

INDIAN CONTROL OF INDIAN  
EDUCATION

POLICY PAPER

PRESENTED TO THE

MINISTER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN  
DEVELOPMENT

BY THE

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PREFACE</b> .....	iii
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	iv
<b>INDIAN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION</b> .	1
<b>STATEMENT OF VALUES</b> .....	2
<b>ROLE OF PARENTS</b> .....	3
<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b> .....	5
<b>FEDERAL JURISDICTION</b> .....	5
<b>LOCAL CONTROL</b> .....	6
<b>REPRESENTATION ON PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL     SCHOOL BOARDS</b> .....	7
<b>PROGRAMS</b> .....	9
<b>CURRICULUM AND INDIAN VALUES</b> .....	9
<b>Nursery Schools and         Kindergarten</b> .....	11
<b>Junior and Senior High         Schools</b> .....	11
<b>Vocational Training</b> .....	12
<b>Adult Education</b> .....	12
<b>Post-Secondary Education</b> .....	13
<b>Alcohol and Drug Education</b> .....	14
<b>LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION</b> .....	14
<b>CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTRES</b> .....	16

<b>TEACHERS</b> .....	18
<b>TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR TEACHERS     AND COUNSELLORS</b> .....	18
Native Teachers and Counsellors .....	18
Non-Indian Teachers and Counsellors .....	19
<b>INDIAN PARA-PROFESSIONALS</b> .....	20
<b>FACILITIES AND SERVICES</b> .....	21
<b>SUB-STANDARD EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES</b> ....	21
<b>NEW EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES</b> .....	21
<b>EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS</b> .....	21
Residences .....	21
Day Schools .....	22
Group Homes — Hostels .....	23
Denominational Schools .....	23
<b>STAFF</b> .....	24
<b>RESEARCH</b> .....	24
<b>PROBLEMS OF INTEGRATION</b> .....	25
<b>SUMMARY OF INDIAN POSITION ON EDUCATION</b> .....	27
<b>CONCLUDING STATEMENT</b> .....	32
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....	33

## PREFACE

This statement on Education has been prepared for the Working Committee of the Negotiating Committee of the National Indian Brotherhood to be used as a basis for future common action in the area of education.

The issues which have been considered were designated by the Special Committee of the Executive Council of the National Indian Brotherhood, at Yellowknife, N.W.T., May 17, 1972.

This statement has been compiled from provincial and territorial associations' papers or statements on education, and from discussions of representatives of the associations at the Education Workshop, June, 1972.

It is a statement of the:

..... philosophy,  
..... goals,  
..... principles, and  
..... directions

which must form the foundation of any school program for Indian children.

In August, 1972, the General Assembly of the National Indian Brotherhood accepted the policy in principle, subject to certain additions. The final draft was approved by the Executive Council, November, 1972. It was presented to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development on December 21, 1972. In a letter to the President of the National Indian Brotherhood, dated February 2, 1973, the Minister gave official recognition to **INDIAN CONTROL OF INDIAN EDUCATION**, approving its proposals and committing the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to implementing them.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**This paper is based on the many statements prepared on behalf of the Chiefs and Band Councils by the Education Directors of the provincial and territorial Indian organizations over the past years. Acknowledgement is made of the important contribution which the Education Directors have made to this joint policy statement.**

**Thanks are also due to the National Indian Brotherhood's Education Committee which worked to find the common denominators in all of the provincial statements. Members of this Committee are:**

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**Dr. Jacqueline Weitz  
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**A special word of thanks is offered to them for their persistence and patience in correcting the several draft copies which preceded this final approved paper. On behalf of all, I wish to extend particular thanks to Dr. Weitz for her excellent co-ordination of the work, meetings and editing of this history-making document.**

**And finally, the initiative of the Executive Council in launching this endeavour deserves public recognition.**

**George Manuel,  
President  
National Indian Brotherhood.**

**Ottawa, Ontario**

**December, 1972**



## **STATEMENT OF THE INDIAN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

**In Indian tradition each adult is personally responsible for each child, to see that he learns all he needs to know in order to live a good life. As our fathers had a clear idea of what made a good man and a good life in their society, so we modern Indians, want our children to learn that happiness and satisfaction come from:**

- pride in one's self,**
- understanding one's fellowmen, and,**
- living in harmony with nature.**

**These are lessons which are necessary for survival in this twentieth century.**

- Pride encourages us to recognize and use our talents, as well as to master the skills needed to make a living.**
- Understanding our fellowmen will enable us to meet other Canadians on an equal footing, respecting cultural differences while pooling resources for the common good.**
- Living in harmony with nature will insure preservation of the balance between man and his environment which is necessary for the future of our planet, as well as for fostering the climate in which Indian Wisdom has always flourished.**

**We want education to give our children the knowledge to understand and be proud of themselves and the knowledge to understand the world around them.**

## STATEMENT OF VALUES

We want education to provide the setting in which our children can develop the fundamental attitudes and values which have an honoured place in Indian tradition and culture. The values which we want to pass on to our children, values which make our people a great race, are not written in any book. They are found in our history, in our legends and in the culture. We believe that if an Indian child is fully aware of the important Indian values he will have reason to be proud of our race and of himself as an Indian.

We want the behaviour of our children to be shaped by those values which are most esteemed in our culture. When our children come to school they have already developed certain attitudes and habits which are based on experiences in the family. School programs which are influenced by these values respect cultural priority and are an extension of the education which parents give children from their first years. These early lessons emphasize attitudes of:

- ..... self-reliance,
- ..... respect for personal freedom,
- ..... generosity,
- ..... respect for nature,
- ..... wisdom.

All of these have a special place in the Indian way of life. While these values can be understood and interpreted in different ways by different cultures, it is very important that Indian children have a chance to develop a value system which is compatible with Indian culture.

