



# Achieving Results through Partnership

First Progress Report on the  
Implementation of the Ontario  
Aboriginal Postsecondary Education  
and Training Policy Framework



2015

Supporting Success for Aboriginal Learners



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This publication is available on the website of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, at [www.Ontario.ca/tcu](http://www.Ontario.ca/tcu).

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# Introduction



In 2011, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities released the *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework*, which espoused a vision for the implementation of a renewed approach to achieving measurable changes in Aboriginal postsecondary education and training in Ontario. The Ontario government and its sector and Aboriginal partners recognize the importance of education as a means of improving lifelong learning opportunities and outcomes for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit people so that they can succeed in today's economy. Since the introduction of the policy framework, significant advancements have been made in First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learning. The creation of the framework has enabled institutions to develop their own initiatives to meet the goals of Ontario's strategy. In addition, the framework has contributed to increased accountability, since colleges, universities, and Aboriginal postsecondary education and training institutes (Aboriginal institutes) can develop baseline metrics for evaluating their own progress.

By raising the profile of “Aboriginal learning”, the policy framework has provided academic and institutional leaders with the impetus and structure for implementing a renewed approach to postsecondary education and training in Ontario that includes effective measures for change. The aspirational aspects of the framework have provided Aboriginal education councils/circles, educators, and leaders with the opportunity to plan local initiatives that reflect the principles contained in the policy framework. In fact, the framework has influenced the degree to which Aboriginal postsecondary education and training initiatives are emerging as priorities within publicly funded institutions. Educators can refer to the policy framework as Ontario's formal direction on Aboriginal postsecondary education and training. The document also provides guidance to assist educators in pragmatic ways with achieving the framework's goals.

Progress to date has resulted in a greater understanding and enhanced awareness of Indigenous Knowledge and perspectives across the continuum of learning, and in meaningful dialogue between government, sector, and Aboriginal partners. All parties have the shared goal of improving outcomes for Aboriginal learners.



## Reporting on the Implementation of the Framework

Upon the release of the policy framework, the ministry made a commitment to report publicly every three years on the progress of the implementation of the framework. This first report provides an overview of the steps that the ministry and its Aboriginal and sector partners have taken to implement the strategies outlined in the framework to support First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners' access to, participation in, and completion of postsecondary education and training opportunities in Ontario.

The accomplishments outlined in this report would not have been possible without the successful partnerships built among the ministry and its Aboriginal and sector partners. This report was developed in collaboration with the ministry's Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training External Working Group (see the Appendix for a list of members), and provides a summary of the progress achieved throughout the first three years of implementation of the framework, as well as "snapshots" of successes selected from the countless success stories across the province. The report also highlights next steps for 2015 and beyond.

## Research Sources

The findings in this progress report have been informed by multiple qualitative and quantitative sources amassed since the launch of the policy framework. As one of the means of assessing progress on framework implementation, the ministry commissioned a third-party evaluation. The evaluators based their findings on a review of data from many sources, including annual reports from the Student Success Fund, Multi-Year Accountability Agreements, Employment Ontario data, Key Performance Indicator surveys, research, demonstration projects, and other initiatives funded by the ministry.

Results of this evaluation identify successes in framework implementation to date and indicate areas of improvement that may lead to more meaningful relationships, dialogue, and focused action. In addition, key findings will enhance our understanding of opportunities for continuing to work in partnership to refine, improve, and enhance existing programs and initiatives, as well as future directions for supporting Aboriginal learners as they make the transition from high school to postsecondary education, training, and the workplace.





## Data Limitations

Ontario recognizes the need for accurate and reliable data about Aboriginal learners' participation in postsecondary education and training in order to support improved measurement of the progress of Aboriginal learners and to inform processes for tailoring programs and services to meet their specific needs. This data will inform the development of new strategies and initiatives to close the attainment gap between Aboriginal learners and non-Aboriginal learners. Publicly reporting on this data is part of the ministry's commitment to close the attainment gap, to identify areas for improvement, and to increase accountability for achieving positive outcomes. Concepts related to the accountability and reporting goals are provided in the policy framework, and it is recommended that they be used in the development and evaluation of strategies to meet those goals.

Although census data is available on the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples in Ontario, more information on First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners in our colleges, universities, and Aboriginal institutes is still needed in order to better assess our progress related to the goals of improving learner access to and achievement in postsecondary education and training. Having accurate and reliable information is a significant step towards ensuring that First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners' needs are being met. Since most institutions are in the early stages of implementation of the framework, limited data on the progress related to framework themes is available at this time. It is critical that data be available on Aboriginal learner achievement in Ontario's publicly funded postsecondary education institutions so that a solid foundation can be built for the development, implementation, and evaluation of effective policies and programs that support the needs of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners.

Availability of information on voluntary, confidential Aboriginal learner self-identification would allow the ministry to establish a baseline for tracking learner achievement in relation to performance measures provided in the policy framework. Currently, Aboriginal learner reporting mechanisms at both the system and institutional levels are inadequate to provide consistent, reliable data at the learner level – including data on enrolment, attainment, and graduation rates – that is needed for setting baselines and for measuring progress on the academic achievement of Aboriginal learners. In order to better understand how the ministry and sectors are improving results for Aboriginal learners, a concerted effort is required in strengthening data sets to establish credible baselines, as well as to determine the appropriate measurement tools.

# Background



To build on the key accomplishments of Ontario's Aboriginal Education Strategy, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities launched a community engagement process across the province signalling a renewed commitment to support positive outcomes in postsecondary education and training for Aboriginal people in Ontario. From 2009 to 2010, the ministry met with 1,600 people and received over 800 pieces of written feedback to inform the development of the *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework, 2011*. The engagement process included both reflections on new approaches and discussions about ways to build on the solid foundations established by those who have worked over the years to facilitate Aboriginal people's access to and success in postsecondary education and training.

Since the launch of the policy framework, the ministry, in collaboration with its Aboriginal and sector partners, implemented programs and initiatives to facilitate this vital work and to track results. The overall aim is to effectively support the following five foundational principles underlying the framework:

- excellence and accountability
- equity, inclusion, and respect for diversity
- cooperation on and shared responsibility for postsecondary education and training
- respect for Constitutional and treaty rights
- respect for Indigenous Knowledge, languages, and cultures

## Building Strong Partnerships

While the framework provides a shared vision and goals, it remains broad enough to support local communities, organizations, and institutions in deciding how they can best work in partnership to address local needs related to achieving these goals.

One key success of the first phase of the implementation of the framework has been the relationships that were built or enhanced among the ministry,





sector, and Aboriginal community partners. For example, the framework has influenced collaboration by creating the momentum for all partners to deepen engagement with Aboriginal communities and seek to create a greater understanding and awareness of Indigenous Knowledge, including First Nation, Métis, and Inuit histories, identities, world views, values, and cultures. These ways of engaging and understanding are taking root and creating a lasting impact across the postsecondary education, training, and employment-service sectors for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. In order to collaborate meaningfully, all partners are acknowledging that supporting Aboriginal learners is a shared responsibility.

Strong partnerships and relationships have led to the identification of many opportunities to support learners at the community and institutional levels. Ontario's colleges, universities, and Aboriginal institutes offer First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners opportunities for lifelong learning through a wide range of programs and services. To promote Aboriginal community participation, the ministry supported the development of Aboriginal Education Councils in publicly funded colleges and universities. Since the launch of the framework, all publicly funded colleges and universities have established Aboriginal Education Councils.

The role of Aboriginal organizations in providing direct and complementary services to Aboriginal learners has been a critical component in the progress to date. To provide these services, agreements were made between Aboriginal organizations and communities, the postsecondary education and training sectors, and the ministry to ensure that every qualified person who wants to go to college or university or to pursue an apprenticeship will have opportunities to acquire the skills and formal education needed to participate in the changing labour market.

## **Ministry Programs and Initiatives**

Existing socio-economic gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people cannot be addressed without closing the gaps in educational attainment and achievement. Today, all publicly funded colleges, universities, and Aboriginal postsecondary education and training institutes receive financial support to fund projects that are aligned with the goals set out in the policy framework. The ministry's Postsecondary Education Fund for Aboriginal Learners (PEFAL), which supports these projects, has been a key component of the implementation of the policy framework.



PEFAL is an investment in activities that support access to, participation in, and completion of postsecondary education and training opportunities for Aboriginal learners in Ontario. For example, to address program gaps, the ministry worked with Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewan Employment and Training Services to introduce the successful Aboriginal Skills Advancement Pilot Program. The ministry has also encouraged its partners to take innovative approaches when developing their programs, which include Aboriginal teacher education programs, Aboriginal nursing programs, programs that use Indigenous approaches to curatorial and visual culture, and a new master's degree program in Indigenous approaches to public administration. Investments like these are essential to providing pathways to close the gap in the attainment of credentials between Aboriginal learners and non-Aboriginal learners, and are also essential to ensuring that all Aboriginal learners have opportunities to attain the skills training and formal education necessary to actively participate and succeed in today's economy.

