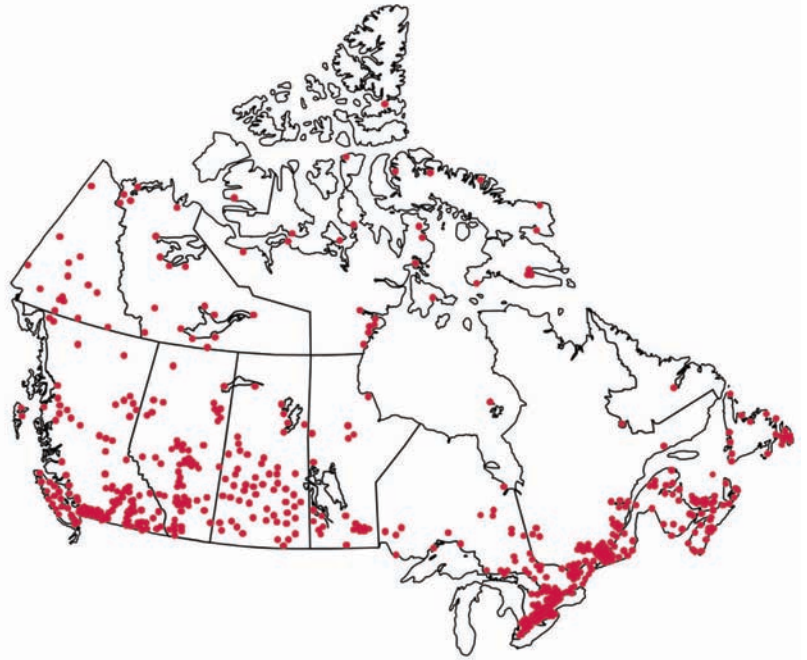


Canadian Colleges & Institutes



Meeting the Needs of Aboriginal Learners

An Overview of Current Programs and Services,
Challenges, Opportunities and Lessons Learned

Final Report

The Association of
Canadian
Community
Colleges



June 2005

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

The Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) is the national and international voice through which Canada's colleges and institutes inform and advise various levels of government, business, industry and labour. ACCC's Strategic Focus priorities for 2005-2006 include Aboriginal peoples' access to post-secondary education, and enhancing student success support mechanisms in colleges and institutes which are grounded in Aboriginal values, culture and tradition.

In April and May 2005 ACCC initiated a study on Aboriginal programs and services at colleges and institutes. For the purposes of this study and report, the term Aboriginal is used to describe, in general, the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people of Canada. The study included a literature review, an on-line survey for mainstream ACCC member colleges and institutes, and interviews with representatives from Aboriginal and northern ACCC member colleges and institutes, and the Aboriginal Institutes Consortium, an Associate Member of ACCC. Of the 140 ACCC member colleges and institutes, 61 participated in the study, 59 mainstream institutions, including the colleges in the three territories, and 2 Aboriginal institutions, for an overall response rate of over 44 percent.

2. Overview of Aboriginal Post-secondary Education in Canada

This report begins with an overview of Aboriginal post-secondary education trends in Canada drawn from 2001 Census data which indicate that:

- Aboriginal people's share of Canada's population is on the rise
- the Aboriginal population is younger
- the education gap between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal people persists
- Aboriginal people are drawn to trade and college credentials
- Aboriginal people tend to go back to post-secondary studies later in life.

The report also provides an overview of the barriers to Aboriginal learners' participation in post-secondary education:

- **Historical barriers** due to the assimilationist education policies of the federal government and the legacy of the residential school system;
- **Social barriers** such as the significant number of Aboriginal learners with family responsibilities, the lack of role models in Aboriginal communities, social discrimination and unemployment and poverty;
- **Lack of academic preparation and prerequisites** due to low high school graduation rates and high number of mature students;
- **Financial barriers** in the case of Status Indians due to insufficient funding provided through Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) Post-secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP), and for Non-Status and Métis students who are not eligible for the PSSSP and must rely on their own resources or student loans;
- **Geographic barriers** because many Aboriginal learners must relocate to urban areas to pursue post-secondary studies;
- **Cultural barriers** because Aboriginal perspectives, traditions, and values and the differences in learning styles of Aboriginal students are not typically reflected in post-secondary institutions;
- **Individual and personal barriers** faced by students who experience a sense of powerlessness, poor self-concept or motivation, poor health, or frustration, which is exacerbated when students do not have sufficient family or institutional support.

It is important to note that there are two very distinct types of Aboriginal post-secondary institutions: the provincially-supported institutions and the Aboriginal-controlled institutions.

Provincially-supported institutions are supported by provincial policy and therefore have:

- the provincially recognized authority to grant certificates and diplomas;
- access to annual operating and special grant funding to support operations and special initiatives.

Among ACCC members, only two Aboriginal institutions in Canada have achieved provincial policy recognition in Canada, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT) and Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT). These two institutes are an exception to the norm of Aboriginal-controlled institutions.

Aboriginal-controlled institutions are not supported by provincial policy and therefore, do not have provincially recognized authority to grant certificates and diplomas. This means that credentials that students acquire from Aboriginal institutions do not have the same currency and portability as mainstream institutions. In addition, Aboriginal institutions in this system are not eligible for annualized operational grant funding like mainstream institutions.

3. Aboriginal Services and Programs at Colleges and Institutes

Colleges and institutes were asked to identify and describe the types of advising, counselling and support services and education and training programs they are currently offering. This was not for the purpose of conducting an exhaustive inventory of all Aboriginal programs and services offered at colleges and institutes but rather as a means to profile and characterize the types of services and programs offered with a view to demonstrating how colleges and institutes are helping to increase Aboriginal learners' access to post-secondary education and labour market participation, as well as contribute to Aboriginal community development. This profile will also be used to develop a section of the ACCC website on Aboriginal Programs and Services which will then be linked to colleges and institutes websites, and wherever possible, Aboriginal web pages or sites.

Aboriginal Student Recruitment: Colleges and institutes view the approaches used for Aboriginal student recruitment as a very important first step which can be instrumental in helping students make informed decisions about the types of programs to choose, their readiness for post-secondary programs, the support services they can access at colleges and institutes to help them succeed, and the type of jobs their programs could lead them to. Colleges and institutes emphasized the need to begin recruitment efforts early in students' high school years in order to instill motivation in students early on and ensure they obtain the prerequisites for the programs which interest them.

Assessment Services: Aboriginal and mainstream colleges and institutes offer assessment services to Aboriginal learners both for high school entrants and mature students including college entrance and academic testing, adult basic education assessments, Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition services, and English or French language competency assessment. Colleges and institutes highlighted the need for assessment tools and approaches to be culturally appropriate for Aboriginal learners.

Counselling Services: Aboriginal and mainstream institutions provide academic counselling and advising services, as well as personal, financial and anti-discrimination counselling to assist with entry and transitions to college/institute programs or transfer to other post-secondary institutions. About one third of mainstream institutions provide Aboriginal-specific counselling services. Participating colleges and institutes also confirmed the need for counselling staff to receive Aboriginal cross-cultural training to ensure they are well prepared to work with Aboriginal learners.

Support services aimed at Aboriginal student retention and program completion: Aboriginal and mainstream colleges and institutes confirmed that they offer the following types of support services aimed at facilitating Aboriginal learners' participation and success in programs: tutoring, Aboriginal gathering places on campus, learning centres, financial assistance, support to find housing, support from community Elders, daycare services, mentor programs, health services and Resident Elder services.

Support services aimed at facilitating Aboriginal labour market participation: Colleges and institutes support their students with the transition into the labour market through a mix of services which include:

- Work placements and internships to provide learners with work experience and employers;
- Career and employment counselling and job search support as confirmed by close to 80 percent of respondent institutions;
- Preparation of resumes, curriculum vitae and job search skills training;
- Mentor programs with practitioners and professionals in students' field of study.

Education and Training Programs: Aboriginal and mainstream institutions provide different types of education and training programs intended to meet the diverse needs of Aboriginal learners whether they are high school

leavers, adult learners or recent high school graduates, as well as their varied goals for post-secondary education.

- **Access and Preparatory Programs**

Access and preparatory programs are offered by Aboriginal and mainstream institutions in order address the needs of Aboriginal learners who either do not meet the basic entry requirements for regular college/institute programs, require upgrading of academic skills before entering career/technical or trades/apprenticeship programs. The types of programs which colleges and institutes would categorize as being “access programs” differ from one province/territory to another. For most institutions, access programs are the Adult Basic Education and upgrading programs, however Aboriginal institutions and some mainstream institutions have introduced access programs which are focused on specific career/technical fields or pre-trades. These programs are designed to meet specific needs of Aboriginal learners by adapting career/technical programs to include courses which address specific skills requirements.

- **Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs** are offered by all colleges and institutes and more than half of respondent mainstream institutions indicated that they offer Aboriginal-specific ABE programs. ABE programs enable adults to acquire the necessary skills to be successful in post-secondary programs by completing prerequisite courses required for entry to college or university.

- **Aboriginal-specific Career and Technical Programs**

Up to 80 percent of respondent mainstream institutions indicated that they offer some Aboriginal-specific career and technical programs. Up to 59 different types Aboriginal-specific programs were identified in diverse fields including Aboriginal Arts Language and Culture, Business Administration, Education, Health Services, Information Technology, Law Enforcement and Correction, Marine Technology, Natural Resources and Environment, Social Services, Technology and Tourism.

- **Trades and Apprenticeship**

Over half of all respondent colleges, Aboriginal and mainstream, confirmed that they offer trades and apprenticeship programs specifically for Aboriginal students or have Aboriginal students enrolled in their regular trades and apprenticeship programs. Colleges and institutes are partnered with provincial apprenticeship boards for the delivery of both pre-trades and apprenticeship programs.

- **University Preparation, University Transfer and Joint Degree Programs**

Almost one third of participating institutions offer university preparation programs and university transfer programs.

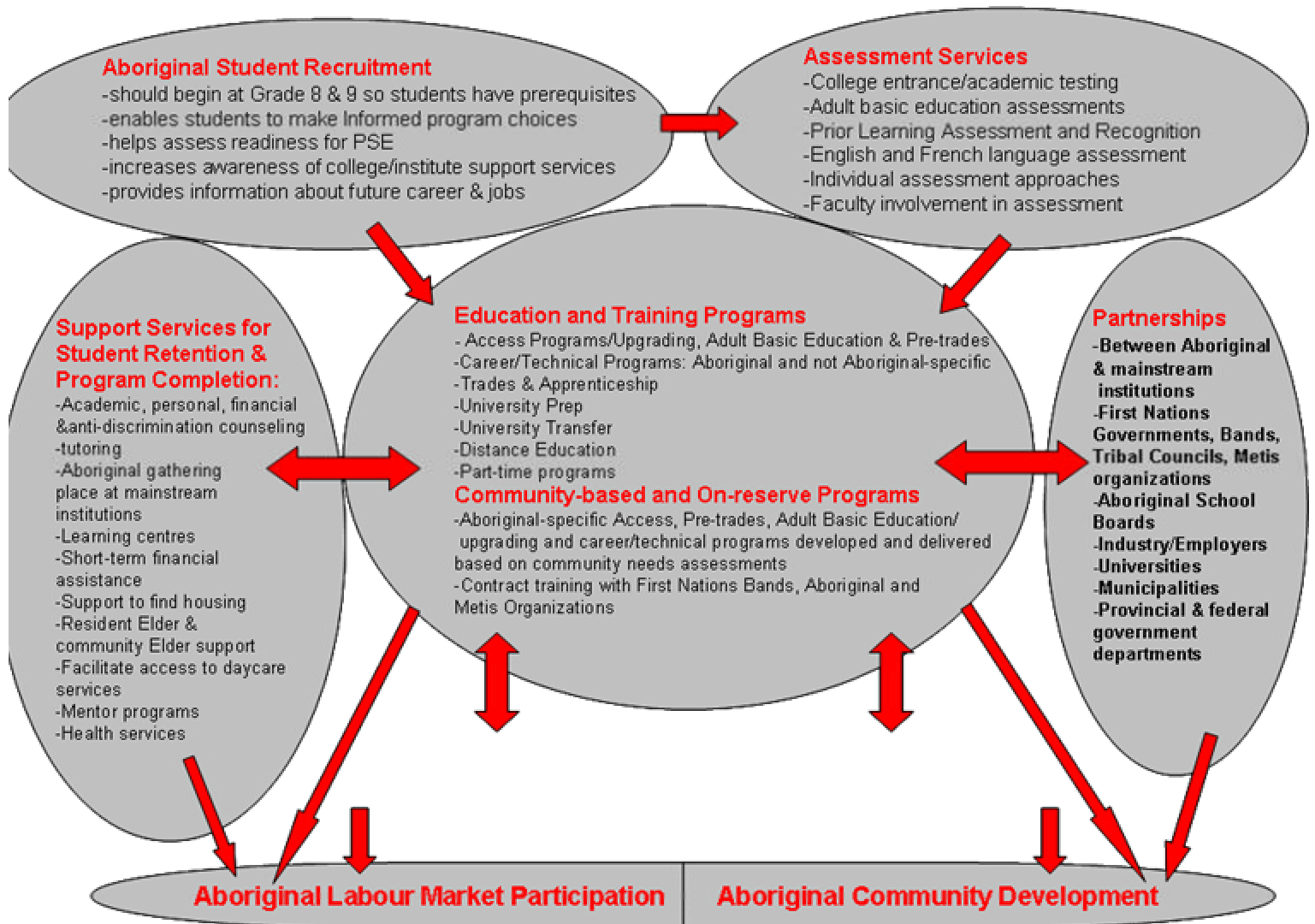
- **Distance Education Programs**

In all, one third of participating institutions confirmed that they offer distance education programs which benefit Aboriginal learners.

- **Part-time Programs**

All colleges and institutes offer part-time programs through continuing education departments, and 42 percent of responding institutions confirmed that they offer part-time programs which benefit Aboriginal learners within their communities and regions.

College/Institute Process Model for Aboriginal Learner Access, Labour Market Participation, and Community Development



4. Aboriginal – controlled Institutions

Aboriginal controlled institutions develop programs based on the core values that post-secondary education is a treaty right for Aboriginal people and should be controlled by Aboriginal people. As such programs combine technical and academic skills and knowledge with Aboriginal values, traditions, history and ways of knowing, in areas such as Business and community development; Aboriginal, First Nations and Native Studies; Natural resources and the Environment; Early Childhood Education and Child Care. Aboriginal institutes which are not funded by provincial operating grants are required to partner with mainstream institutions in order for their students to receive legislatively approved post-secondary credentials for college/institute programs. These institutes are advocating for recognition from provincial governments or to develop a more effective articulation process between mainstream and Aboriginal institutions.

5. Funding for College and Institute Service and Program Development and Delivery

Colleges and institutes are funding recruitment, assessment, counselling and support services for Aboriginal learners mainly from five sources: operating grants/base funding, tuition, provincial/territorial government programs, Human Resources and Skills Development (HRSDC) and First Nations Bands.

The main funding sources for the development and delivery of Aboriginal education and training programs are: tuition, operating grants/base funding, First Nations Bands, Provincial/territorial government programs, earned revenue through contract training.

Funding Challenges:

- **Insufficient program funds** provided through provincial base funding, provincial/territorial Aboriginal program funding, and INAC's Indian Studies Support Program.
- **Insufficient student funding** provided through programs such as INAC's Post-secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) which impacts upon colleges' and institutes' capacity to deliver Aboriginal programs
- **Aboriginal institutes have limited sources of funding** to access because, with the exception of Nicola Valley Institute of Technology in British Columbia, they do not receive base funding from provincial governments.
- **The project-based funding** which institutions must rely on to supplement the limited resources available has serious limitations for long-term and sustainable approaches to programming.
- **Funding available through Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)** through Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreements (AHRDA) and Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDA) also has limitations for Aboriginal programming at colleges and institutes. These programs are short-term and geared to direct employment however many Aboriginal learners at colleges and institutes first require upgrading or high school equivalents. The requirement of the LMDAs that only Employment Insurance (EI) eligible people benefit from training programs is very limiting in rural and remote contexts with very high unemployment rates because there may not be many people in these regions who are EI eligible.

In terms of addressing these challenges, some key suggestions made by colleges and institutes include:

- student funding from INAC needs to be increased;
- increased and more long-term program funding is required from both federal and provincial government programs;
- improvements be made to provincial base funding formulae to allow for the higher service needs of Aboriginal learners;
- HRSDC funding programs require more flexibility to better meet the needs of Aboriginal learners;
- Funds should be provided for increasing the number of Aboriginal faculty and staff at colleges and institutes.

6. Identification and Enrolment of Aboriginal Students

The majority of mainstream institutions confirmed that they experience challenges with having Aboriginal students self-identify and obtaining accurate enrolment data for their Aboriginal students. Without accurate enrolment information on Aboriginal students it is difficult for institutions to understand the scale of services required and to align the human, financial and service-oriented resources needed to offer appropriate support services. Based on estimates of the number of Aboriginal learners in education and training programs provided by 45 of the 56 participating mainstream institutions, most Aboriginal students are in regular career/technical programs and upgrading/ Adult Basic Education programs. About equal numbers of students are in preparatory programs, Aboriginal-specific career/technical programs, trades and apprenticeship programs and university transfer programs.

7. Aboriginal Participation in College/Institute Planning Structures, Program and Curriculum Development

The main approaches for ensuring Aboriginal input into colleges' and institutes' planning processes and program and curriculum development are:

- Aboriginal representation on college and institute Boards of Governors.
- The involvement of Elders through Elders Councils, Resident Elders and/or consultations with Elders from Aboriginal communities;
- Aboriginal advisory structures in place at some mainstream institutions, such as Aboriginal Education or Academic Councils which have an advisory role to the board and participate in program reviews;
- Aboriginal-specific program advisory committees or Aboriginal representatives on regular program advisory committees;
- Partnerships between mainstream and Aboriginal institutions for program and curriculum development;
- Consultations and focus groups with Aboriginal communities, school boards and Aboriginal college/institute graduates;
- The important role of instructors of Aboriginal ancestry and instructors sensitive to the needs of Aboriginal students in curriculum development.

8. Community-based and On-reserve Program Delivery

Community-based delivery enables Aboriginal learners from more isolated communities to begin their post-secondary education within their own community thus allowing them to keep their community support networks and reduce the financial burden of living far from home. All colleges and institutes reported providing some community-based or on-reserve delivery of either career technical or pre-trades programs. Colleges and institutes identify community training needs in partnership with Aboriginal leaders, First Nations Bands, Aboriginal organizations and school boards to ensure they reflect the real community needs.

9. College/Institute Partnerships for the Delivery of Programs and Services

Responding colleges and institutes identified 6 different types of partnerships in which they are involved for the delivery of Aboriginal programs and services:

- Partnerships between Aboriginal and mainstream institutions
- First Nations Governments, Bands, Tribal Councils and Métis organizations
- Aboriginal School Boards
- Industry and Employers
- Other Post-secondary Institutions
- Provincial and Federal Governments.

10. Enhancing College and Institute Aboriginal Programs and Services

Colleges and institutes provided some insights into how current Aboriginal programs and services should be enhanced.

In terms of practices, approaches and services aimed at improving student retention some of the areas to enhance include:

- **enhance student recruitment** by having dedicated staff for this function, begin recruitment activities early on in high school, involve parents, and involving current aboriginal students and recent graduates in recruitment activities;
- **increase the number of Aboriginal faculty and staff** at colleges and institutes;
- **provide faculty staff with Aboriginal cross-cultural training** and increase their sensitivity to racism and poverty issues facing Aboriginal learners;
- **offer more programs through community-based delivery** and strengthen approaches in this area;
- **enhance student success services** through greater Elder involvement; offering more transition programs, mentor programs, Aboriginal cultural activities; developing retention strategies which address Aboriginal learners' non-academic challenges by facilitating access to support services such as daycare, family and addictions counselling; providing Aboriginal gathering places at mainstream institutions; increasing the level of tutoring and include peer-assisted tutoring and programs on post-secondary study skills; and assist students to find housing.
- **enhance education and training programs** by offering more preparatory and access programs; improving curriculum by moving to a learning outcomes approach and integrating more culturally relevant content and Aboriginal knowledge; offering adequate literacy programming; looking at improved models of delivery; offering more bridging and distance education programs;

Institutions identified the following needs regarding services and programs aimed at facilitating Aboriginal learners' participation in the labour market:

- **offer mentor programs** with graduates from college/institute programs or tradespersons or professionals;
- **offer more work-based learning**, workplace programs, and provide more links to employment and better long-term follow-up with graduates;
- **adopt a structured pathways approach** whereby students are introduced to jobs and careers related to their field of study at the onset of their program and are supported to find work.

11. Lessons Learned

Colleges and institutes also shared lessons learned based on their experience in delivering Aboriginal programs and services. These lessons learned demonstrate the depth of experience in delivering these programs and services and give some strong messages on the direction future programming should take. Some interesting lessons colleges and institutes have learned include:

- Aboriginal control of education is imperative to ensuring the goals and aspirations of Aboriginal people are met;
- There is a need to increase awareness of non-Aboriginal faculty, staff and students about Aboriginal history, culture, traditions, issues and challenges;
- Welcoming and safe learning environments must be provided for Aboriginal learners, that are respectful of Aboriginal culture and responsive to learners' academic, emotional, spiritual and physical needs;
- Offer key support services which address the barriers Aboriginal learners face including personal counselling, financial services, support to find housing and facilitate access to daycare services;
- Ensure students have the opportunity to study their own community's needs, see themselves and their communities in the curriculum, not just in Aboriginal programs but across mainstream programs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	1
2. Overview of Aboriginal Post-secondary Education in Canada	3
2.1 The Aboriginal Population Is Increasing	3
2.2 The Aboriginal Population is Younger	3
2.3 The Education Gap between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal People	4
2.4 A Profile Of Aboriginal Post-Secondary Learners	4
2.5 Barriers To Aboriginal Learners' Participation In Post-Secondary Education	7
2.7 Policy Priorities of the Assembly of First Nations	10
3. Aboriginal Services and Programs at Colleges and Institutes	10
3.1 Aboriginal Student Recruitment	12
3.2 Assessment Services	14
3.3 Counseling Services	15
3.4 Support Services to facilitate Aboriginal Learners' Completion of College/Institute Programs	16
3.5 Support Services to Facilitate Labour Market Participation	19
3.6 Education and Training Programs for Aboriginal Learners	20
3.6.1 Access and Preparatory Programs	21
3.6.2 Career and Technical Programs Specifically for Aboriginal Learners	24
3.6.3 Trades and Apprenticeship Programs	28
3.6.4 University Preparation Programs	29
3.6.5 University Transfer and Joint Degree Programs	29
3.6.6 Distance Education Programs	30
3.6.7 Part-time Programs	31
4. Aboriginal-controlled Institutions	31
5. Funding for Aboriginal Programs and Services	32
5.1 Post-secondary Funding for Aboriginal Learners	32
5.2 Funding Sources accessed by Colleges and Institutes for the Development and Delivery of Services and Programs for Aboriginal Learners	33
5.3 Challenges with Current Funding Structures available for the Development and Delivery of Aboriginal Programs and Services	36
5.4 How Colleges and Institutes suggest these Funding Challenges be Addressed	42
6. Identification and Enrolment of Aboriginal Students	46
6.1 Aboriginal Students at Mainstream Colleges and Institutes	46
6.2 Enrolment at Aboriginal Institutions	48
6.3 Challenges In Identifying Aboriginal Students At Mainstream Institutions	48
6.4 Structures, Systems or Practices to Address Self-identification Challenges	49
7. Aboriginal Participation in College/Institute Planning Structures, Program and Curriculum Development	51
7.1 Aboriginal Representation on College or Institute Boards of Governors	51
7.2 Involvement of Elders	51
7.3 Aboriginal Advisory Councils or Committees	52
7.4 Program Advisory Committees	53
7.5 Partnerships with Aboriginal Institutions	53
7.6 Consultations and Focus Groups with Aboriginal Communities, School Boards and Aboriginal College/Institute Graduates	54

7.7 Administrators and Staff of College/Institute Aboriginal Service Areas	54
7.8 Aboriginal Faculty and Instructors.....	54
8. Community-based and On-reserve Program Delivery	54
9. College/Institute Partnerships for The Delivery Of Programs And Services	58
10. Enhancing College and Institute Aboriginal Programs and Services.....	63
11. Lessons Learned.....	67
12. Conclusion.....	71
Appendix A Participating Colleges.....	72
Appendix B Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium.....	75
References	82

1. Introduction

The Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) is the national and international voice through which Canada's colleges and institutes inform and advise various levels of government, business, industry and labour. ACCC's Strategic Focus priorities for 2005-2006 include Aboriginal peoples' access to post-secondary education, and enhancing student success support mechanisms in colleges and institutes which are grounded in Aboriginal values, culture and tradition.