The gap between our people and those who have chosen, often gladly, to join us as residents of this beautiful and bountiful country, is vast when it comes to mutual understanding and appreciation of differences. To overcome this, it is essential that Canadian children of every racial origin have the opportunity during their school days to learn about the history, customs and culture of this country's original inhabitants and first citizens. We propose that education authorities, especially those in Ministries of Education, should provide for this in the curricula and texts which are chosen for use in Canadian schools.

## THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN SETTING GOALS

If we are to avoid the conflict of values which in the past has led to withdrawal and failure, Indian parents must have control of education with the responsibility of setting goals. What we want for our children can be summarized very briefly:

..... to reinforce their Indian identity,

..... to provide the training necessary for making a good living in modern society.

We are the best judges of the kind of school programs which can contribute to these goals without causing damage to the child.

We must, therefore, reclaim our right to direct the education of our children. Based on two education principles recognized in Canadian society: *Parental Responsibility* and *Local Control of Education*, Indian parents seek participation and partnership with the Federal Government, whose legal responsibility for Indian education is set by the treaties and the Indian Act. While we assert that only Indian people can develop a suitable philosophy of education based on Indian values adapted to modern living, we also strongly maintain that it is the financial responsibility of the Federal Government to provide education of all types and all levels to all status Indian people, whether living on or off reserves. It will be essential to the realization of this objective that representatives of the Indian people, in close co-operation with officials of the Department of Indian Affairs, establish the needs and priorities of local communities in relation to the funds which may be available through government sources.

The time has come for a radical change in Indian education. Our aim is to make education relevant to the philosophy and needs of the Indian people. We want education to give our children a strong sense of identity, with confidence in their personal worth and ability. We believe in education:

..... as a preparation for total living,

..... as a means of free choice of where to live and work,

..... as a means of enabling us to participate fully in our own social, economic, political and educational advancement.

**We do not regard the educational process as an "either-or" operation. We must have the freedom to choose among many options and alternatives. Decisions on specific issues can be made only in the context of local control of education. We uphold the right of the Indian Bands to make these specific decisions and to exercise their full responsibility in providing the best possible education for our children.**

**Our concern for education is directed to four areas which require attention and improvement: i.e., responsibility, programs, teachers and facilities. The following pages will offer in an objective way, the general principles and guidelines which can be applied to specific problems in these areas.**

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

### **JURISDICTIONAL QUESTION OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR INDIAN EDUCATION**

The Federal Government has legal responsibility for Indian education as defined by the treaties and the Indian Act. Any transfer of jurisdiction for Indian education can only be from the Federal Government to Indian Bands. Whatever responsibility belongs to the Provinces or Territories is derived from the contracts for educational services negotiated between Band Councils, provincial or territorial school jurisdictions, and the Federal Government.

Parties in future joint agreements will be:

- (1) Indian Bands,
- (2) Provincial/territorial school jurisdictions,
- (3) the Federal Government.

These contracts must recognize the right of Indians to a free education, funded by the Government of Canada.

The Indian people concerned, together with officials of the Department of Indian Affairs, must review all existing agreements for the purpose of making specific recommendations for their revision, termination or continuance.

In addition to the usual school services provided under joint agreements, attention must be given to local needs for teacher orientation, day nurseries, remedial courses, tutoring, Indian guidance counsellors, etc.

Where Bands want to form a school district under the Federal system, necessary provision should be made in order that it has the recognition of provincial/territorial education authorities.

Master agreements between federal and provincial/territorial governments violate the principle of Local Control and Parental Responsibility if these agreements are made without consulting

and involving the Indian parents whose children are affected. Since these children are often from many widely separated bands, it may be necessary to provide for Indian participation through the provincial/territorial Indian associations. In every case, however, parental responsibility must be respected and the local Band will maintain the right to review and approve the conditions of the agreement.

### LOCAL CONTROL

The past practice of using the school committee as an advisory body with limited influence, in restricted areas of the school program, must give way to an education authority with the control of funds and consequent authority which are necessary for an effective decision-making body. The Federal Government must take the required steps to transfer to local Bands the authority and the funds which are allotted for Indian education.

The Band itself will determine the relationship which should exist between the Band Council and the School Committee: or more properly, the Band Education Authority. The respective roles of the Band Council and the Education Authority will have to be clearly defined by the Band, with terms of reference to ensure the closest co-operation so that local control will become a reality.

The local Education Authority would be responsible for:

- ..... budgeting, spending and establishing priorities;
- ..... determining the types of school facilities required to meet local needs: e.g. day school, residence, group home, nursery, kindergarten, high school;
- ..... directing staff hiring and curriculum development with special concern for Indian languages and culture;
- ..... administering the physical plant;
- ..... developing adult education and upgrading courses;
- ..... negotiating agreements with provincial/territorial or separate school jurisdictions for the kind of services necessary for local requirements;

..... co-operation and evaluation of education programs both on and off the reserve;

..... providing counselling services.

Training must be made available to those reserves desiring local control of education. This training must include every aspect of educational administration. It is important that Bands moving towards local control have the opportunity to prepare themselves for the move. Once the parents have control of a local school, continuing guidance during the operational phase is equally important and necessary.

### REPRESENTATION ON PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL SCHOOL BOARDS

There must be adequate Indian representation on school boards which have Indian pupils attending schools in their district or division. If integration for Indians is to have any positive meaning, it must be related to the opportunity for parental participation in the educational decision-making process.

Recalling that over 60% of Indian children are enrolled in provincial/territorial schools, there is urgent need to provide for proper representation on all school boards. Since this issue must be resolved by legislation, all Provinces/Territories should pass effective laws which will insure Indian representation on all school boards in proportion to the number of children attending provincial/territorial schools, with provision for at least one Indian representative in places where the enrollment is minimal. Laws already on the books are not always effective and should be re-examined. Neither is permissive legislation enough, nor legislation which has conditions attached.

