

# MAMÀHTAWISIWIN

The Wonder We Are Born With

An Indigenous Education Policy Framework



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Mamàhtawisiwin : the wonder we are born with — an Indigenous education policy framework

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*Disponible en français.*

Available in alternate formats upon request.

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We acknowledge the work and contributions of the late Chuck Bourgeois, the project lead until July 2017, toward the work of Mamàhtawisiwin.

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## Educational Organizations and Community Partners

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning appreciates the contributions of students, teachers, parents, principals, superintendents, senior post-secondary administrators, educational organizations, Indigenous organizations, and community partners, specifically the following groups:

Kindergarten to Grade 12 Student and Chaperone Participants  
Indigenous Academic Achievement Council  
Indigenous Inclusion Directorate Advisory Council  
Intergovernmental Relations  
Kiskentamowin Indigenous Advisory Council  
Manitoba Indigenous Blueprint Members  
Post-Secondary Student Representatives  
Presidents of University and Colleges  
Niji Mahkwa School—Winnipeg School Division  
School Divisions and Education Stakeholder Associations

*We recognize that Manitoba is on Treaty 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10 Territories and the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, Ininiwak, and Nehethowuk Peoples. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit.*

## Mamàhtawisiwin: The Wonder We Are Born With

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning is committed to providing all Manitoba students with engaging and high-quality education that prepares them for lifelong learning and for contributing to a socially just, democratic, and sustainable society. Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning is also committed to advancing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action,\* specifically Actions 62 and 63 to develop and implement resources on Indigenous Peoples in Canadian history, demonstrating the province's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.

When we are born into this world, we come with a gift to help people live a good life. A person becomes an okihcite (great heart) when they begin to share the gift. A person who goes above and beyond in sharing their gift and connecting people to the root of their existence is referred to as "e-mamahtawisit." *Mamàhtawisiwin* (mah ma tah wee see win) is the noun form.†

*Mamàhtawisiwin: The Wonder We Are Born With—An Indigenous Education Policy Framework* is a provincial policy directive and conceptual framework that supports the holistic achievements of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners by assisting Manitoba educators in incorporating Indigenous pedagogy, languages, and culture into their teaching and practices. This provincial Indigenous Education Policy Framework is intended to support educators, by helping them deepen their understanding and progress along a path of truth and reconciliation in their schools, adult learning centres, post-secondary institutions, classrooms, and communities. It aims to empower Manitoba teachers to understand and meet the needs of Indigenous learners by embedding strategies and practices into their educational settings and classroom routines, so that they reflect Indigenous languages, cultures, and identities. Ultimately, the core goal is to enhance the educational achievement and well-being of Indigenous students, setting them up for success in school and beyond.

\* One example is the requirement for students attending Manitoba's post-secondary institutions faculties of education to take a course on Indigenous perspectives, knowledge, and curriculum.

† In Ojibwe, the word *Mamàhtawisiwin* has a different meaning, which is a spiritual person or a gifted person with supernatural powers.

# Mamàhtawisiwin Policy Directive and Conceptual Framework

*Mamàhtawisiwin* outlines Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning's vision, policy statement, guiding principles, and strategies and actions for achieving the intended successful learning outcomes for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students and for all students in Manitoba.

## Vision

A path to an Indigenous-inclusive education system is grounded in Indigenous histories, cultures, languages, traditional values and knowledge, and contemporary lifestyles. An equitable, inclusive, and diverse education system fosters a sense of belonging in all learners so that they feel they can succeed, take responsibility, find their purpose in life, and achieve The Good Life/*Mino-pimatisiwin* (Ininew)/*Mino Bimaadiziwin* (Anishinabemowin)/*honso aynai* (Dene)/*tokatakiya wichoni washte* (Dakota)/*minopimatitheeewin* (Anisininimowin)/*△ᓐ ᓄᓴᓄᓴ ᓄᓴᓴᓴ* (Inuktitut)/*Miyo-pimatishiwin* (Michif).

The words of the former Grand Chief of Manitoba Dave Courchene highlight the importance of the path to an Indigenous-inclusive education system where children and youth feel they belong, and can succeed, take responsibility, and find their purpose in life:

We, the first people of this land now called Manitoba, are a people that possess an indomitable will to survive, to survive as a people, proud, strong and creative. . . .

These last one hundred years have been the time of most difficult struggle, but they have not broken our spirit nor altered our love for this land nor our attachment and commitment to it. We have survived as a people.

Our attachment means that we must commit ourselves to help develop healthy societies for all the peoples who live upon this land. (Indian Tribes of Manitoba 29)

## Policy Statement

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning commits to work across the system and alongside caregivers, families, communities, and educational partners to embed equity, collaboration, shared responsibility, and accountability into an Indigenous-inclusive education system.

## Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles are the foundation for the Indigenous Education Policy Framework:

- shared understandings of the rights of Indigenous Peoples developed
- knowledge of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit world views held and valued by all educators and learners
- respect for diversity
- student-focused systems
- shared responsibility across systems
- shared accountability
- equity within systems

## Strategies and Actions

Students, teachers, school-based support teams, school leaders, school division/district leaders, and Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning are all committed to the following:

### A. Authentic Involvement

- Promote Elder, Knowledge-Keeper, and community involvement.
- Promote parent, grandparent, and extended family (aunties and uncles) involvement.

### B. Putting Students at the Centre

- Respect and listen to students.
- Employ a holistic approach to supporting students.

### C. Understanding of World Views, Values, Identities, Traditions, and Contemporary Lifestyles

- Teach true history (including treaties and Indian Residential Schools).
- Incorporate cultural teachings, experiences, and Indigenous languages.

### D. Inclusive and Culturally Safe Learning Environment

- Demonstrate respect for world views, values, identities, and traditions.
- Value and celebrate differences.

## Context

The implementation of a provincial Indigenous Education Policy Framework is an essential part of responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and must consider contextual realities such as the diversity of Indigenous Peoples and the ongoing history of colonization.

*Reconciliation must support Aboriginal peoples as they heal from the destructive legacies of colonization that have wreaked such havoc in their lives. But it must do even more. Reconciliation must inspire Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples to transform Canadian society so that our children and grandchildren can live together in dignity, peace, and prosperity on these lands we now share. (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Final Report 8)*

## Terminology

The term *Indigenous* used throughout this document follows the United Nations approach, which maintains it is more beneficial to identify, rather than to define, Indigenous Peoples (United Nations Forum on Indigenous Issues). This approach is based on self-identification and takes into account the diversity of Indigenous Peoples. As noted by Wilson:

Terms such as Indian, Metis, Aborigine or Torres Strait Islander do nothing to reflect either the distinctiveness of our cultures or the commonalities of our underlying worldviews. [The term] Indigenous is inclusive of all first peoples—unique in our own cultures—but common in our experiences of colonialism and our understanding of the world. (15–16)

However, throughout the following discussion, a number of terms are used including *Indian*, *Aboriginal*, *First Nations*, *Métis*, and *Inuit*. *Indigenous* is the term commonly used today. The Government of Canada notes that *Indigenous Peoples* is a collective name for the original peoples of North America and their descendants. In Canada, it refers to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. The term *Aboriginal Peoples*, which is sometimes still used, was made legal when the *Constitution Act, 1982*, came into being. Section 35 (2) of the Act states that Aboriginal Peoples of Canada include First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. However, *Indigenous* has generally supplanted the term *Aboriginal* in government and public discourse. Because of its offensive and negative connotations, *Indian* is only used in quotations and in reference to the *Indian Act* and other historical documents and institutions (e.g., Indian Residential Schools). *First Nations* does not have legal reference, but began to be used in Canada in the late 1970s because *First Nations* more appropriately describes the separate nations that occupied the territory long before the arrival of Europeans.

## Manitoba's Indigenous Peoples Are Diverse

According to the 2016 Census, there were 223,310 Indigenous people in Manitoba, making up 18 percent of the population (Statistics Canada, *Focus on Geography*). The majority of the Indigenous population reported a single Indigenous identity—one of First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. Of the Indigenous population in Manitoba, 58.4 percent (130,505) were First Nations, 40.0 percent (89,360) were Métis, and 0.3 percent (610) were Inuit. Within the First Nations population, 92.9 percent had Registered or Treaty “Indian” Status, as defined under the *Indian Act*. The other 7.1 percent did not have Registered or Treaty “Indian” Status. In addition to those who reported a single Indigenous identity, 2020 people reported more than one Indigenous identity, and 815 were defined as having an Indigenous identity not otherwise included.

There are 63 First Nations in Manitoba of which six are among the 20 largest in Canada. More than half of First Nations people living on-reserve live in 23 First Nations that are not accessible by an all-weather road.

Forty-two percent of Indigenous people in Manitoba live in either large (38 percent) or medium (4 percent) sized centres. In comparison, 15 percent live in small population centres, while 44 percent live in rural areas. There are seven Indigenous languages in Manitoba, including Ininimowin (Cree), Dakota, Dene, Inuktitut, Michif, Anishinaabemowin (Ojibway), and Ansininemowin (Ojibway-Cree).

The Métis people originated in the 1700s when French and Scottish immigrants, brought to Canada to work in the fur trade, married Indigenous women such as Cree and Anishinaabe (Ojibway). The Métis Homeland includes the three Prairie provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta), as well as parts of Ontario, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, and the northern United States. Their descendants formed a distinct culture, collective consciousness, and nationhood. Louis Riel is Manitoba's Father of Confederation bringing Manitoba into Canada in 1870. Canada has the only constitution in the world that recognizes a mixed-race culture, the Métis, as a rights-bearing Indigenous People.