Aboriginal peoples' access to post-secondary education and community development has been one of ACCC's key advocacy priorities since the creation of the Association in 1972, and has been addressed through numerous ACCC conference sessions and initiatives. ACCC's 1993 submission to The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples called for the development of creative partnerships between Aboriginal communities and colleges and institutes:

“As First Nation communities deal with their internal needs, grow strong and reach out in strength, then colleges and institutes will have a role to play. The key is partnerships of equals.”

This submission paper put emphasis on the need for these partnerships to be led by Aboriginal leaders and communities, called for the creation of more Aboriginal schools and colleges and emphasized “the value of having Aboriginal people teach Aboriginal people”, in “recognition of what has long been known about the recovery of cultural self-esteem and confidence.”

Since 1993, creative partnerships and initiatives between colleges and institutes and Aboriginal communities have been developed. Today, it is clear that given Canadian colleges' and institutes' extensive reach across the country and their capacity to work closely with communities to identify education and training needs, these institutions are key partners for national, provincial/territorial, Aboriginal and community-based efforts to address Aboriginal Canadians' needs for increased access to post-secondary education, labour market participation and overall community development. At the same time, although some progress has been made, many challenges remain at the governance, legislative and policy development levels, and at the operational level for the delivery of appropriate and relevant education and training programs, and effective and equitable partnerships that enable social and economic development within Aboriginal communities.

In order to assess the role of colleges and institutes in facilitating Aboriginal Canadians' access to post-secondary education, labour market participation and contribution to Aboriginal community development, in April and May 2005 ACCC initiated a study on Aboriginal programs and services at colleges and Institutes. For the purposes of this study and report, the term Aboriginal is used to describe, in general, the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people of Canada. The study included a literature review, an on-line survey for mainstream ACCC member colleges and institutes, and interviews with representatives from Aboriginal and northern ACCC member colleges and institutes, and the Aboriginal Institutes Consortium, an Associate Member of ACCC. The list of participating colleges and institutes is provided in Appendix A.

Of the 140 ACCC member colleges and institutes, 61 participated in the study, 59 mainstream institutions, including the colleges in the three territories, and 2 Aboriginal institutions for an overall response rate of over 44 percent.

In order to truly assess how colleges and institutes are meeting the needs of Aboriginal learners within their communities, the learners themselves should also be surveyed. However, due to limited resources and time the scope of this research project focused on assessing institutional perspectives with the understanding that colleges and institutes typically conduct education and training needs assessments in consultation community partners. However, ACCC will be conducting a survey of first year college and institute students in the fall 2005 through a research project funded by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) entitled "Pan-Canadian Study of College Students, the College Experience and Determinants of First Year Outcomes". This project aims to:

- Develop a comprehensive profile of students in colleges, institutes, cégeps, and university-colleges;
- Describe the first-term college student experience, any differences between types of students and changes in their attitudes, perceptions and behaviours, and
- Identify the characteristics of students and institutions that promote student success and persistence.

The instrument for this survey includes questions aimed at identifying Aboriginal students so that a sub-set of the results will be analyzed to determine the specific perspectives of Aboriginal respondent students. The results and data specifically on Aboriginal learners will be integrated into this report once available in May/June 2006.

This report includes:

- An overview of Aboriginal post-secondary education in Canada including:
 - data on Aboriginal education drawn from the Statistics Canada 2001 Census¹, the 2004 Report of the Auditor General of Canada, and the Assembly of First Nations;
 - a review of the main barriers to Aboriginal learners' participation in PSE; and
 - a review of the post-secondary education policy priorities of the Assembly of First Nations;
 - a description of the types of post-secondary institutions Aboriginal learners can access, ranging from mainstream colleges, institutes, cégeps, university colleges and universities, provincially recognized Aboriginal institutions and Aboriginal-controlled institutions;
- A description of the types of Aboriginal programs and services offered by respondent Aboriginal and mainstream colleges and institutes including how these programs and services are funded, where they are being delivered, how they are being accessed, and partnerships colleges and institutes are involved in for the delivery of these programs and services;
- A description of the types of programs and services offered by Aboriginal-controlled institutions and the particular challenges they face;
- A description of colleges' and institutes' perspectives on how programs can be enhanced, and lessons learned colleges and institutes identified through the on-line survey and interviews.

¹ The 2001 Census data should be viewed as general indicators rather than precise facts because of the limitations of the census in that there is reluctance in completing census information for some Aboriginal people because of a mistrust of the government that leads some to avoid giving the government information, and low literacy levels. The data may be biased to Aboriginals who are formally educated and thus less marginalized. In addition, some large reserves were not enumerated.

2. Overview of Aboriginal Post-secondary Education in Canada

Although the number of Aboriginal people with a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree continues to grow, a significant education gap continues to exist between Aboriginal people and the overall Canadian population, in particular at the post-secondary level. This section provides an overview of the issues and trends in Aboriginal post-secondary education, with a specific focus on issues and trends of relevance to Canadian colleges and institutes.

2.1 The Aboriginal Population Is Increasing

The most recent data available from the 2001 Census² shows that the Aboriginal people's share of Canada's total population is on the rise. In 2001, a total of 976,305 persons identified themselves as a member of an Aboriginal group. This count was 22.2% higher than the 1996 figure of 799,010. In contrast, the non-Aboriginal population grew only 3.4% between 1996 and 2001.

In 2001, people who identified themselves as Aboriginal accounted for 3.3% of the nation's total population, compared with 2.8% five years earlier. Statistics Canada has specified that about half the increase in the Aboriginal population can be attributed to demographic factors, such as their high birth rate. Increased awareness of one's Aboriginal roots likely accounted for another half, as more people identified themselves as Aboriginal and fewer reserves were incompletely enumerated.

The 2001 census found that almost one-half of the population who identified themselves as Aboriginal lived in urban areas. However, even though there has been a perception that there is a trend of out migration from reserves to municipalities, the reality, backed up by Statistics Canada and the Department of Indian Affairs Canada (INAC), is that the on-reserve population is growing faster than the off-reserve Aboriginal population. In fact INAC projects that the on-reserve Registered Indian population will grow from an estimated 60 percent in 2001 to 75 percent in 2021.³

2.2 The Aboriginal Population is Younger

The Aboriginal population is also younger than the overall Canadian population. The 2001 Census confirmed that this trend is continuing from the 1996 Census as the median age of Canada's Aboriginal population was 13 years younger than that of the non-Aboriginal population, a result of the higher birth rate among Aboriginal people.⁴ The median age for the Aboriginal population was 24.7 years, while that of the non-Aboriginal population was at an all-time high of 37.7 years. Children aged 14 and under represented one-third of the Aboriginal population in 2001, far higher than the corresponding share of 19% in the non-Aboriginal population. Although the Aboriginal population accounted for only 3.3% of Canada's total population, Aboriginal children represented 5.6% of all children in Canada. As these children move through the education system and into the labour market in coming years, they will

² 2001 Census: analysis series Aboriginal peoples of Canada: A demographic profile

³ Basic Departmental Data 2003, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

⁴ 2001 Census: analysis series Aboriginal peoples of Canada: A demographic profile

account for an increasing part of the growth of the working-age population. This will be the case particularly in provinces with higher concentrations of Aboriginal people.

2.3 The Education Gap between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal People

The education gap begins at the secondary school level. The Assembly of First Nations has highlighted that, based on INAC data, about 70 percent of Aboriginal students on-reserve will never complete high school given the graduation rates which range from 28.9 percent to 32.1 percent annually. The 2004 Report of the Auditor General of Canada examined the education gap that existed in 2001 using data from the 1996 and 2001 censuses and estimated the time required to close this gap and for Aboriginal people living on reserves to reach parity with the Canadian population as a whole. This analysis showed that there was very little progress in this five year period in closing the gap in high school graduation rates between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations, and the Auditor General estimated that it would take about 28 years for Aboriginal people living on reserves to reach parity with the Canadian population.⁵

At the post-secondary level, 2001 census data used to compare the post-secondary educational achievement of Aboriginal people and the overall Canadian population show that about 27 percent of the First Nations population (North American Indian) between 15 and 44 years of age hold a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree, compared with 46 percent of the Canadian population within the same age group.⁶ In addition, Statistics Canada has reported that based on 2001 census data, the proportion of the people reporting Aboriginal identity with post-secondary qualifications increased from 33 percent in to 38 percent. However it is important to note that this continues to be part of an overall trend for the Canadian population as a whole.

2.4 A Profile Of Aboriginal Post-Secondary Learners

Statistics Canada 2001 Census data has provided some insights into the profile of Aboriginal post-secondary learners, highlighting that the Aboriginal population is drawn to trade and college credentials and tends to go back for post-secondary studies later in life.

The 2001 Census results show that for the population reporting Aboriginal identity, the proportion with a trade certificate increased from 14 percent to 16 percent, and that in effect, the proportion with a trade certificate in 2001 was higher among Aboriginal people, where they represented 16 percent of the working-age population, compared with 13 percent in the non-Aboriginal population.⁷

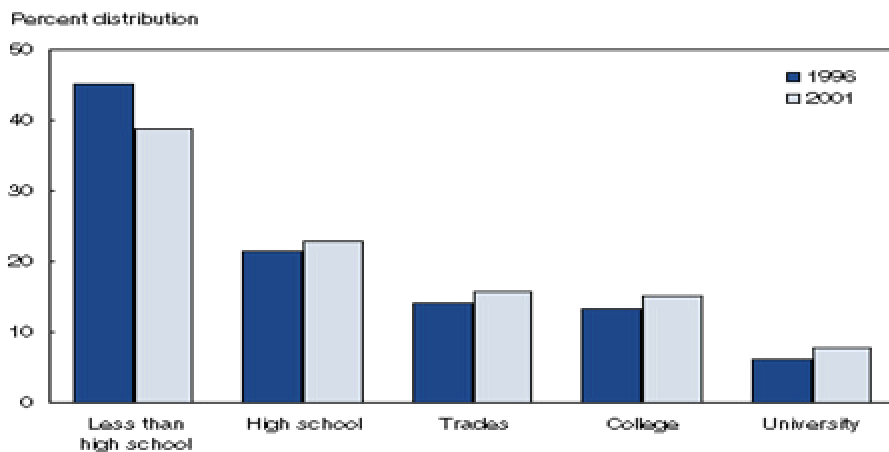
Aboriginal people with college diplomas increased their share of the working age population from 13 percent to 15 percent. This is compared to about 8 percent of Aboriginal people with a university education, also up from five years earlier when 6 percent had a university credential. When comparing with the non-Aboriginal population, the proportion with college qualifications was close, 15 percent among Aboriginal people and 18 percent among non-Aboriginal.

⁵ Report of the Auditor General of Canada – November 2004, Chapter 5

⁶ Report of the Auditor General of Canada – November 2004, Chapter 5

⁷ 2001 Census: analysis series, Education in Canada, Raising the standard, March 2003

Persons aged 25 to 64 reporting Aboriginal identity, by level of educational attainment, 1996 and 2001



Source: 2001 Census: Analysis Series, Education in Canada, Raising the standard, March 2003

The Census results on the fields of study for the Aboriginal population also reflected their heavier involvement with trade and college level education as opposed to university education. Almost one in five Aboriginal men aged 24 to 64 with qualifications beyond high school held a trade or college level credential in building and construction technologies or trades; and another 25 percent were college and trade level graduates of industrial, mechanical or electronic engineering technologies and trades. Among working age Aboriginal women, office administration and secretarial science accounted for 16 percent of college and trade certificates, the highest share and elementary-secondary teaching at either the college or university level accounted for 10 percent of graduates among Aboriginal women.

Top ten fields of study in the population reporting Aboriginal identity¹, by level of certification and sex, Canada 2001

Level of certification	Field of study	%
Men		
All levels of certification	All fields of study	100.0
College or trades	Building and construction technologies and trades	18.8
College or trades	Mechanical engineering technologies and trades	11.8
College or trades	General and civil engineering technologies and trades	5.1
College or trades	Industrial engineering technologies and trades	3.8
University or college or trades	Social work and social services	6.1
College or trades	Electronic and electrical technologies and trades	4.2
University or college	Business and commerce	3.5
College or trades	Transportation technologies and trades	2.7
College or trades	Primary industry processing technologies and trades	2.4
University	Elementary, secondary teaching	2.2
	All other fields	39.4
Women		
All levels of certification	All fields of study	100.0
College or trades	Office administration and secretarial sciences	15.7
University/College	Elementary, secondary teaching	9.9
University/College	Nursing	8.9
University or college or trades	Social work and social services	8.8
University or college or trades	Business and commerce	5.8
College or trades	Aesthetics and other applied arts	4.8
University or college	Financial management	4.0
College or trades	Data processing and computer science technologies	3.2
College or trades	Nutrition and other household sciences	3.2
College or trades	Counselling services	2.9
	All other fields	32.8
1. The population aged 25 to 64.		

Source: 2001 Census: Analysis Series, Education in Canada, Raising the standard, March 2003

Aboriginal learners have a greater tendency to go back for post-secondary later in life. Among Aboriginal people aged 20 to 24, just under one third (31%) were attending school, as were 19% of those aged 25 to 29 (these rates compare to 49% and 21% respectively for the rest of the population); however, from the age of 30 on, the attendance rate among Aboriginal people was higher.⁸

⁸ 2001 Census: analysis series, Education in Canada, Raising the standard, March 2003

2.5 Barriers to Aboriginal Learners' Participation In Post-Secondary Education

An assessment of colleges and institutes role in addressing the needs of Aboriginal learners and communities must first take into consideration the barriers to Aboriginal learners' participation in post-secondary education. The main barriers faced by Aboriginal learners are described below derived from a review of recent studies and publications by Statistics Canada based on Census 2001 data, the Assembly of First Nations, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) and the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation (CMSF). These barriers summarized below are categorized as: historical, social, lack of academic preparation and prerequisites, financial, geographic, cultural and individual/personal. A number of these barriers were substantiated in the interviews with ACCC Aboriginal member institutions and in the survey responses of mainstream institutions. Although this overview is by no means exhaustive, it does help to understand the situation facing Aboriginal learners and contextualize the approaches colleges and institutes have identified in this study.

< **Historical barriers** are largely due to the assimilationist education policies of the federal government which have had significant negative impacts on Aboriginal peoples, in particular through the establishment of the residential school system. The 1996 report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples concluded that many current problems facing Aboriginal communities – violence, alcoholism, and loss of pride and spirituality – have been caused by the residential school system. Many Aboriginal learners have developed a feeling of distrust towards education due to their or their families', experiences in residential schools. As a result, the legacy of this system continues to be a barrier to Aboriginal participation in post-secondary education.

< **Social Barriers** have been identified by some recent studies by Statistics Canada, CMEC and CMSF and were also confirmed in interviews and the survey with ACCC member institutions. They include the following:

- **Family responsibilities** was the top reason among the Aboriginal non-reserve population for not finishing post-secondary studies, cited by 24 percent of individuals in the Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2001. More Aboriginal women are enrolled in post-secondary education than males as confirmed by statistics reported by the Assembly of First Nations that in 1997-1998 there were 67 percent female students and 33 percent male students and this trend was projected to continue through to 2005-2006.⁹ As confirmed by college and institute personnel interviewed and surveyed for this study and the literature review, female Aboriginal students are more likely to have dependants which have implications for the types of support they require to meet family demands, in particular funding and accessibility of daycare services.
- **A lack of role models** with post-secondary credentials within Aboriginal communities has also been identified as an important factor which impacts negatively on Aboriginal post-secondary education participation.
- **The social discrimination** Aboriginal students experience in post-secondary institutions is a significant barrier to persisting in post-secondary studies. Mainstream post-secondary institutions often seem impersonal and intimidating to Aboriginal learners as they do not recognize Aboriginal culture, traditions and values.

⁹ First Nations Post Secondary Education Review, National Report, August 25, 2000, Assembly of First Nations

- **Unemployment and poverty** continue to be significant barriers. As confirmed by the Assembly of First Nations, unemployment rates for all Aboriginal groups continue to be at least double the rate of the non-Aboriginal population. Registered Indians have the highest unemployment rate of any Aboriginal group at 27 percent as well as the lowest labour force participation rate with a rate of 54 percent. In addition, Aboriginal children are more likely to live in one-parent families as confirmed by 2001 Census data that 32 percent of Aboriginal children on reserves lived with a one parent and 46 percent of those in census metropolitan areas, whereas only 17 percent of non-Aboriginal children lived with a lone parent.¹⁰ These statistics indicate that the majority of Aboriginal families do not have the employment incomes which permit them to pay for their children's post-secondary education. As such, the majority of Aboriginal students must seek out other sources of financial assistance to attend college or university.

< **Lack of Academic Preparation and Prerequisites of Aboriginal Students:** Not only are Aboriginal students facing barriers due to low high school graduation rates, they are also less academically prepared for post-secondary education which leads to high drop out rates. Rural and remote and reserve schools typically do not offer the academic preparation required for a successful transition to post-secondary education. In some cases, Aboriginal students seeking to enrol in post-secondary institutions do not have the academic prerequisites for success in programs, whether they are mature students who may not have completed high school, or young graduates who do not have the necessary courses such as mathematics and science or lack the skills needed to succeed, such as study skills, time management, and computer literacy.

As highlighted above, Aboriginal post-secondary students tend to be older, since more Aboriginal learners return to post-secondary studies later in life, and often require upgrading in basic academic skills in order to succeed their programs.

< **Financial barriers:** Non-Status and Métis students, as well as Status Indians living off-reserve, face significant financial barriers which affect their participation in post-secondary education. In the case of Non-Status and Métis students, the Statistics Canada 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey found that finances was one of the top two reasons among the Aboriginal non-reserve population for not finishing post-secondary studies, for which 22 percent cited financial reasons. These students typically must rely on their own resources or Canada Student Loans which are often insufficient.

While many Status Indian students can access funding from INAC through the Post-Secondary Student Support Program, according to the Assembly of First Nations currently "10,000 First Nations students who are eligible and looking to attend post-secondary education are on waiting lists because of under-funding."¹¹ Although the number of students funded by the Post-Secondary Support Program increased from about 3,600 in 1977-78 to approximately 27,500 in 1999-2000, this program has limited resources because funding has not increased since 1994 when \$20 million was added. The Assembly of First Nations also found that Aboriginal students only receive enough funding to cover 48 percent of the estimated average provincial cost per student per academic year.

¹⁰ 2001 Census: analysis series Aboriginal peoples of Canada: A demographic profile

¹¹ Assembly of First Nations Fact Sheet

< **Geographic barriers** impact upon Aboriginal students' participation in post-secondary education because many are required to relocate to urban areas to attend post-secondary institutions. This has financial implications for students to cover housing and relocation costs, often in urban areas which have higher costs of living. The availability of housing is also sometimes an issue in some regions, in particular in Nunavut for example where there is a housing shortage and the only housing available for students is via the student accommodation of Nunavut Arctic College.

< **Cultural barriers:** The post-secondary education culture does not reflect Aboriginal perspectives, traditions, and values, nor the diversity of Aboriginal communities and the differences in learning styles of Aboriginal students. As a result Aboriginal students often do not feel at home within the post-secondary institutions, can feel alienated due to such cultural differences and thus may not persist in their programs of study. Currently, post-secondary institutions do not have enough Aboriginal faculty and staff, nor is there sufficient cultural preparation of non-Aboriginal faculty and staff which help increase understanding of Aboriginal culture, traditions, values and different approaches to learning.

< **Individual and personal barriers** are largely manifested in students who experience a sense of powerlessness, poor self concept or motivation, apathy, poor mental and physical health, anger and frustration. This is exacerbated when students do not have sufficient family or institutional support to assist them with the emotional and health challenges and issues they are facing. The dislocation rural students experience when they move away from home can also pose a significant barrier to success in post-secondary studies.

2.6 Institutions that Deliver Post-secondary Programs to Aboriginal Learners

The types of institutions Aboriginal learners can access to pursue post-secondary education differ from one province to another. In addition to mainstream post-secondary institutions (colleges, institutes, cégeps, university-colleges and universities), Aboriginal learners can access post-secondary education programs through Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutions. It is important to note that there are two very distinct types of Aboriginal post-secondary institutions: the provincially-supported institutions and the Aboriginal-controlled institutions.

Provincially-supported institutions are supported by provincial policy and therefore have:

- the provincially recognized authority to grant certificates and diplomas;
- access to annual operating and special grant funding to support operations and special initiatives.

Among ACCC members, only two Aboriginal institutions in Canada have achieved provincial policy recognition in Canada, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT) and Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT). These two institutes are an exception to the norm of Aboriginal-controlled institutions.

Aboriginal-controlled institutions are not supported by provincial policy and therefore, do not have provincially recognized authority to grant certificates and diplomas. This means that credentials that students acquire from Aboriginal institutions do not have the same currency and portability as mainstream institutions. In addition, Aboriginal institutions in this system are not eligible for annualized operational grant funding like mainstream institutions.

This study provides the perspectives and profiles the types of programs offered by the colleges, institutes, cégeps and university colleges which responded to the on-line survey as well as the two Aboriginal ACCC member institutions, NVIT and SIIT, and the three colleges in the northern territories which participated in telephone interviews. In order to provide a clearer and more complete picture of the options Aboriginal learners have for accessing post-secondary education programs and services. An overview of Aboriginal-controlled institutions is also provided separately, in Section 4 of this report,

2.7 Policy Priorities of the Assembly of First Nations

A review of the policy priorities identified in the Assembly of First Nations' 2000 National Report of First Nations Post Secondary Education Review, helped to guide the design of the survey and interview instruments for this study, in terms of including questions which help provide a better understanding of how colleges and institutes:

- Take into account and contribute to the principle of Aboriginal control of education;
- Facilitate and allow for Aboriginal participation in college/institute program and curriculum development, including a stronger emphasis on and incorporating Aboriginal traditions and cultures in the curriculum;
- Partner and collaborate with Aboriginal institutions for the delivery of programs, and address the need to recognize and increase support for Aboriginal controlled institutes;
- Provide support services aimed at Aboriginal student retention and success, including access to: Elders; academic, career and personal counselling; tutoring; peer counselling; mentorship and buddy programs;
- Provide students with opportunities to pursue life long learning by providing laddering, bridging and transfer arrangements with other post-secondary institutions;
- Promote relationships between Aboriginal communities and post-secondary institutions to develop and implement on-reserve and community-based program delivery;
- Examine funding challenges both in terms of the shortfalls that exist within the Post-Secondary Student Support Program and their impact on college/institute delivery of Aboriginal programs and services, and the challenges institutions face in accessing sufficient funds for effective delivery of programs and services.

