Circle of Light
2009 Conference

Energizing our Partnerships in Education

A First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Conference
November 24 to 26, 2009 in Toronto at the Fairmont Royal York
The conference organizers wish to extend their thanks to all of the speakers and presenters who are sharing their knowledge and expertise at the Circle of Light 2009 Conference.

We also wish to thank the Planning Committee and the many volunteers who have worked so hard to make this event a reality.

Thank you to staff and representatives from the following organizations:

**Chiefs of Ontario, First Nation Education Coordination Unit**

**Indian and Northern Affairs Canada**

**Métis Nation of Ontario**

**Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres**

**Ontario Ministry of Education**
Greetings

The Ontario Ministry of Education and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada are pleased to welcome you to the Circle of Light 2009 Conference.

This year’s conference brings together a broad range of representatives from the provincial and First Nation school systems, academics, students and other First Nation, Métis and Inuit education partners – all with valuable insight to share about First Nation, Métis and Inuit education in the Province of Ontario.

Our theme this year, Energizing our Partnerships in Education, reflects our commitment to building strong ties and positive learning relationships between our Aboriginal communities and education partners to support all students in Ontario.

The 2009 program builds on the momentum of our first Circle of Light Conference in 2007 with a rich array of speakers and presenters who will share their experiences, perspectives and successes. The conference is an opportunity for provincial and First Nation educators to participate in joint professional development on Aboriginal education initiatives.

We are confident that the Circle of Light 2009 Conference will give educators valuable insights and practical tools to help First Nation, Métis and Inuit students be successful in school and beyond, while building on the existing momentum to focus more on the unique needs of First Nation, Métis and Inuit learners in Ontario.

We wish all attendees a wonderful conference.

Sincerely,

Alayne Bigwin 
Ontario Ministry of Education

Kris Hill 
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
DAVID BOUCHARD, British Columbia’s best-selling author and most sought-after public speaker is Métis. He has presented to hundreds of thousands of educators, parents and students around the world. This former teacher and principal of 28 years champions children and literacy, and with passion he promotes and shares Aboriginal culture. David is the author of over 30 best-selling books, which include The Gift of Reading and For the Love of Reading.

“The greatest gift we can give our children is the gift of reading and there is no magic in giving it. There is no toy or program that will do the job for us. It takes time, commitment and most of all, fire. We cannot hope to light a fire in the hearts of others without a fire burning in our own. Light and stoke yours, then spread the flame fast and furious. Let literacy be your legacy.”

David outlines individual roles and responsibilities ensuring that all children are given the gift of reading. He inspires and leaves his listeners with a concrete plan needed to face literacy issues head on.

Born and raised on the Canadian prairie, David now lives in British Columbia with his wife Vicki and their combined family of seven.

David Bouchard’s books have won several prestigious awards, among them: the Gold Medal in the Moonbeam Award for I am Raven in 2008, the Governor General’s Award for The Song Within My Heart in 2004 and the Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award for Voices from the Wild in 1997.

In 2009, David was named to the Order of Canada.

JENNIFER PODEMSKI is an award-winning, Gemini-nominated actor born and raised in Toronto.

Jennifer is best known for her roles in Bruce McDonald’s acclaimed feature film Dance Me Outside, CBC’s The Rez and Riverdale. She has appeared in more than 100 television series and feature films, most recently in the award-winning Showcase comedy series Moose TV, Degrassi TNG and The Robber Bride.

In 1999, Jennifer co-founded Big Soul Productions. There she created and produced award-winning television and film projects including three seasons of the Aboriginal youth role model series The Seventh Generation and Moccasin Flats. It was the first dramatic series to be created, produced and written by an all-Aboriginal production team, garnering three Gemini nominations including Best Dramatic Television series.

Jennifer dedicates a large part of her time to working with children and youth. She tours North America speaking to Aboriginal youth and facilitating workshops and training sessions about self-awareness, goal-setting and self-empowerment. Jennifer is also working to develop new media content for Aboriginal communities to strengthen the presence of Aboriginal people and stories on the web. She has delivered over 1,000 keynote addresses and has been invited to speak at universities around the world to share information on Aboriginal participation in the media and bridging the cultural divide.

In 2004, Jennifer launched an independent production company, Redcloud Studios, and is currently developing two dramatic television series and a feature film. She is also co-executive producer and creative director of this year’s National Aboriginal Achievement Awards.
OUTSIDE LOOKING IN (OLI) is a youth organization with a mission to provide opportunities for self-expression to Indigenous youth through the arts and for Canadians to learn about Indigenous people through performance.

The organization was founded in 2007 to bridge the cultural gap between Canadians and the Indigenous people. Some Indigenous people feel like outsiders looking in on a country in which they live, while many Canadians do not have an understanding of Indigenous cultures beyond what they read in newspapers and see on television. Through OLI’s work and performances, Canadians are given an opportunity to look inside an Indigenous community, while at the same time providing Indigenous youth the opportunity to see beyond theirs.

