

**THE OFFICE OF FIRST NATION EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD
DEVELOPMENT- NEW BRUNSWICK**



RESPONDING TO THE TRC'S *CALLS TO ACTION*

**Bill Patrick
Learning Specialist**

**Artists: Pauline Young, Metepenagiag
Natalie Sappier, Neqotkuk**

OVERVIEW

- **The Office of First Nation Education and district supports**
- ***Calls to Action* and other guiding documents for NB educators**
- **Why this work is so important**
- **What our students are saying**
- **OFNE's initiatives**



EDUCATION AS HOPE



“Despite painful experiences Aboriginal peoples have suffered in the past century or more, Aboriginal people still see education as having hope for their future, and they are determined to see education fulfill its promise.”

-Dr. Marie Battiste, *Decolonizing Education*

THE OFFICE OF FIRST NATION EDUCATION

- **Sacha DeWolfe, Director**
- **Bill Patrick and Craig Williamson, Learning Specialists**
- **Lynn Wolverton, Administrative Support**



DISTRICT SUPPORTS

ASD-W: Two FN Subject Coordinators:
Sarah Francis and Donna White

ASD-E: One FN Subject Coordinator: Tracy Landry

ASD-S: One FN Subject Coordinator: Mark Perry

ASD-N:
One FN Subject Coordinator:
Matthew Sweezey
Two FN Leads:
Elizabeth Price, Patricia Miller



CALLS TO ACTION BY THE TRC

Education for reconciliation

62. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:

i. Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.

GUIDING DOCUMENTS FOR EDUCATORS: THE EDUCATION ACT

7. The Minister (**may**) **shall** prescribe or approve programs and services which

(a) respond to the unique needs of Mi'kmaq and Maliseet children in accordance with any agreement entered into under paragraph 50(2)(*b*), and

(b) foster an understanding of aboriginal history and culture among all pupils.

2000, c.52, s.10; 2017, c.7,s.1

ESSENTIAL GRADUATION LEARNINGS

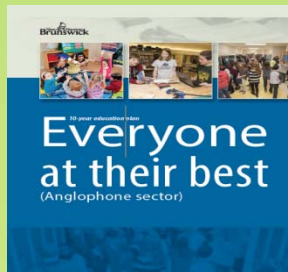
Graduates will be able, for example, to:

- **examine human rights issues and recognize forms of discrimination;**
- **demonstrate understanding of their own and others' cultural heritage, cultural identity and the contribution of multiculturalism to society.**
- **reflect critically on ethical issues**

IT'S PART OF OUR PLAN

Objective 6 of the education plan: *"Everyone at their best"*-

- It is imperative that we acknowledge and affirm the historical and cultural contributions of First Nation communities and individuals. This goal is supported by *ensuring that all curricula, pre-school to Grade 12*, accurately reflect the history and culture of First Nation People.
- As we respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, it is our responsibility to ensure *that all New Brunswick learners understand and appreciate the generational impact of Indian residential and day schooling.*
- To this end, we will ensure that First Nation realities, experiences and contributions to Canadian society are embedded throughout the K-12 educational system, thereby becoming *a foundational understanding for all New Brunswick learners.*



REFLECTING CRITICALLY

The Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum describes the importance of critical literacy-



CRITICAL LITERACY

- **Critical literacy equips students with the capacities and understanding which are preconditions *for effective citizenship in a pluralistic and democratic society.***
- **Critical literacy can be a tool for addressing issues of social justice and equity, for critiquing society and attempting to *effect positive change.***



WHY IT IS SO IMPORTANT TO ADDRESS THE CALLS TO ACTION

“The life of a typical Aboriginal in 21st century Canada remains significantly worse than that of any other demographic group, with rates of poverty, addiction and violence grossly disproportionate to their percentage of the population.”

<http://www.thecanadaguide.com/first-nations>



POVERTY

Indigenous children in Canada are **more than twice as likely** to live in poverty than non-Indigenous children.

-Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA)-
2016



MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Suicide rates among First Nation youth are
5 to 7 times higher
than other young non-aboriginal people in Canada.



A GROWING POPULATION

The Aboriginal population increased by **20.1%** between 2006 and 2011- compared with **5.2%** for the non-Aboriginal population.



In July 2015, The Canadian Human Rights Commission told a United Nations panel that the plight of Canada's Aboriginal peoples is *one of the most urgent civil rights issues facing Canada today.*





VOICES OF FIRST NATION STUDENTS

What they are telling us.

CULTURAL DISCONTINUITY

- **There is often a disconnect for First Nation students when they leave communities and go to provincial schools.**
- **On community (reserve), they live within a familiar culture.**
- **When they are attending provincial schools, they often feel pressure to change themselves to be accepted and to become successful.**

CULTURAL DISSONANCE

- A sense of discomfort, discord or disharmony arising from cultural differences or inconsistencies which are **unexpected** or **unexplained** and therefore **difficult to negotiate**.
- When students experience this in educational settings they become vulnerable to **educational disadvantage**.
- This cultural dissonance can have **a profound and negative effect** on academic achievement and the personal development of students.
- Students looking to reconcile this dissonance may try to align with the dominant culture's values in an attempt to fit in and, in doing so, **may betray their own sense of self**.

RESIDENTIAL AND DAY SCHOOLS' IMPACT

These schools eroded and undermined all aspects of well-being for Aboriginal peoples including:

- Disruption of the structure, cohesion and quality of family life
- Loss of cultural identity and language
- Loss of parenting skills

Result: Devastating and ongoing impacts on the health and well-being of Indigenous individuals, families, and communities.



JUSTICE MURRAY SINCLAIR

OUR INITIATIVES

- **Treaty Education – Grades 3, 4, and 5. (MOU)**
- **Social Studies modules- Grades 7, 8, 9**
- **New Native (Indigenous) Studies 120 curriculum**
- **First Nation Literacy lessons K-12**
- **First Nation Art lessons K-12**
- **Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey Language- online/face-to-face**
- **First Nation Music lessons K-12**
- **Secret Path Professional Learning session**
- **Professional Learning for Guidance Counsellors**
- **Cultural Immersion camp for teachers- July 2018**
- **Trades initiatives- welding stations/tiny houses**
- **PL Day- Sept. 1st, 2017- over 10,000 visits**

OUR INITIATIVES, CONTINUED

- Leadership course for Indigenous students
- Indigenous Knowledge Keepers/Artists Profiles
- Virtual Book and Culture Club
- **Day School Survivors' Resource**
- Portal site
- Blanket Exercise support- ASD-W
- *Education for Reconciliation* presentation

OUR COMMITTEES

NATIONAL COMMITTEES:

- CMEC'S Indigenous Education Committee
- CMEC's National Resource Base
- National Roundtable on Education
- Promising Practices in Supporting Success for Indigenous Students (OECD)

REGIONAL COMMITTEES:

- Atlantic Educators for Reconciliation

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEES

- Intergovernmental Committee on Aboriginal Relations.
- Working Team of the Prevention of Violence Against Aboriginal Women and Girls.

OUR COMMITTEES, CTD.

NB COMMITTEES

- **Objective 6/TRC Fulfillment**
- **PAEC**
- **Enhancement**
- **EPP- FNEII AND TNEGI**
- **Treaty Education**
- **Red Shawl**
- **Band-Operated School Principals**
- **AESI- Aboriginal Employment Services Initiative**

IN CLOSING

“The decolonization of education is not just about changing a system for Indigenous peoples, but for everyone. We will all benefit by it.”

-Dr. Marie Battiste, *Decolonizing Education*



QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?



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