

**Native Women's  
Association of Canada**

**Gendering First Nations Education Reform  
Final Report**

**January 2013**

Submitted to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada

By the Native Women's Association of Canada

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## Introduction

This report is a collaborative effort, funded by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), and developed and carried out by the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC). It addresses the proposed reform for First Nations education in Canada identified by the federal government, and it features the input, priorities, and recommendations of the participants from the Provincial and Territorial Member Associations (PTMAs) of NWAC. This report is the culmination of the entire project, *Gendering First Nations Education Reform*.

AANDC approached NWAC to identify gaps in the literature and to include a gendered perspective on First Nations education. One of the goals of this education project has been to provide AANDC with a guide or framework to enable them to continue with culturally relevant, gender-based analysis with communities. That framework is drawn out from the cornerstones of the data resulting from this project. In other words, the themes that run throughout the data, reflecting the principle concerns and priorities of those present, are well used as structural guides for further work.

This report includes the data collected at NWAC's Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Saskatchewan (2012) through an engagement session with the participants from the PTMAs. While chiefs voted against a First Nations Education Act in the fall of 2012, there is still much value in reviewing the priorities collected on what the PTMA participants put forth for a potential First Nations Education Act.

In addition, a survey instrument was implemented to collect input on language and culture in education. This report includes the concerns, priorities, and solutions that emerged from these two events. Also included is a summary of the findings, the themes arising from the data, and recommendations that are based on analysis of the data gathered from the engagement session and the survey. While the focus was on First Nations women and girls, primarily on-reserve, the participants (representing Inuit, Métis, and First Nations, on-reserve and off-reserve) were less concerned with this restriction and, for the most part, put forth perspectives, concerns, and solutions that touched upon all Aboriginal women and girls.

A review of three primary documents on education reform for First Nations is also included in this report; they include the following, *Reforming First Nations Education: From Crisis to Hope; Nurturing the Learning Spirit of First Nation Students: The Report of the National Panel on First Nation Elementary and Secondary Education for Students on Reserve*; and *Auditor General Status Report, Chapter 4: Programs for First Nations on Reserve*, as well as the primer document (*Gendering First Nations Education Reform: A Primer*) made for aiding participants in the AGA engagement session.

Ultimately, NWAC hopes that readers will find this report to be of interest and use when considering engaging with Aboriginal communities, particularly Aboriginal women and girls, and in considering projects to engage with and encourage the educational success of Aboriginal women and girls. This project was intended to be comprehensive and inclusive. However, it should not be considered an official consultation.

## *About NWAC*

NWAC was founded in 1974 as a result of Aboriginal women's struggle to overcome discriminations inherent in the Indian Act, which still contains residual discrimination against First Nations women today. NWAC is made up of twelve Aboriginal women's organizations called PTMAs that are spread across Canada with a collective goal to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural, and political well-being of Aboriginal women within Canada. NWAC is the only national recognized voice of Aboriginal women in Canada. NWAC works to preserve Aboriginal culture, achieve equality for Aboriginal women, and have a say in the shaping of legislation directly affecting Aboriginal women, their families, and communities.

NWAC's mission is to help empower women by being involved in developing and changing legislation which affects them, and by involving them in the development and delivery of programs promoting equality for Aboriginal women. NWAC engages in national advocacy measures aimed at legislative and policy reforms that promote equality for Aboriginal women and girls. By having a pilot project which aims to increase the civic participation of Aboriginal women, particularly youth, this will help to inform and support Aboriginal women in becoming informed within their communities.

Through activism, education, policy analysis, and advocacy, NWAC works to advance the well-being of Aboriginal women and girls, as well as their families and communities. A fundamental premise of NWAC's work is that the civil, political, cultural, social, and economic rights of Aboriginal peoples cannot be realized without identifying the gender impacts of laws and policies applied to Aboriginal peoples and addressing the needs of Aboriginal women in a culturally relevant way.

NWAC passionately pursues every opportunity to raise awareness of the unique circumstances and realities facing Aboriginal women. Education and awareness in several areas, both domestically and internationally, have become key priorities for the entire organization.

The vision statement can be described as a way of "showing knowledge". It represents the words of women: to be heard, to be understood, to share, and to bring Aboriginal women's perspectives to the table.

NWAC's efforts are based on the belief that the well-being and inclusion of these women and girls are critical for developing a healthier, more productive, more educated, and more just society in Canada. NWAC's methods are inclusive, and it pursues equality on multiple fronts. NWAC's departments represent the forms of oppression and inequality that Aboriginal women and girls face on a daily basis as well as the many related concerns and areas needing strong and lasting change: Environment, Health, Labour Market Development, Youth, Evidence to Action, and International Affairs and Human Rights. Education is a basic human right. As such, while all departments focus on education in some way, this report and education reform initiative has been carried out under International Affairs and Human Rights.

## ***About AANDC***

The Government of Canada, through the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), provides funding for the education of First Nation students living on reserves. The Government invests approximately \$1.5 billion annually to support approximately 117,500 elementary and secondary students. In addition, the Government allocates approximately \$200 million each year to maintain and improve on-reserve education infrastructure.

First Nation education is a priority for the Government of Canada. Under Economic Action Plan 2012, an additional \$275 million over three years was invested to improve school infrastructure and to support early literacy programming, services and partnerships with provincial school systems. The Government has also committed to put in place a new First Nation Education Act by 2014. Legislation would provide the framework necessary to build standards and structures, strengthen governance and accountability, and provide the mechanism for stable, predictable and sustainable funding.

The commitments under Economic Action Plan 2012 build on the progress of reform efforts that have been taking place since 2008. This includes the commitment to partnership, which has led to numerous tripartite education agreements that seek to strengthen education programs, services and standards between on-reserve and provincial education systems.

With the existing gap in the literature provided thus far on the issues faced in First Nations education and needed change, AANDC recognized a need for a gendered-perspective and input to ensure that First Nations women and girls would be included in any coming initiatives for change.

## **Background: Education Project**

The purpose of the project was to conduct a review, using a culturally relevant, gender-based analysis of key documents, as well as to identify gaps in the literature on First Nations education. Also, to engage with Aboriginal women from the NWAC PTMAs on their views and perspectives on the proposed First Nations Education Act and their recommendations on First Nations education reform. It is hoped that this information will help assist AANDC in guiding policies and programs towards improving First Nations education in Canada.

Of some of the worst outcome statistics in Canada, First Nations women and girls can be found at the bottom:

- Aboriginal women 15 years and older are 3-5 times more likely to experience violence than non-Aboriginal women.
- Rates of spousal assault against Aboriginal women are more than three times higher than those against non-Aboriginal women.
- Nearly one-quarter of Aboriginal women experienced some form of spousal violence in the five years preceding the 2004 GSS.

- Between 1997 and 2000, homicide rates of Aboriginal females were almost seven times higher than those of non-Aboriginal females.
- Often overlooked or ignored is the extreme vulnerability of women in the sex trade. Between 1991 and 2004, 171 women involved in prostitution were killed in Canada; 45% of these homicides remain unresolved (Statistics Canada 2006a, p. 37)
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) data published in Amnesty International Canada's report *Stolen Sisters: Discrimination and Violence Against Indigenous women in Canada* indicate that Aboriginal women between the ages of 25 and 44 with Indian status are five times more likely than other women of the same age to die as the result of violence (NWAC Fact Sheet, n.d.)

In Canada, the term Aboriginal includes three distinct groups: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

First Nations women and girls (and other Aboriginal women) face challenges beyond their Canadian counterparts. From research, a causal link has been shown between ensuring and protecting education for women and girls and some of the most impactful, positive changes within a society. The following positive outcomes to increased access to education for women come from Educating Girls Matters:

- Reduction of child and maternal mortality
- Improvement of child nutrition and health
- Lower birth rates
- Enhancement of women's domestic role and their political participation
- Improvement of the economic productivity and growth
- Protection of girls from HIV/AIDS, abuse and exploitation

<http://www.educatinggirlsmatters.org/challenge.html>

The United Nations Population Fund, an agency created to advocate for health and equality for men, women, and children, echoes these broad-reaching positive impacts:

Education is important for everyone, but it is especially significant for girls and women. This is true not only because education is an entry point to other opportunities, but also because the educational achievements of women can have ripple effects within the family and across generations. Investing in girls' education is one of the most effective ways to reduce poverty. (. . .) The education of parents is linked to their children's educational attainment, and the mother's education is usually more influential than the father's. An educated mother's greater influence in household negotiations may allow her to secure more resources for her children. <http://www.unfpa.org/gender/empowerment2.htm>

The positive effects continue, but if social justice is not enough of a reason (and unfortunately for some it may not be), there are also powerful economic benefits to be reaped from including more First Nations women and girls in education (and Aboriginal men, women, and children into the education system). Sharpe and Arsenault's 2009 and 2010 reports on the education gap for Aboriginals in Canada repeat some powerful economic incentives for prioritizing the protection and equality of First Nations education (and Aboriginal education in general).

Calculating the financial impact, the authors make an evidence-based assertion that achieving parity for Aboriginals with Canadians is not only a matter of moral importance, “it is a sound investment that will pay substantial dividends in the coming decades. In particular, Canada’s Aboriginal population could play a key role in mitigating the looming long-term labour shortage caused by Canada’s aging population and low birth rate”. The authors continue, estimating “that complete closure of both the education and the labour market outcomes gaps by 2026 would lead to cumulative benefits of \$400.5 billion (2006 dollars) in additional output and \$115 billion in avoided government expenditures over the 2001-2026 period” (Sharpe and Arsenault, 2010, i).

Aboriginal education is well behind that of standard education in Canada. Investing in creating an equal education has clear benefits. In particular, it would seem that ensuring access to a quality education for Aboriginal women and girls would have broad-reaching and very positive outcomes in health, home life, standards of living, and in economic development for all of Canada.

The questions then become, what are the gaps to First Nations women and girls’ achieving this equal, quality education, and what are the best ways to close the gap?

## Literature Review

NWAC reviewed and summarized the following three reports and listed their recommendations on education reform.

### 1. Reforming First Nations Education: From Crisis to Hope

Report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples

The Senate Report broke down the models for First Nations primary and secondary education into the following three:

- federal schools controlled by the AANDC;
- local schools operated by individual First Nations (also referred to as band-operated schools); and
- provincial and/or territorial public school systems.

(p. 9)

While provinces are generally responsible for the education laws in their boundaries, First Nation schools primarily fall under federal jurisdiction. The responsibility the federal government bears toward First Nations communities is in the Indian Act; however, that guiding document primarily addresses truancy issues. Of critical absence is a definition or description of educational success, quality, or other highly relevant issues in First Nations education today.



Additionally, while provincial schools enjoy a coordinated, reliably funded, consistent education network that bridges student education goals through the grades and curriculum, with supervision and coordination by school boards and ministries of education, the federal approach has been primarily that of funder for education services (p. 11). It falls upon the shoulders of the individual band-operated schools to ensure their schools are following provincial curricula, their teachers are adequately trained and certified, and that teachers receive professional development. In short, the administrative, legislative, and regulatory duties that are shared and coordinated between supported bodies in the province primarily fall individually upon each band-operated school.

To meet the costs of this current approach to First Nations education, “[e]ducation funding, excluding capital costs, is calculated using a national formula (last updated in 1996) and distributed through various funding arrangements with First Nations and the provinces. Since 1996, there has been a 2% cap on annual increases in AANDC’s education funding, including capital expenditures” (p. 11). While it may seem like AANDC’s role as funder is respecting First Nations sovereignty, in action and truth it is quite different. Insufficiently funded and overburdened in its challenge to provide an equal education as that received by Canadian counterparts, First Nation education is undermined, a recognition shared by AANDC (INAC):

Importantly, the departmental evaluation acknowledges that First Nations



responsibility for education has been restrained and that ‘without appropriate capacity and resources, many communities are unable to maximize the impact that First Nations control of education could have over something as fundamental as education of children. (p. 11)

## Reform

Considering how often the senate heard reports about the lack of a true system of education (delivery, legislative, inter-nation collaborations, etc.) and how much of a burden it was attempting to provide everything a First Nations school needs on their own, with only partial support from the Federal government, it comes as no surprise that two of the senate reports’ strongest recommendations are for the establishment of a First Nations Education Act as well as a need to develop (with the guiding support of an education act) comparable levels and functions of education for First Nations schools as those enjoyed by provinces and territories (school boards and ministries of education). “We strongly support and encourage the efforts of First Nations to establish educational authorities, separate from band councils and accountable to the parents and community members, and believe they need a legislative basis from which to operate” (pp. 61-62).

