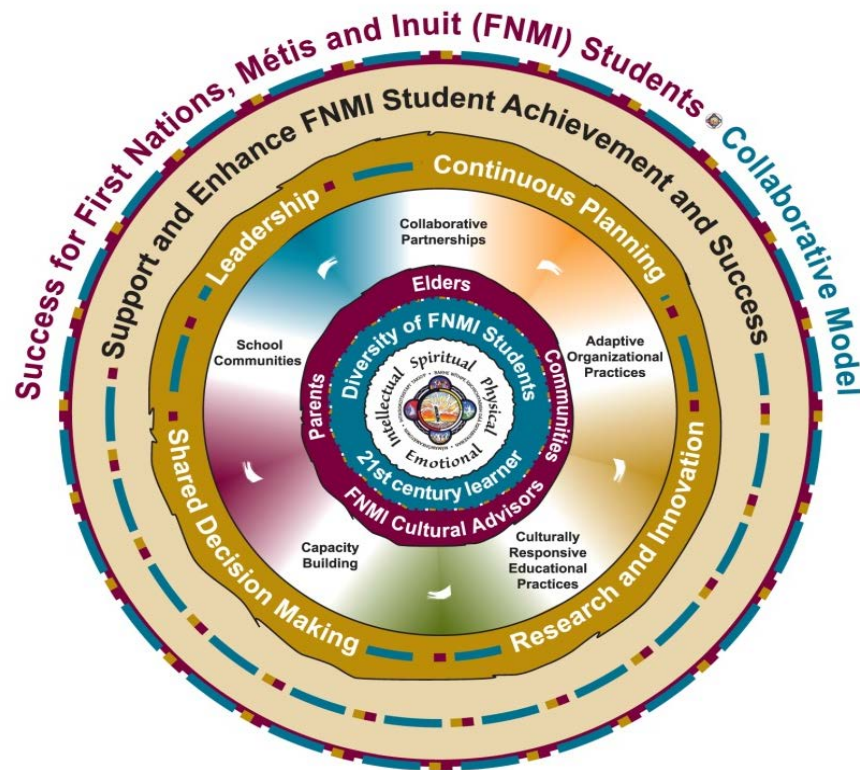# SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES IN FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT EDUCATION:

COLLABORATIVE FRAMEWORKS BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS COMPANION RESOURCE 2012

Successful Practices in FNMI Education:
Collaborative Frameworks
Building Relationships Companion Resource

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Links to external resources included in *Successful Practices in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education: Collaborative Frameworks—Building Relationships Companion Resource* may or may not be recommended or authorized by Alberta Education. Users should verify websites and other resources mentioned prior to using them with students.

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Success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students

First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples have long understood *learning* and *education* as a lifelong striving for balance and wholeness among the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual dimensions, with each community having its own unique goals and vision for the educational success of its children.

As part of Alberta's Commission on Learning, Mackenzie (2009) writes, "… there needs to be a shared commitment and unrelenting effort from all stakeholders to ensure that every child learns and that every child succeeds."[1] All Alberta students, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit, require support and learning opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for full participation in an enriched society and sustainable economy. *Inspiring Education: A Dialogue with Albertans* (2010) captures the vision of Albertans in response to the challenge of adequately preparing each student for our rapidly changing economy and technological world. The *Framework for Student Learning* (2011) builds on this work by highlighting the interrelationships between literacy, numeracy, competencies and subject/discipline areas that are essential for students to become engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit. To support this, schools can create learning opportunities that engage students in:

- critical thinking, problem solving and decision making;
- creativity and innovation;
- social, cultural, global and environmental responsibility;
- communication;
- digital and technological fluency;
- lifelong learning, personal management and well-being; and
- collaboration and leadership.

Since implementing the *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* in 2002, the Government of Alberta has been committed to success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students by helping to ensure they have every opportunity to succeed. In support of this commitment, Alberta Education continues to develop an ongoing dialogue with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and other education stakeholders.[2]

Over the years, Alberta Education has incorporated collaborative practices for all schools to improve First Nations, Métis and Inuit student success. This has been essential in building stronger relationships among stakeholders and deepening an understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, histories, cultures and languages. In *Sharing Our Success*, Bell et al. (2004) writes, "Many studies have shown that strong working partnerships between schools, parents, and communities exert a powerful positive influence toward improved school performance."[3]

Since 2009, Alberta school authorities have been implementing Goal 3: Success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students, developing collaborative frameworks with their local First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, and implementing community and parent strategies focused on improving FNMI student success. During this time, the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Services and Field Services Sector have been working on the development of the Collaborative Frameworks, together with input from First Nations, Métis and Inuit stakeholders, school authorities and with consideration of research.

Collaborative Frameworks Building Relationships

The Collaborative Frameworks serves as a guide to strengthen collaborative processes between school authorities, parents, communities and other stakeholders, as they work together to improve the educational outcomes of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

The digital model of the Collaborative Frameworks was designed in partnership with Alberta Education and the Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia. The model serves as an implementation tool to support school authorities as they develop their own First Nations, Métis and Inuit education frameworks and/or evaluate their existing supports.

In addition, the collaborative partnership with the Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia provided workshop opportunities to address changing demographics and explore ways to increase the participation of local First Nations, Métis and Inuit families, parents and communities in schools. Fourteen First Nations, Métis and Inuit Introductory Workshops on Engagement (see Appendix C) were held across the province. Each of the workshops followed local protocols to respect cultural rights and to promote respectful sharing between school authorities and First Nations, Métis and Inuit families, parents and communities. Feedback from workshop participants included:

- "Understanding your role as a parent is important. What responsibilities belong to me? What are my rights?"

- "… provide schools with contacts—parents or Elders who can advocate for the system to increase engagement."

- "… just because parents don't get involved does not mean they don't care."

- "… the FNMI voice has been heard throughout the province of Alberta and school jurisdictions will have indicators as to the improvement of FNMI parent engagement."

- "… the need to develop specific workshops for FNMI parents regarding the education system, such as increasing knowledge of traditional parenting skills, racism, the historical trauma of residential, and right and responsibilities of parents."

- "… the fact the Introductory Report is involving parents, communities and families. It's not just the people in the high positions making the decisions. Big step!"

- "… educate culturally sensitivity to principals and administrators."

- "… look for ways to enhance community relationships—try different approaches to make an idea work."

Other workshop feedback recommended that resources be developed to support the existing Collaborative Frameworks to strengthen collective First Nations, Métis and Inuit voices, showcase positive results and identify ongoing issues. Further resources could also model other school authorities' best practices in implementing the Collaborative Frameworks and include ways to ensure that appropriate teaching and learning material reflects the views of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and organizations.

An introductory video was also produced to reflect on the successes and challenges from the perspectives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit coordinators, superintendents and directors of education, Elders, principals, teachers, Alberta Education staff and First Nations, Métis and Inuit families, parents and community members. Each interview contains key messages and particular strategies that can be considered and implemented by school authorities as a means of improving FNMI student success. The video also represents a collective effort to address the importance of a continuous planning process where First Nations, Métis and Inuit stakeholders and communities have a voice in shared decision making and common understanding to support the Collaborative Frameworks.
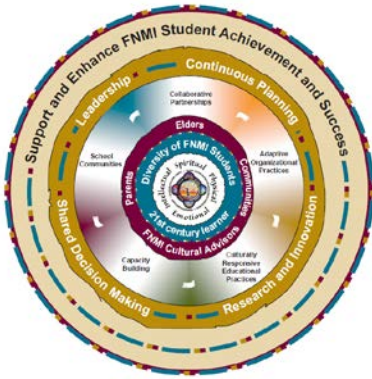
Click on the digital collaborative model sidebar under videos to view the 20-minute video in its entirety

Collaborative Framework Engagement

Shared Responsibility/Ownership of Collaborative Framework

Capacity Building/Teacher Professional Development

FNMI Cultural Advisors/Leadership

Community Engagement

Communicate Collaborative FNMI School/Community Practices

Sustaining Successful FNMI School/Community Practices

Shared Vision for FNMI Student Success

Collaborative Partnerships/Métis Settlements: Families, Parents and Community

Leadership/Elders

Culturally Responsive Education/Teacher Professional Development

Culturally Responsive Practices/Teacher Professional Development

First Nations Collaboration/Visioning

Positive Community Engagement/ Culturally Responsive Education

Shared Decision Making based on Partnerships

Continuous Planning/First Nations Collaboration

Research and Evidence: Impacts of Residential Schooling

Culturally Responsive/Local Resources

Local Continuous Planning/Parent Council

Collaborative Network in FNMI Communities

Positive Relationships/Celebrating FNMI Student Success

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Families, Parents and Community Engagement

Alberta's Commission on Learning (2003) reports that the best approach is to encourage FNMI to take more control of their children's education. "Aboriginal people–especially parents, Elders and community leaders–need to be empowered to take ownership of and responsibility for the education of their children."[4] Despite many challenges, some schools are beginning to show progress in working with First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents and communities toward improving the educational outcomes of their children.

To ensure engagement and approval of the Conceptual Collaborative Frameworks, Treaty 6, 7 and 8, First Nations and Métis educational partners and communities spent a full day in March 2010 refining and further developing common understandings for the content. FNMI committee members contributed and provided advice on the development of workshops and resources.

To build capacity and promote success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students at the community level, 16 workshops were held across the province in 2011. The report from these sessions, Roll-up of FNMI Engagement Workshops (2011) (see Appendix D), affirmed the need to continue building collaborative partnerships between schools, parents, communities, organizations and government agencies. The report also identified the need for consistent direction and leadership and continued efforts in seeking partnerships between home and community and school and authority. Parent and administrator training modules were developed to promote respect and appreciation of local First Nations, Métis and Inuit knowledge, skills and attitudes. The objectives of the modules and workshops include the following:

- *FNMI Traditional Parenting Skills Workshop Module: Facilitator Guide*
  (see Appendix E)
  – To raise awareness and understanding among parents and school authorities about First Nations, Métis and Inuit traditional parenting skills and their implications for student success in school, based on diversity and respect for local protocols.
  – To advocate and support increased parental involvement and improved participation.

- *FNMI Cultural Awareness for Administrators Workshop Module: Facilitator Guide* (see Appendix F)
  – To support administrators in developing First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultural awareness to support improved student success in school, based on diversity and respect for local cultural process.
  – To support administrators in advocating increased First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultural awareness among their staff and in their schools.

Many participants who attended the workshops were very encouraged and felt supported by the learning outcomes of resource materials. Once again, Alberta Education heard that more is needed for implementation support in order to continue to build on the Collaborative Frameworks.

FNMI peoples have long understood *learning* and *education* as a lifelong striving for balance among the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual dimensions. First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents want their children to learn everything that education has to offer and to reap the benefits of the knowledge and technologies of Western society. However, they also want their children educated in a manner that respects their cultural traditions and heritage, and values their perspectives and ways of knowing.

The Collaborative Frameworks provides both a starting point and an ongoing structure for organizing, planning and implementing ideas that emerge from collaborative partnerships with First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents, community members, business and industry, provincial and federal organizations and/or governments as they work together to improve educational outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

The Collaborative Frameworks invites local input, sets a course for planning and allows for continuous monitoring, evaluation of progress and modification. It also provides links to many other resources that may be useful for further learning and professional development.

The Whole Child at the Centre of the Model

"The circularity of the medicine wheel urges us to keep the whole picture in mind, even though the individual component parts may be compelling. As we wrestle with issues in the education of the child, the youth, the adult, and the elder, in turn, we will be reminded that the problems encountered by adults today are rooted in education processes in the past. We will see that educational innovation at each stage of the life cycle gives us the opportunity —and indeed the responsibility—to bring about the profound and significant changes in the lives of generations to come.

"Lifelong learning and learning aimed to balance all dimensions of the person are intermeshed. At each stage of life, learning should develop the whole human being. Intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical learning depends upon successful development at previous stages" (*Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*, 1996, V.3 C5, S2 to S3.2).

… to achieve their full potential as expressed in the vision, children must be the centre of all decisions related to learning and the overall education system. Children and youth of all ages should be supported as individuals—emotionally, intellectually, physically, socially and spiritually. Their personal interests, curiosities, and strengths should be taken into account.[5]

Located at the centre of the model is the whole child, represented by the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual dimensions.[6] Within an Aboriginal understanding of knowledge, education and learning, there is no separation of mind, emotions, body and spirit.[7] Learning is understood to engage all four realms and is integrated into one's daily activities at every stage of life. Therefore, the needs of the whole child must be addressed in order for the child to experience success, both academically and in life overall.[8]

Collaborative Frameworks—Building Relationships Companion Resource
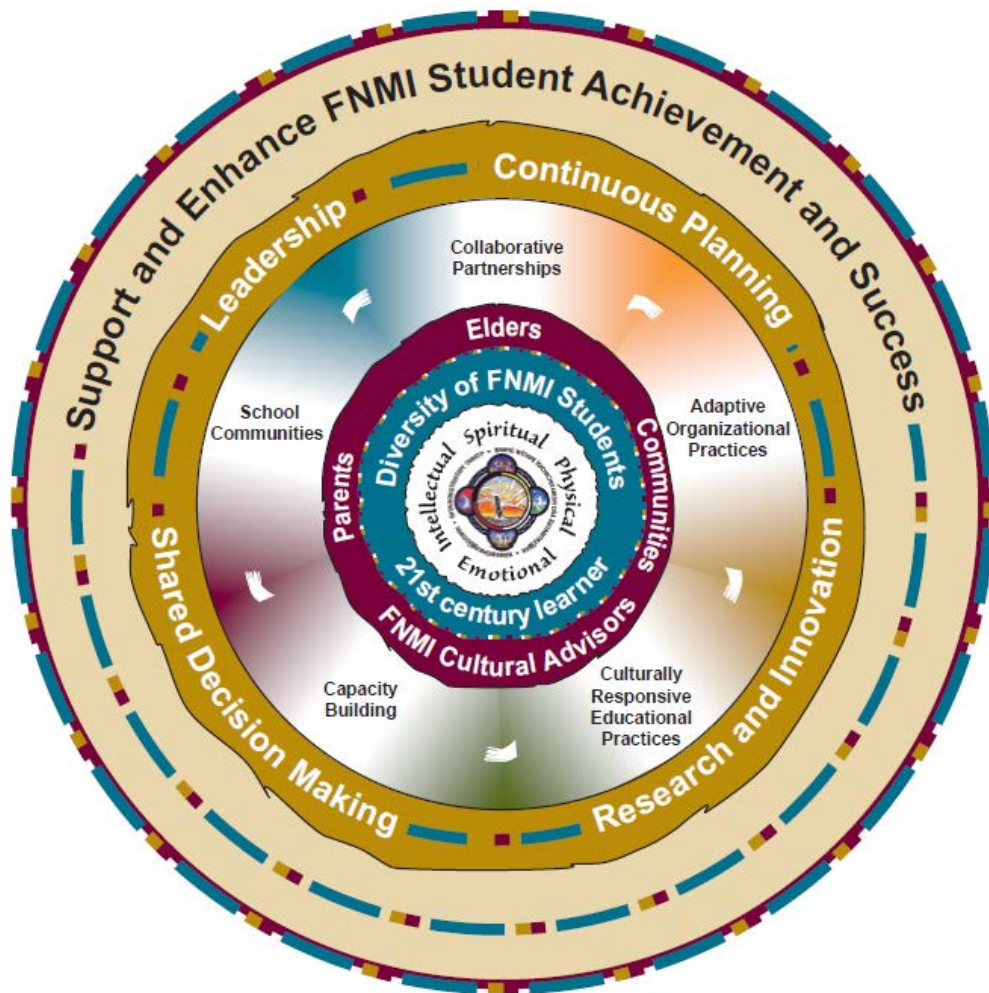
The next layer in the Collaborative Model represents parents, Elders, community members and First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultural advisors. Building relationships that extend beyond the classroom to connect with the parents and community helps teachers access support for student learning.[9]

Diversity of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students

Alberta is home to many First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, including Treaty 6, 7 and 8, which together make up 45 First Nations communities. There are also eight Métis Settlements within the Métis General Council located in the six regional zones that make up the Métis Nation of Alberta. Two major urban centres, Edmonton and Calgary, have experienced significant growth in a diverse group of Aboriginal peoples. Each of these communities has distinct cultures, customs, beliefs, languages, histories, traditions, governance structures and treaty-related rights. Battiste (2002) writes, "As diverse as Indigenous peoples are in Canada and beyond, so also are their ways of knowing and learning."[10]
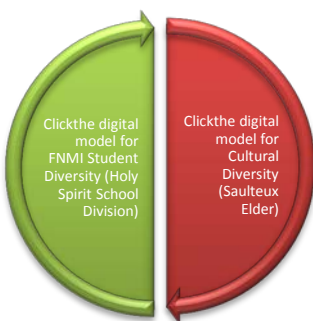
In appreciating the rich diversity of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples in Alberta, it is clear that using a one-size-fits-all approach to education at the school level will not address the complexities of the students being served. While students may share a common identity, individual students and families may be quite different from one another in their experiences, beliefs and attitudes.

Becoming more familiar with the diversity within their First Nations, Métis and Inuit population helps school authorities to respond more effectively to the needs of their First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

Elders, Cultural Advisors, Parents and Communities

First Nations, Métis and Inuit student success is supported by strong working partnerships between schools, Elders, cultural advisors, parents and communities.[11]

Elders are highly respected in their communities, having long discovered their gifts and purposes through their life experiences.[12] Elders bring an understanding of their community's history. Their knowledge is vital as many feel that knowing our past allows us to understand the present

so that we can wisely plan for the future.[13] Both Elders and cultural advisors occupy a distinct place in First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and are considered to be the knowledge keepers of the community.

Click the digital model for
Elder videos:
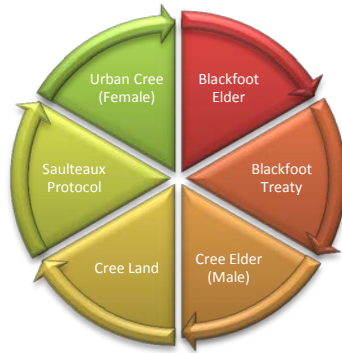
Many schools have found community Elders, parents and cultural advisors to be invaluable in sharing cultural knowledge, acting as positive role models and assisting staff and students in understanding and bridging cultural differences.[14] Elders, in particular, actively participate in guiding children in their learning by helping them develop a quality of silence, keen observation skills and a heightened sensitivity to their connection with all of existence.

Themes

The Collaborative Frameworks is made up of five themes, each of which will be discussed further:

- collaborative partnerships;
- adaptive organizational practices;
- culturally responsive educational practices;
- capacity building; and
- school communities.

Inspiring Education tells us, "Our concept of education should expand beyond the school and integrate the community and the 'real world.' We should make the community a true partner in the education experience."[15]

Successful schools understand and engage with First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents, communities, organizations and government agencies. Research shows that this has a strong positive influence on student success.[16] Friedel (1999) adds, "The key to Aboriginal input is not simply getting people to attend meetings, but exhibiting a true willingness on the part of decision makers to listen and act on what is being said."[17]

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Parents and Community

As the family unit plays a significant role in the education of a child, involving parents in their children's education helps strengthen their interest in their children's success in school.[18] Henderson and Berla (1994) report that when families get involved in developing curriculum, promoting cognitive development in the home, and volunteering in the classroom, their children achieve higher grades, have better attendance rates, complete homework, demonstrate more positive attitudes and behaviours, graduate at higher rates, and have greater involvement in higher education.[19]

First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents and community members are valuable assets to the school community both for their support and cultural knowledge.[19] Corson (1998) writes, "Community-based education begins with the people and their immediate reality. Above all, it allows them to become meaningfully involved in shaping their own futures through the school and other agencies in their community." [20]

School authorities have the key role in enhancing their relationships with First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents and communities.[22] In *Supporting Aboriginal Parents: Teachings for the Future,* the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health (2009) writes, "… we can and must do better—much better by ensuring the creation of truly meaningful, culturally responsive, effective, and equivalent programs, resources and services for Aboriginal parents."[23] Goulet (2001) recommends finding different ways and places to develop these relationships outside of the formal relationships and structure of school administration and teaching.[24]

For school authorities, collaboration with their First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, school authorities may involve:

Click the digital model for School Community: Student & Family Support (Holy Family Catholic School)

- being more flexible in school scheduling to provide more opportunities for parents to participate
- appointing or electing First Nations, Métis and Inuit school board members in authorities with high First Nations, Métis and Inuit student populations
- inviting First Nations, Métis and Inuit representation on school/authority committees
- creating First Nations, Métis and Inuit advisory committees (where numbers warrant).

The Partnership Agreement between Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council (KTC) and Northland School Division No. 61 (NSD) is good example of an effective collaborative partnership in action.

Education/Research/Community Support

Further collaborative partnerships, with the faculties of education at local colleges and/or universities and other stakeholder groups engaged in First Nations, Métis and Inuit education and research projects, can also be explored to strengthen district First Nations, Métis and Inuit education programs and initiatives within the school.