A Band Education Authority which is recognized as the responsible bargaining agent with financial control of education funds, will be in a strong position to negotiate for proper representation on a school board which is providing educational services to the Indian community.

There is an urgent need for laws which will make possible RESPONSIBLE REPRESENTATION AND FULL PARTICIPATION by all parents of children attending provincial/territorial schools.

**Indian organizations and the Federal Government should do whatever is necessary to conduct an effective public relations program for the purpose of explaining their role and that of the local Band Education Authorities to Ministers of Education, to Department of Education officials and to school board members.**

## **PROGRAMS**

### **CURRICULUM AND INDIAN VALUES**

**Unless a child learns about the forces which shape him: the history of his people, their values and customs, their language, he will never really know himself or his potential as a human being. Indian culture and values have a unique place in the history of mankind. The Indian child who learns about his heritage will be proud of it. The lessons he learns in school, his whole school experience, should reinforce and contribute to the image he has of himself as an Indian.**

**The present school system is culturally alien to native students. Where the Indian contribution is not entirely ignored, it is often cast in an unfavourable light. School curricula in federal and provincial/territorial schools should recognize Indian culture, values, customs, languages and the Indian contribution to Canadian development. Courses in Indian history and culture should promote pride in the Indian child, and respect in the non-Indian student.**

**A curriculum is not an archaic, inert vehicle for transmitting knowledge. It is a precise instrument which can and should be shaped to exact specifications for a particular purpose. It can be changed and it can be improved. Using curriculum as a means to achieve their educational goals, Indian parents want to develop a program which will maintain balance and relevancy between academic/skill subjects and Indian cultural subjects.**

**To develop an Indian oriented curriculum for schools which enroll native children, there must be full scale co-operation between federal, provincial/territorial and Indian education people:**

**(1) In the federal Indian school system, funds must be made available for Indian people to work with professional curriculum planners. Together they will work out and test ideas for a relevant curriculum, utilizing the best from both cultures.**

**(2) In the provincial/territorial school system, this same kind of curriculum development must be pursued by the Department of Education with the involvement of the Indian people and the support of federal and provincial/territorial funding.**

**Some other measures for improving the quality of instruction for all students, both Indian and non-Indian, are recommended to provincial/territorial and private school systems:**

- (a) appointment of native people to the curriculum staff for the purpose of supervising the production and distribution of Indian oriented curriculum materials for provincial/territorial schools, complete with the man-power and other resources to accomplish this task;**
- (b) removal of textbooks or other teaching materials which are negative, biased or inaccurate in what concerns Indian history and culture;**
- (c) augmenting Indian content in curriculum to include Indian contributions to Canadian life through supplementary courses in: economics, science, medicine, agriculture, geography, etc., as well as special courses in Indian culture, music, art, dance, handicraft, language;**
- (d) co-operating with Indian people in developing Indian studies programs at all levels;**
- (e) eliminating the use of I.Q. and standardized tests for Indian children. It has been shown that these tests do not truly reflect the intelligence of children belonging to minority, ethnic or other cultural backgrounds.**

**Textbooks are needed which emphasize the importance of the Indian's role in Canadian history. Material for reading classes must be developed: material which is relevant to the experience of the Indian child living in isolated or northern areas. Federal and provincial/territorial governments must be ready to respond to the native people and support their legitimate wishes for improved texts. Indian people should be commissioned to work with historians and educators for the development of proper textbook material.**

**All Indian people, young and old alike, must be given a wide variety of educational opportunities. Specific problems in many**

Indian communities must be met by improved education. Much needed programs include: nursery and kindergarten education, junior and senior high school opportunity, vocational training, adult education, post-secondary education, and alcohol and drug abuse education.

### Nursery Schools and Kindergartens

Financial support for nursery schools and kindergartens should be the special concern of governments. These programs should be designated as priority programs in every respect.

Many communities will view this pre-school experience as an opportunity for the children to learn the second language in which school subjects will be taught. Other communities will emphasize cultural content, for the purpose of reinforcing the child's image of himself as an Indian. This is the decision of the local parents and they alone are responsible for decisions on location, operation, curriculum and teacher hiring.

### Junior and Senior High Schools

In places where junior and senior high school classes once operated, the children have been transferred to provincial/territorial schools. Alarmed by the increasing number of teenagers who are dropping out of school, Indian parents are looking for alternatives to the high school education which their children are now receiving in provincial/territorial schools. If Indian parents had control of high school education, they could combat conditions which cause failures by:

- ..... adopting clearly defined educational objectives compatible with Indian values;
- ..... providing a relevant educational program;
- ..... making education a total experience: recognizing Indian language, life and customs, inviting the participation of Indian parents in shaping the program;
- ..... providing more counselling by Indians for Indians.

The needs of children and the desire of parents would indicate that in some areas high schools and/or vocational schools should be

established on certain reserves to serve students of surrounding communities. These schools would be operated and maintained by a representative Education Authority.

Serious planning must be directed to developing flexible, realistic and relevant high school programs to meet the specific needs of Indian students who have dropped out and desire to resume their high school studies.

### Vocational Training

A new approach to qualifications for many jobs is needed, as well as a change in academic/vocational courses to meet new requirements. In many cases where these jobs are within the Indian community, job specifications should be set by the Indian people, and the training itself should be supervised by the local Education Authority, which is established and/or recognized by the Band or Bands involved.

Some of these positions might include teachers, counsellors, social workers, probation officers, parole officers, community development workers.

On a wider scale, responsible efforts must be made to encourage business and industry to open up jobs for Indian people. Job training should correspond to job opportunity and the economic reality.

