

Teacher Recruitment, Retention and Training:
Implications for First Nations Education

A literature review

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Introduction

This literature review examined academic publications, federal and provincial government reports, Aboriginal organization reports, program information, and statistics regarding teacher recruitment, retention, and training in First Nations¹ education. Literature was found in libraries, databases (such as ERIC and Academic Premier), and the internet. Some reports were provided by INAC and Working Group members. This report begins with an overview of the public K-12 education employment sector and an overview of Aboriginal educators working in the education sector, to provide a broad demographic context and provincial projections about future teacher requirements. Issues and challenges that impact teacher recruitment and retentions are discussed. These include: remote and rural areas; social and economic factors; and systemic problems. The next section highlights strategies, which address these issues and which facilitate teacher recruitment and retention. These include: the importance of Aboriginal teachers; recruitment and retention strategies ranging from marketing tools, factors to consider when hiring teachers, networking and partnerships, induction and mentorship programs, professional development, administrative leadership and support, and rewards and incentives. The section on teacher education/training examines considerations, issues, and strategies about recruitment; persistence through various supports; community based programs; the quality of Aboriginal teacher education programs; new program specializations; increasing Aboriginal faculty and staff; and certification. Preservice and professional development considerations for non-Aboriginal teachers follow. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples' (RCAP) (1996,) recommendations related to teacher recruitment, retention and training are revisited because they still have relevance.

Overview of public K-12 education employment sector

A major national study that examined Canada's education employment sector cites the following facts and figures that establish a national context, which influences First Nations education:

- The numbers of educators (elementary and secondary schools) in Canada declined in the 90s to 271,000 in 1999-2000 from 284,000 in 1991-92; from 1991-92 to 1999-2000, the number of students in Canadian schools increased to 4.86 million from 4.64 million.
- Over 25 percent of Canadian teachers were 50 years or older in 1996-97.
- Approximately 45 percent of the current Canadian teaching force will be eligible to retire by 2008.
- Only 75 percent of teacher graduates take jobs as teachers.
- Canada could be losing 25 to 30 percent of beginning teachers in the first five years.
- Canadian teachers are being offered significant financial incentives to teach in the United States and in other countries.
- Many Canadian regions report significant difficulties in hiring substitute teachers.

¹ We will use the terms 'First Nations' 'Aboriginal' and 'Native' interchangeably in this document when discussion is of a general or broad nature. We will use the same term that is found in specific studies when the study is discussed and when quoting statistics.

- Provincial studies show a range of teacher shortages in specific subject areas such as science, math and technology.
- According to Statistics Canada's NGS, one in five elementary-secondary teachers in Canada in 1997 was looking for another job when surveyed two years after graduating in 1995.
- Fifteen percent of elementary-secondary teachers surveyed in the 1997 NGS were making efforts to leave their current teaching position, either trying to find teaching employment elsewhere or leaving the profession altogether (Canadian Teachers Federation, www.ctf-fce.ca/E/WHAT/OTHER/tchr-sd.htm).

Another national study conducted by the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) during 2000, surveyed senior administrators of 490 public school boards across Canada. Of the 272 responses, the following concerns regarding recruitment and retention are noted:

- Recruiting has been getting more difficult over the past four years
 - three-quarters of school districts reported difficulties but this fell to 29 percent in Quebec
 - smaller school districts experienced more difficulty than larger ones
 - smaller schools experienced more difficulty than larger ones
 - rural boards reported more difficulty than other districts surveyed.
- Teacher shortages are the most prevalent in science subjects in the last four years (science, chemistry, biology, and physics).
- Four subject areas have fewer than 10 percent of districts reporting shortages (physical education, elementary, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, and social studies).
- The majority of school districts anticipate difficulty in hiring to continue over the next five years.
- Smaller districts, rural districts and English-language districts anticipate more difficulty than larger ones
- Retirement was seen by the largest proportion (78 percent) of respondents as the leading factor contributing to shortages (cited in The Steering Group for the Situational Analysis of Canada's Education Sector Human Resources, 2002, pp. 30-31).

The Steering Group Situational Analysis (2002)² also reviewed various provincial government literatures and found that the teacher supply and demand varied. British Columbia predicts a 68 percent shortage of teachers within the next five years; Saskatchewan indicates difficulty in filling positions, especially for rural areas; Ontario shows a need for 10,000 additional teachers for each year until 2004, when enrollment growth will level off; Newfoundland and Labrador indicate no current shortage but the rural areas have a high demand for teachers and secondary school teachers are in biggest

² The ABCs of Educator Demographics The Steering Group for the Situational Analysis of Canada's Education Sector Human Resources Jan. 2002 <<http://www.caeto.ca/reports/CompleteEngSitAna96.pdf>> p.iv

demand; and Alberta has a surplus teacher supply that is predicted to continue until 2005, because of the provinces vibrant economy. No information was noted for Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Yukon, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, or Prince Edward Island.

Overview of Aboriginal teachers employed in the Canadian education sector

The 1996 Census data indicates that there were 378,000 elementary and secondary school educators in the workforce and 400,000 if principals and administrators were included (Statistics Canada’s Education in Canada, 2000). This same data notes that the total Aboriginal employment share in the ten main educator occupations listed in the Table 1 is 1.7 percent (11,262). Table 1 also shows the Aboriginal share of employment is highest for school and guidance counselors and lowest for secondary and university professors.

Table 1: Aboriginal Share of Employment in Key Occupations across Canada³

Occupations	All workers-number	Aboriginal Number	Aboriginal share
Administrators in post-secondary	8550	135	1.6%
Principals/elem & secondary	27250	520	1.9%
University professors	47170	240	0.5%
Post-sec. teaching & research assistants	25315	210	0.8%
College & vocational instructors	91410	1385	1.5%
Secondary school teachers	154035	1335	0.9%
Elementary & kindergarten teachers	226105	3720	1.6%
School & guidance counselors	116650	880	7.6%
Instructors/teachers of disabled persons	19040	185	1.0%
Elem & sec. School teacher assistants	57695	2670	4.6%

In every province and at every level of education, there is a large proportional gap

³ This table is from “The ABCs of Educator Demographics” (Steering Group, 2002, Table 6, p. 15). Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census of Canada, HRDC Special Data.

between Aboriginal student and Aboriginal teacher representation. Table 2 illustrates that chasm and gives a provincial breakdown in terms of the percentage of the Aboriginal population that is 14 years and under and the percentage of Aboriginal teachers employed. Among the ten provinces, Saskatchewan and Manitoba (6.9 and 5.1 percent) have the highest number of Aboriginal teachers while Ontario (0.5 percent) and Quebec (0.9 percent) have the least. The Northwest Territories with 30.6 percent of Aboriginal teachers has a wide gap when considering a 75.2 percent student population, 0-14 years of age.