Between 2009–10 and 2013–14, the PEFAL base budget comprised the following elements:

- \$17.9 million to colleges and universities for the development and delivery of support programs for Aboriginal learners
- \$5.0 million to Aboriginal institutes to support learner services and to offset the costs of delivering provincially recognized postsecondary education programs in partnership with Ontario colleges or universities
- \$1.5 million for the Aboriginal Postsecondary Education Learner Bursary Fund, which provided direct assistance to Aboriginal learners to support their participation in postsecondary education and training (Since 2009, the Aboriginal Learner Bursary Fund has provided support to 5,573 learners.)
- \$2.0 million for targeted funding and demonstration grants for educational institutions and/or community-based organizations and other service-delivery partners to promote postsecondary education and training opportunities, successful transitions, and positive outcomes for Aboriginal learners

In addition to PEFAL's annual budget of \$26.4 million, \$0.9 million was secured in 2012–13 and another \$3.4 million in 2013–14 for projects and initiatives specific to Aboriginal training, trades, labour market development, and employment readiness.

The total investment in Aboriginal postsecondary education and training for the 2011 to 2014 period was \$83.5 million.

# Summary of Activities and Key Accomplishments, 2011–14



The *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework, 2011* includes the following four goals, along with ten key performance measures, and eight strategies. For the purpose of this report, the information provided will be articulated through the following four goals and their related strategies:

- Transparency and accountability are enhanced by improved reporting on and access to information about postsecondary education and training.
- Postsecondary education and training environments are increasingly responsive to and respectful of the needs, choices, and aspirations of Aboriginal learners.
- An increasing number of Aboriginal learners achieve high levels of success in postsecondary education and training.
- An increasing number of Aboriginal learners have the skills and formal education required to more actively participate in the changing labour market.

The following sections of this report focus on ministry initiatives and successes in relation to the four goals that have taken place since the launch of the framework – that is, from 2011 to 2014.



**GOAL:** Transparency and accountability are enhanced by improved reporting on and access to information about postsecondary education and training.

The following are the key performance measures provided in the *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework, 2011* for assessing progress with regard to this goal:

- Increased opportunities for collaboration and knowledge sharing between and among First Nation, Métis, and Inuit communities, the ministry, postsecondary educators, industry representatives, and employers on education, training, and skills-development initiatives
- Improved data collection on, and tracking and monitoring of, ministry investments in Aboriginal postsecondary education and training
- Improvement in demonstrated, measurable outcomes in Aboriginal postsecondary education and training as a result of ministry investments

#### **STRATEGY: Strategic Communication**

Improved communication with Aboriginal partners and communities and sector partners was a core element of the first phase of the framework's implementation. Action was taken by supporting knowledge sharing, collaboration, and celebration of the achievements of Aboriginal learners. New and lasting connections have been established through various forums that include, but are not limited to, those listed below.

#### **Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Steering Committee and Working Groups**

The Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Interdivisional Steering Committee and an internal working group, which was composed of experts in programs and initiatives related to postsecondary education, training, and employment, were established to coordinate and guide the development of this progress report on the first phase of the framework's implementation. This executive Steering Committee was supported by the internal working group in identifying ministry-wide initiatives to facilitate the implementation of the framework.

The Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training External Working Group, which includes representatives (see the Appendix) from Aboriginal



communities and partner organizations, student groups, Aboriginal institutes, and colleges and universities, was established as a formal mechanism to support the ministry by working collaboratively with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit representatives and ministry stakeholders from across Ontario. The External Working Group supported the ministry in identifying the many successes and effective practices across the postsecondary education and training sector and informing the development of the plan for the second phase of implementation of the framework on the basis of identified needs and available evidence. External Working Group discussions typically focus on various strategies and initiatives being implemented by the ministry and their impact on First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learner outcomes and on closing the gap in educational attainment between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners.

### **Sector Organizations**

The Indigenous Peoples Education Circle (IPEC) and the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) Reference Group on Aboriginal Education engage with the ministry regarding initiatives delivered by institutions through PEFAL funding to increase recruitment, improve retention, and incorporate Aboriginal world views in academic programs and campus activities.

The IPEC meets regularly with the ministry to discuss progress achieved by colleges and community councils, and supports the academic achievement of Aboriginal learners within the Ontario college system as an intermediary for college Aboriginal Education Councils. IPEC's membership includes college educators, counsellors, and administrators from across the province who also work directly with the Aboriginal Education Councils. Brought together by a shared vision of building and supporting a continuum of education that promotes Aboriginal learners' access to and success within the Ontario college system, IPEC works towards creating opportunities for colleges and their Aboriginal Education Councils to articulate the needs and interests of Aboriginal learners and to share effective practices in the college setting.

The COU Reference Group on Aboriginal Education, which includes representatives from each of Ontario's twenty publicly funded universities, also meets regularly with the ministry. Institutional representatives in the



reference group include Aboriginal members of senior administrative staff and other staff members who are engaged in service delivery to Aboriginal learners. COU's purpose in working together as the Reference Group on Aboriginal Education is to ensure the success of Aboriginal students in Ontario universities.

The role of the COU's Reference Group on Aboriginal Education is to build and support a continuum of education and development that enables Aboriginal learners to access learning and to succeed in their learning journey. This Reference Group promotes and works on collaborative projects that are based in both research and practice, and shares information about best practices in support of Aboriginal learners. In addition, the members of COU's Reference Group on Aboriginal Education support one another as professional colleagues in seeking the recognition and affirmation of Aboriginal students and Aboriginal education within the mainstream university system.

### **Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Institutes**

Aboriginal institutes were created by Aboriginal communities to meet the training and education needs of First Nation learners in the absence of local and culturally appropriate alternatives.

There are nine Aboriginal institutes that are owned and controlled by First Nations and that receive support from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and from Ontario through special purpose grants. The ministry provides resources and supports to Aboriginal institutes for the delivery of provincially recognized programs and services to Aboriginal learners.

Aboriginal institutes work in partnership with colleges and universities to offer recognized degrees, diplomas, and certificates, and provide opportunities for learners to obtain postsecondary education credentials in a culturally appropriate and safe learning environment close to home. Aboriginal institutes also provide opportunities for learners to make the transition to a mainstream institution. Many programs are offered through blended, community-based models that provide increased opportunities for the participation of learners in rural and remote communities.





### **Aboriginal Institutes Consortium (AIC)**

The Aboriginal Institutes Consortium (AIC) addresses issues that affect Aboriginal-owned and -operated education and training institutes in Ontario. The AIC is committed to supporting and developing culturally viable alternative pathways and programs, in partnership with postsecondary education and training institutions, to successfully meet the needs of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit people. The AIC and the ministry have a strong working relationship built on open communication and continuous engagement. The ministry and the AIC meet frequently throughout the year, and the ministry is invited to join the AIC members during their regular meetings.

### **Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO)**

On January 25, 2010, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and the ministry signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) formalizing the working relationship between the ministry and the Education and Training Branch of the MNO to improve postsecondary education, training, and employment outcomes for Métis learners in Ontario.

The ministry entered into a multi-year agreement with the MNO and provides annual funding to support implementation of initiatives under the umbrella of the MOU. Initiatives supported through this agreement include the Infinite Reach Program, the Métis Student Solidarity Network, and the Labour Market Readiness Action Plan. The minister meets annually with MNO's president to discuss progress being made in support of Métis learners in the postsecondary education and training systems. The ministry is continuing to work in collaboration with the MNO on initiatives in support of Aboriginal learners.

### **Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC)**

The ministry and the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC) have collaborated on the development and implementation of specific postsecondary education and training initiatives. The ministry continues to work with the OFIFC to develop and implement urban Aboriginal postsecondary education, employment, and training projects.



### **The Chiefs of Ontario (COO)**

“The Chiefs of Ontario is a political forum and secretariat for collective decision-making, action, and advocacy for the 133 First Nations communities located in Ontario. Guided by the Chiefs in Assembly, we uphold self-determination efforts of the Anishinaabek, Mushkegowuk, Onkwehon:we, and Lenape Peoples in protecting and exercising their inherent and Treaty rights.”<sup>1</sup>

The ministry and COO work together on numerous initiatives to support positive educational outcomes and employment opportunities for First Nation peoples in Ontario.

### **Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board of Ontario (AABO)**

The Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board of Ontario (AABO) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to increasing the number of Aboriginal people in the trades in Ontario. AABO is composed of Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) holders to whom the board is ultimately responsible. AABO aims to link the Aboriginal supply of labour with the construction industry and to promote employment in the trades as a positive career opportunity. AABO engages with the ministry to explore opportunities to support Aboriginal learners in making successful transitions to the labour market.

### **“Learning from Each Other: Aboriginal Postsecondary Education Gathering”, 2011**

To celebrate and highlight achievements in Aboriginal postsecondary education and training, the ministry hosted the “Learning from Each Other: Aboriginal Postsecondary Education Gathering” in 2011, the first of its kind in Ontario. Representatives from postsecondary education institutions and provincial Aboriginal organizations, including the Chiefs of Ontario, the Métis Nation of Ontario, and the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, supported the planning of the gathering. Over 350 people came together, including education leaders, faculty, administrators, learners, Elders and Senators, and Aboriginal youth, to share effective practices in improving the educational achievements of Aboriginal learners in Ontario.

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1. The Chiefs of Ontario, Home page, [www.chiefs-of-ontario.org](http://www.chiefs-of-ontario.org).