The youth dancers that make up OLI work on their routines with professional dance teachers on a regular basis and, in between sessions, work with teachers and volunteer community members to rehearse prior to performances. OLI believes in hard work, dedication and a passion to succeed. Only through full commitment by the students will they succeed not only with OLI, but also with any endeavour they face throughout their lives.

We hope you enjoy the performance.

Students from elementary and secondary schools across Ontario will speak to conference delegates during the plenary session about their experience in the Ontario school system.

Comments will include challenges, successes and goals, and the students will speak about special programs that helped them or mentors who guided them. Students will also provide some words of advice to educators on how to help students succeed, and words of inspiration for other students and young people on how to succeed in school.

The student panel presentations will be followed by a question and answer session where delegates will be given the opportunity to ask the students questions.
## CIRCLE OF LIGHT
### Conference Agenda

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2009**

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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>5:00 – 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Registration and Networking</td>
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**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2009**

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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>7:00 – 8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Registration &amp; Continental Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30 – 9:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Opening Remarks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Alayne Bigwin, Director, Aboriginal Education Office, Ministry of Education / Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities</td>
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<td>Kris Hill, Acting Director Education, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada</td>
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<td>Elder Gary Sault, Mississaugas of New Credit First Nation</td>
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<td>Senator Reta Gordon, Métis Nation of Ontario</td>
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<td>Chief Bryan Laforme, Mississaugas of New Credit First Nation</td>
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<td>The Honourable Brad Duguid, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs</td>
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<td>Gary Lipinski, President, Métis Nation of Ontario</td>
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<td>Christine Cram, Assistant Deputy Minister, Education and Social Development Programs and Partnerships Sector, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada</td>
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<td>Raymond Théberge, Assistant Deputy Minister, French Language, Aboriginal Learning and Research Division, Ministry of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:45 – 10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Student Panel Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45 – 11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Session A1</td>
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<td>Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning Models</td>
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<td>Session A2</td>
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<td>Incorporating Anishinabe Pedagogy in Native Languages/Native Studies Professional Development and Professional Learning Communities</td>
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<td>Session A3</td>
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<td>Different Approaches to Aboriginal Teacher Education: Perspectives from Lakehead University, Queen’s University and Nipissing University</td>
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<td>Session A4**</td>
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<td>Using Data to Support Student Achievement</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 – 1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Networking Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 – 1:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Keynote Address: David Bouchard – Author, Educator, Presenter</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00 – 3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Session B1**</td>
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<td>Ojibwe Language: SMARTBOARD Technology and ‘Quest for Knowledge’</td>
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<td>Session B2</td>
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<td>Native Language/Native Studies Professional Learning Communities (NL/NS PLCs)</td>
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<td>School Improvement Planning and Implementation in a First Nation School</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00 – 3:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
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**Session A5**
Ways of Knowing and The Medicine Wheel

**Session A6**
Respect, Responsibility and Relationships – A Very Special Education

**Session A7**
Authentic Partnerships for Improving Student Achievement for All

**Session A8**
Urban Aboriginal Education Project

**Session A9**
Environmental Stewardship + Aboriginal Land Ethics = A Balanced Environmental Mandate

**Session A10**
Using Teachings from the Land and Indigenous People to Shape Tomorrow’s Leaders

**Session A11**
Integration of Aboriginal Perspectives into the Curriculum

**Session B1**
Ojibwe Language: SMARTBOARD Technology and ‘Quest for Knowledge’

**Session B2**
Native Language/Native Studies Professional Learning Communities (NL/NS PLCs)

**Session B3**
School Improvement Planning and Implementation in a First Nation School

**Session B4**
Using Data to Support Student Achievement

**Session B5**
The Authentic Learning Wheel

**Session B6**
Transition and Bridging Programs to Postsecondary Education

**Session B7**
Métis Nation – Who We Are

**Session B8**
The Spirit of Co-operation

**Session B9**
Inuit: In Ontario and Transitional Experiences

**Session B10**
Présentation au sujet de l’intégration de la perspective des Premières nations des Métis et des Inuits dans le contexte des écoles francophones

**Session B11**
Integration of Aboriginal Perspectives into the Curriculum

**These sessions are repeat sessions.**
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### WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2009 (CONTINUED)

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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</table>
| 3:15 – 4:15 p.m. | **Session C1**
Qoibwe Language: SMARTBOARD Technology and 'Quest for Knowledge'
**Session C2**
Kinomaagedaa: Promoting Community Engagement Strategies for Student Success, Creating Professional Development Opportunities for Teachers and Support Staff and Acknowledging Anishinabe World Views in the Delivery of Education
**Session C3**
Professional Development Models for Teachers: Perspectives from the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board and the Lambton Kent District School Board

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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| 6:00 p.m.     | Banquet
Kevin Costante, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education
Gary Lipinski, President, Métis Nation of Ontario
Dr. Brenda Macdougall, Chair, Métis Studies, University of Ottawa
Tracee Smith, Founder and CEO, Outside Looking In
Outside Looking In, student performance

### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2009

<table>
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| 7:15 – 8:45 a.m. | Continental Breakfast

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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| 8:45 – 9:30 a.m. | Opening Remarks
Ontario Regional Chief Angus Toulouse
Stephen White, A/Associate Regional Director General, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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| 9:30 – 10:45 a.m. | Student Panel Presentations

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| 10:45 – 11:00 a.m. | Break

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| 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | **Session D1**
Building Bridges in First Nation Education
**Session D2**
Creating Meaningful Relationships and Building Understanding Through Education and the Arts from a First Nation’s Perspective
**Session D3**
The Seven Grandfather Teachings Come Alive in the Rainy River District School Board
**Session D4**
Effective and Culturally Relevant Literacy Within First Nation Schools

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| 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. | Networking Lunch

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| 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. | Keynote Address: Jennifer Podemski – Actor, Producer and CEO of Redcloud Studios Inc.

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| 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. | Wrap-up & Closing Remarks
Raymond Théberge, Assistant Deputy Minister, French Language, Aboriginal Learning and Research Division, Ministry of Education
Senator Reta Gordon, Métis Nation of Ontario
Elder Gary Sault, Mississaugas of New Credit First Nation

**Session C4**
Mentoring Aboriginal Youth for Student Success
**Session C5**
Online Learning: Secondary Education Working for Students in Remote First Nation Communities
**Session C6**
Developing Students’ Mathematical Reasoning and Communication
**Session C7**
Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification
**Session C8**
Respect, Responsibility and Relationships – A Very Special Education
**Session C9**
Ei Lei Leiw pei ma tei sei win / Native Way of Life
**Session C10**
Advice to Educators From a Student Perspective
Session A

A1 Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning Models
Lynnita Jo Guillett

The inclusion of Aboriginal content in literacy instruction is an important component of providing a culturally responsive teaching and learning model in our schools. This session will share storytelling and the importance of honouring the stories of students. It will also address the vital link between self-esteem and belonging in accomplishing academic achievement. Teaching strategies and resources will be explored to assist elementary school-aged children as they transition from one community to another. The inclusion and infusion of Aboriginal content in cross-curricular learning activities is an important factor to engage and support all students. Methods of delivery will also be shared in this session.

A2 Incorporating Anishinabe Pedagogy in Native Languages/Native Studies Professional Development and Professional Learning Communities
Larry Beardy and Jenny Rose Pert

This session focuses on the incorporation and integration of Ojibwe pedagogical approaches to develop, support and engage Native Studies (NS), especially Native Language (NL), teachers in professional development opportunities that positively contribute to their professional learning communities. Through Larry’s leadership and the support of the Aboriginal education board team, unique professional development opportunities of learning for NL and NS teachers has been in place for two years. Regular meetings and workshops support specific NL/NS curriculum programming needs and also provide immersion ‘retreat’ experiences that give teachers an opportunity to strengthen their Ojibwe cultural skills and traditional teachings. This in turn supports students in learning the language.

Jenny has incorporated her experience with total physical response, music/drama, cultural traditions, balanced literacy, differentiated instruction and oral language strategies in her Ojibwe classroom. Students, observers (other NL teachers) and visitors in Jenny’s classroom have clearly been immersed in the Ojibwe language through conversation, interactive experiences, cultural integration activities (art, music, drumming, etc.), leveled learning tasks and fun! Jenny has shared her program plans, assessment/evaluation practices, effective teaching and learning strategies with First Nation schools and NL teachers in several public boards in the region.

A3 Different Approaches to Aboriginal Teacher Education: Perspectives from Lakehead University, Queen’s University and Nipissing University
Sandra Wolf, Jackie Moore Daigle and Chris Hachkowski

This session, hosted by a panel of experts from Lakehead University, Queen’s University and Nipissing University, will examine different approaches to Aboriginal teacher education. The panelists will discuss the history of Aboriginal teacher preparation and the emergence of Aboriginal scholarship, as well as comparing and contrasting their university’s individual programs.

The Lakehead University perspective will provide context and compare traditional Aboriginal community teaching by Elders and other community members with the institutionalization of educational processes in the form of schools, and the purposes for which those schools were created. With the emergence of social activism during the period between 1960 and 1980, First Nation and other Aboriginal communities began to demand remedies to address the widely recognized failure of schools, as institutions, to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal children. As a result, teacher training programs for Aboriginal people began to emerge. This part of the session will highlight the following programs offered at Lakehead University as examples:

- The Native Teacher Education Program (NTEP); the Native Language Instructors Program (NLIP); the Aboriginal Honours Bachelor of Education degree program; and Aboriginal education coursework requirements for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

The Queen’s University perspective will focus on teaching as a complex transmission of values, behaviours and knowledge, and specifically the holistic approach to education in the Aboriginal/Indigenous world, which addresses not only the intellectual but also the spiritual, emotional and physical dimensions of the individual and community of learners. Teaching and learning in Aboriginal cultural context is essential to success, as is the inclusion of community voice. This part of the session will highlight the following Aboriginal teacher education design principles:

- The Native Teacher Education Program (NTEP); the Native Language Instructors Program (NLIP); the Aboriginal Honours Bachelor of Education degree program; and Aboriginal education coursework requirements for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

The Nipissing University perspective will focus on the following aspects of its Aboriginal-specific programs:

- The invitation for the participation of Aboriginal people
- The emphasis on partnerships and mutual understanding
- The inclusion of Aboriginal people as central decision-makers
- The input of Aboriginal people on program perspectives and methodologies
- Working together to find ways to overcome barriers and obstacles.

