Aboriginal Peoples in the Superior-Greenstone Region: An Informational Handbook for Staff and Parents

Superior-Greenstone District School Board
2014

Acknowledgements

Superior-Greenstone District School Board
David Tamblyn, Director of Education
Nancy Petrick, Superintendent of Education
Barb Willcocks, Aboriginal Education Student Success Lead
The Native Education Advisory Committee

Rachel A. Mishenene Consulting
Curriculum Developer ~ Rachel Mishenene, Ph.D. Student, M.Ed.

Edited by Christy Radbourne, Ph.D. Student and M.Ed.

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Additional images that are referenced at the end of the book.

All correspondence and inquiries should be directed to:
Superior-Greenstone District School Board Office
12 Hemlo Drive, Postal Bag ‘A’, Marathon, ON P0T 2E0
Telephone: 807.229.0436 / Facsimile: 807.229.1471 / Webpage: www.sgdsb.on.ca

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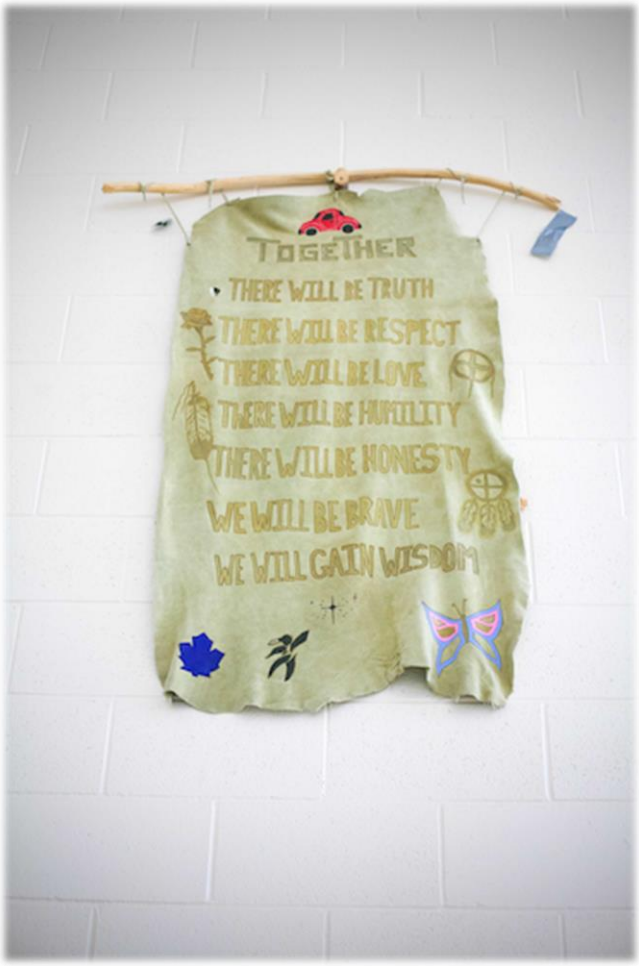
Indian Power

By Judy Wawia

I’m proud to be an Indian today
And it’s not hard to say,
Some are not as proud as me
But some day they'll learn to see,
We are a strong band and nation
Seen by a wide domination,
When I look back into the past
I can see that we did last,
Even from the very start
We were pushed very hard,
Trying hard to stay alive
We used the land to survive,
We had to change our very ways
To try and live in modern days,
An Indian no matter what name
Status or Non-Status it’s all the same,
Some day I hope to see
Every Indian as proud as me.

About the Handbook

The Aboriginal Peoples in the Superior-Greenstone Region: An Informational Handbook for Staff and Parents is a working document and resource tool to help provide information about First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples in the Superior-Greenstone region. The handbook is intended to provide staff and families of the Superior-Greenstone region historical and current information, and the personal perspectives from the First Nations and Métis people of this region.



Special Appreciation

A very special thank you to the following community members for sharing their perspectives and stories during community visits that were held in the spring of 2014.

The quotes within this book (in the green text boxes) come directly from these amazing individuals.

Chi-Miigwetch to each of you for the strength and wisdom you have.

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Claudia Moore, Clayton Kwissiwa, Harold Desmoulin, Ivan Desmoulin, Martina Gaudette, and Nicole Simpson of Pic Mobert First Nation.

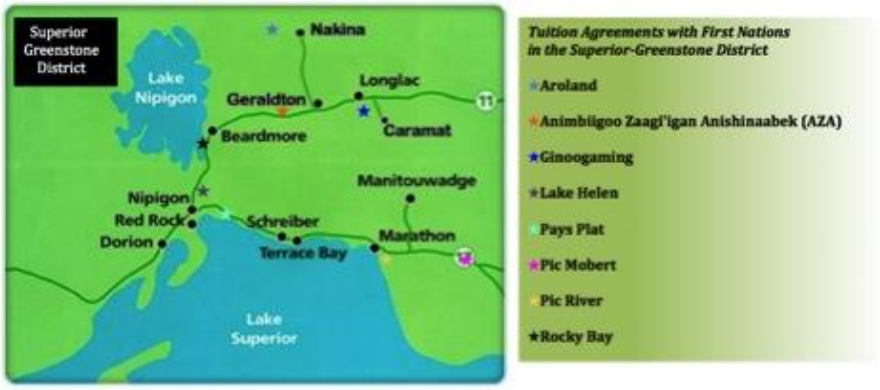
Bonnie Couchie, Carol Desmoulin, Elizabeth Michano, Lisa Michano-Courchene, Marie Desmoulin, and Shannon Courchene of Pic River First Nation.

Superior-Greenstone District School Board

Superior-Greenstone District School Board is located in Northwestern Ontario and covers a vast area of 45,100 square kilometres. The board is responsible for providing public education, and its 17 schools are proud to serve the communities of Beardmore, Geraldton, Longlac, Nakina, Caramat, Dorion, Nipigon, Red Rock, Schreiber, Terrace Bay, Marathon and Manitouwadge, and affiliated First Nation communities Aroland, Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek, Ginoogaming, Lake Helen, Pays Plat, Pic Mobert, Pic River, and Rocky Bay.

Tuition agreements are made between the Superior-Greenstone District School Board and regional and remote First Nation communities. This agreement is a contract between the First Nation and the school board, which includes an exchange of payment for providing educational services.

The following map highlights the eight First Nations that currently access educational services in the elementary and secondary levels in the neighbouring municipalities.



Letter from the Director of Education

At the seventh and final hearing of The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the chair, the Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair, reminded people that the achievement of reconciliation, however one defines it, within the lifetime of the commission was not a realistic ambition. Justice Sinclair states that Indian residential schools were around for over 100 years, and that several generations of children went through these schools. The damage that the schools inflicted on their lives and the lives of the members of their families and communities will take generations to fix. The loss of language and culture, the impacts on family function, the devastation to self-identity, the loss of respect for education, and the loss of faith and trust in Canada's government will take many years to overcome, and will only be achieved with a focus on a vision for a new relationship and a commitment to behavioural change and positive action (Justice Murray Sinclair, special to CBC news April 18th, 2014).

Justice Sinclair goes on to say that reconciliation is not an “Aboriginal problem” but a Canadian one, and it is up to all of us to be a part of forging a new relationship between aboriginal and non-aboriginal people. For a true and effective reconciliation, it must take place at the personal, family, school, and community level. Superior-Greenstone District School Board is committed to being a part of this vision of forging a new relationship to support the specific needs of Aboriginal students. We believe that creating welcoming learning environments for Aboriginal students, families, and community members, will increase student achievement and well-being.

The areas that support our approach to creating a welcoming learning environment include; our school, our staff, instructional practices and community partnerships. The Aboriginal Peoples in the Superior-Greenstone Region: An Informational Handbook for Staff and Parents hopes to contribute to achieving these priorities by providing background information to staff and parents on many of the Aboriginal heritages within our district – their traditions, cultural teachings, celebrations, treaties, language, and human resources, and the history of our country.

The information presented in this handbook is based on extensive research, interviews, and literature. The objective is twofold: to build an aboriginal cultural awareness among our staff and parent community; and support a strong sense of cultural identity among Aboriginal students. This knowledge will help create an Aboriginal cultural awareness in Superior-Greenstone public schools that will assist in delivering quality education, build a supportive school climate, meet the specific education needs for Aboriginal students, and nurture a positive relationship between the staff of Superior-Greenstone and the Aboriginal people we serve.

Reconciliation will be a lengthy process but I believe that we can hasten the process by building a greater understanding and respect for the cultural heritage and history of the Aboriginal people within our district. If each of us recognizes the role we have to play, and how our actions and our words can contribute to creating positive change, we can be a part of that reconciliation.

Sincerely,

David Tamblyn
Director of Education

The Native Education Advisory Committee (NEAC)

It is the policy (No. 539) of the Superior-Greenstone District School Board to improve our understanding of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit partners on and off reserve through its Native Education Advisory Committee (NEAC). Representation on the committee may include Aboriginal groups with which the Board has tuition agreements and/or those groups whose children of Aboriginal heritage may be voluntarily self-identified as defined within Board Policy 527-Voluntary Aboriginal Student Self-Identification.

The Superior-Greenstone District School Board recognizes the importance of co-operation and communication between First Nation, Métis and Inuit stakeholders and the Board. In order to improve communication and receive input, the Native Education Advisory Committee would provide opportunities for Senior Administration, Trustees, and School Principals to interact directly with representatives of First Nation, Métis and Inuit partners wherever they may reside within the geography of the Board.

Representatives from each First Nation community in the region and the Métis community are invited to participate on the Native Education Advisory Committee. Members of the Board Administration and School Trustees also attend and participate in these meetings.

Terminology

Aboriginal People

Aboriginal peoples are the descendants of the original inhabitants of North America. In Section 35(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982, states: “In this Act, ‘Aboriginal peoples of Canada’ includes the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada.” These are diverse groups that have unique societies, political systems, heritages, languages, economics, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs.

Aboriginal Rights

Aboriginal rights are based on collective rights. The foundation of these rights is the Aboriginal distinctive use and occupation of lands and resources. Aboriginal societies developed unique customs, traditions and practices that flow from their initial relationships to their lands and resources. . For an activity to be an Aboriginal right, it must be an element of a practice, custom or tradition, which is integral to the distinctive culture of the Aboriginal community claiming the right. For First Nations (legal term Indian) communities, the activity must have existed at the time of first contact with Europeans. For Métis communities, the activity must have existed prior to the time of effective European control in an area. In both instances, the current practice, custom or tradition must have continuity with the historic practice, custom or tradition, and it must remain integral to the community’s culture. Present-day activities may be exercised in a modern way. Aboriginal rights are protected by section 35 (1) of the Constitution Act, 1982.

Aboriginal Title

Aboriginal title is the Aboriginal society's ongoing collective right to use and occupy (subject to certain restrictions) those lands that they used and occupied exclusively at the time the Crown assumed sovereignty over those lands. For Aboriginal title to be established:

- an Aboriginal community needs to have occupied the lands prior to the Crown asserting sovereignty over the lands
- continuity must exist between present and pre-sovereignty occupation
- the occupation must have been exclusive at the time the Crown asserted sovereignty over those lands
- Aboriginal rights or title may be modified or surrendered through treaties. The impact of a treaty on Aboriginal rights or title will depend on the interpretation of the particular treaty.

Anishinaabe

Anishinaabe interprets into, “the Original Peoples.” This term is primarily used with the First Nations that identify as Ojibwa, Odawa, Potawatami, Saulteaux, Chippewa, Mississauga, Algonquin, Illinois, Fox, Shawnee, and Delaware. The Anishinaabek people reside in what is now called Canada (Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta) and the United States.

Band (First Nations)

An Indian Band is a body of First Nation peoples, for whom collective use and benefit lands have been set apart, or where money is held by the Crown, or who are declared to be a band for the purposes of the Indian Act. Each band has its own governing band council, usually consisting of one chief and several councilors. Community members choose the chief and councilors by election, or sometimes through custom. The members of a band generally share common values, traditions and practices rooted in their ancestral heritage. Today, many bands prefer to be known as First Nations (e.g., the Batchewana Band is now called the Batchewana First Nation).

Band Council

The governing body of a First Nation reserve. It usually consists of a chief and councilors, who are elected for two or three-year terms (under the Indian Act or band custom) to carry out band business, which may include education; water, sewer and fire services; bylaws; community buildings; schools; roads; and other community businesses and services.

Band Council Resolution

A written decision made by a band council. The decision is made during a council meeting and must have the support of the majority of council members.

Chief (First Nations)

The leader of a First Nation community or council who is elected by members of the First Nation, the councilors according to the Indian Act, or through custom elections.

Colonialism and Colonization

Colonialism is the practice and processes of domination and control resulting in the forced subjugation of one people by a majority group, colonizers. Colonization refers to both the formal and informal methods (behaviors, ideologies, institutions, policies, and economies) that maintain the subjugation or exploitation of Indigenous Peoples, lands, and resources. Colonizers engage in this process because it allows them to maintain and/or expand their social, political, and economic power.

Community Council (Métis Nation of Ontario, MNO)

Some Métis citizens are represented at the local level through the MNO Charter Community Councils. Community Councils are the cornerstones of a strong foundation for the MNO in its push toward its inherent right to self-government. The local Councils are an important communication hub for MNO and play a significant role in fostering community empowerment and development for Métis citizens living within the geographic territory of that council. Community Councils operate in accordance with MNO Charter Agreements, which give councils the mandate to govern, while ensuring accountability, transparency, and consistency. It must be noted that there are other Metis peoples in the province of Ontario who

are not affiliated with the MNO. These Metis peoples can be represented by Metis political territorial organizations affiliated with the Congress of Aboriginal peoples such as the Ontario Coalition of Aboriginal Peoples. Additionally, there are other independent Metis people such as the Red Sky Metis, the Woodland Metis Tribe, and others.

Crown

In Canada, and in other Commonwealth countries, which recognize the Queen of England as the formal head of state, the state (or government) is commonly referred to as "the Crown."

Custom

Customs are traditional practices and beliefs practiced within a group of people.

Elder (First Nations)

A man or woman whose wisdom about spirituality, culture, and life, and who is recognized by members of the First Nation community. Elders vary in ages. The Aboriginal community and individuals will normally seek the advice and assistance of elders in various traditions and contemporary areas.

First Nation

A term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word "Indian." It has also been adopted by some First Nation communities to replace the term "band."

First Nation Education Authority

A First Nation Education Authority is comparable to a board of education. Most First Nations have an Education Authority, which is responsible for administering education for the community. It is responsible for hiring teachers and principals working in the community school(s), determines the curriculum to be used in the school(s), and negotiates tuition agreements with local provincially funded school boards when students have to leave the First Nation community to continue their elementary and/or secondary education.

First Nation Governance

Refers to negotiated arrangements enabling First Nations to exercise greater decision- and law-making authority than is currently possible under the Indian Act. (The Canadian government refers to this process as “self-government”.) In Ontario, the governance arrangements that are being negotiated by Canada with First Nations will not be treaties; will not create new rights, such as hunting and fishing rights; and will not expand the reserve land bases of First Nations.

Haudenosaunee Confederacy

The Haudenosaunee Confederacy meaning People of the long house. The Haudenosaunee were improperly called the Iroquois Confederacy (by the French), and the League of Five Nations (by the English). Founded by a

peacemaker and Aionwatha (Hiawatha), the confederacy was developed to create a peaceful means of decision-making. It is made up of the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas. The Haudenosaunee Confederacy is one of the “longest lasting participatory democracies in the world”.

Indian

This is a term with different meanings depending on context. Under the Indian Act, it means “a person who, pursuant to this Act, is registered as an Indian or is entitled to be registered as an Indian”. A number of terms include the word “Indian”, such as “Status Indian”, “Non-status Indian”, and “Treaty Indian”. Status Indians are those who are registered as Indians under the Indian Act, although some would include those who, although not registered, are entitled to be registered. Non-status Indians are those who lost their status or whose ancestors were never registered or lost their status under former or current provisions of the Indian Act. Treaty Indians are those members of a community whose ancestors signed a treaty with the Crown and as a result are entitled to treaty benefits. Christopher Columbus first used the term “Indian” in 1492 to describe the Indigenous people he encountered on the east coast shoreline. He believed he had reached India.

Indian Act

Canadian federal legislation first consolidated in 1876, from existing pieces of colonial legislation, and has been amended several times. It sets out certain federal government obligations and regulates the management of Indian reserve lands, Indian moneys and other resources. Among its many provisions, the Indian Act currently requires the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to manage and approve certain moneys belonging to First Nations and Indian lands, including allowing or disallowing First Nations bylaws.

Indian Agent

This individual was given power via the Indian Act to regulate Indian band activities and oversaw the administration of each tribal council or band affairs in totality on behalf of the Government of Canada thereby restricting First Nations peoples (Wotherspoon and Satzewitch, 2000). All Indian Act reservations had an Indian agent attached to the community who approve or disapproved all Indian band administrative, political and economic business.

Indian Status

A person's legal status as an Indian, as defined by the Indian Act.

Indigenous

Means "native to the area." In this sense, Aboriginal people are indigenous to North America.

Inuit

The Aboriginal people of Arctic Canada. Inuit live primarily in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories and northern parts of Labrador and Quebec. They have traditionally lived above the tree line in the area bordered by the Mackenzie Delta in the west, the Labrador coast in the east, and the southern point of Hudson Bay in the south and the High Arctic islands in the north.

Land Claim

A formal submission to the federal and/or provincial government from an Aboriginal community that states that the Crown has not lived up to its obligations with respect to Aboriginal or treaty rights involving land. The federal government recognizes two broad classes of claims: comprehensive and specific.

Métis

The word "Métis" is French for "mixed blood." The Canadian Constitution recognizes Métis people as one of the three Aboriginal peoples. Historically, the term "Métis" applied to the children of French fur traders and Cree women in the Prairies and of English and Scottish traders and Dene women in the North. Today, the term is used broadly to describe people with mixed First Nations and European ancestry who identify as Métis, distinct from Indian people, Inuit or non-Aboriginal people. (Many Canadians have mixed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ancestry, but not all identify themselves as Métis.) Note: Métis organizations in Canada have differing criteria about who qualifies as Métis. The Métis Nation of Ontario, following the Powley decision which defines Métis as someone who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of historic Métis Nation ancestry, and is accepted by the Métis Nation. See the following link for more information on the Powley case: http://www.pstlaw.ca/resources/Powley%20summary-final.pdf. Other Metis populations in Ontario use similar criteria with some communities focusing on land based criteria.

Nation

In the context of a “First Nation,” a group of Aboriginal people who have a shared sense of national identity and are the largest population in a territory or collection of territories.

Native

Native is a word similar in meaning to Aboriginal. Native Peoples is a collective term to describe the descendants of the original peoples of North America.

Non-status Indian

People who consider themselves to be Indians or members of a First Nation, but the Government of Canada doesn't recognize them as Indians under the Indian Act. Non-status Indians aren't entitled to the same rights and benefits available to Status Indians.

Off-Reserve

A term used to describe people, services or objects that are not part of a reserve, but relate to First Nations.

On-Reserve

A term used to describe people, services or objects that are physically on the reserve.

Oral History

Evidence taken from the spoken words of people who have knowledge of past events and traditions. This oral history is often recorded on tape and then put in writing. It is used in history books and to document land claims.

Oral Tradition

Traditional and cultural information passed down by word of mouth or through songs, chants, music and storytelling from one generation to another without written records.

Racism

The term is to describe the political exploitation of difference in order to rationalize the dispossession and exploitation of an identifiable group. Racism doesn't arise because people are "perceived" as different but because that difference can be used as a tool to justify political domination. In other words, "difference" is not the cause of racism; the root of racism is the political uses to which difference are placed.

Reserve

A tract of land where the legal title is held by the federal government, and set apart for the use and benefit of an Indian band. Some bands have more than one reserve.

Senator (Métis)

A highly respected individual whose knowledge, values and experience is recognized within Métis communities. Métis Senators have a special place in Métis culture, the Métis Nation of Ontario and in its governance structure. Highly respected for their knowledge, values, and experience, Senators provide an elder's presence at community events and meetings, and they help to keep Métis culture alive by sharing Métis traditions and ways of life. Through community consensus, Senators are identified and recognized individually for their commitment to Métis peoples and customary practices. There are also some Metis groups that use other terms consistent with First Nations such as Metis Elders.

Status Indian (Registered Indian)

People who are entitled to have their names included on the Indian Register, an official list maintained by the federal government. Certain criteria determine who

can be registered as a Status Indian. Only Status Indians are recognized as Indians under the Indian Act, which defines an Indian as "a person who, pursuant to this Act, is registered as an Indian or is entitled to be registered as an Indian." Status Indians are entitled to certain rights and benefits under the law.

Traditional lands

Lands used and occupied by First Nations before European contact or the assertion of British sovereignty.

Treaty

An agreement made between the Crown (the government) and First Nations with the intention of creating mutually binding obligations, which would be solemnly respected.

Treaty Indian

A status Indian who belongs to a First Nation that signed a treaty with the Crown.

Treaty Rights

Treaty rights are the specific rights of Aboriginal peoples embodied in the treaties they entered into with Crown governments (initially France and Britain, then Canada after Confederation). Generally, historic treaties are in writing. Courts have found that oral promises can also form part of a treaty and give rise to treaty rights.

Tribal Council

A tribal council is a group made up of several bands and represents the interests of those bands. A tribal council may administer funds or deliver common services to those bands. Membership in a tribal council tends to be organized around geographic, political, treaty, cultural, and/or linguistic lines.

Tribe

A tribe is a group of First Nations sharing a common language and culture. The term is used frequently in the United States, but only in a few areas of Canada (e.g., the Blood Tribe in Alberta).