**Table 2: Aboriginal Population and Teacher Representation
By Province and Territory⁴**

	Aboriginal Peoples Share of Overall Population		Aboriginal Teachers* Share of Employment
	All Ages	0-14 years	
Canada	3.9%	6.4%	1.3%
Newfoundland	4.5%	7.1%	1.7%
Prince Edward Island	1.8%	3.1%	1.2%
Nova Scotia	3.0%	4.8%	1.1%
New Brunswick	2.3%	3.7%	1.1%
Quebec	2.0%	3.0%	0.9%
Ontario	2.3%	3.6%	0.5%
Manitoba	12.6%	21.4%	5.1%
Saskatchewan	12.0%	21.4%	6.9%
Alberta	5.8%	9.3%	2.4%
British Columbia	5.0%	8.2%	1.2%
Yukon Territory	21.0%	27.7%	6.1%
Northwest Territories	62.2%	75.2%	30.6%

*Note: Teachers refer to both secondary and elementary school teachers

Sources: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census of Canada, HRDC Special Data

The Steering Group's report does not give a breakdown of the numbers of Aboriginal teachers for each province. Although no concise and accurate figures are currently available, it is estimated that there are less than 500 certified teachers of Aboriginal origin in British Columbia. That can be juxtaposed with the 6.5 percent of students who are of First Nations heritage. In order to achieve proportional representation of Aboriginal teachers to students, B.C. would need approximately 2,100 teachers of Aboriginal origin (British Columbia Teachers' Federation, 2000).⁵ During the 1996-97 school year, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation records show 315 self-identified Aboriginal teachers

⁴ This table is from the Steering Group's report (2002), "The ABCs of Educator Demographics: Report on the findings of a situational analysis of Canada's education sector human resources" p. 16.

⁵ British Columbia Teacher's Federation. Employment equity program needed for First Nations teachers 15 March 2000. <<http://www.bctf.ca/ezone/archive/2000-03/support/14EmploymentEquity.html>>

working in the provinces publicly funded schools (Saskatchewan Education, 2000). This same report contains information from the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission (1998), which shows that Aboriginal teachers comprised 4 percent of the teaching sector in 1989 and 5 percent in 1997/8. The data on the number of Aboriginal teachers shows a variation such as the Saskatchewan data where Statistics Canada notes 6.9 percent and Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission notes 5 percent in approximately the same time period. However, the data shows a consistent trend of under-representation of Aboriginal teachers in the work force. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples notes that, based on 1991 Census figures, in order “[t]o bring the ratio of Aboriginal teachers to Aboriginal children to the same level as that for non-Aboriginal people, about 24,000 more Aboriginal teachers would have to be working in the various education systems (1996, Volume 3, p. 574). RCAP notes that the 1991 Census indicates approximately 8,075 Aboriginal people in teaching and related occupations. Approximately three times the 1991 rate was recommended to achieve parity with non-Aboriginal teacher representation. The 1996 Census shows a very slight increase in the numbers of Aboriginal educators (11,262) – far below 24,000.

There is a need to have consistent data reporting from provinces and First Nations schools about the number of teachers, their gender, age, qualifications, and retention. One good example of such reporting was found. Saskatchewan Education funded a 1998 research study to examine Aboriginal teachers’ background and experiences who were teaching in the publicly-funded schools (St. Denis, Bouvier, & Battiste, 1998). Of the 315 self-identified Aboriginal teachers, who were sent a questionnaire, 34 percent (106) responded. This response rate is consistent with return rates of Aboriginal people to research questionnaires. St Denis, Bouvier & Battiste’s study provides useful information on gender, age, qualifications that are useful for provincial planning:

- 64 percent of the Aboriginal teachers...are female; 33 percent are male
- The majority (60 percent) are Métis; 25 percent are of First Nations heritage and 13 percent have both Métis and First Nations heritage
- About half (48 percent)...are between the ages of 30 and 39. Twenty percent are single with dependents; 14 percent are single without dependents, and another 14 percent are living with their spouse but have no dependents. For those who have dependents, the average number of dependents is 2.2
- 96 percent...have Bachelor of Education degrees
- 67 percent...graduated from one of the (three Aboriginal) “TEP” programs. Thirty-three percent graduated from the ‘regular’ education program at university
- The largest proportion of female Aboriginal teachers are teaching Kindergarten to Grade 6. The largest proportion of males (31 percent) are teaching Grades 9 to 12 (cited in Saskatchewan Education, 2002, p. 112).

There are pertinent issues that should be considered in planning for Aboriginal representation in the main education occupations. First, the Aboriginal population is much younger than the overall Canadian population. Second, emphasis on self-

government and the greater importance attached to Aboriginal education creates an increasing need for Aboriginal teachers. The situation is even more pronounced in the two provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba where Aboriginal people comprise 12 percent of the population and 21 percent of the total population of children.⁶ While these provinces have a higher number of Native teachers, there is still a wide gap in representation between the number of Native students and the number of Native teachers. Out of the 18 school divisions listed in a 1997-8, Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission Report, each had a low number of Aboriginal teachers in relation to the number of Aboriginal students compared to the number of non-Aboriginal teachers relative to non-Aboriginal students. The Biggar School Division reported two Aboriginal teachers for 178 Aboriginal students (1:89 ratio). In the Saskatoon Public School Division, there were 56 Aboriginal teachers for 2559 Aboriginal students (1:46 ratio). In the Northern Lights School Division, there were 78 Aboriginal teachers for 3980 Aboriginal students (a ratio of 1:51).⁷

In order to achieve proportional representation of Aboriginal students and Aboriginal teachers in the public education system and First Nations band operated schools, far greater numbers of Aboriginal teachers must be hired. An aggressive plan to enroll more Aboriginal teachers in teacher education programs and stronger employment equity policies and strategies are required. The following sections will highlight what the literature indicates as the greatest issues and challenges confronting teacher recruitment and retention. Understanding the causes and implication of these issues will help determine strategies for improving teacher recruitment and retention.