The Nipissing University perspective will focus on the following aspects of its Aboriginal-specific programs:

- Ensuring Aboriginal people are provided opportunities to succeed in postsecondary school
- Recognizing that Aboriginal programs are valued and accredited with the Ontario College of Teachers
- Acknowledging that program graduates bring a unique perspective of Aboriginal education and students to public school boards and First Nation schools.
In this session, participants are introduced to learning materials that can extend the medicine wheel into the classroom. Many other activities and resources infusing the medicine wheel information into curriculum will be shared, including artwork, bookmaking, storybooks, talking stick or feather creation, songwriting and storyteller stone painting.

In this session, two principals will share strategies based on research and best practice demonstrating delivery of quality education that promotes a positive personal and cultural identity along with a respect for First Nation, Métis and Inuit cultures with an emphasis on inclusiveness. The partnership between a federal and provincial school, the Quinte Branch of the United Nations, the two principals and grade six teachers culminated in the first Elementary Model United Nations in Canada in 2004. This learning activity has continued. Using the Model United Nations Framework, grade six students investigated global Aboriginal communities, presented their findings and formed resolutions with regard to land use, water, language and human rights. Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students comprised the research teams and represented their chosen Aboriginal nation.

Participants will have exposure to the step-by-step process and learning that occurred with staff, students and school communities. Session participants will be provided with hands-on strategies for addressing the needs of special education students through inclusion, providing appropriate accommodations and modifications for students involved in the Model United Nations project.

Lakehead District School Board, Simcoe County District School Board and the Toronto District School Board are three boards selected by the Ministry of Education to participate in the Urban Aboriginal Education Project (UAEP). The UAEP is aligned with the goals and funding priorities of Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework. This session will share the strategies, progress to date, successes, challenges and next steps in various initiatives implemented through the Urban Aboriginal Education Project at schools in each of these school boards.
With a new environmental education framework in place, many school boards are developing new policies and programs related to environmental education or refining their already existing programs.

In order to develop its environmental teaching and ethic within its schools, Keewatin-Patricia District School Board established the position of Environmental Stewardship Special Assignment in 2008. The mandate of this position is to promote environmental education within the board’s schools, advise the board on environmental policy and make links with environmental teaching and Aboriginal culture.

The school board has not only developed their environmental stewardship council, but has also directly related it to many land-based teachings and the Aboriginal policy framework.

This session will demonstrate how a school board can merge many ministry initiatives into a dynamic and engaging traditionally-based outdoor environmental education program by using an Indigenous curriculum model.

Two foundational documents recently released by the Ministry of Education placed environmental and Indigenous education on the ministry’s list of priorities.

*Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools* and the *Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* both call for improved strategies to provide students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to ensure the survival of the environment and the cultural survival of Indigenous people.

This session explores how a land-based alternative practicum placement for teacher candidates serves the dual purpose of teaching about Indigenous people while instilling an ecological consciousness. Nicole, who is Anishinabe from the Bear clan, will present the benefits and classroom applications of this learning opportunity.

This session outlines the process and outcomes of integrating Aboriginal perspectives in Ontario’s curriculum.

Beginning with the revised Ontario Curriculum for elementary schools (Social Studies grades 1-6, History and Geography, grades 7 and 8 and Language Arts, grades 1-8) and for secondary schools (History, Geography, Economics, Law, Politics, Guidance and Career Education, Business Studies and English) this session reviews the resulting list of expectations identified in each of the subjects that had an explicit or indirect reference to Aboriginal content in the subject.

Twenty teachers from across the province, mostly Aboriginal, were hired for the month of July to develop teaching strategies, provide background information and list resources based on the identified expectations. There are three distinct products created which, taken together, form a resource library. The first product is the list of expectations for elementary and secondary. The second product is the teacher’s toolkit filled with resources – one for elementary teachers and another for secondary teachers – that introduce teaching strategies by grade level and subject. The third product is a supplementary booklet that describes components of the toolkit and will help teachers use this resource to enrich their teaching and student learning.
This session explores the interactive learning techniques of the SMARTBOARD and of Quest for Knowledge.

How do we retain the language among our students? Language instructors are given the opportunity to teach the student to retain and use the language at home. It is vital to retain language, as language defines who we are as Anishinabe people. We were given the gift of language along with the rich culture of the teachings. There are instruments to help engage students, such as the SMARTBOARD. The SMARTBOARD is a vital tool to engage students to have fun while learning the way our world is, along with the language and the culture of the teachings that have been passed down. In this changing world, we need to motivate students to improve and learn the basis of the language.