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A Brief Historical Overview of Aboriginal People

Diversity of Aboriginal Peoples

Prior to European people arriving to what is now called Canada, the Aboriginal population was said to have been in the millions. Historians identify six main groups that resided across Canada which include: Woodland, Iroquoian, Plains, Plateau, Pacific Coast, and the First Nations of the Mackenzie and Yukon River basins. Each group lived in a geographic environment that had their own beliefs, customs, laws, trade, economy, traditional practices, languages, and much more. Sadly, as more European immigrants migrated to Canada, the Aboriginal population declined drastically as Aboriginal people became exposed to new and deadly diseases, such as small pox. The way of life for Aboriginal people was closely connected to the natural environment and this knowledge was shared with the newcomers as they began to settle on their traditional lands in the 1500's. For a few hundred years, the relationship between Aboriginal people and the settlers relied heavily on the fur trade industry, access to natural resources, and land for newcomers.

Today, there is still great diversity among Aboriginal people in Canada. In the government's National Household Survey in 2011, close to 1.5 million people living in Canada identified as Aboriginal. This represents close to 4.5% of the total Canadian population. The term Aboriginal is a constitutional term that represents the original people of North America. The term Aboriginal encompasses three groups; the First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.

The Constitution Act

The Constitution Act of 1867 (also known as the British North America Act) created the Dominion of Canada thus uniting the provinces. In 1982, the Federal Government made amendments to the Constitution Act including the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Act outlines the areas of authority that the Federal Government has including matters

related to Aboriginal people in Canada. Section 91(24) of the Act outlines the responsibility of the Federal Government regarding the “Indians and lands reserved for Indians”.

Queen Elizabeth and Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau Signing the Constitution Act (1982)

This entrenched the authority of the federal government over the lives of Aboriginal people in the Constitution of Canada. The Constitution Act solidified the paternalistic relationship the government of Canada has with Aboriginal peoples by formally, and without consent, placing Aboriginal peoples under the ‘authority’ of the newly formed Canadian Government.

The Indian Act

The Federal government created the Indian Act in 1876 as part of the ongoing assimilation policies that aimed to end the distinctiveness of Aboriginal people and to merge them into mainstream (non-Aboriginal) life and values. The Act gives federal jurisdiction over “status Indians” and controls the structure of Band government and taxation, and also administers Band memberships and other local matters related to health, education, and land.

The Indian Act is a highly invasive and paternalistic living document, as it authorizes the Canadian federal government to regulate and administer the affairs and lives of status

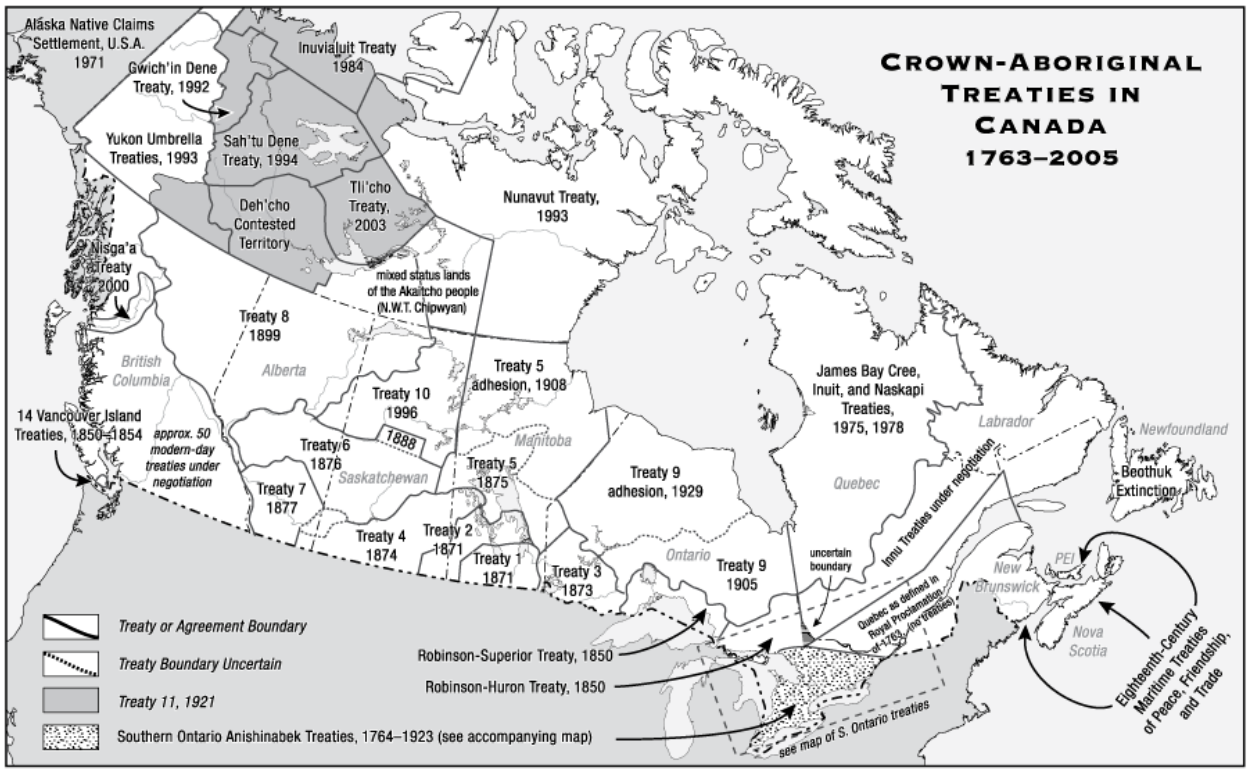
Indians and reserve communities. The Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) administer the Indian Act.

Treaties

Treaties are formal agreements entered into by two or more nations that create mutually binding obligations. Treaties were entered into in a spirit of trust and good will and were made up of both written and verbal agreements. In 1849/50, Métis and First Nations from present day Sault Ste. Marie and along the north shore of Lake Superior objected to the Quebec Mining Company trespassing on their traditional lands at Mica Bay because there was no treaty with the Crown in the territory. The company's agents surrendered without resistance. This became known as the 'Mica Bay incident' that led to the Robinson Treaties (Superior and Huron) between the Crown and "Indians." Treaty Commissioner Robinson stated at the time that he had no mandate to deal with Métis people. As such, "Métis" title, rights and interests in the territory remain un-extinguished.

Treaty Map

The First Nations in the Superior-Greenstone region have signed Treaty agreements with the Crown, which include the James Bay Treaty Number 9 and the Robinson-Superior Treaty. The Ojibway of the Pic River First Nation did not sign any treaties. The following map highlights the existing treaties in Canada.



Aboriginal and Treaty Rights

Aboriginal rights are inherent rights, which means that they are rights not granted by an external source, but rather exist on their own because they always have. These rights are also referred to as pre-existing rights or natural rights. Aboriginal rights have never been extinguished in Canada because Aboriginal Nations were never conquered. Aboriginal Nations across Canada signed Treaty Agreements with European settlers and the Canadian government, which laid out the terms for sharing lands and resources. Aboriginal Rights are protected under Section 35 of the Constitution Act (1982), which recognized and affirmed Aboriginal rights in Canada.

What exactly falls under the scope of Aboriginal rights? “Aboriginal rights refer to practices, traditions and customs that distinguish the unique culture of each First Nation and were practiced prior to European contact. These are rights that some Aboriginal peoples of Canada hold as a result of their ancestors' longstanding use and occupancy of the land. The rights of certain peoples to hunt, trap, and fish on ancestral lands are examples of Aboriginal rights” (AANDC – Aboriginal Rights). Because of the diversity of Aboriginal Nations and territories, what exactly makes up Aboriginal rights can vary from Nation to Nation. The nature of specific Aboriginal Rights can depend upon the traditions and practices of particular Aboriginal Nations.

The right to self-government is recognized by the Canadian government as an inherent Aboriginal right (AANDC, 2010). During the period of colonization, Canada’s federal government imposed a model of government on First Nations, which ignored the traditional systems of governance that Aboriginal nations had in Canada before contact. Despite this, the right to self-govern has never been extinguished in law, which means that Aboriginal nations never lost their right to govern themselves. First Nations in Canada continue to be sovereign nations, meaning that they have an inherent right to be self-determining, and can decide what is best for their own communities and Nations. Many First Nations across Canada are undergoing planning and negotiations to be self-governing within the framework of Canadian law and politics (Ibid.)

Treaty Rights are also protected under Section 35 of the Constitution Act (1982), which means that Treaty rights are part of the fabric of Canadian law. Many Canadians do not understand the long history of treaty making and treaty agreements in Canada, nor do many understand that, as citizens of a country based on treaty negotiations between Indigenous Nations and Canadian Governments, “We are all Treaty People”. This statement has been used to demonstrate the importance of the relationships and Treaty rights, not only historically, but today as well.

Treaties are agreements between two sovereign nations that typically lay out the terms of agreement for sharing the land. Most treaties in Canada were signed between the 1700s and early 1900s. Modern treaties are referred to as Comprehensive Land Claims Settlements. Treaty Rights, therefore, are the specific rights that were agreed upon in the Treaty agreements. Due to the fact that there are many Treaties that cover the vast Canadian landscape, the specifics of Treaty Rights can vary from region to region. Examples of rights that fall under the scope of Treaty rights are the rights to occupy land and reserve lands, and the rights to hunt and fish in certain territories.

During the period of colonization, the Canadian government was often not meeting their side of the Treaty agreements and was profiting from the resources on Aboriginal lands. Legislation such as the Indian Act allowed for federal government control of many aspects of Aboriginal peoples lives, including preventing Aboriginal peoples from being able to advocate for their political rights. More recently, however, Aboriginal and Treaty rights have been recognized in numerous court cases, underscoring the continued importance of Aboriginal and Treaty rights in Canada. Aboriginal and Treaty Rights are part of Canada's legal and political landscape and have, in the past 50 years, become "distinctive elements in Canada's identity" (Cassidy, 2005, p. 53).

Residential and Indian Day Schools

The Residential School system is an important and sad part of Canadian history that is finally being researched and its effects brought to light. Residential schools and Indian Day Schools were education systems designed specifically for Aboriginal children in Canada. Indian Day Schools were schools that operated on or near reserves. Children who went to these schools attended school during the school day and returned to their homes at night. Residential schools, also called boarding schools, required that children live at the schools during the school year and sometimes year-round. The goal of the Residential school system was to strip Aboriginal children of their culture and heritage in order to assimilate the children into non-native society. It was believed that Aboriginal people would be better off adopting the non-Aboriginal language and cultural practices of European settlers and that targeting children would be the most efficient way of doing this. This misguided and racist goal resulted in physical, emotional, and cultural impacts on Aboriginal children, parents and communities.

It is widely believed that the first Residential schools began in the 1860s. However, the groundwork for the school system began prior to this, as early as the 1620s (They Came for the Children, 2012, p. 5). By the late 1800s, the idea was becoming popularized by non-Aboriginal politicians and Christian missionaries intent on assimilating Aboriginal children into non-Aboriginal society, so that Aboriginal cultures would eventually disappear. Although Indian Day schools were also common, the boarding school system model grew as the Canadian government became more devoted to colonizing Aboriginal people (They Came for the Children, 2012, p. 6). The schools were federally run and had a clear purpose; Prime Minister Sir John A. MacDonald stated: “In order to educate the children properly we must separate them from their families. Some people may say that this is hard but if we want to civilize them we must do that.” (MacDonald 1883 as cited in They Came for the Children, 2012, p. 5). By the 1930s, Residential schools became mandatory for Aboriginal children and parents could face legal charges if they attempted to keep their children from attending the schools. By the time the last school had closed, approximately 150,000 Aboriginal children were separated from their families in order to attend the schools (CBC News, 2014, A History of Residential Schools in Canada).

At the time of the operation of the Residential schools, the Canadian government wanted to remove its responsibilities to the treaty agreements. The residential schools, coupled with the extreme control of the Indian Act, were designed to have Aboriginal people give-up their status and assimilate into Canadian society. Therefore, Canada would have no more obligations to the treaties previously signed (They Came for the Children, 2012, p. 12). In 1920, then Deputy Minister of Indian Affairs, Duncan Campbell Scott stated that the government would “continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian

question, and no Indian Department." (As cited in They Came for the Children, 2012, p. 12).

The last Residential school closed in 1996. Thus, for more than 100 years in Canada, Aboriginal children were separated from their families in order to be "educated" into a foreign culture and language. Underlying the system was an ugly objective – "to kill the Indian in the child" (citation needed), a statement which represents the essential goal of the schools. The Residential schools lacked appropriate funding and this resulted in overcrowded and, too often, unhealthy conditions (Sinclair, Littlechild and Wilson, 2012, p. 2). In the years following the closing of the Residential Schools, tens of thousands of former students disclosed abuses that they suffered during their time in the Residential school system. The abuses disclosed spanned a variety of forms, from emotional neglect and lack of parenting, to hunger, physical punishment, and sexual abuse. Investigations into the alleged abuses have been confirmed and, in many cases, charges have been laid. Research into the numbers of Aboriginal children who did not survive the school system continue into 2014,with the previous estimate of 4000 deaths now thought to be an underestimation (CBC News, 2014, New documents may shed light on residential school deaths).

Lake Superior (North) - First Nations and Indian Day Schools

The Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement was formed in 2007 in response to the repeated calls for recognition and compensation for Residential school survivors. The purpose of the Settlement Agreement was to provide compensation for victims of abuse, in the form of Common Experience Payments. Prime Minister Stephen Harper gave a formal apology to survivors and families of survivors of the Residential Schools in 2008, which was preceded by apologies from the Presbyterian, Anglican, and United Churches and followed by an apology by the Catholic Church. Although the Indian Day Schools allowed children to live in their homes, the purposes behind the schools were still based on stripping children of their culture and reports of abuse have also resulted in class action lawsuits. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was formed from the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Commission and was mandated to raise

awareness about the Residential school system and help to guide the process of reconciliation.

The taking of Aboriginal children from their families and communities and placing them in the Residential school system for the purposes of assimilation is a dark chapter in Canadian history. It is important that all Canadians know and understand this history so that the truth of what happened is acknowledged and individuals, communities, and nations can move towards healing. Research is still being conducted in 2014, which continues to reveal the horrors experienced by so many children at the hands of government and religious officials. Survivor's personal stories also continue to be told and these stories bring to light the often-deep distrust of government and education systems with which individuals are coping. As the truth is told, communities in Canada can also begin to participate in the process of healing and reconciliation.

The Establishment of Residential Schools

> *"We are just learning our spiritual and cultural practices. The residential school didn't allow us to practice our culture. I believe in my culture and I also believe in my religion, because that's how we were raised, but you don't have to give up one for the other." Lake Helen member*

The following are examples that relate to the ideology behind the establishment of residential schools and the purpose they held in educating Aboriginal children.

Governor General Sir Charles Bagot

In 1842, Governor General Sir Charles Bagot, submitted a report titled, the Bagot commission report, to the Canadian government. Bagot wrote that "Indians" ought to acquire "industry and knowledge" and be placed in agriculture-based boarding schools "far from parental influence" (Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre, n.d.). These recommendations laid the cornerstone for the residential school system.

Egerton Ryerson

A Methodist minister and the Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada, Egerton Ryerson is honoured for revolutionizing education through his many secular reforms which kept power away from any one particular church in the educational system (Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre, n.d.). In 1847, Ryerson created a

document outlining his perspective on education for Aboriginal children which stated, “The education of Indians consists not merely of training the mind but of a weaning from the habits and feelings of their ancestors and the acquirements of the language, arts and customs of civilized life” (Legacy of Hope, n.d.). Ryerson’s study was carried out at the request of the Assistant Superintendent General of Indian Affairs and became the model for creating future residential schools.

Sir John A. McDonald

Following the organization of the Department of Indian Affairs and the passage of the first Indian Act in 1876, the attention of the federal government became more focused on the education of Aboriginal children. In 1879, Sir John A. MacDonald, then Prime Minister, commissioned a study of the workings of the industrial boarding schools in the United States “for advisability of establishing similar institutions in the North-West territories of the Dominion” (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, n.d.).

Nicholas Flood Davin

Nicholas Flood Davin, a journalist, lawyer and politician, was commissioned to investigate these schools in the United States to find out how they were dealing with “the Indian problem” (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), 1996). Davin visited Indian Boarding Schools in Minnesota, Virginia and the “Indian Territory” which provided an education to the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek and Seminole Indians who had been relocated there (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, n.d.). Davin was particularly impressed with the method of funding the schools whereby the government provided a set amount per student to the Church that operated them. He often cited the founder of the school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, Richard Henry Pratt, who claimed he had discovered a new way to deal with the “Indian problem – by education and assimilation” (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, n.d.) As a result of his investigations, the “Davin Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half breeds” was created in 1879 and formed the basis for residential schools across Canada (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, n.d.).

Edward Dewdney

Also in 1879, Sir John A. MacDonald appointed Edward Dewdney to the position of Indian Commissioner for the North-West Territories. Dewdney became the Lieutenant Governor in 1881, but he retained his position as Indian Commissioner as well (Dominion of Canada, 1883). Like Davin, Dewdney also supported the creation of residential schools in Canada modeled after the boarding schools of the United States:

> I am confident that the Industrial School now about to be established [in Canada] will be a principal feature in the civilization of the Indian mind. The utility of Industrial Schools has long been acknowledged by our neighbours across the line, who have had much to do with the Indian. In that country, as in this, it is found difficult to make day schools on reserves a success, because the influence of home associations is stronger than that of the schools, and so long as such a state of things exists, I fear that the inherited aversion to labour can never be successfully met. By the children being separated from their parents and properly and regularly instructed not only in the rudiments of the English language, but also in trades and agriculture, so that what is taught may not be readily forgotten, I can but assure myself that a great end will be attained for the permanent and lasting benefit of the Indian (p. 109).

Duncan Campbell Scott

Duncan Campbell Scott, who rose to be the Deputy Superintendent of the Department of Indian Affairs, is well known for his quote, “I want to get rid of the Indian problem… Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian left in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic…” (Leslie, 1978, 114).

In 1920, under Scott's direction, and in partnership with the major religions involved in education for Aboriginal people, an amendment to the Indian Act made it mandatory for all Aboriginal children between the ages of seven and fifteen to attend school. For those who were aware, it is believed that attendance at a residential school was made compulsory at this time, but a reading of Bill 14 makes clear that no particular kind of school was stipulated (Leslie, 1978). However, Scott was in favour of residential schooling for Aboriginal children, as he believed removing them from the influences of home and community would hasten the cultural and economic transformation of the whole Aboriginal population. In cases where a residential school was the only kind of school available, enrollment did become mandatory and Aboriginal children were made to leave their homes, families and cultures to go to these schools, with or without their parents' consent. Scott was not only a major contributor to the creation of the residential school system, but he was also responsible for overseeing their implementation.

Peter Bryce

During the height of the residential school system and in response to rumours about the health and care of the children in these schools, Chief Medical Officer for Indian Affairs, Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce, was sent to assess the situation of these schools in 1907. Dr. Bryce did not attempt to disguise the horror of what he found. In his official report, Bryce called the tuberculosis epidemic a “’national crime’ … [and] the consequence of inadequate government funding, poorly constructed schools, sanitary

and ventilation problems, inadequate diet, clothing and medical care" (Bryce, 1922, p. 75.). He referred to the children's health as dangerous and calculated mortality rates among them as ranging from 35% to 60% (Legacy of Hope, n.d.).

Not everyone welcomed what Dr. Bryce had to report and his requests for additional funds to address some of the basic health concerns of the children in the schools were denied. Duncan Campbell Scott suppressed Bryce's incriminating report and then terminated the position of Medical Officer (Legacy of Hope, n.d.). It was not until Bryce was forced to retire from federal service in 1922 that he self-published a complete report of his findings, under the title: The story of a national crime: Being a record of the health conditions of the Indians of Canada from 1904 to 1921.

The Residential Schools Children Attended

The First Nations children in the Superior-Greenstone Region either attended Indian day school, which were schools that were situated in or near the First Nation, or regional residential schools. The Indian day school meant that children attended school during the day and went home at the end of the day. The schools were governed by the Federal government and were administered by religious organizations. For the children that had to leave their homes, families, and communities, to attend residential school, they would not have the choice to go home and visit family when they wanted. The following residential schools, listed below, provide a glimpse of where the schools were located, services provided, and conditions that were present during the duration of operation.

> *"Indian Day School was like residential school. The big difference is that we got to go home at the end of the day. We still got straps and we couldn't speak our language and couldn't talk to each other." Lake Helen member*

St. Anne's Residential School

St. Anne's Residential School was one of 16 Indian Residential schools that operated in Ontario in the 19th and 20th centuries. St. Anne's was a Roman Catholic operated school, which ran from 1910 to 1963 (Auger, 2005, p. 109). The school was located in Fort Albany, along the west coast of James Bay at the mouth of the Albany River. It was the only Residential School in the James Bay region and was intended to house children from the Fort Albany, Weenisk, Openagow, Attawapiskat, Fort Hope, and Ogoki communities (Auger, 2005, p. 111).

The school was originally built in 1910 and had space to accommodate 32 students. Later, due to concerns about flooding and the desire to house more students, a larger school was built with space to accommodate 80 children

(Auger, 2005, p. 113). The larger school opened in 1932. St. Anne's school experienced financial difficulties like many other residential schools due to a lack of funding. The school often operated over-capacity and lacked basic supplies such as furniture (Ibid). In 1945, it was estimated that there were about 170 students attending St. Anne's Residential school (Auger, 2005, p. 114).

The children at St. Anne's followed the half-day system, which was common at the Residential schools. The children did school work for half of the day and the other half of the day was spent on other tasks such as house and yard work. The boys at St. Anne's worked in manual labour tasks around the school while the girls did domestic work such as washing, ironing, and sewing (Auger, 2005, p. 113). The students who attended St. Anne's were generally older when they boarded at the school, typically between 10 to 15 years of age and sometimes as old as 26 (Auger, 2005, p. 114).