This gathering, along with the official launch of the *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework, 2011*, provided the momentum for moving forward in Ontario with a renewed approach to Aboriginal postsecondary education and training. The “Learning from Each Other” gathering was an excellent opportunity to reinforce and validate the work being done, and provided participants with a forum to exchange ideas and connect in ways that enhanced their professional development. At the gathering, much information was shared about supports for Aboriginal success that are available in the postsecondary institutions across the province.

### **The First Aboriginal Education Council Gathering, 2012**

The Council of Ontario Universities, in collaboration with Colleges Ontario and Brock University, hosted the first Aboriginal Education Council Gathering in November 2012. The ministry supported this event as a follow-up to the launch of the *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework* at the “Learning from Each Other” gathering in 2011. The conference brought together representatives from Ontario’s postsecondary education sector to:

- support and encourage dialogue between Aboriginal Education Councils (AECs) and Ontario postsecondary education institutions;
- raise awareness of the value of involving AECs in the development, delivery, and evaluation of, as well as the decision making related to, publicly assisted initiatives;
- discuss transparency and accountability to ensure that postsecondary environments are increasingly responsive to and respectful of the needs, choices, and aspirations of Aboriginal learners.

Panel presentations and discussion sessions at the gathering focused on the following four key themes:

- Aboriginal leadership and community engagement
- attracting and retaining Aboriginal learners, and providing support to enable Aboriginal learners to complete postsecondary education studies
- facilitating transitions in the postsecondary education sector
- accountability and reporting



## **Employment and Training Services Integration (ETSI)**

First announced in the 2012 provincial budget and reaffirmed in each of the 2013–15 budgets, Employment and Training Services Integration (ETSI) is a key government initiative focused on modernizing and integrating Ontario's employment and training programs. ETSI builds on the recommendations from the February 2012 Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services (Drummond Commission) that (a) highlighted complexity and duplication within the current employment and training system and (b) recommended that other ministries' employment and training programs be integrated into Employment Ontario.

Between February and April 2014, the ministry conducted a multifaceted stakeholder engagement with service providers, advocacy groups, and municipalities to solicit input on integration of employment and training services within Employment Ontario. As part of this process, ninety-three Aboriginal partners took part in a separate Aboriginal engagement, which included ten focus groups and twenty interviews across Ontario.

The engagement was a key opportunity to build positive working relationships, to provide an overview of the state of employment and training programs offered by the province and goals for integration, and to explore the employment and training landscape in Aboriginal communities. The results of this engagement are now publicly available online on the Employment Ontario Partners' Gateway, at: [www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/stakeholder/index.html](http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/stakeholder/index.html).

The ministry launched a second phase of stakeholder engagement on ETSI in January 2015, which will include a separate engagement with Aboriginal partners. This second phase of Aboriginal engagement will proceed in the summer of 2015.

### **STRATEGY: Accountability and Reporting**

The ministry is working with its community and sector partners, as well as students, to improve available data through the following initiatives.

#### **Voluntary, Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification**

The principles of the framework have guided all ministry-led programs, policies, and strategies with respect to Aboriginal postsecondary education

and training, as well as the relationships integral to the success of finding ways of contributing to better educational outcomes for Aboriginal learners.

In 2011, the ministry engaged Colleges Ontario (CO) and the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) to work with their respective members to develop consistent approaches to data collection across the postsecondary education system in accordance with voluntary, confidential Aboriginal student self-identification policies and practices. Funding was provided to CO and COU for the development of a proposed Aboriginal Learners' Data Framework, a common self-identification mechanism, a report on universities' and colleges' approaches, and communication tools to build Aboriginal learners' awareness of, comfort with, and participation in voluntary, confidential Aboriginal student self-identification. The ministry sought input on recommended practices designed to increase voluntary, confidential Aboriginal student self-identification.

CO and COU carried out research and community consultation to explore attitudes towards and experiences of self-identification. This work included surveying current practices and engaging with Aboriginal learners, Aboriginal communities and organizations, postsecondary senior administrators (including registrars), and faculty. CO interviewed approximately 84 college stakeholders and engaged 75 students in eight focus group sessions to gather information and feedback about the current self-identification context in the college system. Another 550 students participated in a web-based survey created to identify student preferences on how the self-identification question might be posed. COU conducted 26 Aboriginal community engagements across Ontario, involving 505 participants as part of their self-identification project.

The final reports and recommendations from CO and COU were received in the spring of 2013. Both reports very clearly and succinctly reflected the opinions of Aboriginal partners and communities, as well as institutions and learners themselves, in the development of an appropriate self-identification question to be implemented across publicly funded postsecondary education institutions in Ontario.

Key findings from the COU and CO reports include: reasons why learners might be reluctant to self-identify, the need to explain why the information is being collected and what it would be used for, and the kind of terminology that could be used in the self-identification question and its answers. The reports suggested ways in which publicly funded postsecondary education





institutions could encourage Aboriginal learners to self-identify, including the following:

- Provide information to the students on clear reasons for the collection and use of the data.
- Allow students to identify themselves in terms identified in the Canadian Constitution, by pre-contact terms (e.g., Haudenosaunee), or by other terms that would describe their identity as Aboriginal persons.
- Provide students with multiple opportunities to self-identify over the course of their academic careers and also give them the choice of retracting an earlier identifier.

Aboriginal communities also stressed in the findings that the effectiveness of an Aboriginal self-identification mechanism depends on participants' believing that they can trust data security protocols once their information has been given.

The ministry is working on next steps relative to the recommendations received from CO and COU, including using the principles developed through this collaborative process to inform the ways in which the ministry asks for voluntary, confidential Aboriginal student self-identification information. For example, beginning in the 2014–15 academic year, both the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) application and the Ontario Universities Graduate Survey now include an optional question on voluntary, confidential Aboriginal student self-identification. The self-identification questions were developed in consultation with the Aboriginal Education Office and are based on CO and COU's consultations and recommendations.

### **Redesigning the Postsecondary Education Fund for Aboriginal Learners**

Funding to colleges and universities is the government's primary lever for advancing adaptation of practices and programs in the postsecondary education and training system that are designed to encourage and promote success for Aboriginal learners. In the first phase of the framework's implementation, the ministry redesigned the eligibility guidelines and the targeted spending of the Postsecondary Education Fund for Aboriginal Learners (PEFAL), and enhanced its reporting templates.

PEFAL encompasses the following three funding envelopes available to colleges and universities:

- ***Student Success Fund.*** This provides proposal-based funding for learner-focused services and programs that increase the number of





Aboriginal learners accessing and completing postsecondary education and training. In 2013–14, the Student Success Fund was redesigned to better align programs and policies with the framework’s goals and commitments and to strengthen accountability practices.

- **Targeted Initiatives Fund.** This provides funding to colleges, universities, Aboriginal postsecondary education and training institutes, and sector or Aboriginal stakeholder organizations for proposal-based, time-limited initiatives that demonstrate best practices, pilot improvements to programs or services, and initiatives that meet the framework’s goals but fall outside the guidelines of the Student Success Fund.
- **Aboriginal Student Bursaries.** These are formula-based allocations distributed by colleges, universities, and Aboriginal postsecondary institutes for direct support to individual learners requiring financial assistance.

PEFAL funds a variety of programs and services that support Aboriginal learners’ access to, participation in, and completion of postsecondary education and training opportunities in Ontario. For example, this funding includes support for Aboriginal counsellors, curriculum design, postsecondary education experience camps, Elders in residence, academic assistance, transition programs, partnership development, and learner and community outreach activities. The funds also support campus-wide activities to celebrate, reflect, and incorporate the achievements, perspectives, cultures, and contributions of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. Postsecondary institutions are also including Indigenous approaches in their courses and greater levels of Indigenous Knowledge in curricula and programming.

The ministry is committed to addressing the specific needs of Aboriginal learners through an evidence-informed approach. Colleges and universities are working to implement consistent practices for collecting performance data. It is expected that, over the next phases of the implementation of the policy framework, sufficient reliable data will be available for establishing a baseline regarding Aboriginal learner participation in and completion of postsecondary education and training.

### **Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework Evaluation**

To support the development of this progress report, the ministry hired Bell Browne Molnar and Delicate Inc. (BBMD), an independent evaluation



firm, to undertake an evaluation of the first phase of implementation of the *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework, 2011*. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess (1) the extent to which the framework policies have had an immediate and intermediate impact on postsecondary education institutions and other partners and stakeholders and (2) the extent to which the practices and policies implemented by postsecondary education institutions have had an impact on Aboriginal learners.

Key findings and recommendations from BBMD's evaluation report are as follows:

1. The *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework, 2011* and its objectives and outcomes appear to be well aligned with the needs of most key stakeholders. For institutions, it has provided an increased focus on Aboriginal student issues. In addition, Aboriginal institutes are promoting the need for the framework to go further in terms of their recognition, accreditation, and resources.
2. There appears to be a broad consensus that there is an important and continuing role for the ministry in supporting Aboriginal education and training programs. Proposed additions or enhancements to the current role include more engagement with Aboriginal communities, advocacy with the ministry across the provincial government, and high-level engagement with stakeholders to guide the implementation of the framework and future versions of it.
3. There is a broad range of student needs that the policy framework must address. Aside from counselling, financial, and cultural support, these needs include reflection of Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum, faculty who understand Aboriginal students' perspectives and needs, transitional programs for students entering postsecondary education, and flexibility of programming to accommodate the needs of Aboriginal students.
4. There is an opportunity to enhance the training portion of the framework in the second phase of the implementation.
5. The importance of funding was stressed as a catalyst for new or revised policies, programs, and services. Multi-year funding was cited as beneficial for developing multi-year plans.
6. There is a need for embedding Aboriginal perspectives in institutional governance and decision-making processes, as well as Aboriginal representation in leadership roles, to ensure that their priorities are met.
7. Systemic deficiencies in the K–12 education system were identified as barriers, and reinforce the need to create a common agenda and shared

framework between the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the Ministry of Education in order to strengthen the foundation and ease the transition for Aboriginal learners so that they can move into postsecondary education more easily.