Evidence-based decision making is informed by current data and trends in First Nations, Métis and Inuit education. Studies and initiatives, such as *TELL Them FROM Me Student Survey: Year in Review, 2010–2011*,[25] Sharing Our Success: Ten Case Studies in Aboriginal Schooling[26] and the Aboriginal Learner Data Collection Initiative, can be used to inform and initiate dialogue among schools, parents, community members and stakeholders on different approaches to address the educational challenges of their First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

Click the digital model for Leadership Commitment (Memorial University of Newfoundland)

Internal research within the school is the most significant and useful, as it emphasizes the achievements of the community's own First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. School authorities share this information within their collaborative relationships to inform, receive feedback and enhance program planning to further support First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement.

Business and Industry

First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth are the fastest growing segment of Canada's population and represent a large untapped potential for Canada's current and future workforce. Therefore, Aboriginal communities are well positioned to take advantage of demographic shifts in the province and can contribute to a significant increase in the number of workers entering Alberta's workforce. *Inspiring Education* writes, "The province will draw upon citizens who may have been under-represented or under-utilized in the workforce, such as … Aboriginals, whose population is currently growing at twice the rate of the non-Aboriginal population."[27]

School authorities can look for opportunities within the community to partner with community organizations that are geared toward First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth; e.g., projects that promote leadership skills, build capacity, provide mentorship and support youth in developing life skills and work experience through on-the-job training. Schools can work collaboratively with business and industry to create opportunities for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, such as internships, co-ops and apprenticeship training. These work and learning experiences promote a successful transition from high school to post-secondary education and/or employment. The work of Jackson, Smith and Hill (2003) highlights the positive impacts of structured mentoring programs on Native American college students, including the influence of positive role models for students.

Another example of this is the partnership between the Fort Vermilion School Division No. 52 and the local First Nations community in building two houses on the reserve. The First Nations community provided the land and supplies, and the school division provided the instructor and supports from the maintenance department. Twenty-two students enrolled in the program and spent half of their time working on academics and the other half applying their learning to the housing project.

Strong proactive leadership, clearly articulated vision and mission statements, and flexible, supportive school policies help ensure that program planning is both long term and sustainable.

Leadership Commitment

A commitment to proactive leadership that is responsive to the needs of students supports First Nations, Métis and Inuit student success.[28] Changing expectations for educators and the education system are a result of our changing economy and attitudes toward First Nations, Métis and Inuit education, and therefore schools require leadership that emphasizes creating a 'culture of change' or, in other words, a culture that has the capacity to seek, critically assess and selectively incorporate new ideas and approaches.[29]

Fullan and Levin (2009) write that the revitalization of a school system requires a whole system reform and that it must take place simultaneously at the school, district and provincial level with support from dedicated unrelenting leadership and must be focused on what goes on in the classroom. In their work, they provide examples of whole system reforms that have directly improved educational outcomes across provincial systems.[30]

Click the digital model for Systematic Leadership Commitment (Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools)

Promising Practices in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education: Case Studies of Two Alberta Schools (2007) shows that it is the principals of schools who are key to enhancing First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement in their schools. To achieve this, they require the support of their entire staff from the superintendent to the teaching and support staff to the custodial staff.

Collaborative Frameworks—Building Relationships Companion Resource

Clearly Articulated Vision

Clearly articulated vision and mission statements that actively invite the input of First Nations, Métis and Inuit leadership, Elders, parents and students are invaluable in providing a shared vision for success of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

Click the digital model for Clear & Articulated Vision (Holy Spirit School Division)

It is important that each First Nations, Métis and Inuit community gathers together to define Aboriginal education in its own voice and on its own terms.[31] By doing so, the communities will be more effective in providing guidance to support the school's vision and mission statements toward success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. The school board's role in implementing the First Nations, Métis and Inuit program vision and mission statement is to provide policy guidance and direction for the district. For example:

- The school board works collaboratively with the superintendent to support the focus, alignment and resources needed to develop a clear, coherent vision that all school staff recognize.
- District leaders use the measurements and assessments of their First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, along with staff performance and achievements, to inform their decisions and examine how a new idea or process can serve the vision of the district.
- The district vision for First Nations, Métis and Inuit education is then appropriately and successfully embodied in all of the school's shared vision and practices.
- Principals model the vision of the school through their leadership, priorities and behaviour and ensure that program delivery, academic standards and school activities are also in alignment with the vision.
- Through the school standards and consistent support of the superintendent and principal, teachers and support staff are fully aware of what is expected of them. Professional development and other supports are provided to help them achieve these expectations.

Supportive Policy

Click the digital model for Supportive Policy (Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools)

Flexible and supportive policies are extremely important in providing clear direction for the school. School policies shape the overall structure and tone of schools, guide the spending of the school budget, dictate which resources and professional development will be made available, guide the hiring of staff, determine salaries, inform how staff and students are evaluated, and determine to what extent the school will be involved in the community.[32]

Policy development is strengthened by an appreciation for different perspectives. A broader view provides room for flexibility when accommodating the needs of their First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and encourages creative solutions when dealing with issues, such as student lateness, course scheduling and testing.[33]

First Nations, Métis and Inuit students experience greater success when learning is relevant to their personal values and life experiences. Having warm, caring teachers and welcoming classroom environments; integrating First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures and content into current educational practice; having high expectations of students and recognizing and celebrating student academic progress and success also supports students. Understanding a community's unique relationship with the land also helps teachers become more effective in developing culturally responsive educational practices.

The Ministry of Education continues to support student success in a number of ways, including working collaboratively with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities to develop culturally relevant learning resources and programming opportunities focused on continuous improvement.

Instructional Practices

Teachers who are warm and caring, and have high expectations of their First Nations, Métis and Inuit students contribute to higher levels of student engagement and learning, which are key predictors of school completion and student success.[34]

Teachers need to be aware of the diverse cultures within their classrooms and that they bring their own culture and the culture of the school into their classrooms. *Inspiring Education* calls for "a greater integration of multiple perspectives, including cultural, in the learning experience."[35] *Alberta Education: Our Children, Our Future, Getting It Right* (2012) states that, "The diverse backgrounds of students need to be respected and supported within school environments. Differences should be acknowledged, celebrated and embraced."[36] An increased awareness of culture helps teachers intentionally create respectful learning environments and enhance their relationships with their First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.[37]

The Alberta study, *TELL Them FROM Me: A Year in Review, 2010-2011*[38] involved 33 school districts and focused on student engagement and learning. Along with "quality instruction," the study also identified teacher–student relations, the classroom learning climate, high expectations for success and advocacy for students as drivers of positive student outcomes.

In *Collected Wisdom: American Indian Education,* Cleary and Peacock (1998)[39] identify the following successful teaching methods and behaviours that support success for Aboriginal students:

- building trust;
- connecting with the community;
- establishing cultural relevance in the curriculum;
- tapping into student's intrinsic motivation for learning;
- using humour;
- promoting family support;
- providing situations that yield small successes;
- making personal connections with students;
- using highly-engaging, activity-based learning;
- providing role models;
- being flexible, fair and consistent; and
- providing a real audience and purpose for student work.

Curriculum and Content

When First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and families feel that education is an important and relevant part of their lives they are more likely to be engaged and to succeed academically. Curricula that incorporates and honours First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives, histories, languages and cultures help students and families feel that they belong, are valued and can succeed in school.

Click the digital model for Culturally Responsive Education Practices: Curriculum and Content (Kainai Board of Education)

First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures are richly diverse, each with a subset of traditional practices that embody language, songs, protocols and practices. Alberta's First Nations, Métis and Inuit population includes at least 10 different spoken languages, including Blackfoot, Dene, Dene tha, Beaver, Michif, Nakoda, Plains Cree, Woodlands Cree, Saulteaux and Tsuu T'ina. In developing, accessing and implementing culturally relevant curricula, teachers will be representing First Nations, Métis and Inuit students in positive and appropriate ways that will help students engage with their learning in a meaningful way.[40]

Regardless of whether teachers have Aboriginal students in their classroom, they are responsible for teaching all students about First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, histories and cultures as a part of our country's history of colonization and the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in Canada. This is important, so that *all* Canadians can learn from our history rather than simply about it. For many teachers, this may require a shift in their own understanding of Canada's colonial history and First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.[41]

Alberta Education, along with advice and input from First Nations, Métis and Inuit Elders, community experts and teachers, has developed programs of study for Aboriginal Studies 10–20–30, which infuse First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives into all core subject areas, including physical education and wellness, fine arts, knowledge and employability, and literacy. This infusion serves to strengthen the awareness and understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit governance structures, histories, treaty and Aboriginal rights, lands, cultures and languages among all Albertans. Alberta Education also developed *Language Learning Opportunities in Alberta*, which includes optional programs in a variety of First Nations languages, including Blackfoot and Cree. At the high school level, Aboriginal Studies 10–20–30 offers a perspective that integrates the past, present and future of Aboriginal peoples. This program provides all students with the opportunity to develop, explore and apply their own personal reflections on Aboriginal perspectives.

Click the digital model for Curriculum & Content (Kainai Board of Education)

In addressing any concerns regarding which Aboriginal learning resources are culturally appropriate, teachers can access this helpful resource developed by the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol: *Common Tool for Assessing and Validating Teaching and Learning Resources for Cultural Appropriateness and Historical Accuracy of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Content*.[42]

Learner Assessment

The outermost ring of the Collaborative Frameworks model emphasizes the need for school authorities to have clear goals for First Nations, Métis and Inuit education, along with accompanying ways of measuring success. In its resource, *Redefining How Success Is Measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning*, the Canadian Council on Learning points out that conventional ways of measuring success rarely reflect the specific needs and aspirations of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. "Therefore, a key challenge for Aboriginal peoples and for educators and governments working with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities to improve learning outcomes is to articulate a comprehensive definition of what is meant by 'learning success,' and to develop an appropriate framework for measuring it."[43]

Click the digital model for Learner Assessment (Holy Spirit School Division)

Click the digital model for Learner Assessment (Simon Fraser University)

Understanding how their First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities define 'learning success' and identifying appropriate means of incorporating and measuring these success goals helps school authorities and teachers to be more effective in program planning for their First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners.

Ongoing student assessment is a part of regular classroom activities and may include projects, class presentations, tests, homework assignments, classroom observations, portfolios of student work and feedback from parents.

Along with monitoring student progress, student assessment allows schools to regulate program effectiveness by identifying and responding to areas that need improvement.

Learning Resources

In addition to the curriculum, introducing other culturally appropriate learning resources into Alberta schools allows First Nations, Métis and Inuit students to see their cultures reflected in their learning activities. Learning resources in which First Nations, Métis and Inuit share their knowledge and experiences in their own voice are particularly meaningful. Culturally appropriate learning resources may also help teachers develop an appreciation for the contributions made by Aboriginal peoples of Canada.

Examples of some relevant and useful resources include:
- literature-based resource guides and classroom kits;
- resource guides that have been revised and published for various events; e.g., Aboriginal Awareness month, National Aboriginal month and Louis Riel Day;
- books and videos by Aboriginal authors;
- an extensive collection of books and resources for staff on a variety of Aboriginal topics and issues; and
- teaching and learning materials on the websites of other Canadian provinces, school jurisdictions, Aboriginal and education organizations, museums, archives, interpretive centres, local libraries and community resource centres.

Click the digital model for Learning Resources (Holy Spirit School Division)

While learning resources usually refer to print, digital, audio, visual and audio-visual materials, the importance of accessing the knowledge of local Elders, cultural advisors, parents, leaders and community members as 'learning resources' should not be underestimated. First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures continue to be mainly oral with only a small portion of the vast Aboriginal knowledge captured in written text or on video. The rest of Aboriginal knowledge remains firmly and vibrantly embedded in cultural songs, dances, drumming, ceremonies, designs and stories, and in the way First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples express themselves and live their lives.[44]

Celebrating Success

Success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students is embodied in "future citizens who are secure in their being, their languages, and their cultures . . . citizens who not only exercise their rights but also their responsibilities and duties while participating actively in society."[45]

Building collaborative partnerships with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Elders, parents and community members is important in defining and celebrating student success. Within the circle of collaborative partnerships, when one succeeds, everyone succeeds.

Environment

Each First Nations, Métis and Inuit community has developed and maintained a unique relationship with the particular land that it occupies (or has occupied in the past).[46] Within their cosmologies, they each deeply understand their interdependence with the land and with all of existence and that they are not higher or separate from the other,[47] but that each has a rightful place in the cosmos and is to be valued. Within each geographical region in Canada, First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples have maintained cultural lifestyles that are vibrant and unique to their area.

In order to develop greater insight into the cultures, histories and protocols of each culture, teachers need to understand how different environments are unique to each First Nations, Métis and Inuit community and how Aboriginal sense of self is rooted in the land rather than in an independent individual.
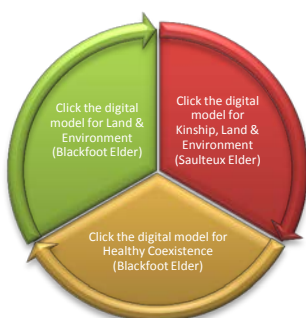
The unique ways in which each group lives within its environment is what defines the group as a distinct people. Understanding and respecting First Nations, Métis and Inuit protocols, which have been developed and used for thousands of years, is the first step toward working together with First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents and communities.

Capacity Building

Long-term strategies for building capacity in schools and supporting success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students include the areas of staff recruitment, retention, staff development, research and orientation, and language and culture.

Staff Recruitment

As part of their strategy in supporting success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, school authorities hire teachers who are committed to improving outcomes for Aboriginal students, have high expectations of *all* of their students, are flexible, and have demonstrated a warmth and genuine care for their students.[48]

Incorporating recruitment strategies to increase the number of certificated First Nations, Métis and Inuit teachers in schools is also beneficial in their long-term planning.[49] Bell et al. (2004) points out the serious shortage of Aboriginal teachers and Kanu (2006) and Stairs (1994) describe the unique contributions made by First Nations, Métis and Inuit teachers and teaching support staff toward the meaningful integrations of Aboriginal perspectives.[50]

Staff Retention

Lower rates of staff turnover contribute to stronger relationships among staff over time, enhance academic achievement and enhance success for students. Schools can provide strong and positive leadership, incentives, supportive and flexible job conditions, and career growth opportunities to promote the retention of staff and encourage staff to commit to working with the school for longer periods of time.

Staff Development

Professional development opportunities that enhance teacher knowledge and understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, languages, histories, issues and worldviews, support teachers in integrating Aboriginal perspectives into their teaching and learning activities.[51]

Teachers, who are not exposed to or do not have a First Nations, Métis and Inuit knowledge base, often find it difficult to understand issues related to First Nations, Métis and Inuit education.[52] Battiste (2002) points out that when teachers encounter cultural differences, they often have little "… theory, scholarship, research or tested practice to draw on to engage Aboriginal education in a way that is not assimilative or racially defined."[53] In a study conducted by Harper (2000), non-Aboriginal teachers expressed that they had not received enough cultural training to be able to meet the needs of their First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.[54]

As school authorities plan and prioritize the types of professional development in which their staff will participate, considering opportunities that will enhance teacher knowledge and understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, languages, histories and worldviews, as well as educational issues, social interaction patterns and pedagogical practices, will greatly help teachers support the success of their First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

Research and Orientation

Making research on First Nations, Métis and Inuit education available to staff helps build capacity by creating a continual dialogue among staff on best practices with regard to First Nations, Métis and Inuit student success.

Click the digital model for Research & Orientation

Research in First Nations, Métis and Inuit education provides a snapshot of generalized trends and is most useful when understood within the local context of the school. Research may include Aboriginal publications, educational journals, books, videos, literature reviews and case studies, as well as consultations with First Nations, Métis and Inuit community Elders and cultural advisors.

Initiatives, such as the *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education: AISI Provincial Research Review,*[55] can provide a foundation for further research and development in First Nations, Métis and Inuit education initiatives in Canada. For a broader understanding of Aboriginal educational issues on a global context, research and reports from other countries, such as the United States, Australia and New Zealand, are also readily available.

Another strategy in building capacity is a thorough staff orientation. By introducing and reinforcing vision and mission statements, school policies and goals in every area of program planning, new staff can align their teaching practices to the vision, mission and goals of the school.

Language and Culture

Teachers and principals who spend time with First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents and community members and attend Aboriginal community events deepen their knowledge of contemporary and traditional First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, histories, perspectives, languages and approaches to learning. Doige (2003) writes, "… to understand Aboriginal culture one must understand the Aboriginal people, the individuals who are living it now. Traditions are only one aspect of the ever-changing dynamic within a culture … People and their values, beliefs, feelings and thoughts are dynamic, and these define a culture." [56]

First Nations, Métis and Inuit languages are highly contextual[57] and embody the intellectual wealth of each community.[58] Culturally supportive schools and communities incorporate the practice of local languages and cultural traditions in their everyday affairs. This may include implementing Aboriginal language programs, inviting Aboriginal language speakers to speak at events, setting up cultural clubs and other extracurricular activities, providing respected Elders with a place of honour at community functions and consistently modelling culturally-appropriate behaviour in the day-to-day life of the school.

Click the digital model for Language & Culture (Kainai Board of Education)

In *Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge*, the Assembly of Alaska Native Educators (2000)[59] identifies standards for 'culturally supportive communities that incorporate the practice of local cultural traditions in its everyday affairs.' A community that meets its cultural standard:

- provides respected Elders with a place of honour in community functions;
- models culturally-appropriate behaviour in the day-to-day life of the community;
- uses traditional child-rearing and parenting practices that reinforce a sense of identity and belonging;
- organizes and encourages participation of members from all ages in regular community-wide family-oriented events; and
- incorporates and reinforces traditional cultural values and beliefs in all formal and informal community functions.

Teaching and learning take place within the rich and complex context of community. Student engagement and learning becomes enriched when students feel safe and experience a sense of belonging within their school community,[60] when parents and community members are meaningfully involved in school planning and programming, and when students feel they are heard and supported.
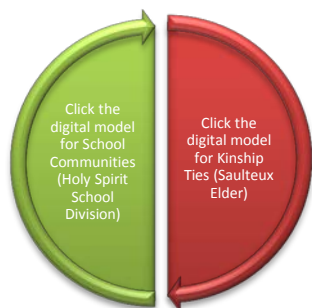
First Nations, Métis and Inuit children are not solely the responsibility of their parents. Traditionally, the whole community shares in the task of raising the next generation, as children learn the values of their community within the supportive circle of their family and community.[61] Today, family members often take care of the children, as they did in the past or through legal guardianship.

Within their communities, children learn through participation in ceremonies, storytelling, talking circles, observation, introspection, modelling, experiential learning and prayer.[62] The school, Elders, grandparents, aunts, uncles, trusted friends, leaders and other community members all have a vital role to play in shaping the future of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children.

Safety and Belonging

There is a strong positive relationship between student academic achievement and the classroom learning environment.[63] Creating warm and caring schools and learning environments where First Nations, Métis and Inuit students feel safe and valued, has a positive influence on student engagement and learning.[64] This is accomplished through positive, inclusive and respectful attitudes, as well as through the presence of affirming First Nations, Métis and Inuit images, art, posters, books, videos and positive messages celebrating diversity.[65]

One of the values expressed within *Inspiring Education* (2010) is, "Learners' differing needs, cultures, and abilities are respected and valued within inclusive learning environments."[66] *Alberta Education: Our Children, Our Future, Getting It Right* (2012) states, "A warm, welcoming and safe school environment should be created. This environment should help students feel secure and comfortable so that they can focus on their learning."[67] Creating a learning environment that honours students' cultures helps First Nations, Métis and Inuit students feel that they belong, are valued and can succeed in school.[68] Research shows that greater success is achieved when First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and families feel that education is an important and relevant part of their lives.[69]

Learning also best occurs in an environment that is safe and caring, where the learner is engaged and where programs are built on identifying personal strengths and individual needs. Creating a positive learning environment for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students is critical for their growth, development and success. Along with a strong focus on academic achievement and cultural infusion, student safety and sense of belonging remains a priority in First Nations, Métis and Inuit education.[70]

A safe and caring school is determined by many things, including the individuals involved, their personalities and level of teaching skills; a school's policy, practices and school-wide programs; and the school building and its surroundings.

Students who experience a sense of belonging are less likely to drop out of school.[71] Demmert (2001) adds "… studies conducted in the past 30 years collectively provide strong evidence that Native language and culture programs and student identification with such programs are associated with improved academic performance, decreased dropout rates, improved attendance rates, decreased clinical symptoms and improved personal behavior."[72] The presence of First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures and language programs in schools helps the school feel less foreign to students and helps community members become involved in the education process.[73]

Transition between school communities is often a huge challenge for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, many of whom have to move between two divergent social structures, each with a different set of rules.[74] When students experience dissonance between their culture and the mainstream culture of the school, their self-esteem may be threatened, especially when their culture is held in low regard.[75] Rural students are often required to transition between a small school and community to a larger school or even a school in an urban area. New school cultures and environments can feel foreign to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students and they may feel lonely and isolated. This may influence their attitudes toward school, their levels of engagement in school and their academic performance. St. Germaine (1995) links the high dropout rates of Aboriginal students to the obstacles and challenges faced during the transition to other schools.[76] Alberta Education's initiative, FNMI Families, Parents and Communities: Engagement Workshops, provides support in the area of transitions and high school completion.