Similar to other Residential schools throughout Canada, records show that St. Anne's was often not a safe and healthy place for the Aboriginal children who lived there. There were numerous deaths that occurred at St. Anne's between the years of 1932 and 1946, many of which remain unexplained (Auger, 2005, p. 117). Contagious illnesses sometimes spread throughout the school; particularly measles and tuberculosis that also occasionally lead to death. Accidents such as drowning and missing children are also in the historical records of St. Anne's Residential school (Auger, 2005, p. 117-118).

Serious allegations of physical and sexual abuse of students at the hands of St. Anne's staff have been made by survivors of the residential school, including the use of a homemade electric chair on the children (Roman, 2013). The allegations of physical and sexual abuse led to criminal charges of former school staff in the 1990s. Up until recently, former students of St. Anne's Residential School were still in dispute with the federal government of Canada over access to the Ontario Provincial Police investigation records from the 1990s. These records were requested to support claims for residential school survivor's compensation for abuse in the residential schools. In January of 2014, an Ontario court ruled that these records would be released to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CBC News, Jan 14, 2014). The release of these records is another step towards healing and truth telling for the survivors of the Residential schools.

St. Mary's Residential School

St. Mary's Residential School was a Roman Catholic boarding school located in Kenora, Ontario. The school was located near the shore of Lake of the Woods and was originally built in 1897 (Auger, 2005a, p. 55). The school was established after the closing of three Indian Day Schools in the surrounding areas: Grassy Narrows, Whitefish Bay and Stangecoming. The school was originally named the Rat Portage Indian Residential School, followed by the Kenora Indian Residential School, and was finally changed to St. Mary's Indian Residential School (Ibid). The school was in operation from 1897 to 1972.

The children who attended St. Mary's were mostly from communities in the Treaty #3 area, however in later years children came from First Nations communities in Manitoba and the Robinson-Superior Treaty areas (Auger, 2005a, p. 56). Many Aboriginal children who attended Residential schools were brought long distances away from their homes to unfamiliar areas (Auger, 2005b, p. 8). The school was originally intended to house 40 students, but in 1915 the Indian Agent allowed the capacity of the school to be increased to 70 students (Auger, 2005a, p. 56). In 1927, a report on St. Mary's Residential School found that the school was overcrowded, particularly the classroom space which had a capacity for 24 students but held 40 children at a time (Auger, 2005a, p. 58).

Like other Residential schools throughout Canada, there were concerns about the conditions of St. Mary's and the health of the children who lived at the school. Prior to 1931, there was an inadequate sewage disposal system for St. Anne's. Water for the facility came straight from the lake and the school's septic system drained directly into the lake, meaning "everyone who drank the water at the school would be ingesting colon bacilli" (Auger, 2005a, p. 57). In 1931, after concerns about pollution of the lake, a sewage disposal system for St. Anne's was installed (Ibid). While this may have helped some of the health concerns at the time, infectious disease remained an issue until at least the late 1930s, when an influenza epidemic spread throughout the school (Auger, 2005a, p. 58).

Historical documents show that parents also expressed concerns about the education that their children were receiving and the manner in which the children were treated while at St. Mary's. In 1928, during an education conference, the Chief of the Wabigoon Band expressed concerns about the level of education that his child received. He stated that his son had learned little at school and, despite having attended the school for 10 years his son did not know how to read and write (Auger, 2005a, p. 57). Following the appointment of a new principal at the school in 1922, many parents of children at St. Mary's also complained about the treatment that their children received, including severe discipline and punishment of children at the hands of the teachers and principal (Auger, 2005a, p. 60).

St. Mary's Residential School closed in 1972. In addition to other Indian Residential schools throughout Canada, it was after the school's closure that many stories of the treatment of children began to more widely surface. In 2013, a researcher published findings showing that nutrition experiments were performed on Aboriginal children attending six Residential schools, including St. Mary's in Kenora during the years of 1942-1952 (Mosby, 2013). Mosby's paper shows that children who attended St. Mary's school were purposely undernourished and denied dental care for the purposes of scientific research in which they did not consent to participate (p. 165). Survivors of St. Mary's Residential school have been involved in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's hearings along with survivors of other Indian Residential schools throughout Canada.

St. Joseph's Residential School

St. Joseph's Residential School, a Roman Catholic school, was operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie and was in operation from 1870 to 1964. In 1966 the school was demolished (Auger, 2005a, p. 99). The school was originally located on the Fort William First Nation, which is adjacent to Thunder Bay, on the city's south side. Later the school was located in the city of Fort William, at the corner of Franklin Street and Arthur Street.

The original St. Joseph's Residential school was established as "The Orphan Asylum of Fort William" and was intended to educate only girls from Fort William First Nation and surrounding areas (Auger, 2005a, p. 101). Later on the school began accepting white children as well as boys. Boys were discharged from the school at age 13 or 14 because it was believed that teenaged boys and girls should not be housed together (Auger, 2005a, p. 101). While some of the children who lived at St. Joseph's were orphans, many were not. Some children came from families where parents were sick, poor, unemployed or families had broken apart (Auger, 2005a, p. 101). Referrals to the school came from children's aid, priests, or families themselves (Ibid.). The Fort William Orphanage, also referred to as St. Joseph's home, was originally built on a one-acre space of First William First Nation, along the Kaministiquia River. The school operated there from 1870 to 1906 when it was forced to move because the Railway took over that piece of the reserve land. Another school was built on the First Nation, at "Squaw Bay" very near to a new church. St. Joseph's school operated at this location until it was decided to combine the Indian Boarding school with another catholic orphanage operating in the city of Fort William (Auger, 2005a, p. 101).

The numbers of children who attended St. Joseph's varied from year to year. Between 1895 and 1905, there was an average of 35-40 students at the school every year (Auger, 2005a, p. 103). By 1932 the school was approved to have 85 students but there were already 108 children enrolled (Ibid.). The children who attended St. Joseph's in its early days of operation were mostly from Fort William and small communities around Thunder Bay. Later, the school began taking children from a wider region in Northwestern Ontario, including the Robinson-Superior, Treaty #3, and Treaty #9 areas (Auger, 2005a, p. 103-104).

Similar to other Residential schools throughout Canada, St. Joseph's Residential school was underfunded, which greatly affected the quality of life for the children boarded at the school. Illness was common and was exacerbated by living in close-quarters in dormitories, which often held 40 or 50 children at a time (Auger, 2005b, p. 38). St. Joseph's Residential School followed the "half day system" common to Residential schools around Canada. The children would attend school for part of the day, having basic instruction in reading, writing and math and would spend the remainder of the day working, with girls engaged in household tasks such as cooking, cleaning and sewing and boys doing household and yard duties (Auger, 2005a, p. 103). It was common for Residential schools to operate on a very strict schedule, with students expected to sleep, eat, attend school, church, and work at very specific times (Auger, 2005b, p. 18).

The St. Joseph's Residential School on Franklin St. ran until 1966 when it was shut down and then destroyed (Auger, 2005a, p. 104). Complaints about the school date back to 1896 (Ibid) and revolve around issues that were sadly too common among many Residential schools in Canada: lack of funding, illness, and the treatment of children. Recently, there have been discussions about constructing a monument at the Franklin St. location to honour the children who attended the St. Joseph's Residential school. Read more about this on the following link. (Garrick, Wawatay News, January 24, 2014. http://www.wawataynews.ca/archive/all/2014/1/24/indian-boarding-school-monument-planned_25324).

Shingwauk Residential School

The Shingwauk Residential School was an Anglican operated boarding school located in Sault Ste. Marie, ON. This Residential School was divided into the Shingwauk Hall Indian Residential School, which operated from 1873 to 1970, and the Wawanosh School for Girls, which operated from 1873 to 1934 (Auger, 2005a, p. 147). Students of Shingwauk Residential School came mostly from surrounding communities around Ontario and as far away as Manitoba and Alberta (Auger, 2005a, p. 155).

Chief Shingwauk proposed the original idea for this school in the 1830s (Auger, 2005a, p. 149), which was to establish a big teaching wigwam on Garden River (Ibid) that would provide an opportunity for cross-cultural understanding and a place where children could receive education in both Anishinaabek and European knowledge (The Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre, 2014). Anglican missionary, Reverend William

McMurray was selected to oversee the building of the original school, which opened in 1833 (Auger, 2005a, p. 149). The Shingwauk School was relocated to the St. Mary's River in the 1870s. The nearby Wawanosh School for Girls was established two years after the new Shingwauk Industrial School opened and began operating in 1877 (Auger, 2005a, p. 150).

Shingwauk Residential School had a farm program that taught boys how to care for animals such as cows, pigs and horses, as well tend to crops (Auger, 2005a, p. 151). The Wawanosh School for Girls employed a Christian lady to educate and care for the girls (Auger, 2005a, p. 150). All of the girls wore uniforms composed of a navy blue dresses (Ibid). The Shingwauk School was intended to be an industrial school designed to train students for a career in trades. The children would begin their schooling at age 10 or 11 and spend the first two years receiving classroom education. During their third year of school, the boys would spend half of their time in classes and half of their time learning the trade that they had chosen. The boys' final two years at school would be spent as working as apprentices (Auger, 2005, p. 152).

Research on Residential schools in Ontario compiled by Nishnawbe Aski Nation shows that for one student, life at Shingwauk School was easier than his previous Residential school in Moose Factory. He recounts: "The rules were more lax, several of my boyhood friends were there and the food was pretty good. I was even able to make my own breakfast and could eat when I wanted to…The atmosphere at the school was 'looser' and I felt freer than I did when I went to Horden Hall" (as quoted in Auger, 2005a, p. 12). Nevertheless, Shingwauk School also had its challenges during the years of operation.

Funding was ongoing issue for the schools, as well as the concerns that arose in regards to safety and health of the students. On one occasion, illness spread throughout the school caused by poor sewage drainage (Auger, 2005a, p. 152). Complaints were also made about the schools condition in the 1880s, stating that the school was "filthy and dirty" (Auger, 2005a, p. 154). Numerous students died during their time at Shingwauk, including 10 children between 1936 and 1943 (Ibid). The causes of death were "scarlet fever, tubercular meningitis (2), bronchopneumonia, cerebral hemorrhage, peritonitis caused by a ruptured appendix, acute otitis media, rheumatic fever (acute bacterial endocarditis), and drowning" (Auger 2005a, p. 154).

Although Chief Shingwauk's vision was for a school that incorporated both Anishinaabek and European knowledge's, in practice Shingwauk Residential School was like the other Residential schools throughout Canada; it was operated by the Anglican-church and guided by Indian Affairs policies of assimilation. The Truth and Reconciliation reports: "On her first sight of the Shingwauk school building in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Jane Willis thought, 'Nothing could ever go wrong in such beautiful surroundings.' But a few months 'was all it took to make me ashamed of the fact that I was Indian.' Feelings of shame and inadequacy were part of the residential school system's ongoing legacy" (as cited in Truth and Reconciliation, 2012, p. 77).

The Shingwauk Residential School officially closed in 1970, although the school began to be phased out in the 1950s and 1960s (Auger, 2005a, p. 154). The building was maintained and now houses the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre and Shingwauk Project, which is dedicated to "cross-cultural research and educational development" (The Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre, 2014) about Shingwauk and other Residential schools. More information about the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre and Shingwauk Project can be found online at http://shingwauk.org/srsc/node/7.

The Impacts of Residential School

> *"Residential school has a lot to do with the issues today and we can still see the impacts." Pays Plat member*

The residential school system, intended to "take the Indian out of the child", disrupted and, in some cases, destroyed many of the traditional ways of life for Aboriginal Peoples across Canada (Baskin, 2011; Dion Stout & Kipling, 2003). Children were removed from their families and communities at an early age and forced to live within these schools where their languages and cultures were forbidden. In partnership with the Canadian government, residential schools were religious institutions, such as Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, United and Presbyterian, that provided curriculum to Aboriginal children in order to attempt to assimilate them into mainstream society (Baskin, 2011; Annett & Lawless, 2007).

In recent years, many Aboriginal people have disclosed their experiences in the schools, which include painful stories of sexual and physical abuse by those who ran the schools and the deaths of many children at their hands (Baskin, 2011; Annett & Lawless, 2007; Sinclair, Littlechild & Wilson, 2012). Generally speaking, boys were taught to become farmers and girls to become domestics with very little schooling actually taking place, which meant that children often grew up without their original languages, but not well versed in English either. Children were told over and over again

that their spirituality and cultures were demonized, inferior, and pagan while Christianity was the only religion that should be practiced.

Needless to say, many children grew up to be adults ashamed of who they were; had great difficulty returning to their communities where they might not be able to communicate with their loved ones due to the language differences; carried internalized anger, fear and sadness; and had little in the way of coping skills to understand and deal with what they were experiencing. Some survivors turned to substance abuse or other self-destructive behaviours in attempts to lessen or escape the pain and still others took their own lives. Since children were denied appropriate parental role models, they did not learn about the central role of family in their cultures and often did not know how to raise their own children when they became parents (Fournier & Crey, 1997; Knockwood, 1992; RCAP, 1996). Hence, many of these parents raised their children the only way they knew how – the way they were raised in the residential schools.

This was the beginning of intergenerational or historical trauma for Aboriginal Peoples, meaning that parents passed on their pain, self-hatred, and trauma to their children, who in turn passed it on to theirs. One will find it extremely difficult to raise children with love, attention, and affection if it was not what they themselves experienced. In extreme cases, survivors neglected and/or abused their partners and children in similar ways similar to how they were abused. Poverty became a way of life. Without an education or way to make a living in their communities, many survivors migrated to towns and cities to search for work; some were able to manage, while others became homeless and died on the streets. Today, Aboriginal Peoples have the highest rates of poverty, unemployment, inadequate or lack of affordable housing, family violence, dependence on social services, substance abuse, incarceration, poor health and involvement with the child welfare system (Baskin, 2011; Campaign 2000, 2005; Shah, 2004). These impacts are believed to be a direct result of the residential school system and other forms of colonization. Thus, generations of Aboriginal Peoples have been seriously impacted by the residential school system even though they did not attend these schools themselves.

It is important to note that, at this time, survivors of the schools, and their children and grandchildren, are reclaiming their true identities and beginning to heal from the impacts of the schools through the teachings of Elders, sharing their stories and participating in ceremonies and other gatherings.

The "Sixties Scoop"

The 'Sixties Scoop" is the term used to describe Canadian child welfare policies where Aboriginal children were 'adopted out' of their families, communities and Nations and placed in non-Aboriginal homes across Canada, the United States, and Europe (Rajotte, 2012). The Sixties Scoop era began in the 1960's and is said to have ended in the 1980s. During these 20 years, about 16,000 Aboriginal children were taken; however, it is important to note, that in 2014, there are more children in the care of the state than at the height of the residential school system (Mark, 2014). Picking up where the residential school system left off, the Sixties Scoop perpetuated the belief that Aboriginal people were culturally inferior and unable to provide for their children continued.

> *"I didn't have a birth certificate when I was born because I was born on the land."*
> *Pic Mobert member*

Many Aboriginal people believe that this ongoing forced removal of children was a deliberate act of genocide (Baskin, 2011). Many children floated from foster home to foster home or lived in institutionalized care. Physical and sexual abuse was not uncommon, but it was usually covered up, rendered invisible by the lack of social services and support for Aboriginal families and the affected children.

The homes in which Aboriginal children were placed ranged from those of well-intentioned families, to those where physical, emotional, and sexual abuse occurred. Generally speaking, these homes were not healthy places for Aboriginal children.

Anglo-Canadian foster and adoptive parents were not knowledgeable about creating an environment where a positive Aboriginal self-image could develop. In fact, many children were taught to degrade anything about themselves that represented their identities, cultures and teachings (Baskin, 2011). Social work educator Raven Sinclair (2007), who experienced adoption into a non-Aboriginal home, describes these experiences as creating "tremendous obstacles to the development of a strong and healthy sense of identity for the transracial adoptee" (66).

Many transracial adoptions began to break down, as Aboriginal children became adolescents and youth. Adolescence is traditionally a developmental stage when individuals begin to search for their own identity and form their personal belief systems; an especially painful and bewildering experience for transracial adoptees. Breakdowns showed themselves through further divisions within the adopted family, including acting out behaviours such as running away, violence, and emotional struggles such as depression. Some families made the youth leave their homes to fend for themselves (Baskin, 2007). Understandably, many of these youth felt as though they did not belong

in either mainstream Canadian society or in Aboriginal communities. Such feelings sometimes led to self-destructive behaviours, involvement with the criminal justice system, homelessness, and suicide (Baskin, 2007).

Complaints of children, their families, and communities were ignored until 1981 when reports were brought to national attention that 30 to 40 percent of children in the care of the State across Canada were Aboriginal even though they only made up four percent of the population (Reed et al., 2011). The government justified the removal of so many children by saying they were rescuing them from neglect and abuse. However, Aboriginal leaders countered that, in fact, many children were physically and sexually abused in foster and adoptive homes while being deprived of their cultures (Reed et al., 2011). Since the 1980s, thousands of Aboriginal youth and adults have confirmed such treatment while living with the destructive emotional, psychological, and spiritual impacts (Baskin, 2011).

Alanis Obomsawin, a distinguished Indigenous filmmaker directed a short documentary called, Richard Cardinal: Cry from a Diary of a Métis Child (National Film Board of Canada, 1986). The film is a tribute to the late Richard Cardinal who lived in 28 different foster home environments in the 17 years he spent in foster care system, until his suicide in 1984. The film includes glimpses of Richard Cardinal's life in the foster care system that were written in his personal diary

Today many adoptees, now adults, are looking to reunite with their birth families and communities. There are many adult adoptees searching for families and families searching for their children. As a result, across the country, several First Nations and urban Aboriginal agencies now have reunification programs. For many adoptees and birth families, it has been beneficial to work with repatriation workers who can assist with the emotional and psychological preparation for reunion and in cases where this does not go well or parents are deceased. In addition, a litigation process has recently begun on the behalf of those children who were part of the 60s scoop. As emphasized by Nishnawbe Aski Nation Deputy Grand Chief Terry Waboose (2012), "An entire generation lost its Aboriginal identity and culture and we support their efforts in pursuing litigation to hold the Government of Canada accountable for this devastating legacy."

> *"The frustration is on the ignorance that remains to be there. No matter what we try to do, it seems like they will never have an understanding of what we lived through." Pic River member*

Way of Life ~ Beliefs and Practices

Harvesting and Hunting

Harvesting (e.g., hunting, fishing, gathering) continues to be part of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit traditional ways of life. The rights to harvest are protected in some cases by treaties ("treaty rights") and, in other cases, as inherent Aboriginal rights. Over a century ago, treaties were promises that the Canadian government made to Aboriginal peoples, sometimes orally and other times through written agreements such as Numbered Treaties and the Robinson Treaties in Northwestern Ontario. In 1850, one of the Robinson Treaties was negotiated and signed between the Anishinaabe and the federal government for the north shores of Lake Superior and became a loose model for future Numbered Treaties in Western Canada (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, n.d.). Sometimes today, however, the rights of Aboriginal peoples to hunt and fish are determined on a case-by-case basis as each province has its own rules and regulations about the management of wildlife and fisheries which were originally formed without any consideration of Aboriginal peoples' rights (Filion et al., 2011).

"My dad was the most amazing thing in my life…when he passed away, I stayed with my mom and grandparents and set snares, trapping, learning how to skin animals, and that's all we lived off of…the food that we hunted."
Ginoogaming member

The issues of Aboriginal rights have also been addressed in numerous court decisions. One very important decision to Métis people was the Powley decision. On September 19, 2003, the Supreme Court of Canada, in a unanimous judgment, said that Section 35 of the Constitution Act, as members of the Sault Ste. Marie Métis community, could exercise a Métis right to hunt. As a Supreme Court ruling, this decision had implications for Métis people across Canada. Aboriginal peoples however, view harvesting and hunting as much more the exercise of Aboriginal or treaty rights. They see these activities as part of their responsibility to care for the land, thereby ensuring that the needs of future generations will be met. In modern day, this is viewed as managing natural resources and some Nations work with the provincial governments in doing so (Filion et al., 2011). In addition, for Aboriginal peoples, this involvement in managing natural resources is becoming a part of today's land claims.

> *"I was brought up on the trap line. I remember as a young kid growing up. I never had a boring moment. I would go and set traps, hunt small game, I was always out preparing the camp with fresh flooring with brush, cutting the fire wood, and hauling the water." Ginoogaming member*

Aboriginal Elders and Senators explain that the land and the process of the hunt do not only teach technical hunting skills, but they also teach important life skills and character traits to children, such as patience (Filion et al., 2011). Hunters need to wait for the proper weather conditions and the animals to show. Other character traits learned while hunting is courage, determination, respect, persistence, and reflection. These valuable traits are not only useful in the hunt, but are important for living, learning, and working in today's world.

Aboriginal people were healthier when they ate food that came from the land and water that they gathered themselves by harvesting, fishing, and hunting. For the Anishinaabe and Métis people in northwestern Ontario, traditional foods include deer, moose, goose, duck, beaver, perch, fish, fish eggs, berries, and wild rice. Said to be one of the most perfect diets in the world, the benefits of these foods include less calories and saturated fat, more fiber and vitamins, and assist in maintaining healthy blood pressure, heart health and weight (Eat Right Ontario, n.d.).

Many of these traditional foods continue to be harvested today, such as manomin, the Anishinaabe word for wild rice, which is actually a type of grass that grows naturally in fresh water lakes. It is a food rich in flavour and high in nutrition. Manomin has a handcrafted taste developed since time immemorial and is honored in Anishinaabe legends, feasts and ceremonies (Kagiwiosa Manomin,

n.d.). In keeping with Aboriginal worldviews, the harvesting of wild rice has always emphasized community participation. Today, manomin is organically grown and harvested by local people and sold to companies such as Kagiwiosa Manomin, an Anishinaabe owned and operated cooperative, located at Wabigoon Lake in northwestern Ontario. It is then locally processed and packaged for market (Kagiwiosa Manomin, n.d.).