These critical areas of focus identified through the evaluation will guide discussions with Aboriginal and sector partners in the second phase of the implementation of the framework.





## A Snapshot of Success Stories

This section includes a variety of achievements by ministry partners that were supported through PEFAL since the launch of the framework. Submissions in this section were provided by the ministry, as well as by Aboriginal and sector partners.

### Academic Supports

One of the critical improvements in support of Aboriginal learner success in postsecondary education is the provision of academic supports. Below are some examples from postsecondary institutions.

***Loyalist College.*** The college has placed a strong focus on learner supports as one key element of Aboriginal learners' success. This includes hiring a math tutor and implementing writing boot camps, both of which help learners strengthen their academic performance and improve their GPA scores.

***Confederation College.*** The college has established Aboriginal learning outcomes in all program areas and implements cross-college faculty training.

***Lambton College.*** Academic upgrading and learner success sessions were offered through the Aboriginal Cultural Learning Centre for Aboriginal learners. More than one hundred academic tutoring sessions were provided throughout the year and covered a range of subject areas, such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, psychology, English, and accounting. The demand for tutoring continues to increase, and the driving force behind the success of this initiative has been the centre's ability to provide flexible tutoring hours, which include after-hours and weekend sessions, that meet learner needs.

***University of Guelph.*** With the goal of enhancing access to programs and the persistence of Aboriginal learners, the Aboriginal Resource Centre has developed a number of support strategies, including a voluntary, confidential Aboriginal student self-identification process, the Aboriginal Learning Support program, and the Celebration of Aboriginal Achievement event acknowledging the accomplishments of Aboriginal learners.

*York University.* The academic support program provided by the Centre for Aboriginal Student Services at York University has proven to be successful in terms of increasing learners' confidence, academic performance, and community participation.

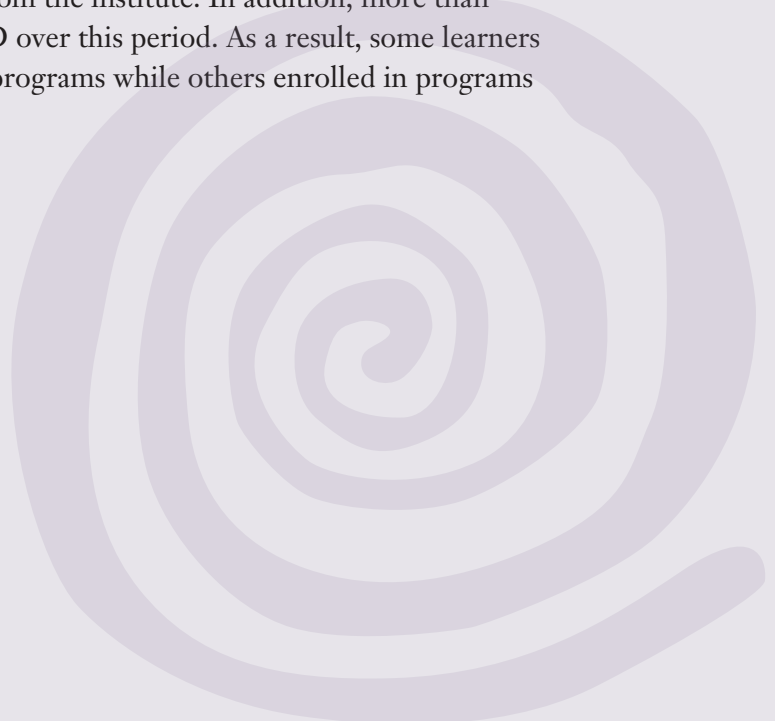
*Queen's University.* The Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre strives to be a home away from home for Indigenous learners and a site of information and support for the broader Queen's community. Queen's University offers sharing circles, including a new Indigenous mental health well-being circle, at the Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre.

### **Community Engagement/Partnerships**

*Algonquin College.* The college has demonstrated exceptional outreach to and engagement of Aboriginal communities in Eastern Ontario. Through the college's efforts, communities have worked with colleges to meet Aboriginal learners' needs in tangible ways that are system-wide across the institution. For example, the college has created a platform for campus/community dialogues on key issues in education, employment, and systemic action plans that are sustainable with the mission of optimizing the learning experience and improving success rates for Aboriginal learners.

### **Growth of Programs and Enrolment**

*Oshki-Pimache-O-Win Education and Training Institute.* The institute was established in 2000 and started delivering postsecondary education programs, including one certificate program, in the fall of 2004. Throughout the first phase of the policy framework's implementation, twenty post-secondary education and training programs were offered and ninety-nine Aboriginal learners graduated from the institute. In addition, more than 300 learners acquired their GED over this period. As a result, some learners went on to mainstream college programs while others enrolled in programs delivered by the institute.





**GOAL:** Postsecondary education and training environments are increasingly responsive to and respectful of the needs, choices, and aspirations of Aboriginal learners.

The following are the key performance measures provided in the *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework, 2011* for assessing progress in relation to this goal:

- Improved receptivity to and respect for Aboriginal knowledge systems in postsecondary education and training settings
- Improved Aboriginal engagement and participation in the planning, design, development, and delivery of policies, programs, and initiatives related to Aboriginal postsecondary education and training in Ontario, including increased participation of Aboriginal people on ministry training boards
- An increased number of formal partnerships between the ministry, its service providers, and Aboriginal leadership and organizations
- Improved knowledge among professionals within the ministry of the rich cultures, histories, values, perspectives, and knowledge systems of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit people in Ontario

**STRATEGY: Sustained Engagement with Aboriginal Communities**

Throughout the first phase of implementation of the framework, the ministry funded over thirty projects with partner institutions and organizations, under the umbrella of PEFAL, through the Targeted Initiatives Fund (TIF). Financial and technical supports are funded through PEFAL to assist in the development of programs and policies that are responsive to the unique needs and aspirations of Aboriginal learners, their families, and their communities to ensure Aboriginal learners' access to, participation in, and completion of postsecondary education and training opportunities in Ontario.

As part of PEFAL's Targeted Initiatives Fund, the ministry provided proposal-based project/demonstration grants to educational institutions





and/or community-based organizations and other service-delivery partners for time-limited projects that met one or more of the following criteria:

- The design and/or delivery methods of programs and/or services are innovative.
- Transition projects with colleges, universities, and Aboriginal institutes incorporate best practices developed by these organizations.
- Projects provide for increasing the knowledge of participants through research or information sharing.
- Projects involve the creation of new partnerships.
- Pre-apprenticeship or trades-promotion projects feature new approaches.
- Projects focus on the development of new academic programs or on adaptation of existing successful academic programs.
- Projects focus on government priorities that fall outside the guidelines of the Student Success Fund.

The following are brief descriptions of a few samples of those initiatives and activities.

### **Aboriginal Skills Advancement Pilot Program**

The Aboriginal Skills Advancement Program is unique and offers skills and training opportunities through Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services, contributing to positive labour-market outcomes for Aboriginal learners in the mining sector. The skills-laddering approach in this training program recognizes that Aboriginal learners are at different skill levels when they enter the program. An assessment component of the program assists in developing an action-training plan for each participant. The intended outcome of the pilot program was to provide participants with the skills needed to access employment opportunities in the Ring of Fire area of Northern Ontario.

### **Anti-Violence Counsellor/Advocate Certificate Program**

An anti-violence counsellor/advocate certificate program for northern and remote workers has been developed to increase the ability of Aboriginal women to obtain and keep employment as service providers in anti-violence services. This certificate program is offered at Confederation College in partnership with George Brown College.



### **Indigenous Visual Culture Program**

The Indigenous Visual Culture program at the Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD) University combines practice-specific and interdisciplinary studio-based learning and courses in the visual, cultural, social, and political history of Indigenous peoples. The program prepares learners to engage in complex and evolving global discourses in Indigenous history, art history, and contemporary art practice across a range of expression, materials, and media, and can lead to a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree or an interdisciplinary minor.

OCAD University has also augmented its first year of the Indigenous Visual Culture program to provide a variety of supports intended to help Aboriginal learners adjust while making the transition from a small-town or rural setting to an urban one.

### **Indigenous Public Administration Program**

In August 2012, through a competitive process, Carleton University was selected for the development of a new graduate studies program. Interested learners have a choice of taking the Indigenous Public Administration (IPA) program either as a concentration in IPA offered through the university's Master of Arts in Public Administration or as a graduate diploma in IPA. The IPA program will train future leaders and managers in IPA through the development of public administration and leadership skills with a focus on curricula specific to Aboriginal peoples. These programs recognize that Aboriginal policy development and administration continue to evolve in Canada, and are affected by: Supreme Court decisions on land and rights issues; self-government and nation-building challenges; foundational shifts in federal, provincial, and territorial policies and laws related to various issues that have an impact on Aboriginal people; and a young, educated, and growing Aboriginal population. The program is expected to begin in the summer of 2015.