In fulfilling its mission to provide community-based and student-centered learning opportunities, Seven Generations Educational Institute has expanded its services by creating and engaging in projects that bring communities, educators and students together to celebrate the rich cultural traditions of the First Nation people in the Rainy Lake tribal area while promoting and commending academic achievement. Each year, for the past ten years, more than 100 students in Grades 5-8 have participated in the Quest for Knowledge. The Quest for Knowledge has been restructured into a centre-based event focused around the Ojibwe language and the current Ontario Ministry of Education science curriculum. This new and improved event, Gagwegakendamaawiziwin, which means ‘We will seek knowledge’, engages students in a variety of language and science-based activities utilizing their problem-solving skills and applying the knowledge gained in the classroom in new and creative ways. Students work in teams rather than individually. Each team is composed of students with various talents. The activities highlight the team’s creative side, while developing and presenting their knowledge-based skills.

Our language is our culture – learning the language brings with it the transfer of knowledge between generations. Gagwegakendamaawiziwin will further students’ understanding of their language, culture and traditions.

This session explores the experiences of three school boards engaging in Native Language/Native Studies Professional Learning Communities (NL/NS PLCs). Algoma District School Board and Huron Superior Catholic District School Board meet on a regular basis to host NL/NS PLCs together as one group. Working on a structured plan as to where they want to head, the PLCs include regular use of the E-learning network providing opportunity to be more task-oriented rather than sharing information. The Avon Maitland District School Board hosts NS PLCs consisting of all Native Studies teachers within the board.

The purpose of the PLC is to explore instructional strategies and best practices in teaching topics/issues within 3M and 4M Native Studies courses. These meetings have evolved from a focus on content and resource collection to instructional strategies and pedagogy, with considerable attention given to the role and responsibility of the non-Aboriginal teacher and strategies for teaching Native Studies to mainly non-Aboriginal students.

School improvement in First Nation communities brings with it numerous challenges not found in the general population primarily due to the historical, political and fiduciary relationship between First Nations and the Canadian federal government. Improving student performance and achievement in an effort to provide First Nation students with comparables to their provincial counterparts is an ongoing struggle, given the discrepancy in funding levels and the lack of second-level services that a provincial Ministry of Education provides to its school boards. Using experiences from the Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education, this session will look at school improvement planning drawn from a research-based model that utilizes data from both formal and informal assessments to improve instructional practices and learning.

The Authentic Learning Wheel

Deanna Fry

The Durham District School Board’s Authentic Learning Wheel is a holistic, multi-dimensional, cross-curricular teaching/learning/planning model based on traditional First Nation Medicine Wheel teachings. It recognizes the concept of the Four Aspects of Human Beings as fundamental to authentic learning; and in doing so values knowing through Spirit,
Heart, Body and Mind. The Four Ways of Knowing are then connected through a cross-curricular literacy focus to Multiple Intelligences, Differentiated Instruction and Assessment and Character Education. A template that began in an effort to support the success of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students, the Authentic Learning Wheel has become a model and tool to support the success of all students and teachers.

In this session, the evolution of the Authentic Learning Wheel will be demonstrated as a journey taking participants from the Western one-dimensional view of time as a line, through the dualities of two-dimensional thinking, to the multi-dimensional interconnectedness of the Medicine Wheel. The many spheres of the wheel are then built upon the foundation of the Four Ways of Knowing, or the “New Four Rs” (Reveal, Relate, Reflect, Respond). Participants will also be engaged in relevant classroom activities modelled in a circle format to reinforce the concepts introduced. The session will include brief collaborative planning time followed by a Closing Circle as participants share impressions, feelings, insights gained or plans for action.

B6 Transition and Bridging Programs to Postsecondary Education
Rona Abramovich and Lois Wey

This session will focus on transition and bridging programs to postsecondary education for Aboriginal students. In some instances, programs enable students to move from high school to postsecondary education. In other cases, the programs enable those who have not completed high school, or who have completed high school with poor grades or inadequate courses, to access postsecondary education. Presenters will share their experience and knowledge of programs and initiatives that support Aboriginal students in the transition to first year studies and improve access to postsecondary education for learners. Through partnerships between Aboriginal organizations, school boards and other community organizations, these programs and initiatives prepare Aboriginal students for admission into postsecondary institutions and equip students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to be successful in either a college or university program.

B7 Métis Nation – Who We Are
Jennifer St. Germain and Scott Carpenter

While there continues to be confusion among educators about who the Métis are, this session will explore the myths, misconceptions and realities of the Métis in Ontario as a unique Aboriginal people. The presentation builds on success to date in Ontario schools to broaden the curriculum to include learning about Aboriginal peoples. The presentation will highlight the importance to include Métis distinct from Inuit or First Nations, with a unique identity and long history that contribute significantly to the development of Canada and Ontario. This session will consider how the education system can provide services to Métis children in a culturally relevant way that can contribute to better success for Métis students, as well as increasing sensitivity and awareness to Métis issues for all students.