They advise an approach to constructing this First Nation Education Act. Refreshingly, it is an approach that recognizes First Nation independence and variation:

We find that a federal First Nations Education act is necessary to begin to build the proper foundation for such a First Nations system of education. Such legislation should be developed as a framework, rather than a detailed code that would attempt to cover every aspect of elementary and secondary education. It should explicitly recognize First Nations authority over education, as well as provide a legal underpinning for First Nations second- and third-level education authorities. Acknowledging the need for flexibility, it should not, however, prescribe those structures. The development of federal First Nations education legislation must be firmly rooted in a consultative process and significant community engagement. (p. 62)

## Recommendations

The following is a list of their overall recommendations:

**Recommendation 1:** That the government of Canada, in consultation with First Nations and First Nations educational authorities, develop a First Nations Education Act; that this Act explicitly recognize the authority of First Nations for on-reserve elementary and secondary education; and that it enable the establishment of First Nations controlled second-and-third level education structures; and that the application of this Act to individual First Nations communities be optional, and provide for the repeal of the education sections of the *Indian Act* for those First Nations that opt into the new Act. (p. 62)

**Recommendation 2:** That the proposed First Nations Education Act provide statutory authority to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada to make payments from

the Consolidated Revenue Fund to First Nations educational authorities, with the objective of providing educational services on reserves; that the methodology for establishing the amount of these payments be enshrined in regulations authorized under the Act, and developed in consultation with First Nations; that these regulations would consider key cost drivers such as demographics and remoteness; and that the formula for establishing payments include, among other things, First Nations language preservation and revitalization programs. (p. 64)

**Recommendation 3:** That the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, in collaboration with First Nations organizations and the Assembly of First Nations, take immediate steps to develop a Canada-First Nations Action Plan for education reform; and that the joint action plan include a process to ensure that First Nations are able to opt into a First Nations Education Act within agreed-upon timelines. (p. 64-5)

**Recommendation 4:** That a task force, jointly appointed by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and the Assembly of First Nations, be established to oversee and monitor progress related to First Nations educational reform; and that the task force report annually, for the next five years, to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and to the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations. (p. 65)

## 2. Nurturing the Learning Spirit of First Nation Students

### The Report of the National Panel on First Nation Elementary and Secondary Education for Students on Reserve

The national report reiterates the contrast between the coordinated, networked cohesion that exists in provincial schools with the system for First Nation schools: In provinces, from the individual school (first level services), to school board (second level services), and onward to the provincial ministry of education (third level services), there is an extensive system to ensure and protect quality education; whereas there exist “no comprehensive legislative framework guiding and protecting delivery of First Nation education” (p. 10). Instead, First Nations education frameworks are supported via ‘stipulations’ from funding agreements with the government. Primarily, this consists of requiring the First Nation schools to achieve provincial standards. Yet, without the same or similar support structures or funding, achieving educational equality has proven elusive.

**Nurturing the Learning Spirit of First Nation Students**  
The Report of the National Panel on First Nation Elementary and Secondary Education for Students on Reserve



While the provincial system may tempt some as a carbon copy answer, when First Nation students attend provincial school after attending on reserve, they do not seem to benefit from the provincial system as they might be expected to. Instead, “[e]ducation outcomes for First Nation students attending schools in provincial systems are not substantially better than those attending First Nation schools. In fact, there is a marked decline in student retention once students enroll in secondary programs which are largely provided through the provincial school system” (p. 14).

When faced with a very different school environment, First Nation students seem to struggle to adapt to it. Isolation and lack of acceptance and support for their cultural perspectives and the contexts of their lives are cited by some students as to why they struggle. (p. 14)

## Reform

There are exceptions to an isolated, federally funded approach:

Some First Nation communities have joined together to form school boards, others have partnered with provincial education authorities. Some are also currently underway including a Memorandum of Understanding signed on February 24, 2010, by the Government of Canada, the Government of Alberta and the Assembly Treaty Chiefs in Alberta (represented by Treaty 6, Treaty 7 and Treaty 8). Two regions have negotiated tripartite agreements, with enabling legislation, to build a system of education and to provide funding, a range of supports and a focus on education attainment necessary to improve First Nation student outcomes and engagement. (p. 12)

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are taken directly from the report. Space and brevity demands require that this section be limited to the recommendation statements specifically; however, each section in the report includes additional elaboration. The reader is strongly encouraged to review the additional information surrounding each recommendation in the original report. The guiding principles behind these recommendations can be read on page viii of the report.

**Recommendation 1:** Co-Create a Child-Centred First Nation Education Act (p. 31)

**Recommendation 2:** Create a National Commission for First Nation Education to support education reform and improvement (p. 33)

**Recommendation 3:** Facilitate and support the creation of a First Nation education system through the development of regional First Nation Education Organizations (FNEO) to provide support and services for First Nation schools and First Nation Students (p. 36)

**Recommendation 4:** Ensure adequate funding to support a First Nation education system that meets the needs of First Nation learners, First Nation communities and Canada as a whole (p. 38)

**Recommendation 5:** Establish accountability and reporting framework to assess improvement in First Nation Education (p. 51)

3. Status Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the House of Commons 2011

### **Chapter 4: Programs for First Nations on Reserves**



While the two previous reports were wholly about First Nations education, the Auditor General Report spoke to more than just the issue of education in First Nation communities. It addressed the general state of First Nations and some of the reasons for some of the ongoing conditions. The sections on education were brief, but were still of great value.

Though the general problems listed by the Auditor General cover a wide spectrum (drinking water quality, housing initiatives, child and family services, land claims, reporting burdens), after reviewing the two previous reports, the general areas of impediment in the Auditor General report overall can all be seen to directly link to education:

In our view, many of the problems facing First Nations go deeper than the existing programs' lack of efficiency and effectiveness. We believe that structural impediments severely limit the delivery of public services to First Nations communities and hinder improvements in living conditions on reserves. We have identified four such impediments:

- lack of clarity about service levels,
- lack of a legislative base,
- lack of an appropriate funding mechanism, and
- lack of organizations to support local service delivery (p. 2)

Delving more specifically into education, the Auditor General Report lists some of the most pressing concerns. Included in this list is an oft repeated assessment that INAC (AANDC) maintains an inconsistent, delayed, and insufficient approach to addressing the education gap between First Nation students and their Canadian counterparts. At this current pace, and with current education measures and practices, the auditor general concluded that “it would take 28 years for First Nations communities to reach the national average. More recent trends suggest that the time needed may be still longer” (4.17, p. 13)

Recommendations

The Auditor Report is, again, less robust than the previous reports when it comes to recommendations. However, it features the following table for what has been asked of AANDC in the past and how they have measured up to those recommendations currently.

Exhibit 4.1 Progress on addressing two recommendations on education (p. 15)

Recommendations	Progress
<p>Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, in consultation with First Nations, should immediately develop and implement a comprehensive strategy and action plan, with targets, to close the education gap. It should also report progress to Parliament and to First Nations on a timely basis.</p> <p>(Recommendation 5.33 of the 2004 November Report of the Auditor General of Canada, Chapter 5. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada—Education Program and Post-Secondary Student Support)</p>	<p><b>Unsatisfactory</b></p>

<p>Indian and Northern Affairs Canada should undertake to obtain reliable and consistent information on the actual costs of delivering education services on reserves and compare the costs with those of providing comparable education services in the provinces.</p> <p>(Recommendation 5.51 of the 2004 November Report of the Auditor General of Canada, Chapter 5)</p>	<p><b>Satisfactory</b></p>
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## NWAC Engagement Session

The primary data collection phase was during NWAC's AGA. Additionally, to compensate for the ambitious timeline of this project, a follow-up online web conference engagement session was held as a possible 'in-reserve' since the critical discussions went past the first engagement session. However, the NWAC board meeting on December 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> provided a preferred face-to-face presentation and invitation for feedback.

It is important to note that the funding for the engagement sessions was provided by AANDC, and with their support came certain requirements. The two that were most influential in the construction of the research focus were A) that this engagement be focussed on First Nations specific issues (as opposed to Inuit or Métis), and B) that the federal government proposed First Nations Education Act be explored to determine its viability and necessary components.

It is also important to note that while AANDC requested a First Nations focus (particularly on-reserve), participants saw the issues as broader than that restriction, which also often meant the inclusion of non-First Nation/on-reserve groups. Their answers suggest that for thorough, real, and lasting reform, the approach by the federal government must be broader and more inclusive.

Because AANDC would be continuing their own community engagements beyond this report, they also sought input on best practices for proceeding on their own with a gendered lens.

Regarding a potential First Nations Education Act, participants were invited to contribute the following: guiding principles; articles, and clauses. For AANDC's ongoing engagement sessions, this was addressed by asking participants in the focus groups at the AGA for direct input on strategies for engagement. Finally, participants were asked to identify what was missed from these questions.

## Methods

Engagement sessions were held through two venues: the NWAC Annual General Assembly (AGA) held in Saskatchewan in August 2012, and the NWAC Board of Directors meeting held in Ottawa in December 2012. The engagement session held during the AGA was with three focus groups. A primer document was prepared and distributed at the AGA to help participants prepare to participate in the focus groups. The engagement session primer and a copy of the survey are included in the Appendix, A and B.

During the focus groups, a series of education questions were posed to the participants. The primary guiding questions for engagement with the Aboriginal women of the PTMAs were the following:

- what do we want for First Nations women and girls
- what is missing to achieve it
- how do we close the gap?

The methodology used in this project is from NWAC's own culturally relevant, gender-based analysis methodology developed in dialogue with representatives from its PTMAs. The culturally relevant, gender-based analysis (CR-GAP) was created to secure equitable approaches to analyzing issues for more socially just and relevant outcomes. This methodology can be read in-depth in NWAC's CR-GBA workbook guide. In brief, it is a methodology that views gender as a social construct, placing gender (and women) in relation to men, within society, not in isolation.

The analysis of gender in a social context is one measure that helps encourage more equitable outcomes. The participatory engagement is the other powerful measure in this methodology to ensure the most viable outcomes from those most cognizant of the different aspects of the issue at hand.

The pursuit of equity as an inherent element in any analysis and project ensures that health and well-being for the relevant population is built into any of NWAC's endeavours. Because this also addresses identifying participants, it ensures that the people involved in the issue are involved in setting the dialogue for solutions. Combined, these help establish the accountability of the research project and strengthens the reliability and relevance of the data collected.

To satisfy AANDC requirements, as well as address other concerns, participants were asked a series of open-ended questions. These questions were influenced by the primary reports used by AANDC to prepare their education reform efforts. They were also determined based on AANDC's need to consider potential legislative enactment, in particular a possible First Nations Education Act. While events have since occurred in such a manner as to make it unlikely that a FNEA would be drafted in the very near future, the exercise of inviting suggestions and considerations for such an Act still has value.

## Participants

NWAC engaged with the Aboriginal women of the PTMAs to provide their perspectives and insights. The input of these women was sought because they are the experts on inequality for Aboriginal women in Canada, but also and perhaps more importantly, they are also experts on creating and pursuing solutions to these inequalities, particularly as they pertain to First Nation education.

Intersectionality is a relatively new term in feminist theory addressing the multiple layers of identity (race, gender, class, etc.) on which a society acts to discriminate against a group or groups within that society. Aboriginal women are not discriminated against solely on being Aboriginal, or on being women, but rather as a combination of the two – as well as other factors – and where these discriminations meet is the positionality Aboriginal women find themselves in and working to improve. Like any academic scholar who can provide a 'fast track' to the core of the issues at their specialty, the women of these PTMAs are experts on the intersecting discriminations Aboriginal women and girls face in Canadian society. They work in the 'front lines' with women who face discrimination every day, and they have the unique position of

dealing with federal, provincial, municipal, and First Nations governments. They provide support to Aboriginal women and girls in their communities and regions as well as being members of these communities themselves, as mothers, daughters, and sisters. They work as centre points, dealing with and specializing in both ends of the power spectrum in Canada and the issues as viewed from top and bottom.

They possess the experience and insight to know where First Nation education has been, is now, and perhaps most importantly, where it needs to be to support First Nation women and girls in Canada.

## Findings

In the case of this education project, the data are actual concerns, needs, and solutions. For this reason, the individual data remain critical in analysis and will not be pushed back in favour of themes. Rather, a balanced view of both data and themes will lead to the most productive results.

The themes that resulted out of the sessions are as follows: self-determination; capacity building; health; cultural inclusion; accountability; and gender. As in the case of any specialised terms, the use of these themes is specific to the data gathered in the engagement session, and come with them specific definitions that are outlined by the data in the charts below.

***Self-determination*** is the expectation of mutual respect and autonomy in the relationship between the federal government and First Nation communities. It is intended to be interpreted flexibly, in terms of the right of Nations, regions, and communities to determine what is relevant and best for them. It speaks of inclusion in the process of any efforts to legislate or create educational (or otherwise) processes to be followed and practiced in First Nation communities. It is a right. Heeding Aboriginal peoples' right to it is the only way to respectfully deal with Aboriginal communities (this is intended as being more than only First Nations Aboriginals).

***Capacity building*** represents Aboriginal communities' desire to further their pursuit of self-reliance. The goal here is for internal development, in contrast to bringing in outside experts to augment community needs. Capacity building, the data suggests, is in part further developed through consistent, core funding to Aboriginal programs, institutes, and initiatives. This was previously labelled as 'Program supports', but as much of what was put forth worked towards the development of in-community ability, it was revised to capacity building.