### **Indigenous Knowledge in Curriculum**

“A new body of research is beginning to demonstrate that Aboriginal students' self-esteem is a key factor in their academic success. An educational environment that honours the culture, language and world view of the Aboriginal student is critical. . . . Aboriginal students require a learning environment that honours who they are and where they have come from. These strategies nurture the self-esteem – the positive interconnection



between the physical, emotional-mental, intellectual and spiritual realms – of Aboriginal students.”<sup>2</sup>

The following are examples of ways in which colleges and universities have worked to foster this type of environment.

**Humber College.** The Indigenous Knowledge program at the Lakeshore Campus of Humber College was developed in consultation with Elders, the Aboriginal Education Council, Aboriginal counsellors, and Traditional Teachers. Through a visioning process, the decision was made to integrate the knowledge into other programs, such as the Police Foundations and Community Justice programs, that included learners who would benefit the most from Aboriginal cultural teachings.

**Lakehead University.** Lakehead University’s Faculty of Law is the first postsecondary institution to include mandatory, stand-alone courses in its program’s first year that are devoted to Aboriginal issues, and a stand-alone course devoted to Aboriginal law in the second year. This program is committed to developing a law school that emphasizes working with Aboriginal people in order to effectively address the legal needs of Aboriginal communities.

**Ryerson University.** Ryerson’s Curriculum Development Fund, administered by the Aboriginal Education Council (AEC), invites all programs, departments, or individual faculty members to submit a proposal to integrate Aboriginal content and perspectives throughout their curriculum. Through an infusion model, the AEC increases Aboriginal curriculum content across all Ryerson schools and programs in order to best serve Aboriginal students and the entire Ryerson community. Aboriginal courses have been created and included in a number of programs through this fund. For example, Aboriginal courses are offered through the schools of Early Childhood Education, Social Work, Midwifery, Nutrition, Child and Youth, and Image Arts.

**Trent University.** The Visiting Elders and Traditional Teacher (VETT) program is a core component of the delivery and integration of Indigenous

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2. Dr. Pamela Rose Toulouse, *Integrating Aboriginal Teaching and Values into the Classroom*, Research Monograph No. 11 (Toronto: Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, Ontario, March 2008), p. 1; available at [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/Toulouse.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/Toulouse.pdf).



Knowledge throughout Trent University. The Visiting Elders and Traditional Teachers provide:

- cultural and personal supports to students both individually and in groups;
- one-on-one individual counselling sessions in a safe and familiar environment, working with the counsellor/cultural advisor;
- knowledge through ceremonies;
- support to faculty members by attending classes as guest speakers who share Indigenous Knowledge with all learners.

### **STRATEGY: Leadership and Professional Development**

Leadership and professional development emerged as a major theme during the engagement work supporting the development of the *Aboriginal Post-secondary Education and Training Policy Framework, 2011*. The ministry has supported a number of sector and community organizations in developing programs based on these themes. Bilateral, regional, and provincial linkages continue to be established to build capacity and leadership initiatives with youth, professionals, and all learners. The following are brief descriptions of a few samples of those initiatives and activities.

#### **Development of Programs Reflecting the Needs of Aboriginal Learners**

***Collège Boréal.*** Located in the heart of the college's main campus in Sudbury, the Louis-Riel Centre provides Métis, as well as First Nation and Inuit, learners with a vast array of services that support learners in creating and maintaining lasting relationships; promotes the richness of their cultural heritage; and facilitates their academic success.

***Lambton College.*** In collaboration with its Aboriginal Education Council, Lambton College developed an Aboriginal academic and learner success plan for 2014–16 that focuses on improving Aboriginal enrolment, retention, and graduation rates, and on enhancing the presence of Aboriginal culture.

***Confederation College.*** The college's strategic plan for 2013–16, entitled *Wiktaa kewin*, which is Anishinaabemowin for “the process of helping or assisting others”, will support the college's efforts to move forward with a clear recognition of local Aboriginal demographics and contribute to the long-term sustainability of local Aboriginal communities. The college's



creation of the Centre for Policy in Aboriginal Learning is another example of its intention to build capacity, leadership, and resources.

***Six Northern Colleges.*** The ministry is supporting Confederation College in leading an initiative to share best practices in Aboriginal learning among Ontario's six northern colleges (Confederation, Sault, Cambrian, Boréal, Northern, and Canadore). The group will establish benchmarks, standards, and best practices, as well as develop a number of resources, including a communications strategy.

***Indigenous Peoples Education Circle (IPEC).*** IPEC has undertaken a project, funded by the ministry, that will produce resources to support administrative employees engaged in the delivery of the Postsecondary Education Fund for Aboriginal Learners in obtaining the skills necessary to help deliver effective learner support services for Aboriginal learners at their respective colleges. IPEC is addressing how colleges can best use targeted funding and share skills and best practices.

***Anishinabek Educational Institute (AEI).*** AEI uses funding from the ministry to provide Aboriginal learners with training in NewViews accounting software as part of the business diploma program. Upon graduation, learners have theoretical knowledge of accounting and hands-on experience with the accounting software that is widely used in their First Nation communities.

***Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute (KTEI).*** KTEI, with funding from the ministry, undertook a time-limited initiative focused on developing an academic transition program for Aboriginal learners desiring a university education. The Azhiitaawin Project "Transitions" Pilot Project is a collaborative pilot project effort undertaken by KTEI, the University of Sudbury, Algoma University, and Nipissing University. The Azhiitaawin "Transitions" program offered first-year university Bachelor of Arts courses delivered on-site at KTEI.

An integral part of the program at KTEI required learners to take part in additional learning modules that focus on life skills, leadership, and financial literacy as key themed areas of study. Learning at a community-based site, learners became part of an extensive learner support system in an Anishinabek culturally inclusive environment that emphasized balanced, holistic learning as a means of achieving learner success. While the learner enrolment was lower than projected, the Azhiitaawin pilot project successfully recruited and maintained a class of the same four learners from start-up in September 2013 – a 100 per cent retention rate.

## A Snapshot of a Success Story

### Nipissing University – Aboriginal Advantage Program

Warren Hardisty was a learner in the Aboriginal Advantage Program, which is a transition-to-university program for Aboriginal learners. Midway through his second semester, he experienced an accident that left him physically impaired. Completion of his term looked bleak.

With the support of his family, Warren sought assistance from Nipissing University's Office of Aboriginal Initiatives Enji Giigdoyang. Advocacy support enabled him to obtain flexible arrangements with his courses and the related departments, as well as flexible scheduling to accommodate physical accessibility needs. In addition, financial assistance from the bursary program, daily encouragement, and academic support enabled him to complete his term.

Warren is now enrolled as a full-time learner at Nipissing University. He has selected a major for his studies, engages in co-curricular experiential learning opportunities with Aboriginal Initiatives, and plans to return to his home community after graduating.



Warren Hardisty, a learner who completed the Aboriginal Advantage Program, a transition-to-university program at Nipissing University.

*Photo courtesy of Nipissing University.*



**GOAL:** An increasing number of Aboriginal learners achieve high levels of success in postsecondary education and training.

The following are the key performance measures provided in the *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework, 2011* for assessing progress with regard to this goal:

- A significant increase in Aboriginal learners' applications to, and registration in, colleges, universities, and Aboriginal institutes for full-time and part-time programs and courses, as well as in apprenticeship programs
- Increased satisfaction and comfort of Aboriginal learners in postsecondary education and training settings and experiences

**STRATEGY: Building the Postsecondary Education and Training System's Capacity**

All publicly funded institutions now have counsellors in place who support Aboriginal learners, as well as Aboriginal Education Councils that provide guidance to institutions and liaise with local communities. There is also a strong institutional focus on strategic planning and investment. Attention to professional programs, already present in key sectors such as teaching and nursing, is expanding to social work, public administration, law, science, and engineering. For example, this includes new programming such as the master's degree in Indigenous Public Administration. Strategic partnerships among sector partners support multi-institutional and multi-pathway options for learners. Enhanced collaboration among institutions allows for the maximization of resources and the sharing of expertise, and increases capacity across institutions.

Programs such as the Service Delivery Network Development Fund, the Ontario Human Capital Research and Innovation Fund, and the Targeted Initiatives Fund allow training service providers and umbrella organizations to build capacity and share effective practices in support of Aboriginal learners.

Also, by including cultural perspectives in programs and projects, hiring Aboriginal staff and faculty, increasingly using research-based evidence, and implementing best practices, the postsecondary education and training



system continues to build its capacity to meet the needs of Aboriginal learners.

To continue to build capacity within Aboriginal communities and organizations, ministry-funded training projects focus on the attainment of credentials and meeting labour-market demands in the mining, building, and construction trades.

The following are brief descriptions of a few samples of those initiatives and activities.

### **Achievements and Regional Collaboration**

As a result of the first phase of the implementation of the framework, formal partnerships have been made among colleges and universities with Aboriginal institutes to deliver provincially recognized certificates, diplomas, and degrees to over 1,000 learners per year that otherwise may not access postsecondary education and training opportunities.