> *"I remember harvesting the wild rice and berries in August." Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek member*

Land Based Activities and Knowledge

Since the beginning of creation, Aboriginal people have depended on the land for all of their economic and spiritual needs. The land in Aboriginal worldviews refers to the entire ecosystem made up of animals, fish, birds, plants, water, the earth, and air (Baskin, 2011). First Nations, Métis and Inuit knowledge holders and harvesters knew the land very well, including the habits of animals and which plants to use for medicines.
This close connection to the land is reflected in the peoples' creation stories. The Anishinaabe creation story speaks about how Turtle Island was created on a turtle's back with mud from the bottom of a huge body of water (Reed et al., 2011). This story shows the deep belief that the people could only live through understanding the land and everything on it. Anishinaabe scholar, Deborah McGregor (2009) links her Nation's creation story to our current environmental challenges.

Key principles that emerge from the Anishinabe Re-creation Story…are that …"all beings in Creation have a role" [and] "everything is connected to everything else". Principles such as these, adhered to not only in ceremony, but also in everyday living, ensured that Indigenous peoples lived harmoniously and in balance with the rest of Creation. Today, these principles can also be thought of as vital principles in ecological science. For example, we now know that industrial activities in one part of the world affect people and the environment in another…" (18).

First Nations, Métis and Inuit people also have a strong spiritual connection to the land. Many Nations refer to the planet as "Mother Earth" to reflect love and respect, as she is the giver of life. Of course, this means that the people are responsible for caring for the earth and using her resources carefully (McGregor, 2009). This is why people always give something, usually tobacco, before they take something from the earth. In today's world, First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples' wisdom is often referred to as "traditional knowledge" or "Aboriginal traditional knowledge" which is becoming increasingly requested by environmentalists and scientists to help inform natural resource management decisions.

> *"As kids we used to make rafts out of wood and go fishing with a hook and a line and no rod. We would get the fish we wanted in a half hour. If you had twelve kids in the family you would get six fish. We didn't waste anything and only took what we needed." Pic Mobert member*

The Anishinaabe people in the Treaty Three area have the legal and political right to carry out land-based activities, such as hunting and fishing (Willow, 2012). These rights are guaranteed through this Treaty and yet people have had to fight for them. During the twentieth century, for example, the Anishinaabe in the Kenora, Ontario area, were often prosecuted for hunting and fishing (Willow, 2012). Today, the legal guarantees of Treaty Three are more likely to be followed. These rights include stipulations that the people may hunt outside of the Ministry of Natural Resources sanctioned seasons, they do not have to follow bag limits on what they harvest and catch, and are able to hunt and fish without a license (Willow, 2012). Métis people who meet the Powley test also have the right to harvest for food. More information on Métis harvesting can be found at www.metisnation.org/harvesting.

> *"I remember trapping, portaging, fishing, and setting nets with my mom. I was the paddler." Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek member*

Even Aboriginal people who live in urban centres tend to have respect for the teachings about the land. As Anishinaabe writer, Joseph Boyden, explains, "This stretch of water…is where I bring my son when we need to reconnect again when the trouble of his teenage years threatens to unground him and me" (Filion et al., 2011, p. 38). Aboriginal agencies in cities sometimes organize culture camps for youth where they spend time on the land, learning to live with her, listening to the teachings of Elders, and participating in ceremonies. There also continues to be many ceremonies and celebrations that honour the land, such as the Anishinaabe women's traditional dance where they must always have one foot on the ground, so they are consistently connected to the earth (Filion et al, 2011). Almost all First Nation spiritual ceremonies, such as fasting, the sweat lodge, and the full moon ceremony, take place on the land and make careful use of her resources, including tree saplings to make the lodge, heated rocks that go inside the lodge, the burning of cedar and the drinking of water.

First Nation Ceremonies

Sunrise Ceremony

The Sunrise Ceremony is a way to start a new day and give thanks to the Creator for having that next day. A Cree Elder, Raymond Ballantyne, states that the Sunrise Ceremony is done differently by all First Nations, and so the exact steps that happen during the ceremony will depend on the Nation of the person who is conducting it. Thus, those who conduct Sunrise Ceremonies will only speak about the way they have been taught. Generally, the Ceremony's procedures will begin with those present sitting or standing around a sacred fire, which has been created for the purpose of the ceremony, typically by young men who have been taught how to make and care for such fire. Smudging is then done by all of those present and the ceremony conductor smudges his or her pipe as well. Tobacco is placed in the bowl of the pipe, lit, and smoked by the conductor. This person then points the pipe in each of the four directions while saying prayers that acknowledge these directions, what they represent, and thanking them for their gifts (Quilan, 2012). The pipe is then brought around to those in the circle who either smokes it, touch it, or the conductor touches it to the person's forehead.

Sundance Ceremony

The Sundance Ceremony is practiced differently by various Nations as well, but the Anishinaabe (Ojibway) practice it with drumming, singing, dancing, and fasting. People participate in this ceremony as it symbolizes the continuity between life on earth and the passing into the spirit world through death (Ruml, 2009). The Lakota tradition of the Sundance Ceremony is regarded as a way to honour the Creator or Great Spirit and pray for the protection and well being of those living in the community (Ruml, 2009). A Sundance Tree is central to the Ceremony and a circular arbor is created around it. The ceremony usually lasts for four days with the participants fasting from food and water while dancing and praying for the duration of the Ceremony (Ruml, 2009). Community members who take on a helper role who are not required to fast or dance support them.

> *"Our medicines come from Mother Earth."*
> *Pic Mobert member*

Coming of Age Ceremonies

There are two separate fasting ceremonies that are intended for adolescent boys and girls (Best Start, 2010). These ceremonies are meant to help prepare the youth for their

future roles and responsibilities as men and women in their communities. They also represent how adults, Elders, and the Creator will guide the young people on how to live a good life.

Boys: Vision Quest

Boys participate in a Vision Quest fast for approximately four days in isolation in a natural environment, typically in the bush (Best Start, 2010). Although they are not allowed food or drink, they can have their smudge medicines, tobacco and the means to make a fire with them. They also build a small shelter from tree branches and have bedding, such as a sleeping bag. The boys spend their time drumming, singing, praying, meditating and sleeping. They pay attention to their dreams for messages or a vision that may come to them. This vision may be in the form of an animal or spirit helper that will guide them throughout their life. The teachings offered during this Ceremony focus on the youth's responsibilities towards their community, their future partner and family, and to their Nation (Best Start, 2010).

Girls: Berry Fasting

When adolescent girls first begin their menstrual cycle, or "moon time", it marks the beginning of the Berry Fasting Ceremony (Wawatay News, 2005). This is a time when, traditionally, girls begin to learn about what it means to be a woman and are given the teachings about this by the women in their family and community. This ceremony signifies the important transition from a girl into womanhood. The girls pick, wash, and preserve berries throughout their yearlong berry fast, meaning that they do not eat any of the berries for one year. At the end of this year, a "coming out" event occurs (Wawatay News, 2005).

Many responsibilities and traditions are taught to the young women at this time by grandmothers, aunts, and mothers, according to the teachings of their particular Nation. All the women come together and speak to the young woman about what they have taught her, how they are proud of her, and what they will teach her in the future. After this, the young woman is offered berries and denies them four times for Elders, children, family, and community. The fifth time that she is offered the berries is when she may accept them and a large feast follows.

Another common practice of berry fasting is that the girl goes into seclusion for 10 days after her first moon time (Best Start, 2010). This practice culminates with a feast and ceremony where the girl walks around the circle of women that have given her teachings. Her grandmothers guide her around the circle four times and then she enters the circle stating her name. She is covered up with a robe while walking around the circle, which is removed when she is introduced as a woman when entering the circle.

Shaking Tent Ceremony

There are two types of Shaking Tent Ceremonies – one that receives power from the water and one from the wind or earth. All those participating in this Ceremony sit in a circle outside of the shaking tent. The Ceremony conductor enters the shaking tent and participants may then either ask questions one at a time or all at once. The conductor inside the shaking tent reveals the answers to the questions that participants are asking (Sinclair, 2010).

Sweat Lodge Ceremony

The Sweat Lodge Ceremony is traditionally used to cleanse the mind, body, spirit and emotions. It is a place to connect with our own spirit, our ancestors, and the Creator (Schiff & Pelech, 2007). The ceremony consists of sitting in a circle in a lodge created with tree branches and coverings such as hides or tarps. Once participants are inside, large rocks heated from the sacred fire outside of the lodge are inserted into a pit in the middle of the lodge. The person conducting the sweat lodge will splash water onto the extremely hot rocks and will sing and pray (Schiff & Pelech, 2007). Participants pray in their own way for their healing and for that of others, ask for guidance and direction, and give thanks for what they have. Some Nations have a set number of rounds, such as seven, that is facilitated by the conductor (Schiff & Pelech, 2007).

Pow Wow

A Pow Wow is a traditional ceremony that has many aspects to it, including the wearing of traditional regalia, dancing, drumming, singing, and celebrating life. Today, not all Pow Wows are viewed as traditional because some are competitions with prize money. Pow Wow means “gathering” or “celebration.” There are protocols that are expected to be followed when attending Pow Wows, including standing and removing hats when the war veterans come out to lead the dancers as a sign of respect, not taking photographs unless invited to do so, and the prohibition of alcohol or drugs at these events (Curve Lake First Nation, 2012).

> *“We didn’t grow up with knowledge about pow-wows but we found out later that our parents and grandparents knew about but hid it because it was forbidden in the residential schools. We learned about it as adults.” Pays Plat member*

Naming Ceremony

Most Nations have Traditional Teachers or Elders that have the gift of giving spiritual or traditional names to others (Anishinaabe Health Toronto [AHT], 2000). This Teacher or Elder will conduct a ceremony for the passing on of this name after the person offers tobacco and asks for this Ceremony to occur. An Elder will accept one’s tobacco, drum, pray, pay attention to his or her dreams, and listen to what the spirits or ancestors are

telling them as this is how a spirit name is revealed to them (Anishinaabe Health Toronto [AHT], 2000).

In some Nations, a spirit name or naming ceremony occurs when a person is a child and a family member gives the name to them. The name is based on what the behaviours or actions of the child resemble and reflect. A spirit name could also be given based on traditional family spirit names that may be relevant to that family's clan (Anishinaabe Health Toronto, 2000).

Spiritual Beliefs

Traditional Spirituality

According to Irwin (1996), "Native religions are remarkably diverse, grounded in specific languages, places, life way rites, and communal relationships, embedded in unique ethnic histories often overshadowed by the more common, pervasive history of religious and political suppression" (p. 312). Generally speaking, however, Aboriginal spirituality is about interconnectedness and interrelationships with all life. Everyone and everything is seen as equal and interdependent, part of the great whole, and as having a spirit (Baskin, 2011).

Elders are spiritual leaders who provide cultural and spiritual knowledge for the people through storytelling and teachings (Waldram, 1993). Spirituality usually includes praying to the Creator and participating in ceremonies to cleanse one's spirit (Irwin, 1996). There are many different ceremonies which differ according to one's Nation, but common First Nation ceremonies include: sweat lodge, sunrise, and full moon (Irwin, 1996). Sacred items used in praying and ceremonies often are pipes, medicines such as tobacco and sweetgrass, and drums (Waldram, 1993).

Many Aboriginal communities practice spirituality in the form of reciprocity, doing things for the overall good of the community and as personal reflection. As explained by Cree Elder, Joanne Daillaire: "There is a sense of connection to community through spirituality. Spirituality brings people together, which is wanted and needed by all people. It is a way of expressing the self. Spirituality can create a bigger trust of the self as well as becoming a process of going inward to look for answers" (personal communication, July 23, 2009).

> *"When the weather was nice and warm families would get together and make a fire and share stories." Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek member*

Religious Spirituality

Diverse forms of Christianity, such as Catholicism, Methodist, and Presbyterian, are practiced in many Aboriginal communities of many different Nations. Although Christianity was used as a tool to colonize Aboriginal Peoples through, for example, the residential school system, many people practice one or more forms of this religion or combine it with traditional forms of spirituality. This blending of the two forms of spirituality may go smoothly in some communities where Aboriginal teachings have been acknowledged by churches and incorporated into their services through artwork and smudging, but others continue to struggle with the incorporation of traditional methods into a Christian framework (Irwin, 1996).

Oneida Elder, Eileen Antone, explains her way of embracing both the spirituality of the Longhouse and the Baptist Church:

> When I was six years old, I started to go to the Baptist church in my community. An Aboriginal person was the pastor at the church. We sang hymns in Oneida, but everything else was in English. I started going to the Longhouse as a teenager. The teachings for me in all this were that God loves everyone. If a particular church accepted me, then it was good, but if it didn't, then it wasn't good. Both the Longhouse and the church taught me that community and family is vitally important (personal communication, July 10, 2009).

Seven Sacred Teachings

The Seven Sacred Teachings, or the Seven Grandfather /Grandmother Teachings, are principles or values that are incorporated into the lives of many First Nations and communities. The following interpretations of these teachings are from the Anishinaabe.

Humility / Dabaadendiziwin

Humility is when a person is able to be humble and not think too highly of her or himself (Bouchard & Martin, 2009). There is a difference between being confident and being humble, as humble people are willing to take constructive criticism and continue to improve themselves. Humility also refers to knowing that you are a sacred part of all of Creation. When you are humble,

you don't consider yourself more important than other people. You are happy to serve others and see other people's needs as important. When you are humble, you don't criticize others. You take an honest look at what you have to learn and are willing to admit your mistakes, so you can learn from them (Kakekayash, J. personal communication, April 7, 2012).

Honesty / Gwayakwaadiziwin

Honesty is important in interactions that a person has with the self and with others. Walking through life with integrity and being trustworthy are a part of being honest. According to Bedonkohe Apache leader, Geronimo, "Honesty comes when you learn to be fearless with yourself" (as cited in Bouchard & Martin, 2009). When people are honest, they can be relied on not to cheat, steal, or tell lies. Honesty is telling the truth no matter what. It is admitting mistakes, even when you know someone might be angry or disappointed. Being honest means that you don't make false promises – you do what you said you would do. Your actions match your words.

Respect / Minaadendamowin

Being respectful is to honour all things in Creation and to recognize the importance of reciprocity. It means to show honour or esteem to someone or something: to consider the well being of, or to treat someone or things with deference or courtesy. Respect includes honouring the teachings of one's family and Nation, which includes behaving in a way which makes life more peaceful and orderly for everyone (Kakekayash, J. personal communication, April 7, 2012).

Courage / Aakode'ewin

Being courageous is personal bravery in the face of fear such as the adversities in life. It is doing what needs to be done even when it is hard or scary. Courage is needed in trying new things, in facing new situations, and in picking yourself up after a mistake and trying again. Sometimes courage means recognizing a danger and standing firm. It doesn't mean taking unnecessary chances just to be seen as brave (Kakekayash, J. personal communication, April 7, 2012).

Wisdom / Nibwaakaawin

The Creator has given wisdom to all, which is to be used for the good of one's community. This teaching is about the practice of balance in all things, the exercise of inner vision, and the ability to see how all things fit together. Wisdom is gained through humility and the daily practice of spiritual discipline. As we accept the guidance of the sacred teachings, we are able to return to our centre and see clearly in all directions (Kakekayash, J. personal communication, April 7, 2012).

Truth / Debwewin

Understanding truth means to recognize, acknowledge and practice all of the seven sacred teachings (Bouchard & Martin, 2009). It also means that there is no deception of others or oneself. Truthfulness means your words and actions are all of the truth. You do not live a lie, as people know who and what you are without exaggerating to impress them or trying to be something you are not. When you are practicing truthfulness, you investigate the truth for yourself. You look into your own heart and speak what is true for you.

Love / Zaagi'idiwin

To know love is to know peace. Love is a strong affection and attachment towards another through admiration, loyalty, and kindness. It is caring for someone, wanting to be near them and share with them. It means treating people with special care and kindness because they mean so much to you. Love is treating other people just like you want to be treated – with care and respect. When people are struggling, this is the time when they need love the most (Kakekayash, J. personal communication, April 7, 2012).

The Arts and Storytelling

The past is what the Elders said it was, the present is what they say it is, and the future is what their children will say it is. Memories conveyed orally are considered to be true and reliable, and can help communicate truth from the heart, not just truth from the mind (personal communication with Lillian McGregor, October 12, 2008).

Storytellers have existed since the beginning of creation, and the community and the land have shaped the stories. Art has also existed since the beginning of time and is used to express worldviews, histories, and stories. Both stories and art connect people to their spirituality and identities. Traditionally, everyone was involved in various forms of art, which included dance and song, as well as, visual representation (Filion et al., 2011). Art, in the case of symbols, is also often seen on spiritual items such as pipes and drums.

> *"I always sit down with an elder when I go out someplace because I know I'm going to learn something." Pic Mobert member*

Stories have many layers of meaning which allow for the listener to be responsible for not just listening, but for reflection and interpretation of the message that is being sent. Stories typically have many possible explanations for whatever is happening, so that problems can be examined from a variety of views and angles before a solution or solutions can be attained (Lanigan, 1998).

Today, many Aboriginal scholars are implementing storytelling as a way to conduct research since stories are a foundational part of Aboriginal oral societies, which existed long before Western education, and research methods were developed (Baskin, 2011). Through storytelling as a research methodology, it is possible for all involved, including the participants and the researchers, to build knowledge together, which is key to Aboriginal peoples' value of collective wisdom that is meant for everyone (Apffel-Marglin, 1998). Thus, storytelling continues to have a strong purpose for Aboriginal people as a way to uncover new insights and pass on knowledge.

In today's world, Aboriginal peoples' art continues to reflect their lives, spirituality, interests, and concerns through music, performance pieces, and clothing designs. There are many talented Anishinaabe artists, such as Rick Beaver, Aaron Paquette, Shaun Hedican, Christie Bellecourt, Norval Morrisseau (1932-2007), George Morrison, Blake Debassige, and Daphne Odjig, who, each in their own way, use visual expression for the spiritual and social dimensions of the world around them and the relationships between people and everything else (National Museum of the American Indian, 2013).

These beautiful creations are visible in traditional Anishinaabe arts, such as dodem (clan) pictographs on treaty documents; bags embroidered with

porcupine quills, painted drums, and carved pipes (National Museum of the American Indian, 2013). The continuity of Anishinaabe art emphasizes traditional Anishinaabe spiritual perceptions that are very much part of Anishinaabe identity today. Artist, Blake Debassige, explained in an interview how Anishinaabe painters tend to share their techniques with one another through demonstration and observation, which represents their worldview:

> All of us worked together as a group, as opposed to as individuals. Listening to Elders and researching legends was my schooling. The art grew exactly the same way grandmothers taught their children: by experience, by oral history. The artists' community grew as everyone shared insights and techniques (Filion et al., 2010, p. 127).

The late Anishinaabe artist, Roy Thomas, held similar views about his work. Born in the small community of Pagwachuan Lake (Moving Waters), Longlac, Ontario, Thomas was one of the creators of a painting style known as the Anishinaabe Woodland style which he described as:

> My mind and my vision go back to my grandmothers and grandfathers going along the shores in birch bark canoes and leaving images for the grandchildren—which is us—to see and to be taught and as a result, we have developed our style. Woodland artists today capture the life and excitement that are in the rocks, making them come alive and speak, but still maintaining their purpose and teachings (Kayeriakweks, 2012).

Thomas had numerous solo exhibitions and participated in several group shows around the world. His work is found in many national and international collections including the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, Ontario, the Inuit Gallery in Mannheim, Germany and the National Gallery of Ethnology in Osaka, Japan.

The spirit of Roy Thomas lives on today through the entrepreneurial work of his wife Louise. After he succumbed to cancer in 2004, she converted his studio into the Anishinaabe Art Gallery in Thunder Bay, Ontario. It is seen as a vibrant gallery that showcases 140 artists, most of who are Anishinaabe from Northwestern Ontario. In October of 2009, Louise was the recipient of the First Nations Business Award of Excellence for creating and managing the gallery, which she describes in this way:
"Even though Roy was already well-known and his works were selling very well, I needed to do something more to honour the man that was my greatest inspiration. The gallery is a way to celebrate his works and give other artists the opportunity to showcase their talents" (Kayeriakweks, 2012).

There are pictographs in the mouth of the river of Nipigon Bay. "I remember going to look at them with my family and there are messages in them." Lake Helen member

Some people of late say that storytelling and other forms of oral culture are being lost, particularly because of modern communications and technology. However, others believe that stories can be transmitted to many more people through technology such as the Internet. Consider music as an example. Tall Paul, an Anishinaabe hip-hop artist blends English and Anishinaabemowin in his music. It has been said of his work: "The language of hip-hop can help inspire our people to revitalize our own Indigenous languages for the generations to come—and it's great to see it in action" (Martineau, 2011).

Music, via singing, dance, drumming and other instruments, such as fiddles (particularly important for Métis people), has always been a part of First Nations and Métis people's lives in social events, ceremonies, healing and recreation. This is still the case in today's world, but now Aboriginal people's music flourishes at powwows, festivals, community gatherings, and in the music industry. Artists range from country music to hip-hop, so such diversity means their work has a wide audience and is quite marketable. There is even a Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards event, which was created and is managed by Aboriginal people across the country.