***Health*** was shown in the data to be focused on multiple aspects. Physical health is of course a concern, but also healthy relationships. These include between partners, within families, and with one's children. The data suggests softening boundaries between teaching healthy living and educational settings.

***Culture-based*** is an expected category, and so its presence here comes as no surprise. Cultural teachings, Aboriginal worldview, Elders, and more all play critical roles in a reformed education. Cultural teachings are often gender-specific. They are also extremely regional-specific. Thus, many cultural assertions can also be seen as assertions of one's right to self-determination.



**Accountability** is critical to a healthy relationship between the federal government and Aboriginal peoples. Included here and of great concern is that of equal funding for an equitable education for Aboriginal peoples.

**Gender** at times was a direct assertion. Often, it was somewhat indirect (such as in cultural teachings. Often times these can be gender-specific, and ceremonies meant to help one deal with life challenges are located within one gender-based practice or another). This theme was very prevalent in other categories, such as health and its focus on teaching girls at an early age what abusive relationships are. This theme is included both as a focus and to remind the reader that much of the above can also be interpreted with strong gender-based specificity.

In considering further community engagements and educational reform, AANDC would benefit from adopting the above themes as key aspects to their approach.

### *Part 1: Participant Views on First Nations Education*

#### **Question 1: What do we want for First Nations women and girls?**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Summations</b>	<b>Data highlights</b>
<b>Capacity Building</b>	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Job readiness” skills (promoting healthy work relationships and practices, achieving and maintaining employment – less the job hard skills, more the job soft skills)</li> <li>• More funding for skill development</li> </ul>
	Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For existing organizations (more funding, staff)</li> <li>• New organizations needed (to address additional needs not yet met)</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	Physical issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitation, sex education</li> </ul>
	Relational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting healthy relationships with family, partners, one’s children; self-esteem building</li> </ul>
	Abuse recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater awareness of what constitutes an abusive relationship</li> </ul>
<b>Culture-based</b>	Traditional language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An important part of identity and nationhood</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability</b>	Consideration and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For all Aboriginal people (Métis, Inuit, women and girls)</li> </ul>
	Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For those not living on reserves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Northern especially</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Gender</b>	Women’s teachings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive teachings for well-being that honour and value women</li> </ul>
	traditional parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction in traditional parenting for mothers and families</li> </ul>

### Question 2: What is missing to achieve it?

Themes	Summations	Data highlights
<b>Capacity building</b>	Life skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial literacy</li> <li>• Coping skills</li> <li>• Preparation for life off-reserve</li> </ul>
	Transitional supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transitioning from on-reserve to off</li> <li>• Service providers</li> <li>• Funding</li> </ul>
	Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job training and opportunities for employment</li> </ul>
	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support from multiple levels and aspects               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This includes political support, and local, regional, provincial, and federal support</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More educational funding is needed</li> <li>• Aboriginal institutes working to help need reliable core funding</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	Family supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing that is safe and affordable</li> <li>• Child care</li> <li>• Transportation</li> </ul>
	Special needs	
<b>Culture-based</b>	Cultural teachings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural teachings</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability</b>	No consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No consideration for Inuit &amp; Métis (with FN education focus)</li> </ul>
	Off-reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Off reserve matters, too</li> </ul>
<b>Gender</b>	Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum on Aboriginal women role models in leadership roles</li> </ul>
	Other groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There needs to be deliberate and specific inclusion and consideration for Métis, Inuit women and girls</li> <li>• This also includes non-reserve groups, especially Northern groups that often find themselves outside of the discussion</li> </ul>

### Question 3: How can we close the gap?

Themes	Summations	Data highlights
<b>Self Determination</b>	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible education, adaptable to regional variance and priorities</li> </ul>
	Inclusive process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education reform should be built on on-going, inclusive process</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity</b>	Family Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the whole family, not limited to in-school</li> </ul>

<b>Building</b>	Literacy programs	settings
	Post-secondary and trade school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More funding is needed, particularly to Aboriginal women who can be underrepresented in the trades</li> </ul>
	Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability, or job soft skills</li> </ul>
<b>Culture-based</b>	Cultural teachings	
	Self-aware	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More teachings to develop one's self and be more self-aware</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability</b>	Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not just in funding but in operations, too</li> </ul>
	Protections for the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional councils that would act to protect children from unsafe homes</li> </ul>
<b>Gender</b>	Aboriginal women and girls focussed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education programming and curriculum</li> </ul>
<b>Unplaced (Other)</b>	Poverty Action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A coordinated poverty plan-of-action was proposed to help close the gap</li> </ul>

### *Part 2: Participant Input on the Proposed First Nations Education Act*

The group identified data by Guiding Principles, and Protections, Rights, and Clauses.

<b>Principles</b>			
	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Submissions</b>	
	<b>Self-Determination</b>	“Indian control of Indian Education”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any resulting Act must protect the principle of Aboriginal control of Aboriginal education</li> <li>• There must be true partnership in developing legislation</li> </ul>
		Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Act needs to allow for local, regional, and nation variance and priorities</li> <li>• It needs to allow for local control of curriculum</li> <li>• It needs to protect community-based education</li> </ul>
	<b>Accountability</b>	“In good faith”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The interpretation needs to be in good faith</li> </ul>
		All parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability falls on the shoulders of all parties, not just that of the federal government</li> </ul>
		Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transparency in operations should be a protected aspect of the process</li> </ul>
		Equal funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education funding for Aboriginals needs to be on level to that of Canadians</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No double standards</li> </ul>
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Protections (alludes to articles or clauses)

<b>Protections (alludes to articles or clauses)</b>	
<b>Themes</b>	<b>Submissions</b>
<b>Self-determination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities/parents have the right to be involved in local education (protected involvement)</li> <li>• Local curriculum development rights</li> <li>• Local Acts for communities</li> <li>• “Central, not centralized” education</li> <li>• Control over certification programming</li> <li>• Jurisdiction over assessment               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Defining what is success</li> <li>○ Defining how it is measured</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Capacity building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate and encourage bridging of educational resources to communities</li> <li>• Consideration given for special needs students – more prioritizing of their needs</li> <li>• Technology updates – comparable schools</li> <li>• Transition supports               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ From on-reserve to off</li> <li>○ Between grades (particularly 8-9 and then to post-secondary)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Leadership teaching in schools</li> <li>• Hire Aboriginal teachers</li> </ul>
<b>Culture-based</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right to one’s culture and language</li> <li>• Cultural awareness of behaviour differences for Aboriginal children (what is a cultural aspect; what is a behavioural problem)</li> <li>• Cultures respected</li> <li>• Special needs are a priority</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obligation of teachers to learn about the culture and history of the peoples in who’s schools they are teaching</li> <li>• Continued Aboriginal engagement in drafting and creating a First Nations Education Act</li> <li>• Equal funding; equal assessment</li> </ul>

**Part 3: Who should be involved in the levels of education?**

This question was designed to help give input to AANDC on their process of continued community engagement. It was intended that the answers to this question would provide groundwork for further questions on identifying key stakeholders for roles and responsibilities in

reformed First Nations education. For this section, groups 1 and 2 tackled different options. In terms of school levels, there were three to choose from: 1<sup>st</sup> level (schools); 2<sup>nd</sup> level (school boards); and 3<sup>rd</sup> level (ministries of education). There was one additional option beyond these, Education Standards and Comparability. This category was to help define how education standards would be defined and measured. Group 1 chose this option; Group 2 chose the 1<sup>st</sup> level category.

### Group 1 – Category: Education Standards and Comparability

Themes	Summations	Data highlights
<b>Self-determination</b>	Aboriginal Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use Aboriginal educators in the school system</li> </ul>
	“Indian Schools”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Indian Schools” need to be recognized and accepted by District School Boards (DSB)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Some examples of “Indian schools” in Ontario can be found in the following:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toronto</li> <li>▪ Awkwesasne</li> <li>▪ Six Nations</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unions (such as teacher unions) need to be more flexible to allow for more Aboriginal focus and standards</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity building</b>	Aboriginal head start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• head start programming for Aboriginal youths are needed to start them on their path early</li> </ul>
<b>Culture-based</b>	Aboriginal standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal standards need to be accepted               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Example: ten eagle feathers would equal a PhD</li> <li>○ In other words, recognition of a person’s cultural knowledge as a right for them to have a teaching role</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Root education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education needs to be rooted in a land-based, language and cultural education system</li> </ul>
	Worldviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There needs to be recognition and appreciation for Aboriginal worldviews in school contexts</li> </ul>
	Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate cultural identity and spirituality               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Teach the whole student</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Immersion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immersion program supports               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Not just language but also traditional ways, such as hunting</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Pride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop pride in self, one’s identity, and culture</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability</b>	Worldviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers need to learn the Aboriginal worldviews for the regions they are entering into to teach</li> </ul>

	Two worlds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be honest to modern settings: Aboriginal peoples (adults and children) walk in two worlds and need preparation for both</li> </ul>
	True history	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum needs to reflect ‘true history’ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ More content about Aboriginals, including their history, perspectives, worldview, and rights</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Equitable education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equitable education supports, not just equal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus is on ‘excellence of outcome’; in other words, different measures to reach same quality outcome</li> <li>○ Students’ strengths are recognized (focus on strengths over weaknesses)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### Group 2 - 1<sup>st</sup> Level (Schools) - Roles, Responsibilities, Participants

Themes	Summations	Data highlights
<b>Self-determination</b>	Community-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The community has a right to involvement in education for their children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Elders, parents, and a Parent Advisory Committee-Council are all examples of appropriate inclusion</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Aboriginal staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal teaching and administrative staff should be a priority</li> </ul>
	Local school boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local school board involvement in schools</li> </ul>
	Redefine roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New definitions for the roles of key players involved</li> </ul>
	Nova Scotia Education Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look to the Nova Scotia Education Act for guidance on education structure</li> </ul>
<b>Culture-based</b>	Cultural liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include a cultural liaison at the school level</li> </ul>
	Mentorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put mentorship programming in place</li> </ul>
	Immersion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support immersion programming for communities that want them</li> </ul>

### *Part 4: What was missed?*

Only Group 2 continued into Part 4. The data from this is relatively brief. To the question “What was missed”, they answered with the following:

- A curriculum review
- Research in conventional methodologies and testing and assessments

To this they added some additional concerns:

- This education project is not an official consultation, A true consultation would include more time and participation, among other things
- A disclaimer is needed stating that this is not a consultation
- The National School Act and Law proposed by AANDC is not a reflection of true self-government

### Group 3

Group 3 selected to provide their input separately from the other groups. They did not directly respond to the questions above in the same process. Instead, they chose to provide their feedback on education concerns separately.

Group 3 was predominantly composed of off-reserve Status Aboriginals. It has been stated previously that participants felt the First Nations women and girls on-reserve focus was too restricting to be adequately addressing education reform. The Métis, Inuit, non-Status, and off-reserve should be considered as well.

In the interest of a fair and equitable education reform, they offered the following concerns to be taken into account.

Themes	Summations	Data highlights
<b>Self-determination</b>	Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently there is a divide between how on-reserve and off-reserve Aboriginals are treated</li> <li>• There needs to be clearer identification as to who is responsible for members once they have left their reserve</li> <li>• Off-reserve Aboriginals would also like a seat at the table to have input and access to programs               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identify who ensures access to education for this group</li> <li>○ Identify how members will be included in these rights and decisions regarding them</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Accountability</b>	Off-reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There needs to be clearer accountability for who is responsible for the rights of members not living on reserve</li> </ul>
	Tracking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It needs to be clearer who is ensuring that bands are fulfilling their requirements for off-reserve members</li> <li>• What are the procedures for checking and ensuring fulfillment?</li> </ul>
	No reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These issues also apply to those who are without reserves; do not let them fall through the cracks</li> <li>• This group needs to be included in discussions for education rights and reforms</li> </ul>

## Language and Culture Survey

It would be impossible to have a full discussion on Aboriginal education reform without discussing language and culture. While language and culture was frequently mentioned in the focus groups, more specific data was required in order to more appropriately address the goals of the project. For this reason, additional data was collected from attendees at the NWAC AGA through the use of a survey to obtain their perspectives on language and culture in an education context. The survey is included as Appendix B in this report.

### Methods

The survey was developed by the Project Lead, along with experienced researchers at NWAC. The survey was comprised of open and closed-ended questions on traditional language and culture.

An announcement was made to all in attendance on the purpose of the research and they were informed on where to obtain a copy and return the completed survey. The survey was distributed at the NWAC booth and interested participants completed surveys throughout the three day event. In total, fifty-four participants completed the survey.

The data was collected from the completed surveys, analyzed, and summarized in this report by the Project Lead.