***Project Pathfinder.*** Project Pathfinder started in 2010–11 as a demonstration project funded by the ministry and is now a core component of the new regional, comprehensive Aboriginal Education Strategy (supported by the ministry) involving two colleges, three universities, local district school boards, Six Nations Polytechnic, and the community of Six Nations. Project Pathfinder applied key elements of the framework across the continuum of learning. While the format of a summer experience camp is a staple for recruitment in colleges and universities, Mohawk College expanded the concept by adding two pathways for participants: high school credit accumulation and dual credits. Project Pathfinder engaged youth who often face complex barriers and are considered at risk due to their lower-than-average accumulation of high school credits, socio-economic status, or other challenges.

***“Bundled Arrows” Initiative.*** Mohawk College successfully engaged in a process with Six Nations Polytechnic and other education partners that resulted in the multi-year “Bundled Arrows” initiative, which demonstrates regional collaboration. Through enhanced partnerships, this initiative provides workforce planning and laddering and transition opportunities, and produces specialized professional development and academic programming.



***Brock University.*** The university's Aboriginal Education Council partially funded the Aboriginal Student Organization to visit Six Nations to learn from presentations by Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and participate in round table discussions about the Six Nations community. Work is continuing to augment the content of the Niagara Holistic Wellness Portal, a website that provides news and resources relating to mental health from a holistic approach, based on the medicine wheel.

***Lakehead University.*** Lakehead has established an Aboriginal Transitions Advisor Program in response to an expressed need for more specific supports for incoming learners and access to university and local resources. In addition to providing services through this program during the academic year, Lakehead has an Elders-in-residence program that serves learners who request counselling.

***Laurentian University.*** At Laurentian, counselling services include sharing circles with Elders. The circles provide learners with an opportunity to share their challenges in a supportive and safe environment. Elders and support staff are able to direct learners to the available resources on campus and in the community, including, for example, mental health first-aid training, which has a strong cultural component and is available to learners, staff, and faculty.

***Collège Boréal.*** The purpose of the college's cultural awareness project was to raise awareness of Aboriginal perspectives, cultures, and contributions. Highlights included presentations by Aboriginal role models, musicians, visual artists, and media workers, all celebrating Aboriginal culture and traditions.

***Algonquin College.*** The college's Aboriginal Portfolio Group has been very successful in its work on engaging members of the Aboriginal community and the college. As a result, an increased understanding through data collection and analysis has become a tool for actively engaging members of the Aboriginal community and the college. Faculty, academic leads, and the community are working together to address the needs of Aboriginal learners and to emphasize the importance of and respect for Aboriginal knowledge systems in postsecondary education settings.

***Cambrian College.*** Over the past four years, thirty-six learners from twenty different First Nation communities have graduated from the college's Binoojiinyag Kinoomaadwin, a Native early childhood education program

that is delivered in partnership with Oshki-Pimanche-O-Win. The aim of the program is to meet the high demand for qualified early childhood education staff and to meet the staff-to-child ratios required by regulation.



### **STRATEGY: Access and Pathways to Achievement**

Several factors affect Aboriginal learners' access to postsecondary education and training: financial resources, academic preparedness, cultural and social values, geographic location, information, and guidance available. With funding from the ministry, and in many cases through institutional investments, Ontario colleges, universities, and Aboriginal institutes have implemented a number of recruitment and transition programs to support learners in choosing the appropriate academic programs and pathways.

Innovative transition programs and initiatives, offered through ministry partners, have been made possible through funding established by the policy framework. Bursaries are now available to relieve some of the financial burden of postsecondary education. The ministry supports successful transitions between and among institutions, communities, the labour market, and the K–12 education sector, as well as between undergraduate and graduate studies, thereby contributing to the academic preparedness of Aboriginal adults and youth for postsecondary education and training across the province.

The following are three examples of how Ontario is increasing access to educational opportunities and materials to Aboriginal learners and educators.

#### **Distance Education and Training Networks**

Contact North/Contact Nord is the distance education and training network in Ontario that serves the goal of increasing access to formal education and training at the secondary and postsecondary levels, as well as providing informal education opportunities. Contact North/Contact Nord serves residents of Northern Ontario through a network of 112 online learning centres. Of them, twenty-seven specifically support Aboriginal learners.

### **Ontario Native Education Counselling Association's Transitions Project**

This Ontario Native Education Counselling Association (ONECA) project is focused on supporting First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners by creating user-friendly resources (online, paper, and video) that are designed for and accessible to education counsellors, other professionals, parents and guardians, communities, and learners.



### **Ryerson University's Support Fund**

Ryerson's Aboriginal Faculty/Student Support Fund supports Aboriginal undergraduate students in developing academic and career skills and Aboriginal graduate students in their transition to graduate school. The fund also supports Aboriginal faculty members in their research on Aboriginal topics and in their development of Aboriginal curriculum for Ryerson.



## A Snapshot of Success Stories

This section includes a variety of achievements related to ministry initiatives that have taken place since the launch of the framework. Submissions in this section were provided by Aboriginal and sector partners.

### Transitions Toolkits from ONECA

The Transitions Toolkits, a grass roots project, were created to help First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners, parents, and communities, as well as teachers, counsellors, and other professionals, gain access to information and resources that support Aboriginal learners in making transitions through all levels of education. Ninety-two per cent of the people who used the materials in the toolkits provided very positive feedback. It is important to note that the information was most effective when given in presentations to parents, counsellors, and learners in communities. Participants felt empowered and their sense of self-esteem was increased during the workshops.

### Nipissing University

#### *The Teacher of Anishinaabemowin as a Second Language Program.*

Five learners enrolled in this language program in 2010 and four completed it in 2013. Today, they are employed as teachers of Anishinaabemowin. One of these four graduates is now teaching in the high school in his home community. This graduate's elementary and secondary schooling took place in schools both on and off reserve. His continued engagement in and implementation of co-curricular cultural activities in his First Nation has helped support him in his current teaching role, as he continues to incorporate traditional ways of knowing and the Anishinaabemowin language in the classroom environment.

*Aboriginal Advantage Program.* The Aboriginal Advantage Program is an access program for Aboriginal learners at Nipissing University. Indigenous pedagogical approaches are embedded in first-year courses, including the Indigenous leadership course. The Elder in residence co-facilitates the Indigenous leadership course, bringing Indigenous Knowledge and methodologies to the classroom environment. In addition, the approach of the Aboriginal Advantage Program emphasizes peer support and engages learners in co-curricular cultural support throughout the academic year.

Of the learners in the Aboriginal Advantage Program in 2013–14, 74 per cent successfully completed it. Of the 74 per cent of learners, 58 per cent enrolled in degree programs at Nipissing University in 2014–15, and 10 per cent transferred to degree programs in other postsecondary institutions in Ontario.

### **Ontario Native Education Counselling Association**

The Ontario Native Education Counselling Association (ONECA) created a “Role Model” poster series that showcased counsellors in the community who support Aboriginal learners. Posters were distributed to postsecondary education and training institutions and to secondary schools. Identifying with the counsellors in the posters created a sense of pride among Aboriginal learners, increased their confidence in the counsellors, and encouraged learners to seek their support. This initiative led a number of communities to express an interest in creating a series of posters highlighting their services and providers.







**GOAL:** An increasing number of Aboriginal learners have the skills and formal education required to more actively participate in the changing labour market.

The key performance measure provided in the *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework, 2011* for assessing progress with regard to this goal is:

- A significant increase in Aboriginal learners' receiving postsecondary education and training credentials

### **STRATEGY: Retention and Completion**

According to research studies, increased Aboriginal learner retention and completion are outcomes that may be achieved through the implementation of initiatives that alleviate barriers to success. Promising practices relating to retention and completion are funded through the Postsecondary Education Fund for Aboriginal Learners.

The ministry is also supporting research on issues, gaps, and results that will help to identify promising practices.

### **Aboriginal Student Centres**

Through PEFAL's Targeted Initiatives Fund, the ministry provided \$1.5 million to enhance or create Aboriginal Student Centres. The goals of Aboriginal Student Centres are to:

- provide Aboriginal learners with the cultural, social, and technical services required to support full participation in postsecondary education settings;
- create a sense of community on campus for Aboriginal learners;
- promote awareness of Aboriginal initiatives and enhance the visibility of Aboriginal cultures and presence on campus.

Institutions' annual reports place considerable emphasis on the role of the Aboriginal Learner Centre, Elders, Senators, and other cultural supports and services to create a welcoming environment for Aboriginal learners. They also place emphasis on the strong reliance on peer mentorship to support the academic needs of learners. Since 2013–14, 93 per cent of colleges and universities have had dedicated spaces for Aboriginal learners.



Durham College's 2013 Student Success Fund report cited a learner as saying: "I came here from Thunder Bay and really felt like I was lost. My upgrading was hard because no one was like me here. I loved coming in here [the Aboriginal Student Centre] and feeling like [I was at] home. I struggle sitting in class just doing work. I am able to come in, do my English, make a cup of tea and listen to music all in one."

Fanshawe College's 2013 Student Success Fund report also included a learner comment: "Being away from home was a lot easier with the friends I met here. I've only known my family history, and known very little about Aboriginal practices. I am very excited to share what I've learned with my family back home!!"