Each school identifies goals for enhancing student safety and belonging that are aligned with the school's vision and mission statements and goals. Initiatives to enhance this may involve:

- offering professional development sessions in this area for staff, students and parents;
- providing educational and informational materials;
- planning special events; and
- initiating school-wide programs and initiatives.

Creating and sustaining a welcoming school environment, not only for students but also for First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents and community members, will help enhance positive relationships and support student success.[77]

Student and Family Support

First Nations, Métis and Inuit students who feel supported in school are more confident in expressing themselves as Aboriginal persons. This is especially true when classroom and school interactions are conducted in a spirit of mutual respect.

Historically, the loss of children to residential schools devastated First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and led to the decline of First Nations, Métis and Inuit families and family responsibilities.[78] Mothers, aunts and grandmothers had only infants and toddlers to nurture and teach the culture. Fathers, uncles and grandfathers were unable to teach survival skills to adolescent sons, nephews and grandsons. First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents were given no choice or input into their children's education. While communities suffered the loss of their children at home, their children's experiences at school stripped many of them of their pride and cultural identity and prepared them for a life of servitude and manual labour.[79] Many experienced cruelty and abuse, which left them emotionally scarred for the rest of their lives.[80]

Click the digital model for Student & Family Support (Holy Spirit School Division)

Today, many First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents and grandparents continue to feel conflicted, unwelcome and/or intimidated by schools due to their own negative experiences. They may not know enough about the school system to enable them to support their children effectively.[81]

School authorities that recognize the importance of having parents actively involved in their children's education take the time to strengthen their relations with their First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents and families and encourage their active participation; e.g., inviting First Nations, Métis and Inuit representation on school committees; actively seeking parental advice on plans for school improvement; conducting parent workshops throughout the school year that focus on relevant topics, such as adolescent development and preparing for high school.

Community Engagement

Developing strategies to build positive and inclusive working relationships between schools and First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities enables schools to be more effective in supporting the success of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students in school. Other useful strategies in building community engagement include:

- developing an appreciation for multiple worldviews, perspectives and knowledge systems that exist in their communities;[82]
- listening to the diverse voices of parents and community members in order to build an engagement strategy with them;
- conducting a needs assessment of what is and is not working in the district with respect to First Nations, Métis and Inuit education; and
- setting goals, identifying benchmarks of success and establishing an assessment timeline for an overall family and community engagement strategy.

Advocacy

The Alberta study, *TELL Them FROM Me Project: Measuring Student Success*, shows that having someone at school, who consistently provides encouragement and who is available when advice is needed, has a significant impact on student engagement.[83] According to Willms (2003), student engagement goes hand in hand with student success.[84]

The prime objective for advocacy is to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit students in the school system. In most cases, First Nations, Métis and Inuit liaison workers and counsellors play the role of advocate and cultural broker for students, by helping students move between their home culture and school culture. They often communicate to teachers on behalf of the parents who are unable to make it into the schools, and they provide culturally-relevant information, research and professional development to school staff.

Other advocacy activities involve working directly with communities, planning cultural events, celebrating best practices in student success, promoting Aboriginal knowledge through professional development opportunities, developing and implementing school policy affecting First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, and supporting communication between parents and the teachers and principal.

Appendix A:

LAYING THE FOUNDATION
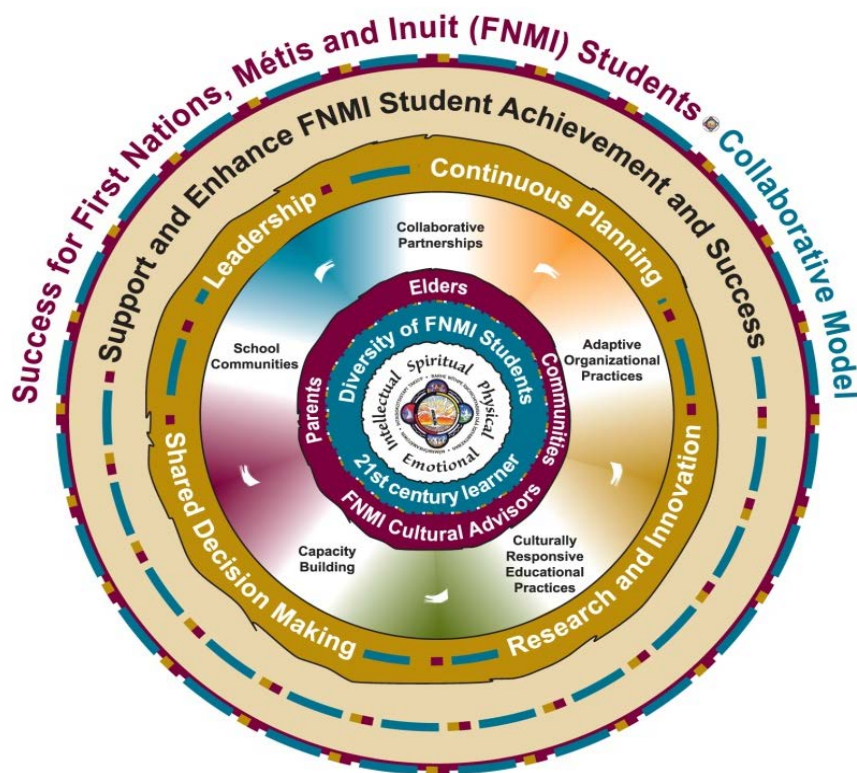
Note: Links to external resources included in *Successful Practices in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education: Collaborative Frameworks—Building Relationships Companion Resource* may or may not be recommended or authorized by Alberta Education. Users should verify websites and other resources mentioned prior to using them with students.

In Canadian society, it is widely accepted that educational success is required for social and economic success. High school completion and post-secondary education and/or training has become the main route leading to economic prosperity for people living in Canada. However, there is a significant gap between the educational achievement of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students as First Nations, Métis and Inuit students continue to face socio-economic and cultural barriers to educational success and the completion of high school. In 2006, 40% of Aboriginal people, ages 20 to 24, did not have a high school diploma, as compared to 13% of non-Aboriginal peoples. The rate is significantly higher (at 61%) for people living on-reserve and (at 68%) for Inuit people living in remote communities.[1] Battiste (2010) writes, "Aboriginal peoples in Canada have been relegated to systemic poverty. They are the most economically disadvantaged Canadians by all standard measures. They suffer the worst educational systems created in Canada, the worst conditions of life, the most unemployment, the lowest incomes, and the poorest health."[2] Statistics have been pointing to a serious gap in educational achievement for a long time now, which is why education has been identified by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) as the single most important issue facing Aboriginal peoples.

Bell et al. (2004) and Alberta Education's *Promising Practices in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education* (2007, 2008) suggest that those school authorities that work together with First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents and communities, that consider their input into the planning process and that invite their participation in school activities, are more successful in improving First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement.

Early Educational Partnerships

Over the years, there has been considerable work to help Aboriginal students reach their full potential within a westernized education system, leading up to the development of the Collaborative Frameworks.

- The *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework*, released in 2002, fosters a greater appreciation and understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples by all Albertans, while providing direction and long-term goals for improving Aboriginal learner opportunities and success in Alberta.

- The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Partnership Council, established in 2009, is a 16-member Council that includes eight community First Nations, Métis and Inuit representatives and eight elected officials; the presidents of both the Métis Nation of Alberta and the Métis Settlements General Council; the three grand chiefs of Treaty 6, 7 and 8; and the Ministers of Education, Enterprise and Advanced Education, and Aboriginal Relations. The Council provides guidance for the future direction of First Nations, Métis and Inuit education in Alberta and is committed to sharing guidance, advice and a broad representation of perspectives on First Nations, Métis and Inuit education issues among its members. Collaborating with First Nations and Métis organizations to implement the Council Action Plan is a ministry priority.

- The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for First Nations Education in Alberta was signed in January 2010 by the Grand Chiefs of Treaties 6, 7 and 8, the provincial government (as represented by Alberta Education, Aboriginal Relations), and the Federal government (as represented by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development). The vision of the Memorandum of Understanding states: *Canada, Alberta and the Assembly Chiefs in Alberta hold a common vision for First Nations students in Alberta where First Nations students are achieving or exceeding the full educational outcomes, levels and successes of all other students in Alberta.* Collaborating with First Nations and the Federal government to implement the Memorandum of Understanding is a ministry priority.

- **Goal 3: Success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students** was introduced in the 2009–2012 Alberta Education Business Plan and outlines Alberta Education's commitment to improving education outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and to closing the gap in education achievement between Aboriginal and other Alberta students.

- In May 2009, information sharing sessions involving First Nations, Métis and Inuit stakeholders and school authorities were held across the province to introduce Goal 3 and provide key strategies for improving outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. In response to field requests for tools to assist jurisdictions in planning for First Nations, Métis and Inuit education, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Services and Field Services Sector began working on the development of the *Collaborative Frameworks,* with input from First Nations, Métis and Inuit stakeholders, school authorities and research.

- Introductory workshops on engagement were held in 14 communities on increasing parental involvement and addressing ways of eliminating the achievement gap between First Nations, Métis and Inuit and non-Aboriginal students. A report, entitled *Report on Introductory FNMI Engagement Workshops (2010)*, verified that gaps in achievement, attendance issues, staying in school and completing high school were ongoing concerns for all participants. First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents and communities also identified the historical trauma of residential schooling and racism as a major issue.

[1] Statistics Canada, *Labour Force Activity (8), Aboriginal Identity (8), Highest Certificate, Diploma or Degree (14), Area of Residence (6), Age Groups (12A) and Sex (3) for the Population 15 Years and Over of Canada Provinces and Territories, 2006 Census –20% Sample Data.* Topic-based Tabulation, 2006 Census of Population. Ottawa. Catalogue No. 97-560-X2006031, March 4, 2008.

[2] M. Battiste, "Nourishing the Learning Spirit: Living Our Way to New Thinking." *Education Canada* 50, 1 (2010), pp. 14–18.

Appendix B:

GLOSSARY
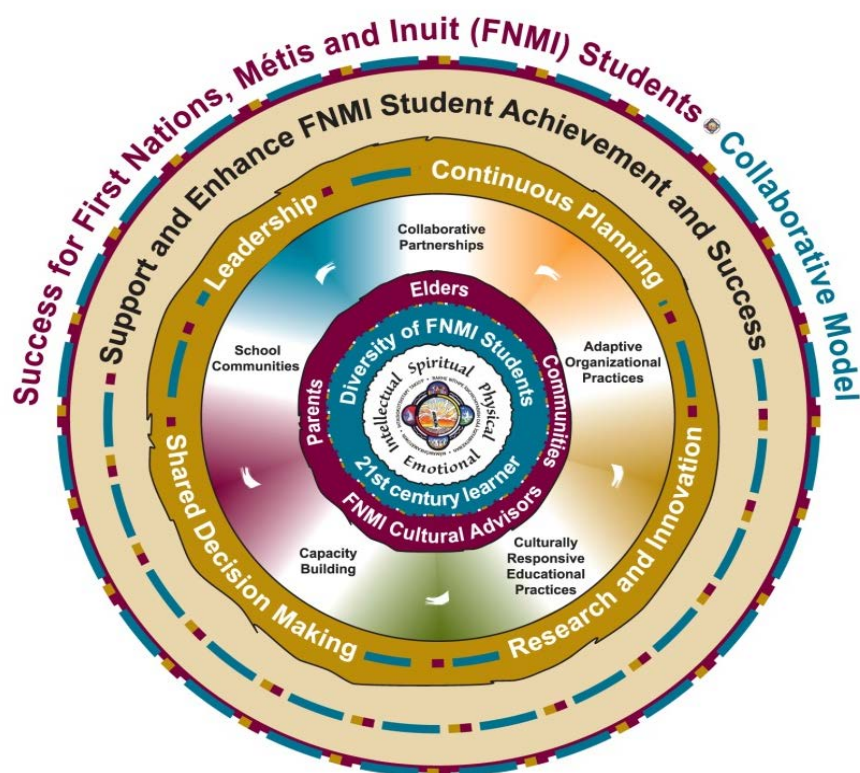
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Glossary

For the purposes of this document, the following definitions are provided. Using language effectively is important for a shared understanding in First Nations, Métis and Inuit education.

Aboriginal	Aboriginal peoples are the descendants of the original inhabitants of North America. The Canadian Constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal peoples: Indian (First Nations), Métis and Inuit. These three separate peoples have unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.
First Nations	The term 'First Nations peoples' refers to the Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Many Aboriginal peoples adopted the term 'First Nations' to replace the word 'band' in the name of their community. Members of a First Nation generally share common values, traditions and practices rooted in their ancestral heritage.
Métis	People of mixed First Nation and European ancestry identify themselves as Métis peoples, who are distinct from First Nations peoples, Inuit or non-Aboriginal peoples. The Métis have a unique culture that draws on their diverse ancestral origins.
Inuit	An Aboriginal peoples in northern Canada, who live above the tree line in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, Northern Quebec and Labrador. The word means 'people' in the Inuit language (Inuktitut).
Community	Community includes First Nations, Métis and Inuit groups.
Family	Family signifies not only parents and their children, but a broad network of grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins. Members of the same clan are considered family.
Protocols	Codes of etiquette that describe appropriate and respectful behaviour and ways of communicating when working with or visiting Aboriginal communities.
Reserve	Land set aside by the Federal government for the use and occupancy of an Indian group (First Nations) or band.
Off-Reserve	First Nations peoples who live outside the boundary of a reserve.

Appendix C:

REPORT ON INTRODUCTORY FNMI ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS (2010)
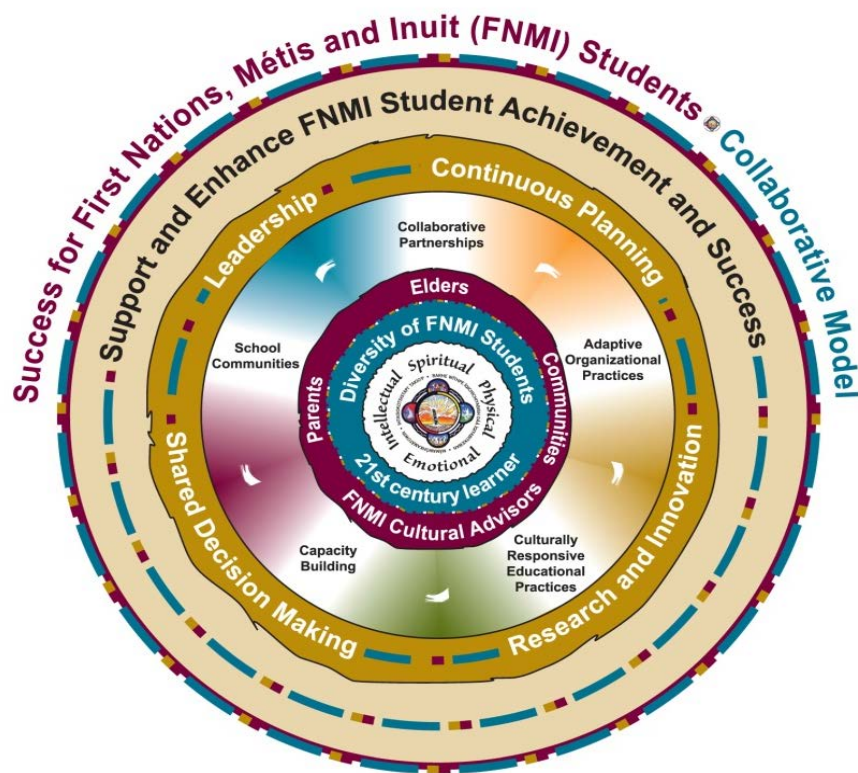
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Report on Introductory FNMI Engagement Workshops (2010)

*Raw data collected from workshop. Verbatim information.

REPORT ON INTRODUCTORY FNMI ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS (2010)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In support of the Alberta Education Business Plan Strategy 3.1, the Ministry of Education assists school authorities in developing collaborative frameworks that will engage local First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) communities and parents in the planning and implementation of strategies focused on improving FNMI student success.

In November 2010, Alberta Education held 14 introductory workshops to engage FNMI families, parents and communities throughout the province. Invitation letters were sent to the majority of provincial and First Nations school authorities and Métis Settlements for Northland. FNMI managers were instructed to follow up with a personal invitation within their assigned zones by contacting their school district coordinators, liaison workers and their Treaty First Nations school authorities. All workshop locations were predetermined based on geographic proximity of First Nations communities and Métis Settlements. In collaboration with ARPDC, the sites were selected based on Alberta demographics to accommodate the needs of FNMI parents, families and communities. An invitation was extended to the Alberta School Councils' Association to provide information on its initiative regarding parent engagement. The Association was able to present in three provincial workshops (Lethbridge, High Level and Grande Prairie) and three Northland School Division workshops (Slave Lake, High Prairie and Peace River).

The workshops provided opportunities to increase awareness and gather information on engagement with FNMI family, parent and community members. Participants were given the opportunity to exchange effective strategies and practices for school authority planning around FNMI student success. In addition, information strategies and recommendations were recorded to support the development of resources on FNMI family, parent and community engagement. The workshop agenda focused on gathering specific data from school authorities and family, parent and community challenges and opportunities. Interviews from Fort McMurray, Edmonton and Lethbridge were conducted to support content development for resources. All participants were encouraged to provide their input and to make general comments and recommendations. Participants were engaged in group discussions on "school communities," as identified in the collaborative framework model. Within these discussions, the participants addressed topics, such as safety and belonging, student and family support, community engagement and advocacy. They also provided individual written responses on three questions regarding "Next Steps."

All workshops were completed according to the November 2010 schedule. We had anticipated a total of 546 participants, based on the required number calculated for each school district likely to attend the workshop in their area. The required participants included provincial school and First Nations authority personnel, parents and community members. In comparison, the actual total numbers was 312 participants or 57 percent. Overall, 62 percent of participants were from a school authority and 28 percent were parents and community members.

During the workshops, FNMI Services shared information on Alberta Education resources and solicited input for the development of a DVD, parent handbook and companion document. In

partnership with the Alberta School Council's Association, information was provided on school councils and how FNMI parents can become more involved in school.

Provincial Introductory Workshop Attendance

Zone	Anticipated # Participants	Actual # Participants	# Central Office and School Staff	# Parent/Community Members
Zone 1 High Level	45	20	15	5
Zone 1 Grande Prairie	38	18	5	13 (urban)
Zone 2/3 Edmonton	27	10	10	0
Zone 2/3 Edmonton	61	8	8	0
Zone 2/3 Fort McMurray	19	51	34	*17 (Northland)
Zone 2/3 St. Paul	58	31	20	11
Zone 4 Red Deer	68	20	19	1
Zone 5 Calgary	46	26	15	11
Zone 6 Lethbridge	52	37	21	16
TOTALS:	414	221	147	74

*17 Northland parents and community members attended the Fort McMurray workshop.

The provincial workshop numbers of anticipated participants was 414 (school jurisdictions, First Nations school authorities, FNMI communities, FNMI parents). The actual numbers were 221 participants. Central office and school staff made up 63 percent, while parents/community members made up 37 percent. Some school personnel, such as FNMI teachers, coordinators and liaison workers, are also community members and parents.

Northland Workshop Attendance

The result of five additional Northland workshops:

Northland School Division	Anticipated # Participants	Actual # Participants	# Central Office and School Staff	# Parent/Community Members
Slave Lake	40	26	17	9
High Prairie	32	30	15	15
Peace River	24	6	2	4
Cold Lake	18	9	6	3
Fort Chipewyan	18	20	8	12
TOTALS	132	91	48	43

The Northland number of anticipated participants was 132 (school staff, local school board members from First Nations parents/communities and Métis settlements parents/communities). The actual number was 91 participants with 47 percent being parents/community members. With the Northland workshops, the majority of school personnel were FNMI teachers, coordinators and liaison workers as well as community members and parents.

Data collected from all 14 workshops were reviewed and compiled in this report. This process was to support school authorities with strategies to increase parental and community engagement within their school communities. The workshop format included opportunities for participants to discuss and address the lack of parent and community involvement with the local school authority. After each exercise, all written responses were collected. In addition, guided questions were given to those participants who agreed to be interviewed. Key quotations from the participants have been included for each activity to capture ideas, suggestions and recommendations related to increasing FNMI family, parent and community engagement.