### Participants

In total, fifty-four participants completed the survey from different PTMAs across Canada. The participating PTMAs that identified themselves for the survey (39 identified out of 54 participants) include:

Native Women's Association of the Northwest Territories (NWANT)  
Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council (YAWC)  
British Columbia Native Women's Association (BCNWA)  
Alberta Aboriginal Women's Society (AAWS)  
Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's Circle Corporation (SAWCC)  
Mother of Red Nations Women's Council of Manitoba Inc. (MPRN)  
Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA)  
Femmes Autochtones du Quebec Inc./Quebec Native Women Inc. (FAQ-QNW)  
Nova Scotia Native Women's Society (NSNWS)  
Aboriginal Women's Association of Prince Edward Island (AWAPEI)  
Observer - Aboriginal Friendship Centres of Saskatoon (AFCS)  
Iskewuk Ewichi 'Wito Chik

### Findings

The survey findings are reported in two parts, Part A: Traditional Language, and Part B: Traditional Culture and Practices.



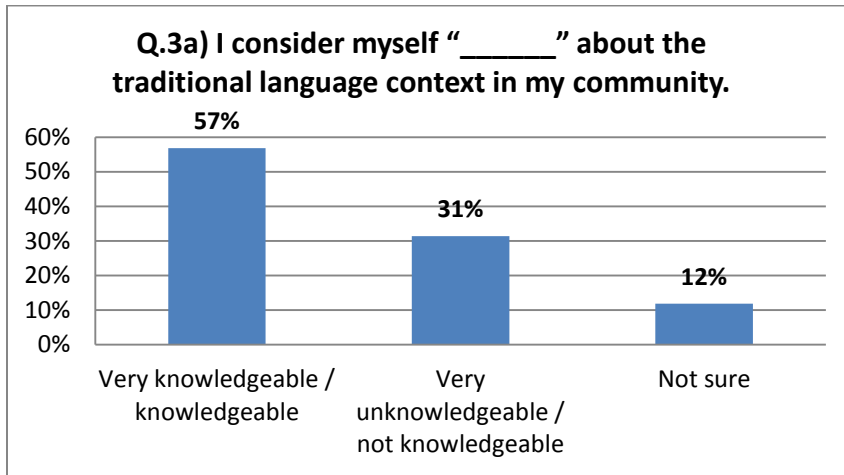
**PART A: Traditional Language**

**Q.2a) I think traditional language is “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” to my community.**

- 86.5% - Very important
- 13.5% - Important
- 0% - Not sure
- 0% - Not important
- 0% - Very unimportant

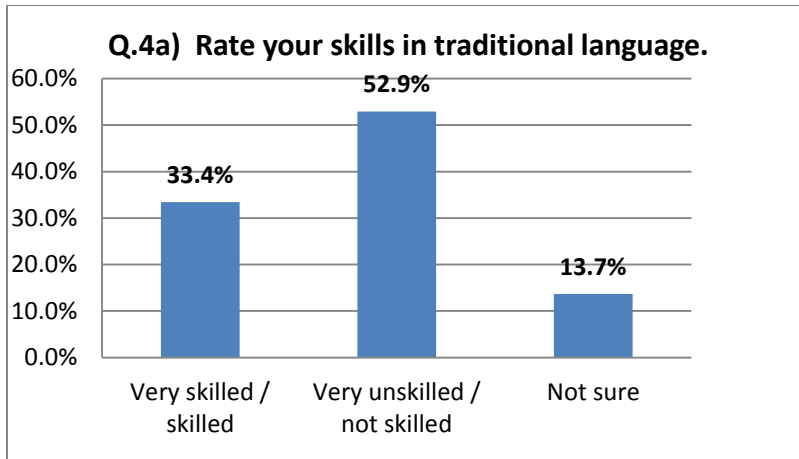
**Q.3a) I consider myself “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” about the traditional language context in my community.**

- 15.7% - Very knowledgeable
- 41.1% - Knowledgeable
- 11.8% - Not sure
- 27.5% - Not knowledgeable
- 3.9% - Very unknowledgeable



**Q.4a) Rate your skills in traditional language.**

- 5.9% - Very skilled
- 27.5% - Skilled
- 13.7% - Not sure
- 43.1% - Not skilled
- 9.8% - Very unskilled



**Q.5a) My community places a high value on our traditional language.**

- 39.6% - Very high value
- 43.4% - Valued
- 3.8% - Not sure
- 13.2% - Not valued
- 0% - Very unvalued

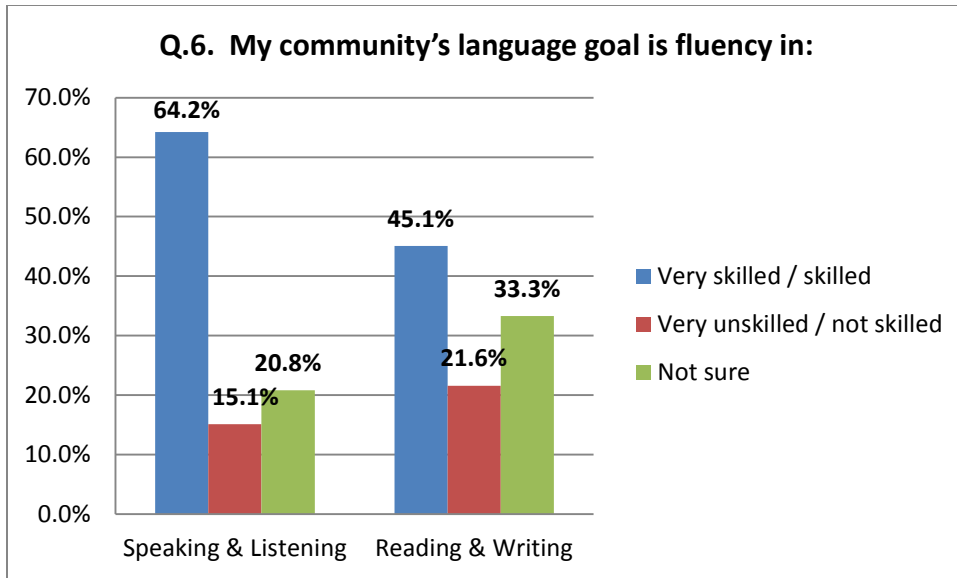
**Q.6. My community's language goal is fluency in:**

a) Speaking & Listening

- 17% - Very skilled
- 47.2% - Skilled
- 20.8% - Not sure
- 15.1% - Not skilled
- 0% - Very unskilled

b) Reading & Writing

- 15.7% - Very skilled
- 29.4% - Skilled
- 33.3% - Not sure
- 21.6% - Not skilled
- 0% - Very unskilled



**Q.8a) With my community's current available funds, we will reach our goals in traditional language.**

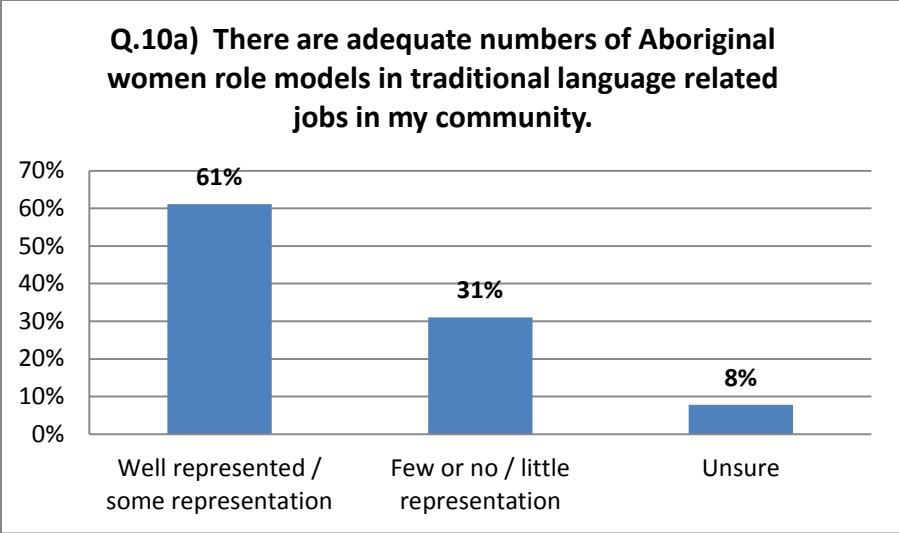
- 0% - Completely achieved
- 12.2% - Mostly achieved
- 53.1% - Somewhat achieved
- 20.4% - Not achieved
- 14.3% - Very below goal

**Q.9a) In my community, knowledge in traditional language can lead to employment.**

- 85% - Yes
- 7.5% - No
- 7.5% - Unsure

**Q.10a) There are adequate numbers of Aboriginal women role models in traditional language related jobs in my community.**

- 13.7% - Well represented
- 47.1% - Some representation
- 7.8% - Unsure
- 25.5% - Little representation
- 4.9% - Few or no representation



**Q.11a) The following obstacles are challenges to more Aboriginal women role models in traditional language related jobs in my community. (More than one options was selected)**

- 26 - Lack of teacher training
- 26 - Lack of job funding
- 25 - Lack of language skills/knowledge
- 16 - Lack of child care
- 3 - Other (nepotism, low-pay funds to sustain family, and lack of opportunity)

**Q.13. I think “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” is the best way to learn our traditional language.**

- 54% - Immersion
- 24% - Dual immersion
- 16% - Intensive immersion
- 6% - Single period class per day
- 0% - Other

**Q.14. The provincial/territory language teaching methodology is sufficient for my community’s language learning needs.**

- 11% - Yes
- 67% - No
- 22% - Not sure

**Q.15a) Traditional language should be taught outside the classroom as well.**

- 98.1% - Strongly agree
- 1.9% - Agree
- 0% - Not sure/Neutral
- 0% - Disagree
- 0% - Strongly disagree

**Q.16. Please explain your reasoning for Q.15a).**

- Heritage reasons
- To retain language.
- Children need to know and practice.
- When put into daily practice, both become more imprinted in our youth.
- There's no language taught in school.
- Practice and practical use is important for retention.
- Language is something that is lived, taught, and learned through everyday activities. It is a way of life and identity.
- Better understanding of one's culture.
- When we use language at home or in conversation, we retain and learn more.
- [I] think too much has been lost over the short history of our country.
- Traditional language is the basis of the culture.
- You learn, or are supposed to learn your language within the home, then when you go to school it gets more developed.
- It's the First Language in my country Canada.
- Loss of daily access to fluent language speakers.
- We must retain our language as it is vital to identity.
- Teaching and learning begins at home.
- Cultural Retention.
- I'm a Cree language instructor M.Ed. (20 years exp).
- Parents must be also encouraged. All generations are not same in skills.
- It is a must.
- Immersion - not to lose language better - no funding
- So our language will not die out.
- Loss of language due to generational effect of residential school.
- For it to stick.
- Younger generation need to carry our history.
- Practice outside of school with parents and family will enhance language speaking within the household. "Sustainability"
- Gives us our history.
- It is very important, we lose our language we lose our culture.
- Lost because of Indian Day School.
- More knowledge.
- Everyday use will promote fluency and continuation.
- Language will evaporate without the use. It is a tradition that shouldn't be lost.
- Immersion in classroom is good but other places (home/community/events/programs) add to learning and absorption of the language.
- Once lost it will be challenging to get back.
- Language is a very important aspect of knowing who one is. Thereby having strong roots. Thereby bringing social issue problems down.
- Children learn better when they see behaviour/language in practice.

- Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles may/do not attend schools - and therefore would not access this information - need to teach all people the language.
- Traditional teachers also need to be delivered in a traditional setting - not a classroom institution.
- Language keeps culture strong --> knowing one's own brings you closer to your relatives and learning.
- Parents should play a lead role in teaching their children traditional language.
- Language can be taught in the community with adults learning alongside their families - evening classes and weekends.
- Clearly shown that traditional languages are best learned and retained when they are actively used in many contexts: at home, business, school.
- The community needs to show and take responsibility for these challenges.
- Because the classroom is not the land and our language comes from the land. We need physical immersion in the environment as well. (To see where our language comes from).
- Beyond colonized education systems.
- Culture
- Unless you know the language your identity is challenged.
- To keep our language going from generation to generation to not lose it.
- Family must teach language and have conversation with one another to keep the language learning happening.
- Language supports should be in place in provinces and territories funded by government for reconciliation of languages lost.

**Q.18. I think Aboriginal language teachers should receive career-long professional development.**

1. 17.4% - Strongly agree
2. 20.4% - Agree
3. 7.4% - Not sure/Neutral
4. 0% - Disagree
5. 1.9% - Strongly Disagree

**Q.19. I think Aboriginal language teacher certification should be handled by the provincial/territory government.**

1. 17% - Strongly agree
2. 13.2% - Agree
3. 30.2% - Not sure/Neutral
4. 20.8% - Disagree
5. 18.9% - Strongly Disagree

**Q.20. Please explain your reasoning for Q.19.**

- To recognize their provincial status.
- Inclusive process will strengthen opportunities for language.
- Unsure about courses available.