*University of Guelph.* The university's Aboriginal Resource Centre (ARC) has an innovative approach to program and service delivery that is a promising practice in the area of support for Aboriginal learners. The ARC is the 2014 recipient of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators' Indigenous Peoples Knowledge Community's Award for Outstanding Student Support Program. In the nomination, a learner commented "I consider their commitment to learning, remarkable teaching ability, enthusiasm, and warm-heartedness to be contributing factors in my ability to achieve academically and grow in my knowledge of Aboriginal traditions and culture heightening my spiritual growth in my life journey."

*Mohawk College.* The college's Wampum Wall was created by and installed at Mohawk College's Aboriginal Education Student Services. The wall is a replica of the Two Row Wampum Belt, which is one of the first agreements Six Nations made with the settlers of this territory. The two purple rows signify the First Peoples in their canoe and the Settlers in their ship, travelling down the river of life together in peace and without interference from each other, but also close enough to reach out when help is needed. The wall has been erected by the college to honour that agreement and also to display pictures of the people who have persevered through history to make sure that all abide by the agreement. The pictures and portraits are of community members, Chiefs, historians, Elders, advocates, and other people of significance to history on Turtle Island (North America).



The Wampum Wall located at the entrance of the Aboriginal Education Student Services Centre on the Mohawk College campus.

*Photo courtesy of Mohawk College.*

## Mentors

Since mentors and success coaches can foster learner success by helping learners to improve motivation, attendance, self-confidence, coping skills, and decision-making skills, many schools and postsecondary institutions have established formal mentoring and Elder programs to help Aboriginal youth develop necessary life skills and a sense of belonging and pride in their identity. Programs that enlist the support of Elders and Aboriginal community leaders are reported to encourage learner enrolment. These initiatives can take place on campus, where Elders can act in a counselling capacity, or on reserve, where they can serve as role models and advisors. Outreach programs designed with the input of Aboriginal Elders are more likely to be successful.

**Laurentian University.** The university's Ancestral Path Mentorship Program provides a great opportunity for learners to work with an upper-year learner or graduate to obtain help in making life decisions.



Secondary school learners and adult learners can ask mentors about programs and other services and obtain help in identifying prerequisite courses needed to complete various postsecondary programs.

**University of Ottawa.** The School of Nursing at the University of Ottawa established a new mentoring program for Aboriginal learners in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program in collaboration with the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada. This mentoring program provides opportunities for Aboriginal learners in the nursing program to be mentored and experience support from other learners, the institution, and the nursing sector, as well as successful integration (instrumental and developmental) into the nursing program. Aboriginal nurse mentors are also recruited through nursing and Aboriginal associations.

### **Métis Nation of Ontario's Infinite Reach Student Mentor Program**

The Métis Nation of Ontario's Infinite Reach Student Mentor Program is a peer mentor program whereby upper-level Métis postsecondary learners assist first-year and other incoming Métis learners with making the transition to a new environment. This has proven to be a very successful model, allowing Métis learners to feel more connected to the institution, their identity, and the community at large.

### **Programs Supported by Elders, Senators, and Community Members**

One of the practices consistently identified as highly beneficial in the Student Success Fund reports is the creation or expansion of programs with Elders who offer cultural support and counselling. As well, it was found to be beneficial to have Elders present to ensure that traditional cultural protocols are followed at institutional events, ceremonies, and consultations with Aboriginal communities and leaders. The following are three examples.

**Northern Ontario School of Medicine.** Aboriginal learners at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine have the opportunity to work with and spend time with Aboriginal Elders and Senators. They help Aboriginal learners to balance the two worlds in which they may see themselves living – that of home and that of the school. By spending time with the Elders and/or Senators, Aboriginal learners increase their understanding of their ancestry and maintain a positive identity and self-image by gaining greater knowledge and appreciation of their roots.



***Brock University.*** Counselling for Aboriginal learners is provided by the staff of the Aboriginal learner service – the Elder in residence, learner services advisor/recruiter, Aboriginal academic support coordinator, Aboriginal academic support assistant, and Aboriginal peer mentors. Through one-on-one consultations, staff are able to refer learners to appropriate on- and off-campus services, including community Aboriginal service providers. The university's Elder in residence plays an integral role in providing counselling to Aboriginal learners and staff with respect to cultural support that reconnects learners to their cultural identity.

***University of Guelph.*** Enhanced community participation is central to creating a welcoming and supportive environment where Aboriginal learners can thrive. The Aboriginal Resource Centre, Counselling Services, and Aboriginal Elders and community helpers have developed a “Counselling Bridge” that focuses on the holistic development and support of Aboriginal learners by integrating aspects of Aboriginal world views into culturally respectful mainstream therapeutic approaches.

### **Cultural Sensitivity/Supports**

***Cambrian College.*** The Sacred Fire Arbour on the Cambrian campus is a place where learners, staff, and members of the community may honour their ancestors and practise the cultures and traditions that support their health and well-being. Since its construction in 2013, the arbour has dramatically improved the receptivity to and respect for Aboriginal world views on campus.

***Carleton University.*** *Kinàmàgawin: Aboriginal Issues in the Classroom* is a documentary film that examines the challenges experienced when discussing Aboriginal issues in postsecondary classrooms at Carleton University. Twenty-one Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners, instructors, faculty, and staff from various disciplines reflect on their most memorable classroom moments when Aboriginal issues were discussed. *Kinàmàgawin* creates greater awareness of the challenges faced at the classroom level. The film confirms the resilience and strength of the Aboriginal community at Carleton, and the soundtrack by the music group A Tribe Called Red showcases local Aboriginal talent.

***Seven Generations Education Institute.*** Aboriginal alumni regularly characterize the learning environment at Seven Generations Education Institute as skills-based and experientially focused, and “hands-on” and



“visual” learning were key preferred learning approaches. A significant number of students were able to use the certificates they obtained to make the transition into a second certificate program or a diploma program. The ability to do this is an important incentive for attracting people and getting learners started on a college or university career path.

***Wilfrid Laurier University.*** A graduate student hired by Wilfrid Laurier University’s Writing Centre and the Aboriginal Student Centre’s Aboriginal learner support coordinator developed a program called “Writing Circles”. Each circle began with a smudge, and the topics were matched with a different traditional teaching (seven grandfathers) related to a Writing Centre workshop topic. Pre-assessments of the first circle determined the level of writing help required, and the last thirty minutes of the session were designed to employ the strategies learned. The last circle topic was “Finding your Indigenous Voice in Academia”.

#### **STRATEGY: Facilitating Transitions to the Labour Market**

Ontario is committed to providing high-quality education and training to Aboriginal people to help improve First Nation, Métis, and Inuit participation in the workforce. As stated previously, the ministry recognizes that improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal learners is critical to improving First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners’ well-being, mobility, and access to the labour market. The ministry has provided supports through existing Employment Ontario (EO) programs and new programs developed in partnership with Aboriginal communities and organizations. These programs include robust upgrading and support programs in literacy, numeracy, life skills, health and safety certification, and skills laddering.

The ministry also supports programs such as Pre-Apprenticeship Training, Ontario Native Literacy, and Labour Market Partnerships, as well as other EO programs, in order to help Aboriginal learners prepare for skills attainment and the transition into the labour market. Additional support is being provided to support the development of self-employment training opportunities focused on Aboriginal entrepreneurship.

Through EO, Aboriginal learners can access a variety of services, including the following:

- counselling, job search, and job placement services
- literacy, numeracy, and basic skills training



- on-the-job and in-class apprenticeship training
- community partnership development
- on-the-job training in Ontario's northern resources sectors

EO has facilitated opportunities for and encourages the inclusion of Indigenous cultural perspectives, and supports traditional methods of Aboriginal learning in the programming. Programs such as Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) provide training tailored to the needs of Aboriginal learners. The successful Aboriginal Skills Advancement Program in Northern Ontario's Ring of Fire area is another example of the government's collaboration with the Aboriginal community in providing support to Aboriginal learners.

### **Aboriginal Skills Advancement Program**

The Aboriginal Skills Advancement Program (ASAP) is a skills laddering model that supports skills advancement, ranging from literacy and basic skills upgrading to pre-apprenticeship training, higher education, and other career-oriented training leading to employment in the nine First Nation communities of the Matawa Tribal Council, which are near the Ring of Fire area in Northern Ontario. The goal is to prepare Aboriginal trainees for entry into the labour market through career planning that is synchronized with the growth of the mining sector and other industries that support it.

These are some of the key successes of the pilot program:

- 100 participants have been assessed and an additional 100 trainees are enrolled in the ASAP.
- 63 participants have graduated from the ASAP with a Grade 12 diploma or equivalent.
- 15 participants have been accepted into postsecondary education programs.
- 13 participants are attending postsecondary education programs.
- 21 participants have entered trades or other programs.
- 11 participants are involved in skills training opportunities with the Ring of Fire Aboriginal Training Alliance.
- 10 participants are employed.