Activity 1: Challenges and Opportunities (Guided Questions for Table Talk)

From the 14 workshops, these are the written responses gathered under each category:

Parental Questions

- *When you hear the phrase parental engagement what do you think of …?*
- *How can school leadership encourage parental involvement in decision-making processes (i.e., board level, school council)?*
- *What are some of the ways you would like to help with your child's education?*

Respondents' (parents) Key Ideas:
- "deepen understanding and awareness of school (education) system, such as procedures, policies, protocols"
- "parents have high academic expectations and celebrate achievements"
- "parents need to know their rights and power"
- "translate policies in FNMI languages"
- "support advocacy for FNMI needs (spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical)"
- "cultural and community involvement"
- "parents feel alienated"
- "extended family awareness and respected"
- "non-threatening communication"
- "gather and build relationships with parent input"
- "school provides a comment box not a complaining box"
- "build an inviting and welcoming atmosphere in schools (teasing, taunting)"
- "consistent communication between parents, teachers and schools (letters, phone calls)"
- "more empowered to become active parents"
- "welcome parent volunteers for cultural events and activities"
- "meet-and-greet night to promote parent/social development"
- "tutorial study program after school"
- "goal-setting for my child"
- "hard to get parents together but start small"
- "Know the difference between punishment and discipline."

Collaborative Frameworks—Building Relationships

School Authority Questions:

- *How do school authorities communicate with FNMI families, parents and communities about rights regarding their children's education?*
- *Parental engagement is essential to a child's education; what strategies would you recommend to increase involvement?*

Respondents' (school authorities) Key Ideas:
- "newsletters, student journals, texts and e-mails to involve parents"
- "work with school liaison and counsellors"
- "communicate through registration process"
- "provide information updates for FNMI student success"
- "hire FNMI liaison workers"
- "train parents in crisis management situations"
- "move away from deficit model toward a holistic model"
- "respect diverse views on engagement"
- "conduct parent–teacher interview and student registration in FNMI communities"
- "community conversation on local events with FNMI people"
- "letter regarding policies sent home at beginning of the year"
- "provide questionnaire for parents"
- "educate school on FNMI family needs"
- "no formal protocol in place regarding the rights of their children"
- "hold information sessions in the community"
- "provide information on children's rights and culturally specific difference"
- "Do parents even know their ability to appeal decisions?"
- "listening to parents is part of engagement"
- "accommodate parents in the evening"
- "parent manual website accessibility"
- "need legal department to deal with guardianship questions and give clarity on caregiver rights"
- "Aboriginal education team, including advisory, to build capacity amongst teachers"
- "form parent advisory committees"
- "bring back pride programs into schools"
- "What is the FNMI Service Branch? Alberta Education? share information about who we are and what we do"
- "hold meetings with First Nations authorities"
- "translate policies"
- "host regular parent and community workshops"
- "showcase schools (open house)"
- "host community events at the school (powwow, Aboriginal day, barbeques)"
- "school-based workshops"
- "roundtables with students to address issues and recommendations"
- "provide FNMI forums"
- "invisible wall (cultural barriers)"

- "breaking/taking away from cultural ways"
- "access to information on data through schools and Alberta Education"
- "go to community to learn about both worlds"
- "identify proper Elders"
- "ask for help from those who know"
- "share our culture with respect"
- "break down urban myths"
- "learning about identity is important"
- "bring awareness of education to community members"
- "learn about community history"
- "cross-cultural awareness (e.g., culture clubs, FNMI clubs, community dinners and events)"
- "obtain First Nations directories (e.g., school representatives, principals)
- "face-to-face surveys"
- "First Nations trustee on provincial boards"
- "a large number of school personnel have not been exposed to First Nations culture"
- "adjust the funding model"
- "build the relationship between schools and programs"
- "Loss of identity/language; how can one succeed if he or she have no sense of self?"
- "address bullying in schools"
- "repair and build relationships"
- "School funds are limited; who pays for additional programs?"
- "more mental health workers, counsellors"
- "start education incentives, tutor clubs"
- "access and create partnerships with the local resources (e.g., Elders)"
- "teach and learn about culture"
- "Get parents to create parent council."

General Responses

- *Do you have any general comments/recommendations?*
- *Some FNMI parents are intimidated by schools because of their own negative experiences (residential schools); how can school authorities build welcoming environments?*

Respondents' (all participants) Key Ideas:
- "we need more opportunities to communicate"
- "offer workshops on historical trauma (residential schools)"
- "accountability for how dollars are spent for FNMI students"
- "track students from K to 12"
- "What is the comparison between parental involvement in First Nations schools and public schools?"
- "If parents are not involved in band schools, why not?"
- "when you say holistic, embrace it"
- "Alberta Education will assist when school districts and parents/communities ask for guidance"
- "pleasant and approachable to relate to"
- "More space, more funds, more opportunities."

Activity 2: Flower Power—Collaborative Framework Model: School Communities

Group Work: How can these components help to shape your needs?
- *safety and belonging*
- *student and family support*
- *community engagement*
- *advocacy (support)*

Respondents' (all participants) Key Ideas:
- "have mentors in the school"
- "bullying awareness information"
- "resource officers"
- "visit websites for information"
- "share information on cyber safety for students"
- "teaching identity is important; children need to know who they are"
- "children want to be accepted"
- "address language barriers"
- "gain trust, build relationships"
- "connect with others to create confidence"

- "respect distinctiveness and differences"
- "create expectations, raise the bar"
- "racism may turn to bullying"
- "Address racism; give victims a voice and an opportunity to report (but to whom?)"
- "parents need to know their children are safe and feel a sense of belonging"
- "teach Blackfoot from Kindergarten to Grade 12"
- "need FNMI teachers and support staff in school"
- "respect self-worth and discipline"
- "welcome students to sports events, extracurricular events and academic study groups"
- "build a solid foundation of trust, communication and understanding"
- "advocacy and support through Elders and Aboriginal liaison from community"
- "staff attend powwow and round dances in the communities"
- "family album, traditional language gives identity"
- "positive staff and student relationships"
- "board and community relations"
- "student billeting"
- "academic support and career direction"
- "buddy systems, mentoring systems, boys and girls club"
- "FNMI liaison workers provide support to students on- and off-reserve"
- "open door policies to come in"
- "culture and ways of knowing for staff, district and community"
- "circle of courage model—increase knowledge about its use and of its application in public schools"
- "diversity and learning advisors"
- "external resources (e.g., family justice)"
- "system-wide standardized policies and practices for all"
- "bring parents in to support literacy and to address attendance"
- "create cultural awareness"

- "appoint Elders on school councils"
- "boards advocate on behalf of the schools and FNMI students"
- "school accountability to communicate and comprehend student achievement to parents"
- "train personnel in how to deal with suicide"
- "teach about the treaties in the classroom"
- "include animated literacy"
- "sharing or talking circles implemented for issues or general discussions"
- "need to be a bridge between FNMI families and schools"
- "parallels in other community organizations (e.g., police gangs)"
- "group mentorships verses one-on-one mentorship"
- "be positive/give the power rather than taking it away"
- "offer rather than tell"
- "must teach acceptance and understanding"
- "recognize student strengths and that every child has great potential"
- "posters, visuals that show FNMI presence"
- "bring your parent to school day"
- "book exchange program"
- "a parent lounge"
- "grandma and grandpa day"
- "parental forum on post your questions"
- "nature walks"
- "bring in more local speakers/presenters/storytellers"
- "awareness of technological needs"
- "interagencies cooperation"
- "teachers deliver report cards to homes"
- "ongoing workshops"
- "educate parents/students with their individual rights with respect to school/education"
- "at the beginning of school year, staff identifies students at risk and a point is made to connect daily with those students"
- "community feasts, dinners, barbeques, pancake breakfast, social events"
- "access to tutors on-reserve"
- "offer parental training"
- "allow parents to bring advocates to meetings"
- "networking"
- "advocate for your child's education"
- "parent sharing circle"
- "knowledge keepers invited to schools"
- "identify and utilize Aboriginal agencies (e.g., friendship centers, local agencies)"
- "open houses bring community together"
- "utilize knowledge keepers (e.g., Elders, advisors, artists, crafters, spiritual advisors, parent mentors)"
- "successful transitions programs, such as mentorships and adult teacher relationships"
- "give five to 10 minutes orientation and expectations"
- "connections to sports and activities"

- "provide parents with clear expectations and consequences of actions (guidelines)"
- "leadership versus economics"
- "pressure of becoming educated in First Nations communities"
- "life/religion problems (culturally)"
- "offer choices when resources are available"
- "after-school programs"
- "professional development for infusion of cultural understanding"
- "reach out to learn about protocol opportunities"
- "share expertise and best practices"
- "roundtable with food and comfortable language"
- "use parents skills and talents"
- "suggestion box, e-mail, Facebook for parents"
- "fun and family challenges to bring to school"
- "advocate inclusion for band-operated schools"
- "provide resource for parents"
- "provide awareness workshops"
- "help work toward provincial and Federal government for involvement and support in education"
- "explore external funding opportunities"
- "workshops on school council"
- "FNMI parent handbook"

Collaborative Frameworks—Building Relationships

- "community resources need to be the ones teaching students culture and language"
- "teachers must have cultural awareness"
- "information gathering with supper and entertainment"
- "What types of workshop exist for parent and community?"
- "provide community information sessions on FNMI because no one knows they exist"
- "promote capacity building by promoting culture and learning about the learned helplessness cycle"
- "pass the buck/dispute resolution"
- "move toward a solution action"
- "empower parents"
- "use of media"
- "active reconnecting to land"
- "diversity exists in the language and way of life"
- "no put downs"
- "parent confidentiality"
- "individual acknowledgement of students"
- "ask a lot of questions"
- "parents and children need ownership of school"
- "parent/teacher meetings every month"
- "ask for mediation"
- "stress management for students and parents"
- "incentive for more improved behaviour (e.g., trips, alternative rewards)"
- "More traditional activities."

Activity 3: Individual Written Responses

Individual Written Responses

- *How can we assist you in planning additional workshops for family, parent and community engagement in your school community?*
- *What do school authorities need to know about the FNMI community in your area?*
- *What can you (families, parents and communities) do to assist in supporting your school community?*

Respondents' (Individual) Key Ideas
- "for continuity continue with these workshops"
- "have the schools hold these workshops for all FNMI communities"
- "go to all districts with this information"
- "workshops are needed in each district"
- "Alberta Education needs to facilitate these workshops with parents"
- "a thorough explanation of the MOU needs to be provided"
- "tips needed to help parents attend workshops"
- "funding for child care and food makes it easier for parents to attend"

- "Alberta Education needs to compile a resource list of people in each area we can contact for expert advice"
- "the price was right for workshop and additional support for transportation and child care was great"
- "Are you (Alberta Education) available to attend school-based parent gatherings?"
- "plan for a series of workshops"

- "separate workshops for parents to ensure opportunities to participate"
- "Can FNMI managers act as a liaison between the school jurisdiction and reserve community?"
- "provide direction so the jurisdiction does not mess it up"
- "provide more resources and information about funding
- "more community members need to be involved"
- "would appreciate help with how to structure workshops and ideas about how to get high levels of parent involvement"
- "it would be helpful to have a workshop template to use that we could customize for our own workshop"
- "have each school district make available at least one representative and have a community service agency at the table as well"
- "keep up with the plan you have and provide more information for workshops"
- "involve more FNMI peoples on boards and councils"
- "do a district-wide PD session on the culture of the students we serve"
- "more district-based workshops so each division gets a chance to voice its opinions and concerns"
- "Would Alberta Education consider doing similar session's on-reserve?"
- "facilitators (FNMI managers) need to call central office for additional workshops"
- "Ask, 'what does success look like for my child'; don't assume."

- "How will the MOU and partnership council affect the reserve schools?"
- "it is not just about FNMI, it is about our communities' future"
- "increase traditional teachings from knowledge keepers"
- "understand FNMI issues and concepts"
- "gain awareness and understanding about FNMI history, culture, languages and especially about socioeconomic concerns"
- "need to develop long-term solutions"
- "provide socioeconomic context for our reserve community, especially the barriers that hinder student success in school"
- "How do you address the issues of attendance, nutrition and literacy in schools?"
- "workshop to include the history of residential schools and their impacts"
- "get to know community leaders"
- "need to know the demographic regions of the province"
- "many of the students come from Saskatchewan; how do we ease that transition and create success"
- "we are equal; just because parents don't get involved does not mean they don't care"
- "more engagement with neighbouring FNMI communities to reach a higher comfort of working together"
- "not sending your children to school regularly is crippling; it affects their education and their success in life"
- "try hosting a feast"
- "Understanding your role as a parent is important: What responsibilities belong to me? What are my rights?"
- "parents are available to participate in district PDs"
- "provide schools with contacts (e.g., parents and/or Elders who can advocate for the system to increase engagement)"

- "schools/districts can provide resources"
- "would be pleased to work with other First Nations to assist in developing strategies for improving parental engagement in their communities"
- "make available website information"
- "have media attend the workshops"
- "invite other Federal government representatives"
- "provide transportation to and from meetings; not everyone has a vehicle"
- "share results and perspectives from today's workshop"
- "provide other learning opportunities for parents, like literacy and numeracy"
- "Can Alberta Education provide PD in our district?"
- "provide opportunities for jurisdictions to share best practices"
- "workshop library to loan existing workshops (e.g., circle of courage, impact of residential school)"
- "provide more information on Alberta Education programs/services"
- "workshops for teachers are needed"

- "What is the reality of FNMI people, taxes and treaties (they get everything for free mentality)?"
- "empower the people by training them"
- "trainer to hold the workshops"
- "start a grandmother program"
- "more parent involvement sessions"
- "consider workshops for parents and FNMI communities as a PD opportunity for school staff"
- "consider hosting workshops in FNMI communities and Métis settlements"
- "host workshops like this at parent appreciation nights"
- "consider workshops exclusively for parents and communities"
- "understand the dynamics and resiliency of FNMI communities"
- "understand FNMI family ties"
- "racism and discrimination are unacceptable"
- "FNMI representation needed on local school boards"
- "facilitate regular talking circles"
- "find funds to hire an FNMI coordinator"
- "provide workshops on long-term effects of the negative residential school experience"
- "more time to prepare questions (ahead of time)"
- "greater dollar allocation for FNMI students"
- "we believe this needs to be a focus; the better we understand each other the better we can help each other"
- "advertise workshop coming to our community through radio and posters"
- "Alberta Education can assist with on-reserve workshops"
- "Alberta Education heading in the right direction"
- "provide information from workshops sessions"
- "parents are asking for community literacy through Alberta Education"

- "moving toward a positive solution"
- "create community links"
- "go to reserves to help parents and families"
- "ask oil companies to donate funds for workshops"
- "fundraiser to hold additional workshops"
- "understand rules and regulations of the school system"
- "create parent and student council"
- "children need to know how to respect school authority"
- "consider offering workshops in the evenings"
- "FNMI culture and history needs to be understood by their neighbours"
- "consider involving parents in after-school programs, like cooking class, homework clubs and more"
- fundraise by establishing a store in the school"
- "parents are taking ownership of what happens to our children's education through the workshops"
- "lack of awareness of the influence on a child's education"
- "No hidden agendas."

Findings

A summary of these findings is provided below and is based on the content gathered during the workshops. In all 14 introductory workshop sessions, respondents expressed strong support for increasing FNMI family, parent and community engagement, as captured in these comments:

- "keep circulating the information received from this workshop and inform others"
- "FNMI parents want their children to succeed in school and are willing to help them"
- "educators know that parent involvement can be a big factor in increasing student achievement"
- "teachers have a challenge in connecting with FNMI parents, families and communities in meaningful ways"
- "resources, such as the development of a DVD and a parent handbook, will increase their understanding of the education system"
- "parent voice at school is very important"
- "parents/stakeholders giving voice through resources will increase understanding for FNMI cultures, histories and perspectives within the schools"
- "some school coordinators work to bring parents to school"
- "focus on school involvement at workshops rather than regional sessions"
- "Strong desire to increase workshops at the local level for FNMI families, parents and communities."

In all 14 introductory workshop sessions, respondents identified concerns and challenges surrounding FNMI family, parent and community engagement, as captured in these comments.

- "insert the word parents into the collaborative framework model and identify what lifelong learning is"
- "more support from Alberta Education is needed, which could be addressed by having the Minister and senior staff show up to support FNMI initiatives"
- "more parent and community involvement is needed"
- "the data collected at the workshops must be shared so that all groups can collaboratively plan for future family, parent and community engagement"
- "provide choices on how parents, families and communities can become involved in the school environment"
- "spiritual component in model is a challenge, as some communities see spirituality as a barrier to their religion; more awareness is needed to distinguish the difference"
- "broaden family, parent and community reading skills with library programs"
- "provide bussing in the summer to offer educational programs and to accommodate needs of students who commute on a weekly basis from rural to urban"
- "promote monthly parent meetings"
- "communication between on- and off-reserve school boards needs to be strengthened"
- "government-to-government relationships need to be strengthened (e.g., Alberta Education and INAC)"
- "broaden understanding of the education system and government resources at local level"

- "access to information on how to set up school council committees is not readily available"
- "broaden FNMI awareness through community visits and participating in cultural events"
- "recruit more FNMI teachers"
- "the term *engagement* is not user friendly as it is implies that I have too"
- "feeling of intimidation at school council meetings"
- "school administrators take an active role in schools and don't shift responsibilities to liaison workers"
- "student needs must be aligned with programs"
- "integration of FNMI history (e.g., visibility, role models)"
- "lack of empathy and treating FNMI as multicultural"
- "improving report card systems"
- "linkage with FNMI representation in school boards"
- "increase knowledge about curriculum, learning and teaching resources and assessment"
- "lack of parent information (handbook must be user friendly)"
- "increasing parental responsibility"
- "lack of training on volunteerism"
- "increasing education on student results"
- "provide FNMI cultural workshop for all staff and school authority"
- "build trust with parents"
- "involve community Elders in the education process"
- "encourage school board trustees to understand and consider initiatives of MOU"
- "need for transparency in decision making for FNMI education"
- "promote awareness and understanding of stereotypes and notions of FNMI people"
- "promote teacher exchange"
- "provide in-service to parents about accessing student achievement"
- "provide a formal document regarding rights and responsibilities"
- "only 10 percent of parents have/use a computer"
- "incorporate culture into special ceremonies (e.g., Remembrance Day)"
- "develop person-to-person contact at schools"
- "Where do band-operated schools fit in?"
- "need to increase knowledge on residential school trauma"
- "change past attitudes by increasing parental involvement"
- "create stronger empathy for understanding of differences"
- "more workshops needed on reserves"
- "need an action plan for building positive relationships between schools and communities"
- "work with parents so they won't give up; keep inviting them to schools"
- "build awareness about Alberta Education initiatives"
- "Get community leaders to be involved and to share responsibility."

Conclusion

As a result of the information and ideas collected during the workshops, the following action items were recommended:

- Increase the number of workshops in each school authority to help ensure the roles and responsibilities of the education system are understood by families, parents and communities.
- FNMI managers need to increase their efforts in communication and collaboration with their First Nations and Métis partners.
- Work with school authorities to develop strategies that will increase First Nations and Métis families, parents and communities engagement.
- Work with FNMI families, parents and communities to develop strategies to increase engagement in schools.
- Establish an external FNMI family, parent and communities advisory committee that includes representation from First Nations and Métis peoples to increase knowledge, culture and traditions.
- Develop local strategies to increase First Nations and Métis family, parent and community engagement by directly and actively involving them in improving their children's education.
- Work with schools to develop strategies and procedures to increase the involvement of First Nations and Métis families, parents and communities to ensure awareness of teaching, assessment and instructional practices.
- Implement strategies on sharing, collaborating and seeking resolution between FNMI families, parents and communities, school authorities, government and ministries.
- Support First Nations and Métis identity and build appreciation that will increase awareness of their histories, cultures and traditions in Alberta.
- Provide a safe and welcoming environment of knowledge sharing and collaboration.
- Provide training and professional development to teachers to strengthen their understanding of FNMI history, cultures and perspectives.

FNMI FAMILY, PARENT AND COMMUNITY AGENDA
FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT SERVICES/ALBERTA REGIONAL CONSORTIA
FAMILIES, PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES
SUPPORTING ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP SESSION

9:00 a.m.–9:05 a.m.	**Opening Prayer**
9:05 a.m.–9:30 a.m.	**Workshop Objectives** *(Why we are doing this?)* • B.P. Strategy 3.1 Assist school authorities to develop collaborative frameworks that will engage local FNMI communities and parents in the planning and implementation of strategies focused on improved student success. **Purpose** *(Why are we here?)* • Build parent knowledge and awareness of education system • Share information about Alberta Education • Gather support and input for development of resources
9:30 a.m.–10:20 a.m.	**Introduce the model by providing background information:** *(Where we began and what we heard)* • Collaborative Frameworks model companion document (from FNMI communities) • DVD (collect first voices through interviews) • A handbook for parents (collaboration) • Question/answer period (facilitator/record)
10:20 a.m.–10:30 a.m.	**HEALTH BREAK**
10:30 a.m.–11:00 a.m.	**Alberta School Councils' Association** • School councils, FNMI representation on provincial board, *School Act*, *Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12* • Question/answer period (facilitator/record)
11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	**Challenges and Opportunities** (*What more do I need to know?*) *(table talk on guided questions)*
12:00 p.m.–12:30 p.m.	**LUNCH SPEAKER:** FPC Story to inspire engagement
12:30 p.m.–1:30p.m.	**Group Work:** Separate participants into groups and discuss the following theme: School communities: How can these components help to shape your needs? • Safety and belonging • Student and family support • Community engagement • Advocacy (support)
1:30 p.m.–2:15 p.m.	**Group Reports on Activity**
2:15 p.m.–2:30p.m.	**Introduce Alberta Education Resources**
2:30 p.m.–3:00p.m.	**Next Steps** • How can we assist you in planning education workshops for parents in your area? • What do school authorities need to know about the FNMI community in your area? • What do you (families, parents and communities) do to assist in supporting your school community? **Closing Prayer**

GUIDED QUESTIONS

FNMI Families, Parents and Community Engagement

November Workshop 2010

Table Talk Discussions

Parent questions:

- When you hear the phrase parental engagement what do you think of …?
- How can school leadership encourage parental involvement in decision-making processes? (i.e., board level, school council)
- What are some of the ways you would like to help with your child's education?