B9 Inuit: In Ontario and Transitional Experiences
Barbara Sevigny with Sally Webster and Robby Qammaniq

This session will provide a clear and unique perspective of Inuit people, specifically their experiences transitioning into the urban area of the Ottawa region. Although related to a specific urban area, session participants will be able to identify with the Inuit in their history, culture and educational experience in Ontario. This session will include the work of the Tungasuvvingat Inuit organization in providing services, cultural support and transitional programs to Inuit students in culturally relevant ways, including perspectives of program support, student needs and Elder participation.

B10 Présentation au sujet de l’intégration de la perspective des Premières nations, des Métis et des Inuits dans le contexte des écoles francophones
Shelley Duquette-Lafortune

Cette présentation touche l’inclusion des gens des Premières nations, des Métis et des Inuits qu’ils soient présents ou non en salle de classe. Elle présente aussi différentes stratégies pour intégrer l’aspect de ces divers groupes dans l’enseignement quotidien. La présentation est basée sur l’expérience personnelle et professionnelle.

Wednesday, November 25, 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Session C

Wednesday, November 25, 3:15 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.

C1 Ojibwe Language: SMARTBOARD Technology and ‘Quest for Knowledge’
Repeated in session B1
Brian Smith and Corine Bannon

For description of this session, see page 9.

C2 Kinomaagedaa: Promoting Community Engagement Strategies for Student Success, Creating Professional Development Opportunities for Teachers and Support Staff and Acknowledging Anishinabe World Views in the Delivery of Education
Dominic Beaudry

This session will explore the Wikwemikong Board of Education’s mandate in promoting education excellence in First Nation communities.

Divided into five sections, this session will focus on community engagement, professional development and networking with other First Nation communities to promote economies of scale. Five areas to be explored include: community engagement and homework strategies (student retention), school and student excellence (public relations), staff appreciation and awards (teacher retention), education conferences (professional development) and finally, Anishinabe curriculum development.

A number of tools assist with the above, including recruiting a strong active school board or committee, involving principals and staff in all planning, getting local political support for school planning, networking with area school boards and education institutes, reviewing the school board strategic plan on an annual basis and subcontracting work for assistance or planning.

C3 Professional Development Models for Teachers: Perspectives from the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board and the Lambton Kent District School Board
Nancy Allaire, Paula Mann and Denise Helmer-Johnston

In this session, an overview of Aboriginal education and professional development for teachers in both the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board (NPSCDSB) and the Lambton Kent District School Board (LKDSB) will be shared. Representatives from each board will discuss their different approaches and provide examples for session participants to take back to their own communities.

The NPSCDSB perspective will focus on a four-day enriching spiritual retreat designed to enhance understanding of Aboriginal culture and traditions for teachers, principals and senior administration in partnership with the Ontario Provincial Police and Aboriginal community partners. In this part of the session, participants will be familiarized with the following retreat highlights:

- Overview of NPSCDSB’s voluntary confidential Aboriginal Self-Identification Policy
- Cultural Native teachings
- Residential schools’ Healing Circles
- Aboriginal perspectives in the Ontario curriculum: integrating Catholic virtues through the Teaching – Learning Critical Pathway
- Walking The Path student leadership program
- Native arts and sweat lodge teachings.

Providing our educators with the opportunity to develop an understanding and awareness of Aboriginal culture through interactive and meaningful experiences that extend beyond the ‘traditional’ professional development model proves to be exceptionally engaging. The opportunity to build relationships with and learn from our Aboriginal community leaders, to increase the capacity of our educators to respond to the learning and cultural needs of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students in our Catholic schools has been powerful. This model supports a greater understanding and appreciation among students, staff, parents and community members about Aboriginal cultures, traditions and perspectives.

The LKDSB perspective will focus on the board’s multi-tiered and multi-partner approach to professional development (PD). Session participants will be made familiar with the following PD approaches:

- Cultural awareness events for staff are planned by and hosted in each of the four First Nations within the district
- Targeted support to teachers occurs through the assistance of our Itinerant Aboriginal Education Teacher
- Local opportunities are planned by committees comprised of members of the local First Nation and the schools that serve the children from the community
- PD opportunities are offered in partnership with the Indigenous Education Coalition (IEC) in a number of subject areas.

Forming partnerships in providing professional development is an integral element to this PD approach. The positive feedback from PD sessions has been overwhelming. The collaboration between the First Nations, First Nation organizations and the board have had tremendous results in creating greater opportunities for our students, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.
Educators have a responsibility to motivate our students on the right path at an early age. Research suggests that in some cases, teachers spend more quality time with students than parents due to work schedules and extracurricular activities. Setting examples, raising the bar for students and providing opportunities to practise the skills introduced guarantee more achievements, more rewards, more fulfillment and more enthusiasm in your classroom. An educator’s positive influence can increase their youths’ ability to be socially successful and improve their educational outcomes.