Morris Wapoose, Program Manager, Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services, recognizing 46 adult learners, members of Matawa First Nations communities who completed the Aboriginal Skills Advancement Pilot Program (ASAPP). Many are now graduates with a General Education Development Diploma (GED) or Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

*Photo courtesy of Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services.*

### Aboriginal Apprenticeships

The ministry has taken steps to enhance apprenticeship opportunities in Ontario for Aboriginal people including the following:

- developing training for Aboriginal learners in specific trades
- recognizing Aboriginal partner organizations as apprenticeship training delivery agencies
- encouraging Aboriginal communities and partner organizations to develop a relationship with the Ontario College of Trades

Several of the training projects funded through the Targeted Initiatives Fund focused on pre-apprenticeship programs. Examples of these include the following:

***Central Ontario Building and Construction Trades Council.*** This is a 12-week training program to provide opportunities for at-risk and Aboriginal youth between the ages of sixteen and twenty-eight to learn about affiliated construction trade areas (fourteen to eighteen trades). Participants are referred by Aboriginal organizations and by service providers who are working with youth with significant barriers to education and employment. The program incorporates two weeks of safety training, orientation to the industry, and appropriate upgrading of skills.





*Grand River Employment and Training, in partnership with Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services.* This project includes orientation and training for the Heavy Equipment Operator occupation to meet labour market growth in the far North. The project provides skills building and training for twenty Aboriginal participants to prepare them for employment in the construction, transportation, and mining sectors.

### **Literacy and Basic Skills Program**

The Aboriginal Literacy Stream of the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) program supports Aboriginal learners' cultural needs and involves the support of the Ontario Native Literacy Coalition and Ningwakwe Learning Press. Funding supports Aboriginal programming within the LBS program, including service delivery, support organizations, and e-Channel. Aboriginal learners can access services through a system of over 300 sites, some of which are designated as delivery sites for the Aboriginal LBS stream. In 2013–14, more than 1,900 self-identified Aboriginal learners accessed LBS services.

### **The Service Delivery Network Development Fund**

The Service Delivery Network Development Fund is an investment by the ministry to support the capacity of Employment Ontario (EO) third-party service providers. These service providers are responsive to the needs identified by communities, and deliver coordinated, high-quality employment and training services that provide Ontarians with the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in the evolving labour market. As one of its priorities, the fund provides EO service providers with the ability to explore opportunities in building capacity with Aboriginal learners.



## A Snapshot of Success Stories

This section includes a variety of achievements related to ministry initiatives that have taken place since the launch of the policy framework. Submissions in this section were provided by the ministry, as well as by Aboriginal and sector partners.

### **The Work Ready Aboriginal People (WRAP) Program**

The Work Ready Aboriginal People (WRAP) program was developed to increase the number of Aboriginal Youth entering unionized construction jobs as apprentices and following through to Journey person status. It is a partnership program between Grand River Employment and Training (GREAT) and the Hamilton-Brantford Building Trades Council of Ontario. The WRAP program was developed to enable Aboriginal youth between the ages of eighteen and thirty to explore ICI construction trades (theory and practical training) while earning industry-recognized safety certifications. The WRAP program is designed to enhance participants' knowledge of Haudenosaunee history and culture through a unique learning experience.

Through WRAP, Aboriginal learners have access to skills training in the construction and building sectors with the opportunity to advance to apprenticeships, which can lead to Journey person accreditation. The ministry supported the inaugural WRAP program and subsequent cohorts. These cohorts have demonstrated the following positive results:

- 23 out of 27 participants successfully completed training.
- 24 received Grade 12 mathematics credits, and 21 received Grade 12 physics credits, which are necessary in order to write their trades entry examinations.
- All 9 who wrote the examination passed.
- 20 participants completed the trades training component and obtained exposure to various construction trades and heavy equipment operation.
- 10 past participants are employed in the trades – 1 is in training and 9 are registered as apprentices.



Wesli Day, a trainee from the Work Ready Aboriginal People (WRAP) program, learning heavy equipment operation skills.

*Photo courtesy of Grand River Employment and Training (GREAT).*

### **Pre-Apprenticeship Welding and Plumbing Training Program for Women**

The United Association (known as UA) Local 67 was founded in 1989 and is part of the United Association of Journeypersons and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry of the United States and Canada. Their members are engaged in the fabrication, installation, and servicing of piping systems. Their Technical Trades Academy (UA Local 67 TTA) is an approved Apprenticeship Training Delivery Agent (TDA) delivering apprenticeship training in the 456A Red Seal Welder program and 456P Pressure Systems Welder program.

Through the ministry's Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program, UA Local 67 TTA has offered pre-apprenticeship training for three years to enable Aboriginal and other women to increase their exposure to the welding and plumbing trades, as well as the opportunity to secure apprenticeship placements for participants and employment within the trade. Over the past three years, the ministry has provided pre-apprenticeship funding to UA Local 67 TTA, which has supported their 22-week pre-apprenticeship programs for welding and plumbing and has enabled forty-five Aboriginal and other women the opportunity to acquire job-readiness skills and trade-readiness work experience.

### Seven Generations Education Institute (SGEI)

Throughout the first phase of the framework's implementation, SGEI awarded 292 diplomas, certificates, and degrees to Aboriginal learners – 40 per cent of all SGEI graduates.

For example, the Culinary Chef-Skills program has been offered at the Fort Frances Seven Generations campus for the past six years. During this one-year certificate program, Aboriginal learners receive the training necessary to start a career as a professional cook and chef in today's growing and challenging cooking industry. Topics of study include the fundamentals of food preparation, presentation, and management of kitchen production. Learners are introduced to hospitality management through courses that focus on areas such as food and beverage management, nutrition, and kitchen management. Many of the graduates pursue further education in Culinary Education. Some begin their cooking career upon graduation. Some enter apprenticeship training in order to achieve their Red Seal.



Trevor Iserhoff, a recent graduate of the Culinary Chef-Skills Program, passed his Red Seal exam after accumulating over 3000 hours in the industry.

*Photo courtesy of Seven Generations Education Institute.*

## **Lakehead University**

Lakehead has established a coordinator of graduate and external relations in Aboriginal initiatives to work across the region to establish paid internships and practicums for Aboriginal graduate learners. Targeted workshops are delivered on academic writing skills and access to a mentorship program to increase Aboriginal learners' readiness for the labour market.

## **“Aboriginal Apprentices: A Solution to Bridging the Skills Gap,” 2013**

Aboriginal Apprenticeship Conferences have been supported through the ministry's Ontario Labour Market Partnership (OLMP) program. For example, the conference held on March 26–27, 2013, in Thunder Bay entitled “Aboriginal Apprentices: A Solution to Bridging the Skills Gap”, brought together construction trades industry leaders, Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Agreement holders, government representatives, and representatives of educational institutions to share successes and discuss how Aboriginal people can help to bridge the skills gap. Conference details are recorded on the website of the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board of Ontario, at [www.aabo.ca](http://www.aabo.ca).



## Next Steps



Significant progress has been made since the launch of the *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework, 2011*.

Our successes to date are the result of the strong partnerships and collaboration with Aboriginal and sector partners. The work accomplished since the release of the policy framework has built a solid foundation for the road ahead. This has enabled the ministry and its partners to launch a variety of programs and initiatives to support First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners' access to opportunities in postsecondary education and training in support of successful labour market outcomes.

To deepen the implementation of the framework and to ensure the ongoing success of the Aboriginal Education Strategy, it is imperative that the Learning Ministries work together with Aboriginal and sector partners to explore ways to leverage existing programs, initiatives, and/or partnerships, and to increase coordination on initiatives related to Aboriginal education and training across the continuum of learning. We need to make full use of the lessons learned from the first phase of the framework's implementation and share them with our Aboriginal and sector partners. We need to continue to increase our successes while enhancing our ability to collect data to help monitor and track progress in raising achievement levels in postsecondary education and training and in closing educational attainment gaps.

To better understand the learning pathways and outcomes of learners through improved data collection and analysis, the ministry will require accurate and reliable data on First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners' participation in postsecondary education and training. Such data is also needed to assess learners' progress and assist in the improvement of programs and services to better support the needs of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners. It is anticipated that, with the momentum from initiatives in the first phase of the framework's implementation, there will continue to be improvements in the access and success rates for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners in postsecondary education and training. Formal and informal mechanisms will continue to strengthen collaboration and ensure



alignment with ministry and sector initiatives along the continuum of learning. Establishing baseline data is a key goal in the next phase of the implementation of the framework.

The plan for the second phase of implementation of the framework will articulate targets, activities, and future directions to support First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners as they make the transition from high school to postsecondary education, training, and the workplace. Strategies and initiatives identified in the plan for the second phase of implementation will help lead the way forward in the important work in continuing to improve First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners' achievements in postsecondary education and training in Ontario.

# Appendix



## **Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training External Working Group Membership**


### **Co-Chairs**

Assistant Deputy Minister  
French-Language, Aboriginal Learning and Research Division  
Ministry of Education and Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Chair, Aboriginal Institutes Consortium

### **Members**

Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board of Ontario  
Aboriginal Institutes Consortium and a student identified  
by the consortium  
Canadian Federation of Students  
Chiefs of Ontario  
College Student Alliance  
Council of Ontario Universities Aboriginal Reference Group  
Indigenous Peoples Education Circle  
Métis Nation of Ontario  
Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres  
Ontario Native Education Counselling Association  
Ontario Native Literacy Coalition  
Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance  
Seven Generations Education Institute  
Tungasuvvingat Inuit



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