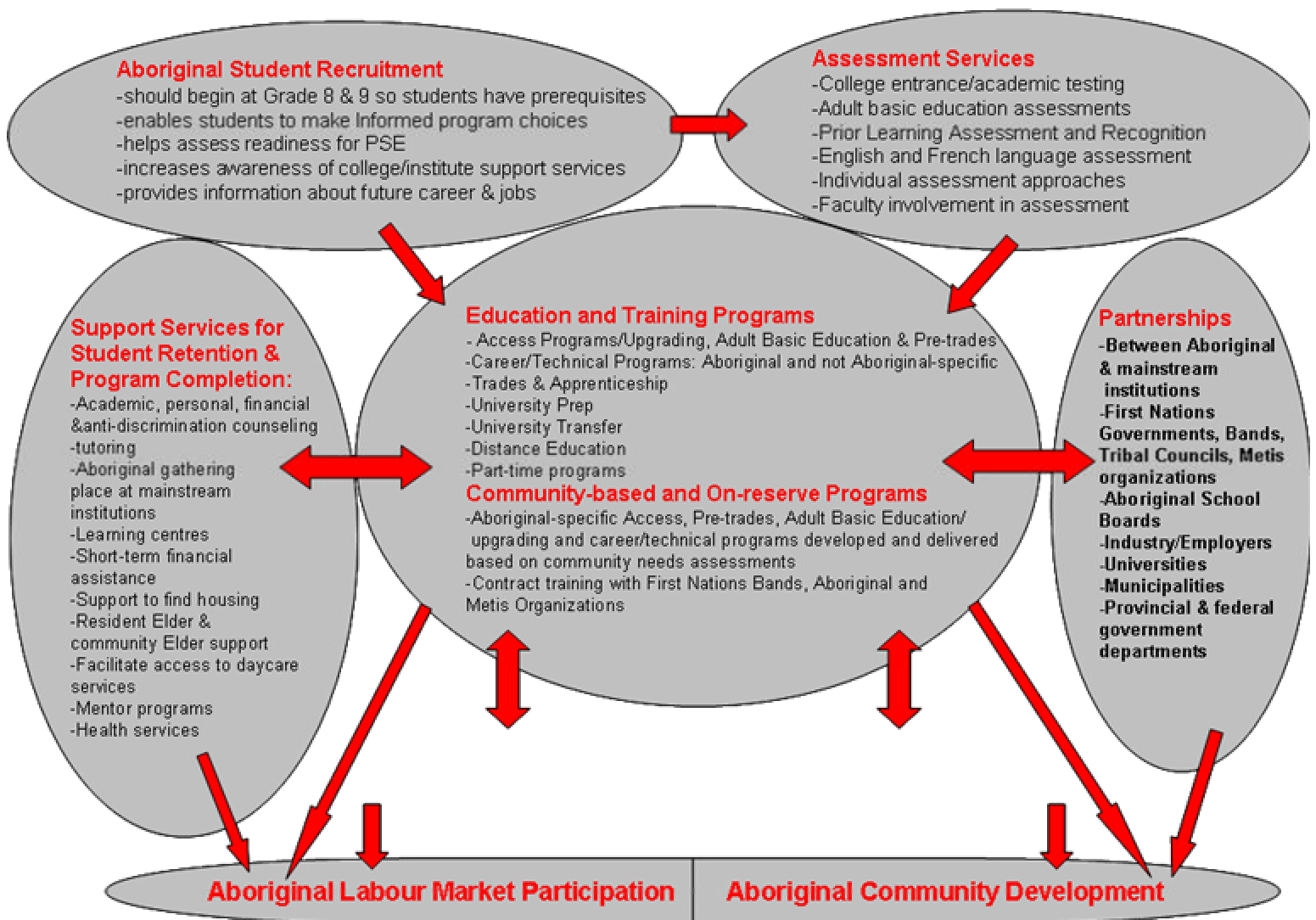
3. Aboriginal Services and Programs at Colleges and Institutes

Through the survey and interviews, colleges and institutes were asked to identify and describe the types of advising, counselling and support services and education and training programs they are currently offering. This was not for the purpose of conducting an exhaustive inventory of all Aboriginal programs and services offered at colleges and institutes but rather as a means to profile and characterize the types of services and programs offered with a view to demonstrating how colleges and institutes are helping to increase Aboriginal learners' access to post-secondary education and labour market participation, as well as contribute to Aboriginal community development. This profile will also be used to develop a section of the ACCC

website on Aboriginal Programs and Services which will then be linked to colleges and institutes websites, and wherever possible, Aboriginal web pages or sites. This overview of the services and programs makes distinctions between Aboriginal, mainstream and Northern colleges and institutes, when applicable.

The process model on the following page provides an overview of the services and programs colleges and institutes offer Aboriginal learners, including Aboriginal student recruitment, assessment services, education and training programs, and support services aimed at student retention and labour market participation, and community development. This process model outlines a comprehensive approach for addressing the needs of Aboriginal learners, with the understanding that not all colleges and institutes are in a position to provide such comprehensive services and programs due to limited resources and funds. These services and programs are described in more detail with examples and exemplary practices from participating colleges and institutes.

College/Institute Process Model for Aboriginal Learner Access, Labour Market Participation, and Community Development



3.1 Aboriginal Student Recruitment

The survey and interviews confirmed that colleges and institutes view the approaches used for the recruitment of Aboriginal learners as a very important first step in helping students succeed in college and institute programs. This is understandable given the education gap facing Aboriginal learners described in section 2.3 above with low high school completion rates. The recruitment approaches used can be instrumental in helping students make informed decisions about the types of programs to choose, their readiness for post-secondary programs, the support services colleges and institutes can offer to help them succeed, and the type of job or career their program could lead them to. The vast majority of respondent colleges and institutes (89 percent) indicated that they are involved in the recruitment of Aboriginal students however the extent of the activities vary from one institution to another, some indicated this is an ongoing or almost daily activity, while for others recruitment is only done three to six days per year due to limited budget and time constraints. Colleges and institutes identified various approaches to Aboriginal student recruitment as described below.

- **Visits, Meetings, and Partnerships with First Nations Bands**

The recruitment activities of both Aboriginal and mainstream colleges and institutes involve visits to aboriginal communities to meet with Education and Training Officers of First Nations Band Councils and Aboriginal organizations and to participate in career fairs. Some institutions have more formal partnerships with First Nations Bands which include student recruitment while others rely on communicating with Aboriginal communities, organizations and First Nations Bands by mailing out college and institute promotional information and calendars.

In some regions of the country, liaison and partnerships with First Nations Bands is viewed as important in order to promote college level education as a viable post-secondary option for Aboriginal students. For example, Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) has indicated that it is sometimes a challenge for Aboriginal students in Nova Scotia who want to attend college to get band funding because some bands do not recognize college programs as being post-secondary. NSCC has initiated an innovative program called "Parent as a Career Coach" delivered in collaboration with Education and Training Officers of First Nations Bands and public school support workers. Through this program, the college organizes meetings with parents and uses the Guiding Circles Approach to engage parents in discussions on their role in guiding their children's career choices, and helps parents see college as a post-secondary option, since many see university as the only option for their children. The Guiding Circles is a self-exploration and career development tool promoted by the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada which combines traditional teachings with sound contemporary career development exercises which enables Aboriginal people to arrive at a better understanding of themselves in terms of possible career goals. The series of activities help users develop a personalized career circle by incorporating personal interests, skills, values, style, spirit, learning patterns and work/life balance. This is a holistic approach that invites input from community members, parents, teachers, elders, peers, etc. to provide additional feedback toward an individual's skills and goals to complete the career circle.¹²

¹² AHRDCC web site

- **Reaching Aboriginal Learners**

Respondent institutions placed emphasis on the need to reach Aboriginal students early on in high school so they begin to think about post-secondary and career options and take the high school courses they need to succeed in post-secondary studies. Specialized orientation sessions to college for Aboriginal high school students and participatory activities such as “Student for a day” programs give students a feel for how a college or institute functions and the opportunities and benefits they can access. For example, the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT) is looking at enhancing recruitment efforts by beginning to reach students in Grade 8 and 9, and organize not only student for a day events but also visits to industry so that students learn about career options early on and are then guided in the types of high school courses and then post-secondary programs they need to take in order to work in their fields of interest. A few respondent colleges and institutes also indicated that recruitment also includes visits and liaison with adult education centres in order to recruit for Adult Basic Education programs.

- **Reserved Seats for Aboriginal Learners in Programs of Mainstream Institutions**

Five respondents from mainstream colleges and institutes indicated that they have admissions policies which require some seats to be allocated for Aboriginal students, for example one or two seats in every regular program.

- **Dedicated Aboriginal Recruitment Services and Staff at Mainstream Institutions**

Most mainstream institutions do not have the resources to have a recruitment officer who works exclusively on Aboriginal recruitment, however about one quarter of mainstream institutions indicated they have an Aboriginal counsellor or coordinator whose responsibilities include Aboriginal student recruitment. Mainstream institutions with dedicated Aboriginal centres run recruitment efforts through those centres as well.

NVIT and SIIT have staff assigned to student recruitment however not on a full time basis. The three colleges in the northern territories have increased student recruitment challenges given the high travel costs required to reach many of their communities. As such, recruitment efforts are combined with other activities and are carried out by different staff, whether they be faculty, counsellors or administrators who will include presentations to high schools and community organizations when visiting communities.

- **College and Institute Websites**

Over half of mainstream institutions responding to the on-line survey indicated that they provide special advice to Aboriginal learners on their website; however the services and programs are not always easy to find. Those with Aboriginal centres feature separate web pages, however most college and institute websites feature their Aboriginal programs and services via their student services or student success sections of their websites, and/or provide contact information for Aboriginal coordinators or recruitment officers.

Although it seems that recruitment efforts with Aboriginal learners can be more effective through face-to-face visits and participatory events for high school students and their

parents, the internet will remain an important communication tool for institutions. Some institutions are working towards enhancing their websites to make Aboriginal programs and services more visible and easier to find. Currently, 54 colleges and institutes are also on the Education section of the Aboriginal Portal which provides program listings at Aboriginal and mainstream colleges and institutes with direct links to the college/institute websites. Once the Aboriginal section of the ACCC website will be developed, ACCC will explore options for linking to the Aboriginal portal as well.

3.2 Assessment Services

Aboriginal and mainstream colleges and institutes offer assessment services to Aboriginal learners, both for high school entrants and mature students. Most survey respondents from the mainstream institutions confirmed that they do not have assessment services specifically for Aboriginal learners, but that they can access services available for all students who do not meet regular entrance requirements. The types of assessment services identified by both Aboriginal and mainstream institutions include:

- College entrance testing; academic testing such as Accuplacer;
- Adult basic education assessments including the Canadian Adult Achievement Test (CAAT);
- Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) services;
- Assessments of English or French as a second language competency levels; and
- Career assessments.

Assessment services often include referrals to basic skills upgrading courses, and in some cases, students are registered according to these assessments.

Smaller institutions and those serving small Aboriginal populations, offer more individualized services through Aboriginal educational advisors or counsellors, or even recruitment officers who offer academic and career assessments in Aboriginal high schools. Nunavut Arctic College also has faculty and adult educators at its 3 campuses and 24 community learning centres involved in the assessment process. In preparation for a new term, faculty at Nunavut Arctic College interview students to assess their personal and academic suitability and to provide students with more information on the program so they can confirm that the program is what they want. This is especially important in programs like human services or nursing where there needs to be a match between the students' readiness and what the program offers. Nunavut Arctic College can do this because it is a small institution with small class sizes and the college has a formal policy which requires college faculty to develop appropriate professional relationships with students.

A few respondents emphasized the need for institutions to review how they do assessments and are seeking Aboriginal input into assessment practices and instruments. For example, North Island College has a First Nations Working Group on Assessment that reviews existing assessment processes, instruments and practices and provides a venue for Aboriginal agencies or individuals to express concerns about these services. NSCC raised some concerns with assessment instruments, such as the CAAT, which have been designed for euro-descent populations, are not necessarily always appropriate for Aboriginal learners, and do not take into

account past learning experiences and styles. For example, NSCC student services staff is encouraged to use a more informal assessment approach which includes interviews and some testing of literacy and numeracy skills. This approach takes more time but NSCC views this as a more holistic process which takes into account Aboriginal learners' learning history, educational challenges, their most and least favourite subjects in high school, and perceptions on practical and hands-on learning and work.

3.3 Counselling Services

Colleges and institutes were asked to identify and describe the types of counselling services offered to Aboriginal learners including academic, personal, cultural, financial and anti-discrimination counselling.

Academic Counselling and Advising

All respondent institutions provide academic counselling and advising services to assist with entry and transitions in college/institute programs or transfer to other post-secondary institutions upon completion of their college/institute program. For the most part, Aboriginal learners at mainstream institutions use institutions' regular counselling services as most do not have services specifically for Aboriginal students. About one third of mainstream institutions which responded to the on-line survey indicated that they have Aboriginal-specific counselling services through Aboriginal counsellors or student services officers employed at the college or institute and Aboriginal centres. Some Aboriginal Centres, such as SAIT Polytechnic's Chinook Lodge Aboriginal Resource Centre, provide walk-in students with academic counselling and advice on program requirements. Two institutions also indicated that faculty members also serve as academic counsellors and advisors for Aboriginal students. In some cases, instructors are assigned students and have the responsibility to follow them.

A few institutions indicated that counselling staff have or will be trained to work with Aboriginal learners, including perspectives on Aboriginal history, issues and cross-cultural training. This is in line with one of the recommendations made by the Assembly of First Nations on the need to promote awareness of Aboriginal cultures and provide cultural awareness and sensitivity training for faculty of post-secondary institutions, which should be extended to include counselling staff.

Personal counselling

Personal counselling is aimed at helping students deal with issues involving their family lives, cultural disconnection, transition from a rural to an urban environment, addictions challenges, and racism and discrimination. The vast majority of mainstream institutions that participated in the study confirmed that they provide personal counselling for Aboriginal students either through regular services offered to all students and to some extent Aboriginal specific counselling. Personal counselling is offered by the two Aboriginal and Northern institutions interviewed.

Participating institutions emphasized the need for colleges and institutes to adopt holistic approaches for counselling Aboriginal students with a view to providing a friendly and safe environment in which students can express and develop their Aboriginal identity. Elders often have a big role to play in personal counselling services and activities, and colleges view campus cultural activities such as sweat lodges, Pow wows and Aboriginal awareness days as ways to

create a welcoming environment for Aboriginal learners, which complements personal counselling efforts. A few colleges also indicated that they enlist the help of the community organizations to complement their personal counselling services, in the areas such as family, addictions and financial counselling. At smaller colleges and institutes faculty also have an important role in personal counselling. This is the case for Nunavut Arctic College where because of the small student teacher ratio, faculty is encouraged to develop a working relationship with students, and consequently students would often feel more comfortable asking their instructors for advice.

Financial counselling

Almost 80 percent of participating institutions indicated that they offer financial counselling services. This type of counselling includes one on one counselling with college or institute counselling staff, connections with First Nations Bands for funding and support, and financial management workshops on campus often with the help of banks or financial organizations from the community.

Anti-discrimination counselling

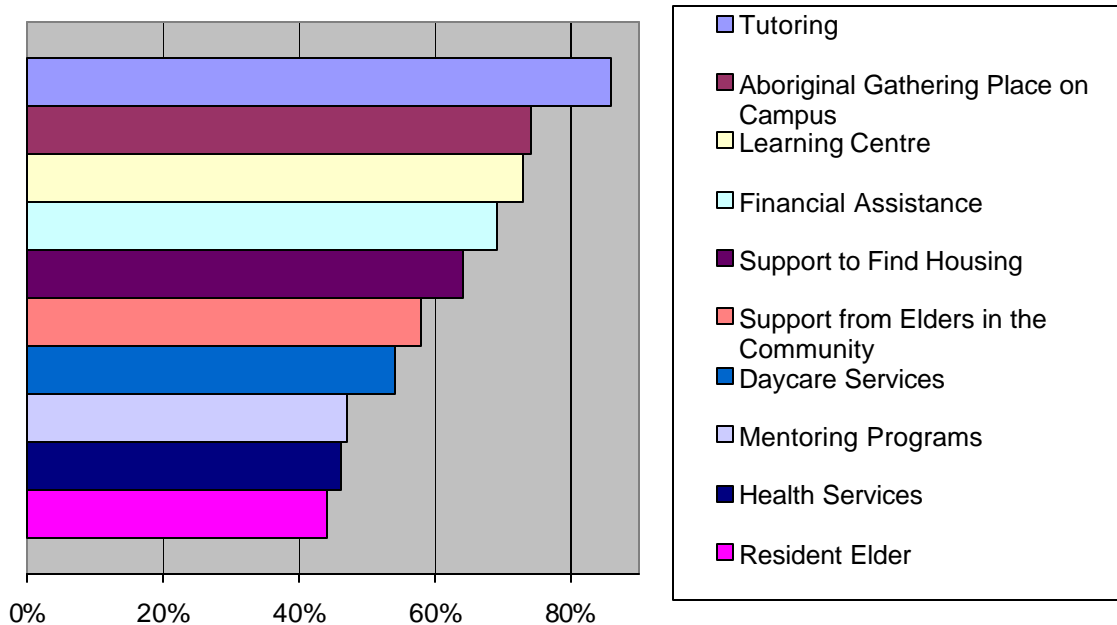
Over half of respondent mainstream institutions offer anti-discrimination counselling to help students deal with racism and diversity issues. Certainly the Aboriginal cultural activities described above would also help complement anti-discrimination counselling services offered and the services of Elders are also very important for the effective delivery of these types of counselling services.

3.4 Support Services to facilitate Aboriginal Learners' Completion of College/Institute Programs

In consideration of the barriers Aboriginal learners face when they enrol in post-secondary programs, in addition to the more standard assessment and counselling services described above, the survey and interviews asked colleges and institutes to identify other types of support services available for Aboriginal learners which help with learners' retention and persistence in college/institute programs.

Respondent institutions reported that they are offering different services aimed at facilitating Aboriginal learners' participation and success in programs. The chart below shows the top ten types of services offered by both Aboriginal and mainstream institutions which participated in this study.

Support Services Offered at Aboriginal and Mainstream Colleges and Institutes



- **Tutoring** is the most commonly offered service by both types of institutions, although not all mainstream institutions have tutoring services specifically for Aboriginal learners.
- It is interesting to note that 74 percent of mainstream institutions confirmed that they have an **Aboriginal gathering place on campus**.
- **Learning Centres** are also a relatively common service offered by 73 percent of institutions surveyed. Learning Centres provide a combination of services aimed at assisting students succeed in their programs however the types of services vary from one institution to another but can include tutoring, workshops on study skills and use of computers for completion of assignments etc.
- Colleges and institutes are also offering **financial assistance** in the form of short term loans and emergency assistance, and also work with First Nations Bands to secure funding and daycare spots. Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT) has access to funding to offer student loans, including for students in Adult Basic Education programs, and personal advisors at the NVIT provide emergency financial assistance on an as required basis. At Nunavut Arctic College different measures are taken to assist students with financial challenges, for example the registrar will advance students money until their funds come through, or students and faculty from departments will organize food banks or organize hunting trips with a view to providing students food to offset their living costs.
- **Support to find housing** for Aboriginal learners moving away from home to attend college is considered to be a key service in many parts of the country. As indicated, 64 percent of institutions surveyed are offering such support.
- **The support of Elders** is considered central of offering a more welcoming environment for Aboriginal learners. More than half of respondents indicated that they are providing support with Elders from the community, and 44 percent of institutions surveyed have

Resident Elders. All Aboriginal institutions have a Resident Elders, and NVIT and University College of the North have Elders Councils which provide input and support at all levels of the institutions. This is a service which many institutions indicated they would like to expand if more funding were available.

- **Access daycare services** are facilitated by reserving spots for Aboriginal learners in institutional or community daycares.
- **Mentorship programs** are offered by almost half of respondent institutions. This is also a service which colleges and institutes would either like to start or expand upon.

Exemplary Practice: Aboriginal Youth Mentoring Project, College of New Caledonia
<p>Responding to low high school completion and low post-secondary participation of Aboriginal youth, the Aboriginal Youth Mentoring Project was developed by College of New Caledonia in partnership with the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council. The program supports Aboriginal youth in achieving career and education goals and prepares them to take a leadership role in their career choice, their communities and their personal lives. The objectives of the eight-month program are to: provide orientation and training in communication and teamwork skills along with mentorship roles and expectations to 40 Aboriginal youth; match 20 Aboriginal high school youth with 20 Aboriginal post-secondary students; and, support the mentors and high school participants throughout the project. Administered in partnership with the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, the program is supported by teachers, Aboriginal education workers and counsellors in the high schools, who refer youth and assist with communication issues. University of Northern British Columbia students participate in the program as mentors. A community advisory group participates in mentor selection and program issues. The program was designed in response to youth identified needs. Through education planning workshops, youth identified motivation, support, racism and lack of confidence as barriers to their continued pursuit of education. Further research undertaken indicated that mentoring programs are particularly appropriate to support individuals in overcoming such barriers.</p>

Colleges and institutes identified other services considered important to facilitating Aboriginal learners' persistence and success and include:

- **Scholarships and Bursaries for Aboriginal Students**

Two respondent institutions reported that they promote the scholarships and bursaries offered specifically for Aboriginal students and provide assistance in completing applications and documentation. The First Nations Education Services department of Camosun College partners with the college foundation to develop and administer awards, bursaries and scholarships for First Nations students, and currently has \$400,000 in endowment funds and provides additional awards totaling \$1,500.

- **Aboriginal Cultural Activities**

Cultural activities are considered important for promoting Aboriginal student success. Cultural activities promote Aboriginal language, traditions, practices, traditional ways of knowing, spirituality, medicines and dress. They include traditional story telling, craft sessions, on campus pow-wows, traditional gatherings and ceremonies.

- **Student Follow-Ups Aimed at Increasing Retention**

At NSCC Coordinators of Retention and Employment track all funded Aboriginal learners to ensure they are attending class, meeting program requirements, and provide follow-up to develop support measures so they can continue in the program. These coordinators are also responsible for reporting back to the Band councils on the progress of all band funded students.

- **Flexibility in Delivering Programs**

Nunavut Arctic College explained that because it is a small college there is more flexibility to deliver programs with more one-on-one support for students. For this college, helping students achieve success is the strongest value. In accordance with this value, the college recognizes that learners come with a lot of personal baggage do not always get support from families to overcome the challenges they face. This is why, when needed one on one help is also offered to help students get through. If students decide to drop out, the college always keeps the door open as it is expected he or she will be back at some point in the future. As such, the college tries to have as many exit and entrance points in its programs as possible. The college representative interviewed provided the following success story which illustrates how this type of one-on-one support is provided.

Success Story: Nunavut Arctic College
A Senior Instructor in Management Studies program told a story of student who had passed all his courses except the math course. This instructor re-taught the course one-on-one and as a result of this personal support, the student passed and got his diploma. According to the instructor, "the smile on his face at convocation was so huge it lit up the room."

3.5 Support Services to Facilitate Labour Market Participation

The practical, work-oriented nature of college and institute education and training programs means that colleges and institutes support their students with the transition into the labour market. This is achieved through a different mix of services offered by colleges and institutes, including:

- **Work Placements and Internships**

Most institutions surveyed confirmed that they offer programs with work placements or internships, and about one third of mainstream institutions offer co-op programs through their regular program offerings which are available to Aboriginal students. Work placements, internships and co-op arrangements help students with labour market transition by providing some work experience and exposing students to employers in their field of study. Upon graduation, often students get jobs with employers from their work placements, internships or co-ops.

- **Career Counselling/Employment Counselling/ Job Search Support**

Close to 80 percent of respondent institutions indicated that they offer career counselling to their students. In the case of the mainstream institutions, most indicated that Aboriginal students can access these services through regular college services however some provide Aboriginal-specific services.

A few respondent institutions emphasized the need for career counsellors to receive cross-cultural training to enable them to work more effectively with Aboriginal learners. For example, at Nova Scotia Community College career counsellors have received cross-cultural training to be better prepared to meet Aboriginal learners' needs, and have also been trained in the Guiding Circles approach.

Job search support and employment counselling is provided by almost 60 percent of responding institutions. Colleges and institutes identified a number of different ways this support is provided to Aboriginal learners: job postings through college departments; references for graduates; the organization of job fairs hosted by Aboriginal centres or corporate mixers to enable graduating students to meet corporate representatives; and referrals to career and employment centres.