A. Teacher recruitment and retention: Issues and challenges

1. Rural and remote areas

Successful provision of education to Aboriginal communities in rural and remote areas is dependent on personnel (teachers, administrative and classroom support, and specialists); relevant curriculum; information and communication technologies; multiple modes of delivery; environments formed through effective community relationships and partnerships; and resourcing (National Framework, 2001). The National Framework for Rural and Remote Education (2001) with respect to personnel, identified recruitment and retention, training and development, appropriate succession planning, development and utilization of community expertise, and leadership as key challenges in meeting the educational needs of rural and remote areas of Australia, especially Indigenous communities. Rural schools often do not have a personnel director for recruiting teachers, which places rural schools at a disadvantage in competing with urban schools (Hare, 1988). Newly inducted teachers who are young, inexperienced (four or fewer years in teaching), single, and from or preferring urban areas often have trouble adjusting to and remaining in rural or isolated areas (Cotton, 1987; McNinch, 1994). Culturally sensitive

⁶ *Ibid.* 15

⁷ SSTA Research Centre. That's A Good Idea! Effective Practices in First Nations and Métis Education: Equity Issues <http://www.ssta.sk.ca/research/indian_education/00-10.htm>

preservice teacher education programs and in-service professional development programs that focus on the relationship between teachers and First Nations communities, cross-cultural teaching with particular reference to the teaching of English as a second language are needed to prepare educators to work more effectively in northern areas (Harper, 2000).

Gibson (1994) analyzes current policy and practice relating to the preparation and selection of teachers for rural areas of Australia, and contrasts these to perceptions of rural teachers concerning the adequacy of their preservice preparation. Nine recent Australian national and state reports and policy statements were analyzed. National policy recognizes the uniqueness of Australian rural schools, and the need for specialized training for future rural teachers in such areas as rural culture and society, Aboriginal culture, climate, mechanisms for adapting to local limited resources, and multigrade teaching methods. By contrast, the pervasive attitude in state education department documents appears to assume no need for specialized training or selection practices for rural and isolated personnel. Interviews with representatives of state and regional teacher recruitment offices revealed no standard approach to selection of rural teachers and little effort to match appropriate skills with rural placements. In-depth structured interviews were conducted with 24 teachers, newly appointed to small communities in "outback" regions of Queensland. Most had requested a rural placement. Half were in one-teacher schools, and 79 percent were teaching three or more grade levels. Three-quarters of interviewees were dissatisfied with their preparation for rural teaching and indicated the need for better training in multigrade classroom strategies and teaching methods, organization, student evaluation and placement, school administration, and dealing with the community.

2. Social and economic factors that contribute to the teacher shortage

In general the literature identifies the factors that contribute to the teacher shortage: increasing retirements, the decline in the respect given to the profession of teaching, lower salaries, teachers needing to secure other jobs during summer holidays, moving, illness, sabbatical or leave of absences, or moving into administrative roles (Dilworth, 1990; Hare, 1988; Jarrett, 1999; Otuya, 1989). The growing preference to enter professions with higher salaries and more prestige (e.g., business, science and health-related fields) also minimizes potential candidates for teacher education programs (Dilworth, 1990). Lack of financial aid incentives during teacher education programs also hinders recruitment into these programs and ultimately the profession (Dilworth, 1990). Geographic isolation along with language and cultural barriers also influence teachers' decision to leave (Cotton, 1987; Duquette, 2000; Sealander, 2001).

Reasons for leaving the profession and contributing to the teacher shortage are discussed next. Professional identity (or lack of it) can also influence Aboriginal teachers to leave the profession (McNinch, 1994). For Aboriginal teachers, the responsibility of being a 'role model' creates added anxiety if this role is not defined or if it is a misunderstood special status (McNinch, 1994). The 'us/them' positioning may exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers, causing professional stressors, such as racism and

discrimination, which creates unwelcoming working conditions (McNinch, 1994). Because of the shortage of teachers, Aboriginal teachers with an elementary school specialization, hired to teach in high schools may feel uneasy about their lack of formal preparation for secondary teaching (McNinch, 1994).

3. Systemic problems

Richardson (1990) comments that more than half of entering community college students lack the basic skills required to do college-level academic work. In the United States, Blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians disproportionately rely on community colleges as their point of initial access to higher education. In some areas, community colleges enroll 40 percent of all high school graduates, but 80 percent of the minority graduates. The prevailing community college approach to student preparation issues involves a deficiency model in which remediation is emphasized as the dominant strategy for bringing everyone to minimum standards. The low expectations of Native American students held by both Indian and non-Indian teachers assert attitudes of "internalized racism" (Ambler, 1999).

In contrast, an achievement model is advocated that challenges faculty to design an environment where diversity is valued and individuals are inspired to build upon their strengths to attain their maximum potential.

The lack of administrative support can be detrimental to teacher retention (Cotton, 1987; McNinch, 1994; Sealander, 2001). Low academic school standards along with inadequate curriculum development (Cotton, 1987) negatively impacts teachers' decision to stay. Lack of Aboriginal administrators within the provincial school system creates skepticism about the sincerity of school boards to accommodate or embrace educational equity (McNinch, 1994).

Inadequate professional development policies (Cotton, 1987) and low turnover of existing non-Aboriginal teaching staff, especially in urban areas, (McNinch, 1994), has impeded recruitment and retention efforts. Recruiting young people from high school into the teaching profession is hindered by the inability to identify and track First Nations students, within and beyond the secondary system. Recruiting, interviewing, and hiring Aboriginal teachers has been done by mainly non-Aboriginal school district personnel who do not represent the Aboriginal community. There also seems to be a discrepancy between articulated equity goals and actual hiring practices (McNinch, 1994). Lack of employment equity policies and the teacher unions' collective agreements greatly limit public school hiring of Aboriginal teachers (BCTF, BC First Nations Task Force). It is curious that unemployment rates for Aboriginal educators is 24.0 percent compared to the overall educator population, which is 10.1 percent and visible minorities, which is 14.2 percent. Of the 24.0 percent, the unemployment breakdown is: secondary school teachers (5.3 percent; elementary and kindergarten teachers (4.4 percent), and elementary/secondary school teacher assistants (9.9 percent) (Statistics Canada, 1996 Census of Canada, HRDC Special Data cited in the Steering Group, 2002 report). This is the only data found on unemployment of Aboriginal educators. With such a shortage of Aboriginal teachers, one must question why there is an estimated 24.0 percent

unemployment rate?