School authority questions:

- How do school authorities communicate with FNMI families, parents and communities about rights regarding their children's education?
- Parental engagement is essential to a child's education; what strategies would you recommend?

Community questions:

- How do you build a positive working relationship between schools and FNMI communities?
- If your school authority was to conduct a needs assessment regarding FNMI education, what do you believe is working or not working?
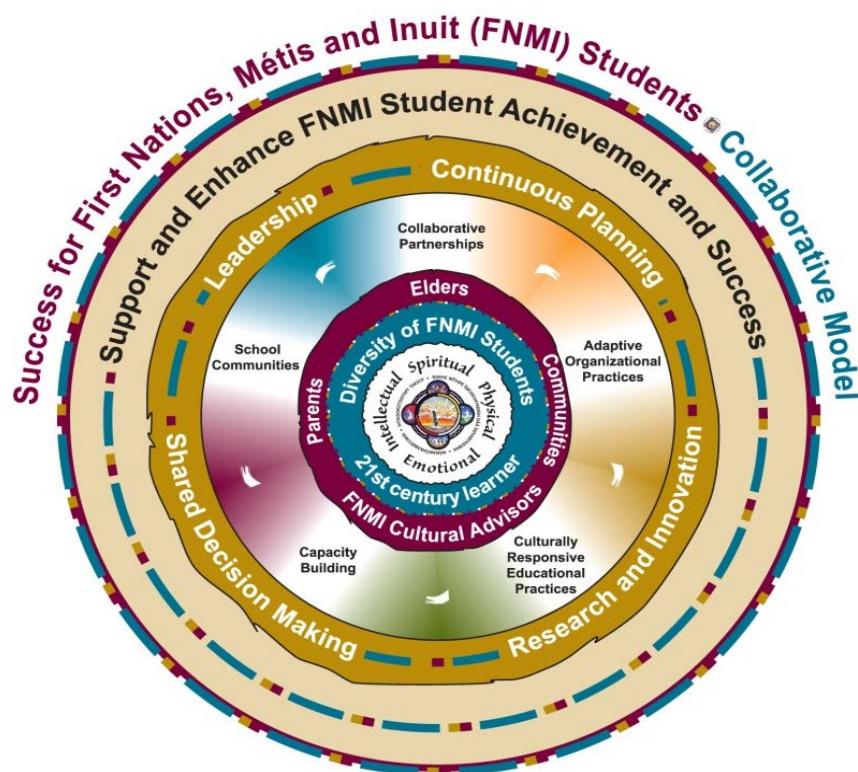
General

- Do you have any general comments/recommendations?
- Some FNMI parents are intimidated by schools because of their own negative experiences (residential schools); how can school authorities build welcoming environments?

Appendix D:

ROLL-UP OF FNMI ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS (2011)

Note: Links to external resources included in *Successful Practices in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education: Collaborative Frameworks—Building Relationships Companion Resource* may or may not be recommended or authorized by Alberta Education. Users should verify websites and other resources mentioned prior to using them with students.

Roll-Up of FNMI Engagement Workshops (2011)

Executive Summary

The Ministry's action on First Nations, Métis and Inuit student success is focused on enhancing educational opportunities through collaborative partnerships. Alberta Education continues to work with First Nations, Métis and Inuit people to ensure that Aboriginal students are engaged in learning. First Nations, Métis and Inuit families, parents and communities play a key role in enabling their children to receive educational programs and services that reflect pride in their cultures, histories and communities, and that build self-confidence.

The Accountability Pillar Online Reporting Initiative identifies achievement in Kindergarten to Grade 12 for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. Overall, the academic achievement of self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students on provincial achievement tests and diploma exams remains an issue, although there has been some improvement. Since implementing the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Collaborative Frameworks in January 2010, continuous planning has become an important process in engaging First Nations, Métis and Inuit families, parents and communities. At the January 2010 conference, school authorities reported a lack of funding and resources as a barrier to successfully implementing collaborative frameworks. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Services and Field Services, Alberta Regional

Professional Development Consortium and Alberta Culture assisted in the facilitation of the workshop process to support school authorities in developing and implementing First Nations, Métis and Inuit collaborative frameworks with their local First Nations, Métis and Inuit families, parents and communities. Together, they focused on strategies to improve First Nations, Métis and Inuit student success.

The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Families, Parent and Communities Introductory Workshops on Engagement were held in 14 communities to assist school authorities in increasing parental involvement and addressing ways of eliminating the achievement gap between First Nations, Métis and Inuit and non-Aboriginal students. All family, parent and community workshop sessions were designed to encourage parents and families to share their personal insights, solutions, challenges and recommendations between schools and their communities. A report entitled *Report on Introductory FNMI Engagement Workshops (2010)*, verified that gaps in achievement exist, and that attendance issues, staying in school and completing high school were ongoing concerns for all participants. First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents and communities also identified the historical trauma of residential schools and racism as other major issues. Parents reported that they were still intimidated by schools based on their personal negative experiences. As well, interviews were videotaped and collected featuring First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents and community leaders, provincial school trustees, superintendents and school administrators, as they reinforced the key findings and messages of the report.

Heart-to-heart conversations between school authorities, Elders, community leaders and members, families and parents helped produce rich qualitative data. These conversations helped to establish relationships based on common values of trust, fairness and openness. Many First Nations, Métis and Inuit families and parents identified the need for increased awareness and greater understanding of their rights, roles and responsibilities within the provincial school system. In addition, parents and community members expressed that they wanted to fully understand the role of federal and provincial bureaucracies around education; for example, tuition, special education funding. They also identified a need to understand school policies and procedures, such as suspensions and expulsions, and how to appeal decisions.

Each of the 16 second round workshops affirmed the importance of key strategies to enhance local factors toward improving First Nations, Métis and Inuit student success. For the first time in the history of Alberta Education, provincial jurisdictions and First Nations, Métis and Inuit families, parents and communities had the opportunity to discuss and identify common themes emerging from the *Report on Introductory FNMI Engagement Workshops (2010)*. The written and verbal responses indicated a strong preference to involve First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents. Everyone valued the draft resources currently being developed by First Nations, Métis and Inuit Services as being innovative and supportive and they valued that their contributions were appreciated. They are anticipating the completion of resources—*A Guide to FNMI Collaborative Relationship: A Companion Document* with accompanying vignettes, a DVD supporting key messages in the implementation of the *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Collaborative Model*, parent training skills module, and a school administrator's module. They expressed a need to also develop a First Nations, Métis and Inuit parent handbook.

In both workshops, the funding for this initiative limited the number of parents and community members who could attend sessions. In the second workshop, the fires in northern Alberta in the month of May 2011 affected attendance. In spite of these setbacks, the data indicates that parent and community participation doubled. However, in some cases, there was an increase in parent and community participation due to geographic location of workshops. Overall, all participants gave Alberta Education positive feedback on their efforts in "communication, communication and communication" between all stakeholders engaged in finding common understandings for First Nations, Métis and Inuit student success.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Families, Parents and Communities Second Round Workshops (2011)

The following chart summarizes workshop locations, numbers of school jurisdictions, First Nations school authorities and First Nations, Métis and Inuit family, parent and community members attending in each zone.

Zone/ Dates	Location	*No. of Provincial School Jurisdictions Attending*	*No. of First Nations Education Authorities Attending*	*No. of Provincial School Personnel Attending*	*No. of FNMI Family, Parent and Community Members Attending*
Zone 1 May 16, 2011	Coco Cola Centre, Grande Prairie	3	1	28	20 (*increase from Introductory Workshop*)
Zone 2 May 19, 2011	St. Paul Regional High School, St. Paul	5	0	14	10 (*decrease from Introductory Workshop*)
Zone 5 May 25, 2011	Tsuu T'ina Junior High School, Tsuu T'ina	7	2	21	10 (*decrease from Introductory Workshop*)

Zone/ Dates	Location	*No. of Provincial School Jurisdictions Attending*	*No. of First Nations Education Authorities Attending*	*No. of Provincial School Personnel Attending*	*No. of FNMI Family, Parent and Community Members Attending*
Zone 6 May 30, 2011	Livingstone Range School Division FP Walsh Senior High School, Fort Macleod	7	2	30	14 *(increase from Introductory Workshop)*
Zone 4 May 31, 2011	Red Deer Lodge, Red Deer	5	2	31	18 *(increase from Introductory Workshop)*
Zone 2/3 September 16, 2011,	Fort McMurray Public	2	1	10	12 *(increase from Introductory Workshop)*
Zone 2/3 October 12, 2011 October 18, 2011 October 21, 2011 October 25, 2011	Hinton Friendship Centre (Grande Yellowhead); Sacred Heart Centre (Edmonton Catholic); Greater St. Albert Boardroom, St. Albert; Woodcroft School (Edmonton Public)	6	2	15	15 *(decrease from Introductory Workshop)*
Zone 1 October 24, 2011	Sawridge Inn, Peace River	3	1	18	1
Zone 1 October 27, 2011	High Level	2 (NSD included Paddle Prairie)		12	10 *(increase from Introductory Workshop)*
Zone 1 October 18, 2011	Hotel High Prairie	1 (NSD which included East Prairie, Gift Lake)	3	5	
Northland September 29, 2011 October 17, 2011 October 26, 2011 October 27, 2011 October 30, 2011	Fort Chipewyan Arena; Slave Lake Sawridge Inn; Fort McMurray Public District Office; Cold Lake Best Western; High Prairie Executive Inn	1		48	114 *(increase from Introductory Workshop)*
Total Workshops:	**18**	**42**	**14**	**232**	**224**

 * The **increase** or **decrease** of FNMI families, parents and communities is a comparison between the attendance from the introductory workshop to the second round workshop.

Collaborative Frameworks—Building Relationships

All participants at these sessions freely talked about their personal aspirations regarding FNMI student success. The second workshop was focused on reaffirming and validating FNMI "voices." Workshop discussions were designed to capture written and verbal responses. In order to avoid repetition for each activity, the most common and frequent comments and responses were rolled up.

Activity 1: Gather initial responses with key words and/or phrases from FNMI Families, Parents and Communities Report on Introductory FNMI Engagement Workshops (2010)

Most common and frequent responses from all participants.

- Equitable allocation of resources.
- Parent workshops to increase and address their rights, roles and responsibilities.
- The FNMI "voice" has been heard throughout the province of Alberta and school jurisdictions will have indicators as to the improvement of FNMI parental engagement.
- The need to build trust in relationships with parents.
- The context of the report involves the parents/caregivers but are they hearing it?
- Parents need to be listened to and heard.
- It captures the "authentic" responses of the jurisdictions, parents and community members.
- Do parents know what is available for them to voice their concerns (e.g., protocols of the schools)?
- The need to develop specific workshops for FNMI parents regarding the education system (e.g., increasing knowledge of traditional parenting skills, racism, the historical trauma of residential schools, right and responsibilities of parents).
- Sustainable funding to carry the engagement initiative forward.
- The fact the Introductory Report is involving parents, communities and families. It's not just the people in the high positions making the decisions. Big step!
- Capturing the importance of parental involvement throughout the schools.
- We, as parents/grandparents need to educate ourselves; we need to be willing to break the history of residential schools; we need to build a healthy connection with the schools and homes.
- Parental feedback is valuable.
- Appreciation for FNMI parent photographs in the report acknowledging their involvement.
- The report is a strong tool for recommendations.
- Parents and students need be aware of school and district policies.
- Like this report in its audio and video form.
- Many common themes/issues (recurring).
- Lots of talk but no action.
- Lack of FNMI mentors and role models.
- Report contains many key ideas.
- Excitement is limited to paper only, what is next?
- Adjust funding model to address student needs.
- Better effective communication tools; many parents do not have access to computers.
- FNMI people are more hopeful than before.
- No action plan frustrates us; we are just repeating ourselves.

Activity 2: Identify common thoughts and ideas from the roll-up report

Most common and frequent responses from participants.

Zone	Many participants identified these themes as areas for further understandings.
Zone 6	FNMI Social/Economic Issues; Racism and Discrimination; Increase Communication from School Jurisdictions; Understanding Governance Structures; Increase Resources; Understanding Culture; Understanding FNMI Funding (Provincial and Federal); Increase FNMI Representation on Councils; Parent Empowerment, Historical Trauma of Residential Schools
Zone 5	Reciprocal Respect; Government and Educational Structures; Parent Engagement Process; Communication; Professional Development; Curriculum and Cultural Content; Relationship Building; Cultural Awareness; Racism; Giving FNMI People A Voice; Traditional Knowledge; Funding and Resources; Cultural and Community Involvement; Parent Rights, Understanding the Effects of Residential Schools
Zone 4	Cultural Sensitivity Training for Teachers; Face-to-Face Interactions; Parental Training; Identity; FNMI Parent Advocacy for FNMI Students; Elder/Parents as School Resources; FNMI Workshops; Building Trust; Building Relationships; Residential Schools; Racism; Mentoring; More Parental Involvement; Communication; FNMI Culture and History; Cultural Awareness and Education
Zone 2/3	FNMI Parent Rights; Elder Involvement; Home and Community; Supports; Professional Development; Empowering Parents, Staff and Student Relationships; Celebrations; Safe/Caring Environment; Capacity Building with Teachers; Support and Understanding of Cultural Teachings; Cultural Responsive Education and Assessment; Collaborative Partnerships; Understanding FNMI Families and History; Understanding Worldviews; Inclusive Education; FNMI Student Education Placement; Cultural Orientation; Racism and Bullying
Zone 1	Strengthen, Improve and Encourage Communication; Shared Responsibility; Build Relationships of Trust; Educate Participants about Cultural Awareness and Understanding; Enhanced Community Engagement; Funding; Parent Partnership in Education; Implementation of Aboriginal Pedagogy; Parent Training and Resources; Rights for Child and Parents; Understanding Bullying, Racism and Peer Pressure; Aboriginal Leadership; Involvement and Empowerment; Educate Educators; FNMI Involvement at All Levels of Education; Creativity: Thinking Outside the Box; Volunteerism; Career Direction for Students; Capacity Building; Parents and Family (Removing Barriers); Meaningful Participation; School Leadership; Continuous FNMI Support; Circle of Courage (Social/Personal Development); Understanding Protocols;

Northland	Relationships; Strategies/Action Steps; Community; Education of Parents; Teacher/School; Communication; Culture; Identity; Success; Community and School; Parent Relationships; Collaboration; Support for Languages; FNMI Student Support; Identity and Culture; Teaching Cultural Values; Elder Forums; Professional Development Goals; Sense of Place and Space; Resources; Relationship Skills; Creativity; Aboriginal Leadership; Parent Education on School System

* The video interviews that were collected reinforce, validate and acknowledge written and verbal discussion on emerging themes.

Activity 3: Workshops for parents, school authorities and communities

Most common and frequent responses from all participants to generate ideas for additional workshop training.

Parent Workshops	School Authority Workshops	Community Workshops
• Traditional parenting skills training. • Workshop forums on parent councils and participation. • What is curriculum? How can my child graduate? What is the difference between K&E – a certificate or diploma? What services are available if your child is coded? • Roles and responsibilities of parents. • Information sessions on scholarships and grants for FNMI students. • FNMI roles and responsibilities. • Information sessions on curriculum. • School policies and protocols. • Parent involvement – take your parent to school day. • Communication; letting parents and community know what is going on. • Build relationships – more parents in school, connect with parents. • Forming parent advisory committees.	• Professional development – ethnocultural awareness. • Gatherings to explain/reveal all the services available for FNMI youth. • Cultural awareness and protocols. • Understanding the history of Aboriginal peoples. • Better knowledge about transitioning (i.e., student-focused transitioning) between the reserves and districts. • Culturally appropriate resources and materials. • Tour First Nations communities. • Educate cultural sensitivity to principals and administrators. • Important for trustees to hear the voice of FNMI people. • Cross-cultural awareness session and orientation for all staff. • Professional development for school administrators – who are your FNMI neighbours? What is their history? • Recruit FNMI teachers. • Will action be taken on workshops?	• Promotions and information sharing on reserves. • Increase communication with FNMI communities. • Communication needs to be both ways – FNMI parents and community must be open to process. • Awareness of standpoints, ideals, norms and way of life between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. • Comprehensive workshops on education policies and procedures. • Create Parent Advisory Committees. • Use cultural advisors. • Understand community protocols. • Equitable funding for First Nations on-reserve. • Acknowledge different personal/cultural strengths – how does the child's family define success? • Look for ways to enhance community relationships – try different approaches to make an idea work.

• Respect and act on parent voice. • Teach FNMI parents to be advocates for their children. • Impacts of historical trauma of residential schools. • Racism, bullying and peer pressure.	• Identify resources for FNMI parent engagement. • Understand the historical trauma of residential schools. • Teacher professional development needs to focus on the FNMI students in addition to the key theme; i.e., literacy. • Need to explore how we define success. • Community mentors for teachers. • Wellness Training/Medicine Wheel.	• Educate everyone – staff, students and senior administrators. • FNMI community shares cultural teachings to the teacher. • Support to continue from FNMI Services. • Pairing the community with students who are at risk. • Comprehensive workshops on education policies and procedures; cultural awareness and meaningful engagement opportunities.

In addition, community workshop themes are similar to those identified under the parent column.

Based on the verbal and written responses regarding themes, all common suggestions were condensed and grouped into a workshop module heading for development, as identified in the following chart. Each workshop module will acknowledge and involve local resources, which will include FNMI people, their cultural experiences and practices. Every workshop was tailored to the uniqueness of each FNMI community.

Next Steps for Third Session: *Parent Training Modules*

The following workshop modules were identified by parents in the introductory and second round workshops. It is important that parents feel empowered when working through the workshops modules and that their understanding and awareness of their children's success in education is enhanced.

Workshop module: Understanding of Traditional Parenting Skills (i.e., protocols, rites of passage, respect, honour)	Workshop module: What is Curriculum? (i.e., programs of study, learning and teaching resources, assessment)	Workshop module: Governance Structures Understanding My School (i.e., policy and procedure, school councils)
Workshop module: Communication (Formal and Informal)	Workshop module: Relationship Building	Workshop module: Professional Development
Workshop module: Understanding Worldviews	Workshop module: Education Funding (provincial versus federal)	Workshop module: Impacts of Historical Trauma of Residential Schools (systemic)
Workshop module: Advocacy for FNMI Students (i.e., attendance/tardiness, transportation, extracurricular activities)	Workshop module: Racism, Bullying and Peer Pressure	Workshop module: Parent Rights and Responsibilities (i.e., decision making, school programs, consultations, permission, be informed)

Under a grant provided by Alberta Education to the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium (a member of Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia), a workshop package was developed to support implementation from 2011 to 2014 of Education Goal 3. Based on the frequency of responses, the participants identified a need to connect to their culture. The *FNMI Traditional Parenting Skills Workshop Module: Facilitator Guide* (Appendix E) provides content and process for working with parents, families and communities to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit student success within a school and/or district setting. The goals of the workshop material are:

1. To raise awareness and understanding among parents and school authorities about First Nations, Métis and Inuit traditional parenting skills and their implication for student success in school, based on diversity and respecting local cultural protocols.
2. To advocate and support increased involvement and improved participation between First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents and schools.

Next Steps: Fourth Session: <u>Administrator Training</u> Modules

Under a grant provided by Alberta Education to the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium (a member of Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia), a workshop package is being developed to support implementation from 2011 to 2014 of Education Goal 3. Based on the frequency of responses, the participants identified professional development/cultural awareness as important to increase and support their understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

Workshop module: Professional Development—Cultural Awareness and Orientation (protocols; i.e., ceremonial, visits/tours to community, resources, materials)	**Workshop module:** Historical Trauma of Residential Schools	**Workshop module:** Understanding the History of FNMI peoples (i.e., treaties, Métis scrip, local histories, local governance [whose who, services])
Workshop module: Better Knowledge about Transitioning (i.e., student-focused transitioning between the reserves and districts)	**Workshop module:** Services available for FNMI youth (i.e., bursaries, grants, sponsorships)	**Workshop module:** Structures (provincial school systems; i.e., boards, councils, recruitment of FNMI teachers)
Workshop module: Inclusive Education (i.e., students at risk)	**Workshop module:** FNMI Social/Economic Issues	**Workshop module:** Being Champions for Schools with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students

The workshop modules provide guidance to school authorities as they work toward improving relationships and involvement of FNMI families, parents and communities to help ensure FNMI student success. With the completion of the workshop modules, all resources—*A Guide to FNMI Collaborative Relationship: A Companion Document* with accompanying vignettes, a 20-minute video supporting key messages in the implementation of the *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Collaborative Model*, traditional parent training skills module, school administrators' module and First Nations, Métis and Inuit parent handbook—will be posted on the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Services website.