Exemplary Practice: Career Village, Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies(SIIT)
<p>Career Village is a service offered at the downtown Saskatoon campus of SIIT which provides one-stop shopping for Aboriginal people seeking information on careers, job and training opportunities, and includes support on preparing resumes and job search approaches. This service informs students of the gamete of training opportunities, including but not exclusive to SIIT, and university programs.</p> <p>The Career Village serves as a complete place to move through the stages of personal career development and encompasses the needs of the job seeker, the support agency and the employer. This service was initiated by SIIT in order to help address some of the barriers Aboriginal people experience in the search for career and employment needs. Such barriers may include: travel, access to telephones, computers and internet, advice and support, self-esteem and finances. Career Village reduces some of these barriers by combining multiple, but compatible services in one central location in Saskatoon.</p>

In some territories and provinces, career and employment counselling is a government ministry responsibility, and colleges and institutes collaborate with these departments to deliver workshops for graduating students. However, in the case of institutions such as Aurora College in the Northwest Territories or Nunavut Arctic College, which have campuses and learning centres serving very large territories, faculty also have an important role in providing career counselling and job search support.

- Preparation of resumes and curriculum vitae and job search skills training**
 Almost 80 percent of responding institutions confirmed that they provide students help with the preparation of resumes and curriculum vitae, mostly as part of the curriculum of communications, upgrading or adult basic education programs. Similarly, 68 percent of respondents indicated they provide job search skills training integrated as part of upgrading and adult basic education programs.
- Mentorship programs**
 About one third of respondents indicated they provide mentorship programs to facilitate labour market participation, with practitioners in students' field of study providing guidance on how to find work and/or the nature of the work they will be involved in. Through the interviews and survey responses, colleges and institutes which are not currently offering this type of service indicated that this is a service they would like to be able to develop and offer to Aboriginal students.

3.6 Education and Training Programs for Aboriginal Learners

Aboriginal and mainstream institutions provide different types of education and training programs intended to meet the diverse needs of Aboriginal learners whether they are high school leavers, adult learners or recent high school graduates, as well as their varied goals for post-secondary education. This section profiles these education and training programs as follows:

- access and preparatory programs
- career and technical programs specifically for Aboriginal learners
- trades and apprenticeship
- university preparation
- university transfer and joint degree programs
- distance education programs
- part-time programs.

3.6.1 Access and Preparatory Programs

Access and preparatory programs are offered by Aboriginal and mainstream institutions in order to address the needs of Aboriginal learners who either do not meet the basic entry requirements for regular college/institute programs or require upgrading of academic skills before entering career/technical or trades/apprenticeship programs. Access programs also aim to provide opportunities to those who would not have the opportunity to participate in college/institute programs because of a lack of social, cultural or linguistic barriers, lack of formal education, or residence in a rural or remote area.

The types of programs which colleges and institutes would categorize as being “access programs” differ from one province/territory to another. For most institutions, access programs are the Adult Basic Education and upgrading programs. However, NVIT and SIIT and some mainstream institutions have introduced access programs which are focused on specific career/technical fields or pre-trades. These types of access programs are designed to meet specific needs of Aboriginal learners by adapting career/technical programs to include:

- courses which address specific skills requirements such as language or numeracy skills;
- allow for more time to complete programs;
- combine traditional and Aboriginal learning;
- learning about professional issues related to the specific field.

Approximately 70 percent of colleges and institutes which participated in the survey and interviews confirmed that they offer access programs or preparatory programs. This combines institutions which defined access programs as adult basic education and upgrading and those which defined them as career/technical programs.

In order to profile the types of access and preparatory programs offered by colleges and institutes, the following categories will be used: career/technical access programs, pre-trades programs, adult basic education programs.

Career/Technical Access Programs

Mainstream institutions identified career/technical access programs, some offered specifically for Aboriginal learners and others offered for all students but available to Aboriginal learners. The colleges located in the northern territories, Aurora College, Nunavut Arctic College, and Yukon College, and University College of the North in northern Manitoba offer career/technical access programs which are not specifically for Aboriginal students however the majority of learners benefiting from these programs are Aboriginal. Participating institutions identified access programs in diverse fields including:

- Aboriginal Public Administration
- Business Administration
- Civil Technology
- Early Childhood Education
- Health Sciences: Health Care Aide, Home Support Worker, Medical Technician, Nursing, Practical Nursing
- Information Technology
- Integrated Science and Technology
- Interpreter/Translator
- Introduction to Navigation
- Law Enforcement, Policing
- Pre-technology
- Teacher Education

Red River College has developed a significant number of access programs for Aboriginal learners, and in addition to the field specific access programs (Nursing, Business administration, Integrated Science and Technology and Pre-trades), Red River Colleges allows students accepted into other regular Red River College day programs to apply for funding and/or other support services through the Access Program office providing that they meet the basic criteria. Within the Access Model Program, provisions have been made to deliver support services to ensure and promote student success, including the advising, counselling and support services described in 3.3.

Pre-trades

Over half of respondent colleges and institutes, both mainstream and Aboriginal offer pre-trades programs. These programs are designed to train Aboriginal students for entry into trades programs such as:

- Automotive or Motor Vehicle Mechanic
- Building Construction
- Carpentry/ Woodworking
- Electrical

- Heavy Duty Mechanic
- Industrial Electrician
- Manufacturing
- Outdoor Power Equipment
- Pipe fitting
- Precision Metals
- Welding

The purpose of these programs is to provide Aboriginal students with the skills necessary to succeed in trades and apprenticeship programs, with a view to increasing their participation and retention rates in these programs.

Pre-trades programs are often delivered at the community level, through learning centres based in Aboriginal communities or on-reserve. Trades and apprenticeship programs are offered at institutions' main campuses because of the equipment requirements for these programs. As such students in community-based pre-trades programs are required to transfer to college/institute main or regional campuses for their trades or apprenticeship programs.

Adult Basic Education Programs

Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs, also referred to as upgrading or college prep programs are offered by all colleges and institutes. More than half of respondent institutions indicated that they offer Aboriginal-specific ABE programs, this includes the two participating Aboriginal institutions, NVIT and SIIT. Otherwise Aboriginal learners at mainstream institutions participate in regular ABE programs. The relevance and the importance of offering ABE for Aboriginal learners is supported by the most recent 2001 Census data which confirmed that Aboriginal people have a greater tendency to go back for post-secondary later in life.

ABE programs enable adults who are in need of upgrading to acquire the necessary skills to be successful in post-secondary programs by completing prerequisite courses required for entry to college or university. NVIT reported that that ABE also provides opportunities for adults to learn about their own Aboriginal language and culture and fosters personal development because of the safe, caring and culturally-appropriate environment provided by Aboriginal institutions.

Yukon College has an interesting program, the First Nations Access Program, which offers First Nations students the opportunity to study college prep courses while participating in a journey that explores personal awareness, self-empowerment, and Yukon First Nations traditional knowledge.

Success Story: Vancouver Community College
"E. came to Vancouver Community College (VCC) in hope of upgrading her English and Math skills. She enrolled in the Adult Basic Education Program. The College Foundations Program which is classroom based gave her the solid foundation she was looking for. She graduated with Adult Graduation

Certificate. E. applied to the Applied Business Technology Program at the Native Education Centre for 2003-2004. She won the award for Top Achievement. E. is now enrolled in the Aboriginal Justice Program and is doing quite well. When E. was a student at VCC she could be found in the First Nations Lounge discussing English grammar rules and exceptions with her classmates.”

3.6.2 Career and Technical Programs Specifically for Aboriginal Learners

Through the on-line survey, **mainstream colleges and institutes** were asked to identify and describe the Aboriginal-specific career and technical programs. Up to 80 percent of respondent mainstream institutions indicated that they offer career and technical programs specifically for Aboriginal students. Colleges and institutes identified 63 different types Aboriginal-specific programs which are categorized and listed below.

Aboriginal-Specific Programs Offered At Mainstream Institutions	
<p>Arts, Language and Culture Aboriginal Arts: Jewelry Techniques Native Cultural Arts Instructor Interpreter/Translator Integration et exploration – Inuit Native Artisans Certificate Native Studies Aboriginal Language Specialist</p> <p>Business and Administration Business Administration Aboriginal Entrepreneurship Aboriginal Applied Business Technology Certificate Administration en milieu autochtone Aboriginal Self-Government Administration First Nations Public Administration First Nations Land Stewardship</p> <p>Education Early Childhood Education Enhanced Educational Assistant Program Aboriginal Teacher Education Yukon Native Teacher Education Program Aboriginal Language/Culture Instructor Native Language Instructor Certificate</p> <p>Health Services Aboriginal Health Care Attendant Community Health Representative Comprehensive Health Care Aide First Nations Home Support Aboriginal Mental Health Diploma Program Northern Community Health Nursing / Northern Access program to Nursing Practical Nursing First Nations Resident Care Attendant</p> <p>Information Technology Computer Technology Multimedia</p> <p>Law Enforcement and Corrections Aboriginal Police Studies Aboriginal Cadet Aboriginal Court Worker Program Native Police Technology Program</p>	<p>Marine Technology Capitaine de pêche Marine Emergency Duties Marine-related Vessel Maintenance and Repair Navigation de base</p> <p>Natural Resources and Environment Aquaculture Environmental Officer Training Program Fisheries Aboriginal Vocational Forestry Horse Care Horticulture Oil and Gas Land Administration Resource Management Aboriginal Resource Technician Program Water Treatment Training</p> <p>Social Services Aboriginal Family and Youth Support Community Social Worker Social Service Worker Aboriginal Substance Abuse Counselling Certificate Aboriginal Addictions Services Aboriginal Child & Family Services Community and Social Development First Nations Family Support Worker</p> <p>Technology Aboriginal Gas and Oil Heating Technician Hatchery Worker</p> <p>Tourism Aboriginal Tourism Program Techniques de loisirs Coastal Adventure First Nations Tour Guide Aboriginal Adventure Tourist Guide and Assistant Guide Aboriginal Hotel and Restaurant Supervisor</p>

Fleming College has adopted a different approach to Aboriginal-specific programming through the Aboriginal Emphasis Initiative. The Aboriginal Emphasis Initiative has recently been introduced at the college with the goal of integrating established curriculum with courses dealing with Aboriginal history, spirituality and culture. This is an inclusive approach to providing more understanding of Aboriginal people, communities and nations. Students learn the mainstream requirements for their program of choice,

and in addition, gain a more in-depth understanding of Aboriginal populations. Course materials are geared towards program specific learning outcomes with emphasis on Aboriginal people, history and culture. Two Academic Schools, Law and Justice and Community Development and Health, have "Aboriginal Emphasis" streams whereby students receive diplomas with an "Aboriginal Emphasis" designation. Programs include: Police Foundations and Correctional Worker, as well as, Social Service Worker, Drug and Alcohol Counsellor, Career and Work Counsellor and Educational Assistant. Through this initiative, Aboriginal learners and other students can now benefit from gaining a deeper understanding of Aboriginal peoples and cultures.

Success Stories

Norquest College

As an Aboriginal youth growing up in Lac La Biche, Alberta, V. was no stranger to addiction, violence, and crime. Now, as a graduate of NorQuest's Aboriginal Policing and Security program, V. is no stranger to success. "The only way to change the future is to heal the past. For this to occur one must have awareness, confidence, and pride in who they are – these are characteristics that my education at NorQuest has helped me recognize in myself," said V. at NorQuest's 2nd Annual Fundraising Breakfast at the Crowne Plaza Chateau Lacombe on November 3. V. told a crowd of almost 500 people about his experiences growing up in a Métis community, where he was exposed to alcohol and drugs at a very young age. By Grade 12, he was more concerned with drinking, partying, and starting fights than thinking about his future. V. said he was inspired by his mother's determination to create a better life for her family when she returned to school to pursue her dream of becoming a social worker. Always fascinated by the stories of his former hockey coach, an RCMP Officer, V. eventually found inspiration in a poster for NorQuest's Aboriginal Policing and Security program. He realized the need for positive Aboriginal role models and enrolled in the program. "NorQuest College has not only taught me about policing, but also about Native culture and how to become a better role model and a better person," he said. Currently completing his field placement with the RCMP in his hometown, V. has a renewed confidence and the desire to make a difference. "Since coming to NorQuest, I've opened myself up to a new future, and started looking at life in a different way," he said. "What I've learned is that it doesn't matter who you are – you just have to believe in yourself and you will achieve."

Grant MacEwan College

"S. had applied to the RCMP and was not successful in the application process. Through the Métis Nation of Alberta, Youth Coordinator was aware of the college program and referred S. to the program. After attending an information session and speaking with program staff and the police service recruiter, S. felt this program would assist her in reaching her career goal. Over the 9 months, S. developed her skills, abilities and knowledge in the area of policing and Aboriginal issues. S. graduated with honours, wrote her entrance exam and fitness testing and was accepted into depot immediately upon graduation. S. received her police badge 6 months later and is currently a constable stationed in Northern Alberta."

Seneca College

"One recent success story is that of a young woman who, in preparation to her goal of becoming an Aboriginal lawyer, successfully completed the 3 year Law Clerk program at Seneca College. She is now working at obtaining her BA at York University with the intent of entering Osgoode Hall law school. Her steady progress through the College's program gave her the confidence to attain her ultimate goal and to eventually become involved in Aboriginal governance and politics.

A second success story is that of male student who has just completed his 2 years of study in the Pre-Service Fire Fighter Education and Training Program. Wanting to travel this young person is now actively

seeking employment in his chosen field anywhere in Canada or the USA.

As an ideal role-model, another young woman completed the 2 year Aesthetics Program and the 1 year Cosmetic Techniques & Management course and has now developed her own business offering beautician services to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples living in a small town in Northern Ontario. As a young entrepreneur she has very positive things to say about her time studying at Seneca College thus advertising the institution by word of mouth.

An interesting component to all 3 'success' stories is that all of these people worked part-time staffing the Seneca College Aboriginal Resource Area as Aboriginal Administrative Assistants to the Aboriginal Services Consultant. These opportunities may have helped them take 'ownership' of their designated space, small as it is, and, through interacting with visitors gave them practice working with the public as well as providing them with a safe harbour within the institution."

Aboriginal colleges and institutes offer programs specifically designed and developed to meet the needs of Aboriginal learners and their communities. SIIT and NVIT participated in interviews for this study. Maskwachees Cultural College in Alberta and Yellowquill College in Manitoba are two additional ACCC Aboriginal member institutions, however they were not available for interviews at the time of the study. Based on the interviews with NVIT and SIIT and a review of Maskwachees Cultural College and Yellowquill College websites, a list of programs offered by ACCC Aboriginal member institutions is provided in the box below.

NVIT and SIIT affirmed that programs are developed based on the core values that post-secondary education as a treaty right for Aboriginal people and should be controlled by Aboriginal people. As such programs combine technical and academic skills and knowledge with Aboriginal values, traditions, history and ways of knowing, for example:

- Business, community development and administration programs are designed to assist Aboriginal learners and communities meet the leadership and management challenges of business and Aboriginal self-sufficiency and self-government.
- Aboriginal, First Nations and Native Studies programs examine Aboriginal history, laws, languages, arts, literatures, cultures, as well as social, political and economic issues. Typically, graduates of these types of programs develop critical reasoning skills and knowledge applicable to many entry level planning and development positions, for Band controlled programs and projects, and related sectors of mainstream society.
- Natural resources and environmental programs provide training that reflects traditional native ethics of respect and care in the management and protection of forests, grassland, range, fish, wildlife and other wilderness resources.
- Early Childhood Education (ECE) and First Nations Child Care programs provide training on ECE and child care theories, values, culture, practices, skills and standards relevant to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal individuals, families and communities.

Programs offered at Aboriginal ACCC Member Colleges and Institutes	
<p>Maskwachees Cultural College <u>College Programs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal Justice Certificate • New Office Technologies • Early Childhood Development • Cree Language Instructor Training Program 	<p>Nicola Valley Institute of Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Social Work Degree with Thompson Rivers University • Business Administration Certificate/Diploma • Aboriginal Community Economic Development which can ladder into Simon Fraser University's Bachelor of General

Programs offered at Aboriginal ACCC Member Colleges and Institutes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petroleum Industry Certification • Training Teaching Assistant Training <p><u>University Programs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Education • Bachelor of Arts • First Nations Management • Aboriginal Social Work Diploma 	<p>Studies Degree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Studies Diploma • Diploma of Arts in First Nations Studies • Arts in English Diploma • Arts in First Nation Women Studies Diploma • Natural Resource Technology Certificate/Diploma • Aboriginal Early Childhood Education Certificate • Information Technology Certificate • Law Enforcement Preparatory certificate • Aboriginal Community and Health Development Certificate/Diploma
<p>Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate in Aboriginal Employment Development • Combined Fire/Paramedic Training • Community Health • Community Services, Addictions • First Nations Child Care • First Nations Home Child Care Provider • First Nations Orientation to Day Care • First Nations Aide/Long-term Care Aide • Licensed Practical Nurse Program • Life Skills Coach Training • Teachers Assistant Program • Information Technology • Accountancy • Hotel and Hospitality Management • Management Studies • Professional Golf Management • Workplace Management • Building Maintenance Technician • Geographical Information Systems Technician • Integrated Forestry Worker • Process Operation Technician 	<p>Yellowquill College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Broadcast Training Initiative • Aboriginal Business Certificate • Aboriginal Pre-Employment Training Program for Corrections Service • Administrative Assistant Certificate Program • Certified Aboriginal Financial Manager • Community Diabetes Worker Training Program • First Nation Community Management Program • First Nation Governance Diploma Program

3.6.3 Trades and Apprenticeship Programs

The results of the 2001 Census confirmed that Aboriginal people are drawn to trades and apprenticeship programs. As pointed out by the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC), Canada has a growing shortfall of skilled labour, highlighted by the fact that the average age of fully skilled trades people in Canada is 50. By 2020, there will be an anticipated shortfall of one million skilled workers. AHRDCC has emphasized the need to leverage stronger Aboriginal involvement in trades apprenticeship, and provides a support system for Aboriginal inclusion in trades and apprenticeship through its Aboriginal Trades Apprenticeship Initiative.

Over half of all respondent colleges, Aboriginal and mainstream, confirmed that they offer trades and apprenticeship programs specifically for Aboriginal students or have Aboriginal students enrolled in their regular trades and apprenticeship programs. Colleges and institutes are partnered with provincial apprenticeship boards for the delivery of both pre-trades and apprenticeship programs.

Confederation College has developed a centre for trades and apprenticeship related needs in northwestern Ontario and has included the Negahneewin Council and Negahneewin College in its growth. The college works together in creating new partnerships and implementing strategies to assist First Nations communities in the forestry and energy areas.

Colleges and institutes are also involved in promoting Aboriginal participation in trades and apprenticeship. For example, SIAST and SIIT partnered with AHRDCC and the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship Commission to deliver a Western Symposium on Aboriginal People in Trades in October 2004. This symposium brought together representatives from education, industry/union, government and Aboriginal communities from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, the Yukon and Northwest Territories. The symposium enabled participants to identify strategies for success, best practices and ideas for change aimed at increasing the participation of Aboriginal people in trades.

3.6.4 University Preparation Programs

Almost one third of participating institutions offer university preparation programs. For example, the College of the North Atlantic offers a College University Transfer Program as part of a student transition program before students go outside of Labrador to larger institutions. Academic upgrading, open studies, general arts and science, adult basic education, and Quebec cégep pre-university programs were all cited as examples of university preparation programs offered by colleges and institutes.

3.6.5 University Transfer and Joint Degree Programs

Almost one third of institutions surveyed confirmed that they offer Aboriginal learners university transfer programs. University transfer programs allow Aboriginal students to complete two or three year diploma programs at the college level and then transfer to a university with which colleges/institutes have block transfer agreements, to complete a degree. All programs at Nicola Valley Institute of Technology are considered university transfer given the B.C. university transfer system where all college and university programs are required to be transferable. Some examples of university transfer programs include:

- **Aurora College :**
 - Three year nursing diploma program. Upon the completion of their third year, nursing students only have to leave the Northwest Territories for one year to obtain their Bachelor in Nursing at the University of Victoria. The college is also working towards enabling students to do all four years in North and still obtain the degree from the University of Victoria.

- Teacher Education with an agreement with the University of Saskatchewan.
- Social work degree with the University of Regina whereby students take 2 years at the college and 2 years with the university.
- Management Studies with Athabasca University for which students can apply directly to the university with the completion of 2 years at the college.
- **Nunavut Arctic College:**
 - Three joint degree programs are currently being offered: nursing in partnership with Dalhousie University, Teacher Education with McGill University, as well as a law degree program for one cohort, with University of Victoria, which may or may not have enough funding be repeated.
- **Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT):**
 - SIIT has block transfers with the University of Lethbridge, University of Victoria and Athabasca University.
- **University College of the North (UCN):**
 - UCN has a Committee on Transfer of Credit and the Business Administration Program is offered via distance education through the University of Manitoba.

3.6.6 Distance Education Programs

The Assembly of First Nations has recommended that in order to improve accessibility there is a need to acknowledge and support distance education for Aboriginal students in rural and remote communities.¹³ Colleges and institutes' responses to the on-line survey and interviews confirmed that institutions view distance education as a means to reaching Aboriginal learners in rural and remote areas. Many would like to deliver more distance education but cannot due to funding constraints.

In all, one third of participating institutions confirmed that they offer distance education programs which benefit Aboriginal learners. In the case of mainstream institutions, these are mostly regular program offerings which are also available to Aboriginal learners. The program and course offerings vary and include:

- Nova Scotia Community College offers standard required courses via distance education such as Occupational Health and Safety;
- University College of the North has distance education programs in Nursing, Home Care, and Early Childhood delivered by a combination of video conferencing and computer based;
- SIAST is piloting a Level 1 Math course for mechanical trades programs in 2004-05, offering online;

¹³ Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Post Secondary Education Review, National Report, August 25, 2000, pg. 80.

- Cambrian Colleges offers Native Early childhood Education by distance education;
- Selkirk College delivers an Associate Degree in First Nations Studies in consortia with other colleges;
- Cumberland College in Saskatchewan has a distance learning project in partnership with First Nations and Métis organizations;
- Heritage College delivers the following distance education computer delivery of programs to James Bay: Social Sciences, Humanities and English.
- Northwest Community College offers Early Childhood Educations via distance specifically to reach the Aboriginal population.

3.6.7 Part-time Programs

All colleges and institutes offer part-time programs through continuing education departments, and 42 percent of responding institutions confirmed that they offer part-time programs which benefit Aboriginal learners within their communities and regions. A different range of part-time programs are offered including: general interest courses on Aboriginal language, traditions and arts and crafts; literacy; credit programs which include academic upgrading, college and university preparation, computer programs, and Aboriginal Teacher Certificate Programs. Many programs are offered in a flexible delivery format, and bridging programs have been found to be particularly effective for Aboriginal learners.

4. Aboriginal-controlled Institutions

Aboriginal-controlled institutions were created by First Nations to provide culturally appropriate and relevant curriculum and to address the low recruitment, retention and success rates of Aboriginal peoples in mainstream post-secondary institutions. As mentioned in 2.6, there are two types of Aboriginal institutions in Canada, those which are supported by provincial policy and legislation such as NVIT and SIIT, and those which are not provincially-recognized such as the Aboriginal-controlled institutions in Ontario represented by the Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium, a national organization has been formed, the National Association of Indigenous Institutes of Higher Learning which has members from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Nova Scotia. The mandate of the national association is to advance, advocate for and support post-secondary, technical, adult and related Indigenous education.

In order to fully understand Aboriginal post-secondary issues, it is important to understand how Aboriginal-controlled institutions are addressing the needs of Aboriginal learners. The range of programs offered by Aboriginal-controlled institutions is very diverse and includes:

- literacy;
- adult basic education and upgrading;
- secondary school completion;
- certificate, diploma and degree programs offered in partnership with mainstream colleges, institutes and universities;
- apprenticeship and skills training;

- culture, language and history programs;
- employee/employer training; and
- community workshops.

Aboriginal-controlled institutions are focused on providing student support and community-based programming and delivery. The list of programs of Ontario Aboriginal institutes provided by the Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium is included as Appendix B to this report.

The Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium (AIC) has identified some key challenges faced by Aboriginal-controlled institutions which affect their capacity to deliver sustainable post-secondary services and programs, including:

- the lack of policy and legislative support to ensure adequate funding support;
- jurisdictional responsibility for post-secondary education for Aboriginal peoples continues to be debated among the federal and provincial governments;
- the lack of recognition by provincial and federal governments as having the authority to grant certificates, diplomas and degrees;
- while Aboriginal-controlled institutions deliver provincially recognized programs in partnership with colleges and universities, they also deliver programs outside of those recognized provincially and therefore are not recognized or transferable within the public post-secondary system;
- employer recognition of credentials granted by Aboriginal-controlled institutions pose a challenge because these institutions are not provincially recognized;
- de-regulated tuition fees in provinces like Ontario, and the cap on federal post-secondary student funding support for Aboriginal people in 1989, limits access to post-secondary for Aboriginal people.

The AIC has advocated that the Ontario provincial government provide recognition to Aboriginal institutes through policy and legislative support however there has been limited movement on these recommendations in comparison to the magnitude of education and training needs that are required to address the needs of Aboriginal peoples. In the past, the AIC asked the provincial government to help by putting together a standard template for articulation agreements between Aboriginal and mainstream institutions with a view to making the process more equitable and effective for both types of institutions.

5. Funding for Aboriginal Programs and Services

Given the Aboriginal demographic reality of an increasing and younger Aboriginal population base, and the barriers Aboriginal people face when trying to access post-secondary studies; it is clear that there is a need for sustainable and holistic post-secondary education services and programs for Aboriginal people. The funding sources and structures in place to meet Aboriginal people's post-secondary education needs are varied and complex. This section provides an overview of the main sources of funding available for Aboriginal post-secondary participation, explains how colleges and institutes are funding Aboriginal services and programs, and describes the funding challenges colleges and institutes identified and their suggestions for enhancing funding structures and programs.

5.1 Post-secondary Funding for Aboriginal Learners

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) provides limited support for Status Indians through the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) and the University College Entrance Preparation Program. These programs assist eligible Status Indian and Inuit students with tuition, books, travel and living expenses. Almost all of the combined funds of these two programs are delivered directly by First Nations Bands or their administering organizations. Band Councils have had to develop their own selection criteria and policies due to limitations of the funds and restrictions placed on them by regional INAC representatives.

However these programs have serious limitations:

- < Not all Status Indians, such as “Bill C-31 Indians” who achieved Indian Status through changes to the Indian Act in 1985, can access the Student Support or Entrance Preparation programs, and no non-Status or Métis are eligible for these programs.
- < The programs do not provide sufficient funds to cover students’ costs. In effect, “the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) found that First Nations students receive only enough funding to cover 48% of the estimated average provincial cost per student per academic year.”
- < As stated earlier, although the number of students funded by the Post-Secondary Student Support Program increased substantially between 1977-78 and 1999-2000, INAC funding for this program has not increased since 1989. As a result, the program is not meeting the real demand for post-secondary funding for as the Assembly of First Nations has estimated, there are currently 10,000 First Nations students who are eligible and want to attend post-secondary education but are on waiting lists.
- < The PSSSP does not fund one-year programs, trades training, computer studies or upgrading and there are restrictions on the choice of institution and the age of students.
- < In addition, the federal government has recently raised the possibility of taxing student support funding which will add even more challenges to eligible students who want to enrol in post-secondary programs.

Since Non-Status and Métis students cannot access the INAC programs, they must rely on their own resources or Canada Student Loans in order to fund their post-secondary education, and once again these are often insufficient.

5.2 Funding Sources accessed by Colleges and Institutes for the Development and Delivery of Services and Programs for Aboriginal Learners

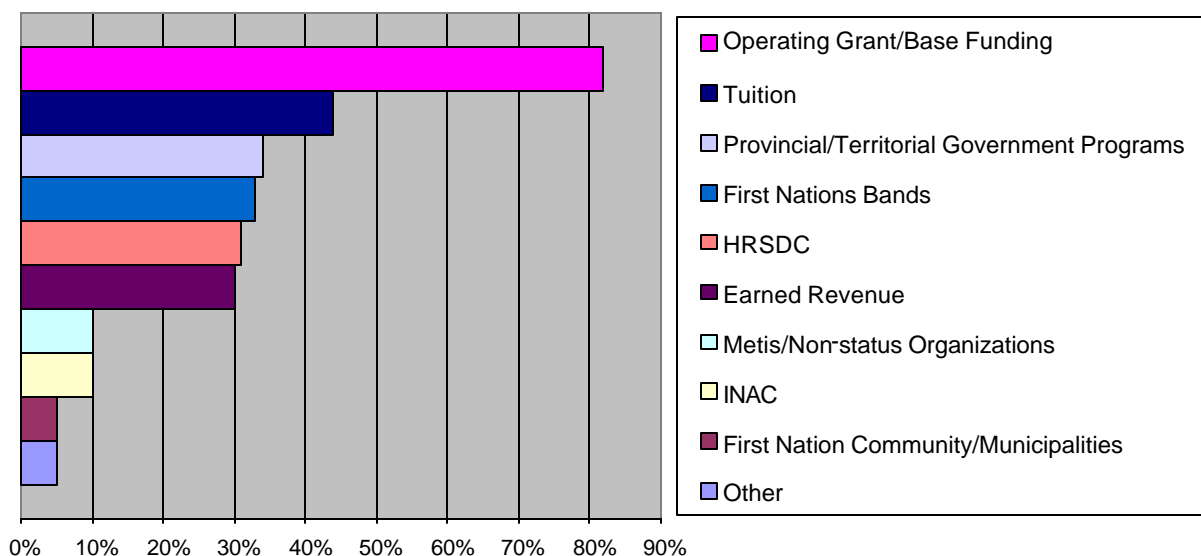
Colleges and institutes which participated in the on-line survey and interviews were asked to identify their main sources of funding for both Assessment, Counselling and Support Services and Education and Training Programs. The main sources which would be available to colleges and institutes are:

- operating or base funding provided by provincial or territorial governments to colleges and institutes for the development and delivery of all programs and services;
- tuition;
- earned revenue from contract training;
- Aboriginal program or project funding from provincial or territorial governments;

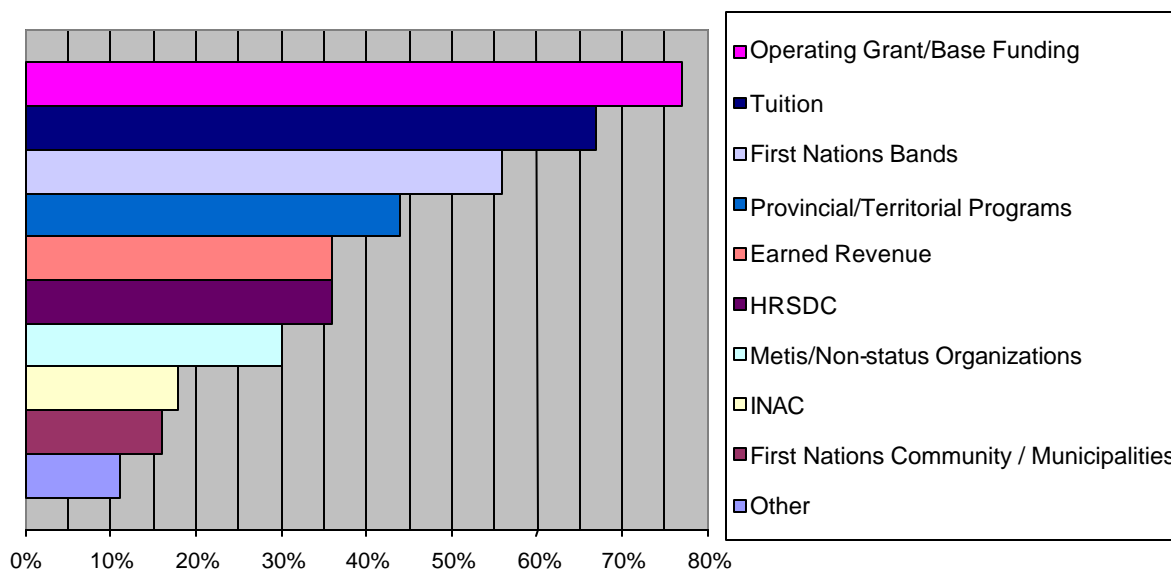
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, namely through the Indian Studies Support Program which offers financial assistance through post-secondary institutions for the delivery of special programs for Aboriginal students;
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada through the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreements (AHRDA's) or Labour Market Development Agreements;
- First Nations Bands;
- Métis and Non-Status Organizations
- First Nations Communities or Municipal Government Programs.

For the most part Aboriginal and mainstream colleges and institutes are funding the assessment, recruitment, advising, counselling and support services described in this report through operating grants or base funding provided by the ministry responsible for colleges and institutes in their provinces, as confirmed by 82 percent of respondent institutions. Tuition was the second most common source of funding for these types of services, used by 44 percent of institutions. Colleges in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, the Yukon, Ontario, Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador, more than a third of respondent institutions, also access Aboriginal program or project funding through their provincial government. For example, some Ontario colleges indicated that they use funds from the Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to cover human resources costs for Aboriginal counsellors. Thirty-one percent of participating colleges and institutes are accessing funds for support services through AHRDA holders in their regions and First Nations Bands, and one-third also rely on earned revenue to help cover the costs of delivering these services. Métis and Non-Status Organizations are also a source of funding for 13 percent of respondent institutions and 10 percent access the INAC program funding. A few institutions indicated that First Nations communities or municipal structures help fund these services. Examples of other sources of funding identified by colleges and institutes include: in B.C. Aboriginal School Boards and provincial ministries of human resources, health and social services; in Quebec, Correctional Services Canada and the Cultural and Education Institute of the Montagnais.

Colleges and Institutes Accessing Funding Sources for the Delivery of Assessment, Counselling, and Support Services for Aboriginal Learners



Colleges and Institutes Accessing Funding Sources for the Development and Delivery of Aboriginal Education and Training Programs



In the case of education and training programs for Aboriginal learners, respondents indicated the following:

- Once again, more institutions rely on operating grants or base funding from provincial ministries responsible for post-secondary education to cover education and training program costs as confirmed by 77 percent of institutions.
- Up to 67 percent of respondent institutions indicated that tuition is used to fund education and training programs for Aboriginal learners.
- More than half of respondent institutions indicated that First Nations Bands are a source of funding for the development and delivery of education and training programs; this is largely through partnerships and contract training initiatives to address community identified needs.
- Up to 44 percent of respondent colleges and institutes from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, the Yukon, Ontario, Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador, access Aboriginal program or project funding through their provincial government for the development and delivery of education and training programs. For example B.C. colleges indicated that they access funding for developing Aboriginal-specific curriculum through the Aboriginal Special Project Fund of the B.C. government.
- Thirty-six percent of participating institutions indicated that they rely on earned revenue from contract training.
- About 36 percent access funding from HRSDC, mostly through AHRDA holders in their regions and also through Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDAs), as well as INAC's Indian Studies Support Program.
- One third confirmed that they access funding from Métis and Non-Status organizations for the delivery of programs to those groups.
- Sixteen percent identified First Nations communities and municipal structures as sources of funding for Aboriginal programs, for example Nunavut Arctic College delivers a

Municipal Government Certificate Program with the support of the Nunavut Municipal Training Organization.

- Examples of other sources of funding identified by colleges and institutes include: in B.C. partnerships with First Nations Development Corporations and Industry as well as Aboriginal School Boards and provincial ministries of human resources, health and social services; in the Yukon, First Nations Governments; in Saskatchewan, the Tribal Councils; and in Quebec, as mentioned above, Correctional Services Canada and the Cultural and Education Institute of the Montagnais.

5.3 Challenges with Current Funding Structures available for the Development and Delivery of Aboriginal Programs and Services

Given the complexity of Aboriginal post-secondary funding, colleges and institutes were asked to identify the challenges they face with the current funding sources and structures available for the development and delivery of services and programs for Aboriginal learners. The main challenges identified by participating colleges and institutes are described, with specific reference to challenges faced by Aboriginal institutes when applicable.

- **Diverse and High Needs of Aboriginal Learners**

Aboriginal students' needs are very complex and often require a high level of service which has cost implications for the institutions. The more responsive a college/institute is to Aboriginal needs, the more funds are required to provide the level of services Aboriginal students require.

Aboriginal students also have different needs and it is challenging for institutions to have sufficient funding to provide the diversity in services and programs that would be required to meeting the needs of all Aboriginal groups, without excluding certain groups of students because of Aboriginal status.

- **Insufficient Funding**

Adequate funding is lacking for offering the necessary programs and services. Colleges and institutes often must duplicate services in order to offer Aboriginal-specific programs and this often is not recognized. Institutions indicated that there generally are insufficient funds for Aboriginal advising, support services, mentoring programs and tutoring, and some are challenged to fund a full-time position responsible for Aboriginal services and programs at the college.

In some cases, Aboriginal service areas or departments within colleges and institutes are required to operate on a cost-recovery basis. For example, even though the Chinook Lodge at SAIT Polytechnic is considered to be the one stop shop for all institutional undertakings that relate to Aboriginal students, the institution does not provide an operating budget. All of funding comes from corporate sponsors. However this only provides for the actual cost of the support services, and leaves all initiatives and services to be developed, delivered and maintained with limited human resources.

- **Unstable Funding due to Limitations of College and Institute Base Funding from Provincial/Territorial Governments**

One of the biggest challenges facing institutions is finding stable and sustainable funding to deliver Aboriginal programs and services. Although institutions are trying to use more base funds for aboriginal-specific programs, this is challenging as the budget is limited and it means that another program or service that is currently base funded will no longer be so. Some provincial and territorial examples help to further explain these issues:

- In **Ontario**, current funding structures through the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities do not provide for a separate Aboriginal Full-time Equivalent (FTE) and the current FTE Production Model pressures institutions to increase class sizes and cancel programs that do not fill quickly. This has serious consequences for the delivery of Aboriginal programming. The current FTE production model also reduces the focus on Aboriginal-specific student services which do not directly affect FTE generation. Aboriginal Education Programming can often only be offered in partnership with Aboriginal agencies, corporate partners, and/or AHRDA funding. These funding arrangements are very complex and it can be very challenging to put programming in place in a timely and sustainable manner.

In addition, Sault College pointed out that current funding formulas for Ontario colleges and institutes are not adequate. There is more dependence on the funds from the Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy to off-set costs which were previously covered through operational dollars. There are no opportunities to access additional funding to move forward with new initiatives and the current under-funding of the system creates a further barrier to moving forward.

- In **Quebec**, cégeps are funded based on the number of first and second semester students registered. As such, John Abbott College pointed out that with this unstable funding approach the college may not have sufficient funds to cover expenses for the Aboriginal Student Resource Centre. The continuity of services is at risk due to semester to semester funding.
- **Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies** is faced with the challenge of trying to find its place between provincial and federal government funding structures. The province does not provide SIIT base funding because it is considered to be under federal responsibility.
- **Nunavut Arctic College** underwent an external review which found that the college does not have enough funding to deliver core programs. However the Nunavut Department of Education has no additional funding available and has concluded that the college will simply have to spend the available funds smarter. Because of the financial crisis, the college is being encouraged to get more federal funding or be more proactive in tapping into philanthropic foundations and organizations, however this type of funding is project-based and not for core programs and services. There is a sense that the college does not have sufficient funds to improve and move forward, and may have to realign current base funding and cut programs. This leaves the college in a difficult situation for in the past, when base funding was realigned funding to deliver credit programs at the community level was lost and the college faced criticism for not doing enough at the community level. The external review report also mentioned that the

college is not spending enough on program development and curriculum services, but it is not clear where the funds for this work is to be drawn.

- **Student-based Funding through the PSSSP**

Colleges and institutes confirmed that Aboriginal students who are seeking to enroll or are currently attending their institutions continually face challenges accessing sufficient funding. First Nations Bands are not resourced adequately through the Post-secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) to provide adequate funding to students, and as tuitions and the cost of living increase the number of students bands can sponsor diminishes. As indicated earlier in this report, the PSSSP has limited resources because funding has not increased since 1989, and the funding level is not adequate to cover students' costs. This in turn impacts upon colleges' and institutes' capacity to delivery Aboriginal programs:

- For example, Camosun College has developed a number of First Nations programs and reserved a number of seats for First Nations students in many programs that have exceedingly long waiting lists (up to three years). However, often the financial support does not meet student demand, the spaces cannot be filled with Aboriginal students and programs do not run at full capacity resulting in a waste of resources on all sides.
- The Aboriginal Institutes Consortium also confirmed that the insufficient funds transferred to First Nations Bands by the PSSSP are limiting Aboriginal students' access to post-secondary education. Students coming to Aboriginal Institutes for programs and are told they have to pay tuition. These students then go to their First Nations Band for tuition funding but find out that there is no more funding available. The impact on Aboriginal institutions is that students want to enroll in programs but cannot attend due to the lack of funding support.
- SIIT emphasized that student funding is not sufficient to cover tuition and living allowances. This makes access to college/institute programs a challenge. The current funding can help people pay the tuition but most often the challenge for students is the living allowance. For example, a student coming to SIIT to become an A1 Driver may be able to afford the \$3,000 tuition for the 3 month course, but the real challenge is how he or she will pay to live while completing the program.

- **Aboriginal-controlled Institutions face Specific Funding Challenges**

In some provinces, such as Ontario, Manitoba and Alberta, Aboriginal-controlled institutions typically must partner with mainstream institutions for the credentialing of their programs. Although the Aboriginal institutes deliver the programs they do not receive any operating grant from the provinces nor are they transferred funds from mainstream institutions' tuition revenue for those Aboriginal students. This severely limits the funding sources for Aboriginal institutes. Currently these institutes are funded through provincial and federal government program funding. For example, Ontario Aboriginal-controlled institutions can apply for year to year grants from the province from an \$800,000 per year fund divided between the 8 institutions. Ontario colleges, institutes and Aboriginal-controlled institutions can also access \$3.5 million per year from the INCA Indian Studies Support Program (ISSP) for the development of Aboriginal programs and services. However under this program Aboriginal-controlled institutions are required to partner with mainstream institutions for the credentialing of the programs, and mainstream institutions are also eligible to apply for funding under this federal program. This

year to year funding structure puts serious limits on the type of programming Aboriginal Institutes can offer, in particular for certificate and diploma programs which require more than one year of study.

- **Project Based Funding**

Colleges and institutes have grown to rely on project based funding to supplement the limited resources available from provincial or territorial governments through operating grants or base funding. This type of funding is typically used to match and leverage funds for the delivery of Aboriginal-specific and community programs. Some colleges indicated that there is less project-based funding available in recent years as it is increasingly difficult to access.

Project-based funding often enables institutions to develop innovative approaches to Aboriginal program and service delivery, however it is typically short-term funding or pilot-based and therefore is limited to “one-off” type pilot projects and does not enable institutions to address long term needs. These types of experimental approaches make it difficult to support students adequately, and once project funding is expired, institutions typically have to scale down or cancel the service or program.

In the Yukon, funding available from First Nations Governments varies from one First Nation to another depending on their Land Claims Final Agreements. Demand for programming is highly variable due to a boom-bust economy, often driven by short-term mega-projects.

- **Provincial/Territorial Aboriginal Program Funding**

Ontario colleges and institutes all indicated that the level of funding from the Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy (AETS) from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has not increased since the initial allocation well over 15 years ago. The allocation is fixed and is not reflective of the broad scope of Aboriginal programs and services colleges are delivering for Aboriginal learners. The level is not sufficient to provide all the services or deliver all the programming requested, in particular with the increase in the number of Aboriginal students served. In addition, the funding does not reflect the unionized work environment and how salaries are taking up more than half of the funds available. Stability and long term workers' costs create new pressures and do not allow for enhancement or development programs.

Some examples of the challenges Ontario colleges are facing related to the AETS include:

- Georgian College served approximately 30 Aboriginal students when they first received the allocation, and today they serve 300-400 Aboriginal students with the same level of funding.
- Fleming College indicated that AETS funding only assists with staffing compliments and does not provide for any operating dollars. This combined with the challenges facing all colleges with trying to do more with less makes for some very difficult choices with respect to priorities for support services. Fleming College has established an operating budget for Aboriginal Services but would like to do so much more.
- Sault College uses approximately 80 percent of the funds received from the AETS to cover staff wages and benefits. As a result, there are not enough funds to adequately invest in new program development.

- Confederation College recommended that the AETS be evaluated province wide to take into account the growth and how northern colleges in particular are grappling with a larger Aboriginal demographic and central priorities in the resource-based economies in the north today.

In Alberta colleges and institutes indicated that there is a lack of provincial support for First Nation students, in particular for training allowance support that is available to all other Albertans. Funding from First Nations Bands is limited and there is unmet demand. In addition, Grant MacEwan College faces challenges in accessing funds from the government to create and expand Aboriginal programming. Occasional grants from other funding partners enable the college to create unique services such as an Alberta Health grant to initiate an Elders office on campus. The college makes efforts to provide a global perspective on learning and includes Aboriginal specific content in many programs, especially those in the human services. Entrepreneurial activities within program areas have also contributed to financial viability, for example 15 students came to the college's Aboriginal Police program from the Saskatchewan RCMP recruiters).

The funding sources available to New Brunswick Community College are limited because as a ministry governed institution and is not eligible for provincial Aboriginal funding programs.

- **HRSDC – AHRDA, LMDA and Employment Insurance Students**

Colleges and institutes identified challenges with the three main programs accessed for funding from HRSDC: the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreements, Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDA) and the Employment Insurance (EI) program.

Some colleges and institutes rely on AHRDA funding to meet the needs of Aboriginal learners from the communities and region they serve. In some cases, some institutions indicated that AHRDA holders provide program funding to their own training arms rather than give student specific funding. This leaves public post-secondary institutions in some regions without a primary funding source to meet Aboriginal community needs for college level credentials. On the other hand, Camosun College does not access local AHRDA funds because it considers that Aboriginal communities are more in need of this funding.

Colleges and institutes identified some limitations with the federal funding available through AHRDA's, LMDAs and EI for Aboriginal programming:

- First, interventions funded by these programs are too short and geared to direct employment. However many aboriginal learners require more long term training due to low secondary school graduation rates and literacy levels. For example:
 - One campus at SIIT currently has 300 Adult Grade 10 students on a waiting list, and another 300 for the Grade 12 program. However high school upgrading programs are not a government priority because they are not tied to direct employment at the end of the program. Given the backlog, SIIT has been trying to make the case for government to fund these students because the upgrading provides them with a direct ladder to other post-secondary and employment related programs.

- Nunavut Arctic College works with a population base with low literacy levels. In order to address the real needs in Nunavut the federal government should provide more sustainable, multi-year funding that enables institutions like Nunavut Arctic College meet the literacy and skills development needs of its population. For example, in Nunavut, the average grade level of the Inuit is Grade 9 if you remove all the government employees. Within this context, it is not realistic to expect that short term training programs can enable learners to develop academic, work related skills as well as employment skills such as punctuality, financial management, and personal skills to be successful in the working world.
- Employment-related programs have a very narrow definition of what employment is, particularly within the context of the northern territories where the traditional subsistence economy is still important. For example Nunavut Arctic College would like to deliver a land skills program which would enable young men to learn from Elders how to survive on the land, how to hunt and trap, and be much more economically self sufficient. This should be considered an employability program but it is not under the federal government definition and therefore the college cannot access funding to run this program.
- The requirement of the LMDAs that only EI eligible people benefit from training programs is very limiting in rural and remote contexts with very high unemployment rates because there may not be many people in these regions who are EI eligible. This limits what colleges and institutes serving these regions can do with the federal funding that is available.
- In addition, HRSDC EI funds are allocated through students and are not project-specific or block funds; as such colleges and institutes must depend on having enough students in order to run the programs. However these must be EI eligible students and as the College of the North Atlantic pointed out, if Aboriginal students lack credentials and are counselled to quit their current jobs for retraining, they would not be EI eligible and thus would not qualify for HRSDC programs. For the most part colleges and institutes have to be creative in pooling resources to make Aboriginal projects happen. Projects that can be block funded are easiest to make happen however institutions often get into the complexities that policy will only allow a certain component of a project to be funded.
- It is often hard for institutions serving rural and remote regions to access federal funding for labour market development and training because the geographic and demographic reality in these regions does not fit the funding criteria. In order to access this type of federal funding, institutions are sometimes required to design a training program to meet the funder's needs which is contrary to goals of education that programs be designed to meet learners' needs.
 - **Number of Students in Programs**

One of the challenges for regions of the country with small Aboriginal populations is that the small number of Aboriginal students enrolled in some programs does not make the programs financially viable but serve an extremely important need.