Perkel (2002) discusses the negative impact of *mandatory testing* as part of the certification of new Ontario teachers. The test measures have not been validated and “marginal” groups are in danger of being disadvantaged by this test. Teachers from outside Ontario are certified based on credentials and given optional time to complete the test. Such a testing policy may influence Ontario students to attend teacher training and work in another province. The following section examines facilitating factors contributing to teacher recruitment and retention.

B. Teacher Recruitment & Retention: Facilitating Factors

This section begins with a focus on Aboriginal teachers because there has been consistent recognition of the positive impact Aboriginal teachers can and do have: “It has been recognized for decades that having Aboriginal teachers in the classroom represents the first line of change in the education of Aboriginal children and youth” (RCAP, 1996, Vol. 3, p.490).

1. Importance of Aboriginal teachers

The importance and benefit of Aboriginal teachers is reinforced throughout the literature for the following reasons. They:

- understand the values of the community
- infuse the Euro-Canadian curriculum with their language and culture
- are cultural brokers between cultural maintenance and economic advancement
- instill self-esteem in students
- are positive role models and
- can be change agents in educational systems (Kirkness, 1987; Duquette, 2000;

Kavanagh, 1998).

However, the impact and benefit of Aboriginal teachers can only be realized if their teacher education programs prepare them to be not only academically skilled teachers but teachers critically aware of social/cultural issues, such as colonization, racism, anti-racism, gender, social justice, and sexual orientation, which impact students’ identity and belongingness in schools. St. Denis (2002) points out that viewing Aboriginal teachers and Aboriginal culture as the panacea for improving Aboriginal education can overshadow the need to critically examine and change institutional policies and practices that perpetuate inequalities.

Aboriginal schools and communities also need to identify the expectations, skills, and qualities that they desire in teachers and communicate these to teacher education programs so that these programs can address them. Specializations in areas such as First Nations languages, special education (FAS/FAE, learning disabilities), urban teaching, have been mentioned by many communities over the years. A First Nations community identified these criteria for hiring Aboriginal teachers for a band school, in 1990, which were still relevant ten years later. The initial community-school plan stated the need to hire qualified teachers who: (1) can teach multigrades and do some individualized

teaching, (2) are resourceful and creative, (3) can meet community needs, (4) are flexible, (5) are able to start projects on their own, (6) are emotionally stable, and (7) are good role models. The planning group also suggested providing support services to teachers which included hiring qualified tutors and teacher aides and limiting class size to 12-15 students (Charters-Voght, 1999).

A qualitative study that examined the stories of seven Aboriginal teachers who graduated from an Aboriginal teacher education program in Saskatchewan (Northern Teacher Education Program, NORTEP) shows that these teachers are positively influencing students, parents, and communities (Friesen & Orr, 1998). The authors examined the teachers' role identities, which are facilitated by Aboriginal language and culture, the northern environment and supportive family, community, and educational systems. The teachers are aware of the politicized nature of education and are working to establish effective links between schools and communities. The discourse and action about self-determination is prevalent. Their teacher education program was viewed as a catalyst for developing and strengthening their cultural perspectives and identities, which carried over into their teaching.

2. Strategies for recruiting and retaining First Nation teacher education students, First Nations, and non-First Nations teachers

The following strategies have been compiled from recruitment and retention literature from Canada, US and Australia as each country deals with decreasing minority and Indigenous teacher populations and increasing minority and Indigenous student populations. While many of these suggestions assume that many of the positions are within rural areas and hence, Indigenous populations, it is important to remember that urban areas with high First Nation populations also require qualified First Nations teachers. Some marketing tools and administrative/recruiter responsibilities are suggested below, along with a variety of considerations that recruiters should consider when searching for the ideal candidate. Even though First Nations teachers are mentioned in the strategies, these same considerations have some application to non-First Nations teachers.

a. Marketing Tools

To recruit teachers, a creative marketing strategy must be used that emphasizes the advantages of the school, community and geographical area (Cotton, 1987; National Framework, 2001; Voices for Diversity 1995). Increasing recruitment campaigns, especially targeted to students in rural areas to enter education and teacher training is needed (Country Roads, 2000). Ocansey (1989) and Voices for Diversity (1995) recommend that personal contacts provide direct access to potential recruits as well. By establishing a larger range of partnerships and mechanisms designed to promote and support initiatives in pre-service teacher education focusing on rural/remote education and training also creates a pool of candidates with rural exposure (Country Roads, 2000). Alaskan school district staff set up booths at university job fairs, reaching out to new graduates who might be interested in an Alaska lifestyle. (Jarrett, 1999).

An important part of recruitment is to make potential candidates aware of issues they

should consider before taking a teaching position. LaBerge (1997) authored a manual that offers practical advice to educators on conducting a job search and obtaining a position in Alaska. The manual acts as a guide and ‘preliminary’ interview asking potential candidates to consider: whether they can adapt to geographic isolation, extreme weather, limited housing, and the needs of working and living in a cross-cultural setting. Realities of food costs and teacher salaries are also presented.

b. Consider previous experiences for hiring

Selection practices should identify professionals from rural backgrounds and those with personal characteristics or educational experiences that would predispose them to remain in rural areas (Boylan & Bandy, 1994; Cotton, 1987). Selecting candidates who have experience living in similar climates might help reduce turnover resulting from candidates leaving due to climate (Jarrett, 1999). New graduates require more support in their initial year and are more likely to leave a rural position than others with experience living in a rural area (Cotton, 1987; McNinch, 1994). It is important to recognize Aboriginal teachers’ assets and strengths (McNinch, 1984) when recruiting such as community connections, previous experience with rural living, and the importance of being a positive role model for students (Kavanagh, 1998; Rural Policy Matters, 2001).

c. Networking, collaboration, and partnerships

Collaborating with educational and Aboriginal community institutions and agencies can help recruiters highlight specific needs or areas of interest for potential candidates (Equal Educational Opportunity, 2001; Dilworth, 1990; McNinch, 1994). Increasing partnerships with communities and other agencies to implement incentive and benefit packages, and promote attractions of living in different locations strengthens recruitment efforts (Country Roads, 2000; Voices for Diversity, 1995). Wright & Simpson (2001) developed an on line teacher application system, Regional Education Application Placement system (REAP), that successfully grew from serving 49 school districts in Missouri to 600 school districts in nine states. The on-line system is user friendly, free to applicants, and human resources administrators say that their paper work and time spent in the hiring process is greatly reduced as they can customize their search. Rather than perpetuating a costly and time consuming competitive hiring process, this on-line system, appears to be beneficial to teacher applicants and school districts.