While Manitoba is not the traditional home of Inuit, many come to Manitoba every year for a variety of reasons, including the desire to access training, education, and health care. Many Inuit have made Manitoba their permanent home. As noted in the *Manitoba Inuit Association Annual Report, 2018-19*,

Every year, in excess of 15,000 visits to healthcare facilities in Winnipeg are made by Inuit from the Kivalliq region of Nunavut. They are travelling to Winnipeg in order to access healthcare and other services that they can't otherwise access at home in Nunavut. Of those who travel to access Manitoba-based health services, some will stay for a day or two, while others relocate to Manitoba in order to access ongoing health care not accessible back home. Relocation is often required in order to access long-term healthcare while others relocate on a temporary basis. (8–9)

The Indigenous Peoples in Manitoba are not a homogeneous group. As noted in the census data, in addition to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, there are other Indigenous Peoples of mixed ancestry. Therefore, when thinking about Manitoba's Indigenous Peoples, we must remember the diversity in language, culture, traditions, community context, community structure, and political histories.

## Historical Overview of Colonization

Canada's pre-Confederation and post-Confederation history has been replete with programs and policies that have had multi-generational impacts on Indigenous Peoples. In Manitoba, we are on the traditional territories of First Nations and Métis Peoples. We need to celebrate and learn from the diversity and strengths of all Indigenous Peoples in Manitoba. We need to better understand not only their origin stories, but also ours as individuals. As well, we need to better comprehend our shared history and collective experience. In doing so, the classrooms in Manitoba will become a more meaningful place not only for Indigenous students, but also for non-Indigenous students. Our classrooms can then take an important place in Truth and Reconciliation efforts.

A timeline (see Figure 1) is presented to help in our understanding of the different realities that Indigenous Peoples have experienced. (See Appendix A for more detail on the history of ongoing colonization.) These experiences resulted from a variety of policies and programs of a colonization that aimed to assimilate and eradicate Indigenous Peoples. If we are to move forward in a spirit of Truth and Reconciliation, we must understand our past to better understand our present and dream for our future. As stated by Alfred:

The value of the Indigenous critique of the Western world view lies not in the creation of false dichotomies but in the insight that the colonial attitudes and structures imposed on the world by Europeans are not manifestations of an inherent evil: They are merely reflections of white society's understanding of its own power and relationship with nature. (45)

## Brief History of Ongoing Colonization

The following timeline is a brief overview of the way Crown and government policies and programs have shaped Indigenous realities in Canada.

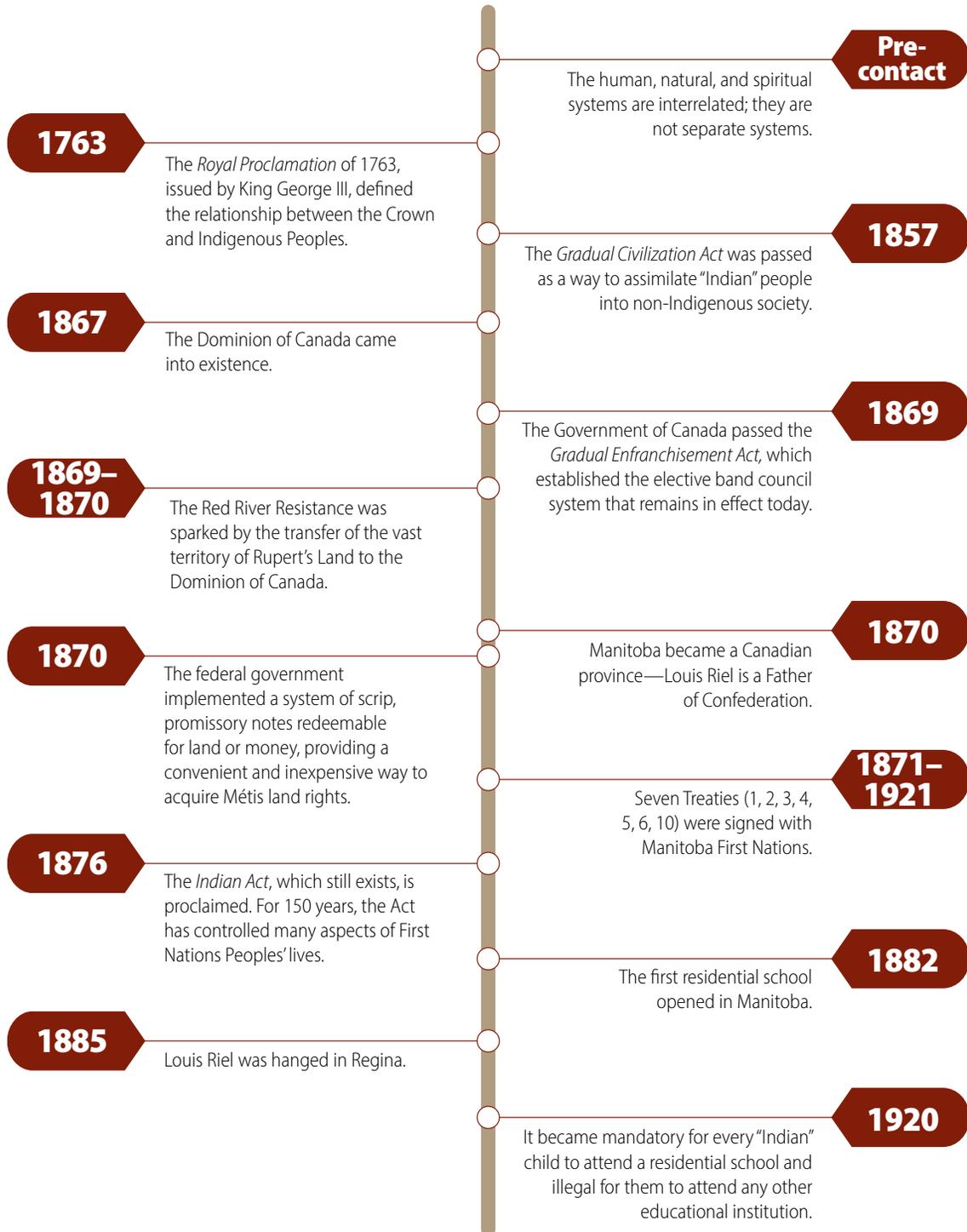
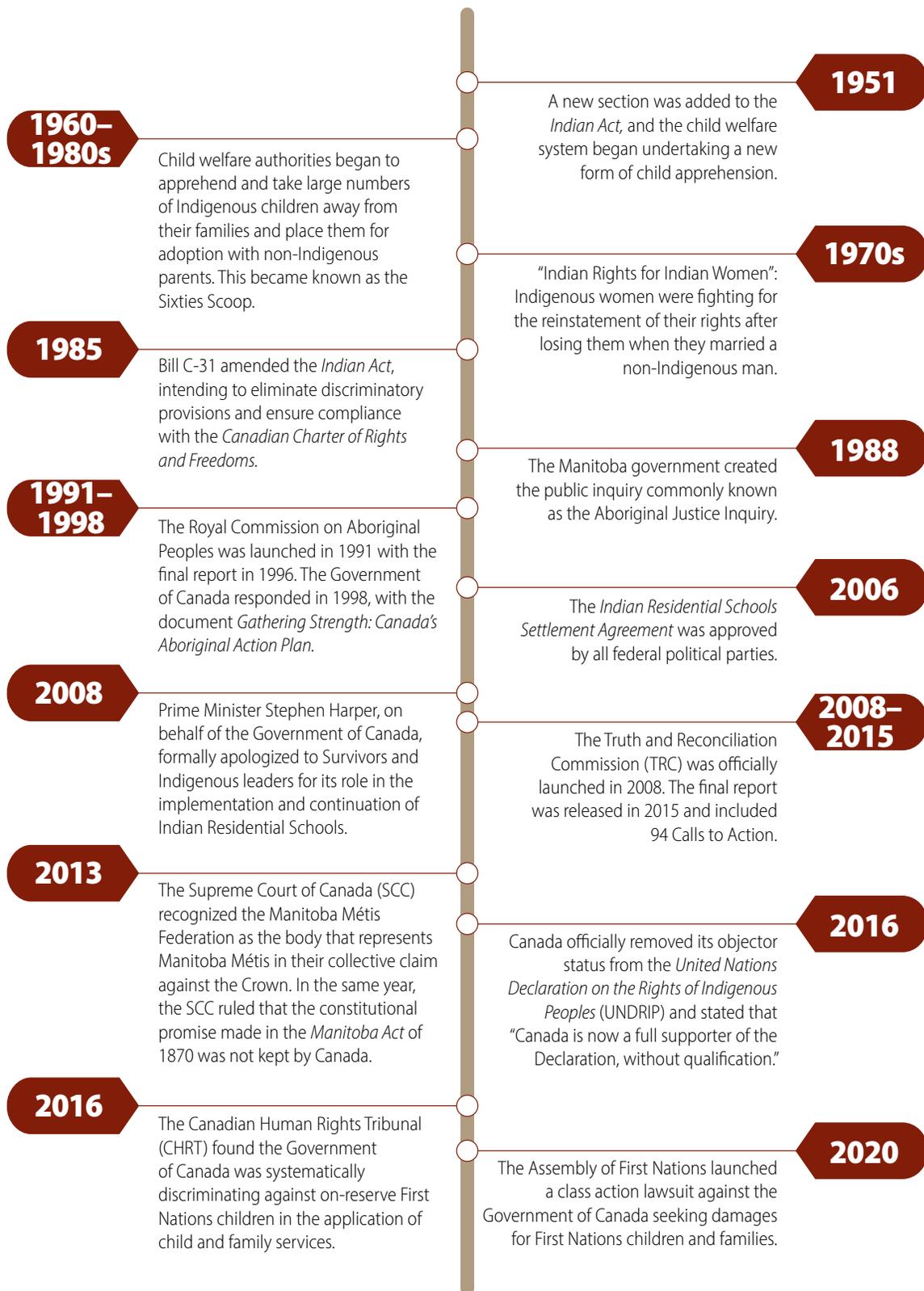


Figure 1: Timeline



# The Conceptual Foundation for an Indigenous-Inclusive Education System

The Indigenous Education Policy Framework is based on core concepts, including the Circle of Courage, the Honourable Murray Sinclair’s four guiding questions, and how those questions connect to balanced wellness and students’ sense of belonging, meaning, purpose, and hope.