Appendix E:

FNMI TRADITIONAL PARENTING SKILLS WORKSHOP MODULE: FACILITATOR GUIDE
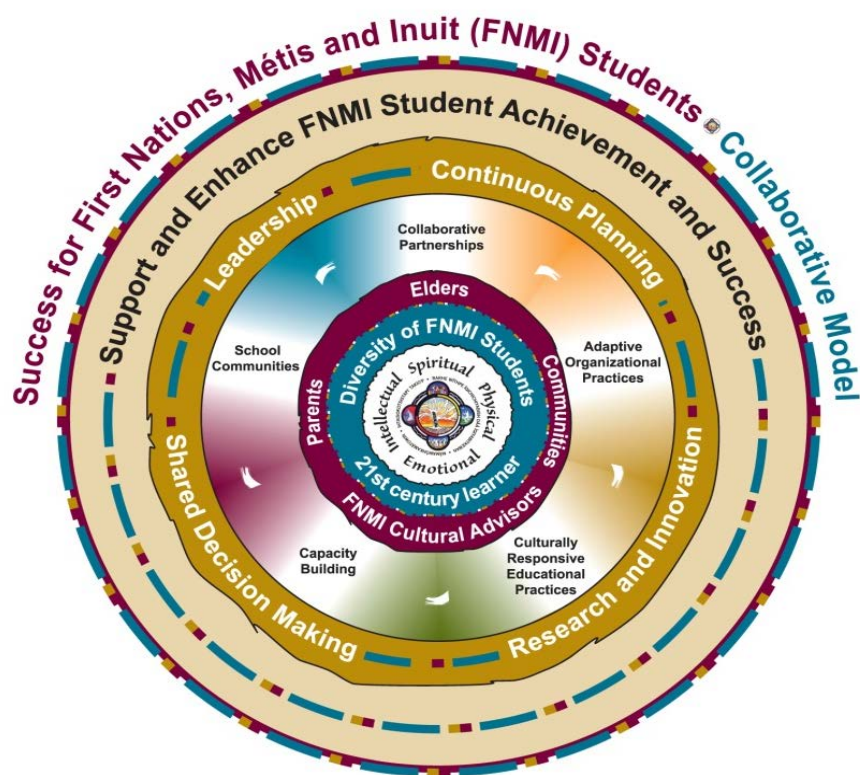
Note: Links to external resources included in *Successful Practices in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education: Collaborative Frameworks—Building Relationships Companion Resource* may or may not be recommended or authorized by Alberta Education. Users should verify websites and other resources mentioned prior to using them with students.

FNMI Traditional Parenting Skills Workshop Module:

Facilitator Guide

Alberta Education/
Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium

This workshop facilitator guide provides content and process for working with families, parents and communities to support FNMI student success within a school and/or school district setting.

The goals of the workshop are:

1. to raise awareness and understanding among parents and school authorities about FNMI traditional parenting skills and their implications for student success in school, based on diversity and respecting local cultural protocols
2. to advocate and support increased involvement and improved participation between FNMI parents and schools.

This professional development package was produced under the leadership of the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium (ERLC) and Alberta Education (FNMI Services Branch).

The materials were reviewed by Alberta Education's FNMI Services Branch; Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium; and members of the ERLC FNMI Advisory Committee.

Acknowledgements

Professional Development Materials Support by the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium

Workshop Goals:

1. To raise awareness and understanding among parents and school authorities about FNMI traditional parenting skills and their implications for student success in school, based on diversity and respecting local cultural protocols.
2. To advocate and support increased involvement and improved participation between FNMI parents and schools.

For further information about these workshop materials, contact the Alberta Education, FNMI Services Branch at 780.415.9300 or Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium at 780–444–2497 or e-mail info@erlc.ca.

Introduction

The ***Traditional Parenting Skills Workshop: Facilitator Guide*** is organized into three sections:

1. Before the Workshop
2. Workshop Goals and Overview Chart
3. PowerPoint slides with facilitator notes and suggested activities.

A variety of strategies can be selected to create workshops that facilitate different time requirements and needs. The Overview Chart that follows provides a description of each strategy and the time suggested for each. The suggested times are estimates only. **Adapt and adopt the workshop materials (activities, discussion questions, video clips, handouts and slides) to best meet the needs and interests of those with whom you are working.**

This workshop facilitator guide provides a number of discussion starters and activities. The discussion starters and activities are designed to be selected according to your purpose, and delivered in a number of different workshop settings. The discussion starters and activities can be combined within a variety of time formats—from a couple of hours to full days—depending on the audience and needs.

Before the Workshop

Questions to ask before preparing for the workshop

Use this as a reference to prepare for the learning opportunity.

1. Who is the audience?
   – What are their roles? What are their attitudes about this topic, this presentation, and/or the work environment in general? What experiences, knowledge, skills and potential contributions do they bring to this event?

2. Are there contextual outcomes (purposes) for the workshop you should be aware of?
   – What will be seen, heard or felt by the end of the presentation?

3. What's most important?
   – Of all the possible outcomes, which are most critical? What types of outcomes are most desired – knowledge, skills or attitudes?

4. What resources will you have to work with?
   – How much time is available? What needs to be communicated and to whom prior to the event? What background knowledge do participants have about this topic? What are their levels of expertise?

5. What other FNMI-related workshops and/or inservices has the staff done?

Logistics considerations

1. Situate the session in a location within the FNMI community, and following proper protocol seek out eminent (male/female) Elders from the local community to assist you in the delivery of the workshop. The role of the Elder(s) may include beginning and ending the session with prayer, providing advice and guidance, and sharing traditional knowledge and wisdom throughout the session.

2. How much time will you have?
   Could any surprises affect the amount of actual presentation time? How long will you have for lunch and for breaks? Who will provide the refreshments?

3. What physical set-up is required?
   For example, name tags, table tents, room arrangements, snack arrangements, audiovisual equipment, and instructional materials.

4. What travel and transportation details should we check?
   How do I get to the site and how long will it take me to get there? Can I get in the room 45 minutes before the event?

Facilitators will need to work closely with the school/community contact person to develop a workshop plan to suit the needs of the participants. There are, most likely, more activities than time available, so facilitators should pick and choose to meet the particular needs of each group. Ideally, this workshop should be offered as a full day, but a half day could also be offered with adjustments.

Workshop materials

- Participant handouts/booklets, if applicable
- PowerPoint slides
- Screen
- Chart paper
- Sticky notes or index cards
- Felt pens
- Highlighters
- Tape
- Data projector with laptop or desktop computer connected
- Name tags/table tents

Onsite requirements

- Choose a comfortable setting with tables and chairs that are arranged for dialogue and discussion rather than a room that is set up "lecture style."
- Ensure that Elders are well looked after and that they have a place in the room to set up anything they might need.

Workshop Goals and Outline

- This workshop planning guide contains a variety of learning opportunities and is intended to be adapted based on participant and community needs.
- There may be more activities than can be done in one workshop; the facilitator should choose activities/processes based on participants' experience, time available and expressed need.

Workshop Goals

1. To raise awareness and understanding among parents and school authorities about FNMI traditional parenting skills and their implications for student success in school, based on diversity and respecting local cultural protocols.
2. To advocate and support increased involvement and improved participation between FNMI parents and schools.

Overview Chart

	Activity	Suggested Time	Goal Addressed
A.	**Introduction** Welcome/Introduction/Goals	X Minutes	1, 2
B.	**Opener** Yes/No Questions	X Minutes	
C.	**The Context** • Share context; i.e., Introductory FNMI Engagement Workshop Report (2010), FPC Roll-up Report (2011) • This workshop is based on what we heard, what you said was needed	X Minutes	2
D.	**Purpose Statement** • *Why* is this important? • Strength-based approach	X Minutes	1
E.	**Outcomes** • *What* do we present in raising awareness/supporting importance of traditional parenting skills? • Introduce existing resources • Time to explore (identify what would work in their parenting skills)	X Minutes	1
F.	**Ahas/Affirmations/Applications**	X Minutes	2

	Activity	Suggested Time	Goal Addressed
G.	**Process** • *How* do we provide an outcome that meets the needs of all? • Multiple entry points to move along a continuum (share their individual school context) • Include Elder/community resource people to identify alternate pedagogies (i.e., discipline, values, gifts, self-esteem, partnership circle, cooperative learning teachings)	X Minutes	1
H.	**Ahas/Affirmations/Applications**	X Minutes	2
I.	**Conclusion/Assessment** • Reflection • Closure – Revisit questions generated through the opener • Evaluations and Closing	X Minutes	2

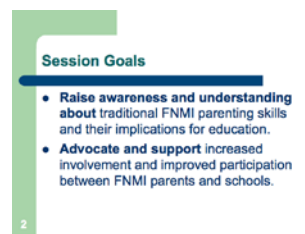**Facilitator's Notes**

Suggested Time:
X Minutes

Materials:

Agenda (Facilitator will create a unique agenda for each group)

Slides:
1. Session Goals
2. Ahas/Affirmations/ Applications

Session Goals

- **Raise awareness and understanding about** traditional FNMI parenting skills and their implications for education.
- **Advocate and support** increased involvement and improved participation between FNMI parents and schools.

Ongoing Reflection

Ahas	Affirmations	Applications
Interesting ideas	Ideas that affirm my beliefs and approaches	Ways I can use these ideas

A. Introduction

** Sponge activity prior to workshop start time.
Jot a note on chart paper or white board, asking participants to write their names on their name cards.

Welcome/Goals/Agenda
1. Introduce yourself and give a brief explanation of the workshop, your organization, as appropriate, and the funding provided from Alberta Education.
2. Review goals and agenda for the session.
3. Introduce the ongoing reflection page ("Ahas/ Affirmations/Applications"), slide and booklet, if applicable. Explain that we will stop during the session periodically to briefly reflect on what we've done during the workshop.
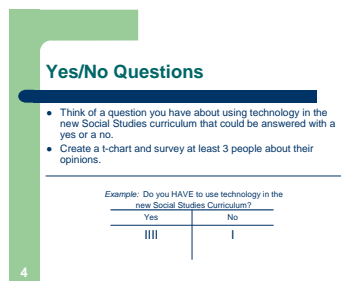
Facilitator's Notes

<u>Suggested Time:</u>
X Minutes

<u>Materials:</u>
1. Sticky note, index card or blank paper
2. Chart paper
3. Felt pens
4. Tape

<u>Slides:</u>
1. Quotation
2. Yes/No Questions

"The life of a person is a circle from childhood to childhood. Within each child lies our future and our past."

Yes/No Questions

- Think of a question you have about using technology in the new Social Studies curriculum that could be answered with a yes or a no.
- Create a t-chart and survey at least 3 people about their opinions.

Example: Do you HAVE to use technology in the new Social Studies Curriculum?

Yes	No
IIII	I

B. Opener

Quotation
1. Share quotation.
2. Explain that our focus will be on sharing and strengthening cultural identity to support parents in sharing traditional FNMI parenting skills as part of their children's education.

Yes/No Questions
1. Using a sticky note or index card, ask participants to write a question they have about how traditional parenting skills help support success for their children in school that can be answered with a yes or a no (see slides for example).
2. Ask them to make a T-chart with Yes/No at the top (example on slide).
3. Ask them to survey other workshop participants at their table to collect opinions on their question.
4. Debrief this activity by asking for volunteers to share their questions.
5. List these on a large piece of chart paper. In addition to the workshop outcomes, the participants will be able to explore many of these questions. Post questions. Explain that they will be revisited during or at the end of the workshop.
6. This activity will reveal important information about your participants' interests and concerns. This information can be used to guide the strategies you choose for the workshop.
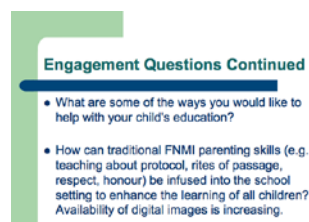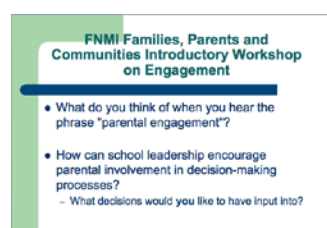
Facilitator's Notes

Suggested Time:
X Minutes

Materials:

Slides:
1. FNMI FPC Workshops on Engagement Q 1&2
2. FNMI FPC Workshops on Engagement Q 3&4

C. The Context

a) **FNMI Families, Parents and Communities Introductory Workshop on Engagement**
   1. Report on Introductory FNMI Engagement Workshops (2010)
   2. Roll-up of FNMI Engagement Workshops (2011)

b) **Questions for Parents**
   Questions that were asked of FNMI parents at these sessions included:
   1. What do you think of when you hear the phrase "parental engagement"?
   2. How can school leadership encourage parental involvement in decision-making processes?
      o What decisions would you like to have input into?
   3. What are some of the ways you would like to help with your child's education?
   4. How can traditional FNMI parenting skills (e.g., teaching about protocol, rites of passage, respect, honour) be infused into the school setting to enhance the learning of all children?

   Process for participants to provide their answers to these questions:
   1. Give participants a chance to review the questions. Give a few minutes for them to reflect and to individually jot down some ideas under each question, including some that were shared during the presentation about the reports.
   2. As a table group, brainstorm some ideas that would fit under each question and have someone record them for the group (on chart paper?) *Session facilitator(s) will circulate and assist with getting discussions going.*
   3. Next, have them individually place a check mark to the two ideas they feel are the most important to them.
   4. Finally, as a team, decide on the two most important areas of focus. Have the recorder place two check marks on the chart paper to indicate.

5. Ask groups to post their chart paper on the wall and share their strategies with the larger group (depending on the number of groups and the time remaining … or just leave them on wall for people to view during coffee time).

Facilitator's Notes

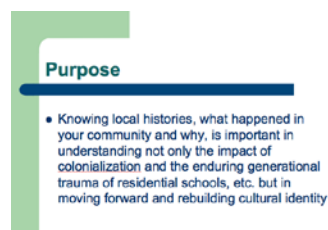<u>Suggested Time:</u>
X Minutes

<u>Materials:</u>
1. Laptop that can run video attached to projector
2. Internet connection to access video or have DVD

Slides:
Activity Instructions

Participant Handout:

Purpose

• Knowing local histories, what happened in your community and why, is important in understanding not only the impact of colonialization and the enduring generational trauma of residential schools, etc. but in moving forward and rebuilding cultural identity

D. Purpose Statement

Why is this important?

- Knowing local histories, *what happened* in your community and *why it occurred* is important in understanding, not only the impact of colonialization and the enduring generational trauma of residential schools, but in moving forward and rebuilding cultural identity.
- Remembering, relearning and respecting traditional knowledge can lead to reculturation, building hope and resilience in future generations.

Strength-based, Solution-focused Approach
- Integrate local knowledge in the revival, maintenance and preservation of FNMI culture and language.
- A strength-based approach keeps a strong focus on setting a child up for success by highlighting what the child **can** do, rather than on weaknesses or deficits.
- Solution-focused collaboration between FNMI parents and their child's school staff can help them to:
  – **Keep their own perspective by focusing on strengths**— observing what the child can do, setting new goals, and tracking progress.
  – **Have the conviction that they can make a difference**— committing to teaching, learning and supporting changes.
  – **Dwell in the present**— finding the best in each day and celebrating whatever growth each day brings.

Collaborating with Parents: Questions for Discussion after Watching this Video

Video location:
http://www.inclusiveeducationpdresources.ca/collaborating-with-parents

Video clip will also be available on a DVD for locations with limited bandwidth.

Scroll down to the video called "*Solution-focused Collaboration in FNMI Contexts.*" You may wish to return and view some of the other videos later.

Video Synopsis: This video supports the concept of traditional inspiration/cultural perception to strengthen self-esteem, trust and mutual understanding for positive discipline.

A teacher is reprimanding an FNMI student in the classroom for making his classmates laugh. *(illustrating what the student believes is an everyday practice to promote his/her self-esteem/gift)*

The teacher walks him to the principal's office and calls him a "class clown." *(illustrating teacher misunderstanding to a positive culture/family value/conflict between what she has been taught is the mainstream approach to classroom management)*

Since this is a recurring behaviour, the principal decides to call in the parents. *(illustrating family support system)*

Community Elder is invited to meet with all to explain that their child has received the ability to make people laugh from the Creator. At home and in other public areas, he is encouraged use this gift/talent to make people happy. *(illustrating community involvement; respect for sense of humour related to student's way of life)*

Rather than suppress this gift/talent the school/parents problem solve and agree to a solution. *(illustrating building of mutual understanding)*

Facilitators: Working in table groups, post the questions below before viewing the video so people know what they are watching for/reflecting upon. Choose some or all of the questions for discussion. May wish to use a jigsaw process: each table is given a number and assigned the

corresponding question (1–3) to discuss for 10–15 minutes, then people are moved so that each table now has members who have discussed each of the questions. At this point they can lead/share the discussion that their first group had around their question. Question 4 is a personal response type of question and could be done as a large group activity where volunteers share their thoughts or as an individual writing activity.

1. Which examples of strength-based approaches stood out for you in this video? What did you observe about the ways in which the family collaborated with the school to find solutions to potential learning issues?

2. What are some examples of strength-based approaches that you currently use or have previously used with children that you could share?

3. What processes does your school community have in place to identify a student's strengths and build on them? What new processes could be put into place?

4. ***Live in the present. Celebrate successes, big and small. The more we begin to focus on successes, the more we'll experience. Celebrating success has a snowball effect.***

   As you reflect upon this statement, think about how you apply this in your own family situation. What recent successes have you had in your family that you can share? How did you celebrate them? Do you currently have any activities/practices in place in your home for sharing success?

Facilitator's Notes

<u>Suggested Time:</u>
X Minutes

<u>Materials:</u>

Slides:
1. Let's Explore: What kinds of resources have already been developed to support student success?
2. Let's share

Let's Explore!

• What kinds of resources have already been developed?

Let's Share

• What strategies, ideas or resources did you see that are helpful in connecting FNMI student success in school with traditional FNMI parenting skills?

• Reflection time – Ahas/Affirmations/ Applications

Focused Reading

Share and compare your text markings:

√ I know and understand this

! Important idea

? I'd like to know more

E. Outcomes

***What* do we present in raising awareness/validating importance of traditional FNMI parenting approaches?**

1. Share that there are many resources already available that support implementation of Goal 3: FNMI Student Success and that you will provide ideas/examples of Alberta research, practices and protocols that identify issues and support the importance of a return to inclusion of strong FNMI traditional parenting skills.

2. Briefly share resources (Slide "What kinds of resources have already been developed?"): Introduce with film clip of Aldon Armstrong, Paddle Prairie Métis Settlement (2 minutes)
   • Cree Protocol: Blue Quills Modules, St. Paul, Alberta
   • Nakoda Protocol: Îethkabi – A Study of a First Nation
   • Blackfoot Protocol: Kainai Family Structure and Parenting
   • Metro Protocol: Native Children and the Child Welfare System
   • Métis Protocol

3. Ask participants to work with a table partner.

4. Provide time to explore the resources using the Focused Reading process outlined below.

5. Ask participants to be ready at the end of the exploration time to share the ideas they marked in their readings with their table groups.

Focused Reading
√ **I know or understand this**
! **Important idea**
? **I'd like to know more or want clarification**

Instructions for participants (Slide "Resources")**:**
• Ask participants to find a partner either at their table or (if you choose to mix up the groups at this point) at another table. (Could also do this as individuals.)
• Distribute the resources.
• Together, partners will read, discuss and highlight the information that stands out for them.

- As they work together, they will engage in the focused reading process and mark √ **!** and/or **?** to signify their responses to the resources.

Once the Focused Reading/Resource Review is complete:
1. In a round robin format, have participants share first their **!** items with the table group, and then their **?** items.
2. In the large group, ask each table to share one **!** item, and the next table must share a different **!** item (etc.) until all tables have shared. Repeat with **?** items. The facilitator may wish to add items to the list of questions generated at the beginning of the workshop during the Yes/No Questions opener.

Facilitator's Notes

Suggested Time:
X Minutes

Materials:

Slide:
1. Ongoing Reflection: Ahas/Affirmations/ Applications

Participant Handbook:
1. Ongoing Reflection: Ahas/ Affirmations/Applications

F. Ahas/Affirmations/Applications

This process is used twice in the session and is designed to create a reflective space to honour the individual thoughts, responses and reflections of participants.

Allow a few minutes for participants to jot down any of their thoughts from their work and discussion so far.