The local Band Education Authority should be in a position to deal directly with Canada Manpower and other training institutions.

When necessary, several Education Authorities might join together to plan programs for a particular region.

### Adult Education

Adult education programs, properly conducted can be a means for many Indians to find economic security and self-fulfillment.

If the native language is spoken in the community, then native instructors should be trained and employed to teach these adult courses. Grade advancement classes should be offered on and off the reserves, as well as basic literacy courses for those desiring to speak, read and write English. Basic oral English programs are

also needed. Other adult programs which should be provided as the need demands, might include: business management, consumer-education, leadership training, administration, human relations, family education, health, budgeting, cooking, sewing, crafts, Indian art and culture, etc.

These programs should be carried out under the control and direction of the Band Education Authority, on a short term or continuing basis, according to the local needs.

### Post-Secondary Education

Considering the great need there is for professional people in Indian communities, every effort should be made to encourage and assist Indian students to succeed in post-secondary studies.

Encouragement should take the form of recruiting programs directed to providing information to students desiring to enter professions such as: nursing, teaching, counselling, law, medicine, engineering, etc. Entrance requirements, pre-university programs, counselling and tutoring services, course requirements, are some factors which influence how far a student can progress. He would be further encouraged if the Indian language is recognized for the second language requirement and a native studies program has a respected place in the curriculum.

Considering the tremendous educational disadvantages of Indian people, present rigid entrance requirements to universities, colleges, etc., must be adjusted to allow for entrance on the basis of ability, aptitude, intelligence, diligence and maturity.

Assistance should take the form of generous federal financial support eliminating the difficulty and uncertainty which now accompanies a student's decision to continue on for higher education. Indian students should be able to attend any recognized educational institution of their choice. Those who have the motivation and talent to do post-graduate studies, should receive total financial assistance. Since it will be many years before the number of candidates for professional training exceeds the demand for trained professionals, each request for financial assistance to do post-secondary or post-graduate studies should be judged on its own merits, and not by general administrative directives.

Indian people should seek representation on the governing bodies of institutions of higher learning. This includes university senates and boards of governors, as well as the governing councils of colleges, community colleges and technical schools.

### Alcohol and Drug Education

There is immediate need for educational programs of a preventative and rehabilitative nature, designed and operated by Indians to meet the threat of alcohol and drug addiction which plagues both young and old alike. Whatever funds and means are necessary to operate these programs should be made available at the earliest possible date.

Some recommendations proposed by Indian provincial/territorial organizations for implementing these programs are:

- (a) Training native people as social animators to initiate programs of group dynamics at the community level. In this way there would be community participation in decision-making which affects the community. Through the acquisition of knowledge about problems and services, combined with reality-oriented group discussions leading to community action, the solution of the socio-medical ills can be placed in the context of the community.
- (b) Governments, federal and provincial/territorial, should encourage special seminars and study groups for teachers, parents and students, as well as make available the best audio-visual aids, in order to bring those concerned up to date on all that can be done to combat addiction.
- (c) These programs should be directed not only to the victims of addiction but also to the communities, professions and institutions that necessarily become involved in the circle of human relationships which are affected by addiction.

### LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

Language is the outward expression of an accumulation of learning and experience shared by a group of people over centuries of development. It is not simply a vocal symbol; it is a dynamic

force which shapes the way a man looks at the world, his thinking about the world and his philosophy of life. Knowing his maternal language helps a man to know himself; being proud of his language helps a man to be proud of himself.

The Indian people are expressing growing concern that the native languages are being lost; that the younger generations can no longer speak or understand their mother tongue. If the Indian identity is to be preserved, steps must be taken to reverse this trend.

While much can be done by parents in the home and by the community on the reserve to foster facility in speaking and understanding, there is a great need for formal instruction in the language. There are two aspects to this language instruction: (1) teaching in the native language, and (2) teaching the native language.

It is generally accepted that pre-school and primary school classes should be taught in the language of the community. Transition to English or French as a second language should be introduced only after the child has a strong grasp of his own language. The time schedule for this language program has been determined to be from four to five years duration. Following this time span, adjustment and adaptation to other languages and unfamiliar cultural milieux are greatly enhanced.

The need for teachers who are fluent in the local language is dramatically underlined by this concern for the preservation of Indian identity through language instruction. Realization of this goal can be achieved in several ways:

- ..... have teacher-aides specialize in Indian languages,
- ..... have local language-resource aides to assist professional teachers,
- ..... waive rigid teaching requirements to enable Indian people who are fluent in Indian languages, to become full-fledged teachers.

Funds and personnel are needed to develop language programs which will identify the structures of the language: i.e., syntax, grammar, morphology, vocabulary. This is essential, not only to preserve the language, but to encourage its use in literary expression. Serious studies are needed to adapt traditional oral languages to written forms for instructional and literary purposes.

In places where it is not feasible to have full instruction in the native language, school authorities should provide that Indian children and others wishing it, will have formal instruction in the local native language as part of the curriculum and with full academic credit.

While governments are reluctant to invest in any but the two official languages, funds given for studies in native languages and for the development of teaching tools and instructional materials will have both short and long term benefits.

### CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTRES

The purpose of a Cultural Education Centre is to provide for the personal development necessary for social and economic achievement in today's society. This personal development is achieved when an individual knows himself fully: his personal identity, dignity and potential. The Cultural Education Centre will promote this through studies of Indian history, culture, language and values.

By learning ways to apply traditional beliefs, values and skills to survival in modern society, and by learning modern skills and behaviours needed to participate in the benefits of economic and social development, the Indian will gain self-confidence and independence. The Cultural Education Centre will be designed to meet these needs and to make up for deficiencies in other educational programs.

Considering the vital role that these Centres could play in cultural, social and economic development, it is imperative that all decisions concerning their evolution (goals, structure, location, operation, etc.) be the sole prerogative of the Indian people.