- Develop your own.
- Governments may not understand the importance of the elders teachings integrated with traditional language Ed. You cannot learn "real" traditional language from books. They are a translated version of the real messages in our traditional words. Not customary in English and French languages.
- Honestly what does the government know about each First Nations language? The use and dialect, etc. Language training in Indigenous languages that result in a diploma or certificate is inappropriate.
- Better access to information and connecting with staff.
- I'm not sure because I want us to control our own education but I want to make sure it is recognized everywhere.
- They should work together.
- It is the First Nations/Metis/Inuit community that knows the language experts, but government does have a role to play.
- If the government (provincial/territory) will handle the certification with the right amount of respect then okay. But I wouldn't know if they will. [That's] why I am not sure.
- Because it's important.
- It's a catch 22 at the beginning it will be firm at start then evolve into non-Native friendly delivery.
- They don't know the language so how could they certify? But someone should oversee.
- Can be done in the community, Elders etc.
- They will be limited to follow Provincial standards.
- Aboriginal people can decide what certificate skills are for their community.
- Because we need to decide who is able to teach our kids. [Ourselves not non-Native governments/institutions.
- Conflict in mind who knows better language and traditional culture and practices.
- It's a legitimate language. It should be respected and recognized. We can't go to another country to revive. This is our homeland/motherland.
- Provincial approaches may not fully understand First Nation.
- For funding, but guided by Elders.
- We can do our own teachings through knowledge and wisdom.
- Our Elders are few who have the language and we need positive people who did not attend Residential School.
- More students or youth would know more.
- Aboriginal input necessary.
- Language is individual to each band. I think there should be government support in the same capacity that there is provided for the French.
- Should be certification done by a National Aboriginal board.
- Are they delegates of the Native community who are knowledgeable of the language?
- Because they do not practice it themselves, therefore will not be passionate about the language being kept alive.
- Do not know enough about language teaching.
- Native groups know who their speakers and teachers are. They should be the ones to certify and choose and engage their own teachers.

- Appears that only government certification of any subject is accepted by academic institutions.
- Teachers are always benefited by professional development. The stronger teacher the more adequate the students.
- Certification by province/territorial government will be recognized and acceptable by all nationalities.
- I think should be done with the community, to ensure [dialect] and language skills appropriate to reach community.
- FN Governments should be at the centre of matters such as certification and funding provided.
- It should be done by the First Nation.
- White government cannot dictate Aboriginal language systems.
- For certification only.
- The folks learning would learn at the top level taught by professional speakers and Elders.
- Traditional knowledge is not static and each community is different. Diversity is a must to maintain community identity.
- The provincial/territory government doesn't know anything about the language or how it's learned so how can it certify?
- Our languages should be equally supported and valued.
- Provinces and territories control education and need to support culture and education for First Nations to educate all Canadians.

**Q.21. Team-teaching traditional language would greatly improve language learning success.**

- 0% - Strongly agree
- 51.9% - Agree
- 48.1% - Not sure/Neutral
- 0% - Disagree
- 0% - Strongly Disagree

**Q.23. Our community's language curriculum is coordinated between grades and schools to promote continuous language development through the grades.**

- 35% - Yes
- 23% - No
- 42% - Not sure

**Q.24. Please briefly explain your choice for Q.23.**

- I am not directly involved in the programs at this time.
- Our community teaches immersion classes and is a progression through the grade levels.
- Live off reserve.
- The curriculum needs to be consistent and continue to ensure language retention.
- Some are, some are not.



- Do not know what is currently happening.
- Not sure what a language curriculum is.
- Because it's important.
- Our children go to non-Native schools.
- Mikmac Kmamatewej is coordinating language material development.
- They're working on it.
- For the sake of consistency in language acquisition.
- We have French. Why not Aboriginal language.
- I think it's per grade.
- Mikmaq language is taught in Lennox Island school, elementary, Jr., and Sr. High school. No post secondary. Abeqweit - elementary school off reserve.
- Lennox has on-reserve school.
- I believe our language teaching should start at home and then schools.
- We have knowledge but need teachers (Mikmaq).
- Though not necessarily easily accessible for all.
- Language immersion schools in our communities are coordinated but not yet full immersion (except for [school name])
- What cultural differences each community has and what they feel is best for their community.
- [There is no language curriculum]
- Michif or Cree is not offered. On occasion an option will be offered.
- This does not happen in my community.
- Native/traditional languages are rarely taught in the public school curriculum.
- Our schools do not currently offer Metis languages. They do offer Cree and French.
- Eight languages are taught in schools regionally so some FN children living out of their areas miss out on learning their own traditional language.
- It is within schools for sure, but between schools is different.
- Because of the constant item on the agenda, school boards feel the pressure and oblige.
- I don't know.
- Not sure

**Q.25. The community should be consulted to establish classroom language goals.**

- 67.9% - Strongly agree
- 28.3% - Agree
- 3.8% - Not sure/Neutral
- 0% - Disagree
- 0% - Strongly Disagree

**Q.26. Our community has sufficient traditional language learning materials.**

- 1.9% - Strongly agree
- 32.1% - Agree
- 32.1% - Not sure/Neutral
- 26.4% - Disagree
- 7.5% - Strongly Disagree

**Q.27a) Our community has a department or organization that creates traditional language materials for teachers**

- 43% - Yes
- 28.5% - No
- 28.5% - Not sure

**Q.28a) Our teachers must make up most or all of the traditional language materials they use in class.**

- 61% - Yes
- 14% - No
- 25% - Not sure

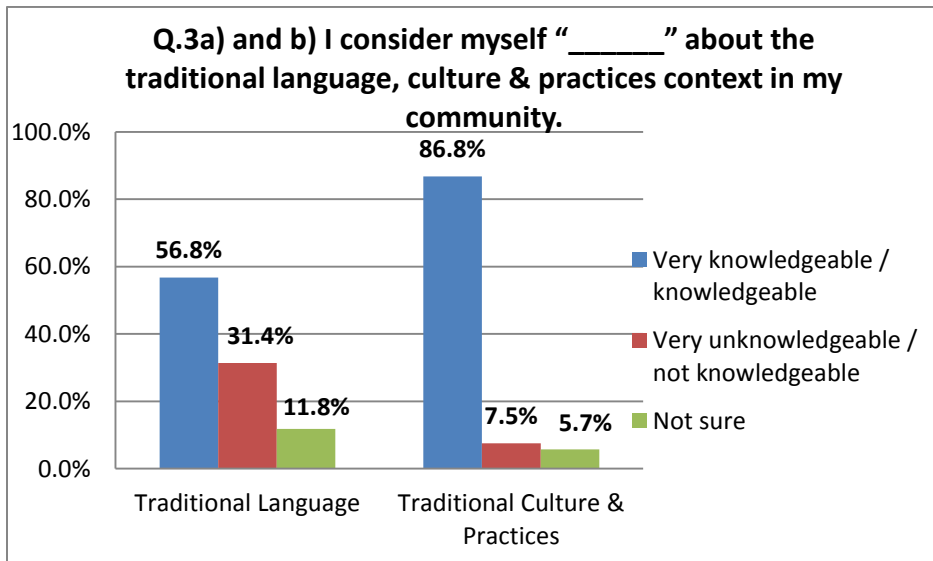
**PART B: Traditional Culture and Practices**

**Q.2b) I think traditional culture and practices is “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” to my community.**

- 81.1% - Very important
- 18.9% - Important
- 0% - Not sure
- 0% - Not important
- 0% - Very unimportant

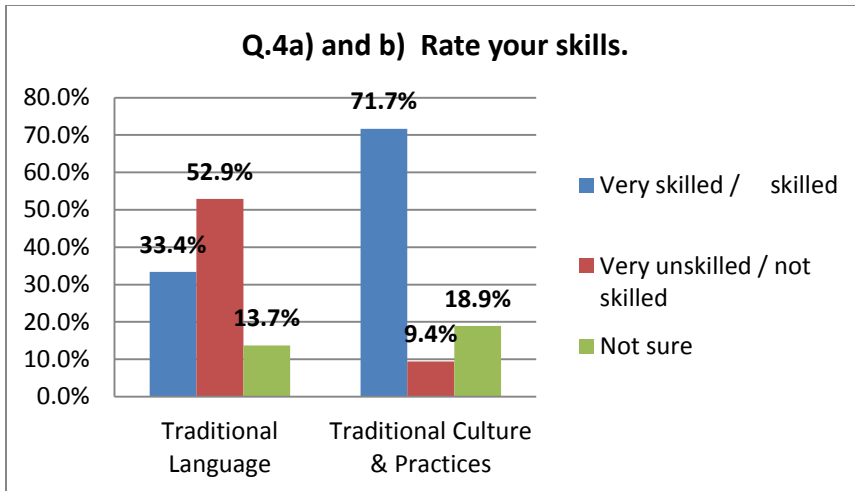
**Q.3b) I consider myself “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” about the traditional culture and practices context in my community.**

- 22.6% - Very knowledgeable
- 64.2% - Knowledgeable
- 5.7% - Not sure
- 7.5% - Not knowledgeable
- 0% - Very unknowledgeable



**Q.4b) Rate your skills in traditional culture and practices.**

- 20.8% - Very skilled
- 50.9% - Skilled
- 18.9% - Not sure
- 7.5% - Not skilled
- 1.9% - Very unskilled



**Q.5b) My community places a high value on our traditional culture and practices.**

- 41.5% - Very high value
- 52.8% - Valued
- 5.7% - Not sure
- 0% - Not valued
- 0% - Very unvalued

**Q.7. My community's cultural goal is:**

- To help out
- Flourish and grow.
- To promote culture, history at our schools and other programs
- To educate youth and community in language and culture.
- Culture is used as a crime prevention and recidivism tool. [Money] generally centered in "at risk" sectors.
- To educate Mi'gmaq children in their home community in the language and by the people.
- Working with Elders in schools.
- Bring healthy past practices of living a balanced life filled with our language and ceremonies and pride in our identity.
- Educate.
- \*Awareness \*Skill \*Practice \*Teach others.
- To provide services to teach Native languages within the community.
- Culture.
- Unity, safety, culture practices, respect, understanding.
- Cultural retention and revitalization.
- Continue to pass on our culture and heritage for future generations.
- Cultural Revitalization.
- Please [visit] website [www.onwa-tbay.ca](http://www.onwa-tbay.ca)
- For fluency in Cree language and culture.

- Survival of traditional governance and treaty rights.
- To get "L'nusin" back
- Ensure on-going teaching for future generations.
- To bring back our language and to ensure our culture practices prevail
- Not sure.
- To become skilled and knowledgeable
- Promote awareness to younger groups.
- Enhance cultural knowledge and practice with the children and youth, Elders.
- To bring back Mikmaq language.
- Culture.
- To teach our children our culture.
- To regain our language.
- Traditional knowledge.
- Very skilled.
- Continuing the cultural integration into the youth of our community.
- Value and learn cultural traditions.
- Engaging the younger generations in culture.
- Revival and practice.
- Skilled
- Reviving practices and incorporating into every daily living.
- That our children of all nations learn that they are part of something greater than themselves, which promotes community.
- To have more community cultural events.
- To teach and inform our youth and the general public.
- Revive the Michief language - to educate general population that being Metis is not only jigging and fiddle music.
- Continuing and reinforcing our cultural practices (potlatches and others) and teaching younger generations
- Reviving languages.
- Keep language as priority and to encourage speaking, reading, and writing to community members, especially youth.
- To revive and sustain culture and language in all communities.
- To enhance cultural values to youth through Elder teachings.
- Relearn traditions and language.
- "We are working towards a vision that is rooted in our history and our distinct culture and heritage."

**Q.8b) With my community's current available funds, we will reach our goals in traditional culture and practices.**

- 1.9% - Completely achieved
- 24.5% - Mostly achieved
- 43.4% - Somewhat achieved
- 18.9% - Not achieved

11.3% - Very below goals

**Q.9b) In my community, knowledge in traditional culture and practices can lead to employment.**

81% - Yes

4% - No

15% - Unsure

**Q.10b) There are adequate numbers of Aboriginal women role models in traditional culture and practices related jobs in my community.**

18.5% - Well represented

50% - Some representation

9.3% - Unsure

16.7% - Little representation

5.6% - Few or no representation

**Q.11b) The following obstacles are challenges to more Aboriginal women role models in traditional culture and practices related jobs in my community.**

100% - Lack of language skills/knowledge

0% - Lack of teacher training

0% - Lack of child care

0% - Lack of job funding

0% - Other

**Q.15b) Traditional culture and practices should be taught outside the classroom as well.**

88.7% - Strongly agree

9.4% - Agree

1.9% - Not sure/Neutral

0% - Disagree

0% - Strongly disagree

**Q.17. Please explain your reasoning for 15b)**

- To know about your own background.
- Retention.
- We don't wish to lose our culture.
- Same as above answer.
- Don't really practice my own culture. I believe in the higher power to lead me (Jesus).
- No culture practice in the community.
- Cultural practices are a way of life, children, youth, and adults learn better from practice.
- More so than language, traditional culture and practices need to be taught by the people outside of the classroom.
- Better communication. Feel sense of belonging.
- Children learn from modelling and they look to their parents to guide them.
- Too much is lost again.