There are several well known Anishinaabe musicians and groups, such as the blues and folk group, Digging Roots, who have toured North America and Europe and won a Juno Award in 2010. Additionally, artists the DJ crew, A Tribe Called Red is known internationally and won a Juno Award in 2014. Mishkosiminiziibiing (Big Grassy River) is an Anishinaabe First Nation community of 246 residents in Northwestern Ontario, located on the southeast shores of Lake of the Woods, and is the home of Percy Tuesday. Popularly known as "The Reverend", Tuesday is fondly recognized by fans and fellow musicians as a "legend in his own time". He is a seasoned musician and entertainer and has performed in a multitude of venues during the past 35 years, travelling across Canada and the United States. In 2014, Tuesday became a Manitoba Aboriginal Music Hall of Fame inductee and is now referred to as an Elder in his community.

Three well know Aboriginal musicians that reign from the Superior-Greenstone region include Bonnie Couchie (*see photo*), a member of the Pic River First Nation, Ron Kanutuski (who is also a comedian and traditional teacher) of Lake Helen Reserve, and Shy-Anne Hovorka, who has won numerous music awards and is currently teaching for the Superior-Greenstone District School Board. For more information on these artists, please visit their website: www.bonniecouchie.com / www.ronkanutski.com / www.shy-ann.com.

Both music and visual arts are methods of expressing one's values, identities and aspirations. They are powerful means of communication and can pass on beliefs to future generations while also contributing to

raising the public's understanding of Aboriginal peoples and challenging stereotypes. With today's technology, First Nations, Métis and Inuit people can share their art with people around the world via listening to music, watching videos online, and creating computer-assisted designs in one's visual work.

The art industry is one of the most significant economic endeavours of Aboriginal peoples. CDs, paintings, and prints are not only available in Aboriginal run craft shops, but many are now sold in retail stores, thereby making profits for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Many artists also have websites to promote and sell their work. For the first time in 2014, Aboriginal artists, including Anishinaabe ones, were represented at the One of a Kind Spring Show in Toronto, Ontario (Muskrat Magazine, 2014). This first time Aboriginal marketplace, called Thunderbird Marketplace, was produced by Thunderbird Aboriginal Arts, Culture and Entrepreneur Centre whose aim is to bring traditional teachings into contemporary perspectives through art (Dion-Fletcher, 2011).

Gender Roles and Responsibilities

Historically, most Aboriginal Nations had clear divisions of work amongst the different genders, but all roles and responsibilities were equally valued (RCAP, 1996). Basil Johnston (1982), author of many books about Anishinaabe life and culture, speaks about this concept of equality between men and women:

> *"We were brought up that if there was a job that needed to be done at home we all contributed, regardless of being a male or a female." Lake Helen member*

The Anishinaabe word for the relationship between a man and a woman was weekjeewaugun, meaning companion – a term which referred equally to male or female. There was no distinction in sex, and therefore no notion of inferiority or superiority. More particularly, weekjeewaugun meant Companion on the Path of Life – "he who goes with" or "she who walks with (p. 79).

In most Nations, women were viewed as natural and equal leaders with powerful voices in the decision-making processes of day-to-day living. Traditionally, women were negotiators, mediators, healers, storytellers and the centre of family life. In some Nations, women appointed the male leaders and had the power to remove them from these positions if they were not acting in the best interests of the community. Although women made the decisions, the men carried them out. Anishinaabe Elder, the late Art Solomon (1994), explains the importance of women:

The woman is the foundation on which nations are built. She is the heart of her nation. If that heart is weak, the people are weak. If her heart is strong and her mind is clear, then

the nation is strong and knows its purpose. The woman is the center of everything (n.d.).

Men made an enormous contribution to the safety and welfare of their communities. They were highly valued as those who carried out the responsibilities of defense and protection. Although their roles included builders and hunters, their main task was to defend women, children, and Elders. In the Anishinaabe language, the word for community protector is “ogitchidaa” which does not mean warrior or soldier, but rather those who maintain peace so that communities can thrive (Filion et al. 2011).

As a result of cohesive and respectful teamwork between men and women, communities thrived. Nevertheless, it is not unheard of for role reversal to occur and both men and women have been, and are, protectors, hunters, teachers, medicine people, and leaders who offer their gifts to the community (Minnesota Department of Education: Office of Indian Education, n.d.).

Ancient teachings of some Aboriginal Nations talk about community members who are said to have received a gift that enables them to see with two perspectives at once (Reed et al, 2011). A direct translation of the Anishinaabe term, Niizh manidoowag, meaning "two-spirit" is usually used to indicate a person whose body holds both a masculine and a feminine spirit and so are fulfilling many mixed gender roles. Thus, a two-spirit person may carry the spirits of both a hunter and a clan mother (Reed et al., 2011). Today, this term is often representative of those who identity as, for example, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered or queer (personal communication with Jessica Yee, June 21, 2010).

> *“We did grow up with people that were two-spirited and they weren’t treated any differently. You didn’t call them down or tease them.” Pays Plat member*

The roles and responsibilities of women and two-spirited people were attacked through colonization, including the Indian Act of 1876. Such gender discrimination continues to this day despite some changes to the Act. The educational system has also had a huge impact on these traditional roles, as its aim has consistently been to assimilate everyone into mainstream roles. Unfortunately, two-spirited people have not only been discriminated against by mainstream society, but sometimes also by their own families and communities. According to one Anishinaabe two-spirited person, who moved from his community to a city due to discrimination, “being two-spirited was not talked about or accepted in my family. It is better now, but it’s a very fine line” (Filion et al., 2011, p. 173).

"First Nations were nomadic: they followed the seasons, they followed the animals. Western view was that we should be living in one area all year. Each family group was on their own and made connections with other families." Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek member

Matriarchy

Traditionally, many First Nation communities were formed as matriarchal societies. According to Yee (2010), matriarchal societies in such communities meant that the women were in charge of land and resources. This meant that women were highly regarded. This is seen through the fact that when a couple were married, the man would leave his community to join the woman's and, should the couple separate, the man moved out while the woman retained the home (Baskin, 2011).

A powerful example of matriarchal societies is that of the Haudenosaunee whose laws state that women traditionally held powerful roles which included choosing the Clan Mothers, who had the power to select chiefs as political leaders and remove them if they did not think they were working in the best interests of the community, make inter-tribal decisions, and controlled the distribution of goods (Goodleaf, 1995). According to McIvor (1995) and Sparrow (1990), in hunting and gathering systems, Aboriginal women's rights are not derived from treaties or documents because matrilineal and matriarchal societies were a foundation in the structure of these systems long before contact. Such systems meant that women held positions of political significance and, today, when addressing the need for self-government, the political rights of women are consistently raised (McIvor, 1995). To truly reaffirm Aboriginal peoples' traditional rights also means incorporating Aboriginal women's rights, since failure to do so is in direct opposition to traditional values and laws (Sunseri, 2000).

Relationship with Water

Water has always been critically important to the earth and the people. Traditionally, in the Anishinaabe culture, women have been responsible for taking care of the water, as they are the givers of life just as the earth is. Babies are born once the mother's water breaks and the grandmother moon controls the ocean waves as she does the menstrual cycles, or moon time, of women. At ceremonies, it is the women who bring the water, bless it and offer it to the spirits and the people who are participating.

The place of birth is a part of the cultural, spiritual, and political landscape of First Nations peoples across Canada. One's birthplace is important because of the relationship between the people and the land and water they are born to. This concept is symbolized through the notion of 'carrying water'. Ceremonies surrounding birth and the relationship that is created through the woman's connection to the land and the water, have a place in the current discussions regarding First Nation peoples' rights (Simpson et al, 2009).

> *"There was a water spill in 1996/97 – there was a leak in the tailings pond and cyanide leaked into the creek and it went into the Pic River, our main source of water. We couldn't drink the water for three years. They've said that it will take at least 25 years for us to utilize the water. We were told that we had to limit the intake of fish that we consume from the Pic River." Pic River member*

Considering the significance of water to Anishinaabe people, it is understandable that they are seriously concerned about water contamination, particularly around the First Nations communities they live in. For example, those whose territory surrounds the English-Wabigoon River system were dependent upon this river for food and water for

centuries (Olson, 2012). Fish from the river system were critical for the diet of community members and fishing was an important cultural and economic activity. People got their drinking water from the river and hunted and trapped animals that were also dependent on the same water. Then, from the early 1960s to the late 1970s, Reed Paper dumped more than 50,000 pounds of mercury into the English–Wabigoon River system (Olson, 2012). Many community members suffered from severe mercury poisoning and all communities dependent upon this river system continue to deal with the social, cultural, and health impacts of living in a contaminated ecosystem.

However, the women in this territory took up their traditional roles and responsibilities for taking care of the water. In 2003, a group of women from the communities of Asubpeechoseewagong Netum Anishinaabek (Grassy Narrows) and Wabauskang First Nation began to study the impacts of environmental contaminants on their traditional territories using both Anishinaabe traditional knowledge and western science (Olson, 2012). They were gravely concerned about the impacts of environmental contaminants on the health and well being of women and their children. From 2001 to 2005, the two communities completed a large traditional foods testing program and held two Anishinaabe knowledge workshops to discuss the impact of contamination on their communities (Olson, 2012).

After watching the deterioration of the water quality in the Great Lakes, Anishinaabekwe, Josephine Mandamin, began a process of creating awareness to protect it. She led a group of women on a walk around Lake Superior in 2003, which has since expanded to an annual event and covers all of the Great Lakes (Reed et al., 2011). Mandamin's leadership in bringing awareness to this crisis led to an agreement between Ontario's Minister of Natural Resources and the Union of Ontario Indians to ensure that First Nations in this province participate in decisions regarding water quality (Reed et al., 2011).

Support Networks

In many Aboriginal languages, there is a phrase that translates into "all my relations." It is intended to express that one's community is an extension of one's family that interdependence is valued, that we must care for one another and that it is important to

focus all our efforts on the betterment of our community (Baskin, 2011). Everyone is viewed as having the ability to participate in the well being of one another and the community. In fact, traditionally, and for some today, hereditary clan systems have a great deal of influence in First Nation communities. Each clan had a specific purpose; some clans were protectors, others were carriers of medicines, and some were mediators (Kakekayash, J. personal communication, April 7, 2012). Every person belonged to a clan and, therefore, was able to support others in his or her own way.

This emphasis on collective well being is based on Aboriginal values such as caring for all, sharing what one has and interdependence. It is also based on necessity and logic. Centuries ago the original people of this land endured harsh environmental conditions, such as extreme cold weather and a shortage of food. Families gathered to live together so they could support one another by working together for the betterment of all. They needed each other. Today, this is expressed through teachings such as all things must be used so as to diminish waste, never take more than you need, and always give away what you do not use (Bouchard & Martin, 2009).

Communal living meant sharing the raising of children and providing for old people. It meant that when food was plentiful, everyone had enough and when it was not, no one had more than any other member of the community. No one moved ahead of anyone else. In fact, there were ceremonies in place to ensure this. If any one family accumulated a lot of things, then this family was required to give away things to others; this is what we call the “giveaway” today (Bouchard & Martin, 2009). In this way, what everyone had was more or less the same.

Extended Families

Aboriginal people value a communal, collective, kinship model of societal functioning, which means that everyone in a community related in one way or another, regardless of blood ties. For example, the clan system for the Anishinaabe is made up of seven clans and all those who belong to a certain clan are seen are relatives (Castellano, 2002). When referring to families, many Aboriginal people include aunts, uncles, and grandparents as being just as important to them as parents. Often, this means that when a person needs guidance or assistance in some way, s/he will go to a relative rather than seeking outside or professional help.

"I grew up, as a child, being very close to my aunts and uncles. We grew up with a lot of family gatherings." Pic River member

When it comes to the raising of children, family and community members are relied upon for the upbringing of children with shared responsibilities for educating, nurturing, and cultural incorporation (Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency [VACCA], 2010). This practice is also sometimes referred to as customary care since it comes out of the original teachings on how people are to support each other. As noted by Castellano (2002), "the notion of the caring, effective, extended family, co-extensive with community, continues to be a powerful ideal etched deep in the psyche of Aboriginal people" (Castellano, 2002, p. 16).

In some communities, both on and off reserve, the role of the extended family is being fulfilled through community services provided to children and families (Castellano, 2002). In this way, extended family members are involved in decisions regarding children and are supported in the care of them. According to Martin & Yurkovich (2014), "Members of the extended family provide social, emotional, spiritual, and material support to one another. Today, the notion of extended family is not restricted to blood relatives in First Nations communities and may include, for example, members of a housing community in a city, which are similar to subdivisions" within towns and cities (p. 62).

Feasts and Celebrations

Feasts can be held for various celebrations or gatherings, such as feasting our spirit names, the changing of seasons, giving thanks or to celebrate accomplishments (Saskatchewan Libraries, 2014). Those who are helping with the preparation of the feast and cooking the meal may be offered tobacco by the persons or family that is holding the feast. Again, First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples conduct ceremonies and gatherings in different ways. During a feast, ceremonial prayers may be said in the original language of the area one is in and may or may not be translated into English (Saskatchewan Libraries, 2014).

As with all First Nations ceremonies, particular protocols are followed. One is that women who prepare the food for ceremonies are those who are not on their "moon time" or menstrual cycle. This is because women are seen as very powerful during this time in their monthly cycles in so that they can overpower the spiritual aspects of any ceremony and are in a time when they do not work, but instead rest, meditate and pray as much as possible (Saskatchewan Libraries, 2014).

Another traditional protocol is that women wear long skirts to ceremonies, which represents their connection to Mother Earth and how everything is circular, as in the bottom of the skirt. Most Nations emphasize that the creation of the feast meals are prepared "in a good way" without any negative behaviours or thoughts occurring while the food is being prepared (R. Koleszar-Green, personal communication, January 31, 2013). This teaching explains how the thoughts and feelings that the person has while preparing the meal goes into the food and, therefore, these are transmitted to those that consume the food. Some feasts may also have a protocol of consuming all of the food and drink that were prepared and therefore nothing is wasted or thrown away (Saskatchewan Libraries, 2014). Of course, it is also expected that, as in all ceremonies, no one will attend a feast if under the influence of alcohol or street drugs.

Humour

> *"I don't think we can go a day without laughing. It's an important part of our daily lives." Pic River member*

Humour has always been a staple of Aboriginal cultures and it continues to be a significant source of strength today, especially during difficult times. It is an important part of storytelling and a way to deliver difficult messages. This is because laughter can bond people, help relieve stress and get people through hard times. Humour equals resiliency.

A prominent character in First Nation cultures is the trickster who teaches important lessons through humour. The Anishinaabe call this character Nanabush whose purpose is to trick the listener into understanding a teaching (Filion et al., 2011). Nanabush is as old as the Anishinaabe language. He was sent to teach the Anishinaabek how to live. His mother was Anishinaabekwe and his father a spirit (Ojibwe Cultural Foundation, n.d.). Of course, being half spirit meant he had amazing abilities, but being half human, he had the virtues and flaws that people have and often could not control his humanly wants and needs (Ojibwe Cultural Foundation, n.d.). His many humorous escapades and great adventures explained the natural world, entertained generations of Anishinaabe and helped preserve the language. He remains an important figure in Anishinaabe culture.

Anishinaabe cartoonist, Perry McLeod-Shabogesic, who is the creator of a comic strip called, Baloney and Bannock, explains his Nation's sense of humour:
I have always known that humour has been an important part of our survival and a way of sometimes expressing our anger towards those who continually annoy us. It seems

the angrier we get, the funnier we become! If we are depressed, a good joke will bring us around. If we are sad, a funny situation will make us laugh. If we are too full of ourselves, someone will bring us back down to reality. Our sense of humour is honest and direct. Through our laughter we celebrate sexuality, human nature, life and yes - even death.

One of Canada's leading Aboriginal humourists is Drew Hayden Taylor. An Anishinaabe award-winning playwright, author, columnist, filmmaker, and lecturer, he has managed to “bridge the gap between cultures by tickling the funny bone” (Taylor, n.d.). As his website says, “There is a Hopi proverb that says "A smile is sacred" and Drew Hayden Taylor believes it, even though he's not Hopi” (Taylor, n.d.). Here is an excerpt from Taylor’s writing that offers a small example of his sense of humour:

> Clearly, the average Personal Computer is not exactly the ideal thing to take to bed for a little light reading before lights out. Nor is it easy to cuddle up on a couch or backyard lawn chair while balancing a laptop on your knees. The hand-held reader is a good step in the right direction, but can that digital display really replace the homey comfort of flipping through a paperback novel? Can you use your hand-held to swat the mosquitoes that bug you while you’re trying to read the paper? (Taylor, n.d.).

Language Revitalization

Native Language

Language expresses worldviews, values and cultures and is used to convey knowledge to future generations. Native languages are descriptive, verb focused, predominately action words, and are not easily translated into English. It is not uncommon to hear a language speaker, while attempting to translate an Aboriginal language into English, say “it means something like” before they say the English words. Language is tied to identity as it provides a sense of belonging whereby one can feel secure with a link to both the past and the future. One of the conclusions of the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) was that teaching language is critical to the wellbeing of Aboriginal people and communities.

Of course, languages were attacked during the colonization of Turtle Island as a method of eradicating cultures and ancient wisdom. For example, the residential school system was a strong tool in shattering many Aboriginal languages as those who ran these schools punished children who spoke their language, even when that was the only language they knew. Survivors speak of horrible acts against them when they spoke their languages, such as having their tongues nailed to their desks in the classrooms. Remarkably, some survivors managed to hang on to some of their original languages throughout their confinement in the schools. Some used language as a defense mechanism through humour by calling nuns and priests derogatory names in their languages when only children were together (Knockwood, 2001).

> *“One of the biggest things that makes a “nation” a “nation” is the language.” Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek member*

Today, language revitalization is of great importance so that not all of them will be destroyed. Revitalization, which is happening in a number of Anishinaabe communities, as well as some schools and universities, means increasing the numbers of speakers and using the language everyday (Filion et. al, 2011). An example of this is the program run by Anishinaabe scholar, Dr. Ethel Gardner, at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Since her first year at Lakehead in 2006, Dr. Gardner has been working with members of Treaty Three’s three Tribal Councils to restore the Anishinaabe language in this area. After 30 years of language revitalization efforts, the Treaty Three Tribal Councils had failed to produce any new Anishinaabe speakers. Faced with the possibility of language extinction, the Councils coordinated their 28 communities and devoted the next 15 years to reversing the loss of their language (Bryce, 2008).

Dr. Gardner was inspired by the Treaty Three Council’s concern for their language and wanted to be involved in a project that would benefit the people. She has created a

program that enables Treaty Three Chiefs to have support, resources, and an ability to advocate for the revitalization of their language. This language revitalization program incorporates language specific curriculum, Anishinaabe radio stations, community resources and Anishinaabe language immersion courses (Bryce, 2008).

Michif is the language of Métis people once spoken all across the homeland. Like most Aboriginal languages, the number of Michif speakers declined due to the colonization process that attempted to stamp out the use of languages other than English and French. Efforts are now underway to preserve Michif, and introduce Métis youth to their heritage language. As part of that effort, the Métis Nation of Ontario has created on-line Michif resources.

Technology is proving to be a useful tool in transmitting Aboriginal languages in recent times. Some innovative young people, who point out the difficulties of youth going to Elders to learn their original languages, are creating podcasts for others to learn Anishinaabe (Reed et al., 2011). In addition, a research project examined how urban Anishinaabe families used computer-based language learning technology at home. Findings from this project suggest that technology-based language learning can be incorporated into family interactions and help to provide a starting point for learning the language (Hermes & King, 2012). The Métis Nation of Ontario uses technology to provide online language resources to introduce people to the Michif language (http://www.Métisnation.org/culture--heritage/michif).

Language Phrases of the First Nation and Métis Peoples

> *"Language is important to understanding our history and culture, and our people." Pays Plat member*

Language is an important connection of one's cultural identity. Some people believe that it is language that makes the culture. In Canada, there is a great diversity in Aboriginal people. There are currently over 50 Aboriginal languages spoken in Canada. Within each First Nation, Métis and Inuit groups across Canada there is a unique distinction in the language and dialect.

The First Nations and Métis people of the Superior-Greenstone region have their own language and dialect, which can differ from their relatives in neighbouring communities and region.

The following demonstrate the vowel system and some simple words and phrases. Please note: the language will differ from community to community. Should you like to learn more about the language, it is recommended to make community connections with the First Nation and Métis peoples of your region. You will find information about the communities in the next section of this handbook.

Basic Ojibwe Words and Phrases

The Phonology:
All consonants sound the same as in English.

"Zh"- sounds like the "su" in measure
"a"- sounds like the "u" in sun
"aa"- sounds like the "a" in father
"i"- sounds like the "i" in sit
"ii"- sounds like the "ee" in feet
"o"- sounds like the "o" in go
"oo"- sounds like the "oo" in food
"e"- sounds like the "ay" in stay

Questions:

How are you?- Aaniin ezhi-ayaayan?
How is it outside (what is the weather like)?- Aaniin ezhiwebak agwajiing?
How old are you?- Aaniin endaso-biboonagiziyan?
What are you called (name)?- Aaniin ezhinikaazoyan?
Where are you from?- Aandi wenjibaayan?
Where are you going?- Aandi ezhaayan?

Phrases:

Come here!- Ondaas
Come in- Bendigen
Hello- Boozhoo or Aaniin
My name is (your name)- Niin (your name) nindizhinikaaz.
Please- Daga
See you again- Giga-waabamin menawaa
See you later- Giga-waabamin naagaj
Thank you- Miigwech
I am…(Niin)
Cold- Ningiikaj
Hungry- Nimbakade
Mad- Ninishkaadiz
Resting- NindanwebSad- Ningashkendam
Sick- Nindaakoz
Sorry- Nimaanendam
Tired- Nindayekoz
Well- Nimino-ayaa
Working- Nindanokii

Basic Michif Words and Phrases

The Phonology:
In Michif-French there are no silent vowels or consonants. Adjectives are written the same whether they are masculine or feminine.

