MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education
Supervisory Officers and Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

FROM: Alayne Bigwin
Director
Aboriginal Education Office

DATE: September 5, 2014

SUBJECT: 2014-15 Funding Opportunities for Aboriginal Education

In March 2014, the ministry released the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework Implementation Plan. The plan identifies strategies and actions to support ministry and school board implementation of the Framework in this current school year through to 2016. As you will recall, the ministry made a commitment in A Solid Foundation: Second Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework to release a provincial implementation plan to build on the current Aboriginal Education Strategy.

In support of district school boards’ ongoing Framework implementation activities, the Aboriginal Education Office (AEO) is pleased to provide funding, in addition to the Grants for Student Needs (GSN), for the 2014-15 school year. This year, funding will be allocated based on total board population and self-identified Aboriginal student population.

Within the Framework Implementation Plan, the ministry commits to increasing the analysis, use, and sharing of self-identification data to track First Nation, Métis and Inuit student achievement, develop strategies that build on successes achieved, and identify promising practices to reduce achievement gaps. Allocating funding based on the self-identified Aboriginal student population enables the ministry and boards to target resources to directly impact and improve First Nation, Métis and Inuit student achievement and well-being.

The total population based funding reaffirms the ministry’s support to engage all boards in Framework implementation initiatives, acknowledges that all boards must undertake initiatives to implement the Framework and recognizes that boards are at different stages of implementing their Voluntary, Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification policies.

Board funding for 2014-15 is to focus on the following:
Phase 1: September – October 2014
Using the template provided (see attached template), boards are asked to develop a Board Action Plan on First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education that will include programs and initiatives aligned with each of the strategies included in the Framework Implementation Plan.

It is a key expectation that boards continue to collaborate with Aboriginal parents, communities, and organization partners to ensure that each Board Action Plan on First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education is based on local demographics and student/community needs, as part of the planning process.

The AEO will provide direct support to boards to assist with the completion of Board Action Plans. A Board Assessment Tool (see attached template) has been developed to assist boards with examining their progress to date and identifying key priority areas moving forward.

The completed Board Action Plans are to be submitted to the Aboriginal Education Office by October 17, 2014.

Phase 2: October 2014 – June 2015
Funding will be provided to support boards with implementing select initiatives from their respective Board Action Plans. Transfer Payment Agreements will be in effect from October 2014 to June 2015.

2014-15 Board Action Plan initiatives are required to address each of the four main areas:
1. Using Data to Support Student Achievement
2. Supporting Students
3. Supporting Educators
4. Engagement and Awareness Building

Funding:
This year, the Ministry will be allocating funding based on total student population (base funding) and Aboriginal student self-identification data.

Funding will be allocated as follows:
- 60% - Total student population size [by range]
- 20% - Self-ID total population (2013-14 October preliminary self-id data) [per pupil]
- 20% - Self-ID percentage (2013-14 October preliminary self-id data) of total population [by range]

The self-identification portion of the allocation will be based on the Aboriginal student self-identification data submitted by boards to OnSIS in the October 2013 data submission period. While this data is still considered preliminary, it is the most up to date data available and reflects schools’ and boards’ work to increase Aboriginal student self-identification. Basing the self-identified Aboriginal student portion of the allocation on both self-identified Aboriginal student data as percentage of total student population and total self-identified Aboriginal student population helps to balance the variance across the province in board population size and diversity.

AEO Education Officers will communicate funding allocations to boards and provide direct support and outreach as required.
As this is a new approach to funding, First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Advisory Council/Circle members may have questions. AEO Education Officers are available to attend Advisory Council meetings upon request to support the discussions on this new funding approach.

Eligible expenses include:
- Teacher release time
- Meeting Costs (including meals)
- Staffing
- Classroom/Teacher/Board Resources
- Travel & Accommodation
- Guest Speakers & Honoraria

Key Dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning and Reporting</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tr>
<td>Submission of Board Action Plan on First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education</td>
<td>October 17, 2014</td>
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<td>Transfer Payment Agreements in place</td>
<td>October 31, 2014</td>
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<td>Interim Reports due</td>
<td>March 6, 2015</td>
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<td>Final Reports due</td>
<td>July 15, 2015</td>
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AEO Education Officers would be pleased to respond to any questions (see attached contact list).

Alayne Bigwin

c:  Rob Andrews, Director, Student Success/Learning to 18 Strategic Implementation, Innovation and Support Branch
    Sandra Bickford, Director, Student Success/Learning to 18 Strategic Policy Branch
    Richard Franz, Director, Research and Capacity Branch
    Karen Gill, Director, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch
    Bruce Drewett, Director, Leadership Development and School Board Governance Branch
    Ruth Flynn, Director, Inclusive Education Branch
    Denys Giguère, Director, French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch
    Barry Finlay, Director, Special Education Policy and Programs Branch
    Kathy Verduyn, Director, Field Services Branch
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    Doris McWhorter, Director, Education Research and Evaluation Strategy Branch
    Bruce Shaw, Director, Leadership and Implementation Branch
    Lolita Singh, (A) Director, Safe Schools and Student Well-Being Branch
    David McIntosh, Director, Corporate Finance and Services Branch
    Rupert Gordon, Director, Early Years Policy and Programs Branch
    Pam Musson, Director, Early Years Implementation Branch Branch
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