Networking also includes building school-community links and partnerships among communities, schools and parents (Equal Educational Opportunity, 2001; Kavanagh, 1998). Involving parents and community in the operations of the school and especially with recruiting and retention of teachers demonstrates the important role of the school and its teachers to the community (Voices for Diversity, 1995; Equal Educational Opportunity, 2001).

d. Induction/Mentorship programs at the school and in the community

New teachers require support to adjust to a new school and community; therefore, part of a recruitment/retention strategy has to involve the development of school/community

support networks (Voices for Diversity, 1995; McNinch, 1994). This support can be through a teacher induction program and mentors who assist new teachers with transition to the community and school environment (Cotton, 1987; Voices for Diversity, 1995). Orientation programs are another helpful retention strategy (Country Roads, 2000). Such programs can help beginning rural professionals to overcome feelings of isolation, acquire a sense of community security, and develop professional competence (Boylan & Bandy, 1994). The willingness of a teacher to stay is influenced by the professional's integration into the community and involvement in community educational and cultural programs (Boylan & Bandy, 1994). Therefore, social gatherings with community members and district staff can assist retention efforts (Cotton, 1987; Rural Policy Matters, 2001). By establishing a reliable and consistent relationship with community members, teachers build ties to the school and the community (Voices for Diversity, 1995; Cotton, 1987; Rural Policy Matters, 2001).

The Northwest Territories' induction program for beginning teachers contains many useful strategies that focus on systematic sustained support:

- Formal mentorship program where a beginning teacher is paired with an experienced mentor. Support about teaching practices such as classroom management and life in the community are offered.
- School team planning/team teaching conducted throughout the school year in order to develop cooperative models of working together and reducing the isolation that teachers experience. The support of the principal is key for success.
- New and beginning teacher support systems such as monthly newsletter with teaching ideas, internet exchange of teaching resources and information, and resource web site
- Regional teacher networks maintained through email or telephone
- Observations of exemplary teachers
- Resource files kept as each school of yearly plans, unit plans, and resource lists developed by teachers from previous years
- Resource people are available through territorial, regional, and local networks
- Study groups formed for purposes of problem solving and support (http://www.newteachersnwt.ca/what_is_teacher_induction.html, accessed October 30, 2002).

e. Preservice training and professional development opportunities

While paraprofessionals can relieve work burdens and feelings of isolation for rural professionals, they often perform tasks that exceed their training and expertise (Boylan & Bandy, 1994). Therefore, the retention of teachers and paraprofessionals is also influenced by opportunities and funding for professional development programs (Cotton, 1987; Country Roads, 2000). Accessibility of such programs is increasing through the diversification of delivery models, including information technology (Boylan & Bandy, 1994; Country Roads, 2000).

Programs that increase teacher sensitivity and knowledge about Aboriginal students'

culture, worldview, and knowledge will assist teachers in learning how to effectively teach First Nations students (McNinch, 1984; Battiste 2000). Teacher education programs must include at least a core course about Aboriginal matters (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996).

f. Administrative leadership and support

Cotton (1987) found that teacher satisfaction was related to the quality of the school and its programs, smaller classes, opportunities for professional development, good working conditions, high teacher morale, job satisfaction and supportive administrative leadership. A supportive administration and a collaborative team approach have had positive influences on teacher recruitment and retention (McNinch, 1994). Such leadership creates an environment in which positive support and genuine concern maintain quality programs with relevant and meaningful curriculum, which attracts and retains teachers (Cotton, 1987; Dilworth, 1990; Equal Educational Opportunity, 2001; Voices for Diversity, 1995). Other suggestions for administrators and recruiters include:

- commitment to provide adequate curriculum resources (Dilworth, 1990; Aboriginal Education Initiatives, 1999)
- establishment of a national centre for rural education research and training and development, focusing on partnerships to drive local capacity building (National Framework, 2001)
- increase provision of specialist education staff (Country Roads, 2000)
- implement staff transfer and promotion systems which better recognize successful tenure in rural and remote locations and institutions (Country Roads, 2000)
- increase range of preservice teacher education units and modules focusing on working and living in rural/remote areas (Country Roads, 2000)
- improve student tracking to decrease gaps and increase support for students in transition between school and college (Equal Educational Opportunity, 2001).
- treating teachers as professionals by implementing common planning time (time allotted for regularly scheduled collaboration with other teachers) (Rural Policy Matters, 2001).
- involving teachers in decision making (Rural Policy Matters, 2001).
- review school policies and procedures to identify and remove barriers to Aboriginal student's achievement (Aboriginal Education Initiatives, 1999)
- restructuring schools or classes to make them smaller (Dilworth, 1990; Rural Policy Matters, 2001).

g. Rewards & Incentives

Rewards and incentives are critical for retention strategies (Dilworth, 1990; Ocansey, 1989). For example, school districts may provide financial support for coursework (Shonerd, 1990) or for professional development opportunities (Dilworth, 1990). Expanding scholarships and funded programs targeted at increasing teacher and education support for personnel trained and prepared to serve for extended periods in rural, regional

and remote locations may assist in recruitment and retention efforts (National Framework, 2001; Voices for Diversity, 1995). An important aspect of retention is the provision of comfortable and affordable accommodations (Country Roads, 2000).

The interest in teaching as a profession is on the decline. Therefore, it is critical that the profile of the profession be raised by acknowledgement of the professional qualities of teachers (National Framework, 2001).