Funds for these Centres should be available with a minimum of regulations. These latter should be the result of discussion and agreement between the Government and the Indian people.

**The Indian people will welcome the participation of other Departments of Government, of provincial/territorial or local governments, of business or industry, of churches or foundations in securing sufficient and continuing funds for the Cultural Education Centres.**

**These Centres must be Indian controlled and operated, in view of the fact that they are established for Indian purposes and use.**

# **TEACHERS**

## **TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR TEACHERS AND COUNSELLORS**

If progress is going to be made in improving educational opportunity for native children, it is basic that teacher and counsellor training programs be redesigned to meet the needs. The need for native teachers and counsellors is critical and urgent; the need for specially trained non-Indian teachers and counsellors is also very great.

### **Native Teachers and Counsellors**

It is evident that the Federal Government must take the initiative in providing opportunities for Indian people to train as teachers and counsellors. Efforts in this direction require experimental approaches and flexible structures to accommodate the native person who has talent and interest, but lacks minimum academic qualifications. Provincial/territorial involvement is also needed in this venture to introduce special teacher and counsellor training programs which will allow native people to advance their academic standing at the same time as they are receiving professional training. Because of the importance to the Indian community, these training programs must be developed in collaboration with the Indian people and their representatives in the national and provincial/territorial organizations. The organizations have a major role to play in evolving and implementing the training programs and in encouraging native young people to enter the education field.

Native teachers and counsellors who have an intimate understanding of Indian traditions, psychology, way of life and language, are best able to create the learning environment suited to the habits and interests of the Indian child.

There is urgent need for more Indian counsellors to work with students both on and off the reserves. If the need is to be met, many more training centres must be opened immediately. The few

which are now operating can never supply enough trained counsellors for the job that has to be done.

### Non-Indian Teachers and Counsellors

The training of non-Indian teachers for teaching native children, either in federal or provincial/territorial schools, is a matter of grave concern to the Indian people. The role which teachers play in determining the success or failure of many young Indians is a force to be reckoned with. In most cases, the teacher is simply not prepared to understand or cope with cultural differences. Both the child and the teacher are forced into intolerable positions.

The training of non-Indian counsellors who work with Indian children in either the federal or provincial/territorial systems, is also of grave concern to Indian parents. Counsellors must have a thorough understanding of the values and cultural relevancies which shape the young Indian's self-identity. In order to cope with another cultural group the self-image of the child must be enhanced and not allowed to disintegrate. It is generally agreed that present counselling services are not only ineffective for students living away from home, but often are a contributing factor to their failure in school. It is the opinion of parents that counselling services should be the responsibility of the Band Education Authority.

Federal and provincial/territorial authorities are urged to use the strongest measures necessary to improve the qualifications of teachers and counsellors of Indian children. During initial training programs there should be compulsory courses in inter-cultural education, native languages (oral facility and comparative analysis), and teaching English as a second language. Orientation courses and in-service training are needed in all regions. Assistance should be available for teachers in adapting curriculum and teaching techniques to the needs of local children. Teachers and counsellors should be given the opportunity to improve themselves through specialized summer courses in acculturation problems, anthropology, Indian history, language and culture.

Primary teachers in federal or provincial/territorial schools should have some knowledge of the maternal language of the children they teach.

Until such time as Bands assume total responsibility for schools, there must be full consultation with the Band Education Authority

regarding the appointment of teachers and counsellors. As part of its involvement, the community should also take the initiative in helping the teachers and counsellors to learn the culture, language and history of the local community.

### INDIAN PARA-PROFESSIONALS

More Indian teacher-aides and more Indian counsellor-aides are urgently needed throughout the school systems where Indian children are taught. These para-professionals can play an important role in helping the young child or the adolescent to adjust to unfamiliar and often overwhelming situations during their school experience.

Job requirements and the personal qualities needed by para-professionals working with Indian children will be set by the Education Authority of the Band. Instead of operating on the fringe at some clerical or irrelevant task, Indian para-professionals will be delegated by the parents to work with the children at the level of greatest need. The importance of this work warrants that the para-professional receive proper training and be given responsibilities in line with the position. These positions should serve as a training ground for professional advancement.

Performance and effectiveness rather than degrees and certificates should be the criteria used in hiring and in establishing salaries and benefits. For the protection of those who are qualified by experience rather than by academic standing, it is essential that the status of para-professionals be determined by their responsibility and function. On this basis they will be assured of parity in salaries and benefits with professionals doing the same job.

It should be the aim of the para-professional program to encourage young people to continue their commitment to Indian education.

To operate a good school, many types of jobs must be filled. There should be adequate funding to insure that Indian schools are adequately staffed, not only with professionals, but with well-trained para-professionals, including recreation assistants and specialist-aides.

## **FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

### **SUB-STANDARD EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES**

All unsafe or obsolete school buildings, equipment and teacher-ages on reserves should be replaced with modern, functional units. Where Indian communities wish to maintain educational services on their reserves, the reserve school facilities must be brought up to the same standards as those in the outside communities. To provide for all the improvements necessary, Band Councils must make long-term plans for building construction. If the Department of Indian Affairs cannot handle the financing under its usual annual budgeting scheme, other alternatives must be considered.

### **NEW EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES**

It shall be within the power of the Band Education Authority to plan for and provide the school facilities needed for community educational programs: e.g., education of children, parental involvement in education, adult education, cultural activities, training sessions, etc.

### **EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

There is no single type of educational institution which will meet all of the needs of Indian children. Facilities and services must be many and varied to suit particular kinds of circumstances.

#### **Residences**

No general statement can be made on residences because of varying needs across the country. In many places the need still exists for this type of accommodation. However, many parents object to sending their children long distances and want accommodations provided at the village level. In all cases, the Federal

Government is advised to consult all parents with children in residences, in order to determine their wishes on keeping or closing residences, and to examine alternative accommodations.