Could be shared with table groups or large groups, or kept as personal record.

Ahas – What things provide a "light bulb" moment? Something new or different participants may note?
Affirmations – What things affirm or support existing practices/beliefs?
Applications – What strategies and ideas will I use to support my child's success in school?
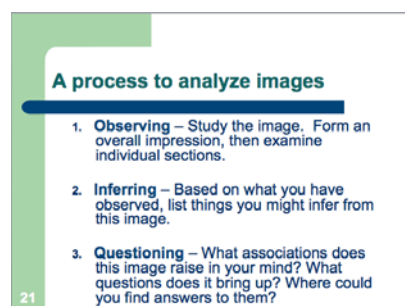
Facilitator's Notes

Suggested Time:
X Minutes

Materials:

Slides:
1. Medicine Wheel Teachings
2. Opikinawasowin
3. RCAP Métis Elders

G. Process
How **do we provide an outcome that meets the needs of all?**

1. Include Elder/community resource people to identify alternate pedagogies (i.e., discipline, values, gifts, self-esteem) and share relevant teachings for the community as they participate throughout the day (e.g., justice circle, teepee teachings).

2. Medicine Wheel Teachings
    a. Medicine wheel teachings vary nation to nation, but all contain links to elements of traditional FNMI parenting skills.
    b. Engage participants in the process below. Use an unmarked medicine wheel image (ensure wheel/colours appropriate for community/nation).
        *   **Observing** – Ask participants to study the image. Form an overall impression, and then examine individual quadrants. Share with a partner or with the large group.
        *   **Inferring** – Based on what they have observed, list things they might infer from this image. Share with a partner or with the large group.
        *   **Questioning** – Ask participants what associations does this image raise in their minds? What questions does it raise? Where could they find answers to them? Share with a partner or with the large group.
    *   Share that this is an effective process in working with students. Ask for other strategies or ideas they've used.
    c. Share one or two sites for further study of medicine wheels. (Recommend showing the html versions not the flash versions.)
        *   http://linna.ca/page8.html
        *   http://fourdirectionsteachings.com/

Collaborative Frameworks—Building Relationships
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3. Opikinawasowin
   a. Background: The findings of this research study by Leah Dorion demonstrate possible solutions for FNMI families and communities that are trying to neutralize the negative effects of colonization on contemporary childrearing practices. In her interviews with Elders, she looked at how concepts of harmony and balance were represented in stories of traditional childrearing practices from both male and female perspectives, and how such practices contributed to creating individual and community cultural resilience.
   b. Literature review in this study reviews impacts of colonialism on childrearing for those who would like to read further (pp. 19–38).
   c. Author identifies 13 Opikinawasowin traditional teachings (slide with teachings on wheel) (p. 50).
   d. Divide participants into groups and let them choose a teaching from the wheel to explore. They can revisit the Focused Reading strategy or use Talking Stick strategy (adapted from Laura Lipton, First Turn/Last Turn, *Groups at Work*, 2011). Depending on size of group, facilitators may want to choose just three teachings to explore, have each table explore just one to share, or have all tables explore one of the resources most relevant to their Nation. Model the strategy below to ensure participants are clear on the practice, emphasizing the round robin pattern with no cross-talk (only one person speaks) and no one comments on what they said.
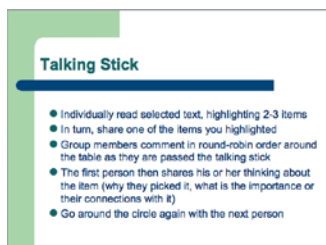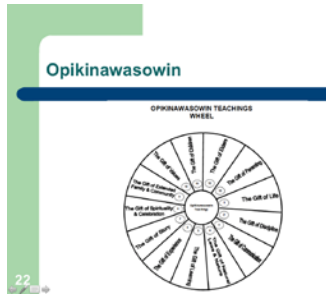
Talking Stick Strategy
   • Individually read selected text, highlighting 2–3 items that stand out for you.
   • In turn, share one of your items, but do not comment on it – The First Turn.
   • Group members comment in round-robin order about the item (with no cross-talk).
   • The initiating person then shares his or her thinking about the item and gets – The Last Turn.

An alternate strategy: ask each participant to choose a teaching of interest, read and then respond to stem "A significant point or personal connection I am making is

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…" on a sticky note, and then post on wheel next to teaching. Note where most stickies are posted or if any patterns emerge.

4. RCAP Métis Elders – An estimated 18,000 FNMI children were adopted or fostered to non-native homes from the 1960s to the early 1980s. This came to be known as the 60's scoop. http://www.cbc.ca/doczone/8thfire/2012/01/hidden-colonial-legacy-the-60s-scoop.html

a. View video that tells the stories of a Cree man returning home to Manitoba after 39 years away, and a young boy who benefited from new strategies in adoption to ensure that Aboriginal children stay within their communities. (12 minutes).
In a Word: 5-3-1 Strategy: While participants watch the video, ask them to take note of and record 5 words (about the content and/or how it made them feel) that came to mind as they watched. Participants will then each share their 5 words with their group at the table. Together as a table group, they will choose 3 words initially to represent their thinking/feeling, and from there will narrow it down to only 1 word. A representative from each table group will share their word and explain why it was chosen.

In a Word – 5-3-1

- As you watch the video, record 5 words about the content or how it makes you feel
- Share your own 5 words with your table
- As a group, choose 3 words together
- Narrow that down to just one word
- Choose someone to share your table's word and explain why it was chosen

Collaborative Frameworks—Building Relationships

Facilitator's Notes

<u>Suggested Time</u>
X Minutes

<u>Materials</u>

Slide:
Ongoing Reflection:
Ahas/Affirmations/
Applications

Ongoing Reflection

Ahas	Affirmations	Applications
Interesting ideas	Ideas that affirm my beliefs and approaches	Ways I can use these ideas

H. Ahas/Affirmations/Applications

Allow a few minutes for participants to jot down any of their thoughts from their work and discussion so far.

Ahas – What things provide "light bulb" moments? Something new or different participants may note?
Affirmations – What things affirm or support existing practices/beliefs?
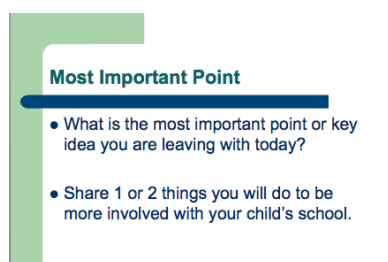**Applications** – What strategies and ideas will I use to support my child's success in school?

Once again, responses could be shared with table groups or large groups, or kept as a personal record.
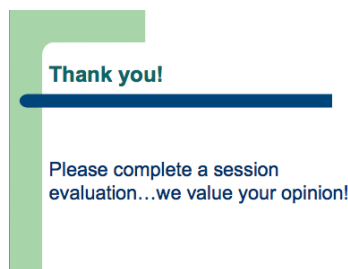

Facilitator's Notes

<u>Suggested Time:</u>
X Minutes

Materials:
1. Yes/No Questions from beginning of workshop
2. Session Evaluations

Most Important Point

● What is the most important point or key idea you are leaving with today?

● Share 1 or 2 things you will do to be more involved with your child's school.

Thank you!

Please complete a session evaluation…we value your opinion!

I. Conclusion/Assessment

a) Closure

1. Revisit questions generated through the Yes/No Questions Opener.
2. Highlight questions you were able to address.
3. Point to links for further reference and inquiry.
4. **Most Important Point**: Ask participants to consider what they would say is the most important point or key idea that they are taking away from the session. Share (with a partner, with their table group, and/or with the larger group). If this would be good data to collect to assess the effectiveness of the session, then ask them to write it on an index card and leave it on the table to be collected.
5. Thank the group for the opportunity to share and work together.
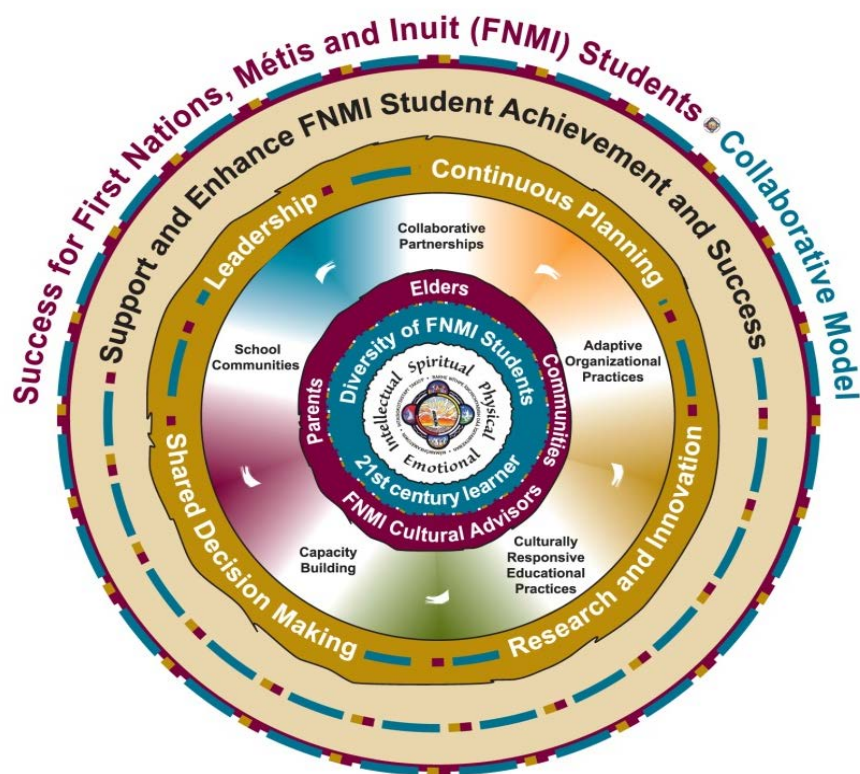6. Invite eminent Elder(s) to close the session with prayer/circle.

b) Evaluations

1. Distribute session evaluations.
2. Thank participants and close the workshop.

Appendix F:

FNMI CULTURAL AWARENESS FOR ADMINISTRATORS WORKSHOP MODULE: FACILITATOR GUIDE

Note: Links to external resources included in *Successful Practices in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education: Collaborative Frameworks—Building Relationships Companion Resource* may or may not be recommended or authorized by Alberta Education. Users should verify websites and other resources mentioned prior to using them with students.

FNMI Cultural Awareness for Administrators
Workshop Module:
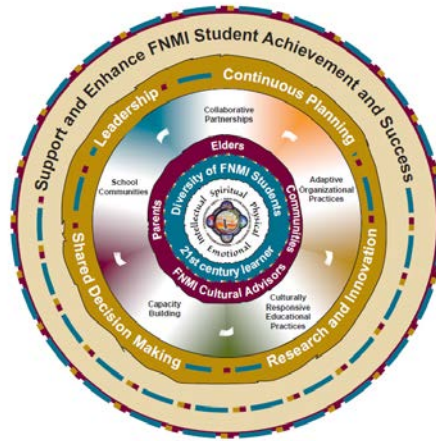
Facilitator Guide

Alberta Education/
Alberta Regional PD Consortia

This workshop facilitator guide provides content and process for working with administrators to support FNMI student success within a school and/or school district setting.

The goals of the workshop are to support administrators in:

1. developing an understanding of FNMI cultural awareness to support improved FNMI student success in school, based on diversity and respecting local cultural protocols
2. advocating and supporting increased FNMI cultural awareness among their staff and in their schools.

Acknowledgements

Professional Development Materials Support
by the Alberta Regional PD Consortia

This professional development package was produced under the leadership of the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium (ERLC) and Alberta Education (FNMI Services Branch).

The materials were reviewed by Alberta Education's FNMI Services Branch, and Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium consultants.

Workshop Goals:
To support administrators in:

1. developing an understanding of FNMI cultural awareness to support improved FNMI student success in school, based on diversity and respecting local cultural protocols
2. advocating and supporting increased FNMI cultural awareness among their staff and in their schools.

Introduction

The ***FNMI Cultural Awareness for Administrators Workshop Facilitator Guide*** is organized into three sections:

1. Before the Workshop
2. Workshop Goals and Overview Chart
3. PowerPoint slides with facilitator notes and suggested activities.

A variety of strategies can be selected to create workshops that facilitate different time requirements and needs. The Overview Chart that follows provides a description of each strategy, the time suggested for each and the workshop goals the strategy aligns with. The suggested times are estimates only. **Adapt and adopt the workshop materials (activities, discussion questions, video clips, handouts and slides) to best meet the needs and interests of those with whom you are working.**

This workshop facilitator guide provides a number of discussion starters and activities. The discussion starters and activities are designed to be implemented according to your purpose, and may be delivered in a number of different workshop settings. The discussion starters and activities can be combined within a variety of time formats—from a couple of hours to full days—depending on the audience and needs.

In most cases, it is strongly suggested that a half day session (2.5 to 3 hours) would be optimal to meet the needs of school administrators.

Before the Workshop

Questions to ask before preparing for the workshop

Use this as a reference to prepare for the learning opportunity.

1. Who is the audience?
   – What are their roles? What are their attitudes about this topic, this presentation, and/or the work environment in general? What experiences, knowledge, skills and potential contributions do they bring to this event?

2. Are there contextual outcomes (purposes) for the workshop you should be aware of?
   – What will be seen, heard or felt by the end of the presentation?

3. What's most important?
   – Of all the possible outcomes, which are most critical? What types of outcomes are most desired – knowledge, skills or attitudes?

4. What resources will you have to work with?
   – How much time is available? What needs to be communicated and to whom prior to the event? What background knowledge do participants have about this topic? What are their levels of expertise?

5. What other FNMI-related workshops and/or professional learning has the group been involved with?

Logistics considerations

1. Follow proper protocol to seek out (male/female) Elders from the local community to assist you in the delivery of the workshop. The role of the Elder(s) may include beginning and ending the session with prayer, providing advice and guidance, and sharing traditional knowledge and wisdom throughout the session.

2. How much time will you have?
   Could any surprises affect the amount of actual presentation time? How long will you have for lunch and for breaks? Who will provide the refreshments?

3. What physical set-up is required?
   For example, name tags, table tents, room arrangements, snack arrangements, audiovisual equipment, Internet/Wifi connection and instructional materials.

4. What travel and transportation details should we check?
   How do I get to the site and how long will it take me to get there? Can I get in the room 45 minutes before the event?

Facilitators must work closely with the school/community contact person to develop a workshop plan to suit the needs of the participants. There are, most likely, more activities than time available, so facilitators may wish to pick and choose between them to meet the particular needs of each group. **Ideally this workshop should be offered in 2.5 to 3 hours**, but a longer session could also be offered if participants are available for a longer timeframe.

Workshop materials

- Participant handouts/booklets, if applicable (digital/downloadable, if applicable)
- PowerPoint slides
- Screen
- Chart paper
- Sticky notes or index cards
- Felt pens
- Highlighters
- Tape
- Data projector with laptop or desktop computer connected and hard-wired Internet connection
- Name tags/table tents

Onsite requirements

- Choose a comfortable setting with tables and chairs that are arranged for dialogue and discussion rather than a room that is set up "lecture style."
- If you have asked participants to bring their laptops, ensure that a robust Wifi connection is available.
- Ensure that Elders are well looked after and that they have a place in the room to set up anything they might need.

Workshop Goals and Outline

- This workshop planning guide contains a variety of learning opportunities and is intended to be adapted based on participant and community needs.
- There are more activities than can be done in one session; the facilitator should choose activities/processes based on participants' experience, time available and specifically expressed needs.

Workshop Goals

To support administrators in:

1. developing an understanding of FNMI cultural awareness to support improved FNMI student success in school, based on diversity and respecting local cultural protocols
2. advocating and supporting increased FNMI cultural awareness among their staff and in their schools.

Overview Chart

	Activity	Suggested Time	Goal Addressed
A.	**Introduction** Welcome/Introductions/Goals	15 Minutes	
B.	**Opener** Activating Strategy/Synectics	15 Minutes	1, 2
C.	**The Context** • Share context; i.e., Introductory FNMI Engagement Workshop report (2010), Roll-up Report (2011) • What FNMI FPC participants want you to know • FNMI Holistic Lifelong Learning Models	40–60 Minutes	1, 2
D.	**Purpose Statement** • *Why* is this important? • Strength-based approach	20–25 Minutes	1, 2
E.	**Outcomes** • *What* do we present in developing understanding/supporting importance of cultural awareness? • Introduce existing resources • Time to explore (identify what additional resources/strategies are available to support this work with their school staff)	20–30 Minutes	2

	Activity	Suggested Time	Goal Addressed
F.	**Ahas/Affirmations/Applications**	5 Minutes	1, 2
G.	**Process** • *How* do we provide an outcome that meets the needs of all? • Building intercultural relationships and learning about protocol • Include Elder/community resource people to provide local context and begin to build inter-community relationships	20–60 Minutes (depending if you have an Elder available to speak to group)	1, 2
H.	**Ahas/Affirmations/Applications**	5 Minutes	2
I.	**Conclusion/Assessment** • Reflection • Evaluations and Closing	10 Minutes	2

Facilitator's Notes

Materials:

Agenda (facilitator will create a unique agenda for each group)

Slides:
1. Session Goals
2. Introductions
3. Ahas /Affirmations /Applications

A. Introduction

Welcome/Goals/Agenda
1. Introduce yourself and give a brief explanation of the workshop, your organization, as appropriate, and the funding provided from Alberta Education.
2. Review goals and agenda for the session.
3. Allow the group members to introduce themselves, using a round robin pattern by responding to prompts on Introductions slide (Name/role, relation to this topic, what constitutes success).
4. Introduce the ongoing reflection page ("Ahas/ Affirmations/Applications"), slide and booklet, if applicable. Explain that we will stop during the session periodically to briefly reflect on what we've done during the workshop.

Session Goal 1 – Supporting Administrators In…

- **developing an understanding** of FNMI cultural awareness to support improved FNMI student success in school, based on diversity and respecting local cultural protocols.

Session Goal 2 – Supporting Administrators In…

- **advocating and supporting** increased FNMI cultural awareness among your staff and in your schools.

Introductions

- Name/role
- Relation to this topic
- This session will be successful for me if…

Ongoing Reflection

Ahas	Affirmations	Applications
Interesting ideas	Ideas that affirm my beliefs and approaches	Ways I can use these ideas

Facilitator's Notes

<u>Suggested Time:</u>
15 Minutes

<u>Materials:</u>
1. Sticky notes, index card or blank paper

<u>Slides:</u>
1. Synectics

B. Opener/Activating Strategy

Synectics (Visual Imagery)
1. Display visual image(s) on screen or provide a copy of the image for each table group.

2. Explain that our focus will be on taking leadership in fostering FNMI cultural awareness to support student success.

3. The task: complete this stem "Skilled leadership is like this image because …" and generate as many comparisons as possible in the time given. (All groups can work on same image or each group can choose one of 4–6 images provided.) Ask group to have a recorder to capture the brainstorming.

4. Give 3 minutes to brainstorm, inform groups to choose someone to share to the larger group, give 1 more minute for group to make its choice and gather its thoughts.

5. Focus the group, begin the sharing.

Facilitator's Notes

Suggested Time:
40–60 Minutes

Materials:
Index cards, sticky notes

Slides:
1. FNMI FPC Workshops (2010)
2. FNMI FPC Workshops (2011)
3. FNMI FPC Feedback
4. 60s Scoop
5. 5-3-1

C. The Context

- What is meant by FNMI cultural awareness?
- How does FNMI cultural awareness affect my school community and student achievement?
- As an administrator, what is my role in promoting/supporting FNMI cultural awareness?

a) FNMI Families, Parents and Communities Introductory Workshop on Engagement
1. Report on Introductory FNMI Engagement Workshops (2010)
2. Roll-up of FNMI Engagement Workshops (2011)

Background: Since 2009, FNMI Services Branch and the Alberta Regional Consortia have been supporting partnerships between provincial school authorities and FNMI communities to increase parent and community engagement.

Year One (*2010–2011*): 14 provincial introductory workshops were held across the province to support and engage a common vision between school authorities and FNMI families, parents and communities for:
– identifying issues, challenges and needs in their children's success in school
– development of FNMI content to support the Collaborative Frameworks resources, including
  o companion document and DVDs
  o Collaborative Frameworks video
  o a proposed handbook to support FPC common themes.

Year Two (*2011–2012*): 16 Second Round Workshops were held with school authorities and FNMI families, parents and communities to:
– field validate Roll-up Report completed in October 2011
– identify common themes from the Roll-up Report to support the development of training modules for principals and FNMI parents
– pilot draft training guides to raise awareness and understanding among parents and school authorities about:
  o FNMI traditional parenting skills and their implications for student success in school, based on diversity and respecting local cultural protocols

o administrator training to increase FNMI cultural awareness and advocate for an increase of FNMI understanding in school, community and professional development opportunities.