The Northern Development Ministers Forum⁸ (2002) is discussed here because it provides a comprehensive overview of the issues and strategies noted above. This study identified skills/professions/trades' shortages, "root causes" of problems attracting and retaining people in these areas, best practices' strategies to address these issues, and involvement with northern Aboriginal communities regarding these matters. Education is the second highest sector noted for shortages (health is the highest), particularly in early childhood education and secondary school teaching positions. Root causes of shortage problems include: financial/economic (competition in labour market and high cost of living), education/training/professional development (limited professional education no replacement staff and professional isolation), quality of life (isolation and lack of adequate housing), quality of work life (lack of resources), and demographics/trends (increase in retirements and insufficient graduates in specialized fields). Best practices include: (1) improving salaries, benefits and working conditions; (2) marketing initiatives to promote particular sectors and regions and (3) implementing decentralized education for people living in northern regions. Examples of best practices that are relevant to education include:

- signing bonuses, relocation allowances, isolation pay, subsidized housing, special leave, and transportation subsidies
- bursaries and subsidies for professional development and educational leave
- financial assistance to students on condition they work for benefactor upon graduation
- marketing through web sites, CD's, brochures, and outreach to high schools
- collaborations among government, industry, post secondary institutions, and Aboriginal authorities
- stay in school programs
- establishing educational facilities and programs in northern regions and offering distance education delivery (pp. 1-4).

New suggested strategies include:

- focus on local community members as 'recruits' to the program – often referred to as 'grow your own' or 'home grown' in the literature
- increase participation by Aboriginal groups
- increase job fairs and career forums

⁸ Not all provinces or territories are represented in this report. The education section received information from Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Newfoundland & Labrador, and Indian & Northern Affairs Canada.

- increase the use of information technology for program delivery and increase communications
- implement early career planning at elementary and secondary school levels
- increase partnerships and establish coordination among governments, industry, and Aboriginal communities and organizations (ibid, p. 6).

One innovative community approach to facilitating retention is noted in Saskatchewan where they started a “family-adopt-a-teacher” approach. New teachers are matched to families and the family encourages the teacher to participate in community events.

Another inter-provincial study emphasizes the problems associated with a lack of incentives and rewards. Lack of job security and lack of compensation for living in remote areas are consistently stated barriers to recruitment and retention of teachers to on-reserve schools in a study conducted in BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba (Canadian Labour and Business Centre, 2002)⁹. This study also noted that no empirical evidence exists about salary amounts paid to teachers at First Nations schools. However, respondents of this study believe that First Nations schools can not match the salaries paid by the public school systems. Another common concern is the lack of portability of pension and other benefits. However, one province, Saskatchewan is noted for recognizing years of teaching service for pension seniority. Research participants feel that First Nations schools would benefit from collaborating on recruitment and retention efforts and developing partnerships with public schools on these matters (Alberta and Manitoba have signed operational agreements). Respondents also feel that increasing job security and personal security will improve teacher retention. Teachers often have one year contracts and sometimes teachers, especially women, are concerned about theft and vandalism. Increasing the support for Aboriginal teacher training is another common recommendation.

C: Teacher Education/Training

1. Recruitment into teacher training programs

Understanding why people enter the teaching profession is important in order to develop relevant recruitment and retention strategies. Duquette (2000) found that the majority of First Nations students enrolled in a two-year teacher education program wanted to become a teacher to advance the situation for First Nations people, contribute to their communities and become role models. Aboriginal teachers are motivated by a sense of purpose and idealism and they are satisfied when they see students enjoying success in a supportive environment in which they (teachers) contributed (McNinch, 1984). One way to increase Aboriginal teacher recruitment is to utilize Aboriginal educators already working in the schools (Equal Educational Opportunity, 2001). The "grow your own"

⁹ The sample includes interviews with administrators and directors of education. There were 33 interviewees and 15 others who completed questionnaires. Authors caution that the small sample is not representative and findings should be cautiously interpreted.

approach, which is most prevalent in urban school districts, is also growing in popularity. School districts need to provide non-teaching employees, parent volunteers, or other community members with the necessary support to complete a teaching degree (Rural Policy Matters, 2001).

However, a barrier to recruiting students to teacher education programs is the admission requirements which focus solely on grade point averages from high school or college. In accepting students into teacher education programs, consideration should also be given to the individuals' previous experience, knowledge of First Nations cultures and traditions, connection to First Nations communities, and understanding and awareness of the needs and unique characteristics of First Nations students (Kavanagh, 1998).

2. Retention and persistence in teacher training programs

It is also important to understand the reasons students drop out of teacher education programs in order to address these. Factors which explain disruptions in teacher training of Native American students include: poverty- incidental costs related to training are often unbearable to student's already tight budget; geographical isolation- coming from rural to urban setting results in loss of time, increased economic responsibility for travel and related expenses (e.g., longer hours in daycare); family commitments; cultural conflicts conflict between mainstream educational goals and goals of student's community; and conflicts between Western and Native American learning styles of students (Shoner, 1990). A heavy course load combined with family and community responsibilities is another major factor (Duquette, 2000). Duquette (2000) also found that lack of confidence, fatigue, poor health, perceived lack of support from program coordinators, inability to find babysitters, and personal problems also contribute to students withdrawing from their academic program. Archibald, Bowman, Pepper, Urion, Mirehouse, & Shortt (1995) found in their follow-up study of First Nations post-secondary graduates that racism is a common barrier that students face while completing their studies. Lack of academic skill preparation and limited funding also present difficult challenges for students.

a. Supportive retention strategies

More studies are beginning to examine factors that helped Aboriginal teacher education students succeed to graduation. Duquette (2000) identifies three main components of Aboriginal teacher education programs, which create a positive environment for student persistence: 1) program elements for mentoring such as a reflective seminar given by the Northern coordinator and the presence of teacher peers in the community; 2) personal support; and 3) individual goal orientation and persistence. Successful preservice programs offer a specific rural focus in coursework and provide ample opportunity for rural experiences (Boylan & Bandy, 1994). Shoner (1990) states more can be done on the recruitment/retention efforts by offering Native students a larger monthly stipend, more on-site courses, and on-site advising and tutoring. Family, friends, and First Nations support services are the three most helpful persistence factors in Archibald et al.'s study (1995). Barnhardt (1994) interviewed 50 Alaska Native teacher education graduates who completed their programs between 1989-1993. These factors contributed to the students'

successful completion: (1) a responsive teaching and learning environment that met the need of culturally diverse students; (2) student support services that also respected the cultural diversity of the students; (3) strong family and community support; (4) supportive prior school and life experiences; and (5) exceptional individual efforts. Tetpon's (1998) study examined the experiences of 35 Alaska Native teachers who completed a Cross-Cultural Education Development Program. The graduates noted field based instructors, the inclusion of local curriculum, and school district, community, family, and peer support as persistence factors.