- **The Indian Studies Support Program funded by INAC**

The Indian Studies Support Program (ISSP) has limited (and time-limited) funding. Camosun College pointed out that this type of funding should go first to community and/or Aboriginal institutions and that: "Public institutions should not have to rely on 'Indian money' to provide Aboriginal programming."

- **Perceptions and understanding of college level education**

Nova Scotia Community College indicated that in their context, one of the biggest challenges is getting First Nations Band Council funding for students to come to college because some bands do not understand that college provides post-secondary level education.

- **Different Layers of Funding Sources/Complexity of Funding Applications**

Colleges and institutes pointed out that trying to get federal, provincial and First Nations Band funding committed is a very time consuming process. As a result, it can often take up to two years to secure the funding for a new program or service.

In addition, sometimes one funding source cannot be combined with another, such as AHRDA funding with HRSDC program funds. It seems that there is not sufficient regional planning of the bigger picture and how it all fits into a local regional human development process.

5.4 How Colleges and Institutes suggest these Funding Challenges be Addressed

With the understanding that colleges and institutes work with Aboriginal learners on a day to day basis, in light of the funding challenges identified, colleges and institutes were asked to provide their perspective and make suggestions on how to enhance current funding structures. Colleges and institutes provided different suggestions which are listed and grouped below.

More Collaboration and Integration of Government Funding Mechanisms

- There needs to be better coordination and collaboration between the types of funding available: federal, provincial, and band.
- There should also be a process for integrating funding at the regional or local level to ensure Aboriginal support programs are complementary.
- Colleges and institutes would benefit from better clarification and organization of regulations.

Funding Mechanisms for Aboriginal Apprenticeship Students

- For Aboriginal students in apprenticeship programs there is need for more collaboration between and among funding agencies, industry and training institutions - connecting a systematic process between the funding agency, the training institution and industry. There should be a more formalized process between institutions and industry, not leaving it to chance or individual learners as in current apprenticeship model.

More Long-Term Funding

- Funding agencies often overlook the time required for occupational training, as such if a diploma certification is required, it is a minimum of two years from the time a student walks through the institution's door until they graduate.
- Colleges and institutes need to secure more long-term funding to allow for the upfront planning time required for effective service and program delivery, and to ensure continuity of services and programs. To this end, funding should be based on program/project requirements, and not the number of students accessing the services.

Increase Funding

- It is clearly necessary to increase budgets to develop and support new programs and essential campus services for Aboriginal students. It must be recognized that these students have to have special supports to get into programs, to stay in school and to get assistance to gain employment. Colleges are under great financial burdens. If it is a priority to have doors opened for Aboriginal youth then there must be some incentive programs for colleges.

HRSDC Funded Programs

- Develop more flexible funding criteria which does not necessarily require direct employment upon program completion, and which enables HRSDC programs to better address the gap between rural and remote and urban areas, and take into account geographic and demographical differences that exist in Canada's rural and remote regions and Aboriginal people living in these regions.
- There should be an incentives initiative built into the EI process that would encourage students to go into training rather than stay home off season and draw EI. There could be plans articulated whereby seasonal workers could work during the season and go to school during the off season - i.e. more fisherpersons and construction workers could be in school during the winter season - to enhance their credentials and hence give them greater opportunity to work longer.
- Broaden the federal government's definition of employment for programs which support Aboriginal people from the northern territories where the traditional subsistence economy is still important

INAC Funding

- The federal government should recognize that the majority of Aboriginal students are educated in public institutions but continue to be included within the population for whom the federal government has fiduciary responsibility. INAC should consider developing a funding program similar to the ISSP, that is accessible primarily to public institutions that have demonstrated a commitment to Aboriginal education and are guided by Aboriginal partners or advisory committees.

Funding for Literacy Programs

- There is a serious need to address the low literacy levels in many Aboriginal communities. There is not sufficient funding for literacy programs by either the federal or provincial governments. This is a major obstacle for adult learners currently assessed at Adult Basic Education Level I.

Operating Grants or Base Funding from Provincial/Territorial Governments

- The full-time equivalent (FTE) funding provided by provincial and territorial governments as part of colleges and institutes operating or base funding, should reflect additional support for student success services and cultural activity required for Aboriginal learners.
- B.C. institutions suggested that the province could develop an Aboriginal FTE structure. The basis of this model could be that one 'regular' FTE student would be equal to 1.6 Aboriginal FTEs. This would help support additional costs (student support, community facilities costs, Elders honorariums, smaller classes to support personal/cultural development, etc.) and would provide an incentive for institutions to include more First Nations/Aboriginal programming.

More Funding for Aboriginal Students

- There is a need for more funding to ensure students can access desired programs.
- For students to be successful in college, living expenses need to be addressed including transportation, meals, books and supplies etc. Often Aboriginal students are mature students with numerous responsibilities in particular family responsibilities, childcare expenses, housing etc.
- A review of the current funding strategy in relation to the actual number of students serviced annually might be beneficial.

Provincial Government Aboriginal Program Funding

- Ontario colleges made a strong call for the need to increase the funding available through the Aboriginal Education Training Strategy. It was suggested that funding be linked to students enrolled and not necessarily to students graduating. Many students do graduate however, it is not unusual for some students to extend their programs, or leave and come back to finish at another time.
- It was also suggested that institutions which provide Aboriginal programming out of their operating or base funding could also be provided better access to particular provincial or federal program funds.

Funds for Aboriginal Program Development at Colleges and Institutes

- Colleges and institutes made suggestions for funding to support Aboriginal program development at colleges and institutes. For example:
 - Annual dedicated funds for aboriginal programming and services, based on the Aboriginal population. As one college indicated, it is very difficult to maintain

essential student success services - particularly in the smaller regional centres without targeted funds.

- Colleges and institutes would benefit from a strong government commitment to Aboriginal Education policy and funding to create Aboriginal specific programs. This should also include stronger partnerships with other post-secondary institutions and Aboriginal high school or preparatory programs would help with recruitment of Aboriginal students.
- Increase specific fund availability, for example for trades/apprenticeship program development where there is a demonstrated need.
- Perhaps there could be specific initiatives funding for areas such as: Aboriginal recruitment, academic preparation, cultural activities, Aboriginal curriculum and program development, etc. These funds would then align with colleges' specific goals and mandates for improved services.
- Support mainstream institutions to develop or enhance Aboriginal service areas, including meeting space for Aboriginal students and student success and support services. Aboriginal-specific programs could be developed to enable those who so desire to move into university level studies.
- New funding should be available to facilitate partnerships with Aboriginal communities and institutions, as well as, external non Aboriginal and Canadian partners i.e. industry.

Funds for Increasing Aboriginal Faculty And Staff At Colleges And Institutes

- The hiring of more Aboriginal faculty would do much to provide an Aboriginal perspective to mainstream education and, by their presence, be needed role models for students. As such it was suggested that institutions could take on, in an incremental way, the salaries of fulltime Aboriginal specific positions as opposed to having the funding reflect the actual costs of these positions. As such the funds could be used for developmental positions, projects and program/curriculum development.

Increased Information on Funding Sources

- A website for all sources of funding open to Aboriginal students both federal and provincial would be useful.

Recognition for Aboriginal Service Areas of Colleges and Institutes

- Colleges and institutes and the provincial and federal governments need to recognize, and support through adequate funding and staffing the large contributions Aboriginal service areas at colleges/institutes provide to the recruitment, retention and successful graduation of Aboriginal students. As well, these areas usually provide support and cross-cultural learning opportunities for the rest of the student bodies at most institutions. Other faculties that utilize the staff of Aboriginal support areas on an ongoing basis should be required to contribute to the operational costs of these areas.

6. Identification and Enrolment of Aboriginal Students

At mainstream institutions, the identification of Aboriginal learners can be challenging because institutions must rely on students self-identifying themselves. In order to get a sense of the number of Aboriginal learners, colleges and institutes reach in a given year, mainstream and Aboriginal institutions were asked to provide estimates on the number of individual Aboriginal learners in programs for the 2004/2005 academic year. Mainstream institutions were also asked to describe the challenges they face with identifying Aboriginal students.

6.1 Aboriginal Students at Mainstream Colleges and Institutes

Mainstream colleges and institutes were asked to provide estimates of the number of self-identified Aboriginal students in education and training programs during the 2004-2005 academic year. The colleges in the three territories and the University College of the North in northern Manitoba are included as mainstream institutions because even though very significant percentages of their student population are Aboriginal, they are also serving non-Aboriginal people within their territories and region. To date 46 participating colleges and institutes have provided estimates on the number of self-identified Aboriginal students by program type. These estimates are not for full-time equivalent students but rather for the number of individual Aboriginal learners attending institutions.

College and Institute Education and Training Programs	Estimate of the Number of Aboriginal Students as reported by 45 Mainstream Institutions
Preparatory programs for career/technical programs	1252
Career/technical training programs - Aboriginal-specific	1323
Career/technical training programs - not Aboriginal-specific	7373
Pre-trades programs	700
Trades and apprenticeship programs	1394
University preparation programs	66
University transfer programs	1347
Applied degree	56
Baccalaureate degree	158
Access and upgrading programs / Adult Basic Education programs	3969
Other, please specify	898
TOTAL	18536

Mainstream colleges and institutes were also asked to provide an estimate of the **percentage** of their total student body which self-identifies as Aboriginal:

- **Large colleges located in Canada's largest metropolitan cities** generally reported having 1 to 5 percent of their student population self-identify as Aboriginal, with the exception of Northern Alberta Institute of Technology in Edmonton which reported 15 percent of their students self-identify as Aboriginal.
- **For the Western provinces the ranges vary as follows:**

British Columbia:

- **Vancouver area:** Vancouver Community College reported 1 percent, and Kwantlen University College and Langara College reported 2 percent of their student population self-identifying as Aboriginal;
- **Vancouver Island:** Camosun College reported 5 percent and North Island College 10 percent;
- **B.C. interior:** College of New Caledonia 14 percent, College of the Rockies 5 percent, and University College of the Fraser Valley 2 percent, Northwest Community College 40 percent.

Alberta:

- **Edmonton:** Norquest College 25 percent, NAIT 15 percent, Grant MacEwan College 7 percent
- **Calgary :** SAIT Polytechnic 2 percent, Bow Valley College 10 percent
- **Portage College** 57 percent
- **Keyano College** 20 percent
- **Lakeland College** 10 percent

Saskatchewan:

- **SIAST:** 18 percent
- **Regional Colleges:** Parkland College 35 percent, Cypress Hills College 15 percent, Cumberland College 6 percent, North West Regional College 60 percent

Manitoba:

- **Red River College:** 16 percent
- **Assiniboine Community College:** 26 percent

Ontario:

- **Northern Ontario:** Sault College, Cambrian College and Canadore College are all at 10 percent, and Confederation College 20 percent
 - **South/Central Ontario:** Mohawk College 3 percent, Seneca College 4 percent, Fanshawe College 4 percent, Lambton College 5 percent, Georgian College 7 percent
-

Quebec:

- **Heritage College:** 5 percent, **John Abbott College:** 1 percent, **Collège Edouard Montpetit:** 5 percent; **Cégep de Sept-Iles:** 13 percent; **Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue :** 1 percent

For colleges in the Northern Territories:

- **Yukon College:** 42 percent
- **Nunavut Arctic College:** 95 percent

For colleges in the Atlantic overall colleges estimated that 1 percent of the student body self-identify as Aboriginal, however, the Labrador campuses of the College of the North Atlantic reported a 60 percent Aboriginal student body.

6.2 Enrolment at Aboriginal Institutions

Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies and Nicola Valley Institute of Technology are the two ACCC Aboriginal member institutions which participated in the study, and provided the following estimates on the number of students in education and training programs during the 2004-2005 academic year. These estimates are not for full-time equivalent students but rather for the number of individuals attending the institutions.

Education and Training Programs at Aboriginal Institutions	Estimate of the Number of Students - SIIT	Estimate of the Number of Students - NVIT
Preparatory programs for career/technical programs	80	
Career/technical training programs	450	140
Pre-trades programs	100	
Trades and apprenticeship programs	100	
University preparation programs		
University transfer programs		97
Applied degree		
Baccalaureate degree		
Access and upgrading programs	60	
Adult Basic Education programs	180	33
Other, please specify		35
TOTAL	970	305

6.3 Challenges In Identifying Aboriginal Students At Mainstream Institutions

The majority of mainstream institutions confirmed that they experience challenges with having Aboriginal students self-identify. Respondent institutions indicated that the main reasons students do not self-identify include a mistrust of the institution's motives, fear that the information will be used in a negative way, that it is no one's business or that they do not want special treatment. These are essentially the same reasons that Aboriginal people do not participate in the census.

As an indicator, one college confirmed that only about 55 percent of Aboriginal students self-declare their identity. The college Aboriginal Student Centre and some dedicated instructors help increase awareness about the centre and many of those who do not identify on application

forms do become involved by registering with the Aboriginal student club and participating in activities.

Most institutions have application forms which ask students to self-identify. On the other hand, some institutions do not ask students to self-identify on the application form and as a result reach Aboriginal students once they are in the college or institute if they register with the Aboriginal centre. Colleges and institutes in provinces with centralized application processes suggested it may be preferable to gather this type of data through the application structures.

Many institutions determine their Aboriginal enrolment numbers by cross-checking the number of self-identified students with students who are sponsored by Bands, AHRDAs and Aboriginal service providers. One institution indicated that because students are not self-identifying, at times the 'unknown' fraction exceeds both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal fractions. This is a frustrating situation for many institutions, especially when they know they have more Aboriginal students than their enrolment statistics show. A number of respondents indicated that their institution is not tracking this information carefully through admissions and rely more on overall percentages of Aboriginal students available from student surveys.

In addition, aside from identifying sponsored or Band-funded Aboriginal students, it is also difficult for institutions to identify and obtain accurate figures on Aboriginal students receiving either provincial or federal financial assistance or loans, who are paying their own way or are receiving alternate types of funding, and students who do not access Aboriginal-specific services.

Without accurate enrolment information on Aboriginal students it is difficult for institutions to understand the scale of services required and to align the human, financial and service-oriented resources needed to offer appropriate support services for Aboriginal students. Some institutions indicated that Aboriginal students do not self-identify even though the college/institute provides incentives to encourage self-identification.

6.4 Structures, Systems or Practices to Address Self-identification Challenges

Mainstream institutions were also asked to identify the structures, systems or practices put in place to address the challenges related to the self-identification of Aboriginal students. Some of the more common approaches and practices include:

- Review and ensure the admissions application self-identifying category is clear, concise, appropriate and encouraging;
- Encourage learners to self-disclose during the admissions process, during interviews or anonymously on the college point of entry survey;
- Encourage Aboriginal students to self-identify in college/institute literature and promotional materials;
- Provide information sessions for aboriginal students, have counselling departments encourage self-identification, and encourage identified student to encourage others;
- Promote Aboriginal student services as much as possible so that students are comfortable and understand the benefit in self-identifying;
- Connect with high school students, Aboriginal high schools and boards and First Nations Band Education Councils to ensure students are informed about the college services;

- Be available at registration to encourage students to self identify and provide assistance in completing forms;
- Communicate to new students information about applying for internal bursaries and scholarships for Aboriginal students, typically through the college/institute awards office;
- Send welcome letters to all applicants who self-declare;
- Aboriginal service areas provide students with orientation and support during the application process, and when they arrive at the college/institute.
- Improve the internal statistics identification system within the college;
- Post notices on campuses for services/activities available to Aboriginal students.

Exemplary Practices for the Identification of Aboriginal Students

➤ **Camosun College**

First Nations Advisors, instructors, and instructional assistants counsel students and prospective students that filling in the Aboriginal Ancestry box on the application form provides the college with information that influences its Aboriginal policies. With this information most Aboriginal students allow themselves to be identified.

➤ **New Brunswick Community College (NBCC)**

An Aboriginal Seat Allocation Form is provided (both in the calendar and on the web-site) as a part of the request for admission to NBCC, where seats are set aside in regular programs for members of the Aboriginal community. The NBCC encourages Aboriginal students to use this process for admission which also enables the NBCC to collect enrolment data.

➤ **University College of the Fraser Valley (UCFV)**

UCFV has provided more discrete categories on its application form for Aboriginal students to allow them to self-identify. The Aboriginal Resource Centre staff actively encourages students to self-identify. The university college is currently considering designating a portion of tuition paid by self-identifying students for support services, aboriginal curriculum development etc.

➤ **Red River College**

Red River College is trying to implement a system where students who self declare have a copy of their information sent directly to the Aboriginal Education Division. As well, students are given information about Aboriginal supports available on campus when they enroll. The Aboriginal division presents to the students during orientation, recruitment and new staff orientation days.

➤ **College of the Rockies**

The Aboriginal coordinator tries to meet with as many students as possible. The college Aboriginal Advisory Committee supports college efforts to support students and encourage them to self-identify by talking to as many potential students as possible.

➤ **SAIT Polytechnic**

SAIT Polytechnic recently introduced a self-identification section on the institute registration forms. The Aboriginal Policy was passed this past year following presentations to Board of Governors Executive Committee. SAIT Polytechnic is working to create a welcoming environment for Aboriginal students by going into other programs to discuss Aboriginal issues with all students at the institution, as well as organize cross-cultural events to encourage student participation and identification.

➤ **Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology (SIAST)**

SIAST put in place an Education Equity (EE) Program over ten years ago. At each campus there was an Education Equity committee and representatives from those campus committees sat on the SIAST-wide Education Equity committee, which operated under the direction of the SIAST Education Equity Coordinator.

Exemplary Practices for the Identification of Aboriginal Students

The SIAST wide committee oversaw the allocation of special projects and events. SIAST still commits over 1% of its annual operating budget to Education Equity projects. The position of Education Equity Coordinator and her support person was recently eliminated, since the process is working well and no longer needs a separately funded position to run the Education Equity program. SIAST recently created an Aboriginal Council which has replaced the EE Committee. The Aboriginal Council has a broader scope and includes faculty, staff and students.

The EE Program has been instrumental in encouraging Aboriginal students to self-identify, and as a general rule, Aboriginal students at SIAST self identify because they realize that it is to their advantage to do so in order to access services. The students have developed trust and realize it is not used against them in any way if they self-identify. SIAST has now established special Aboriginal counsellors at all four campuses because the numbers warrant this. If students do not self identify, and there are not sufficient numbers of students, SIAST cannot justify the level of staffing and services could be cut. As part of the EE program, SIAST has set target participation goals (12.4% overall, and 25% at the Prince Albert campus). In 2003-04 SIAST had 18% Aboriginal participation in total.

7. Aboriginal Participation in College/Institute Planning Structures, Program and Curriculum Development

In consideration of Aboriginal people's goals of Aboriginal control of education and participation in curriculum design, the study tried to get a sense of how colleges and institutes, both mainstream and Aboriginal, receive input from Aboriginal leaders for college/institute planning processes and structures and program and curriculum development. Colleges and institutes identified a number of different structures and approaches for ensuring that Aboriginal leaders from their regions contribute and provide direction for the planning, development and delivery of Aboriginal programs and services.

7.1 Aboriginal Representation on College or Institute Boards of Governors

A key approach to ensuring Aboriginal input into colleges' and institutes' planning processes is through Aboriginal representation on college and institute Boards of Governors. Seven mainstream institutions indicated they have one Aboriginal Board member. The boards of colleges and institutes which serve mainly Aboriginal learners, such as the University College of the North and Nunavut Arctic College, are for the most part composed of Aboriginal members. Aboriginal institutes such as Nicola Valley Institute of Technology and SIIT have boards composed exclusively of Aboriginal leaders and community members. Aboriginal board members are drawn from Elders from Aboriginal communities, representatives from First Nations Bands, Métis and Aboriginal organizations, and Aboriginal industry representatives. The colleges in the territories also have regional Aboriginal representatives to ensure input is provided from all the regions of the territories.

7.2 Involvement of Elders

For Aboriginal institutions the involvement of Elders is central to the approaches and practices used for institutional planning as well as program and curriculum development. NVIT has a 12 member Elders Council which sits on the board and works with the program advisory committees, students, faculty, staff and the management team. This Elders Council is funded out of the institute's base funding. SIIT has an Elder Advisory Committee at the institutional

level as well as Elders on local management committees. At SIIT, Elders are also asked to help with community dialogues through the education and training officers in Aboriginal communities.

Mainstream institutions are also involving Elders to support institutional planning efforts and program development and delivery. Up to 44 percent of mainstream institutions have Resident Elders, and 58 percent involve Elders in support programs for students. The roles of Resident Elders vary somewhat from one institution to another but they are considered a key resource when planning and developing new programs and services. Elders from Aboriginal communities are consulted for institutional strategic planning exercises, are asked to participate in program advisory committees and DACUM curriculum development processes.

7.3 Aboriginal Advisory Councils or Committees

Some mainstream institutions have put in place separate structures referred to as Aboriginal Education or Academic Councils, or Aboriginal Circle. These structures are composed of representatives from all identified Aboriginal communities served by the college/institute including Elders, community leaders, Aboriginal organizations, First Nations Bands, and Education Councils, Métis and political territorial organizations. These councils typically have an advisory role to the board for planning and program development purposes, sometimes participate in annual program reviews of credit programs, or are considered as partners to college/institute boards. Some examples of these boards include:

➤ **Camosun College - First Nations Advisory Council (FNAC)**

The membership of the First Nations Advisory Council includes local First Nations, Aboriginal organizations that have a direct interest in education, other Aboriginal education providers, all Aboriginal partners, representatives of Vancouver Island Tribal Councils, and First Nations students. FNAC reports to the college President, while at the same time providing direction to the First Nations Education and Services department. FNAC is consulted regarding any Aboriginal institute planning processes.

➤ **Confederation College - Negahneewin Council**

Confederation College has a robust and meaningful dialogue with its Aboriginal peoples council called the Negahneewin Council. This council has been in place since the mid 1980's. It is comprised of community representatives with a real commitment to education and career development for Aboriginal students. It is a community based form of leadership that shapes the academic and community development agenda of Negahneewin College of Indigenous Studies and Confederation College. The Council is very active in helping form the vision and direction for the college and is absolutely critical to the college's development and success.

➤ **Georgian College – Aboriginal Circle**

The Aboriginal Circle at Georgian College meets at a minimum 4 times per year. It is comprised of community representatives from both urban Aboriginal organizations as well as the Education counsellors from the local First Nations, Elders and Aboriginal students. The Aboriginal Circle provides advice to the college administrative team, the Board and is consulted for program and curriculum development initiatives.

➤ **Cambrian College - Anishnaabe Affairs Advisory Committee**

The Anishnaabe Affairs Advisory Committee at Cambrian College reports back to the college Board of Governors. This committee is actively involved in the development of annual plans for the Wabnode Institute and the development of the submission to the Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy funding. Two members of the Board of Governors sit as chairs of the Anishnaabe Affairs Committee.

➤ **Northwest Community College – First Nations Council**

The First Nations Council at Northwest Community College meets on a bi-monthly basis to discuss community needs for training and services and is also responsible for providing input to the College Board of Governors, as well as strategic Planning Task Force, the Education Planning Task Force, Hiring Committees and Curriculum and Service Committees.

➤ **Nunavut Arctic College – Language and Culture Committee**

Nunavut Arctic College has established a Language and Culture Committee composed of Inuit employees, instructors, adult educators and administrators to provide advice to the board and administration on the incorporation of Inuit knowledge and values into the organization through a statement of Inuit learning principles and curriculum development. This committee will play an increasingly important role in the changes introduced in the college. This committee was created when the Board passed a motion requiring that Inuit traditional knowledge, ways of knowing, values and principles become the foundation of all programs and services offered at the college, so that it is central to the college's capital design and way of doing business. This will be the guiding body in terms of what is important in terms of knowledge, value and principles.

