Ontario

Aboriginal Education in Ontario

New Resources and Opportunities for **Parents**, **Educators** and **Students**

2007

Dedicated to Excellence for all Students

THE ONTARIO GOVERNMENT is dedicated to excellence in publicly funded education for all students, including First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students. An exciting new strategy, described in the *First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework, January 2007*, will:

- **Help improve student achievement among Aboriginal students**
- **Raise awareness about First Nation, Métis, and Inuit histories, cultures and perspectives for all learners.**

Plans include:

- Increasing the number of Aboriginal staff working in schools and school boards
- Providing teaching strategies that are appropriate for Aboriginal students
- Improving literacy and numeracy skills
- Engaging parents in their children's education.

The Ontario government supports many programs and projects across the province to provide specific opportunities for Aboriginal students, including:

- New Resources – *Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit* to help teachers integrate Aboriginal perspectives into the curriculum.
- Alternative Secondary Schools within Native Friendship Centres Program – to help First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students get their secondary school diploma.
- Lighthouse Projects – to support Aboriginal students through tutoring, skills development, transition programs, diversified instruction and oral language support.

Benefits for Aboriginal Students

Students can benefit from programs designed to improve literacy and numeracy skills, assist in transitioning from elementary to secondary school, create opportunities to meet and be Aboriginal role models, increase the number of Aboriginal resources found in libraries, and more.

Benefits for all Ontario Students

Students can learn one of the seven languages offered in the Native Language programs: Cayuga, Cree, Delaware, Mohawk, Ojibwe, Oji-Cree or Oneida, and may have the opportunity to take one or more of ten Native Studies courses available in the Ontario Curriculum.

As well, Aboriginal histories, cultures and perspectives are being woven into many aspects of the curriculum in general.

Ask your local school or school board about availability.

Investments in Aboriginal Education

The Ontario government's multi-million dollar investment in Aboriginal education has significantly increased. It now includes $22.7 million in new resources, including funding for school boards to offer Native Language and Native Studies courses, and support programs that assist Aboriginal students. At the postsecondary level, the government has invested over $13 million in 2007-2008 to improve programs and services for Aboriginal students enrolled in Ontario's colleges and universities and to assist postsecondary learners in Aboriginal institutions.

First Nation and Métis representatives serve on the Minister of Education's Partnership Table. As well, an Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Postsecondary Education, including representatives from 13 Aboriginal organizations, provides input and advice to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities on priorities and issues related to access and Aboriginal student success.

Measuring Success – Self-Identification

To assess Ontario's progress in helping more Aboriginal students reach their full potential, it is necessary to have accurate and reliable data. A new resource is available to help school boards develop effective policies and practices for voluntary, confidential Aboriginal student self-identification. This is done in consultation with Aboriginal families and communities. The information will help school boards improve programs and support for Aboriginal students and enable them to focus their efforts on student achievement.

Vision

"First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students in Ontario will have the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to successfully complete their elementary and secondary education in order to pursue postsecondary education or training and/or to enter the workforce. They will have the traditional and contemporary knowledge, skills and attitudes required to be socially contributive, politically active, and economically prosperous citizens of the world. All students in Ontario will have knowledge and appreciation of contemporary and traditional First Nation, Métis, and Inuit traditions, cultures and perspectives." (*First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework, January 2007*).

How to Learn More

Contact the Aboriginal Education Office at:

Ministry of Education
Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
Aboriginal Education Office
900 Bay Street
Mowat Block, 12th Floor
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Visit www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal or
Contact your local school or school board for details.

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