## The Circle of Courage

It has been said that in Indigenous cultures “the central purpose of life was the education and empowerment of children” (Brendtro et al. 44). Starr Commonwealth’s Circle of Courage® model works as a framework for empowerment and education through restoring a sense of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity in children and youth.



Following from this approach, the principles of the Circle of Courage (Brendtro et al.) set the stage for an inclusive education system wherein children and youth can find success and empowerment.

### The Spirit of Generosity

Character is cultivated by concern for others so that the child can say, “I have a purpose for my life.”

### The Spirit of Independence

Free will is cultivated by responsibility so that the child can say, “I have the power to make decisions.”



### The Spirit of Belonging

The universal longing for human bonds is cultivated by relationships of trust so that the child can say, “I am loved.”

### The Spirit of Mastery

The inborn thirst for learning is cultivated; by learning to cope with the world, the child can say, “I can succeed.”

Figure 2: Circle of Courage\*

\* The Circle of Courage® is a trademarked title registered to Starr Commonwealth, and is a positive youth development model that is based on the universal principle that to be emotionally healthy all youth need a sense of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity. The copy righted content within this unique model was developed by Starr’s 2nd President, Dr. Larry K. Brendtro (PhD), and his colleagues, and it provides the philosophical foundation for Starr Commonwealth’s resilience-focused approach to working with children, families, and communities, in addition to the work of Reclaiming Youth International.

## Four Guiding Questions and Balanced Well-Being

The Honourable Murray Sinclair, former Senator and Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), has asked, “What would it take to create a world where we all feel we truly belong?” He went on to say that “true belonging means there are people around you who will help you when you need it—and you, in turn, will help them” (Dalhousie University). As a result of the need for dialogue in a time of reconciliation, we want students to be able to connect to self, family, community, place, the land, and animals by having them explore the Honourable Sinclair’s four guiding questions:

- Who am I?
- Where do I come from?
- Why am I here?
- Where am I going?

From an Indigenous perspective, it is foundational that the human, natural, and spiritual systems are interrelated; they are not separate systems. The Indigenous world view is one of relationality.

Experiential, land-based learning\* provides opportunities for students to make these connections. As noted in the TRC *Final Report*:

Reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians, from an Aboriginal perspective, also requires reconciliation with the natural world. If human beings resolve problems between themselves but continue to destroy the natural world, then reconciliation remains incomplete. (18)

The importance of family, community, and culture are other points of connectivity that must be reflected in the conceptual foundation for an Indigenous-inclusive education system. Students find purpose, hope, belonging, and meaning through their educational and lived experiences—all of these were addressed at the Mamàhtawisiwin sessions.

Wellness is a balance of the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. This balance is enriched as individuals have a sense of **belonging** and connectedness within their families, to community, and to culture; a sense of **meaning** and an understanding of how their lives and those of their families and communities are part of creation and a rich history; **purpose** in their daily lives whether it is through education, employment, caregiving activities, or cultural ways of being and doing; and, finally, **hope** for their future and those of their families that is grounded in a sense of identity, unique Indigenous values, and having a belief in spirit.

\* Land-based learning refers to the relational aspects of learning **from** the land, not simply being outdoors on the land. Learning from the land is experiential and involves Indigenous perspectives, values, and practices in relation to the land.

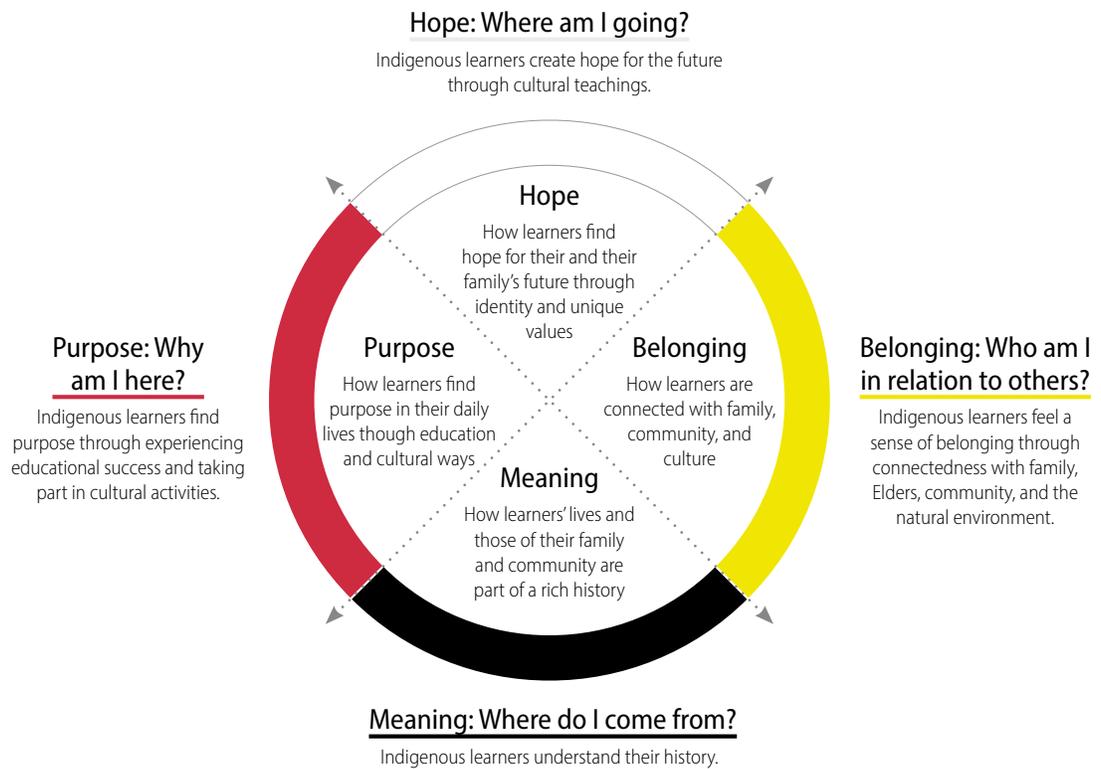


Figure 3: Indigenous-inclusive Education System\*

\* The visual draws on the *First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework* (Health Canada—see [https://thunderbirdpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/24-14-1273-FN-Mental-Wellness-Framework-EN05\\_low.pdf](https://thunderbirdpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/24-14-1273-FN-Mental-Wellness-Framework-EN05_low.pdf)) and reflects the Honourable Murray Sinclair's four fundamental questions.

# Mamàhtawisiwin Development Timeline

*Mamàhtawisiwin* has been several years in the making. The following timeline shows the key points along the way.

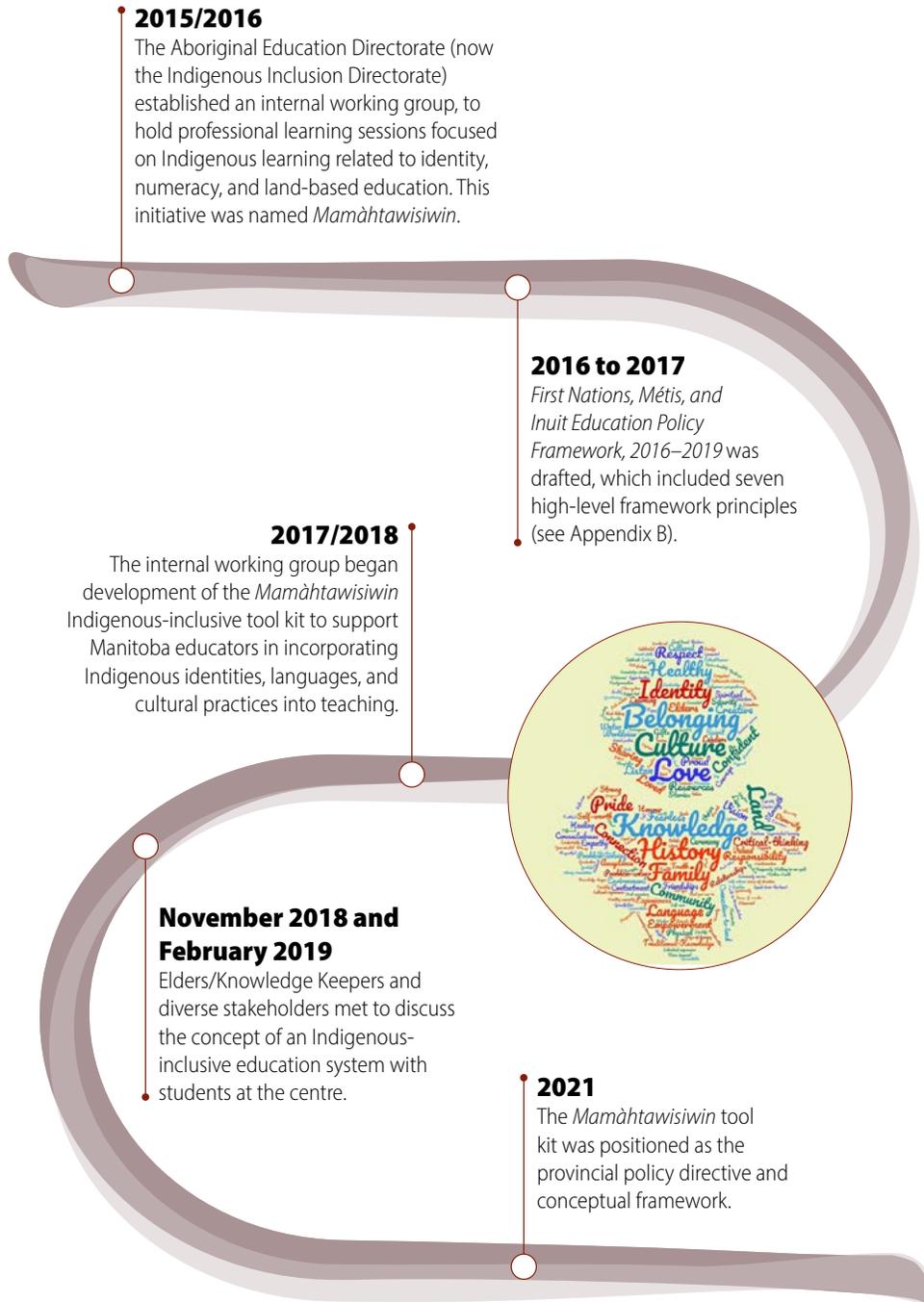


Figure 4: *Mamàhtawisiwin* Development Timeline

# The Conceptual Framework for Implementing an Indigenous-Inclusive Education System

## Guiding Principles

The Mamàhtawisiwin guiding principles provide the foundation for the provincial policy directive and conceptual framework that guides the actions at all levels in the Kindergarten to Grade 12 education system.