3. The benefit of community based teacher education programs

Community based Aboriginal teacher education programs is another consistent recommendation and preferred delivery mechanism that contributes to program retention and completion (Archibald et al, 1995; Duquette, 2000; RCAP, 1996). Schwartz & Ball (2001) report on the accounts given by 103 First Nations graduates of a 2-year early childhood certificate program, offered by the University of Victoria and delivered in seven First Nations communities. The results of this investigation indicate that a supportive community based learning and teaching environment results in high rates of retention and program completion. Support is identified as: (1) financial support; (2) preparatory programs; (3) personal support services; (4) child care services; (5) curriculum design; (6) instructors; (7) instructional methods; (8) other students; (9) First Nations Elders; (10) practicum settings; (11) flexibility in program delivery; (12) community based program delivery; and (13) informal support from other community members and family members.

Community based teacher education programs are often joint efforts between the university, the Aboriginal community and schools. One very successful American field based special education program for Native American and non-Native American students, noted a high retention rate over a ten year period (1992-2002): 109 students enrolled and 104 completed it. Of these graduates, 67 students were Native American. The community based nature of the program was seen to contribute immeasurably to its success. The teacher education students were mainly employed para-professionals who were given time to attend classes. Language and culture were integrated into the curriculum and mentor teachers helped the non-Native students adjust to the Native community. Most of the Native American program graduates also remained in their home areas and secured teaching positions in the school districts (Medina, Redsteer, Prater, & Minner, 2002).

An American teacher education program, CO-TEACH, was developed in cooperation with a number of organizations: Washington State University (WSU), Northwest Indian College (NWIC), four community colleges and more than a dozen school districts serving American Indian populations. CO-TEACH's objectives are aggressive. It plans to recruit 20 Native students each year into the teacher education program at NWIC; retain and graduate 15 Native students each year at NWIC and 10 each year at WSU; and through a summer institute provide certificate programs for 100 Elders and cultural leaders, teacher aides and teachers working with Native children (Tirado, 2001). The summer institute is an excellent mechanism to supplement community based program offerings and facilitate

continued professional certification and development.

4. The quality of Aboriginal teacher education programs and teacher education in general

There are a number of Aboriginal teacher education programs offered across Canada (see <http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/~first/ntep.html>, accessed October 27, 2002 for some program descriptions). Goldsmith (1993) prepared an extensive literature review regarding the training of teachers of Aboriginal people for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.¹⁰ Since the 1970s, numerous scholars have written program descriptions, posited arguments for increasing the numbers of Aboriginal teachers and Aboriginal teacher training programs, discussed the positive impact of Aboriginal teachers, examined course offerings and program component such as practicum supervision strategies. Much of the literature is theoretical and descriptive. Since the 1990s, applied (qualitative) research has increased somewhat (Barnett & Aldous, 1973; More, 1980; Archibald, 1986; McEachern & Kirkness, 1987; Foreman, 1991; Ralph, 1993; Goulet, 1995; Hill & Freeman, 1998). Early program descriptions are based on the Indian Control of Indian Education Policy and focusses on local community involvement and control (Archibald; McEachern & Kirkness). Recent program discussions are focusing on the introduction of Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing that are controlled by Aboriginal people (Hill & Freeman). New teacher education programs are being introduced that focus on language certification (Sto:lo Nation & Simon Fraser University, 2001) or Aboriginal language component (Mistaken Chief, Duane Sr., 2000) or early childhood education (Swartz & Ball, 2001).

What is lacking in the literature available for scholarly examination is information about the impact of recruitment strategies and information about annual retention and graduation rates; as well as employment patterns, successes and problems, after graduation. The impact of Aboriginal teachers upon Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students and their impact upon educational change is also lacking in the research. The impact of Elders, school support workers, and teacher aides is also lacking in the literature. Goldsmith (1993) noted a lack of evaluative literature and impact studies of Aboriginal teacher education programs.

5. The expansion of Aboriginal teacher education programs and specializations

In British Columbia, the Sto:lo Nation and Simon Fraser University (2001) have developed a teacher education program which leads to a developmental standard term certificate in First Nations language and culture, which has been approved by the BC College of Teachers, which is the provincial teacher licensing body. Red Crow Community College and the University of Lethbridge education faculty, Alberta developed the Niitsi-tapi Teacher Education Project. The Blackfoot language and cultural components are important program components (Mistaken Chief, Duane Sr., 2000).

¹⁰ Literature between 1980-1993 was examined. The author sent a questionnaire to various organizations and asked for copies of program documentation. There was a very low response rate. Goldsmith's study is found on RCAP CD ROM "Seven Generations."

Kompf & Hodson (2000) describe the planning process for a new Bachelor of Education in Aboriginal Adult Education to be offered at Brock University, Ontario. This program is developed in partnership with Aboriginal communities in southern Ontario and is based upon traditional cultural principles.

6. Increasing Aboriginal faculty and staff at university

Academic support programs, mentors, and transition programs increased the number of First Nations students entering teaching as a profession (Voices for Diversity, 1995; McNinch, 1994; The National Framework, 2001). As more Aboriginal students enroll in teacher education programs, then more Aboriginal faculty and staff are needed for post-secondary institutions to provide quality education, support and mentorship to First Nations students (Adams, 1988; Frank, 1991; Ocansey, 1989; Archibald et al, 1995).

Cook-Dallin, Rosborough, & Underwood (2000) describe the teaching role of Elders in a two-year diploma First Nations Child and Youth Care education program (CYC) offered at community based locations by Malaspina University College, BC. This was the only study found that shows the appointment of Elders as instructors and mentors for a post-secondary education program. Many post-secondary institutions have Elder involvement, but the literature is lacking in this regard.

7. Certification

Pavel & Curtin (1997) summarize findings of the 1993-94 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) with regard to schools that serve American Indian and Alaska Native students. Teacher supply and demand was one component of Pavel & Curtin's report. No literature was found about certification of teachers hired to teach in band operated schools. The following information is presented, not to infer that Canadian First Nations schools follow the US trends, but to indicate the need for such information.