In this session, learn how mentoring, continued support, and creative, positive outlooks on life can reduce the gap in student achievement in education and unfavourable social behaviour. This session will introduce strategies and share tools that guarantee positive results within organizations and education systems. Guest Youth Turtles will provide insight from their experiences as recent graduates fresh out of the secondary education system and transitioning into adulthood. This session will offer new twists to old approaches and restore energy in wanting to make a difference.

This session will explore how an innovative First Nation program is meeting a variety of needs for students in Northwestern Ontario. Keewaytinook Internet High School (KiHS) is an online, ministry-inspected school program offering a full three-stream selection of courses to learners. Presently, the school offers a choice of 45 courses in Grades 9-12.

The session will provide a brief background of the program and explain the day-to-day functioning. The KiHS team will also make a live connection to remote communities as they would in a normal day. A First Nation program can offer a parallel approach to Ministry-directed Student Success initiatives in the public system. KiHS delivers its own version of these initiatives with credit recovery, credit rescue, co-op education, special education, PLAR mature students, emerging technical skills, and a cultural and language component. We believe we have to create the opportunities for students to help them reach their full potential, and their community is an important place for this to occur. The KiHS team will discuss the possibilities for supplementing existing secondary programs and show how KiHS can be used as a model for developing similar community-based programs in other communities.

Aboriginal education is a key priority for the Ministry of Education. Specifically, the goals for school boards are to improve the achievement among First Nation, Métis and Inuit students as well as closing the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in the areas of achievement in literacy and numeracy, school retention, graduation rates and advancement to postsecondary studies. Defined performance measures are established in the Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework. The ministry requires reliable student specific data on the achievement of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students across Ontario to assess progress and support improvement planning and accountability. This data is also necessary to inform policy and funding decisions.
Session C

In order to measure the effectiveness of programs and initiatives, boards must first recognize those students who are of Aboriginal ancestry. In response to this need, boards across the province are developing and implementing policies for voluntary, confidential Aboriginal student self-identification.

Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students is a document produced by the Ministry of Education that is designed to assist boards with the process of establishing a self-identification policy and program. In order to be successful, it is critical that boards work with local First Nation, Métis and Inuit parents, families and communities. This session will review Ministry of Education documents that pertain to voluntary, confidential Aboriginal student self-identification as well as highlight the journey two boards have taken to establish their Self-ID programs. Communication strategies, lessons learned and next steps will be presented.

This session will examine the progression of a provincial award-winning Outdoor Education Program involving Grades 4-8 students at Ministik School in Moose Factory, Ontario, from its early inception to the present. Divided into three units – Fall, Winter and Spring – the program integrates Cree cultural values with the Ontario curriculum by focusing on the traditional hunting, survival and fishing traditions of the Moose Cree of the James Bay Lowlands area. There are three components to the program: Fall Goose Hunting, Winter Survival and Spring Fishing.

In addition to background information on the location, geography and physical characteristic of Moose Factory Island and James Bay Lowlands, this session will follow the hunting practice of the Moose Cree and how the local school is incorporating these community hunting practices into the curriculum in an attempt to keep the hunting practice traditions alive and strengthen the students’ awareness of the history of hunting in this traditional land area.

Students from senior secondary school grades will address the issues for First Nation, Métis and Inuit students in the education system. They will challenge session participants to consider ways in which schools and classrooms could be changed to better engage Aboriginal students in their education until graduation. They will also consider how schools could encourage non-Aboriginal students and staff to better understand Aboriginal cultures. These solutions may include special programs, events, activities, resources, experiential learning and mentors to help Aboriginal students succeed in school.

The students will present their ideas and then dialogue with session participants. Attendees will be encouraged to ask questions, make suggestions and share successful practices.

For description of this session, see page 7.
Session D

D1 Building Bridges in First Nation Education
Bruce Stonefish with Felicia Huff and Bonnie Hill

This session will discuss the development of partnerships between the Indigenous Education Coalition (IEC) and surrounding public school boards and educational organizations, including joint projects with K-12 professional development, curriculum development and First Nation language development. This session will discuss how IEC has begun to build bridges for partnerships in the advancement of First Nation education, cultural awareness and sensitivity.

D2 Creating Meaningful Relationships and Building Understanding Through Education and the Arts from a First Nation’s Perspective
Lorrie Gallant, Carol Holmes, Ricki Crothers and Gerald Willmott

This session will explore how the Woodland Cultural Centre’s Arts Access project with the Wahta Mohawks formed positive relationships with educators and students in Muskoka area schools, located in the Trillium Lakelands District School Board. Session participants will learn about the Woodland Cultural Centre’s Arts Access Wahta project including the background, how the project was developed and how it continues to evolve. An overview of the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder and how they contributed to the overall success of this project will be provided.

Panelists will share their experiences using the arts to develop positive outcomes for students and educators. Session participants will learn how Wahta’s story of their history was used as a tool to build a stronger knowledge base and sense of First Nation culture within educational institutions through identifying the wealth of creative resources found within their own community.