The following guiding principles were developed, based on seven high-level principles from the Manitoba draft *First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (Indigenous Inclusion Directorate and Manitoba Education and Training) and on key characteristics of successful Indigenous learning identified by the Canadian Council on Learning (see Appendices B and C for details):

- shared understandings of the rights of Indigenous Peoples developed
- knowledge of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit world views held and valued by all educators and learners
- respect for diversity
- student-focused systems
- shared responsibility across systems
- shared accountability
- equity within systems

The following diagram shows the relationship between these guiding principles and the high-level principles found in the draft *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (see Appendix B).



Figure 5: Guiding Principles

## Strategies and Actions

The foundations of an Indigenous-inclusive education system are articulated in the actions of the following four strategies:

- authentic involvement
- putting students at the centre
- understanding world views, values, identities, traditions, and contemporary lifestyles
- inclusive and culturally safe learning environments

These strategies are mutually supportive, as shown in Figure 6.

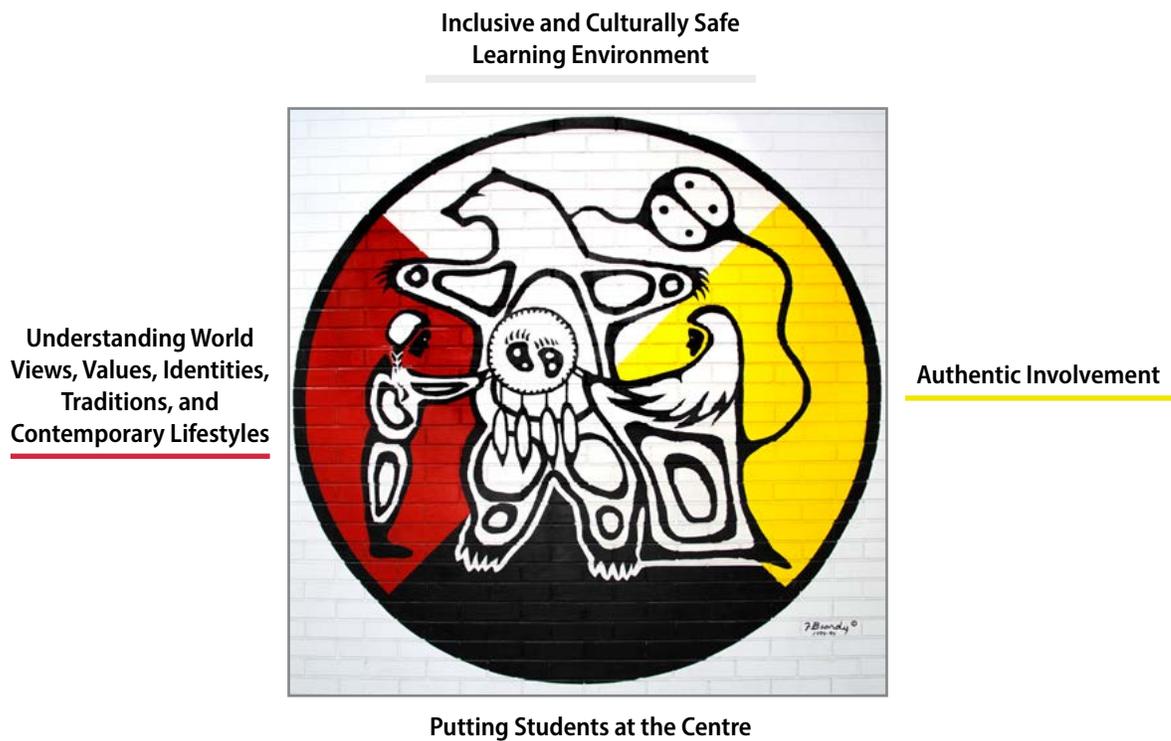


Figure 6: Niji Mahkwa Circle of Nations. Painting by Fred Beardy. Teaching and colours provided by Fred Beardy and Elder Myra Laramée. Used with permission.

The four colours of the Niji Mahkwa Circle of Nations represent the people of the earth and their unique nationhood. Fred Beardy, a local artist and former staff person at Niji Mahkwa School, designed and painted the circle at the school in 1994. The circle represents care and love for the children, youth, families, and staff who make up the community that attend the school. It acknowledges the responsibility of community to preserve and protect the rights and privileges of all the children and members of the school community. The spirit and intent of the circle is for all nations of the world to love one another and get along in peace. The bear represents peace and justice for all people of the earth and protection for the children at Niji Mahkwa School in the Winnipeg School Division.

Each strategy has two supporting actions. It should be recognized that many of these actions are interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

Mamāhtawisiwin Guiding Principles							
Shared Understanding of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Developed	Knowledge of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit World Views Held and Valued by All Educators and Learners	Respect for Diversity	Student-Focused Systems	Shared Responsibility across Systems	Shared Accountability	Equity within Systems	
<b>Strategies</b>							
<b>A. Authentic Involvement</b>							
Promote Elder, Knowledge-Keeper, and community involvement.	●	●	●		●	●	●
Promote parent, grandparent, and extended family (aunties and uncles) involvement.	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>B. Putting Students at the Centre</b>							
Respect and listen to students.	●	●	●	●			
Employ a holistic approach to supporting students.	●		●	●	●	●	
<b>C. Understanding of World Views, Values, Identities, Traditions, and Contemporary Lifestyles</b>							
Teach “true” history (including treaties and Indian Residential Schools).	●					●	●
Incorporate cultural teachings, experiences, and Indigenous languages.	●	●	●	●	●		●
<b>D. Inclusive and Culturally Safe Learning Environment</b>							
Demonstrate respect for world views, values, identities, and traditions.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Value and celebrate differences.	●	●	●	●			●

The following table\* provides guidance for educators by describing what an Indigenous-inclusive education system could “look like” in Manitoba educational settings and classrooms. This is not a curriculum nor is it intended to produce standardization, but rather to encourage adaptation and enhancement appropriate to the local context. Schools, school divisions/districts, and other educational institutions are to use this framework to plan and articulate commitments and actions relevant to their local situation. If your school, division/district, or educational institution has an Elder and/or an Indigenous Academic Achievement Team and/or employs an Indigenous consultant, be sure to access their expertise.

Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing: Action Toward Truth and Reconciliation								
Role	Authentic Involvement		Putting Students at the Centre		Understanding of World Views, Values, Identities, Traditions, and Contemporary Lifestyles		Inclusive and Culturally Safe Learning Environment	
	Promote Elder, Knowledge-Keeper, and Community Involvement	Promote Parent, Grandparent, and Extended Family Involvement	Respect and Listen to Students	Employ a Holistic Approach to Supporting Students	Teach True History	Incorporate Cultural Teachings, Experiences, and Indigenous Languages	Demonstrate Respect for World Views, Values, Identities, and Traditions	Value and Celebrate Differences
Students	Participate in cultural and ceremonial experiences.	Encourage their parents and extended family members to engage with school activities.	Express their opinions related to their school environment.	Ask for help when they need it.	Understand their own origin story and take ownership of their own biases.	Engage in place-based and land-based learning.	Participate in experiential land-based learning.	Help create content for learning activities, based on their own knowledge and lived experiences.
	Interact with and learn from Elders and Knowledge Keepers.	Participate in school and classroom activities that involve their parents and extended family members.	Identify their areas of interest to increase their engagement in school and classroom activities.	Access available culturally appropriate supports.	Learn about historical events that have had an impact on their communities, their families, and themselves.	Participate in learning activities that are multi-sensory, incorporating sight, smell, touch, sound, taste (e.g., sound of the drum, smell of sage).	Participate in action-oriented, family-centred activities that are based in community protocols and practices.	Participate in celebratory learning activities and events.
			Control the pace of their own learning.			Learn their own Indigenous language(s).	Identify themselves and their communities in learning activities and materials.	

\* Not all sections have suggestions included. However, educators are encouraged to add their own ideas to the actions proposed, as well as to adapt and enhance the suggested actions.

## Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing: Action Toward Truth and Reconciliation

Role	Authentic Involvement		Putting Students at the Centre		Understanding of World Views, Values, Identities, Traditions, and Contemporary Lifestyles		Inclusive and Culturally Safe Learning Environment	
	Promote Elder, Knowledge-Keeper, and Community Involvement	Promote Parent, Grandparent, and Extended Family Involvement	Respect and Listen to Students	Employ a Holistic Approach to Supporting Students	Teach True History	Incorporate Cultural Teachings, Experiences, and Indigenous Languages	Demonstrate Respect for World Views, Values, Identities, and Traditions	Value and Celebrate Differences
Teachers	Teach alongside an Elder or Knowledge Keeper who uses Indigenous pedagogies to complement and enrich learning activities.	Communicate with parents and families in plain language and on a regular basis.	Create opportunities for students to share their knowledge and their stories.	Recognize and plan for each student's strengths and gifts, as well as their needs and challenges.	Learn about the historical events that have had an impact on Indigenous Peoples in Manitoba (e.g., treaties, Indian Residential Schools, TRC), and make curricular decisions based on this knowledge and understanding.	Invite Elders and Knowledge Keepers to share their teachings with students.	Select learning activities that provide opportunities for students to participate in local Indigenous cultural practices.	Include learning activities that allow students to share things about what and how their family and community celebrate.
	Learn about and honour Indigenous community protocols in order to attend and participate in community events and ceremonies.	Create opportunities in the classroom for parents, aunts, uncles, and other family members to share their knowledge and contribute to their children's learning.	Connect learning activities to students' lived experiences and interests.	Create opportunities where students can reach out for help.	Learn about the impact of intergenerational trauma on families and children.	Incorporate oral history, storytelling, and narrative inquiry in learning activities.	Identify places in the curriculum where issues of sustainability, environmental stewardship, and ethical citizenship can be incorporated.	Include celebrations from different cultures in the classroom over the course of the school year.
			Create opportunities for students to share their unique gifts and strengths.	Know what school, family, community, and intersectoral supports are available for students.	Understand their own origin story and take ownership of their own biases.	Use Indigenous language(s) in the classroom (e.g., bilingual learning materials).	Embed learning about Indigenous values and traditions into daily teaching (not as a specific theme or unit).	Find ways (e.g., professional learning sessions, reading material) to learn about the diversity across and within Indigenous communities.
			Recognize that students do not represent their whole community or Indigenous Peoples in general.		Create space in learning activities in order to have safe discussions of difficult issues.	Use Indigenous language(s) in communication with families and communities, along with English or French.	Reflect on what they are teaching and how they are teaching to ensure no students feel excluded.	Use examples when teaching that show how the local community is connected to, yet different from, other places in the world.

## Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing: Action Toward Truth and Reconciliation

Role	Authentic Involvement		Putting Students at the Centre		Understanding of World Views, Values, Identities, Traditions, and Contemporary Lifestyles		Inclusive and Culturally Safe Learning Environment	
	Promote Elder, Knowledge-Keeper, and Community Involvement	Promote Parent, Grandparent, and Extended Family Involvement	Respect and Listen to Students	Employ a Holistic Approach to Supporting Students	Teach True History	Incorporate Cultural Teachings, Experiences, and Indigenous Languages	Demonstrate Respect for World Views, Values, Identities, and Traditions	Value and Celebrate Differences
Teachers <i>(continued)</i>							Find ways to incorporate Indigenous way of knowing into curriculum (e.g., science activities from both Euro-Western and Indigenous perspectives)	
School-Based Support Teams	Learn about and draw on resources present in the community that families can be connected to.	Communicate with parents and families in plain language and on a regular basis.	Treat all students equitably and with respect, recognizing their individual strengths and needs.	Maintain connections and relationships of trust to encourage students/families' comfort in asking for help/support.	Support professional learning for other educators and educational assistants in the school that teaches about the impact of intergenerational trauma on families and children.	Invite Elders and Knowledge Keepers to participate in establishing or bridging relationships of comfort and trust with students and their families.	Learn about the world views, values, and traditions of Indigenous Peoples in their school communities.	Ensure that the physical environment of the collaborative working space reflects the diversity of students with whom they work.
	Teach alongside an Elder or Knowledge-Keeper who uses Indigenous wisdom to complement and enrich connections to students and their families.	Work in collaboration and consultation with extended family, including grandparents, aunts, and uncles.	Provide opportunities for students to express themselves in multimodal forms including talking circles and through artistic expression.	Provide students access to local and culturally appropriate supports.		Offer students learning opportunities that are multi-sensory, incorporating sight, smell, touch, sound, taste (e.g., sound of the drum, smell of sage).	Show respect for Indigenous community values in any written or verbal communication with families and communities.	Attend and participate in Indigenous community events.
				Create a wrap-around student support system that supports student wellness, drawing on family, community, and intersectoral supports.			Engage in professional learning that promotes learning about the world views, values, and traditions of Indigenous Peoples in their school communities.	Provide opportunities that allow students to share things about what and how their family and community celebrate.

## Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing: Action Toward Truth and Reconciliation

Role	Authentic Involvement		Putting Students at the Centre		Understanding of World Views, Values, Identities, Traditions, and Contemporary Lifestyles		Inclusive and Culturally Safe Learning Environment	
	Promote Elder, Knowledge-Keeper, and Community Involvement	Promote Parent, Grandparent, and Extended Family Involvement	Respect and Listen to Students	Employ a Holistic Approach to Supporting Students	Teach True History	Incorporate Cultural Teachings, Experiences, and Indigenous Languages	Demonstrate Respect for World Views, Values, Identities, and Traditions	Value and Celebrate Differences
School Leaders	Learn about and draw on resources that are present in the community.	Communicate with parents and families in plain language and on a regular basis.	Treat all students equitably and with respect, recognizing their individual strengths and needs.	Model being open and welcoming to all students.	Support professional learning for themselves and other educators in the school that teaches the “true” history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada.	Help find resources and supports for educators in the school so Indigenous language(s) can be present in the school and in classrooms.	Learn about the world views, values, and traditions of Indigenous Peoples in their school community.	Ensure that the physical environment in the school (e.g., pictures on the walls) reflects the diversity of the school community.
	Connect with Elders and traditional Knowledge Keepers, and invite them into the school to share in school events and celebrations.	Connect with parents and families, and invite them into the school to share in school events and celebrations.	Hold high expectations for all students, and share information on how this can be done.	Create a wrap-around student support system that supports student wellness, drawing on family, community, and intersectoral supports.	Support professional learning for themselves and other educators in the school that teaches about the impact of intergenerational trauma on families and children.	Use Indigenous language(s) in communication with families and communities, along with English or French.	Show respect for Indigenous community values in any written or verbal communication with families and community.	Ensure that Indigenous community events are listed on the school calendar.
	Budget in order to be able to provide honoraria for Elders and Knowledge Keepers.	Ensure that the Parent Advisory Council includes, welcomes, and listens to the voices of all families.	Find ways to include student voice in school planning and decision-making processes.	Put in place supports for students and families at critical transition points (e.g., entry into school, transition between levels, transition between school and post-school options).	Understand their own origin story and take ownership of their own biases.	Invite Elders and Knowledge Keepers to share their teachings with students and other adults in the school.	Support professional learning for all educators and educational assistants in the school that promote learning about the world views, values, and traditions of Indigenous Peoples in their school community.	Ensure that the school holds events that celebrate different school and community populations.
	Learn about and honour Indigenous community protocols in order to attend and participate in community events and ceremonies.						Expect all staff and students to speak and act in ways that create and maintain a respectful school environment where everyone feels emotionally and culturally safe.	

## Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing: Action Toward Truth and Reconciliation

Role	Authentic Involvement		Putting Students at the Centre		Understanding of World Views, Values, Identities, Traditions, and Contemporary Lifestyles		Inclusive and Culturally Safe Learning Environment	
	Promote Elder, Knowledge-Keeper, and Community Involvement	Promote Parent, Grandparent, and Extended Family Involvement	Respect and Listen to Students	Employ a Holistic Approach to Supporting Students	Teach True History	Incorporate Cultural Teachings, Experiences, and Indigenous Languages	Demonstrate Respect for World Views, Values, Identities, and Traditions	Value and Celebrate Differences
School Division/ District Leaders	Connect with Elders and traditional Knowledge Keepers, and invite them to share in division/district events and celebrations.	Communicate with parents and families in plain language and on a regular basis.	Hold high expectations for all students, and share information on how this can be done.	Model being open and welcoming to all students.	Support professional learning for themselves and other educators in the division/district that teaches the “true” history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada.	Help find resources and supports for educators so Indigenous language(s) can be present in the school and in classrooms.	Learn about the world views, values, and traditions of Indigenous Peoples in their school division/district.	Ensure that the physical environment in division/district buildings (e.g., pictures on the walls) reflects the diversity of the communities in the division/district.
	Budget in order to be able to provide honoraria for Elders and Knowledge Keepers.	Connect with parents and families, and invite them to share in division/district events and celebrations.	Find ways to include student voice in division/district planning and decision-making processes.	Allocate funding for supports to students and families at critical transition points (e.g., entry into school, transition between levels, transition between school and post-school options).	Support professional learning for themselves and other educators in the division/district that teaches about the impact of intergenerational trauma on families and children.	Use Indigenous language(s) in communication with families and communities, along with English or French.	Show respect for Indigenous community values in any written or verbal communication with families and community.	Ensure that Indigenous community events are listed on the division/district website.
	Learn about and honour Indigenous community protocols in order to attend and participate in community events and ceremonies.	Encourage Indigenous participation on the school board.			Understand their own origin story and take ownership of their own biases.	Invite Elders and Knowledge Keepers to share their teachings at division/district events.	Support professional learning for all educators and educational assistants in the school that promotes learning about the world views, values, and traditions of Indigenous Peoples in their school community.	

## Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing: Action Toward Truth and Reconciliation

Role	Authentic Involvement		Putting Students at the Centre		Understanding of World Views, Values, Identities, Traditions, and Contemporary Lifestyles		Inclusive and Culturally Safe Learning Environment	
	Promote Elder, Knowledge-Keeper, and Community Involvement	Promote Parent, Grandparent, and Extended Family Involvement	Respect and Listen to Students	Employ a Holistic Approach to Supporting Students	Teach True History	Incorporate Cultural Teachings, Experiences, and Indigenous Languages	Demonstrate Respect for World Views, Values, Identities, and Traditions	Value and Celebrate Differences
Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning	Engage with Indigenous leaders, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and organizations to inform policy and planning in all matters related to education and in particular Indigenous education.	Establish provincial guidelines to enhance and build school division/school capacity to support meaningful parent/caregiver and family engagement.	Develop a provincial data and performance measurement strategy that includes provincial targets for Indigenous student achievement, engagement, and well-being.	Foster interdepartmental and intersectoral collaboration to meet the holistic needs of Indigenous students and families.	Involve Indigenous partners in curriculum development and renewal to accurately depict the historical and contemporary realities and contributions of Indigenous Peoples in Canada.	Ensure that all policy and program development aligns with the advancement of truth and reconciliation through education.	Reaffirm the provincial philosophy of inclusion and <i>Mamāhtawisiwin: The Wonder We Are Born With</i> as the foundation for all policy/program development.	Promote and support Indigenous cultural and historical events throughout the year.
	Uphold Manitoba's duty to consult in a meaningful way with Indigenous communities.	Advance equity, inclusion, and diversity in parent/caregiver engagement to eliminate barriers to participation.	Ensure Indigenous student voice in provincial planning and decision making through various channels.	Support the development and implementation of Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing into inclusive teaching and assessment practices.	Support Indigenous-focused and designed research to inform policy/program development and decision making.	Promote and develop accessible teaching, learning, and training resources that incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing with a specific focus on land-based learning.	Implement mandatory training for all employees of the department on the history of Indigenous Peoples, including the history and legacy of Indian Residential Schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, treaties and Indigenous rights, Indigenous law, and Indigenous-Crown relations.	Provide guidelines and resources to support the inclusion of Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing into the physical environment.

## Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing: Action Toward Truth and Reconciliation

Role	Authentic Involvement		Putting Students at the Centre		Understanding of World Views, Values, Identities, Traditions, and Contemporary Lifestyles		Inclusive and Culturally Safe Learning Environment	
	Promote Elder, Knowledge-Keeper, and Community Involvement	Promote Parent, Grandparent, and Extended Family Involvement	Respect and Listen to Students	Employ a Holistic Approach to Supporting Students	Teach True History	Incorporate Cultural Teachings, Experiences, and Indigenous Languages	Demonstrate Respect for World Views, Values, Identities, and Traditions	Value and Celebrate Differences
Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning <i>(continued)</i>				Work closely with post-secondary institutions/ partners and the post-secondary and training department(s) to create pathways for Indigenous teachers in the Kindergarten to Grade 12 system.		Renew and strengthen partnerships with the Manitoba Aboriginal Languages Strategy to embed Indigenous language programming and opportunities for all children and students.		
				Strengthen partnerships to support student transitions between First Nations and provincial schools, and from high school completion to post-secondary education and the workforce.				

A Self-Assessment Tool and Rubric is forthcoming.

## Conclusion

We have the moral and professional responsibility to support students' proficiency, and their ability to navigate and walk "strong like two people" (Dogrib) in both traditional and contemporary worlds. To do this, we must better understand that Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing revolve around the individual's responsibility to the collective—to their roles and place within the community. Indigenous students will then be more successful in school, and will be able to participate in and contribute to the economic and social benefits long denied them and their communities. All learners need to feel they belong, and that they can succeed, take responsibility, find their purpose in life and achieve The Good Life/*Mino-pimatisiwin* (Inineew)/*Mino Bimaadiziwin* (Anishinabemowin)/*honso aynai* (Dene)/*tokatakiya wichoni washte* (Dakota)/*minopimatitheewin* (Anisininimowin)/ $\Delta^{\circ} \cdot \text{or}^{\circ} \text{b}^{\circ} \text{r} \text{ } \triangleleft^{\circ} \text{or}^{\circ} \text{b}^{\circ}$  (Inuktitut)/*Miyo-pimatishiwin* (Michif).

# Glossary

Most definitions in this glossary are (with some adaptations) from Manitoba Education and Training, Indigenous Inclusion Directorate's *Creating Racism-Free Schools through Critical/Courageous Conversations on Race*, which is available at [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/racism\\_free/index.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/racism_free/index.html). Other definitions (marked with an asterisk\*) were adapted by the authors from more than one source. The Manitoba Métis Federation provided the definition of *Métis*.

## **Aboriginal Peoples**

The descendants of the Indigenous or original inhabitants of a particular nation or territory. In Canada, the term is used to collectively describe three cultural groups of Aboriginal people: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. These are three separate peoples with unique heritages, languages, cultural practices, spiritual beliefs, histories, and political goals.

The 1982 *Constitution Act* confers official Aboriginal status on status "Indians," "non-status Indians," Métis, and Inuit. As the Indigenous Peoples of Canada, Aboriginal Peoples argue that they have collective entitlements that were never extinguished and that they are rightfully entitled to special considerations. The term *Indigenous* is now used more frequently than *Aboriginal*.

## **assimilation**

A process, usually in reference to cultural minorities, of surrendering distinctive characteristics and identity in order to become part of and accepted by the majority group.

## **bias**

A subjective opinion, preference, prejudice, or inclination, either for or against an individual or group, formed without reasonable justification that influences an individual's or group's ability to evaluate a particular situation objectively or accurately.

Reasonable apprehension of bias exists when there is a reasonable belief that an individual or group will pre-judge a matter and, therefore, cannot assess a matter fairly because of bias.

Bias exists in systems that force all people into only two categories—for example, either man or woman. In such a system, men and women are expected to look and behave in particular ways that are different from one another.

### **colonialism**

Usually refers to the period of European colonization and political domination from the 1400s onwards in the Americas, Asia, and Africa, and includes the different forms of colonialism involving settler colonies, such as Canada, and non-settler colonies, such as India during British rule. Colonialism also differs across colonizing nations and across time. For example, French colonialism had different policies from British colonialism, while modern colonialism is often seen as part of “globalization,” which includes the exploitation of labour and national resources by transnational corporations and the expansion of free trade agreements and blocs.

### **culture**

The totality of ideas, beliefs, values, knowledge, habits, and the way of life of a group of individuals who share certain historical experiences.

### **discrimination**

The unjust or prejudicial treatment of an individual or groups of people; the unequal treatment of groups or individuals with a history of marginalization either by a person or a group or an institution that, through the denial of certain rights, results in inequality, subordination, and/or deprivation of political, education, social, economic, and cultural rights.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission defines discrimination as “an action or a decision that treats a person or a group badly for reasons such as their race, age or disability. These reasons, also called grounds, are protected under the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.”

Canadian Heritage notes the following, in a discussion about a change to the *Canadian Human Rights Act*:

In 2008, section 67 of the Canadian Human Rights Act (CHRA) was finally repealed with the passing of an amendment.

The revised legislation means that First Nations individuals who are registered Indians and members of Bands, or individuals residing or working on reserves, can now make complaints of discrimination to the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) relating to decisions or actions arising from, or pursuant to the Indian Act.

### **systemic discrimination**

The institutionalization of discrimination through policies and practices that may appear neutral on the surface, but have an exclusionary impact on particular groups, such that various minority groups are discriminated against, intentionally or unintentionally. Systemic discrimination operates directly or indirectly to sustain the power structure and advantages enjoyed by the dominant groups. It results in the unequal distribution of economic, social, and political resources and rewards among diverse groups. It also denies diverse peoples access to fully participate in society and creates barriers to education, employment, housing, and other services available to the dominant group. Systemic discrimination may be the result of government policies, laws, and regulations.

**diversity**

The variety of characteristics that all persons possess, that distinguish them as individuals, and that identify them as belonging to a group or groups. It is a term used to encompass all the various differences among people that is commonly used in Canada and in the United States in reference to programs aimed at reducing discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and outcome for all groups. The dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, type of area (urban/rural), age, faith, and/or beliefs.

**dominant group**

A group that is considered the most powerful and privileged of all groups in a particular society or context and that exercises that power through a variety of means (economic, social, political, etc.).

**equality**

The state of being equal in regard to status, rights, opportunities, and treatment.

**equity**

A condition or state of fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences. For treatment to be fair, issues of diversity need to be taken into account so that the different needs and requirements of individuals are met. As a concept underlying social and educational perspectives, it takes into consideration the existence of systemic obstacles and social inequalities, and proposes policies and practices to counter them, thereby providing all individuals and groups the possibility of educational success, employment, and social mobility. In equitable terms, educational achievement should be an inclusive rather than an exclusive goal.

**ethnicity**

A social and political construct used by individuals and communities to define themselves and others. It can be used to describe how people are defined, differentiated, organized, and entitled to group membership based on shared linguistic, historical, geographical, religious, and/or racial homogeneity. Ethnicity can also be used in reference to a consciously shared system of beliefs, values, practices, and loyalties shared by members of a group who perceive themselves as a group. Essentially, ethnicity can be thought of as an attachment that a person or a group feels toward a common cultural heritage. *Ethnicity* and *ethnic identity* are interchangeable terms.

## **First Nations**

One of the three distinct cultural groups of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. This is a term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word *Indian*, which many people found offensive. Although the term *First Nations* is widely used, no legal definition of it exists. Among its uses, the term *First Nations Peoples* refers to the “Indian” people in Canada, both Status and non-Status. Many have also adopted the term *First Nation* to replace the word *band* in the name of their community. There are 633 First Nations, representing 52 nations or cultural groups, and more than 50 languages. Most individuals prefer to be referred to by their specific First Nation. For example, Manitoba’s First Nations include Anishinaabe (Anishinabemowin), Ininew (Cree), Anisinine (Anisininemowin), Dakota, and Denesuline (Dene).