Greetings:

Hello - Taanishi.
Good morning -Boon matayn.
Good afternoon -Bonn apray mijii.
Good evening -Boon swayr.
How are you? -Taanishi kiiya?
Fine. How about you? -Ji bayn. Kiiya maaka?
Fine. How about you? (alternate) -Nimanaandow. Kiiya maaka?
Okay. Thanks. -Si kwaarayk. Maarsii.
I'm sad -S'id valeur.
I'm sad (alternate) -La penn n'dayaan.
I'm happy -Ni miyeuytayn.
I'm happy (alternate) -Ji koontaan.
I'm not feeling well -Nimoo ni miyaayaan.
I'm not feeling well (alternate) -Ji paa bayn.
I feel great! -Mitooni ni miyaayaan.

Introduce Yourself:

Hello, my name is Norman -Taanishi Norman dishinihkaashoon.
It's nice to meet you -Ni miyeuhtayn aen nakishkataan.
Nice to meet you too -Niishta nimiyeuhtayn aen nakishkataan.

"I would like to see our kids learn the language. That's number one!" Pic Mobert member

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First Nations and Métis in the Region

The following provides information on the First Nations and Métis people and communities in the Superior-Greenstone region.

Animibiigoo Zaagi Igan Anishinaabek (AZA) First Nation

Animibiigoo Zaagi Igan Anishinaabek First Nation, abbreviated to AZA is a new First Nation community located in Northwestern Ontario. AZA was previously known as Lake Nipigon Ojibway First Nation and officially changed its name to Animibiigoo Zaagi Igan Anishinaabek in 2001. AZA is located on Partridge Lake's south shore, between Geraldton and Beardmore, ON (AANDC, 2008). AZA has a registered population of 476 members, the majority of who live off of the reserve land (AANDC, 2014). Most of the AZA community members live in communities around Northwestern Ontario and are employed in many diverse occupations (Animibiigoo Zaagi Igan Anishinaabek, 2014).

Historically, the members of Animibiigoo Zaagi Igan Anishinaabek were without a land base and reserve because, although the members were within the Robinson-Superior Treaty of 1850, no land was set aside for the use of AZA members. The AZA members were the only one of four communities in the Lake Nipigon area that were left without a land base in the 1920s (AANDC, 2008). In 1921, Canada's government recognized the community as "Lake Nipigon Various Places" (Animibiigoo Zaagi Igan Anishinaabek, 2014). Until the 1980s, the community had no elected chief and the members were dispersed, living in the Ombabika and Auden areas north east of Lake Nipigon (Ibid). Despite having no reserve lands and formal leadership, community members had contact with Indian agents and names were changed and children were sent to Residential School (Ibid).

Circumstances began to change for AZA members in the 1980s, when members elected their first Chief, Joe Thompson (Animibiigoo Zaagi Igan Anishinaabek, 2014).

Chief Thompson's priority was to organize membership and begin to create a reserve for AZA. In the 1980s, the name was changed from "Lake Nipigon Various Places" to "Lake Nipigon Ojibway First Nation" (Ibid). The band office was set up in Beardmore, ON, where it remains today. Negotiations about establishing a land base began in 1989 and were finalized in 2008, under the leadership of Chief Yvette Metansinine. The reserve land for AZA was formed "under the provisions of the Land and Larger Land Base Framework Agreement, which was established in 1991 to address the circumstances of First Nations with small reserves or no reserves. The Province of Ontario transferred 1270 hectares (12.7 square kilometres) of provincial Crown lands to Canada to create the reserve" (AANDC, 2008). The new land base for AZA has allowed the leadership to work on building a community that will be a place of home for their members.

Today, Animibiigoo Zaagi Igan Anishinaabek is working on economic development opportunities and plans to create infrastructure on the reserve. A Comprehensive Community Plan was undertaken following the creation of the reserve and the first building to be constructed on AZA was a picnic shelter built in 2013 (Haynen, 2013). AZA First Nation has a website and online monthly community newsletter to inform members about developments within the community. Two films have been produced about Animibiigoo Zaagi Igan Anishinaabek. The first one, "A Place of Our Own", outlines the negotiation process that the community underwent to create a reserve. The second film, "Red Willow Trails", documents the history of the community.

Pow Wow: June 21st (National Aboriginal Day)

More information about Animibiigoo Zaagi Igan Anishinaabek can be found at www.aza.ca.

Aroland First Nation

Aroland First Nation is an Ojibway community in Northwestern Ontario, approximately 350 kilometres northwest of the city of Thunder Bay, ON. Aroland First Nation is 25 kilometres west of Nakina, ON and 90 kilometres north of Geraldton, ON. The community of Aroland has a total registered population of 700 members, with 300 of these members living on reserve (Matawa First Nations Community Cultural Portal, 2014, p.1). An elected Chief and Council govern the community and who serve 2-year terms in office (Ibid). Aroland First Nation is located in the Treaty #9 area.

Prior to the creation of this First Nation, the people of Aroland of were mostly members of Ginoogaming, Long Lake #58, Eabametoong, and Fort William First Nations (Matawa First Nations Community Cultural Portal, 2014, p.5). Around 1900, these original members of Aroland had settled along Kowashkagama River south of Aroland, mostly for the purposes of fur trading with the Hudson's Bay Company (Ibid). Later, as the fur trade waned , people of the area began to work primarily for the Arrow Land and Logging Company (Ibid). In 1941, the lumber mill was closed and people slowly began moving north to where the community is currently located (Ibid).

On April 15, 1985, Aroland First Nation received status under the Indian Act (Matawa First Nations Community Cultural Portal, 2014, p. 5). Later, reserve lands totaling 79 square miles were set aside for use of the First Nation by the Provincial and Federal governments (Ibid). Aroland First Nation has recently been engaged in Community Capital Planning in order to "better define the community's needs and proposed long term solutions by way of planning" (Matawa First Nations Community Cultural Portal, 2014, p. 2). The community houses a band office, school, seniors complex, health centre, Nishnabe-Aski Police Services, Tikinagan Child and Family Services, as well as numerous local businesses including a gas station, convenience store, tourist outfitters and a taxi company (Matawa First Nations Community Cultural Portal, 2014, p. 2). Aroland First Nation is one of the communities of Matawa First Nations Management, and is also a member of Nishnawbe Aski Nation (First Nation.ca, ND).

Pow Wow: 1st weekend in June.

For more information about Aroland First Nation, contact the community band office by mail at P.O. Box 10, Aroland ON P0T 1B0 or by Phone: 807-329-5970.

Ginoogaming First Nation

Ginoogaming First Nation is an Anishinaabe community in northwestern Ontario. Ginoogaming is located approximately 40 kilometres from Geraldton, ON along of the northeastern shore of Long Lake. The community sits beside Long Lac, ON, and Long Lake #58 First Nation. The community of Ginoogaming occupies a space of 70 square miles (Matawa First Nations Community Cultural Portal, 2014) and is part of Treaty #9.

Ginoogaming is a member of Nishnawbe-Aski Nation and Matawa First Nations. The First Nation of Ginoogaming has a total registered population of 718 members, with 160 members living on reserve (Ibid). An elected Chief and five elected Councilors who serve two-year terms govern the community.

Ginoogaming First Nation was previously known as Long Lake #77 First Nation and was established in 1906 (Matawa First Nations Community Cultural Portal, 2014). However, prior to creation of the reserve, members of Ginoogaming First Nation had long used and lived off the land in the area (Ginoogaming First Nation, 2009). The community underwent some changes over time, as portions of the reserve were sold off and surrendered (Ibid). Ginoogaming has faced challenges historically over disputes regarding logging on their lands. In the 1920s, the First Nation surrendered an estimated amount of timber for sale. Clear-cutting began in the 1930s and the community maintained that far more timber was actually cut and sold than had previously been agreed upon. Beginning in the 1990s, Ginoogaming submitted a claim that Indian and Northern Affairs had known that more timber was sold and broke regulations regarding the cutting of the wood. In 2002, Ginoogaming finally received compensation through the Ginoogaming First Nation Timber Trust Agreement (Ginoogaming First Nation, 2009). The money received through the compensation has been an asset to the community for the present and future development (Ibid).

Today, Ginoogaming First Nation is dedicated to preserving cultural traditions within the community: “We believe in the unwritten, but incontestable rules of nature. We have our own government, traditional laws and governing principles…Our traditions provided us with systems for education and training of our youth as well as health, social, economic, spiritual and cultural systems” (Matawa First Nations Community Portal, 2014, p. 5). The community offers its members many programs and services in terms of education, health and economic development. Ginoogaming has a number of economic development projects underway, including a Wind Farm Project, Kenogami Forest Planning, the Ring of Fire, and the Long Lake Hydroelectric Dam Project (Ginoogaming First Nation, 2009).

Pow Wow: 3rd weekend in August.

For more information about Ginoogaming First Nation, visit their website at www.ginoogaming.ca.

Lake Helen First Nation (Red Rock Indian Band)

Lake Helen First Nation, also known as Red Rock Indian Band, is an Anishinaabe community made up of two reserves: Parmacheene Reserve 53 and Lake Helen

Reserve 53A (Red Rock Indian Band, ND). The two reserves combined comprise about 950 acres of land. The community is located two kilometres from Nipigon, ON, about 120 kilometres east of Thunder Bay, ON. Lake Helen First Nation is located inside the Robinson-Superior 1850 Treaty area. The Red Rock Indian Band has a total registered population of 1762 people. Of these people, 276 members live on the reserve and another 1486 members live off reserve (AANDC 2014).

Today, Lake Helen First Nation is involved with the Lake Sturgeon spawning study on the Nipigon River, which tracks and studies the patterns of sturgeon in order to better understand the species and reduce the risk of endangerment (Red Rock Indian Band, ND). Lake Helen also hosts an annual pow-wow every summer, which brings together Aboriginal people from around the region. Lake Helen First Nation offers its community members supports in terms of employment, housing and education. The Red Rock Indian Band website features monthly newsletters and community calendars showcasing what is going on in the community from month to month.

Pow-Wow: 3rd weekend in July.

For more information about Lake Helen First Nation and the Red Rock Indian Band, consult their website at www.redrockband.ca.

Long Lake #58 First Nation

Long Lake #58 First Nation is an Ojibway community that is located near the northeast shore of Long Lake in northwestern Ontario. The First Nation is 1 kilometer from the community of Long Lac, ON and is accessible via Highway 11. Long Lake #58 First Nation has a total population of 1275 members, with 450 members living on the reserve (Matawa First Nations Community Cultural Portal, 2014). The community is located within the boundaries of the Robinson-Superior Treaty of 1850 and is one of the nine Matawa First Nations.

First Nations peoples have a long history in the Long Lake #58 area. The community website explains: "Since time immemorial our people have hunted moose and bear in the vast forests, gathered wild berries and natural medicines in the wilderness, fished in the lakes and streams and travelled seasonally in the fast flowing rivers within our watershed" (Long Lake #58, ND). Although the community of Long Lake #58 has always been within the borders of the Robinson-Superior Treaty, the community itself has never entered into a treaty agreement with the Crown (Ibid). The location of Long Lake #58 has also

changed over time, “The original reserve area was located east and south of its present location, but an 1887 survey indicated that the land was not suitable for the installation of services, so the reserve was moved to its’ present site” (Matawa First Nations Community Cultural Portal, 2014).

After the signing of Treaty #9, 65 of the Long Lake band members were transferred to Treaty #9 from the Robinson-Superior annuity pay list (Ibid). Long Lake #58 First Nation has also gone through many challenges in relation to its land base; the community now sits on less than 500 acres of which only 200 acres are useable for the community (Long Lake #58, ND). The land base grew smaller with various developments, including the creation of a highway and railway, as well as flooding from hydroelectric damming (Ibid).

Despite these challenges, Long Lake #58 has persevered. An elected Chief and 12 Councilors who have been involved in exploring a variety of economic development opportunities for the First Nation govern the community. Long Lake #58 now has many community projects underway, including but not limited to, a Solar Project, Warehouse Project, Kenogami Forest Project and the Ring of Fire (Long Lake #58, ND). Long Lake #58 community members have been active participants in First Nations issues such as Aboriginal and Treaty Rights (Ibid). The community offers its members a variety of services in the areas of health and education. Long Lake #58 also hosts an annual pow-wow and annual fishing derby each summer (Ibid).

Pow Wow: 1st weekend in July.

For more information about Long Lake #58 First Nation, visit their website at www.longlake58fn.ca.

Pays Plat First Nation

Pays Plat First Nation, or Pawgwasheeng, is a small community in northwestern Ontario. Pays Plat is located on Highway 17, about 183 kilometres northeast of Thunder Bay, Ontario (Pays Plat, 2014). Pays Plat First Nation is near Rossport, Ontario and is an Ojibway, or Anishinaabe community.

Pays Plat First Nation has a membership of just over 200 people, with about 70 members currently living on the reserve (Pays Plat, 2014). An elected Chief and 3 elected Councilors govern the community. The community of Pays Plat First Nation is part of the Robinson-Superior Treaty of 1850.

Historically, Pays Plat was a Hudson’s Bay trading post, located in what is now Rossport, Ontario (Pays Plat, 2014). The trading post was constructed between 1859

and 1869. “Pays Plat”, meaning flat country or shallow water, at that time referred to the general area of Lake Superior and Nipigon region. Pays Plat River served as the main route into the region of Nipigon. Further up the river from Pays Plat there are old stone trenches and pits, which are reported to originate from the time that the Ojibway and Iroquois fought one another (Pays Plat, 2014). Prior to the Hudson’s Bay post, a British fur trader named John Long wintered in Pays Plat during the winter of 1777. There were approximately 150 people in Pays Plat at the time and Long was welcomed and accepted by the community, being given an Ojibway name: Amik (meaning beaver). (Pays Plat, 2014).

In 1863, a church was built on Pays Plat, under the supervision of Jesuit Missionary Father Du Ranquet (Pays Plat, 2014). While the church initially underwent renovations and was re-built in the 1990s after a fire burned the original church down, the place where the current church stands in Pays Plat is the same location as the original church in the 19th century. A log schoolhouse was constructed in Pays Plat at the turn of the century and children attended school here until they began to go to the school in Rossport in the 1950s (Pays Plat, 2014). More historical information about Pays Plat First Nation can be found on the community website.

Today, Pays Plat First Nation operates a Band Office, Community Hall, Water Plant, Arena, Fire Hall, Church, Playground and Pow-Wow Grounds (Pays Plat, 2014). The Business Centre of Pays Plat First Nation also holds a Health Centre, Daycare Centre, Gas Station and new office space (Ibid). The community also holds an annual Pow-Wow every summer.

Pow Wow: Last weekend in July.

For more information about Pays Plat First Nation (Pawgwasheeng), visit their website at www.ppfn.ca.

Pic Mobert First Nation

Pic Mobert First Nation is an Ojibway community located in Northwestern Ontario, approximately 53 kilometres east of Marathon, Ontario. Pic Mobert is located on the southwest shore of White Lake. The community of Pic Mobert First Nation is divided into Pic Mobert South and Pic Mobert North because the community received an additional parcel of land in the 1970s. Pic Mobert North serves as the community’s main land base.

Pic Mobert First Nation has a total registered population of 939 members, with 337 currently living on reserve and the remaining 602 members living in other First Nation communities or off reserve (AANDC – First Nation detail, Pic Mobert). An elected leadership of one Chief and nine councilors governs pic Mobert. Pic Mobert is also affiliated with Nokiiwin Tribal Council as well as the Union of Ontario Indians.

Anishinaabek people since originally inhabited the area of Pic Mobert First Nation before 1875 (Twance, 2011, p. 35). According to local history, the ancestors of the people of Pic Mobert came from Pic River, Beardmore, Michipicotan, Moosonee and Moose Factory (Twance, 2011, p. 36). Historically, Pic Mobert First Nation was referred to as Mobert, Montizambert and netamising zagigun, which translates to "first big lake from Lake Superior" (Ibid.). The families in the area hunted, trapped, fished and gardened for sustenance and also were employed by companies such as Abitibi Lumber Company (p. 37). The area was also an active Hudson's Bay trading post, established in 1850 and remaining open until 1969 (p. 68). Pic Mobert First Nation is one of the communities that is part of the Robinson-Superior Treaty of 1850.

Today, Pic Mobert First Nation employs its members in community governance and leadership, health, education, social services and forestry. Pic Mobert First Nations co-owns a company called White River Forest Products Ltd., which harvests and sells lumber throughout Canada and the United States. The community is also involved in the Gitchi Animki Hydroelectric Project, which is the largest economic development that Pic Mobert has been participated in to date (Pic Mobert First Nation, 2010).

Pow Wow: 1st weekend in August.

More information about Pic Mobert First Nation can be found on their website: www.picmobert.ca and in their newsletters, published online.

Pic River First Nation

Pic River First Nation is an Ojibway community situated in northern Ontario, along the shore of Lake Superior. Pic River First Nation is located near Marathon, Ontario about halfway between Thunder Bay and Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. The community is positioned at the mouth of the Pic River, which has historically been a place of settlement and trading for thousands of years (First Nations Market Housing Fund – "Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation").

Pic River First Nation has 1,137 registered members, with 528 members living on reserve and 609 living off reserve (AANDC – Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation). The community is governed by a Chief and Council system, with 11 councilors and one Chief that is elected by community members and serves two-year terms (The Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation). Pic River First Nation is also one of the First Nations that belong to the Union of Ontario Indians.

> *"Pic River First Nation did not sign a treaty. We never gave up our lands and exercise our Aboriginal title to the land. Our chief did not go to the signing of the Robinson-Superior Treaty. Our land claim is close to going into the courts." Pic River member*

Historically, the location of the Pic River First Nation was a centre for Aboriginal trade and settlement (The Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation, 2014). There is evidence of traditional occupancy of the area dating back 15,000 years ("The Making of a First Nation", ND.) The mouth of the Pic River allowed for access to northern lands and was a canoe route to James Bay (Ibid.). The Aboriginal people of the region started to trade furs with the French in the late 1700s and in 1792 a fur trade post was created. The Hudson's Bay Company ran the trading post until 1888 (Ibid). Members of the Pic River First Nation did not sign the Robinson-Superior Treaty of 1850 but successfully petitioned for reserve land in the late 1800s.

Today, Pic River First Nation is involved in many economic development and entrepreneurial projects, including hydro development projects and forestry operations. These opportunities have allowed the community to develop a sustainable economic base and the development of programs and services for the people of the community. Pic River First Nation operates a healing lodge, daycare, schools, a youth centre and is currently involved in a language revitalization project called Anishinaabemowin Project (Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation, 2014). The community of Pic River First Nation is also working on developing a Constitution, which allows a First Nation community to develop their own laws based on the values and needs of the community (Ibid). The development of a community constitution is an important step towards self-government of First Nations communities.

Pow Wow: 2nd weekend in July.

More information about the community can be found on their website at www.picriver.com

Rocky Bay First Nation (Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek First Nation)

Rocky Bay First Nation, also known as Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek (BZA), is an Ojibway community located in Northwestern Ontario. The community is situated on the southeast of Lake Nipigon near the town of MacDiarmid, ON, approximately 160 kilometres from Thunder Bay. Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek is part of the Robinson-Superior Treaty of 1850.

Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek has a total registered population of 716 members (AANDC First Nation Detail – BZA). Of these members, 338 live on the reserve and the remaining members live off reserve in other communities. Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek is governed by an elected Chief and five elected councilors who serve 4-year terms (Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek, 2009).

Historically, the ancestors of the Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek living on the shores of Lake Nipigon engaged in hunting, fishing and trapping for sustenance. “As the fur trade moved into the Lake Superior area, they expanded their economic activities to include hunting and trapping for trade purposes. By the early 19th century, Ojibway hunting ranges had evolved into well-defined trapping territories” (Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek, 2009). The Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek community developed into the land base that they have today over time:

In 1963 Ontario Order-in-council transferred 32 acres at MacDiarmid to the federal government to be set apart as a reserve for Rocky Bay. Indian people from Gull Bay, Sand Point, Red Rock, McIntyre Bay, and Chapleau had been living there in the early 1950's, and were formally constituted as the Rocky Bay Band in 1960. In 1971, a federal Order-in-Council set apart those lands as Rocky Bay I.R. No.1 for exclusive use and benefit of the Band. On June 20, 2000, Rocky Bay Band formally changed its name to Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek. (Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek, 2009, “Community Profile”)

The people of Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek practiced and continue to practice many of the Ojibway cultural traditions, including the annual pow-wow hosted by the community every summer and the continued practices of hunting and fishing.

Today, Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek is involved in the Rocky Bay Fisheries Unit, which is designed to “help First Nations people increase their understanding and control of and authority and responsibility for the waters which in turn will give them an economic basis for development and self-sufficiency” (Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek, 2009, “Projects”). The community is also involved in the Little Jackfish River Project, designed to study new hydroelectric generation; and the Lands and resource Program, intended to develop skills and relationship within and outside the

community so that members can actively participate in consultation with government and private sectors about land use (Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek, 2009). Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek is also involved in exploring opportunities for the development of sustainable energy through discussions about creating a Wind Farm project (Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek, 2009). The community also operates a school, medical centre, and numerous services provided by the administration. The Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek vision is: “To provide for our people a destiny of hope by creating opportunities that are sustainable for a long term that will meet expectations far beyond tomorrow”.

Pow Wow: Last weekend in August.

For more information about Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek, visit the community website at www.rockybayfn.ca.

The Métis People

The Métis people of Canada are a distinct Aboriginal people that originated from the early relations between First Nations women and European men. Later, these relations developed into the Métis people of Canada: “While the initial offspring of these Indian and European unions were individuals who simply possessed mixed ancestry, subsequent intermarriages between these mixed ancestry children resulted in the genesis of a new Aboriginal people with a distinct identity, culture and consciousness in west central North America – the Métis Nation” (MNO, 2014, “The Métis Nation of Ontario”).