7.4 Program Advisory Committees

College and institute Program Advisory Committee structures are responsible for developing new programs and updating the content and curriculum of existing programs, with direct input from representatives from industry and community employers. A significant number of mainstream institutions confirmed having Aboriginal Advisory Committees or then include Aboriginal representatives on relevant program advisory committees. The two Aboriginal institutions that participated in the study also confirmed that they have a program advisory structure. For both Aboriginal-specific committees and regular program advisory committees, colleges and institutes draw upon representation from Aboriginal community leaders, Elders, First Nations Bands, Tribal Councils, industries and employers based in Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal school boards, regional representatives, as well as college/institute faculty and deans.

7.5 Partnerships with Aboriginal Institutions

Some institutions have developed strong ties and partnerships with Aboriginal institutions and work closely with these institutions for program and curriculum development. For example, SIAST has very strong ties to the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT) which began before SIIT had credit granting status, and now continues since SIIT often adapts SIAST programs for their Aboriginal students. SIAST also works closely with the Dumont Technical

Institute (DTI) and the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) to develop programs for their Meti students.

7.6 Consultations and Focus Groups with Aboriginal Communities, School Boards and Aboriginal College/Institute Graduates

Colleges and institutes which do not have formal structures in place, organize consultations and focus groups with Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal school boards, teachers, Aboriginal college graduates, First Nations Bands, Tribal Councils and Aboriginal organizations to obtain community stakeholder input for the development of college/institute strategic plans and Aboriginal initiatives, services or programs. For example, NBCC recently initiated an internal exercise on Aboriginal Training and Service Delivery where resource persons from the Aboriginal community (both on and off-reserve) have been invited to participate.

7.7 Administrators and Staff of College/Institute Aboriginal Service Areas

The administrators and staff of Aboriginal service areas or departments at mainstream institutions also have a role in facilitating the planning and development of Aboriginal programs and services. These service areas or departments are responsible for liaising with First Nations regarding program and service development, and as the respondent from Camosun College indicated, “the First Nations Education and Services (FNES) Chair acts as the internal voice of the Aboriginal community.” In the case of institutions with Aboriginal advisory structures in place, the administrators of these departments are also responsible for supporting and seeking the input of these structures for program and service development and renewal. In some institutions, the administrators of these departments report directly to the Vice President Academic and have a voice at the Academic Management table.

The staff of these departments or services areas contribute to program development by maintaining continuous liaison with Aboriginal communities and groups to gather suggestions for new programs or for the enhancement of programs and services.

7.8 Aboriginal Faculty and Instructors

Aboriginal faculty and instructors have an important role in the development of new Aboriginal programs and services. Instructors of Aboriginal ancestry and instructors sensitive to the needs of Aboriginal students are also responsible for curriculum development in their own instructional areas, with support and guidance from Aboriginal advisory structures at colleges and institutes.

At Nunavut Arctic College, Community Adult Educators have an important role in identifying community needs and informing campus directors who then integrate them into campus plans, for program planning and development, but also institutional planning. For example, not all courses in the college calendar are offered every year, depending on what communities identify as needs and the availability of third party funding.

8. Community-based and On-reserve Program Delivery

Community-based and on-reserve program delivery is viewed as an effective way to reach Aboriginal learners, facilitate access to post-secondary programs and also contribute to community development. Colleges and institutes are well positioned to deliver community-

based and on-reserve programs because with their reach in smaller cities and towns across the country, they are already in close proximity to many Aboriginal communities and reserves. Community out-reach and partnership for the development and delivery of education and training programs is also at the core of how colleges and institutes do business. As such it is not surprising that when developing programs and services for Aboriginal learners, institutions are working very closely with Aboriginal community representatives, leaders, Elders, school boards, employers and Aboriginal graduates of their programs who have returned to their communities to work.

Community-based delivery enables Aboriginal learners from more isolated communities to begin their post-secondary education within their own community thus allowing them to keep their community support networks and reduce the financial burden of living far from home. Since many colleges and institutes are still within a relatively short commute from many Aboriginal communities, community-based programs can often ladder or bridge into higher level college/institute programs, or even university programs through the many articulation and university transfer agreements in place in a number of provinces and territories.

Colleges and institutes were asked to explain how they identify education and training needs within the Aboriginal communities and reserves they serve, identify best practices and explain how programs are aligned with community needs.

Colleges and institutes identify community needs for training and education through a number of different approaches, including:

- Direct dialogue with Aboriginal community partners, agencies, education authorities and First/Nation and Band administration;
- Staff and administrators of Aboriginal service areas or departments within mainstream institutions;
- Aboriginal advisory structures;
- Program advisory committees;
- Learner/student centred approach to developing programs;
- College/institute contract training services;
- Ongoing relationships with Aboriginal community partners;
- Regular meetings, consultations and focus groups with First Nations Bands, Band Education and Training Officers, communities and Aboriginal organizations to discuss education and training needs;
- Faculty contacts with Aboriginal communities;
- Liaison with primary and secondary schools in Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal school boards;
- Surveys and labour market studies at the regional or community level;
- Environmental scanning to identify opportunities and possibilities that are researched and considered for implementation.

The innovative practices described in the box below highlight some of the main outcomes and impacts of community-based delivery of programs. Colleges and institutes affirmed that the

programs designed specifically for Aboriginal students are done in complete cooperation with Aboriginal communities to ensure they are in line with learners', community, and regional development, and labour market needs. This type of programming contributes significantly to Aboriginal community development by providing much needed education and training opportunities for future employment as well as role modeling for children and youth. As one respondent indicated:

"Staff work closely with Aboriginal Education Counsellors to ensure services are geared specifically to students in transition. Students are supported by a network of faculty, staff and counsellors (from their home communities). Many graduates get jobs in their home communities. More and more often we are welcoming children of past graduates to our college community. We see first-hand the positive effects that a post-secondary education can have for family and community."

Exemplary Practices for the Identification of Aboriginal Community Needs and Community Delivery
<p>➤ Assiniboine Community College The Aboriginal Community Development Program was developed to address the needs within the Aboriginal community. The major contact with Aboriginal communities has been in the Health and Human Services Areas, where the college has partnered with the communities to deliver Practical Nursing, Health Care Aid and Early Childhood Education in the Communities. The main goal of these projects is to meet labour market needs by training community members and keeping them in the community.</p> <p>➤ Confederation College Confederation College relies on direct dialogue with its partners, that is, Aboriginal communities, agencies, educational authorities and First Nation/Band administrations. The college relies on focus groups and surveys around specific projects and program development initiatives. The membership of the Negahneewin Council which is diverse and representative of all Aboriginal groups, urban, rural and reserve based is also an important resource and support mechanism for the identification of Aboriginal community needs. The college has a great coherence with Aboriginal community needs and community development through the inclusive consultative model with the Negahneewin Council, with focus groups locally and regionally, and direct work with communities directly, for example, remote fly - in communities. The college developed an applied degree in Indigenous Leadership and Community Development using a strong consultation model that was targeted regionally and seeks direct input and feedback to ensure the appropriateness of new implementation approaches</p> <p>➤ Fanshawe College Individual First Nations make requests for specific training they would like to offer on-site in the First Nations communities. Also, the College completed a Human Resource Strategy for the London District Chiefs Council which provided an overall human resource strategy as well as individual strategies for the seven (7) local First Nations communities.</p> <p>➤ Grant MacEwan College Based on community consultation, the Aboriginal Police Studies and Mental Health Programs were created. The college and the stakeholder groups worked collaboratively in the development of these programs to ensure that the curriculum met the needs of the community as well as ensuring student success. Critical to this development, was the inclusiveness and consultation with the Aboriginal community and other stakeholders. The programs have continued to work closely with the Aboriginal community through Advisory committees to ensure community involvement.</p>

Exemplary Practices for the Identification of Aboriginal Community Needs and Community Delivery

Through such partnerships with Aboriginal communities we have ensured that the needs of the community are met and that students are successful. Because of these successes, students serve as role models for other Aboriginal youth. This encourages them to pursue post-secondary and other careers they may not have thought about. The result is community development enrichment.

➤ **John Abbott College**

The NURSES Project, a collaboration between Kahnawake and John Abbott College started in 2002-2003 and is designed to address the community's vision of having Kahnawakero:non as primary caregivers and to increase the number of nurses in the community. The project was initiated by Kahnawake community members who developed a publicity campaign to generate interest in nursing as a career. Candidates applied and were interviewed to elicit academic qualifications, career goals, motivation and commitment. The college supports the project through the services of the Aboriginal Student Resource Centre. Originally, the community organizing committee contacted the college to deliver the program which was designed collaboratively. The project's design included a two semester preparatory program given in the community (with some labs at the college) followed by the regular 3 year nursing program at the college. Specialized support services have been maintained throughout the program and most of the students are now completing their second year of nursing. The preparatory program allowed students to:

- complete prerequisites for nursing
- gain skills for success at college
- take some general education courses (English, Humanities)
- take preparatory course in French and Biology
- become familiar with the college and the college-level work load
- take one nursing course.

This project meets a community need and provides opportunities to increase cultural awareness within the college.

➤ **Keyano College**

The Department of Adult Education makes frequent visits, sits on various community committees and acts as a valuable educational resource to communities. Needs assessment tools are used during community visits. The college contributes to community development by evolving programs to meet local needs. For example, with the expansion of oil sands development closer to aboriginal communities, Keyano College has developed on-site pre-trades programs to allow students to prepare for the apprenticeship entrance exams and is working with local industry and other partners to assist students in obtaining apprenticeships. The college is also piloting mobile delivery of trades training at the Suncor work site.

➤ **Cégep de St-Félicien**

Cégep de St-Félicien has a long tradition of partnerships with First Nations communities in Quebec. In 1996, the cégep began working with the Cree Regional Administration, the Kativik Regional Administration, the Association of Aboriginal Women of Quebec and representatives from different First Nations in order to develop a program for Aboriginal Early Childhood Educators. This training program leads to a college certificate recognized by the Ministère de l'Éducation, Loisirs et Sports (Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sport), as well as the Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine (Ministry of Families, Seniors and Status of Women).

This program has been offered in Aboriginal communities of Quebec and Inuit communities of Nunavut for up to 10 years. The training program is based on a competency based approach. The success of this program is based on its relevance, the capacity to adapt to local situations, on the quality of the support provided to instructors and students, as well as on the partnerships which are created with the early childhood centres and related community-based services.

Exemplary Practices for the Identification of Aboriginal Community Needs and Community Delivery

To date, the 1455 hour program, which is taught over an intensive 14 month period (including seasonal breaks) has been delivered up to fifty (50) times resulting in more than 500 graduates. The program is considered an essential element for the establishment of professional early childhood learning and daycare services in First Nations and Inuit communities.

➤ **Sault College**

In 2003, Native specific programs at Sault College were suspended for review. Recommendations for new programming was based on extensive consultations with various stakeholder groups/individuals at conferences, workshops and meetings as well as via telephone, email government reports and past reports from the college. Based on this information, Sault College was able to align its new programming to meet the identified needs of the Aboriginal community. The programs and services offered contribute to Aboriginal community development in that students are acquiring the necessary skill sets, knowledge and confidence to become employable within their own communities as identified by Aboriginal stakeholders.

➤ **Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies**

The Meadow Lake Campus of SIIT in collaboration with the Tribal Council identified and developed a program for Process Operation Technicians. This was identified as a need by community employers, first for their Oriented Strand Board Plant, then for the forestry and lumber industries. The Tribal Council and SIIT organized a campaign to build a million dollar boiler lab. With such a facility, SIIT and the community have experienced many positive spin-offs such that they have been able to expand the use of the facility by other sectors and employers such as power engineering. In addition, industry sends staff to the facility for retraining on a contract basis with SIIT.

➤ **Yukon College**

Yukon College has community campuses located in most Yukon communities. Small communities in the Yukon are predominantly First Nations communities. Campus coordinators are in constant contact with the local First Nations governments to learn of their needs for education and training. Community Campus Committees and program advisory committees typically include First Nations elders or other First Nations representatives. The Director of First Nations Initiatives liaises with First Nations to develop programs and services.

Yukon College strives to support First Nations governments and communities in the implementation of their Land Claims and Self-Government Agreements by providing education and training. Yukon College also strives to include First Nations worldviews in educational processes (for example, courses in the English program include a Survey of First Nations Literature, courses in the Criminology program include Aboriginal Justice, etc). Courses and programs are offered in First Nations communities as needs are identified, such as trades programs when a construction project is anticipated in the community, or office administration programs to build capacity for self-government. Yukon College programs and services are very well aligned with First Nations community needs. In fact, with 42% of our student body being First Nations, the needs of First Nations and the needs of Yukon College students are not really different from one another.

9. College/Institute Partnerships for The Delivery Of Programs And Services

Colleges and institutes are responding to the needs of Aboriginal learners within their communities by becoming involved in different formal and informal partnerships at the community, regional, provincial and even pan-Canadian levels. Responding colleges and institutes identified 6 different types of partnerships in which they are involved for the delivery of

programs and services which benefit Aboriginal learners. Examples of these types of partnerships are provided below.

Partnerships between Aboriginal and Mainstream Institutions

The Assembly of First Nations advocates for the need to recognize and increase support for Aboriginal institutes, and enable them to develop alliances with other PSE institutions in the form of accreditation, articulation and affiliation agreements.

As indicated in sections 2.6 and 4, Aboriginal-controlled institutions are required to work through mainstream institutions to gain access to funding and to provide their learners with the post-secondary credentials they are seeking. Based on an interview the Aboriginal Institutes Consortium (AIC), which represents the eight Aboriginal institutions in Ontario, it is clear that alliances and partnerships between Aboriginal and mainstream institutions must also be made more equitable and balanced so that Aboriginal-controlled institutions have access to adequate resources and funding for meet the increasing demands for their programs and services by Aboriginal people. AIC member institutions are receiving increasing demands for their services by Aboriginal people within their communities and regions, enrolments and the demand for community-based post-secondary education and training continue to grow at rates that cannot be met by Aboriginal institutions.

Over half of respondent mainstream institutions indicated that they offer career and technical programs in partnerships with Aboriginal post-secondary institutions. There is clearly a need to enhance these partnerships to make them more equitable, so that both Aboriginal and mainstream institutions can collaborate more to better serve Aboriginal learners who are seeking out their programs and services.

First Nations Governments, Bands, Tribal Councils, Métis Organizations

Colleges and institutes, both mainstream and Aboriginal, have partnerships with First Nations Governments, Bands, Tribal Councils and Métis organizations for the delivery of community-based training, largely through contract training arrangements, collaboration and input for college/institute program development and delivery, involvement in Aboriginal advisory structures, and Aboriginal student support services to assist students with financial assistance mechanisms provided through First Nations Bands, Tribal Councils and Aboriginal organizations.

Some examples of these types of partnerships include:

Assiniboine Community College

A partnership with the Manitoba Métis Federation for the delivery of Health Care Aide training front ended by academic upgrading. In addition, Practical Nursing programs in Thompson and Berens River, front-ended by academic upgrading, and Early Childhood Education programs in several programs.

University College of the Fraser Valley (UCFV)

UCFV has a partnership with the following First Nations Bands for the delivery of programs:

- Sto:lo First Nation community for Halq' meylem language courses and Social Services Diploma;
- Seabird Island Band to deliver an Early Childhood education program;
- Chehalis First Nation for a Substance Abuse Counselling Certificate Program;
- Institute for Indigenous Government for an Associate degree in Social Work.

Sault College

The Native Education and Training Council at Sault College is committed to providing Native Education at Sault College in order to ensure that the seven generations hereafter of Native People will have Native culturally appropriate and controlled education available to them. Membership of the council consists of representatives from the following areas: (a) Indian Friendship Centre (b) Batchewana First Nation (c) Métis community (d) Garden River First Nation (e) Michipicoten First Nation (f) Nishnawbe Aski Nation (g) North Shore Tribal Council (h) Missanabie Cree First Nation (i) Anishnaabek Credit Union (j) Off reserve Native community member (k) Native Student Association

Aboriginal School Boards

College and institute partnerships with Aboriginal school boards are largely for the purpose of providing post-secondary education transition programs and support services for students from the communities served by those school boards. For example:

John Abbott College

John Abbott College in Montreal has two partnerships with Aboriginal school boards:

- with the Kativik School Board for the delivery of a college adaptation program for Inuit students offered at the college, and for which students take Inuktitut as their language requirement;
- with the Cree School Board to offer services to post-secondary students at the college.

Camosun College

Camosun College works in partnership with the Saanich Indian School Board on a number of initiatives including:

- indigenizing a culinary arts program;
- delivery of Adult Basic Education programs;
- development of a First Nations Studies Summer Institute for International students, for which the Saanich Indian School Board will provide all the cultural education and teachings, and the development and ownership of this curriculum will rest entirely with Saanich Indian School Board.

Industry and Employers

Over half of respondent institutions confirmed that they offer career and technical programs in conjunction with industry and community employers to address community or regional skills shortages in key economic sectors such as construction trades, oil and gas, mining, hydro, tourism and hospitality, as well as nursing and early childhood education. Industry and employer funded contract training and covers subject areas such as: employability skills, computer skills, management development, safety training, and career training.

Industries such as oil and gas and mining companies located across the country, from Nova Scotia to Alberta, and the three northern territories, are intent in having Aboriginal people work with them and to provide services to Aboriginal communities. Although this is in part because the pipelines, oil sands and mines cross through Aboriginal land, this also provides interesting employment and community development opportunities for Aboriginal people. Colleges and institutes are positioned to facilitate Aboriginal people's participation in some of these key economic sectors because they are already providing trades and technology programs which would serve these sectors. In order to be successful with Aboriginal learners there is clearly a

need for mainstream institutions to indigenize these programs, however in many cases industry is prepared to support the development and delivery of such programs.

Some examples of industry and employer partnerships include:

Heritage College

Heritage College provides industry training for the James Bay Hydro Quebec facility by delivering a Hydro Technologist Program.

Northwest Community College

Northwest Community College in partnership with the Haisla Nana Kila society and Alcan Primary Metals delivers two university courses (cultural geography and anthropology) in the Kitlope area which is the last pristine rainforest in the world. The courses are delivered through a field studies program that includes the Haisla elders and watchmen as well as a trip into Alcan's plant. Students spend up to five days in the field with the elders, watchmen and professors.

Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC)

The oil and gas industry is supporting a program delivered by NSCC called "Techsploration" which aims to introduce Aboriginal girls from grades 9 to 11 to skilled trades occupations. Through the program, students work with a role model between November to April and learn about a specific job. They then hold a 'conference' during which they present what they learned about the job to other girls. This program exposes girls to a potential career but also teaches them about occupational research and public speaking. The college tracks the students through high school and then they become eligible for industry-sponsored scholarships. This program operates in 4 Aboriginal schools and 12 euro-descent schools. The industry is also interested in developing a program for Aboriginal boys.

Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies

The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT) and Boeing, the world's leading aerospace company, have signed an agreement that will dramatically strengthen the Institute's capacity to prepare First Nations youth for information technology and other technology-based jobs in high demand in the Canadian labour market. Boeing is equipping SIIT with the latest computer technology to replace aging equipment: 330 new PCs, as well as printers, servers and complementary hardware to permit a major upgrade of the Institute's technology infrastructure. In addition, Boeing has arranged expert training in database and network management for SIIT's Information Technology program instructors, delivered by faculty from the Center for the Application of Information Technology (CAIT) which is part of Washington University located in St. Louis, Missouri.

Vancouver Community College (VCC)

VCC has partnered with Bell Canada to offer a summer institute for Aboriginal high school students who are interested in Health/Science careers, to begin in summer 2005. The objective of this program is to connect Aboriginal students to the Health field, make them aware of the range of opportunities and careers available through VCC and other post-secondary institutions, and help them establish career goals.

Other Post-Secondary Institutions

Aboriginal institutions and colleges serving northern regions and territories have partnerships with universities for university transfer and joint degree programs in the following fields: Business Administration, Child Care, Law, Nursing, Social Work and Teacher Education. These programs enable Aboriginal learners to either complete the entire program at the colleges/institutes or begin in their home region or territory and transfer to the partner university for the last one or two years of the degree program.

Nunavut Arctic College is a very active member of the University of the Arctic, which is a network of institutions of higher education and Aboriginal organizations that want to increase education opportunities for people in the circum polar world. Through this partnership Nunavut Arctic College offers access to a Bachelor of Circum Polar Studies program. All University of the Arctic partner institutions own the curriculum and can work collaboratively with other institutions to deliver the programs.

Provincial and Federal Government Departments

Colleges and institutes also partner with provincial and federal government departments to deliver programs which support government efforts at promoting Aboriginal employment. For example:

Grant MacEwan College

Grant MacEwan College has a strong partnership with the Alberta Solicitor General. The college was approached to develop a program to improve the success of Aboriginal youth wanting police/security careers. As a result, the college has worked collaboratively with reserves and settlements, Aboriginal, municipal and federal police services, First Nations and Métis funding agencies, as well as other key stakeholder groups. This program has been extremely successful and has led to partnerships with other provinces and territories.

Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC)

NSCC has a partnership with Maritime Forces Atlantic to deliver a Diversity Student Outreach Program. The aim of this program is to introduce grades 11 and 12 high school students from the four designated groups (Women, Visible Minorities, Persons with Disabilities, and Aboriginals), to the Department of National Defence work environment. The program had the participation of 19 schools, including two located in First Nations communities. The program includes an orientation to Maritime Forces Atlantic, a workshop on career development, a visit onboard a naval ship, and tours of various occupations. Each student will use a 'skills passport' to explore occupational fields throughout the week, including: administration, business planning, clerical, computer systems, engineering, electronics, general labour trades, ship repair trades, contract administration, ship's crews and officers. Afterwards the students can be selected for an 8 week summer placement with DND to gain on the job experience in their targeted field. Based on the youth apprenticeship model, they are followed through high school and the following year they can apply to college in the appropriate program, knowing that upon graduation from the college program they are guaranteed a job with DND. The program also had the cooperation of the Public Service Commission which waved the regular requirements for entering the public service for participants in this program. This is an excellent example of a structured pathways approach.

10. Enhancing College and Institute Aboriginal Programs and Services

Colleges and institutes were asked to provide perspectives on how college and institute programs can be enhanced. The richness of the responses from mainstream and Aboriginal institutions demonstrates the depth of reflection many institutions are engaged in to better address the needs of Aboriginal learners living in their communities and regions. College and institute responses are categorized according to practices, approaches and policies adopted to address issues of student retention and program completion and to facilitate Aboriginal student introduction to and participation in the labour market. A third category is included to capture the suggestions which would be cross-cutting and include improvement of colleges' and institutes' general systems and policies.

How to enhance practices, approaches, services and programs aimed at student retention and program completion:

- **Enhance Aboriginal student recruitment initiatives by:**
 - Ensuring there are dedicated aboriginal recruitment services and staff, ideally at each college/institute campus responsible for serving Aboriginal learners.
 - Assisting students make better course selections and ensure they have the essential skills for the program and eventual career.