- Have to practice in all aspects of life.
- What you learn in your home is what you take in life and teach others.
- It's life.
- There are lots of teachings that revolve around customs and traditions.
- Culture is important for identity.
- Should be taught as well at home.
- Cultural Retention.
- Students will learn to appreciate and value their language.
- Need to know this.
- Sporadic not sufficient to maintain tradition, culture, and practices.
- For future posterity to enjoy and identify with.
- Need to learn out of class setting.
- Practicing culture outside of school engages youth to continue cultural learning within the household or after school activities. Beading or crafts takes patience and keep one active with ceremonies to stay away from the use of addictions.
- It is who we are.
- This is very important as our creator gave us our culture and traditional ways.
- Because of Residential School Adult member. Loss of language.
- Know more about our culture that was buried.
- Cultural and traditional practices are important and reinforce their importance if in community events, etc.
- Getting back to the importance of keeping culture alive.
- Children learn better when they see behaviour/language in practice.
- Same as above and all Canadians also have to learn about these practices and culture to promote understanding.
- My Mushum taught me "my way" in the bush which is the foundation of TEK and is relatable for our children.
- Being respectful is of utmost importance.
- Elders should be consulted in the traditional practices.
- Family teaches culture and traditions, from Elders and parents. The children then learn and will teach their children as well.
- Traditional practices are strong in our communities and should continue to be taught in ceremonies to other community/family venues.
- To encourage all community members to participate and this will instill strength.
- Lifestyle, not only education.
- Culturally [inundated].
- My ancestors were fluent. Canadian government abolished all.
- To keep our traditional culture and practices going to the next generation to not let it go extinct.
- Culture is learned from family, our Elders; some basics can be taught in school.
- Funding for traditional people to train our children and families should be supported by provincial / territorial / federal governments for reconciliation of cultures lost (schools) (friendship centres)

**Q.22. Elders should receive official recognition for their knowledge for teaching in classrooms.**

- 1.9% - Strongly agree
- 81.5% - Agree
- 16.7% - Not sure/Neutral
- 0% - Disagree
- 0% - Strongly Disagree

**Q.27b) Our community has a department or organization that creates traditional culture and practices materials for teachers.**

- 37% - Yes
- 23% - No
- 40% - Not sure

**Q.28b) Our teachers must make up most or all of the traditional culture and practices materials they use in class.**

- 56% - Yes
- 13% - No
- 31% - Not sure

## **Discussion**

### ***Focus Group Data***

There are many ideas and values expressed in the data that help to determine very actionable follow-up projects. Reviewing the data, it seems a strong assertion can be made about the priorities of the Aboriginal women from the PTMAs: the types of changes they think are missing, that are the most needed, are changes that empower them to act, with skill, to create healthier individuals, families, and communities.

When explored, each theme seems to share a desire for well-being, independence and freedom for self-determination, and a deep consideration for the roots of understanding, accountability, and respect necessary to achieve strong, positive educational change.

If viewed in the context of operationalization, the themes may be more easily perceived as components of or goals in a given project. The theme of self-determination suggests that endeavours must have strong community input and an on-going role, participation, or leadership in the development of a project. Consider that goals should incorporate the internal development or capacity building of the relevant group (as opposed to bringing in an outside party for on-going management). Health and well-being should be implemented into the processes of any given project – modified of course to fit the context of one project or another. Cultural consideration and respectful implementation will help build positive relations and ensure the project has healthier outcomes and a more positive reception. A project must have



accountability to achieve any of the above considerations. And of course it would be best not to assume that a project aimed at ‘Aboriginals’ or ‘First Nations’ considers gender-based needs or differences. One should continue to ask where are the men, where are the women, and why are they where they are?

### *The Survey*

The survey was intended to pursue participants’ perspectives on needed change or developments in the teaching and learning of Aboriginal languages and cultures within a school setting as well as to identify current trends and contexts in the communities. Not surprisingly, both language and culture were considered to be important to very important in most communities.

#### Language

Fully everyone who answered the statement “I think traditional language is ‘ \_\_\_\_\_ ’ to my community” answered either that traditional language is very important or important. Unfortunately, when this statement is cross-checked against the statement, “With my community’s current available funds, we will reach our goals in traditional language”, there are no responses in ‘completely achieved’. Instead, the highest answer by participants was ‘somewhat achieved’ at 53.1 percent of participants.

Language is a strong priority in most communities, yet the participants felt their community goals for language were not sufficiently funded to reach the level they desired. This may also be much more than a cultural or roots impact as well. When provided with the statement “In my community, knowledge in traditional language can lead to employment” an overwhelmingly 85% of those who responded identified that yes, it can lead to employment.

Not surprisingly, the Aboriginal language goals the communities are pursuing are higher in speaking and listening skills than reading and writing. According to participants, speaking and listening accounts for 64.2 percent of respondents, whereas reading and writing, while still significant, is much lower, at 45.1 percent of respondents identifying it as a priority. This is not surprising considering that in the research, the priority amongst most Aboriginal communities is for speaking ability over that of writing.

When presented statements on teaching methodology, most participants identified a more intensive or immersive Aboriginal language learning environment as desirable for the classroom. Of the options, only 6 percent identified a single period class per day as the best way to learn their traditional language. Most answers were in other solutions: 54% - immersion; 24% - dual immersion; 16% - intensive immersion. As a follow-up to this statement, participants were asked to identify whether or not the provincial or territory language teaching methodology was sufficient for their community’s language learning needs. Not surprisingly considering the participants’ desire for more time-committed learning methods, they checked overwhelmingly that their current provincial-territorial methodology was not sufficient (67%).

Aside from identifying whether or not the traditional language was important, one of the other statements that had the highest agreement in responses was the statement on where the language

should be taught. Provided with the statement, “Traditional language should be taught outside the classroom as well”, all who answered were either in strong agreement (98.1%) or agreement (1.9%).

Two statements that were somewhat in conflict in terms of relationship were “I think Aboriginal language teachers should receive career-long professional development” and “I think Aboriginal language teacher certification should be handled by the provincial/territory government”. Of the first, 17.4% strongly agreed with career-long professional development, and 20% agreed. Disagreement was very minimal (1.9% strongly disagreed). However, when it came to certification, 17% strongly agreed with the province or territory government authorizing it, and 13.2% also agreed. However, fully 20.8% disagreed, and 18.9% strongly disagreed. The single highest category was on the fence, at 30.2% being neutral or not sure. There is some ambiguity with the second statement, as teacher certification is not necessarily training, though that would be strongly implicated. If taken as Aboriginal language teacher certification also equalling the training of language teachers, it would suggest a strong split between participants as to whether or not the province or territory should be determining how Aboriginal languages are taught. This perhaps echoes sentiments felt by participants for statement 14 (“the provincial/territory language teaching methodology is sufficient for my community’s language learning needs”, to which participants overwhelmingly answered ‘no’).

This raises questions and warrants a follow-up research endeavour.

When provided with statement 25, “The community should be consulted to establish classroom language goals”, it will probably come as no surprise to see that participants were overwhelmingly in favour of community-involvement for setting Aboriginal language goals (67.9% strongly agreed; 28.3% agreed; none disagreed). Considering how much self-determination was involved in the focus groups, and, within the survey, how many participants had identified that the language should be taught outside of the classroom as well, the response to this statement seems very in-line with those stances. It also reflects a methodology in Aboriginal education to involve and consult Aboriginal peoples rather than making decisions outside of their input and applying it to them.

### ***Traditional Culture and Practices***

Echoing participants’ response to the priority of language, fully 100% of those who responded checked for “I think traditional culture and practices is ‘\_\_\_\_\_’ to my community” either very important (81.1%) or important (18.9%).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, participants also identified shortfalls in achieving community goals for culture and practices with their current funding (1.9% completely achieved; 24.5% mostly achieved; 43.4% somewhat achieved; 18.9% not achieved; 11.3% very below goals). Again, as with language, this has more than a social-cultural impact. In response to the statement “In my community, knowledge in traditional culture and practices can lead to employment” the majority of respondents answered “Yes” (81%).

Similarities between answers to language and culture continued: to the statement, “Traditional culture and practices should be taught outside the classroom as well”, respondents were

overwhelmingly in favour of this (88.7% strongly agree; 9.4% agree; 1.9% neutral; none disagreed). Respondents were also in favour of cultural and traditional knowledge being recognized in the classroom, with more community-representatives being recognized as valuable contributors to students' knowledge: "Elders should receive official recognition for their knowledge for teaching in classrooms" (1.9% strongly agree; 81.5% agree; 16.7% unsure or neutral).

It would seem that participants were in favour of more community participation in classrooms and more inclusion of Aboriginal culture and practices.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations for Follow-up Research**

Educational reform for First Nations on-reserve is extremely important to change the current situation. Whatever is implemented needs to have broad, sweeping impact. And it needs to be an initiative that maintains sight of those impacted, man, woman, boy, girl. Any approach that fails to be explicitly cognizant to the different needs and concerns of the groups involved risks perpetuating imbalance and injustice.

It can be seen from the data some of the priorities raised by the Aboriginal women of the NWAC's PTMAs in the time allotted. In a longer, more intensive project, there would no doubt be more to consider, more valuable input to guide efforts at culturally-relevant, gender-based educational reform. However, what is presented here offers a good start towards working towards balanced change.

The recommendations emerging from this report for education reform are as follows:

- Education reform planning needs to involve First Nation communities in determining the goals and processes. Only reform goals determined in full, informed consultation are acceptable to the First Nations communities. This would respect the First Nations' right to self-determination and would produce the goals most relevant to First Nations needs and contexts.
- The goals being worked towards should be at their inception aimed to increase the internal capacity of communities. The methods and practices to achieving those goals should involve building up the capacities of First Nations communities. This is in strong contrast to outside or third-party management and leadership.
- Health and healthy living are more than physical, it is also relational. There is a strong need for developing programs and curriculum for healthy living, for individuals, partners, and families. Girls would benefit from this at a young age to help avoid abusive relationships.
- First Nations (and Aboriginal) students need culture in the classroom. The education system, including teachers, would benefit from having a greater awareness and understanding of Aboriginal worldviews and Aboriginal history.
- Be transparent in planning and practice. This means on-going dialogue with First Nations communities as well.
- Maintain a focus on Aboriginal women and girls: they must be actively sought out and included in any endeavours. Their needs may be similar, but often times there will be

difference. This needs to be respected and honoured through ongoing consideration and inclusion.

In a project such as this, there can be many options arising from the data for continued work. Such is the case here. Turning the above points and data into actionable projects, NWAC proposes the following as ideas for continued projects. While the over-arching focus of this project has been education for First Nations women and girls on-reserve, the proposed follow-up projects may be less restrictive in terms of target group(s) and location. The ideas below are not intended to be exhaustive.

### Health

There is a great deal of interest in educating Aboriginal women and girls in healthy living and lifestyle. This strongly includes abuse recognition as well as a greater awareness of what constitutes an abusive relationship. Self-esteem, cultural living, and women's teachings, and traditional parenting all fall under this category. A curriculum or outreach program in the communities is a possible outcome as well as implementing courses in schools, on or off reserve.

### Skills

The data identifies a need for skill-building for employment including soft-skills, or job readiness skills. Workshops or courses on-reserve and in urban centres to focus on teaching healthy workplace dynamics and interactions would address this. Within skills is also a push for more funding and supports for increased training. More funding in terms of schooling for Aboriginal women for education, including trade skills.

### Family supports

The supports identified in the data refer to a recognition that Aboriginal women are often care givers, and they can use extra supports such as child care in order to afford them the time they need to attain more employment skills. Additionally, there is the issue of travel, both on-reserve to off, and in urban centres, that needs consideration. Projects that fit under this heading could be to fundraise for additional financial access for Aboriginal women for education. Also, enhancing or extending existing childcare services to better match the needs of these women would address this gap.

Safe, affordable housing is also a priority. While there exists housing programs for Aboriginals in many areas already, the data (and the First Nations housing crisis) would suggest that more needs to be done. Unfortunately, much of this calls for more funding, substantially more funding, to resolve.

### Education projects

Greater awareness of Aboriginal issues and worldviews will help non-Aboriginals to understanding Aboriginal issues. In fact, this is actually one of the recommendations made by Justice Linden in the Ipperwash report. There are a number of ways this can be achieved.

- Curriculum projects aimed at students for use in the classroom teaching about Aboriginal worldviews, culture, history, and rights
- Teacher training events where teachers are provided the opportunity to meet with representatives from Aboriginal communities to learn about the students coming in from those areas
- Transition programs that help orientate students into new schools (this is particularly important during the critical transition period from on-reserve to off-reserve schooling, or, generally, grades 8-9)
- Community outreach or speaker programs that work to get Aboriginal presenters into the classrooms to teach about local culture and history, validating it in a formal education setting

#### Aboriginal language projects

- Literature reviews on immersion (and immersion-type) methodology for Aboriginal language teaching
- Language teaching programs that bring in community members or that work to establish language learning and practice beyond the school settings

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# Appendices

Appendix A



## **Native Women's Association of Canada**

**Gendering First Nations Education Reform: A Primer  
By Andrew Bomberry, policy analyst, NWAC**



# AGA Engagement Sessions Primer

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# Introduction

## Purpose of report

The purpose of this primer is to prepare participants for an engagement session that will at least begin, if not finish, during the upcoming August 2012 AGA in Saskatoon. The session's goal will be to produce enough information to create deliverables for both NWAC and AANDC, to guide any possible further actions taken by AANDC in upcoming First Nations (FN) education reform.