## **inclusive education**

Refers to the successful education of all students while acknowledging and respecting diversity. It is an approach to education that is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected.

## ***Indian Act***

An amalgamation of pre-Confederation colonial legislation, introduced shortly after Confederation, which has been updated to meet the needs of the emerging Canadian state to expand and allow European settlement of the West and other regions. This Canadian legislation governs the federal government’s legal and political relationship with Indigenous Peoples across Canada. It has been amended many times. The amendments made in the late 1800s and the first few decades of the 1900s are generally accepted as making the act more repressive and were intended to further the Canadian state’s goals of assimilation. Since 1945, some of its more repressive and detrimental elements have been removed to comply with the international human rights law regarding civil and political rights, including opposition to genocide.

## **Indigenous\***

A collective name referring broadly to peoples whose traditional territories have been affected by displacement and settlement on their traditional territories by others. In North America, *Indigenous Peoples* is the collective name for the original peoples of North America and their descendants. In Canada, it refers to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples.

## **Indigenous Knowledge\***

Knowledge, know-how, and well-being that flow from the particular world views that Indigenous Peoples possess. The knowledge adapts according to the context, is constantly evolving, varying from place to place and from individual to individual. Indigenous knowledge relates, among other things, to political, economic, philosophical, linguistic, cultural, and spiritual concepts.

**Inuit**

Indigenous Peoples in northern Canada who live above the tree line in the Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, northern Quebec, and Labrador. The word means “the people” in the Inuit language, Inuktitut. Inuit are one of the cultural groups comprising Indigenous Peoples of Canada.

The term is also used internationally, as in 1977 when the Inuit Circumpolar Conference was held in Barrow, Alaska, and it officially adopted the name *Inuit*, meaning “the people” as a replacement for the name *Eskimo*, meaning “eaters of raw meat.”

**Métis**

In the past, mixed ancestry was used to describe Métis people.\* Today, Métis means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples, and is accepted by the Métis Nation.

**prejudice**

An attitude that favours one person or group over another because of certain characteristics.

**race**

A socially created category to classify humankind according to common ancestry or descent. It is reliant upon differentiation by general physical or cultural characteristics, such as colour of skin and eyes, hair type, historical experience, and facial features. Race is often confused with ethnicity (a group of people who share a particular cultural heritage or background); there may be several ethnic groups within a racial group.

**racism**

A mix of prejudice and power leading to domination and exploitation by the dominant or majority group over the non-dominant, minoritized, or racialized group. It asserts that the one group is supreme and superior, while the other is inferior. Racism is any individual action or institutional practice backed by institutional power that subordinates people because of their colour or ethnicity.

**relationality\***

The concept that we are all interconnected to each other, to the natural environment, and to the spiritual world. These relationships bring about interdependencies and support sustainability.

### **reconciliation\***

“Reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, an acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Final Report* 6–7). Reconciliation is an ongoing process through which Indigenous Peoples, the governments, and all Canadians work cooperatively to establish and maintain a mutually respectful framework for living together, with the intention of fostering strong, healthy, and sustainable Indigenous Nations within a just Canada.

### **social justice**

Equal treatment and equality of social and economic opportunity, irrespective of one’s sexual orientation, gender identity/ expression, race/ ethnicity, biological sex, national origin, age, or health status. As John Rawls says, “Each person possesses an inviolability founded on justice that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override. For this reason, justice denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others” (3).

Social justice is premised upon the belief that each individual and group within society is to be given equal opportunity, fairness, civil liberties, and participation in the social, educational, economic, institutional, and moral freedoms and responsibilities valued by society. It includes equitable and fair access to societal institutions, laws, resources, and opportunities without arbitrary limitations based on observations or interpretations of differences in age, colour, culture, physical or mental disability, education, gender, income, language, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

Generally, a socially just society is one that values human dignity, celebrates diversity, pursues a common purpose, embraces individual and collective rights and responsibilities, narrows the gaps between the advantaged and disadvantaged, provides equitable access to resources for health and well-being, eliminates systemic discrimination, and accommodates different needs.

### **Status/non-Status\***

“Indian Status” refers to a specific legal identity of a First Nations person in Canada. The criteria are outlined in Section 6 of the *Indian Act*, defining who qualifies for registered “Indian” Status. Individuals are issued a status card that contains information about their identity, their band, and their registration number. Given the government’s historical unilateral authority to determine who is legally “Indian,” the Assembly of First Nations and other leaders have described the *Indian Act* as a form of apartheid law. In Canada, the term “non-status Indian” refers to any First Nations person who, for whatever reason, is not registered with the federal government, or is not registered to a band that signed a treaty with the Crown.

## truth

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, established in 2008 under the terms of the *Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement*, had the following as part of their mandate:

Reveal to Canadians the complex truth about the history and the ongoing legacy of the church-run residential schools, in a manner that fully documents the individual and collective harms perpetrated against Aboriginal peoples, and honours the resilience and courage of former students, their families, and communities.  
(TRC, *Final Report* 23)

It is this “complex truth” that is referred to in the context of “truth and reconciliation.” The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation holds a collection of statements, documents, and other materials to honour and keep safe the truths of the Indian Residential School experience for future generations.

## Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada\*

Article Seven of the *Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement* called for the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was officially launched in 2008. Between 2010 and 2014, the Commission held seven national events. Over 9000 Indian Residential School Survivors registered to attend these events, and it is presumed that more attended than registered. It is estimated that over 155,000 individuals attended the national events. In addition, regional events and town halls were organized, as well as 238 local hearings in 77 communities across Canada. In December 2015, the *Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* included 94 Calls to Action.

## treaties\*

Treaties are agreements made between the Government of Canada, Indigenous groups, and often provinces and territories that define ongoing rights and obligations on all sides. These agreements articulate the continuing Treaty Rights and benefits for each group. Treaty Rights and Indigenous Rights are recognized and affirmed in Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* and are also a key part of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which the Government of Canada has committed to adopt. Treaties with Indigenous Peoples include both historic treaties with First Nations and modern treaties (also called comprehensive land claim agreements) with Indigenous groups. In Manitoba, there are seven Treaties with First Nations (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10). These Numbered Treaties were signed from 1871 to 1921. Five Manitoba First Nations are not signatory to any treaty with the Government of Canada. These First Nations are Birdtail Sioux, Sioux Valley, Canupawakpa, Dakota Tipi, and Dakota Plains. The *Manitoba Act* of 1870 represents a *sui generis* treaty in relation to the Métis.

# Appendix A: History of Ongoing Colonization

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, Indigenous Peoples satisfied their material and spiritual needs through the resources of their surrounding natural world. Relationality was central to the Indigenous world view. Spiritual, human, and natural systems were viewed as one. The focus was on the community and not the individual. These views were in conflict with the European world views that were individualistic and non-relational. Due to these differences, settler governments took actions and enacted legislation that were intended to assimilate Indigenous people into Euro-Western values. The following provides a brief overview of some of the actions undertaken by both the Crown and the Government of Canada.

## Legislative History

The *Royal Proclamation of 1763*, issued by King George III, defined the relationship between the Crown and Indigenous Peoples living on the land that would become Canada. It is sometimes referred to as the “Indian Magna Carter,” as it is viewed as an important first step toward the recognition of existing Indigenous rights and title including the right to self-determination (University of British Columbia, “Royal Proclamation, 1763”). As noted by the Government of Canada (*Royal Proclamation of 1763*),

The Royal Proclamation itself is referred to in the *Constitution Act 1982*, in section 25, which states:

25. The guarantee in this Charter of certain rights and freedoms shall not be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from any aboriginal, treaty or other rights or freedoms that pertain to the aboriginal peoples of Canada including:

- any rights or freedoms that have been recognized by the Royal Proclamation of October 7, 1763; and
- any rights or freedoms that now exist by way of land claims agreements or may be so acquired.

– *Constitution Act, 1982*

However, as noted by Shawn Atleo, then National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, “the treaty relationships and aspirations that were expressed in the Royal Proclamation are about us sharing the land, wealth and resources of this country. That has not happened” (CBC, *Royal Proclamation*). Some of the reasons why the Treaty of 1763 has not achieved its intended purpose are seen below.

In 1857, the *Gradual Civilization Act* was passed, which was viewed as a way to assimilate “Indian” people into non-Indigenous society through the process of voluntary enfranchisement. By volunteering for enfranchisement, a person would give up their Indian Status in order to receive full Canadian citizenship.

The *Gradual Civilization Act* was not a success as few Indigenous people were willing to give up their Status.

On July 1, 1867, the Dominion of Canada came into existence and, on July 15, 1870, Manitoba officially became a Canadian province. Manitoba was much smaller than today, measuring about 130 miles east to west and 110 miles north to south, with an area of 13,928 square miles. Its size and shape gave it the nickname “the Postage Stamp Province.” The boundaries were later expanded in 1881 and again in 1912.

In Manitoba, there are seven Treaties with First Nations (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10). These Numbered Treaties were signed between 1871 and 1921. Under the Numbered Treaties, First Nations Peoples agreed to allow settlers access to much of their land in exchange for promises, many of which have not been kept. However, five Manitoba First Nations are not signatory to any treaty with the Government of Canada. These First Nations are Birdtail Sioux, Sioux Valley, Canupawakpa, Dakota Tipi, and Dakota Plains. The *Manitoba Act* of 1870 represents a *sui generis* treaty in relation to the Métis.

## The Métis Experience

The Métis people originated in the 1700s when French and Scottish immigrants, brought to Canada to work in the fur trade, married Indigenous women such as Cree and Anishinaabe (Ojibway). The Métis Homeland includes the three Prairie provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta), as well as parts of Ontario, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, and the northern United States.

Louis Riel, Manitoba’s Father of Confederation, was born in St. Boniface in 1844. Initially educated in St. Boniface, he went to study at a seminary in Montreal in 1858. After completing his studies in 1864, he studied law in Montreal and returned to St. Boniface in 1868.