Admission criteria for student residences will be formulated by the people concerned: parents, Band Councils and administrators. The latter will reflect fiscal considerations.

Indian Bands wishing to take over administrative responsibility and financial control of student residences should be given full assistance to do so. This will require changes in present Department procedures for the operation of residences, as well as training Indian candidates for administrative positions.

Where a residence is in operation, there should be an active parents' council, representative of the student enrollment. This council will act with the responsible residence authority on matters of policy and program.

Programs must be implemented for bettering the qualifications of present staff members and assisting unqualified persons to meet job requirements. Residences should be staffed as far as possible by Indian personnel.

Where conditions warrant the closing of a residence, the land and buildings should revert to the use of the Band or Bands, with a preference for educational purposes.

### Day Schools

The need for good schools in Indian communities is becoming more urgent. These schools should have two goals: (a) providing adequate and appropriate educational opportunity, where skills to cope effectively with the challenge of modern life can be acquired, and (b) creating the environment where Indian identity and culture will flourish.

In working toward these goals, the reserve school would be a major factor in eliminating the conditions which lead to dropouts: negative parental attitudes and student alienation.

To provide these facilities an increased financial and human investment must be made in the Indian community. Complete

modern buildings, classrooms, equipment, gymnasiums and staff quarters are needed.

These reserve schools will be the vehicle by which Indian parents gain knowledge, experience and confidence in fulfilling their obligation and responsibility in the education of their children.

All school facilities should be available to the community for adult education, cultural activities and training sessions.

To facilitate the transition of students from reserve schools to others, it is essential that Ministries of Education recognize Indian day schools as accredited educational centres. This presupposes that academic quality will improve, that federal Indian schools will become "models of excellence", recognized and imitated by provincial/territorial schools. If an Indian oriented curriculum differs from that of the provincial/territorial system, steps should be taken by the proper authorities to develop appropriate criteria for grading and accrediting purposes.

#### Group Homes — Hostels

There is a need among students living off the reserve for familiar, homelike accommodations. These could be provided in the small hostel or group home setting. When administered and staffed by Indian people, these homes could give the young person the security and comfort of an Indian family while he or she is adjusting to a new way of life.

In northern communities there is a great need for this kind of home to replace the very large and often far distant residence. Located centrally in every village and operated by an Indian couple, the group home would provide long and short term care, i.e., food, shelter, recreation and companionship for all in the village who need it. This would include children whose parents were absent for hunting and trapping, and old people who might be left alone for the same reasons. The concept of this kind of home is derived directly from Indian culture, and if allowed to take form would contribute to a healthy Indian community.

#### Denominational Schools

As in all other areas of education, the parents have the right to determine the religious status of the local school. In as far as

possible, there should be an attempt to satisfy the preference of everyone.

### STAFF

Where there are Indian people in attendance at a school, the number of Indian staff hired, including professional, para-professional, clerical and janitorial, should be based on a minimum ratio of one Indian staff person to every 20 Indian students. This procedure should be observed in residences, reserve day schools and integrated schools.

Professionals, para-professionals and community resource people are all needed to operate a good reserve school. In addition to teachers and teacher-aides, reserve schools must have good counsellors and counsellor-aides. Consultants with knowledge of curriculum development and curriculum adaptation are necessary. A recreation director has a special role to play. Where it is not economically possible to have a recreation director on the school staff, the community recreational program must be designed to include the requirements of the school curriculum.

Whenever possible these positions should be filled by native people. Consultants and specialists in Indian language, history, crafts, customs, dances, legends will be drawn from the local community.

### RESEARCH

There is increasing need for factual and scientific information on which to base planning and decisions. The Indian people advocate that research be under the direction and control of Indian people. Monies labeled for research shall be channeled to research programs identified by Band Councils and Indian organizations in relation to their priorities and programs. Academics who are engaged to conduct research projects will be responsible to the Indian community, local or regional.

It is equally important that the Indian people have the direction and control of experimental programs conducted in their name by universities, academic centres or research bodies.

## **PROBLEMS OF INTEGRATION**

**Integration in the past twenty years has simply meant the closing down of Indian schools and transferring Indian students to schools away from their Reserves, often against the wishes of the Indian parents. The acceleration with which this program has developed has not taken into account the fact that neither Indian parents and children, nor the white community: parents, children and schools, were prepared for integration, or able to cope with the many problems which were created.**

**Integration is a broad concept of human development which provides for growth through mingling the best elements of a wide range of human differences. Integrated educational programs must respect the reality of racial and cultural differences by providing a curriculum which blends the best from the Indian and the non-Indian traditions.**

**Integration viewed as a one-way process is not integration, and will fail. In the past, it has been the Indian student who was asked to integrate: to give up his identity, to adopt new values and a new way of life. This restricted interpretation of integration must be radically altered if future education programs are to benefit Indian children.**

**The success of integration hinges on these factors: parents, teachers, pupils (both Indian and white) and curriculum.**

**On the side of the Indian people, much more preparation and orientation is needed to enable parents to make informed decisions and to assist their children to adjust and to succeed. Indian parents must have the opportunity through full representation to participate responsibly in the education of their children.**

**The Indian child also needs preparation and orientation before being thrust into a new and strange environment. In handling the conflict of values, he will need the continuing support of his parents and Indian counsellors. Inferiority, alienation, rejection, hostility, depression, frustration, are some of the personal adjust-**

ment problems which characterize the Indian child's experience with integration. These are also factors in the academic failure of Indian children in integrated schools.