- Offering to participate in career fairs and speak to high school students and their parents, with the understanding that this requires funding for travel to remote areas.
 - Offering an aboriginal ambassador program where current aboriginal students do presentations, community visits, trade shows in order to recruit aboriginal students.
- **Increase the number of Aboriginal staff and faculty at colleges and institutes**
- **Enhance the capacity of faculty and staff to work with Aboriginal learners by:**
 - Ensuring faculty and staff have a better understanding of Aboriginal culture by offering mandatory diversity training for faculty and staff.
 - Increasing staff sensitivity to issues of systemic racism and poverty facing many Aboriginal learners.
 - Increase professional development for faculty in Aboriginal institutions.
- **Enhance college/institute capacity to deliver community-based programs by:**
 - Ensuring Aboriginal communities provide input for the development of community programs and services.
 - Providing more resources to consult and work in partnership with the aboriginal communities to review services and develop and re-package programs.
 - Building partnerships and integrating services with Aboriginal organizations and service providers, for example, meeting regularly with AHRDA, employment and training counsellors.
- **Enhance Aboriginal student retention and success services at colleges and institutes by:**
 - Providing for dedicated student retention services and staff that would focus on individualized education planning and tracking for success.
 - Providing for greater Elder involvement in student success and retention initiatives.
 - Developing special transitions programs and services to improve retention and completion.
 - Building capacity and a sense of community on campus for Aboriginal learners.
 - Offering mentor or buddy programs during students' first year.
 - Organizing activities that connect Aboriginal students to the community and campus.
 - Developing retention strategies which address Aboriginal students' non-academic challenges, related to the impact on students' families and community. This could include support services such as daycare, family counselling, grief and abuse issues.

- Providing adequate and higher profile gathering places for Aboriginal students.
- Offering regular, even weekly, meetings between student success counsellors and Aboriginal learners, follow-ups when significant absences occur, study and homework support mechanisms.
- Increase the level of tutoring.
- Developing curriculum and delivering a supplemental course on how to study at the post-secondary level, including how to write papers, reading and writing skills.
- Providing peer-assisted study sessions.
- Providing adequate student housing and support to find housing, in particular family and couples' accommodation as many Aboriginal students go to college with dependents.
- **Enhance education and program delivery by:**
 - Creating and developing preparatory courses for trades programs.
 - Improving curriculum content and delivery by moving to learning outcomes approaches and ensuring programs are more culturally relevant with more Aboriginal knowledge.
 - Revising mainstream college/institute programs that serve a high Aboriginal population, such as Social Work, Child and Youth Care, to ensure they are inclusive and reflect the contributions of Aboriginal Peoples.
 - Offering more programming specific to languages, history and culture of Aboriginal peoples.
 - Ensuring adequate literacy programming is offered.
 - Looking at improved models of delivery. Currently the main options are campus-based or community-based. Hybrid models could be considered which combine campus, community and perhaps some distance delivery to increase students' access to postsecondary.
 - Retooling program advisory committees to make them more current and increase their effectiveness.
 - Providing more funds for access or bridging programs in order to ensure better success rates.
 - Providing more funds for distance education program to reach more Aboriginal learners in rural and remote regions.

Enhance practices, approaches, services and programs aimed at facilitating Aboriginal students' introduction to and participation in the labour market by:

- Developing mentor programs with graduates from college and institute programs or with tradespersons or professionals already working in careers related to students' field of study.
- Introducing work-based learning within Aboriginal communities.
- Fostering stronger linkages with industry and business.

- Ensuring programs focus on available career opportunities.
- Working more closely with employers in developing programs that would enhance Aboriginal employment.
- Developing work/study programs and arranging internships in Aboriginal organizations.
- Maintaining links with Aboriginal institutions and organizations and finding ways for students to participate in research projects in their communities.
- Providing job coaching services.
- Improving career planning for adult learners.
- Providing sufficient resources to provide career and employment specific services for Aboriginal student labour market participation.
- Providing more direct links to employment and better long-term follow-up with graduates.
- Increasing workplace programs for Aboriginal students, in particular more on-reserve programs for which there are jobs on reserve or close to reserve.
- Adopting a “Structured Pathways” approach whereby students are already introduced to jobs related to their field of study, and support in finding work. This approach is based on the premise that learning is enhanced when there are more direct links to students’ eventual careers, or even knowing that upon program completion they will have a job.
- Work closely with Aboriginal high schools in the area of career planning so that students are able to make more informed decisions about their post-secondary programs.

Cross-cutting suggestions proposed by colleges and institutes for the enhancement of Aboriginal programs and services:

- Develop an institution wide strategic plan for Aboriginal education that will address the development of programs and services aimed at improving Aboriginal student success.
- Ensure college and institute policies are congruent with Aboriginal needs, culture and ways of knowing.
- Improve practices and systems for identifying Aboriginal learners at mainstream institutions.
- Improve access to learner and program funding.
- Working proactively to identify risks before they happen.
- Provide effective institutional research services which have the capacity to collect college/institute enrolment statistics and conduct labour market and training needs assessments which compare employers’ needs to college/ institute enrolment participation trends, and employment trends of college/institute aboriginal graduates to help ensure that Aboriginal graduates will attach to the labour market. This type of service should also analyze barriers to participation, reasons for dropping out, etc. and this information can help to develop more tutorial sessions, financial and personal counselling, daycare facilities etc.
- Conduct environmental scans and specific needs assessments to support new and improved initiatives.

- Maximize success stories of college and institute Aboriginal graduates through recruitment initiatives.
- Organize more focus groups and consultations with successful students as well as with those students who were unable to complete.
- Ensure college/institute administrators, faculty and staff have a good understanding of Aboriginal culture, values, traditions and customs.
- Increase in funding for more Aboriginal-specific support services, education and training programs and career counselling and support.

11. Lessons Learned

Through the survey and interviews, colleges and institutes identified lessons learned based on their experience in delivering Aboriginal programs and services. These lessons learned touch upon a diverse number of Aboriginal issues and program and service areas offered by institutions.

At a broad level, colleges and institutes affirmed that:

- Aboriginal control is imperative to ensuring the goals and aspirations of Aboriginal people are maintained.
- There is a growing awareness that the non-Aboriginal population of students, faculty, and administrative people need to be further educated about destructive colonial histories and current realities that continue to impoverish Aboriginal peoples. There is a need to increase awareness that colleges and institutes are actively supportive of Aboriginal peoples.
- It is important to recognize the value and importance of relationships, building relationships with students, administration with faculty, institution with stakeholders. Relationships are very important in Aboriginal cultures where people are used to knowing who they work with. As such, open and two way communication is essential.
- Successful programs and services require commitment from the entire college community.

Some more specific lessons learned identified by participating institutions are provided for student recruitment, student retention, student services, education and training programs, college/institute faculty, staff and administrators, funding, and partnerships.

Student Recruitment

- Student recruitment initiatives must begin with high school students early on, in Grade 8 or 9 to expose youth to career options early enough in high school so that they work towards obtaining the prerequisites required for targeted career paths.
- Student recruitment efforts should help to ensure that students are not set up for failure by being accepted into programs when they do not have the skills to succeed.
- For Aboriginal students and communities to benefit from college/institute programs, they need more Aboriginal role models, students and employees. College/institute graduates need to be more present as role models in Aboriginal communities.

Student Retention

- Some key factors for Aboriginal student retention are to provide a safe learning environment, free from racism, strong student services, and support to find housing.
- From a college perspective it is important that the learning environment is respectful and positive but it is also forgiving of mistakes, and it has a sense of being non-threatening and encourages students to do self evaluation in addition to the traditional write a test evaluation. If we want institutions where students are most successful we have to get over the assumption that there is right and wrong. In institutions where Aboriginal students are most successful, the learning environment is much more supportive of a developmental approach to education where people are encouraged to make mistakes and learn from them and not penalized for making mistakes.

Support Services

- Ideally, institutions need to:
 - Develop a high profile, stand-alone Aboriginal services area that is knowledgeable of and responsive to academic, emotional, spiritual, and physical needs of Aboriginal students.
 - Provide extensive financial services, including liaison with student funding agencies, a good portfolio of Aboriginal-specific awards and bursaries, and emergency money to provide to students in crisis.
 - Ensure that community and culture is reflected back to Aboriginal students through the presence of Aboriginal art and artefacts on mainstream campuses.
 - Organize Aboriginal cultural and community sports activities for all college students to foster student engagement.

Education and Training Programs

- For colleges and institutes serving Aboriginal populations it is important that programs:
 - recognize the need for holistic programs that engage the body, mind and spirit; and
 - achieve a balance between western and Aboriginal knowledge and values and acknowledge both knowledge systems.
- For more effective programs for adult learners, courses should include more Aboriginal materials for adult learners on subjects such as Aboriginal life, history and culture.
- Find additional ways to incorporate Aboriginal worldviews and contemporary issues into the curriculum. This means active participation on the part of non Aboriginal staff and students to learn about Aboriginal Peoples' cultures and perspectives. Colleges and institutes have a responsibility for creating some of these opportunities for learning.
- Pay attention to details: for example in designing Aboriginal-specific programs one college learned that there were special holidays outside the regular statutory holidays. These are important considerations when preparing syllabus and setting class dates and times. In another case learners needed and wanted to return home for lunch this was important to know in scheduling the day.

- Provide bridging or access programs before technical programs.
- Show flexibility and keep an open mind to new ways of delivering curriculum and dealing with students.
- Even though it is important to take a non traditional approach to evaluation that involves peer evaluation, self evaluation and other practical means of evaluation, which should not in any way result in lower expectations of academic performance. It is very important that an institution demand a high level of academic achievement. But there are many different ways to get there, institutions need to pay attention to learning differences and how people learn and provide personal support when it is needed.
- Qualifying candidates according to transcripts is not sufficient as some students do not have the reading and math levels to succeed at the post-secondary level. Sometimes they have been too long away from school to have the learning habits needed for success.
- Remain current and up to date in program offerings.
- Ensure that students have the opportunity to study their own community's needs and to see themselves and their communities reflected in curriculum, not just in Aboriginal programs, but across the board.
- Indigenize curriculum by including Aboriginal content, knowledge, and perspective.
- Provide students within opportunities to ladder to other studies or careers.
- Integrate Aboriginal and Métis history courses into programs so that Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal students have a better understanding of Canadian history, which begins with Aboriginal history, including treaty rights, Aboriginal rights, and Métis rights.

Community-based programs

- Ensure the institution has the right motivation for delivering customized training in aboriginal communities, not just for revenue generation but because it is the right thing to do to meet community needs
- In order to deliver effective community-based training, colleges and institutes need to:
 - involve Aboriginal community members from the beginning in the planning and delivery of services and programs;
 - maintain strong linkages with Aboriginal communities, hold regular consultations and continue to communicate with graduates who are working in their communities.

College/Institute Faculty, Staff and Administrators

- Prepare the college/institute community for the proposed increases in Aboriginal students, as well as new Aboriginal programming and services. In order for Aboriginal students to feel welcome and included, Aboriginal cultures also have to be welcomed and included. An innovative practice in this area is provided by Georgian College through the Native Way Training (12 full days) provided to all of the Senior Management, before any services or programs were ever brought on board. This was a clear demonstration that the College was committed to the Aboriginal community. This was only the first of such training opportunities and Georgian College continues to provide this type of training as much as possible to both staff and students.

- Institutions need to acknowledge that racism does exist and must work to ensure that new faculty and student success staff receive cross-cultural and anti-discrimination training, and include cross-cultural skills and knowledge as a core competency for college/institute staff.
- Hire Aboriginal faculty who are knowledgeable about and experienced with Aboriginal communities and issues.
- It is important that college and institute administrators have sensitivity and support the consultative approaches required for working effectively with Aboriginal communities.

Program and Service Funding

- Ensure that the decision making and budgeting process related to Aboriginal programming and services is transparent and open to the Aboriginal community.

Partnerships

- Building and developing partnerships is key, and how to take care of those partnerships so that they mean more than just financial arrangements.
- It is important that institutions that partner with the Aboriginal communities have a shared vision and shared resource, financial base.

Words of Wisdom

- Maintain a balanced approach to new initiatives: respecting the past while planning the future. "The teachings of the circle."
- Absolutely - be learner-centered!
- Share and maintain complete openness.
- Understand the funding complexities.
- Listen.
- Don't assume.
- Have a long term commitment.
- Develop a sense of community within the college/institute.
- Students need to feel accepted and missed if they are not attending.
- Raise the bar, students will rise to the challenge.
- Make time for the students, they are the reason we are here.
- Remember and acknowledge that there are many First Nations within provinces, on and off reserves, and each one has its own needs and expectations.
- Understand differences between mainstream and Aboriginal student needs/expectations.

We look at our work as evolving. It is a work in progress. We cannot be positional but can remain principled in our approaches. We have worked hard to neutralize the political influence and interference factors although this is difficult. We have tried to cultivate our own sense of leadership in post secondary education and are actively de-segregating

ourselves in this larger mainstream educational environment. We are committed to transforming this learning environment to enable all of us to explore and expand upon Aboriginal and Canadian discourse. We know that it will not be easy but we are determined to make changes. We are not merely interested in maintaining the status quo or in adaptation of educational models; rather, we recognize that we are responsible to build them.

Confederation College

12. Conclusion

Given the demographic reality of an increasing and younger Aboriginal population in Canada, one of the most important issues for colleges and institutes today is the urgent need for greater participation of Aboriginal learners. Key areas of focus include the overarching premise of Aboriginal control of education, as well as learner access, success and retention, and overall Aboriginal community development.

“With 30,000 Aboriginal graduates in Canada – a huge improvement from a decade ago – and the impact of the increasing age of the workforce and impending skills gaps, we need to realize the goal of accessibility to post-secondary education. To do so, we need to work with government in terms of treaty and Aboriginal rights, increasing institutional capacities and working with other colleges and institutes to ensure that there is adequate programming for First Nations students. Colleges and institutes have the opportunity to respond to regional needs more immediately than any other institutions in Canada, and the needs of Aboriginal communities are regionalized, to some extent, both on- and off-reserves. “

Bob Watts, Chief of Staff, Assembly of First Nations, speaking to college and institute Presidents, November 2004

Mainstream and Aboriginal colleges and institutes across Canada must continue to reach out to form partnerships with Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal institutes with a view to providing the education, training and skills development that enable Aboriginal people to contribute to the economic and social development of Aboriginal communities and Canada as a whole. Colleges and institutes must also enhance Aboriginal student retention through culturally appropriate counselling and support services, seeking and making use of student input and having more Aboriginal faculty so students feel understood and supported in the challenges they are facing while attending colleges and institutes.

ACCC must also continue to form partnerships at the pan-Canadian and regional levels with a view to supporting colleges' and institutes' efforts at providing more effective programs and services for Aboriginal learners. This includes supporting exchanges of innovative practices, providing opportunities for colleges and institutes to dialogue with federal government departments, national and regional Aboriginal organizations and amongst themselves. This report is only an initial step in this process.

Appendix A

Participating Colleges

British Columbia

Camosun College

Capilano College

University College of the Fraser Valley

Kwantlen University College

Langara College

Malaspina University College

College of New Caledonia

Nicola Valley Institute of Technology

North Island College

Northwest Community College

College of the Rockies

Selkirk College

Vancouver Community College

Alberta

Bow Valley College

Grant MacEwan College

Keyano College

Lakeland College

Lethbridge Community College

Mount Royal College

Northern Alberta Institute of Technology

Norquest College

Portage College

SAIT Polytechnic

Saskatchewan

Cumberland Regional College

Cypress Hills Regional College

North West Regional College

Parkland Regional College

Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology

Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies

Manitoba

Assiniboine Community College

Red River College

University College of the North

Ontario

Algonquin College

College d'Alfred

Cambrian College

Canadore College

Confederation College

Fanshawe College

Fleming College

Georgian College

Lambton College

Loyalist College

Mohawk College

Sault College

Seneca College

Quebec

Cegep Abitibi-Temescaming

College Edouard-Montpetit

Heritage College

John Abbott College

Cégep de St-Félicien

Cégep de Sainte Foy

Cégep de Sept-Iles

New Brunswick

New Brunswick Community College

Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick

Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia Community College

Nova Scotia Agricultural College

Newfoundland

College of the North Atlantic

Marine Institute

Prince Edward Island

Holland College

Yukon

Yukon College

Northwest Territories

Aurora College

Nunavut

Nunavut Arctic College

Appendix B

Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium Programs 2004-2005

ANISHINABEK EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE

Diploma Programs Accredited Through Cambrian College:

- Native Early Childhood Education
- Native Community Worker: Healing and Wellness
- Aboriginal Business Management
- Anishinabek Governance and Management
- Native Community Care: Counselling and Development - Mental Health & Addictions, Counselling & Treatment
- Aboriginal Lands and Resources Management

Diploma Programs Accredited Through Canadore College

- Social Services Worker: Native
- Personal Support Worker
- Small Communities Maintenance Management
- General Arts & Science

Diploma Programs Accredited Through St. Clair College

- Traditional Aboriginal Healing Methods
- Aboriginal Small Business Management
- Native Early Childhood Education

Professional Development Certificate Courses:

- Native Education Administrators Certificate
- Communication and Facilitation Strategies
- Bekaandendong - Conflict Resolution and Peace Making
- Aboriginal Small Business Management
- Career Education Technician
- Cross Cultural Training
- Native School Trustee Training
- Anishinabek Life Skills Training
- Family Violence Training
- Case Management Training
- Native Early Childhood Classroom Assistant

Youth & Career Programs:

- Vision Quest Camp – Career, Communication and Leadership Training
 - Back on Track Training – Leadership Training
 - Youth Focused Career & Esteem Building Workshops
-

Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute

Second Level Services (indirect services to support education) – Comprehensive School Evaluations, Special Education Services (Psycho-Educational and Speech and Language Assessments), Performance Reviews, Comprehensive School Evaluations, School Improvement Plans, Early Years Program (preschool and early development assessments).

Kenjgewin Teg High School (private school licensed by Ministry of Education) – wide range of credit options, Outdoor Education Program, Co-operative Learning Program and GED preparation

Shki Mawtch Taw-Win En-Mook (The Path to New Beginnings) – Native Studies for elementary and secondary

Science Camp

Aboriginal Teachers Education Program – Two year, part-time, Bachelor of Education or Diploma in Education accredited by Queen's University, Certificate of Qualification by the Ontario College of Teachers

Master of Education – (Two year, part-time studies accredited by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto – begins May 2004)

Business Administration Certificate – (Full-time post-secondary studies program accredited by Cambrian College)

First Nation Development Programs – Certificate Programs by Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute)

- Workplace Communications
- Stay In School Workshop
- Board Development Workshops
- IT Training and Support
- Web Page Design
- Karate
- Strategic Planning Training
- Customer Excellence
- Training the Trainer
- Leadership Training

Teacher Training and Professional Development

- Professional Development for First Nations Schools and PLP credits
 - Naabin (workshops and seminars)
 - Student Support Services
-

IOHAHI:IO AKWESASNE ADULT EDUCATION

Nursing (3-year diploma program in partnership with St. Lawrence College)

Bachelor of Social Work Program (part-time degree program accredited by Carleton University)

Vocational Preparation, Ontario Secondary School Diploma Program (accredited by T. R. Leger, an Alternative Secondary School for Adults, Upper Canada School Board)

Challenges and Opportunities Program – Literacy Program

Early Childhood Education - 2-year diploma program with St. Lawrence College

Human Resource Management Program – 2-year diploma program in partnership with St. Lawrence College

Various General Interest Courses

FIRST NATIONS TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

Aviation (accredited by Humber College)

Aboriginal Media (accredited by Humber College)

Journalism (3 year diploma program accredited by Humber College)

Bachelor of Social Work (partnerships with Ryerson University and the First Nations University of Canada)

Social Service Worker (accredited by St. Lawrence College)

Office Administration (accredited by St. Lawrence College)

Indigenous Community Health Approaches (accredited by St. Lawrence College)

Public Administration in partnership with Ryerson University

Service Excellence

Six Nations Polytechnic

University Programs

- ? [Native University Program](#) (in partnerships with Brock, McMaster, Laurier, Guelph and Waterloo)

College Programs

- ? [Pre-Technology Program](#)
- ? [Paramedic Program](#)
- ? [Early Childhood Education](#)
- ? [Pre-Health Science Program](#)
- ? [Educational Assistants Program -Special Needs Support](#)

Short Term and Part Time Programs

- ? [Advanced Care Paramedic Program](#)
- ? [Palliative Care Program](#)
- ? [Principles of First Nations Schools](#)
- ? [Conversational Cayuga](#)
- ? [Conversational Mohawk](#)

Workshops and Professional Development

- ? [Additional Courses and Upgrading](#)
 - ? [Programs In The Works](#)
-

OGWEHOWEH SKILLS AND TRADES TRAINING CENTRE

Computer Training

Horticulture

Welding

Automotive Service

Pipe Fitter

Understanding Financial Statements

Accounting Basics

OSHKI-PIMACHE-O-WIN EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSTITUTE

- A+ Certification Preparation Program
 - Certificate in Website Development
 - Certificate in Website Development - Online
 - International Computer Driving License (ICDL)
 - Kids Have Stress Too!
 - Microsoft Office XP
 - Native Early Childhood Education Program in collaboration with Cambrian College
 - Ojibway Language - Beginner
 - PLP Courses
 1. Kids Have Stress, Too!
 2. Overview of the Curriculum Units
 3. Elementary Literacy Strategies and Assessment
 4. The Role of Principals
 5. Overview of the Elementary Native Languages Curriculum
 6. Preparing Students for the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test
 7. Policy to Practice: Implementing the Secondary Assessment Policy Part A
 8. Policy to Practice: Implementing the Secondary Assessment Policy Part B
-

Seven Generations Education Institute

Training Programs

Computer Training

Cooperative Learning with Tribes

Anishinaabe Nagamoowin Dewe'iganag Mino Bimaadiziwin: Drum Making and Anishinaabe Songs

College Certificate Programs

Personal Support Worker in partnership with Sault College

Computer Support Analyst Certificate Program

Recreation Worker Program in partnership with Fanshawe College

College Diploma Programs

Computer Systems Technician in partnership with Lambton College

Aboriginal Cultural Interpretation Program in partnership with Sir Sanford Fleming College

Additional Qualifications

Principals of First Nations Schools

Renewable Energy Certificate Program created in partnership with Lambton College

University Diploma Training Program

Aboriginal Teacher Education Program – Primary, Junior Divisions in partnership with Queen's University

University Degree Programs

Bachelor of Arts Credits in partnership with Lakehead University

Bachelor of Social Work Program in partnership with Carleton University

Masters of Social Work

Masters Program through Seven Generations Education Institute

Masters of Indigenous Knowledge/Indigenous Philosophy

Professional Development through Seven Generations Education Institute

Professional Career Leadership Program

True Colors

Survivability Workshop

References

Aboriginal Canada Portal: <http://www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca/acp/site.nsf/en-frames/ao28010.html>

Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada website:
http://www.ahrdcc.com/welcome/welcome_e.htm

Aboriginal Peoples and Post-secondary Education, What Educators have Learned, Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, January 2004.

Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2001- initial findings: Well-being of the non-reserve Aboriginal population, Statistics Canada, September 2003.

Aboriginal Participation in Apprenticeship Making It Work, Report of the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Projects Steering Committee, June 1999.

Aboriginal Post-secondary Education and Labour Market Outcomes, Research & Analysis Directorate, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1996.

Accessing and Completing Apprenticeship Training in Canada, A Report on Consultations, Canadian Apprenticeship Forum, March 2005.

Achieving Potential, Towards Improved Labour Market Outcomes for Aboriginal People, Canada West Foundation, September 2003.

Assembly of First Nations Fact Sheets, AFN website: <http://www.afn.ca/article.asp?id=434>

Basic Departmental Data 2003, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, March 2004.

Canada-Aboriginal Peoples Roundtable, Lifelong Learning (2) Sectoral Follow-up Session, Post-secondary Education and Skills Development, Facilitators Report, November 2004.

2001 Census: analysis series Aboriginal Peoples of Canada: A demographic profile, Statistics Canada, January 2003

2001 Census: analysis series Education in Canada: Raising the standard, Statistics Canada, March 2003.

First Nations Post Secondary Education Review, National Report, Assembly of First Nations, August 25, 2000.

Human Resources and Skill Development website:
http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/epb/sid/cia/aro/aro_info.shtml

Lamontagne, François, *The Aboriginal Workforce : What Lies Ahead, CLBC Commentary*, Canadian Labour and Business Centre, September 2004.

Indian and Northern Affairs website: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/index_e.html

Indian Control of Indian Education, Policy Paper, National Indian Brotherhood/Assembly of First Nations, 1973, 1976, 2001.

Making it Work! On-the-job Training for Aboriginal Apprentices, Canadian Apprenticeship Forum.

Report of the Auditor General of Canada, November 2004