



INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

POLICY STATEMENT 352

Category: Educational Programs and Related Services

AUTHORITY: *Education Act (section 7) - 2021, c.10, s.1* EFFECTIVE: November 2023

RESPONSIBILITY: Superintendent REVISED:

Statement:

- 1.0** This policy will provide the 'what and how' of ensuring that schools, school leaders and teachers are including Wabanaki Education in their buildings and classrooms.

By including the voices of those with lived experience (i.e. – Indigenous Advisors), ASDE will plan how to best support schools with aligning their spaces, curriculum and pedagogical/instructional practices with Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. By including the Truth and Reconciliation's calls to action with school improvement planning, we will strategically ensure that the Wabanaki Framework and First Nation look-fors (LINK) are embedded in our classrooms and buildings. A yearly review on the calls to action in relation to departmental and district goals will be provided to the DEC and Advisory Group.

2.0 Who will follow this:

All staff as per details in section 6

4.0 Legal Authority

Education Act (section 7) - Programs and services in relation to Indigenous education

2021, c.10, s.1

The Minister shall prescribe or approve programs and services which

(a) respond to the unique needs of Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey children, if the Minister has entered into an agreement with a council of a Mi'kmaq or Wolastoqey First Nation under subsection 50(1) or paragraph 50(2)(b), and

(b) foster a better understanding of Indigenous history, culture and languages among all pupils.

CONTEXT/ALIGNMENT

10 Year Education Plan:

Meet the needs of First Nation learners and ensure that provincial curriculum is reflective of First Nation culture and history (ensuring a trauma-invested, culturally responsive approach).

Establish a culture of belonging (inclusion) and valuing diversity.

First Nation look-fors

School Improvement Planning

5.0 Goal #1 – To ensure that the financial, material and human resources necessary to schools are provided so that the Wabanaki Framework and First Nation look-fors are used by all educators.

Goal #2 – To provide mandatory cultural competency training to ALL staff.

Goal #3 – To respect the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action and honor the journey through truth and reconciliation.

The following principles will guide development of educational programs, services and initiatives by ASDE:

1. The quality of education provided to students in ASDE schools is enhanced through partnerships amongst schools, Mi'kmaq communities, Elders/Knowledge Keepers, First Nation organizations, Education and Early Childhood Development/Office of First Nation Education and the Central Office.
2. The Indigenous Advisory group will be involved in all aspects of planning.
3. Anglophone School District East offers educational opportunities and culturally safe spaces that meet the needs of a diverse population of Indigenous students.
4. Programs and teaching methods in schools recognize the benefits gained by including Wabanaki worldviews in classroom practice and the school environment. Educational practice will embed the use of the Wabanaki Framework and First Nation look-fors.
5. Anglophone School District East provides opportunities for all students, teachers, administrators and District Education Council members to recognize and value Wabanaki history, culture and contemporary issues.
6. All educators will use trauma-invested/informed and culturally responsive lenses in their pedagogies.

What is the compelling interest of the Province in this topic?

- First Nation look-fors
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 calls to action
- Objective 6 of 10-year education plan
- Office of First Nation Education (Wabanaki Framework)
- Royal Commission Aboriginal Peoples
- Requirements from the Ed Act
- Elders' Advisory
- Feedback from First Nation communities
- Framework for SIP (Effective Schools Framework)

Discuss any liabilities of the Province in this area.

(From the Final Report on Systemic Racism)

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Recommendation 5:

Develop an anti-racism policy and mandate that all provincial workplaces adhere to this policy. This policy should be mandated to all parts of GNB.

Many participants spoke of encouraging their youth to "pass;" in other words, if possible, pretend that they were not Indigenous in order to avoid racism. We heard numerous stories of traumatic school experiences, losing youth to suicide and children to social services.

"For us to move forward as a country, we need both Truth and Reconciliation. The Truth is that Indigenous people are the original stewards of this land. The rest of us are either forced or volunteer settlers with varying degrees of influence and power. There is no lack of qualitative and quantitative data demonstrating that Indigenous people face racism that is more overt, destructive and ingrained than any other group in Canada. As the original people on this land and direct victims of colonization, Indigenous people experience systemic racism in a unique way. I acknowledge this by providing our First Nations a separate section for recommendations which relate to their realities."

Recommendation 59:

Create a youth-focused task force for Indigenous youth living both on and off reserves. Census data (2020 & 2022) identifies Indigenous youth as the largest youth population in Canada (ages 16-29).

Recommendation 63:

Provide support for an anti-racist approach to Indigenous education already being done at EECD. I commend the work that EECD is currently doing with Wabanaki Elders and knowledge-keepers on curricular and pedagogical matters. I was also pleased to learn that Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey courses are being delivered online and in classrooms. An important aspect of this is to include an anti-racist perspective, to discuss the impact of colonization, systemic racism, and intergenerational trauma. This teaching should happen from K-12. Too many of my participants spoke of experiences of overt racism such as name-calling and accusations, such as "just get over it." This situation needs to be addressed by direct anti-racism intervention strategies.

Recommendation 77:

Mandatory Indigenous-based education and Blanket Exercise for GNB employees starting with elected officials, Part 1 and 2 senior leadership and all Horizon and Vitalité employees. To develop

meaningful relationships on a Nation-to-Nation basis, it is critical that government as a whole understands past and current effects of colonial policies on Indigenous Peoples.

6.0 POLICY AND STANDARDS

1. A Professional Learning Day each school year will be designated at the district level for Indigenous cultural competency as the focus; with a number of sessions offered.
2. Indigenous Educational Support teachers and/or Elders/Knowledge Keepers/Cultural Advisors will be invited to schools to team teach/collaborate/consult with teachers.
3. A Wabanaki Education PLC will be created and maintained within every school and will include the Indigenous Education Champion.
4. There will be an Indigenous Education Champion in each school who will be trained (cultural competence and trauma informed) and supported regularly by the district-based Indigenous Education team.
5. An Indigenous Education Advisory Group (consisting of Elders/Knowledge Keepers/Cultural Advisors, teachers/administrators/ youth from across the district) will be involved in all aspects of planning and consultation in regards to Indigenous Ed in ASDE. This group will meet quarterly.
6. There will be visual representation of Wabanaki languages and culture in schools and central offices.
7. Peace and Friendship (culturally designed) spaces will be created in middle and high schools.
8. All staff will partake in the Blanket Exercise.
9. Educational staff will partake in cultural competence training that aligns with School Improvement Planning (as measured by the First Nation look-fors and TRC calls to action).
10. All staff will partake in completing and signing off yearly on anti-racism training (i.e. – understanding bias, micro-aggressions, privilege, etc.)