- *certification in field of assignment*: proportion of teachers in schools who are uncertified or who hold certification in areas other than their field of assignment. While the majority of teachers in public schools (97 percent) were teaching in their assigned field, BIA/tribal school teachers were less likely than peers to be certified, however, newly hired BIA/tribal school teachers were more likely to be certified than colleagues in low enrollment public schools.
- *criteria for hiring teachers*: graduation from state-approved programs was required more by public school districts than BIA/tribal schools although both considered college major/minor fields during hiring. Both also required special knowledge tests designed to assess teacher knowledge and skills.
- *adequacy of the supply of qualified teachers*. An important indicator of the supply of teachers is whether schools and districts are able to fill vacant

teaching positions created by retirement, transfers, and other staff changes. BIA/Tribal schools were less likely to replace positions; if they did, they hired inexperienced teachers who are at higher risk of leaving after their first year. School districts have a variety of strategies to address teacher shortages including canceling classes, increasing class size, and offering salary incentives and retraining programs designed to decrease the likelihood that teacher shortages will occur. Filling teacher vacancies may require BIA/Tribal school administrators to hire less qualified teachers, canceling classes, increasing teaching loads, increasing class size or adding course sections, and using teachers from other grades or subject areas.

- *teacher retention, retraining and development practices.* Free retraining to current staff members is a technique used more often by BIA/Tribal schools over others. BIA/Tribal schools are also more likely to use pay incentives to recruit new teachers and to retain existing teachers in the fields with shortages.

D. Pre-service and professional development of non-Aboriginal teachers

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) and The British Columbia Teacher's Federation Task Force on First Nations Education recommends that all teachers be required to take at least one course on Aboriginal history and culture during their training, and that school districts develop plans for recruiting and retaining Aboriginal teachers. However, Harper's (2000) study found that non-Aboriginal female teachers, who had taken one First Nations course and were teaching in a northern community felt that one course on Aboriginal education wasn't adequate to prepare them to understand the historical, political, social, and cultural context in which they were teaching. However, there is no indication that teacher education programs across the country are requiring preservice students to take one course of First Nations education. Besides courses, teacher education programs could implement other strategies to better prepare non-Aboriginal students for teaching Aboriginal students. One example is completing a practicum or a few weeks of a practicum in a First Nations context. Other studies also recommend that rural practica would enhance teachers' introduction to teaching in rural areas (Country Roads, 2000; Grinder, 1999).

E. Re-visiting the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples made recommendations regarding financial support for Aboriginal teacher education programs, increasing the number of Aboriginal secondary teachers, improving accessibility to teacher education programs by increasing community based sites, developing a comprehensive and collaborative approach to educational laddering for para-professionals, and developing in-service programs for non-Aboriginal teachers. These recommendations remain relevant and are

worth repeating, since the number of Aboriginal teachers remains extremely low and the need for increasing the cultural sensitivity and preparedness of non-Aboriginal teachers remains high. They are noted below.

1. Aboriginal teacher education:

RCAP 3.5.14:

Federal, provincial and territorial governments expand financial support to post-secondary institutions for existing and new Aboriginal teacher education programs, contingent on

- (a) evidence of Aboriginal support for the program;
- (b) Aboriginal participation in the governance of the program;
- (c) the incorporation of Aboriginal content and pedagogy into the program; and
- (d) periodic evaluations that indicate that the quality of teacher education conforms to standards of excellence expected by Aboriginal people (Volume 3, p. 493).

2. Increasing Aboriginal secondary school teachers,

RCAP 3.5.15:

Canadian governments, Aboriginal education authorities, post-secondary institutions and teacher education programs adopt multiple strategies to increase substantially the number of Aboriginal secondary teachers, including

- (a) promoting secondary school teaching careers for Aboriginal people;
- (b) increasing access to professional training in secondary education, for example, community-based delivery of courses and concurrent programs; and
- (c) offering financial incentives to students (Volume 3, p. 495).

3. Increasing accessibility of teacher education programs

RCAP 3.5.16:

Federal, provincial and territorial governments provide support to increase the number of Aboriginal people trained as teachers by

- (a) expanding the number of teacher education programs delivered directly in communities; and
- (b) ensuring that students in each province and territory have access to such programs (Volume 3, p. 497).

4. Increasing the number of professionally trained Aboriginal people for education careers

RCAP 3.5.17:

Teacher education programs, in collaboration with Aboriginal organizations and government agencies that sponsor professional and para-professional training, adopt a comprehensive approach to educator

training, developing career paths from para-professional training to professional certification in education careers that

- (a) prepare Aboriginal students for the variety of roles required to operate Aboriginal education systems; and
- (b) open opportunities for careers in provincial education systems (Volume 3, p.498).

5. Increasing the effectiveness of non-Aboriginal educators

RCAP 3.5.18:

Provinces and territories require that teacher education programs

- (a) in pre-service training leading to certification include at least one component on teaching Aboriginal subject matter to all students, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal;
- (b) develop options for pre-service training and professional development of teachers, focused on teaching Aboriginal students and addressing Aboriginal education issues; and
- (c) collaborate with Aboriginal organizations or community representatives in developing Aboriginal-specific components of their programs (Volume 3, pp. 499-5000).

Concluding comments

This literature review presents the findings of various literature about teacher recruitment, retention, and training with application to First Nations education. The statistics presented at the beginning of the report shows a trend of a projected shortage of teachers across Canada, although there is great variation among some provinces. Finding enough teachers to teach subjects such as math and science and to teach in rural/remote areas seems to be common areas of concern. Certainly there remains a great need for more Aboriginal teachers. Aggressive recruitment plans, rewards and incentives, and community support will be required in order to get the current and future supply of teachers to agree to work in First Nations education because of the competition for teachers, in general. Induction and mentorship programs, rewards and incentives, and strong community involvement will help increase the retention of teachers. Large financial investments in Aboriginal teacher education programs are required in order to produce sufficient numbers of qualified Aboriginal teachers. Emphasis on the strategy of 'growing your own,' through encouraging elementary and high school Aboriginal young people to consider teaching as a career and developing educational laddering for existing para-professionals such as teachers' aides and education support workers to complete education degree qualifications will provide a valuable source of future teachers.

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