This endeavour came about from a meeting between NWAC and AANDC over education concerns for FN women and girls. Because of the federal government's recent commitment to fund and engage in strong education reform for First Nations, AANDC reached out to NWAC to help prepare it for whatever FN community engagements and partnerships it may have to engage in within the near future.

NWAC determined that the best way to find solutions for FN education gender equality is to call upon the Aboriginal women of the Provincial, Territory Member Associations (PTMAs) to engage with them and aggregate their perspectives and insights. As the representatives for Aboriginal women and girls, you are the experts on Aboriginal gender inequality in Canada, but also and perhaps more importantly, you are also experts on creating and pursuing solutions to these inequalities.

The solutions sought will be built upon your knowledge and experience. This engagement session will not only be about where FN education has been and is now. Perhaps most importantly, it will be about where it needs to be to support First Nations women and girls in Canada.

This project is an exciting opportunity to prioritize concerns and ensure that AANDC has heard your voices.

The engagement session will cover a few very important themes: definitions of success for First Nations women and girls via education; gendering a First Nations Education Act; determining roles and responsibilities for the different levels of education services; the importance of language and culture; and finally what was absent from the engagement session that needs to be addressed.

Note: the language and culture content will be addressed by a survey that will be available at the AGA. Make sure to fill one out and submit it to ensure your opinions are heard.

## Executive Summary

In order to participate fully in the engagement session scheduled during the August AGA, it is recommended that you use this primer. AANDC has highlighted that it has been influenced by the following three reports: *Reforming First Nations Education: From Crisis to Hope* (Report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples); *Nurturing the Learning Spirit of First Nation Students: The Report of the National Panel on First Nation Elementary and Secondary Education for Students on Reserve*; and *2011 June Status Report of the Auditor General of Canada*.

With these considerations in mind, the engagement session has been focused around assessing these guiding reports and highlighting gender absences as well as to make additional gendered recommendations. Additionally, the engagement group will turn its attentions toward outlining a process of operations to help AANDC in any potential community proceedings they may need to conduct in the near future to elicit localized, gendered perspectives and priorities. From this, AANDC can continue on its own to build and incorporate a gendered view for First Nations education reform.

While there remains many aspects that warrant further exploration, because of various constraints, a major one being time, the above have composed the main thrust of the engagement session in order to lead to as productive a set of guidelines and recommendations as possible.

Educational changes for First Nation girls and women should be recognized as not only attempting to address lagging academic performance, but also as one (very important) tool to change their status as the lowest economic group in Canada, as well as elevating them above high rates of abuse and victimization. This is a battle for pride and empowerment not only as First Nations, but First Nations women and girls.

## Report Summaries

**Note: All quotes and references in each report summary come from that report specifically**

### Reforming First Nations Education: From Crisis to Hope

Report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples



The Senate Report broke down the models for First Nations primary and secondary education into the following three:

- federal schools controlled by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC/ the Department);
  - local schools operated by individual First Nations (also referred to as band-operated schools); and
  - provincial and/or territorial public school systems
- (p. 9)

While provinces are generally responsible for the education laws in their boundaries, First Nation schools primarily fall under federal jurisdiction. The responsibility the federal government bears toward First Nations communities is in the Indian Act; however, that guiding document primarily addresses truancy issues. Of critical absence is a definition or description of educational success, quality, or other highly relevant issues in First Nations education today.

Additionally, while provincial schools enjoy a coordinated, reliably funded, consistent education network that bridges student education goals through the grades and curriculum, with supervision and coordination by school boards and ministries of education, the federal approach has been primarily that of funder for education services (p. 11). It falls upon the shoulders of the individual band-operated schools to ensure their schools are following provincial curricula, their teachers are adequately trained and certified, and that teachers receive professional development. In short, the administrative, legislative, and regulatory duties that are shared and coordinated between supported bodies in the province primarily fall individually upon each band-operated school.

To meet the costs of this current approach to First Nations education, “[e]ducation funding, excluding capital costs, is calculated using a national formula (last updated in 1996) and distributed through various funding arrangements with First Nations and the provinces. Since 1996, there has been a 2% cap on annual increases in AANDC’s education funding, including capital expenditures” (p. 11). While it may seem like AANDC’s role as funder is respecting First

Nations sovereignty, in action and truth it is quite different. Insufficiently funded and overburdened in its challenge to provide an equal education as that received by Canadian counterparts, First Nation education is undermined, a recognition shared by AANDC (INAC):

Importantly, the departmental evaluation acknowledges that First Nations responsibility for education has been restrained and that ‘without appropriate capacity and resources, many communities are unable to maximize the impact that First Nations control of education could have over something as fundamental as education of children. (p. 11)

## Reform

Considering how often the senate heard reports about the lack of a true system of education (delivery, legislative, inter-nation collaborations, etc.) and how much of a burden it was attempting to provide everything a First Nations school needs on their own, with only partial support from the Federal government, it comes as no surprise that two of the senate reports strongest recommendations are for the establishment of a First Nations Education Act as well as a need to develop (with the guiding support of an education act) comparable levels and functions of education for First Nations schools as those enjoyed by provinces and territories (school boards and ministries of education). “We strongly support and encourage the efforts of First Nations to establish educational authorities, separate from band councils and accountable to the parents and community members, and believe they need a legislative basis from which to operate.” (pp. 61-62).

They advise an approach to constructing this First Nation Education Act. Refreshingly, it is an approach that recognizes First Nation independence and variation:

We find that a federal First Nations Education act is necessary to begin to build the proper foundation for such a First Nations system of education. Such legislation should be developed as a framework, rather than a detailed code that would attempt to cover every aspect of elementary and secondary education. It should explicitly recognize First Nations authority over education, as well as provide a legal underpinning for First Nations second- and third-level education authorities. Acknowledging the need for flexibility, it should not, however, prescribe those structures. The development of federal First Nations education legislation must be firmly rooted in a consultative process and significant community engagement. (p. 62)

## Recommendations

The following is a list of their overall recommendations:

**Recommendation 1:** That the government of Canada, in consultation with First Nations and First Nations educational authorities, develop a First Nations Education Act; that this Act explicitly recognize the authority of First Nations for on-reserve elementary and secondary education; and that it enable the establishment of First Nations controlled second-and-third level education structures; and that the application of this Act to individual First Nations communities be optional, and provide for the repeal of the education sections of the *Indian Act* for those First Nations that opt into the new Act. (p. 62)

**Recommendation 2:** That the proposed First Nations Education Act provide statutory authority to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada to make payments from the Consolidated Revenue Fund to First Nations educational authorities, with the objective of providing educational services on reserves; that the methodology for establishing the amount of these payments be enshrined in regulations authorized under the Act, and developed in consultation with First Nations; that these regulations would consider key cost drivers such as demographics and remoteness; and that the formula for establishing payments include, among other things, First Nations language preservation and revitalization programs. (p. 64)

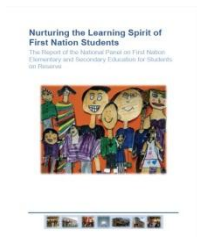
**Recommendation 3:** That the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, in collaboration with First Nations organizations and the Assembly of First Nations, take immediate steps to develop a Canada-First Nations Action Plan for education reform; and that the joint action plan include a process to ensure that First Nations are able to opt into a First Nations Education Act within agreed-upon timelines. (pp. 64-5)

**Recommendation 4:** That a task force, jointly appointed by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and the Assembly of First Nations, be established to oversee and monitor progress related to First Nations educational reform; and that the task force report annually, for the next five years, to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and to the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations. (p. 65)

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## Nurturing the Learning Spirit of First Nation Students

The Report of the National Panel on First Nation Elementary and Secondary Education for Students on Reserve



The national report reiterates the contrast between the coordinated, networked cohesion that exists in provincial schools with the system for First Nation schools: In provinces, from the individual school (first level services), to school board (second level services), and onward to the provincial ministry of education (third level services), there is an extensive system to ensure and protect quality education; whereas there exist “no comprehensive legislative framework guiding and protecting delivery of First Nation education” (p. 10). Instead, First Nations education frameworks are supported via ‘stipulations’ from funding agreements with the government. Primarily, this consists of requiring the First Nation schools to achieve provincial standards. Yet, without the same or similar support structures or funding, achieving educational equality has proven elusive.

While the provincial system may tempt some as a carbon copy answer, when First Nation students attend provincial school after attending on reserve, they do not seem to benefit from the provincial system as they might be expected to. Instead, “[e]ducation outcomes for First

Nation students attending schools in provincial systems are not substantially better than those attending First Nation schools. In fact, there is a marked decline in student retention once students enroll in secondary programs which are largely provided through the provincial school system” (p. 14). When faced with a very different school environment, First Nation students seem to struggle to adapt to it. Isolation and lack of acceptance and support for their cultural perspectives and the contexts of their lives are cited by some students as to why they struggle. (p. 14)

### *Reform*

There are exceptions to an isolated, federally funded approach:

Some First Nation communities have joined together to form school boards, others have partnered with provincial education authorities. Some are also currently underway including a Memorandum of Understanding signed on February 24, 2010, by the Government of Canada, the Government of Alberta and the Assembly Treaty Chiefs in Alberta (represented by Treaty 6, Treaty 7 and Treaty 8). Two regions have negotiated tripartite agreements, with enabling legislation, to build a system of education and to provide funding, a range of supports and a focus on education attainment necessary to improve First Nation student outcomes and engagement. (p. 12)

### *Recommendations*

The following recommendations are taken directly from the report. Space and brevity demands require that this section be limited to the recommendation statements specifically; however, each section in the report includes additional elaboration. The reader is strongly encouraged to review the additional information surrounding each recommendation in the original report. The guiding principles behind these recommendations can be read on page viii of the report.

**Recommendation 1:** Co-Create a Child-Centred First Nation Education Act (p. 31)

**Recommendation 2:** Create a National Commission for First Nation Education to support education reform and improvement (p. 33)

**Recommendation 3:** Facilitate and support the creation of a First Nation education system through the development of regional First Nation Education Organizations (FNEO) to provide support and services for First Nation schools and First Nation Students (p. 36)

**Recommendation 4:** Ensure adequate funding to support a First Nation education system that meets the needs of First Nation learners, First Nation communities and Canada as a whole (p. 38)

**Recommendation 5:** Establish an accountability and reporting framework to assess improvement in First Nation Education (p. 51)

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## Status Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the House of Commons 2011

### Chapter 4: Programs for First Nations on Reserves



While the two previous reports were wholly about First Nations education, the Auditor General Report spoke to more than just the issue of education in First Nation communities. It addressed the general state of First Nations and some of the reasons for some of the ongoing conditions. The sections on education were brief, but were still of great value.

Though the general problems listed by the Auditor General cover a wide spectrum (drinking water quality, housing initiatives, child and family services, land claims, reporting burdens), after reviewing the two previous reports, the general areas of impediment in the Auditor General report overall can all be seen to directly link to education:

In our view, many of the problems facing First Nations go deeper than the existing programs' lack of efficiency and effectiveness. We believe that structural impediments severely limit the delivery of public services to First Nations communities and hinder improvements in living conditions on reserves. We have identified four such impediments:

- lack of clarity about service levels,
- lack of a legislative base,
- lack of an appropriate funding mechanism, and
- lack of organizations to support local service delivery (p. 2)

Delving more specifically into education, the Auditor General Report lists some of the most pressing concerns. Included in this list is an oft repeated assessment that INAC (AANDC) maintains an inconsistent, delayed, and insufficient approach to addressing the education gap between First Nation students and their Canadian counterparts. At this current pace, and with current education measures and practices, the auditor general concluded that "it would take 28 years for First Nations communities to reach the national average. More recent trends suggest that the time needed may be still longer" (4.17, p. 13)

### *Recommendations*

The Auditor Report is, again, less robust than the previous reports when it comes to recommendations. It features the following table for what has been asked of AANDC in the



past and how they have measured up to those recommendations currently.