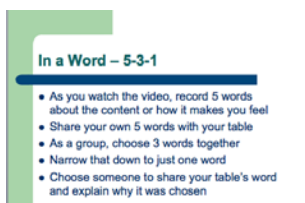**b) What FNMI Families, Parents and Community members want to share**

During the community workshops, it became clear that participants wanted to share their culture, values and beliefs with school/district personnel in support of increased student engagement and achievement. Specifically, the following comments from FNMI participants were identified as being important to bring forward to administrators (managers may also want to make the connection between engagement, community connections, cultural awareness and provincial achievement tests data Linda Pelly shared at a literacy conference.

- *We want to share our culture with them and invite them to visit our communities and to attend our celebrations.*
- *We want them to understand why we live the way we do and who we are as FNMI peoples, and to explain our protocols.*
- *We want them to understand the history and poverty of our communities, so that they can better relate to our children.*
- *We want them to understand the governance structures of our communities, and how the Federal government has jurisdiction over First Nations peoples.*
- *We want administrators to model their leadership qualities, especially when partnering/working with our FNMI communities.*
- *We want administrators to identify who the champions are in provincial school districts, what they did differently to engage with FNMI communities, and who the champions are in FNMI communities.*
- *We want to understand and support their process in incorporating cultural understandings for their staff.*

    Support school administrators in identifying and inviting local FNMI community resource people to assist them in bridging the gap.

FNMI FPC Feedback

FNMI participants wanted to share their culture, values and beliefs with school/district personnel in support of increased student engagement and achievement.

9

Provincial Achievement Test

In a Word – 5-3-1

- As you watch the video, record 5 words about the content or how it makes you feel
- Share your own 5 words with your table
- As a group, choose 3 words together
- Narrow that down to just one word
- Choose someone to share your table's word and explain why it was chosen

Materials:
Index cards, sticky notes

Slides:
1. Holistic Learning
2. FN Model
3. Métis Model
4. Compare and Contrast
5. Making Connections

1. **Deepening Understanding and Respect:**
   (This relates to "what FNMI FPCs want to share" above.) View video clip *"The 60's Scoop"* to see the impact on FNMI people of being separated from their culture (12 minutes). Again, this may be something that administrators may wish to share with school staff to deepen understanding of the impact of being stripped of one's own cultural ties.

   An estimated 18 000 FNMI children were adopted or fostered to non-native homes from the 1960s to the early 1980s. This came to be known as the 60's Scoop.
   http://www.cbc.ca/doczone/8thfire/2012/01/hidden-colonial-legacy-the-60s-scoop.html

   Video Synopsis: This video tells the stories of a Cree man returning home to Manitoba after 39 years away, and a young boy who benefited from new strategies in adoption to ensure that Aboriginal children stay within their communities (12 minutes).

   In a Word: 5-3-1 Strategy: While participants watch the video, ask them to take note of and record 5 words (about the content and/or how it made them feel) that came to mind as they watched. Participants will then each share their 5 words with their group at the table. Together as a table group, they will choose 3 words initially to represent their thinking/feeling, and from there will narrow it down to only 1 word. A representative from each table group will share their word and explain why it was chosen.

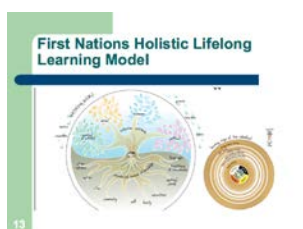2. **FNMI Lifelong Holistic Learning Model(s)**
   The intent of this activity is to expose administrators to FNMI holistic learning philosophy as a framework for measuring and supporting FNMI student success. A secondary intent is to help them see that First Nations and Métis peoples have slightly different worldviews in this regard; i.e., diversity and cultural differences need to be considered.
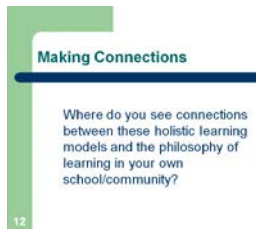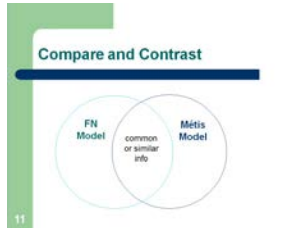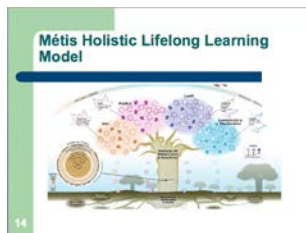
Overview: Indigenous pedagogy highlights the idea of a holistic learning process that engages the emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual aspects of the individual. Facilitators will show the video clip of Wilton Goodstriker speaking of the holistic nature of learning, then provide participants with print copies of the First Nations and Métis Holistic Lifelong Learning Models and chart paper and markers. Participants will view the models, look for similarities and differences, and create a Venn diagram to chart what they have discussed in their table group. Next, they will choose a representative from their table group to present their diagram, sharing patterns and generalizations they have noted. Finally, they will have an opportunity to make connections with what is already happening in their school communities.

Process for facilitators:

1. Introduce video clip of Wilton Goodstriker speaking about the FNMI holistic view of education (2:39 minutes).

2. Hand out copies of the Canadian Council on Learning First Nations and Métis Holistic Lifelong Learning Models. Give participants a chance to review the models on their own and to read the description on the back of each model, to reflect and to individually jot down their thoughts/responses about similarities and differences. Note that an Inuit model is also available and use if appropriate, for the participants (5 minutes). These models are available online at http://www.cclcca.ca/CCL/Reports/RedefiningSuccessInAboriginalLearning/RedefiningSuccessModelsFirstNations.html.

3. As a table group, share ideas that have come forward and appoint a recorder for the group to create a Venn diagram on chart paper to capture the discussion. *Session facilitator(s) will circulate and assist with getting discussions going* (10 minutes).

Métis Holistic Lifelong Learning Model

Compare and Contrast

FN Model | common or similar info | Métis Model

Making Connections

Where do you see connections between these holistic learning models and the philosophy of learning in your own school/community?

4. Each table group will then choose a representative from the table group to present the diagram to the larger group (sharing patterns and generalizations they have noted). During group sharing time, ask each table group to share one similarity and one difference that haven't been commented on by a previous group, and explain why that was important/interesting to them (allot 2 minutes per group).

5. Finally, give the group a moment to think about and respond to the following question: "Where do you see as connections between these holistic learning models and the philosophy of learning in your own school/community?" Ask for volunteers who would like to respond verbally.

6. Ask groups to post their chart papers on the wall for others to view during networking/coffee time.

Facilitator's Notes

<u>Suggested Time:</u>
20–25 Minutes

<u>Materials:</u>
1. Laptop that can run video attached to projector
2. Internet connection to access video or have DVD

<u>Slides:</u>
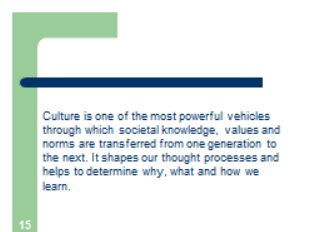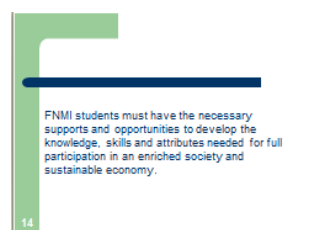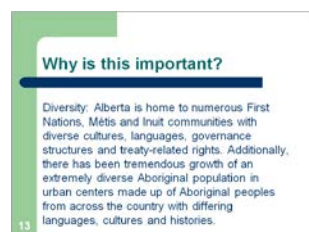1. Purpose Slides (3)
2. Activity Instructions

<u>Participant Handout:</u>
1. Discussion Questions

D. Purpose Statement

Why **is this important?**

- Diversity: Alberta is home to numerous First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities with diverse cultures, languages, governance structures and treaty-related rights. Additionally, there has been tremendous growth of an extremely diverse Aboriginal population in urban centers made up of Aboriginal peoples from across the country with differing languages, cultures and histories.
- FNMI students must have the necessary supports and opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for full participation in an enriched society and sustainable economy.
- Culture is one of the most powerful vehicles through which societal knowledge, values and norms are transferred from one generation to the next. It shapes our thought processes and helps to determine why, what and how we learn.

Why is this important?

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FNMI students must have the necessary supports and opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for full participation in an enriched society and sustainable economy.

Culture is one of the most powerful vehicles through which societal knowledge, values and norms are transferred from one generation to the next. It shapes our thought processes and helps to determine why, what and how we learn.

Strength-based, Solution-focused Approach
- Integrate local knowledge in support of FNMI student success.
- A strength-based approach keeps a strong focus on setting a child up for success by highlighting what the child **can** do, rather than on weaknesses or deficits.
- Solution-focused collaboration between FNMI parents and their child's school staff can help them to:
  - **Keep their own perspective by focusing on strengths**—observing what the child can do, setting new goals, and tracking progress.
  - **Have the conviction that they can make a difference**—committing to teaching, learning and supporting changes
  - **Dwell in the present**—finding the best in each day and celebrating whatever growth each day brings.

Collaborating with Parents: Discussion Questions
(Example of a strength-based approach in an FNMI cultural context.)

> Video location:
> http://www.inclusiveeducationpdresources.ca/collaborating_with_parents.php. The video clip will also be available on a DVD for locations with limited bandwidth.
>
> Scroll to the video called "*Respecting Cultural Diversity*" (length: 10 minutes). People may wish to return and view some of the other videos later.

Video Synopsis: This video supports the concept using of traditional FNMI parenting skills and cultural knowledge to strengthen self-esteem, trust and mutual understanding for positive discipline, and demonstrates how the school administration respects and supports a strength-based, culturally respectful collaborative process in seeking solutions.

Scene Explanations and Key Messages (for facilitators)

A teacher is reprimanding an FNMI student in the classroom for making his classmates laugh. *(illustrating what the student believes is an everyday practice–using his gift to make others feel better by promoting laughter)*

The teacher walks him to the principal's office and calls him a "class clown." *(illustrating teacher misunderstanding to a positive culture/family value; demonstrates conflict between the cultural teachings she has grown up with and what she has been taught is the mainstream approach to classroom management)*

Since this is a reoccurring behaviour, the principal decides to call in the parents. *(illustrating family support system and cultural kinship ties, community working together as positive behaviour supports)*

Community Elder is invited to meet with all to provide cultural and spiritual wisdom. He explains that their child has received the ability to make people laugh from the Creator. At home and in other public areas, he is encouraged use this gift/talent to make people happy. *(illustrating community involvement; respect for sense of humour related to student's way of life)*

Rather than suppress this gift/talent the school/parents problem solve and agree to a solution. *(illustrating building of mutual understanding and using strength-based collaborative approach to problem solving)*

<u>Further Explanation of Cultural Implications</u>
Student is not "disciplined" or "punished" in the more traditional sense; rather he is counselled about the proper use of his gift in a good way.

Student shares his perspective when he is called into office and when he is at home with his family. During the final meeting, he respectfully listens and learns while his extended family advocates on his behalf and the Elder provides cultural teachings that will help him use his gifts respectfully.

The young teacher listens to the Elder and is able to reconnect with her earlier cultural teachings. She begins to see how to situate an indigenous worldview of holistic pedagogy with her work with students in the classroom.

Process for Facilitators: Working in table groups, post/hand out the questions below before viewing the video, so people know what they are watching for/reflecting upon. Choose some or all of the questions for discussion. To debrief, ask participants to use a round robin approach to share their responses. Afterwards, allow time for people to bring forward any burning questions or wonders they have to the whole group.

1. In *Reflecting on Leadership for Learning* (2011), Jim Parsons and Larry Beauchamp's study of five Alberta elementary schools and their principals indicated that effective schools and school leaders share these three basic characteristics:
    1. They focus on students.
    2. They focus on effective collaboration.
    3. They focus on positive relationships.
   As you view the video, *Respecting Cultural Diversity*, look for examples that illustrate these characteristics.

2. As you watched this video, what stood out to you in terms of culturally relevant strategies or approaches? What questions do you have about what you viewed?

3. Which examples of strength-based approaches stood out for you in this video? What did you observe about the ways in which the school staff and family collaborated to find solutions to potential learning issues?

4. What are some examples of strength-based approaches that you currently use or have previously used with FNMI children/families in your school that you could share?
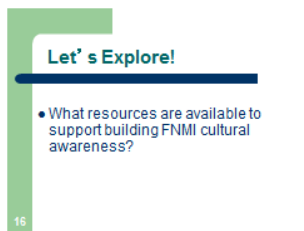
Facilitator's Notes

Suggested Time:
20–30 minutes

Materials:
Internet browser bookmarked with sites; Handouts including ATA pdf file

Slides:
1. Let's Explore
2. Say Something

Let's Explore!
● What resources are available to support building FNMI cultural awareness?

16

E. Outcomes

What can we do as instructional leaders to promote the importance of FNMI cultural awareness in our schools?

Option 1:
1. Share that there are many resources already available that support implementation of Goal 3: FNMI Student Success and that you will provide ideas/examples of Alberta resources, practices and protocols that support the importance of FNMI cultural awareness in supporting student success. Remind administrators that the activities they have already participated in may be adapted for use with their school staff.
2. Briefly share resources (Slide "What resources are available to support building FNMI cultural awareness?"):
   - Collaborative Framework and Resources http://www.inclusiveeducationpdresources.ca/fnmi/
   - Alberta Regional PD Consortia (ARPDC) sessions/resources http://learning.arpdc.ab.ca
   - ATA sessions: PD E-News v 12 n3 Winter 2012 [distribute print copies or provide pdf file]
   - Walking Together multimedia resource http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/
   - A variety of Aboriginal cultural perspectives http://www.inclusiveeducationpdresources.ca/fnmi/capacity_building.html
   - 2Learn Education Society – Canada's First Peoples http://www.gateways2learning.ca/CFP/default.html

Collaborative Frameworks—Building Relationships
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- Print resources, such as *Our Words, Our Ways*, *A Broken Flute*, *Aboriginal Perspectives* (Aboriginal Studies 10 textbook), and *Education Is Our Buffalo*. [See p. 118 of this resource for further readings.]
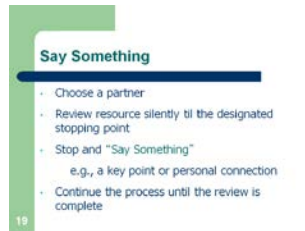
3. Ask participants to work with a table partner and each choose a resource to explore (if you have asked them to bring laptops and have Internet connection … otherwise facilitator can provide them with a walkthrough).
4. Provide time to explore the resources, using the response process outlined below.
5. Ask participants to be ready at the end of the exploration time to share the resources/comments in their resource review with their table groups.

Say Something – this strategy focuses attention even when energy is slow or distraction is high, and provides an efficient and balanced method for examining information and resources.

Instructions for Participants (Slide "Say Something")
- Ask participants to find a partner either at their table or (if you choose to mix up the groups at this point) at another table. (Partners sit next to one another to reduce noise level for talking.)
- Distribute the resource "urls."
- Partners will review the resource independently and highlight the information that stands out for them.
- As the facilitator calls "time" they will pause and 'say something' to one another. (Statement should be fairly brief and succinct.)
- Partners continue this process until resource review is complete. (Set time at beginning: 10–15 minutes)
- After completion, widen the conversation to ensure that partners are able to hear about the other resources (whole group, table groups, etc.).

Option 2:

Assemble a local FNMI leadership team to provide a panel discussion in which they share exemplars, promising practices and local cultural knowledge. After panel discussion is held, hold a Q and A session with other administrators in attendance. (Be sure the local team is available during the session for networking opportunities during breaks.)

- Example: Linda Gadwa, Kehewin; Dr. Phylis Cardinal, Enoch; Kathy Breaker, Blackfoot Tsuu T'ina; Dr. Barbara Laderoute, Métis. Choose leaders that reflect the local context and that may already have some sort of connection with provincial schools in terms of tuition agreements, etc. in order to further build relationships between administrators.

FNMI principals can model/discuss their experiences/cultural context in being:

1. Instructional leader— FNMI focus on teaching and learning professional development, data driven, decision making and accountability (i.e., Barb Laderoute, Northland).
2. Community leader—Big picture awareness of school's role in society, shared leadership among educators, community partners and others, advocacy for school capacity (i.e., Kathy Breaker).
3. Visionary leader—Energy, commitment, entrepreneurial spirit, values and convictions that all children will learn at high levels, as well as inspiring others with this vision both inside and outside (i.e., Phyllis Cardinal).

Collaborative Frameworks—Building Relationships

Facilitator's Notes
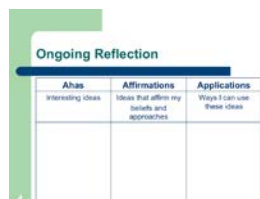
Suggested Time:
5 Minutes

Materials:

Slide:
1. Ongoing Reflection: Ahas/Affirmations/ Applications

Participant Handbook:
1. Ongoing Reflection: Ahas/Affirmations/ Applications

F. Ahas/Affirmations/Applications

This process is used twice in the session and is designed to create a reflective space to honour the individual thoughts, responses, reflections and applications of participants. Allow a few minutes for participants to jot down any of their thoughts from their work and discussion so far. Could be shared with table groups or large groups, or kept as a personal record.

Ahas – What things provide "light bulb" moments? Something new or different participants may note?
Affirmations – What things affirm or support existing practices/beliefs?
Applications – What strategies and ideas will I use to support further learning about FNMI cultural awareness?

Facilitator's Notes

Suggested Time:
20–60 minutes

Materials:
Internet connection; Ramona Bighead Handout

Slides:
1. Elder Videos
2. Protocol
3. Weasel Traveller Video

G. Process

***How* do we provide an outcome that meets the needs of all?**

Community Connections

1. Making connections and building relationships through respecting protocol:
   * View and discuss this video clip from Walking Together http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/#/elders/exploring_connections/videos/elders_in_the_classroom to learn about Elders, cultural advisors, and the advantages to inviting them into your school systems. (4 chapters: Knowing Who Elders Are; What Elders Can Tell Us; The Role of the Elder; Elder Support). (Total length: 8 minutes)

- What protocols are involved in inviting Elders to collaborate with you? This interactive activity from Walking Together can be used to lead a discussion on the process. http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/#/fnmi_worldviews/beginning_together.

  Handout: Elder Wisdom in the Classroom. Ramona Bighead http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/documents/elders/elder_wisdom_in_classroom.pdf.

2. Build collaborative relationships with nearby band/settlement schools (if applicable) and host events, such as shared celebrations, storytelling sessions and cross-cultural learning opportunities.

   - Audrey Weasel Traveller on building relationships, respect and rapport (2:17 minutes) from Walking Together. http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/#/fnmi_worldviews/respecting_wisdom/audrey_weasel_traveller

3. Talk to Elders – If you have local Elders in attendance at your session, invite them to share the protocol to be followed in approaching/inviting them to schools and any advice they might have on how to begin to build relationships in the FNMI community. Could also connect with local band/settlement school administrators (perhaps Elders/Alberta Education managers could facilitate these introductions). If you are unsure of which band schools/Métis settlements to connect with, *Our Words, Our Ways* has a list and maps in the appendix.

Facilitator's Notes

<u>Suggested Time</u>
5 Minutes

<u>Materials</u>

Slide:
Ongoing Reflection:
Ahas/Affirmations/Applications

Ongoing Reflection

Ahas	Affirmations	Applications
Interesting ideas	Ideas that affirm my beliefs and approaches	Ways I can use these ideas

H. Ahas/Affirmations/Applications

Allow a few minutes for participants to jot down any of their thoughts from their work and discussion so far.

Ahas – What things provide "light bulb" moments? Something new or different participants may note?
Affirmations – What things affirm or support existing practices/beliefs?
Applications – What strategies and ideas will I use to support further learning about FNMI cultural awareness?

Once again, responses could be shared with table groups or large groups, or kept as a personal record.

Facilitator's Notes

<u>Suggested Time:</u>
10 Minutes

Materials:
1. Slide: Most Important Point
2. Session Evaluations

Most Important Point

• What is the most important point or key idea you are leaving with today?

• Share 1 or 2 things you will do to as an instructional leader to support FNMI cultural awareness in your school .

I. Conclusion/Assessment

a) Closure

1. **Most Important Point**: Ask participants to consider what they would say is the most important point or key idea that they are taking away from the session. Share (with a partner, with their table group, and/or with the larger group). If this would be good data to collect to assess the effectiveness of the session, then ask them to write it on an index card and leave it on the table to be collected.
2. Review the goals of the workshop. Thank the group for the opportunity to share and work together.
3. Invite Elder(s) (if applicable) to close the session with prayer/circle.

b) Evaluations

1. Distribute session evaluations.
2. Thank participants and close the workshop.

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Collaborative Partnerships
- FNMI parents/community
- Education/research/community support
- Business and industry

Adaptive Organizational Practices
- Leadership commitment
- Clear and articulated vision
- Supportive policy

Culturally Responsive Educational Practices
- Instructional practices
- Curriculum and content
- Learner assessment
- Learning resources
- Celebrating success
- Environment

Capacity Building
- Staff recruitment
- Staff retention
- Staff development
- Research and orientation
- Language and culture

School Communities
- Safety and belonging
- Student and family support
- Community engagement
- Advocacy