The Métis people developed a unique knowledge base and cultural traditions, which stemmed from the knowledge and traditions of both their First Nations and European heritage. Early Métis people in Ontario formed settlements in the Northwest, typically along rivers and lakes in the province, and “were connected through the highly mobile fur trade network, seasonal rounds, extensive kinship connections and a collective identity (i.e., common culture, language, way of life, etc.)” (MNO, 2014, “The Métis Nation of Ontario”). More information about the aspirations and values of the Métis people in Ontario can be found in the Métis Nation of Ontario Statement of Prime Purpose (http://www.Métisnation.org/governance/statement-of-prime-purpose).

In Northwestern Ontario, historic Métis communities are now represented by the Métis Nation of Ontario's local, regional and provincial governance structure. The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), established in 1993, was created to represent the people of the Métis Nation, who maintain that they have the right to self-determination and self-government. The MNO created a Métis-specific system of governance. Local councils exist throughout Ontario and represent the interests of particular Métis communities across the province. The MNO Greenstone Métis Council, the MNO Superior North Shore Métis Council, the Thunder Bay Métis Council, and a MNO Regional Councilor represent the Métis people of the Superior Greenstone District. Information about the Métis Nation of Ontario governance structure can be accessed online at http://www.Métisnation.org/

Historically, the Métis people have maintained that they have specific rights based on being a distinct cultural group in Canada. Often left out of treaty negotiations and some of rights offered to Status Indians in Canada, as well as often being denied the opportunities and benefits of European Canadians, the Métis people have lobbied since the 19th century to have recognition as a distinct Aboriginal group. In 1982, the Constitution Act recognized and affirmed Aboriginal and Treaty rights in Canada. Section 35 of the Constitution Act states:

> "1). The existing Aboriginal and treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed. (2) In this Act, "Aboriginal peoples of Canada" includes the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada" (1982). This provision in the Constitution was viewed as a victory for all Aboriginal people and "For the Métis Nation, the explicit inclusion of the Métis in s. 35 was viewed as a new beginning after over 100 years of denial, avoidance and neglect by governments in Canada" (MNO, 2014, "Métis Harvesting Rights").

Unfortunately, in the years following the 1982 Constitution Act, the Canadian government did little to honour the rights of the Métis peoples, leaving political bodies and advocacy groups such as the Métis Nation of Ontario, to continue advocating for Métis rights. In 2003, the Supreme Court ruled that Métis father and son, Steve and Roddy Powley, had a right to exercise their right to hunt because of their membership in a Métis community (MNO, 2014, "The Powley Story"). This decision, known as the Powley, case was another victory for Métis rights because it verified that Métis peoples do have rights that are protected under Canada's Constitution Act, 1982.

The Métis Nation of Ontario continues to represent Métis members at the local, regional and provincial levels. The MNO provides services to Métis people in the areas of education and training, healing and wellness, housing, and the promotion of Métis culture. Local MNO Community Councils, such as the Greenstone Métis Council, work with the MNO's regional and provincial-level governance structures to represent the interests of the local Métis community by protecting and promoting the rights, way of life, and livelihood of the Métis people.

Métis Day

Louis Riel was the great Métis leader executed by the Canadian government for leading the Northwest Resistance in defense of Métis rights and the Métis way-of-life. Every year Louis Riel Day is held to remember what Riel sacrificed, and renews the commitment to completing his work. The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) celebrates Louis Riel Day every November to recognize the many contributions of the Métis to Canada and to highlight the continuing struggles that Métis continue to face. "We celebrate this day to recognize our ongoing struggle to fulfill Louis Riel's dream that the Métis take their rightful place within Confederation," explained MNO President Gary Lipinski.

More information about the culture and history of the Métis people may be found at www.Métisnation.org.

"First Nations Elder Brought to Tears by School Mural"

(This article is an excerpt (and photos) from: CBC News, Jan 21, 2014 5:52 PM ET. Retrieved from: http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/first-nations-elder-brought-to-tears-by-school-mural-1.2505022)

While she was growing up, Pic River First Nation resident Diane Michano-Richmond could not understand why her parents did not speak their language. It was only later in life that she discovered the impacts of the Indian residential school system.

Michano-Richmond was asked to do the opening prayer and perform a traditional song at the unveiling of the mural at Marathon high school.

"I didn't know anything about my culture," the First Nations elder said. "But I started learning ceremony way back in 1980, and I started fasting in the Sun Dance and that's where I got all my teachings from." Students at the Marathon high school have been learning about issues such as the Indian Act, Indian agents, and residential schools as part of an English course to better understand the some of the recurring themes in stories written by Aboriginal authors.

Students at Marathon High School have created a special mural that tells the story of First Nations People. (Submitted by Diane Michano-Richmond)

It was the students who then suggested creating a mural once they learned more about Indian residential school. "When I saw the mural, I cried," Michano-Richmond said Michano-Richmond was asked to do the opening prayer at the unveiling of the mural and perform a traditional song and drumming.

Our Welcoming Learning Environments

Schools create a welcoming environment for First Nations, Métis and Inuit families when appropriate cultural elements are represented and respected. Aboriginal students need to learn in environments where their histories and values are present and infused throughout the curriculum. Schools become more welcoming when teachers and school staff are respectful and knowledgeable about the contextual aspects of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit education and when staff members treat children and their families with respect. In order to become more welcoming to Aboriginal learners, schools should have a commitment to inclusion as well as a commitment to address exclusion when in occurs in their schools (Saunders and DeBeer, p. 1).

Superior-Greenstone District School Board believes that creating welcoming learning environments for Aboriginal parents, community members, and learners, will increase student success and achievement, and also parental engagement. The areas that support our welcoming learning environment approaches include: Our School, School Staff, Instructional Practices, and Community Partnerships.

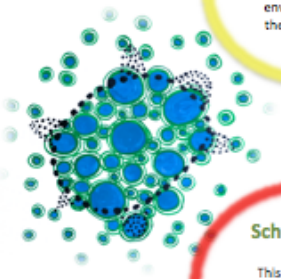
Additional information has been included in this handbook on what schools can do to create welcoming and inclusive learning environments for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

Superior-Greenstone District School Board

Our Welcoming Learning Environments

12 Hemlo Drive, Postal Bag 'A'
Marathon, ON, P0T 2E0
T: 807-229-0436 / F: 807-229-1471
http://www.sgdsb.on.ca/

Superior-Greenstone District School Board believes that creating welcoming learning environments for Aboriginal parents, community members, and learners, will increase student success and achievement, and also parental engagement. The areas that support our welcoming learning environment approaches include: Our School, School Staff, Instructional Practices, and Community Partnerships.



Our School

This includes the physical learning environment of the community school.

Our School…

- acknowledges and represents the traditional lands and diversity of Aboriginal people.
- includes visual displays and resources that appropriately reflect the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and cultures.
- provides effective admissions & registration processes that support Aboriginal parents understanding and involvement.
- creates an environment that celebrates the cultural identities of all learners.
- utilizes cultural protocols to incorporating Aboriginal presence in the learning environment.

School Staff

This includes all individuals working in the community school.

The Staff…

- is provided with professional development opportunities to gain a better understanding and appreciation for Aboriginal cultures.
- demonstrate practices and attitudes that are friendly and courteous when welcoming Aboriginal people into the school.
- invites and encourages Aboriginal parents and community members to take an interest and be involved in the school.
- incorporates a variety of communication methods that engage Aboriginal parents.
- receives input and guidance from the Native Education Advisory Committee to initiate best practices to engage Aboriginal parents and community members in the school environment.

Instructional Practices

This includes implementing and delivering content and curriculum.

The Instructional Practices…

- incorporates culturally relevant content, materials and worldviews into all subject areas and curriculum.
- includes anti-racist education that focuses on eliminating stereotypes and discrimination.
- builds learning activities based on the learner's experiences, strengths, gifts, and learning styles.
- accesses and connects with the Aboriginal community to incorporate local Aboriginal knowledge.
- informs Aboriginal parents on the positive development of their child and creates opportunities for parents to be a part of the learning process.

Community Partnerships

This includes developing working relationships and partnerships with the Aboriginal community.

The Community Partnerships…

- includes Aboriginal people to participate in the responsibility for planning and implementation of policies related to Aboriginal education.
- invites local Aboriginal people to participate in school activities that reflect Aboriginal culture and knowledge.
- explores strategies to engage and establish collaborative partnerships between educators, the school and Aboriginal community on applying best practices to meeting the learning needs of Aboriginal learners and creating a more welcoming and inclusive learning environment for Aboriginal learners, parents, and community members.

Addressing Stereotypes

> *"I remember in history class, the Indians were the bad guys, "savages". They only included one side of a story and it wasn't ours." Pays Plat member*

Stereotypes, which are generalizations about people, usually derogatory, tend to be ingrained in our society and often accepted as truth. They are communicated through the media, education and advertising. Stereotypes are used to undermine the identities of Aboriginal people and how they are viewed. Schools often teach, for example, about Aboriginal people in the past tense as if they only existed in the past. This way of referring to Aboriginal people creates a situation whereby they are rendered invisible and left out of present life. Naturally, this can have a negative impact on one's identity (My Culture is not a Costume, n.d.).

Popular stereotypes of First Nation people are the "noble savage" and the "Indian princess" whereby they are seen only through their interactions with settlers as if they had no history prior to, or since, contact with Euro-Canadians (Filion et al., 2011). Even when First Nations people are viewed in the present tense, they are typically depicted as either warriors or victims. They are shown wearing regalia, dressed in camouflage holding rifles or in the midst of a crisis of homelessness, youth suicide, or lack of clean drinking water (Filion et al., 2011).

> *"You see these little kids playing on the floor with kids from different cultures. They don't care what colour you are." Ginoogaming member*

The Anishinaabe face the same misconceptions and stereotypes applied to other Aboriginal peoples. Because they refuse to strip the land of all its bounty, they have been considered lazy and unintelligent. Sports mascots and consumer product labels targeted at the general public perpetuate. Anishinaabe have also seen their sacred spiritual beliefs, such as vision quests and sweat lodge ceremonies, misinterpreted and sold by those commonly known as "new age" people (Baskin, 2011). Misconceptions about sovereignty are also common. Almost all early treaties promised the Anishinaabe that they could continue to hunt and fish in ceded land. Yet when they attempt to take up their treaty rights, conflicts arise with non-Aboriginal environmentalists and tourists. The relationship between the Anishinaabe and the federal government is often seen, not as a legal right, but as a special privilege whereby they receive extraordinary benefits.

Education is an important tool to eliminating racism, stereotypes and misconceptions that non-Aboriginal people have. Creating safe learning environments is an important element to the learning of all children, and addressing racism and stereotypes is an equally important approach.

> *"It was fine when were on the reserve. We didn't know what racism was until we went into town for high school. It included attitudes from the teachers and students. I didn't feel welcome there. I quit because I didn't want to be faced with that. There are a lot of kids in our generation that quit school because of racism." Pays Plat member*

What Welcoming Schools Look Like

Welcoming schools incorporate First Nations, Métis, and Inuit knowledge into the curriculum and classrooms. The Feathers of Hope report, compiled and put together by First Nations youth across Ontario identified that in mainstream school systems, English and French peoples were included in every part of the curriculum, yet Aboriginal content was too often only included during "cultural weeks". The report's recommendations state: "We want our education and school systems to include traditional teachings in our education and to have this material taught by culturally aware educators" (2014, p. 65). First Nations youth recommended that First Nations values, history, traditions and cultural practices be included in every part of the curriculum and that all teachers receive training on the culture, history, and traditions of the community (Ibid.). Métis and Inuit learners also need to have their culture reflected in their curricula and lessons.

In order to achieve this, teachers could make use of resources in the communities where they teach by learning about the history of the community and inviting elders and other knowledgeable community members to their classrooms. Teachers and school staff should make efforts to promote participation in all aspects of extracurricular education in order to promote involvement in all aspects of education (Ontario Public School Boards, 2013, p. 2).

There are many ways that schools can be more welcoming to Aboriginal students which include, and not limited to, the following: physical space, course content, opportunities to contribute, safety to self-identify, and mentorship.

"We make every effort to have the curriculum reflect our culture. They learned to skin, de-hair, stretch and dye a moose, and made a drum from it. The kids come back and they've said, "Now, we understand why we had to take geometry. Relevance is so important." Pic River member

A key component of making schools welcoming for Aboriginal students is the physical space. Youth need to see themselves visually represented in the hallways and classrooms through, for example, art and posters. Schools must be inclusive so that, for instance, information about Aboriginal celebrations is seen just as prominently as those of other populations. Thus, when Christmas, Hanukah and Diwali are visually represented within schools, Aboriginal celebrations of the winter solstice ought to be as well. One way to achieve this is for schools to develop relationships with local First Nation, Métis, and Inuit artists.

It is critical that what students are learning about in their courses is information that is relevant to who they are. This means ensuring that content includes an examination of the history of colonization and its current impacts, original language instruction, traditional knowledge and worldviews and the strengths of Aboriginal people and communities (Filion et al., 2011). It is also important, however, that students learn from Aboriginal people's perspectives and experiences and from non-Aboriginal teachers who have knowledge of accurate information. It is much more likely that students will develop their literacy and numeracy skills if these lessons are embedded in Aboriginal content (Dion et al., 2010). Métis students, as well as the broader school community, will benefit from being able to see Métis culture reflected in their school (i.e., through the display of the Métis symbols such as the Métis sash, information on Métis role models, Métis art, etc.).

Schools must understand that Aboriginal content within their courses must be infused throughout the entire curriculum rather than simply being an "add on." Such content must also be seen as being part of Canada's history and culture, rather than only that of Aboriginal people (Baskin, 2011; Battiste, 1998). In addition, these teachings must not be delegated to one month out of the school year as in Aboriginal awareness month, but rather need to be discussed throughout the year.

Aboriginal students, in addition to learning and receiving information at school, need to feel that they are also giving to their school community by making meaningful contributions. Providing opportunities for them to do so creates respect and a sense of belonging, so that students see that they have a place in their school and their school has a place in their lives (Battiste, 1998; Dion et al., 2011).

"There has to be more sensitivity (in schools) to the traditional practices such as moose hunting." Pic River member

Students need to feel safe enough in school to identify that they are First Nation, Métis or Inuit. Many conceal this if they are able to which creates a barrier to their overall well being. However, when school environments are positive and supportive of First Nation, Métis and Inuit knowledge and experiences, it is much more likely that students will feel comfortable enough to self-identify (Filion et al., 2011). In fact, Aboriginal students have reported that when they can identify, their understanding of themselves as learners helps to change their attitudes toward school and positively impacts on their feelings about being Aboriginal (Dion et al., 2010).

Aboriginal students also need mentorship from those in their communities who are doing well in areas such as law, teaching, medicine and the arts, and have overcome obstacles to get to where they are today. For example, Métis students, as well as their non-Métis classmates, benefit from the incorporation of Métis culture through the inclusion of Métis Senators and knowledge holders into classroom activities. They also need access to good resources that highlight the successes of Aboriginal people. This offers a great deal of encouragement to Aboriginal youth, helps to dispel stereotypes for other students and addresses questions that they may have within a nurturing classroom environment. Learning such as this has the potential to have a positive impact upon the relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students both in and outside of the classroom.

The three critical facets in structuring culturally appropriate, welcoming school environments are:

i. Physical Environment
ii. School Culture
iii. Community Participation (Ladson-Billings, 1990)

Each of these facets must be attended to in the school environment and in school improvement planning in order to construct, or perhaps re-construct, relationships and trust. Before community members are willing to engage in the school, they must believe and have evidence of a sincere commitment to building bridges through relationships with the community.

(i) Physical Environment

"We know that when students see themselves reflected in their studies, they are more likely to stay engaged and find school relevant"(Ontario Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, p. 15). Students and parents both wish to see themselves reflected in the physical environment, curriculum, and learning materials. Historically marginalized groups are noticeably absent from texts, literature, art, and even popular culture. Think back to the "Disney Princesses" of your youth. Prior to the 1990's these 'princesses' were exclusively white. This is a type of systemic racism that is played out in the world we see around us. We can, and should, act to alter this in our school physical environments.

Reflections in the Physical Environment

- Include First Nation, Métis and Inuit Artwork throughout the school
- Post pictures of students alongside their work (include family pictures too!)
- Decorate with natural elements where possible – plants, rocks, natural craft paper on bulletin boards
- Ensure 'factory made' posters reflect Aboriginal faces
- Post Words of welcome in native languages (Ojibwe, Oji-Cree, Cree, Michif, Inuktitut)
- Include Syllabics on signs where possible
- Include First Nation and Métis language words alongside English vocabulary in Word Walls, Personal Dictionaries, class made posters
- Ensure posted work is inclusive of all students
- Purposefully stock reading shelves, library and entry points with stories that reflect First Nation, Métis and Inuit people and their stories
- Adopt the Seven Grandfather teachings to support Character Education within the school. Note that this is a First Nation teaching (not Métis or Inuit teachings). The incorporation of Métis and Inuit teachings and information alongside First Nations teaching will be necessary in order to appropriately include Métis and Inuit students.
- Carefully consider School Mascots…are they culturally appropriate

- Invite speakers and members of the First Nation, Métis and Inuit community to visit the school (First Nation Elders/Métis Senators, business people, artists, authors, dancers, drummers, musicians, local First Nation Chiefs / Métis Community Council Presidents, activists, etc.)
- Use photos of the local natural landscape and local wildlife in classrooms, hallways, front office etc.
- Ground your curriculum in the local (i.e. use real-life community examples for math word problems, writing assignments, science inquiries etc.)
- Consider providing an Open Space for parents to visit with each other when they are in the school
- Include a display of the Four Medicines (Sage, Cedar, Tobacco, Sweetgrass)
- Include a display of the Métis sash and Métis flag

(ii) School Culture

The school's culture encompasses more than the physical reflections on the wall. It includes how staff and students interact, how staff interacts with each other and administration, how staff interacts with parents, and how inclusive decision-making and input are in a school. Schools that foster warm, caring climates and that build trust and value relationships, enable resilience and sustainability. (Ungar, 2012) This resilience and sustainability translates into engagement and input. Interactions (i.e. parent/teacher conferences, student/teacher conferences, discipline meetings, case conferences, administrative meetings, school council meetings, assemblies, etc.) must be governed by a culture of respect. The school must take the time to seek out the 'rules of engagement' for all cultures represented in their schools and then practice them.

A case study of 5 Aboriginal women (Bazylak, 2002) who have experienced academic success identified "strong healthy relationships (between teachers and Aboriginal students) built on trust and respect" (p. 145), a "tolerance of Aboriginal spirituality" (p. 146), and "high teacher expectations" (p. 147) as factors that contributed to Aboriginal students' success. Additionally, Ladson-Billings (1995) cited, in her study of successful culturally responsive teachers, the belief "that all students were capable of academic success" (p. 478) as a key factor in their success.

In Aboriginal culture, less is generally more. Key components of western culture, or ways of doing business, are often considered disrespectful and rude in Aboriginal culture. Eye contact is not always considered respectful, particularly from children. 'Wait time' and thinking time are essential components of interactions. Relationships are critical to conducting 'business' as it allows one to find common ground with another prior to beginning. Humour is an important component in Aboriginal relations. Speaking 'out of turn' or over others is considered rude and/or disrespectful. Time is a fluid concept in Aboriginal cultures. Aboriginal culture is

predicated on a cyclical or circular understanding of the world, while Western culture is linear (i.e. there is a beginning and steady progress toward an end) in nature. This often translates in Aboriginal culture as the notion that "everything will get done in due time". It is in these aspects that Aboriginal people visiting or attending schools often face the most significant barriers.

> *"I take my grandkids into the bush to teach them about the land. They love it. They help me with water and the wood. Being on the land was our education." Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek member*

One Teacher's Story

One year, I decided, in conjunction with my administrator, that I would invite an Elder to work with a small group of Aboriginal boys from my class to build self-esteem and engagement. My Principal, an Aboriginal woman herself, made the invite and we booked a meeting time with the elder. I came, as usual with an agenda, a fixed time-line and plenty of ideas as to what the Elder could do with the boys. When the Elder arrived, with his wife, I launched into my plan, complete with time-lines and ideas. I was met with dead silence. Fortunately, as I sat rather dumbfounded, I was rescued by my Principal. So, I followed their lead. Sitting silently does not come naturally, I was uncomfortable, disconcerted, listened, and a whole new world opens before me.

My Principal did not talk about our boys, teaching, schedules, or even why we wanted to include an Elder in our school. She talked about tanning hides and her Kookum. I knew, from my limited Ojibwe, a 'Kookum' was a grandmother and I listened as she wove a tale about tanning; how her Kookum told a story with each new step and this is how she remembered. "Perhaps you could tan a hide with the boys, as my uncles are hunting in the bush just now", she suggested chuckling. Then everyone laughed; everyone knows tanning is women's contribution. Of course they did, I however did not.

Our Youth Outreach Worker suggested perhaps something smaller with a smirk, and smiles and knowing nods pass around the table. I continue to hold silent, even farther afield from my experience than before and slightly bewildered. Then he begins to speak. He said he knew dancing and drumming. He works with these people. This is what he knows; creating regalia, the stories that go with the dances and the drums and the songs. He also knows about hunting, fishing and a little about trapping; not so much about tanning, but he had watched his mother do it. More laughter around the table; it's like an inside joke you're not privy to, but I keep trying.

The Principal suggested that he work with the boys on dancing, regalia and drumming. She suggests a loose schedule; and so it continues. Being rather tongue tied, I have the opportunity to observe. There was a beautiful economy to his speech and his wife, she simply listened. By economy, I mean there was never a word spoken in haste, each is carefully weighed and considered, consequently, what comes out is exactly what was meant. There is no extraneous; no ancillary explanations needed for unintended vocabulary. We are nearing the end, but it is clear there is more he means to say, this I can detect now. Before he speaks, his wife speaks; for the first time today. She asks my Principal, "Who is your Kookum?" My Principal answers and the elder's wife said simply, "I know her", with a smile and a nod. He tells a story; a story about his preteen granddaughters and a trip with them to the bush blueberry picking. The girls couldn't go to the bathroom…no toilets. Everyone laughs and laughs, even I laugh now, they have included me and I feel more at ease.