Exhibit 4.1 Progress on addressing two recommendations on education (p. 15)

Recommendations	Progress
<p>Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, in consultation with First Nations, should immediately develop and implement a comprehensive strategy and action plan, with targets, to close the education gap. It should also report progress to Parliament and to First Nations on a timely basis.</p> <p>(Recommendation 5.33 of the 2004 November Report of the Auditor General of Canada, Chapter 5. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada—Education Program and Post-Secondary Student Support)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Unsatisfactory</b></p>
<p>Indian and Northern Affairs Canada should undertake to obtain reliable and consistent information on the actual costs of delivering education services on reserves and compare the costs with those of providing comparable education services in the provinces.</p> <p>(Recommendation 5.51 of the 2004 November Report of the Auditor General of Canada, Chapter 5)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Satisfactory</b></p>

## Workshop Agenda

Themes	Description	Approximate Time
<b>Part 1</b>		
Setting the trend for the day:  Empowering First Nation women and girls through education – Goal Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what do we want for First Nations women and girls</li> <li>• What’s missing to achieve it</li> <li>• How do we close the gap</li> </ul>	30 Minutes
<b>Part 2</b>		
First Nations Education Act	Gendering the Education Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guiding principles</li> <li>• Articles and Clauses</li> </ul>	30 Minutes
<b>Part 3</b>		
Operationalizing Engagement Sessions	1 <sup>st</sup> level, 2 <sup>nd</sup> level, 3 <sup>rd</sup> level  Roles, Responsibilities, Participants, and appropriate methods of consultation	20 Minutes
<b>Part 4</b>		
What was Missed?	What should have been on the agenda? What still needs to be done?	10 Minutes

# First Nations Education Act

One of the main targets of this engagement session is to gather input on a potential First Nations Education Act. Repeatedly called for in the interviews and engagement sessions that informed the guiding reports (Standing Committee, National Panel), this act would potentially, and ideally, secure First Nations sovereignty over their own education, as well as to ensure adequate and reliable funding and other supports for implementing an equal education. Of critical importance for its equitable creation is the valued input of Aboriginal women. Without the perspectives Aboriginal women bring to the endeavour, without their knowledge and experience, any resulting First Nations Education Act would be lacking in ensuring the protections needed for First Nations women and girls, and it would not be what it could be, what it needs to be.

To know much about education is one thing. To be ready with appropriate suggestions for articles/clauses and guiding principles is another. Merely as an aide, samples from the United Nations’ Declaration of Indigenous Rights are included here. Please reflect and come ready to give your valued input.

The workshop will be encouraging input in two general categories: guiding principles and suggested articles. The guiding principles generated at the AGA are intended to be used as aides in any future official effort to create a First Nations Education Act. What values would you want such a committee to keep in mind when writing it? What should they remember when determining issues, roles, or responsibilities? The ‘suggested articles’ mean exactly that: What particular statements do you think belong in a potential First Nations Education Act?

UN Example (Note: This author has taken assumptive license by attributing the resolution elements within a ‘guiding principles’ and ‘articles or clauses’ framework)

Guiding Principles	Articles or Clauses
<p><i>Guided</i> by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and good faith in the fulfilment of the obligations assumed by States in accordance with the Charter,</p> <p><i>Affirming</i> that indigenous peoples are equal to all other peoples, while recognizing the right of all peoples to be different, to consider themselves different, and to be respected as such, (UN Declaration of Indigenous Rights, p. 1)</p>	<p><i>Article 14</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.</li> <li>2. Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination</li> <li>3. States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous</li> </ol>

	individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language. (p. 7)
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If the reader wishes to read the entire declaration, they can proceed to this site:

[www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf)

In the example, the articles generally are sectioned into the following: declaration of a right, definition of a role, and statement of obligation or responsibility. It may be helpful to keep those distinctions in mind when generating your own recommendations.

The reader is encouraged to come with samples pre-written. Please use this sheet to brainstorm and submit additional entries (feel free to make additional submissions beyond this sheet as well).

Guiding Principles	Articles or Clauses

## General Public Education Network in Canada

Within the provinces of Canada, the education system is generally separated into three separate levels. These levels have roles and responsibilities that are both within their level and in coordination with or within oversight from the level above. In Canada, legislating education is a provincial responsibility (except with First Nations). Therefore, the levels are capped at the provincial level. This section is only intended as a quick primer. For the workshop, the reader should not consider themselves limited to provincial determiners for each level.

Levels	
First Level	Generally this level is the individual schools. The roles and responsibilities within the school category can include those of the principal, teachers, students, and parents. While each school generally sets its own particular policies and priorities, these are generally required to be within guidelines provided by the school board and ministry of education. This level is generally considered to be the 'front lines' of education.
Second Level	Generally this level is occupied by school boards. The roles and responsibilities within the school board category can include managing finances from the ministry of education, overseeing teacher and staff hiring, teacher professional development, and providing education programs.
Third Level	Generally this level is occupied by the provincial ministries of education. These organizations can include determining the policies by which the other levels adhere to, developing curriculum, and approving curriculum.

For additional examples and elaborations on the different levels, please see the following websites:

**Ontario Ministry of Education:**

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/whosresp.html#boards>

**British Columbia Ministry of Education:**

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/primer/roles.htm>

## **Language and Culture**

While language and culture remain one of the key issues when discussing First Nations education, because of the time available, it has been decided to address language and culture via questionnaires. Please be sure to fill one out and submit it during the AGA. A booth will be set up where they will be distributed. Alternatively, please seek out Andrew Bomberry, policy analyst from NWAC, for a copy and to submit it when you are done.

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## **What was Missed?**

With something as important as reforming First Nations education, and a perspective as rich as gender, it is inevitable that something will be missed. After reviewing the above contents and participating in the engagement session, please submit your thoughts and opinions on relevant gaps or issues that were missed but are still very important to the topic of gender reforming First Nations education.

Thank you sincerely for your time and input. Both are greatly valued by NWAC.

# Language & Culture Survey

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## General Information

1. Please list your PTMA:

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2. I think “\_\_\_\_\_” is very important to my community.

<p>A) <i>Traditional language</i></p> <p>B) <i>Traditional Culture and practices</i></p>	<p><b>A) (Please circle one)</b></p> <p>1. Very important</p> <p>2. Important</p> <p>3. Not sure</p> <p>4. Not important</p> <p>5. Very not important</p>	<p><b>B) (Please circle one)</b></p> <p>1. Very important</p> <p>2. Important</p> <p>3. Not sure</p> <p>4. Not important</p> <p>5. Very not important</p>
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3. I consider myself very knowledgeable about the “\_\_\_\_\_” context in my community.

<p>A) <i>Traditional language</i></p> <p>B) <i>Traditional culture and practices</i></p>	<p><b>A) (Please circle one)</b></p> <p>1. Very knowledgeable</p> <p>2. knowledgeable</p> <p>3. Not sure</p> <p>4. Not knowledgeable</p> <p>5. Very not knowledgeable</p>	<p><b>B) (Please circle one)</b></p> <p>1. Very knowledgeable</p> <p>2. knowledgeable</p> <p>3. Not sure</p> <p>4. Not knowledgeable</p> <p>5. Very not knowledgeable</p>
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4. Rate your skills in the following:

<p>A) <i>Traditional language</i></p> <p>B) <i>Traditional culture and practices</i></p>	<p><b>A) (Please circle one)</b></p> <p>1. Very skilled</p> <p>2. Skilled</p> <p>3. Not sure</p> <p>4. Not skilled</p> <p>5. Very not skilled</p>	<p><b>B) (Please circle one)</b></p> <p>1. Very skilled</p> <p>2. Skilled</p> <p>3. Not sure</p> <p>4. Not skilled</p> <p>5. Very not skilled</p>
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5. My community places a high value on our

<p>A) <i>Traditional language</i></p> <p>B) <i>Traditional culture and practices</i></p>	<p><b>A) (Please circle one)</b></p> <p>1. Very high value</p> <p>2. Valued</p> <p>3. Not sure</p> <p>4. Not valued</p> <p>5. Very not valued</p>	<p><b>B) (Please circle one)</b></p> <p>1. Very high value</p> <p>2. Valued</p> <p>3. Not sure</p> <p>4. Not valued</p> <p>5. Very not valued</p>
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6. *My community's language goal is fluency in*
- A) *Speaking & Listening*  
B) *Reading & Writing*
- A) (Please circle one)**
1. Very skilled
  2. Skilled
  3. Not sure
  4. Not skilled
  5. Very not skilled
- B) (Please circle one)**
1. Very skilled
  2. Skilled
  3. Not sure
  4. Not skilled
  5. Very not skilled
- 

7. *My community's cultural goal is*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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8. *With my community's current available funds, we will reach our goals in "\_\_\_\_\_"*
- A) *Traditional language*  
B) *Traditional Culture and practices*
- A) (Please circle one)**
1. Completely achieved
  2. Mostly achieved
  3. Somewhat achieved
  4. Not achieved
  5. Very below goals
- B) (Please circle one)**
1. Completely achieved
  2. Mostly achieved
  3. Somewhat achieved
  4. Not achieved
  5. Very below goals
- 

9. *In my community, knowledge in "\_\_\_\_\_ " can lead to employment.*
- A) *Traditional language*  
B) *Traditional culture and practices*
- A) (Please circle one)**
1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Unsure
- B) (Please circle one)**
1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Unsure
- 

10. *There are adequate numbers of Aboriginal women role models in "\_\_\_\_\_ " related jobs in my community.*
- A) *Traditional language*  
B) *Traditional culture and practices*
- A) (Please circle one)**
1. Well represented
  2. Some representation
  3. Unsure
  4. Little representation
  5. Few or no representation
- B) (Please circle one)**
1. Well represented
  2. Some representation
  3. Unsure
  4. Little representation
  5. Few or no representation
- 

11. *The following obstacles are challenges to more Aboriginal women role models in "\_\_\_\_\_ " related jobs in my community.*
- A) *Traditional language*  
B) *Traditional culture and practices*
- A) (Circle all that apply)**
1. Lack of language skills/knowledge
  2. Lack of teacher training
  3. Lack of child care
  4. Lack of job funding
  5. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- B) (Circle all that apply)**
1. Lack of language skills/knowledge
  2. Lack of teacher training
  3. Lack of child care
  4. Lack of job funding
  5. Other \_\_\_\_\_
-

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**Methodology**

13. *I think “\_\_\_\_\_” is the best way to learn our traditional language.<sup>1</sup>*

**A) (Please circle one)**

**B) (Please circle one)**

1. Immersion
2. Dual immersion
3. Intensive immersion
4. Single period class per day
5. Other \_\_\_\_\_

1. Immersion
  2. Dual immersion
  3. Intensive immersion
  4. Single period class per day
  5. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 

14. *The provincial/territory language teaching methodology is sufficient for my community’s language learning needs.*

**(Please circle one)**

1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Not sure
- 

15. *“\_\_\_\_\_” should be taught outside the classroom as well.*

**A) (Please circle one)**

**B) (Please circle one)**

- A) *Traditional language*
- B) *Traditional culture and practices*

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Not sure/Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

1. Strongly agree
  2. Agree
  3. Not sure/Neutral
  4. Disagree
  5. Strongly disagree
- 

16. *Please explain your reasoning for A) Traditional language.*

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17. *Please explain your reasoning for B) Traditional culture and practices.*

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18. *I think Aboriginal language teachers should receive career-long professional development.*

**(Please circle one)**

1. Strongly agree
  2. Agree
  3. Not sure/Neutral
  4. Disagree
  5. Strongly Disagree
- 

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<sup>1</sup> **Immersion:** students are taught core subjects in the target language; **Dual Immersion:** students are taught core subjects 50% in target language & 50% in English/French; **Intensive Immersion:** usually target language is learned in single period a day for 5 months, then for 65% of the day for 5 months

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19. *I think Aboriginal language teacher certification should be handled by the provincial/territory government.*

**(Please circle one)**

1. Strongly agree
  2. Agree
  3. Not sure/Neutral
  4. Disagree
  5. Strongly Disagree
- 

20. *Please explain your reasoning.*

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21. *Team-teaching traditional language would greatly improve language learning success.*

**(Please circle one)**

1. Strongly agree
  2. Agree
  3. Not sure/Neutral
  4. Disagree
  5. Strongly Disagree
- 

22. *Elders should receive official recognition for their knowledge for teaching in classrooms.*

**(Please circle one)**

1. Strongly agree
  2. Agree
  3. Not sure/Neutral
  4. Disagree
  5. Strongly Disagree
- 

**Curriculum**

23. *Our community's language curriculum is coordinated between grades and schools to promote continuous language development through the grades.*

**(Please circle one)**

1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Not sure
- 

24. *Please briefly explain your choice.*

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25. *The community should be consulted to establish classroom language goals.* **(Please circle one)**

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Not sure/Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

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26. *Our community has sufficient traditional language learning materials.* **(Please circle one)**

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Not sure/Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

---

27. *Our community has a department or organization that creates "\_\_\_\_\_ " materials for teachers*

<p>A) <i>Traditional language</i></p> <p>B) <i>Traditional culture and practices</i></p>	<p><b>A) (Please circle one)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Yes</li><li>2. No</li><li>3. Not sure</li></ol>	<p><b>B) (Please circle one)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Yes</li><li>2. No</li><li>3. Not sure</li></ol>
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28. *Our teachers must make up most or all of the "\_\_\_\_\_ " materials they use in class.*

<p>A) <i>Traditional language</i></p> <p>B) <i>Traditional culture and practices</i></p>	<p><b>A) (Please circle one)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Yes</li><li>5. No</li><li>6. Not sure</li></ol>	<p><b>B) (Please circle one)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Yes</li><li>5. No</li><li>6. Not sure</li></ol>
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