Indian children will continue to be strangers in Canadian classrooms until the curriculum recognizes Indian customs and values, Indian languages, and the contributions which the Indian people have made to Canadian history. Steps can be taken to remedy this situation by providing in provincial/territorial schools special auxiliary services in cultural development, curriculum development, vocational guidance, counselling, inservice training of teachers, tutoring and recreation. Evidently many of these services can be provided under the regular school program. However, if services are introduced especially for the Indian children, the school board should have financial support from the Federal Government.

The success of integration is not the responsibility of Indians alone. Non-Indians must be ready to recognize the value of another way of life; to learn about Indian history, customs and language; and to modify, if necessary, some of their own ideas and practices.

## **SUMMARY OF THE INDIAN POSITION ON EDUCATION**

Indian parents must have **FULL RESPONSIBILITY AND CONTROL OF EDUCATION**. The Federal Government must adjust its policy and practices to make possible the full participation and partnership of Indian people in all decisions and activities connected with the education of Indian children. This requires determined and enlightened action on the part of the Federal Government and immediate reform, especially in the following areas of concern: *responsibility, programs, teachers, facilities.*

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

#### **Local Control**

Until now, decisions on the education of Indian children have been made by anyone and everyone, except Indian parents. This must stop. Band Councils should be given total or partial authority for education on reserves, depending on local circumstances, and always with provisions for eventual complete autonomy, analogous to that of a provincial school board vis-à-vis a provincial Department of Education.

#### **School Board Representa- tion**

It is imperative that Indian children have representation on provincial/territorial school boards. Indian associations and the Federal Government must pressure the Provinces/Territories to make laws which will effectively provide that Indian people have responsible representation and full participation on school boards.

#### **Transfer of Jurisdiction**

Transfer of educational jurisdiction from the Federal Government to provincial or territorial governments, without consultation and approval by Indian people is unacceptable. There must be an end to these two party

agreements between the federal and provincial/territorial governments. Future negotiations with Education Departments for educational services must include representatives of the Indian people acting as the first party. The Federal Government has the responsibility of funding education of all types and at all levels for all Indian people.

**Indian  
Control**

Those educators who have had authority in all that pertained to Indian education have, over the years, tried various ways of providing education for Indian people. The answer to providing a successful educational experience has not been found. There is one alternative which has not been tried before: in the future, let Indian people control Indian education.

**PROGRAMS**

**Kinds**

A wide range of programs is needed in the Indian community. The local Education Authority must take the initiative in identifying the needs for adult education, vocational training, remedial classes, kindergarten, alcohol and drug education, etc., etc. The local Education Authority must also have the authority to implement these programs, either on a temporary or long-term basis.

**Language  
and  
Culture**

Indian children must have the opportunity to learn their language, history and culture in the classroom. Curricula will have to be revised in federal and provincial/territorial schools to recognize the contributions which the Indian people have made to Canadian history and life.

**Cultural  
Education  
Centres**

Cultural Education Centres are desperately needed. Considering the vital role that these Centres could play in cultural, social, and

economic development, it is imperative that all decisions concerning their evolution, i.e., goals, structure, location, operation, etc., be the sole prerogative of the Indian people. The Minister is urged to recognize the rights of the Indian people in this matter. He must insure:

- (a) that the Indian people will have representatives on any committees which will decide policy and control funds for the Cultural Education Centres;
- (b) that enough funds are made available for capital expenditure and program operation.

## TEACHERS

**Native  
Teachers  
and  
Counsellors**

The Federal Government must take the initiative in providing opportunities in every part of the country for Indian people to train as teachers. The need for native teachers is critical. Indian parents are equally concerned about the training of counsellors who work so closely with the young people.

**Non-Indian  
Teachers  
and  
Counsellors**

Federal and provincial/territorial authorities are urged to use the strongest measures necessary to improve the qualifications of teachers and counsellors of Indian children. This will include required courses in Indian history and culture.

**Language**

As far as possible, primary teachers in federal or provincial/territorial schools should have some knowledge of the maternal language of the children they teach.

**Qualifica-  
tion**

It should be the accepted practice that only the best qualified teachers are hired for Indian schools, and always in consultation with the local Education Authority.

**Para-Pro-  
fessionals**

**More Indian teacher-aides and more Indian counsellor-aides are urgently needed throughout the school systems where Indian children are taught. The importance of this work requires that the candidates receive proper training and be allowed to operate at their fullest potential.**

## **FACILITIES**

**Kinds**

**Education facilities must be provided which adequately meet the needs of the local population. These will vary from place to place. For this reason, there cannot be an "either-or" policy, which would limit the choices which Indian parents are able to make. In certain localities, several types of educational facilities may be needed: e.g., residence, day school, integrated school. These must be made available according to the wishes of the parents.**

**Substandard**

**Substandard school facilities must be replaced and new buildings and equipment provided in order to bring reserve schools up to standard. Financing of such building and development programs must be dealt with realistically by the Federal Government.**

## **INTEGRATION**

**Responsibility for integration belongs to the people involved. It cannot be legislated or promoted without the full consent and participation of the Indians and non-Indians concerned.**

## **CONCLUSION**

**There is difficulty and danger in taking a position on Indian education because of the great diversity of problems encountered across the country. The National Indian Brotherhood is confident that it expresses the will of the people it represents when it adopts a policy based on two fundamental principles of education in a democratic country, i.e.:**

..... parental responsibility, and  
..... local control.