D3 The Seven Grandfather Teachings Come Alive in the Rainy River District School Board
Brent Tookenay

This session will explore how the Rainy River District School Board (RRDSB) worked with Métis author David Bouchard in developing a curriculum resource that focuses on the Seven Grandfather Teachings. First Nation parent and community engagement was the central focus with this initiative and continues to be a key factor in the success of Aboriginal students. Through its partnerships with David Bouchard and Seven Generations Education Institute, the RRDSB continues to focus on literacy strategies that help Aboriginal students, parents and communities become engaged in school. The First Nation students, parents and communities helped the RRDSB develop a model to improve student success and community engagement.

This session will explain how the First Nation students, parents and communities have ownership of this very important initiative.

D4 Effective and Culturally Relevant Literacy Within First Nation Schools
Meg Tucker, Russ Blackbird, Craig Bunda and Gretchen Gamble

Given the unique challenges facing many band-operated First Nation schools, the five-year journey of the Waipole Island First Nation Elementary School shows it is possible to work together in a culturally sensitive manner to meet provincial expectations. In this session, school administration and classroom teachers share their journeys and struggles to effect positive systematic and school-wide changes dedicated to improved student achievement.

D5 The Alternative Secondary School Program in Native Friendship Centres
Crystal Kingston, Shelly Noel, Serge Pietramale, Celina Cada-Matasawagon, Rick Sanderson and Ian Jacobsen

The Ministry of Education provides funding towards the Alternative Secondary School Program within Native Friendship Centres to support urban First Nation, Métis and Inuit students who are at risk of leaving or who have left the education system. This program runs in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres. The program supports activities such as cultural programs and counselling, as well as the engagement of human resources such as Elders. Programs are located in London, Sudbury, Fort Erie, Fort Frances, Kenora, Sault Ste. Marie, Hamilton and Ottawa.

D6 Building ‘Community’ in the School Setting
Denise Baxter

This session explores an exemplary community school model that is inclusive of successful engagement for all (students, staff, parents and community) in a supportive environment of learning. Ogden Community School has active and ongoing programs that engage parents, community agencies, Elders and community members to support the high percentage of Aboriginal learners in their school. Warm, engaging and welcoming cultural components of programming support are a ‘whole’ community effort, successful in closing the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal student learning. The active and ongoing programs to engage parents include: family literacy, math, safe school and healthy-living nights, Fall feast with drumming nightly, home reading programs and Welcome to Kindergarten night.
These activities are successful because all levels of staff participate in the planning and delivering of the programs.

Ongoing education and dialogue with parents ensures success. In addition to engaging parents, the program strives to connect with community agencies, Elders, and other community members to foster a positive school community culture. Partner agencies include: NorWest Health Unit, Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre, and the Red Cross, as well as partnership with the Urban Aboriginal Strategy to connect with local Elders and local community members, fostering a positive environment for all students. Session participants will leave with ideas for programs, physical environment changes and communication strategies for engaging community within their schools.

**D8 First Nation Education Coordination Unit**

Members of the First Nation Education Coordination Unit (FNECU)

This session will provide an overview of the First Nation Education Coordination Unit (FNECU), outlining and providing awareness of the role and function the FNECU plays as a structure to support First Nation Education interests in Ontario. The session will provide background on the FNECU, strategies developed to create awareness on education issues, the link with First Nation Tribal Councils and Political Territorial Organizations, and profile key priorities and working groups such as those underway in the areas of special education, the band operated funding formula, postsecondary and tuition agreements.

**D10 Using Culture as a Tool for Classroom Management and Character Education**

Laura Schwager

In this session, Laura and Jennifer invite you into their classroom during the first few days of school. As a group, participants will create a Respect Agreement and make a Wampum Commitment String: the building blocks of a classroom community supported by cultural values.

**D9 Métis Partnerships with School Boards**

Chris Paci and Bonny Cann

In 2007, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) held community consultations across the province and drafted an Education Action Plan, which was adopted in 2009 by the Annual General Assembly. The plan includes goals and objectives in line with the Ontario First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework, toward bridging the gap on educational outcomes for Métis in Ontario's public schools. Targeted planning is essential to meeting the goals of the Métis Education Action Plan (MEAP).

This session explores the elements of targeted planning and essential considerations and how it fits with the K-12 board improvement planning cycle. The current education status of Métis learners, case studies and improvements to ensure a robust data set to inform SMART goals will also be discussed.

**D7 Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification**

Repeated in session C7  
Lisa Ewanchuk and Bill Littlefair

For description of this session, see page 12 and 13.

**D11 Integration of Aboriginal Perspectives into the Curriculum**

Repeated in session A11  
Bryon Brisard

For description of this session, see page 8.
Thank you to staff and representatives from the following organizations:

- Chiefs of Ontario, First Nation Education Coordination Unit
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
- Métis Nation of Ontario
- Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres
- Ontario Ministry of Education