I understand the rules, a bit. No business was to be done until we had found some common ground. That ground would only be established through getting to know one another; and that would only come from stories about ourselves. Stories from the elders are how lessons are often conveyed in Indigenous learning (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). Once commonality was established, business, such as it was, could be accomplished. Learning through stories; listening before speaking; connecting before business; taking time to think and speaking with humility; these were the lessons I learned today.

Building a School Culture

- Foster relationships
- Use 'wait time' when talking with students and parents
- Keep agendas loose
- Practice Active Listening
- Make a point to engage in conversations with students and parents other than about school
- Offer information about your own interests, family, hobbies, etc.
- Use Restorative practices throughout the school to plan, problem solve and for discipline
- Use Talking Circles in the classroom and other settings to build trust, create community, plan, problem solve
- Invite parents, grandparents, and other relative into the school for teas, 'read with your child' days, Family Fridays, etc.
- Host Math and Literacy nights and provide food, even prizes

- Develop a culture of high expectations and high care
- Live the motto ‘all children can learn’
- Maintain an ‘Open Door’ policy to classrooms and administrative offices
- Offer translation services where possible
- Develop positive relationships with community partners and provide space for families to meet with community partners
- Host ceremonies for the community (include drummers, dancers, First Nation Elders/Métis Senators wherever possible)
- SMILE
- Say good morning! Or Boozhoo! Everyday to parents, students and staff
- Practice speaking ‘slow and low’ when addressing issues: calm demeanor begets calm response
- Engage with the outdoors on a regular basis

Pamela Toulouse (2008) suggests using the seven grandfather teachings (Respect, Love, Bravery, Wisdom, Humility, Honesty and Truth) as a model to address First Nation students’ self-esteem needs. Toulouse (2008) relates each teaching to an action in the classroom or school. As identified by Toulouse (2008) some of the key implications for education are:

- Respect: Having high expectations for Aboriginal students
- Love: Demonstrating the belief that all Aboriginal students can succeed
- Wisdom: Sharing our best practices on Aboriginal education with each other
- Truth: Evaluating the school success of Aboriginal students as a key indicator of how inclusive our curriculum and pedagogy is… (p.3)

(iii) Community Participation

Gloria Ladson-Billings (1990), a researcher/writer on culturally relevant pedagogy, explains that other than building relationships and ensuring that students are visible in the curriculum and physical environment; the single most important practice school staff can do to foster culturally relevant and welcoming environments is to be seen in their students’ community.

"Schools could:

- *Get to know us*
- *Invite elders or people from the community to come to the school*
- *Name us right (we're not Indians, we're Anishnaabe)*
- *Teach kids about racism and to be accepting of other people and their culture*
- *The more they invite us in the school, the more we won't be so different to them*
- *When kids came to our pow-wows we noticed the attitude change." Pays Plat member*

Though teachers and school staff spend a tremendous amount of time with our students while at school, at the end of the day they often leave the community to go to their homes. Thus the relationship becomes limited to the school building, which only allows the student/parent to see staff as a teacher, Early Childhood Educator, Principal, Custodian, or Secretary rather than a 'real' person. School staff should make a point to be visible in the community in which their students reside. This breaks some of the institutional barriers that are embedded in the school – student – parent relationship.

Getting Out in the Community

- Attend events where students perform/participate (i.e. sporting events, dance or music recitals, Pow Wow(s),etc.)
- Attend cultural events that are open to the public (Tip: always bring your 'learning stance'!)
- Shop in the community where students live
- Take the opportunity to utilize civic facilities that students' families use (i.e. Recreations centres, parks, libraries, etc.)
- Offer the school as a place for community groups to meet
- Volunteer at Community events (i.e. fundraisers, food drives, toy drives, awareness and education events, etc.)
- Start a "Community Activity Night" at the school that families and students are invited to – and Teachers and staff volunteer to host

Engaging with Families

While residential and industrial schools are no longer operating, their legacy and other educational assimilationist policies still exist. Students and their families continue to experience racism and stereotyping in schools and generally do not see themselves or their values reflected in the classrooms and subjects they are learning. This is wisely expressed by scholar Dr. Marie Battiste (1998):

> The current curriculum in Canada projects European knowledge as universal, normative, and ideal. It marginalizes or excludes Aboriginal cultures, voices, and ways of knowing….Modern educational theory and practice have, in large part, destroyed or distorted the ways of life, histories, identities, cultures, and languages of Aboriginal peoples (p. 16).

Of significance is how Aboriginal parents and other community members see student wellbeing as the goal of education, rather than simply improving literacy and numeracy skills and accumulating credits (Dion et al., 2010). Not attending to the whole person in learning often contributes to disengagement and dissatisfaction with schooling by both parents and students.

Parents need information on how to support and advocate on behalf of their children and clear communication between themselves and the school. They report that learning about their Aboriginal identity at school has a positive impact on their children's attitude toward school (Dion et al., 2010). Many parents and other caregivers believe that teachers must have an understanding of the legacy of residential schools as this often alienates them and their children from formal education. They are tired of the Aboriginal content in school being the building of an "Indian village" and the language used such as "explorers" and "pioneers" within the curriculum, rather than the truth of colonization as told through the voices of Aboriginal peoples (Dion et al., 2010).

Engaging learner's means engaging their families. Thus, schools must reach out and support parents' involvement within the school community and then respond positively to their contributions, which shows respect and invites further participation. Schools are, in many ways, closed communities where only those who work and learn there make it their home. They forget how others experience the space, so this must be taken up and given consistent attention. Schools need to also work at overcoming historical and contemporary relations of mistrust and alienation between Aboriginal families and communities and schools through ongoing outreach in times of both difficulty and celebration (Dion et al., 2010).

> *"The teacher has to take the time to get to know their students and who they're serving. Visit the communities and get to know the members." Pic River member*

Schools must develop trust with parents and other caregivers, as well as the communities surrounding them. They need to have Aboriginal teachers and build relationships with Elders/Senators and language teachers. However, allowing for alternative sources of qualifications for Aboriginal people in schools is a necessity since

it is unlikely that Elders will have formal teaching degrees and yet, they are highly qualified to teach. This applies to mainstream schools as well as alternative schools such as the one in the United Native Friendship Centre in Fort Frances, Ontario. Research on what characteristics make a school engaging for learners and their families highlight the following:

- Safe and welcoming for families
- Respect for First Nation, Métis and Inuit cultures in order to make learning relevant
- High expectations of learners with a focus on long-term success
- Diverse programs and supports for learning
- Strong leadership
- Teachers who have been educated and trained to work with First Nation, Métis and Inuit learners and their families (Filion et al., 2011).

Protocols for Approaching Elders and Senators

In many towns and cities, institutions and community-based settings, there may be a need to consult a First Nation Elder or a Métis Senator for the teaching of traditional knowledge, counseling, or to conduct ceremonies. Métis Senators have a special place in Métis culture, the Métis Nation of Ontario, and in its governance structure. Highly respected for their knowledge, values, and experience. Senators provide an elder's presence at community events and meetings, and they help to keep Métis culture alive by sharing Métis traditions and ways of life.

Some organizations create a list of respectful procedures when asking an Elder or Senator to share their knowledge or assist them in some way. An example of this is the University of Manitoba; they have created an outlined document of the proper procedures for approaching a First Nation Elder for assistance. This document states that offering tobacco is the first step to asking an Elder for assistance or the sharing of knowledge (Sinclaire & Storm, n.d.). If the Elder can do what has been asked of her or him, the tobacco will be accepted which signals the form of a binding agreement, like a contract. However, tobacco offerings are not part of the protocols for the Inuit and instead, a small gift is usually given as a sign of respect and thanks for the Elder's assistance. Other important protocols include offering gifts to the Elder, ensuring that an appropriate honourarium is given for the work that they do, travel and accommodation costs are covered, and having a person responsible for greeting, escorting and attending to the needs of the Elder.

Another document that addresses protocols for approaching Elders is from the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO, n.d.) which discusses the offering of tobacco to

First Nations and Métis Elders, whether or not pictures can be taken during ceremonies or talks, and not interrupting the Elder as she or he speaks. Furthermore, an important point that is almost always emphasized is that someone who has consumed alcohol or street drugs should not approach Elders. It is good practice to approach the First Nation or Métis community in order to be informed of the preferred protocol for approaching a First Nation Elder or Métis Senator, respectively.

Best Beads Approach
By Martha Moon, PhD Student and Teacher

Personal Introduction

My name is Martha Moon. I am a thirty-year old teacher and researcher from Peterborough, Ontario – the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe. My family is of English, Irish and Scottish descent. I've worked as a public school teacher and a full-time master's of education student. My goal is to learn from and listen to Indigenous community members and leaders, students and families in order to participate in education and research that honours them. A challenge for me has been working through what it means to be a White person and a Christian in this work, recognizing that both of these groups have been oppressive to Indigenous people in Canada. Friendships and mentorships with Indigenous educators have helped me to gain new perspectives and to proceed respectfully.

Background of this Study

This study was conducted by Martha as a teacher in a public school board in a large Canadian city. She interviewed seven Indigenous colleagues, asking them what they believe success looks like for Indigenous students in public boards. Optional sub-questions were provided, but the participants were free to answer the question however they chose. One spoke for over two hours, another for less than half an hour; most were between forty minutes and one and a half hours. The audio recordings were then transcribed. The researcher reviewed the interviews (audio and written versions) multiple times, made summaries of each interview and then integrated the information into a model and a final paper. At every step, the work was sent to the participants to ask for their feedback or criticism.

Key Findings

The findings of the study are presented in two sections. The first section addresses participants' considerations of what "success" means, and to whom. The second section is a model that integrates all seven participants' views of what success looks like or could look like for Indigenous students in public boards.

Section 1: viewpoints on success.

Participants were clear that success is defined differently depending on who you ask. They made it clear that their own views of success are based on their own backgrounds and experiences. Here are some key points related to the idea that there are multiple viewpoints on success:

Success is personal.

Several participants said that the definition of success that is most important is what success means to each individual student. For example, for one student, success could mean succeeding at his passion of working with horses. For another, it might mean attending university. For another, it might mean developing stronger social skills at school this year. Since each student has unique strengths, values, and background, success for that student must be considered accordingly. Each Indigenous student is an individual; success in Indigenous education means nurturing the strengths of each.

Success is "no different- but not the same either" for Indigenous students.

Several participants emphasized the idea that Indigenous students will have similar outcomes to Settler students (such as engaging and participating in school, feeling confident in learning, and graduating), but the process might look different. Some differences might include pace and approach.

Success differs in Indigenous and Eurocentric perspectives.

Some of the participants noted differences between Indigenous and Eurocentric perspectives on success. Many spoke about Indigenous perspectives as holistic or circular, focusing on an ongoing process that involves physical, emotional, intellectual/mental, and spiritual growth, and some spoke about nurturing individual strengths and the reciprocity of contributing to community. This was contrasted through the linear, standardized Eurocentric approach. Participants noted that Eurocentric perspectives prevail in the public school system, which has implications for Indigenous students.

Section 2: connected beads model.

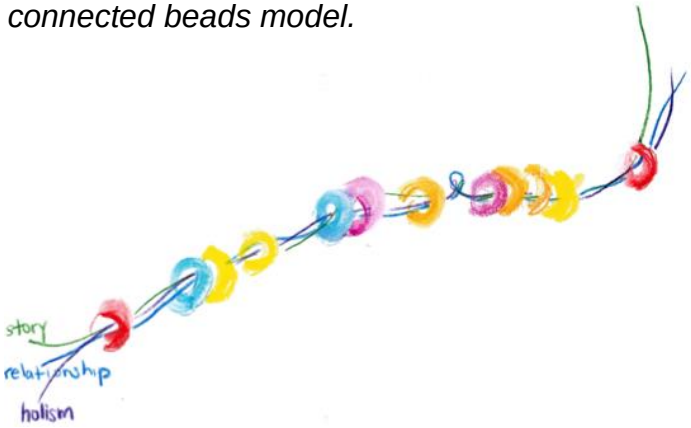


Figure 1. The Connected Beads Model is based on a "We" core of Storytelling and Multiple Perspectives, Relationship and Interconnectedness, and Holistic Thinking and Being. Beads represent practical strategies that have the three strands at their core.

"We" – the three central strands.

When the participants spoke about success, they used the word "We." They were speaking about the importance of all educators (Settler and Indigenous) working together for Indigenous student success. They pointed out that practices benefiting Indigenous students (such as strong relationships and holistic perspectives) will benefit all students. One participant was clear that when Settler students learn to value Indigenous perspectives, a community is created where Indigenous students feel a sense of belonging, which nurtures their success.

Storytelling and multiple perspectives strand.

All of the participants spoke about the value of learning from multiple perspectives. Some described this as welcoming the stories of each student, each family, and local stories. On one hand, the participants warned of the danger of seeing things from only one perspective. On the other hand, they gave examples of the vibrant community and conversations opened up by learning from multiple personal, cultural, and historical perspectives.

Relationship and interconnectedness strand.

Every participant emphasized the priority of developing strong, mutual relationships. Relationships between families and educators, and students and educators were highlighted. Participants gave examples of connecting with students and families on a personal level, of sitting down together to plan for individual students' success, and of developing work groups at school where students feel comfortable and valued and receive personalized instruction.

Holistic thinking and being strand.

Each participant took a big-picture look at success in education. They spoke about the physical, emotional, mental/intellectual, and spiritual dimensions of students' development, about initiatives that address these, and about the importance of government services (such as nutrition, counseling, and education) working together to meet students' and families' needs.

The beads: practical strategies.

Resting on the three central strands are many different beads. These represent ways in which stories, relationship and holism can be applied in today's public school system. Each bead represents strategies suggested by at least two, and up to seven participants. They are listed here. For an in-depth description of each, please see the full report (Moon, 2014).

- Hiring Indigenous (First Nation, Métis and Inuit) educators
- Elders'/Senator's centrality to public education
- Accurate knowledge of educators
- The process of teacher education
- Educator attitudes
- Hope
- Sharing educator successes
- The educator's role as guide
- Welcoming student voice
- Learning from stories
- Learning from families
    - Intake meetings
- Valuing student identities
    - Exploring identity through story
- Learning environment
- Responding to "survival mode"
- Diverse learning communities
- "Owning" our students
- Avoiding labels
- Celebrating student successes
- Establishing small, relational working groups
- Mentorship
- Funding
- School leadership
- Openness to possibility on a system level

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is vital for educators to remember that success has many definitions, and that listening to students' and their families' views on success is of utmost importance. It is necessary to be aware that Eurocentric (i.e., linear, standardized) views on success tend to prevail in public schools. The next step is to actively work to implement Indigenous views on success for the benefit of all students. This includes opening up to physical, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of education, actively building trusting, mutual relationships between educators, families and students, and seeking out multiple perspectives and stories. There are many practical ways to begin, as presented as "beads" in this report, yet the participants emphasized that the context of each school must be honoured – there is no one-size-fits-all approach.

> *"Take more time to get to know us and understand our history and way of life." Pic River member*

Best Beads Approach References

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Voluntary Aboriginal Student Self-Identification

The Superior-Greenstone District School Board believes the learning aspirations and potentials of Aboriginal (First Nation, Métis and Inuit) students can be realized through a responsive, transparent and accountable policy that focuses on improved programs and services and builds on strong partnerships with Aboriginal parents and guardians, and their communities.

It is essential to understand our student population and have accurate student achievement data within Superior-Greenstone District School Board to improve success for all students. In accordance with the Ministry of Education's Aboriginal Policy Framework, accurate student achievement data needs to be collected to assess progress towards the goals of improving Aboriginal student achievement and closing the gap in academic achievement between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. Continued data collection and analysis will provide information for improvement planning and decision-making surrounding student success.

Determining the number of Aboriginal students enrolled with the Superior-Greenstone District School Board is fundamental, as this data will foster the enhancement and enrichment of education programs.

Students will benefit. Some of the ways that all students may benefit include:

- Enhanced academic programming
- Expanded Native Studies programming
- Additional artistic and enriched cultural learning experiences

Our Expectations for ALL Students

- Improved literacy and numeracy skills
- Increased student retention in schools
- Increased number of high school graduates
- Advancement to post-secondary studies

Student information will be collected via school Registration form, student verification form and or self-identification statements. All data would be securely stored to respect privacy and used only as a means to enhance Aboriginal education programs. This information is treated in the same manner as an Ontario Student Record (OSR) and governed by the Freedom of Information Act. Information gathered will be used in the aggregate only.

For more information see:

Superior-Greenstone District School Board Policy 527 Voluntary Aboriginal Student Self-Identification at http://www.sgdsb.on.ca/upload/documents/527---voluntary-aboriginal-student-self-.pdf

Ontario First Nation, Métis , and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2007) at http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/fnmiFramework.pdf

Ontario First Nation, Métis , and Inuit Education Policy Framework Implementation Plan (2014) at http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/OFNImplementationPlan.pdf

Definitions

Aboriginal Peoples: As stated in the Constitution Act, 1982, Section 35(2): "Aboriginal peoples of Canada include Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada.

First Nations People: "First Nation" peoples include both status and non-status peoples.

Status: Refers to peoples registered under the Indian Act of Indian and Northern Affairs of Canada (INAC), holding certain rights and benefits and possessing a registry number with INAC.

Non-Status: An unregistered person of Aboriginal and mixed ancestry, who will not or cannot be registered as Status under the current legislation.

Inuit: Is a distinct group of Aboriginal people in Northern Canada, who live in Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Northern Quebec and Northern Labrador. The word means "people" in the Inuit language, Inukitut. The singular of Inuit is Inuk.

Métis: Métis is a Michif word that means a person who is of historic Métis Nation ancestry, and is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples with citizenship traced to a historic Métis community.

Superior-Greenstone District School Board

12 Hemlo Drive
Marathon, Ontario
P0T 2E0

Phone: (807) 229-0436
Toll Free: (888) 604-1111
www.sgdsb.on.ca

"Small Schools Make a Difference"

Voluntary Aboriginal Student Self-Identification

Our Dream...

The Superior-Greenstone District School Board is committed to improving the quality of education for *ALL* students.

We believe that the potential and learning aspirations of our Aboriginal students can be achieved through this policy by focusing on improved programs and services and by building stronger relationships with Aboriginal students, their parents, guardians and our communities.

Determining the number of Aboriginal students enrolled with the Superior-Greenstone District School Board is fundamental. This data will foster the enhancement and enrichment of education programs

What is Voluntary Aboriginal Student Self-Identification?

It is a way for parents and guardians to let Superior-Greenstone know if a student is of Aboriginal ancestry.

Policy Implications

Student information will be collected via school registration form, student verification form and or self-identification statements. All data would be securely stored to respect privacy and used only as a means to enhance Aboriginal education programs. This information is treated in the same manner as an Ontario Student Record (OSR) and governed by the Freedom of Information Act.

Information gathered will be used in the aggregate only. For more information see:

- Superior-Greenstone District School Board Policy 527 Voluntary Aboriginal Student Self-Identification
- First Nation, Metis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework.

All students will benefit.

Some of the ways that all students may benefit include:

- Enhanced academic programming
- Expanded Native Studies programming
- Additional artistic and enriched cultural learning experiences

Our Expectations for ALL Students

- Improved literacy and numeracy skills
- Increased student retention in schools
- Increased number of high school graduates
- Advancement to post secondary studies

SUPERIOR–GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Voluntary Self-Identification Statement

Should you wish to voluntarily self-identify yourself or your child(ren) please complete the bottom portion of this brochure and return to the main office of your home school.

Name of Student: _____

This student is (check one)

- ❑ First Nation (Status, Non-Status)
- ❑ Métis
- ❑ Inuit
- ❑ Non-Aboriginal
- ❑ I do not wish to participate

Language(s) Spoken at Home

- ❑ English
- ❑ French
- ❑ Ojibwe/Ojibway
- ❑ Oji-Cree
- ❑ Cree
- ❑ Other (Specify)

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Front Cover	People. Ruthless Images Métis Sash. Photo courtesy of Métis Nation of Ontario
9	Map adapted from the Superior-Greenstone District School Board
19	Métis Nation of Ontario
20	Queen and Prime Minister. Blatchford, A. (March 26, 2012). "Sovereignty far from a dead issue in Quebec, poll finds." The Canadian Press. Retrieved from http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/sovereignty-far-from-a-dead-issue-in-quebec-poll-finds/article4096017/ Parliament Building and Indian Act. Cultural Foundation Native Expressions (November 21, 2012). National News APTN National News. Retrieved from: http://www.cfne.org/modules/news/article.php?storyid=19396
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34	Girls in front of school. Shingwauk Indian Residential School (n.d.). Algmoa University. Retrieved from: archives.algomau.ca
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42	Métis youth. Photo courtesy of Métis Nation of Ontario.
50	Beadwork. Photo courtesy of Métis Nation of Ontario.

65	Métis Sash. Photo courtesy of Métis Nation of Ontario.
76	Métis leader, Gary Lipinski, paddling. Photo courtesy of Métis Nation of Ontario.
78	Métis infinity symbol. Photo courtesy of Métis Nation of Ontario.
79	News clip photos by Diana Michano-Richmond (CBC News)
80	Youth at school. Photo courtesy of Superior-Greenstone District School Board.
83	Youth sewing. Photo courtesy of Superior-Greenstone District School Board.
84	Culture room at school. Photo courtesy of Superior-Greenstone District School Board.
85	Youth at school. Photo courtesy of Superior-Greenstone District School Board.
87	Youth at school. Photo courtesy of Superior-Greenstone District School Board.