**If this policy is recognized and implemented by officials responsible for Indian education, then eventually the Indian people themselves will work out the existing problems and develop an appropriate education program for their children.**

## CONCLUDING STATEMENT

**This policy paper is subject to periodic review by the Executive Council of the National Indian Brotherhood. Additions or amendments may be initiated by a provincial/territorial Indian organization as the need arises.**

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## INDEX OF SUBJECTS

- Adult education, 6, 12**  
    and native language, 12  
    and programs, 12
- Agreements**  
    federal-provincial, 6, 27  
    joint, 5—6  
    master, 5  
    parties to, 5, 27—28  
    review of, 5
- Alcohol abuse education,**  
    preventative, 14  
    programs, 14  
    rehabilitative, 14
- Approval for education policy,**  
    Indian, iii  
    Ministerial, iii
- Band Council, iv**  
    and local control, 6  
    and research, 24  
    role, 6  
    and School Committee, 6
- Band Education Authority**  
    and band council, 6  
    and control, 6  
    and counselling, 19  
    and high schools, 12  
    and para-professionals, 20  
    and programs, 13  
    responsibility, 6, 12, 28  
    role, 6  
    and school boards, 7  
    and school facilities, 21  
    and teacher appointment, 20, 29
- Building**  
    reserve facilities, 21, 23, 30
- Choice, 3, 4**
- Counsellors**  
    non-Indian, 19, 29  
    training, 18—19, 29
- Culture, 6**  
    in curriculum, 10, 28  
    gap, 2  
    study of, 16, 25—26
- Cultural-Education Centres, 16—17, 28**
- Curriculum, 9—11**  
    adapting, 19  
    development of, 9, 26  
    Indian content in, 2, 26  
    Indian values, 9—11, 25  
    in integrated schools, 2, 26  
    responsibility for, 6
- Day School, 6, 22—23**
- Decision-making, 6**  
    and integration, 25
- Denominational schools, 23**
- Department of Indian Affairs, iii, 3, 21**
- Drop-outs**  
    academic failure, 11—12, 19, 22, 25—26
- Drug abuse**  
    preventative, 14  
    programs, 11, 14  
    rehabilitative, 14
- Education**  
    foundation of, iii  
    in the family, 2  
    Indian, 3, 27—31  
    intercultural, 2, 26  
    opportunity for, 28  
    purpose of, 3
- Facilities, 21—24, 30**

**Federal Government**  
 and addiction programs, 14  
 building programs, 30  
 Cultural Education Centres, 16—17  
 educational jurisdiction, 27  
 and language programs, 16  
 partnership, 3  
 and policy, 27  
 responsibility, 3, 28  
 role, 3  
 teacher training, 18, 29

**Funding, 3, 28**  
 and building programs, 21  
 Cultural-Education Centres, 17, 28  
 curriculum development, 9  
 language programs, 16  
 special services, 26

**General Assembly, iii**

**Goals, 1—4**

**Group homes, 6, 23**

**High School, 6, 11—12**  
 drop-outs, 12  
 junior and senior, 11-12  
 reserve, 12

**Hostels, cf. Group homes**

**Identity, 1, 3, 15**

**Integration, 25—26**

**Kindergarten, 11**  
 and language, 15  
 program, 6, 11

**Language, Indian, 14—16**  
 in adult education, 22  
 curriculum, 9, 28  
 in high school, 11  
 instruction, 15  
 in post-secondary, 13  
 in pre-school, 11  
 and teacher, 19

**Local control, 4, 6—7, 27, 31**  
 training for, 7

**Nursery schools, 6, 11**  
 language in, 11  
 program, 11, 14

**Off-reserve education, 3, 7, 28**  
 enrollment, 7

**Organizations, Indian**  
 and education, iii  
 Executive Council, iii, 32  
 National Indian Brotherhood,  
 iii, 30, 32  
 public relations, 8  
 and research, 24  
 and training programs, 18

**Para-Professionals, 20, 24, 30**

**Parents' role, 3—4**  
 and denominational schools, 23  
 group homes, 23  
 and integration, 25  
 and language, 15  
 and para-professionals, 20  
 and residences, 23  
 responsibility, 23  
 staff hiring, 30

**Philosophy, of Indian Education,  
 iii, 1—4**

**Post-Secondary education, 13—14**  
 financial assistance, 13  
 recruiting, 13  
 representation, 14  
 success factors, 13

**Priorities**  
 cultural, 2  
 educational, 3

**Professions, training for, 13**

**Programs, 9—17**  
 high school, 11, 12  
 recreation, 24  
 residence staff training, 22  
 teacher training, 19

**Provincial/Territorial**  
 accreditation, 23  
 Indian enrollment, 7  
 joint agreements, 5—6  
 laws, 7  
 Ministers of Education, 8  
 school boards, 7, 27  
 school integration, 25—26  
 training programs, 19

**Recreation**  
 in school program, 20, 24

**Representation**  
 in curriculum branch, 10  
 in post-secondary institu-  
 tions, 14  
 on school boards, 7—8

- Research, 24
- Residences, 6, 21—22
- Responsibility, 5—8
  - Band, 4
  - education authority, 6—7
  - financial, 3
  - legal, 3, 5
  - parental, 3—4, 28, 31
  - provincial/territorial, 5
- School boards,
  - laws, 7
  - provincial/territorial, 7
  - representation, 7, 27
- School committee, 6
- School district, 5
- Services, 21—24
- Staff, 20, 24
  - hiring, 6, 19, 20, 29
  - residence, 22
- Teacher-aides, 20, 24
  - and language instruction, 15
- Teachers, 18—20
  - and community, 20
  - and language, 15, 29
  - native teachers, 18, 29
  - non-Indian, 19—20, 29
  - training, 18, 29
- Teaching materials, 10, 16
- Tests, 10
- Text-books, 2, 10
- Tradition, 1
  - Cultural Education Centres, 16
- Training
  - band councils, 7, 21
  - counsellor, 19
  - residence staff, 22
  - teacher, 19
- Transfer of authority, 5—6
- Values, 2—3
  - Cultural Education Centres, 16
  - and curriculum, 9—10
  - non-Indian, 26
- Vocational schools, 11—12
  - and Canada Manpower, 12
- Workshop, Education, iii
  - members, iv