In 1869, the Hudson’s Bay Company sold Rupert’s Land to the Dominion of Canada, and land surveys were conducted throughout the summer and fall of 1869 without consulting the Métis who inhabited the lands. The land transfer and resulting surveys caused a number of concerns among the Métis including the loss of their religion, culture, land rights, as well as political representation. These concerns resulted in the December 1869 election of a Provisional Government led by Riel, followed by the 1870 Red River Resistance. The Provisional Government was tasked with negotiating Manitoba’s entry into Confederation and, on May 12, 1870, the Canadian Parliament passed the *Manitoba Act* creating Canada’s fifth province. The province included a small square of land—about 35,000 square kilometres—around the Red River Valley and Portage la Prairie. The rest of Rupert’s Land became the Northwest Territories.

Riel and his lieutenants were not granted amnesty through the *Manitoba Act*, and they fled into exile prior to the arrival of Canadian troops in August 1870. Many of the Métis moved westward in order to maintain their traditional lifestyle, with a number settling around Batoche in what is now Saskatchewan. The Métis once again approached Louis Riel for assistance in obtaining title to their land, leading to the 1885 Northwest Resistance during which the Métis were overcome by the Canadian army. Riel gave himself up for trial and was hanged in Regina in November 1885.

As part of the *Manitoba Act*, English- and French-language rights were safeguarded in the new legislature and the courts, as were Protestant and Roman Catholic educational rights. The province received four seats in federal parliament. In addition, Ottawa agreed to pay subsidies to the provincial government and approximately 1,400,000 acres of land were set aside for the Métis. However, the Métis were not able to obtain their property rights until the land surveying was complete, which took up to three years. Furthermore, in 1870, the federal government implemented a system of scrip (the Métis or “half-breed” scrip). These promissory notes were redeemable for land or money. Scrip provided a convenient and inexpensive way for the federal government to acquire Métis rights to land.

The scrip process was complex and disorganized, making it difficult for Métis people to acquire land, while at the same time creating room for fraud. Initially, the value of scrip provided to the Métis was either 160 acres of land or \$160 cash to be used for the purchase of land. The Métis had little knowledge of the financial and legal systems of Eastern Canada including deeds, money, and written laws. As result, there was a lack of understanding of the value of the scrip and, as a result, many Métis were cheated out of their entitlement by shrewd speculators. It has been estimated that as little as 15 percent of the 1.4 million acres promised under the Act have ever been distributed.

In 1967, the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) was established. In 1981, the MMF and the Native Council of Canada filed a statement of claim with the Manitoba Court of Queen’s Bench arguing that the amendments to the *Manitoba Act* between 1873 and 1884 were illegal alterations to the law. In 1997, MMF President Chartrand made a commitment to revitalize the Manitoba Métis land claim. In March 2013, the Supreme Court of Canada acknowledged that the MMF as the body that represents the Manitoba Métis in their collective claim against the Crown. The Supreme Court of Canada also ruled that Métis have never been provided the land grant they were promised in the *Manitoba Act* of 1870. Negotiations between the various levels of government and the Red River Métis concerning the reclamation of land rights are ongoing.

## Indian Residential Schools

In 1869, the Canadian government established the *Gradual Enfranchisement Act*, which established the elective band council system that remains in effect. In 1876, the Government of Canada proclaimed the *Indian Act*, which consolidated a number of prior acts. The *Indian Act* still exists and for 150 years has controlled many aspects of First Nations Peoples' lives. From the imposition of governing structures, such as band councils, and control of the rights of First Nations Peoples to practise their culture and traditions, to the determination of the land base in the form of reserves, the *Indian Act* has intruded in the daily lives of Indigenous Peoples. The Act also determines who can actually qualify as an "Indian" in the form of "Indian status." The *Indian Act* also had an impact on the education of children, and in 1920, under the *Indian Act*, it became mandatory for every "Indian" child to attend an Indian Residential School and illegal for them to attend any other educational institution.

In Canada, the first Indian Residential School opened in Alderville, Ontario, in 1849; in Manitoba, the first opened in 1882. The last Indian Residential School operated by the Canadian government, the Gordon Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan, closed in 1996. As noted in the *Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba*, "the main goal of residential schools and the assimilation policy, however, was not further education, but, rather, to remove Aboriginal children from the influences of their parents and communities, and to rid them of their languages and cultures" (vol. I, ch. 14, "The Residential School System").

It is estimated that over 150,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students attended these schools. Many of the children lived in poor conditions and were often sexually and physically abused. Indian Residential Schools included "industrial schools, boarding schools, homes for students, hostels, billets, residential schools, residential schools with a majority of day students, or a combination of any of the above. At the request of Survivors, this definition has evolved to include convents, day schools, missions, sanatoriums, and settlement camps" (Aboriginal Healing Foundation, qtd. in Legacy of Hope Foundation 3).

In June 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper, on behalf of the Government of Canada, formally apologized to Survivors and Indigenous leaders for its role in the implementation and continuation of Indian Residential Schools: "The Government of Canada sincerely apologizes and asks the forgiveness of the Aboriginal peoples of this country for failing them so profoundly. . . . We are sorry."

## Child Welfare

Decades prior to the closure of the last Indian Residential School, the child welfare system began undertaking a new form of child apprehension. In 1951, a new section (Sec. 88) was added to the *Indian Act* and the changes in the nature of the apprehensions have been attributed to this new section. The new section allowed provincial and territorial laws to be applied to First Nations people living on reserve. In 1966, the governments of Canada and Manitoba signed an agreement that enabled the existing children's aid societies of central, eastern, and western Manitoba to deliver child welfare services to 14 First Nations in southern Manitoba. It has been suggested that as a result of federal and provincial/territorial funding disputes, apprehensions were usually the only child welfare "service" provided to Indigenous communities (Bennett et al.).

In Manitoba, and elsewhere in Canada, provincial and territorial child welfare authorities began to apprehend large numbers of Indigenous children, taking them away from their families and placing them for adoption with non-Indigenous parents. This became known as the Sixties Scoop, which continued into the 1980s.

Gradually, as education ceased to function as the institutional agent of colonization, the child welfare system took its place. . . . the Sixties Scoop was not coincidental; it was a consequence of fewer Indian children being sent to residential school and of the child welfare system emerging as the new method of colonization (Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission, *Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba*, 1991, vol. I, ch. 14, "The 'Sixties Scoop' ").

With the integration of Indigenous children into the public school system, the purpose of the Indian Residential Schools began to change. Rather than serving as a place to strip Indigenous students of their culture and language, they became places to house child welfare placements.

According to *Transforming Child Welfare Legislation in Manitoba: Opportunities to Improve Outcomes for Children and Youth – Report of the Legislative Review Committee, September 2018*, Manitoba continues to have the highest rate of children in care in Canada. Of the 11,000 children in care in 2017, 90 percent were Indigenous; it should be noted that Indigenous people comprise 20 percent of the Manitoba population. As the report explains, this is a result of the colonial policies and practices such as the *Indian Act*, the Indian Residential School system, and the Sixties Scoop. In order to counter the destructive and disruptive practices of child welfare agencies, Indigenous communities began forming their own child welfare agencies in the late 1970s and early 1980s to provide culturally relevant child welfare services to children, youth, and families both on and off reserve.

In January 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found the Government of Canada was systematically discriminating against on-reserve First Nations children in the application of child and family services. As a result of discriminatory funding, the federal system was found to have created an incentive to remove children from their homes and families and put them in out-of-home care. Furthermore, the system failed to take into account the different needs of First Nations across the country. In February 2020, the Assembly of First Nations launched a class action lawsuit against the Government of Canada seeking damages for First Nations children and families.

## Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy (The White Paper, 1969)

In the early 1960s, there was growing realization within the federal government that Indigenous Peoples in Canada were facing serious socio-economic barriers. In 1969, Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau and his Minister of Indian Affairs, Jean Chrétien, unveiled a policy paper that became known as the “White Paper.” It proposed changing the relationship between the Government of Canada and First Nations Peoples by abolishing the *Indian Act*. The Prime Minister held a view that for a “Just Society” to exist in Canada, discriminatory legislation should be repealed. The *Indian Act* was viewed as being discriminatory, as it only applied to First Nation Peoples and not the general Canadian population. What was proposed included the elimination of “Indian status,” repeal of the *Indian Act*, transfer of responsibility for “Indian” affairs to the provinces and territories, funding for economic development, and winding down the Department of Indian Affairs. Furthermore, the Government of Canada was to appoint a commissioner “to consult with the Indians and to study and recommend acceptable procedures for the adjudication of claims” (199).

First Nations Peoples across Canada were shocked, and the backlash was widespread among both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples. Instead of admitting wrongdoing over centuries of colonial practices, the Government of Canada was seen as trying to absolve itself of any fault. Furthermore, the paper was viewed as an attempt by the Canadian government to release itself from its responsibilities regarding the recognition and honouring of First Nations’ special rights, or to recognize historical grievances, such as Treaty Rights and land claims/Indigenous Title. It was implied that, as part of Canadian society, First Nations Peoples would have no rights to future land claims/Indigenous Title because they would become part of Canadian society owning land just like anyone else.

In 1969, Harold Cardinal, who was the head of the Indian Association of Alberta, wrote a book in response to the government’s White Paper entitled *The Unjust Society*. In it, he stated:

Now, at a time when our fellow Canadians consider the promise of the Just Society, once more the *Indians* of Canada are betrayed by a programme which offers nothing better than cultural genocide.

The new Indian policy . . . is a thinly disguised programme of extermination through assimilation. (1)

In 1970, the Indian Association of Alberta, under Cardinal's leadership, rejected the White Paper in their document *Citizens Plus*, which became known as the "Red Paper." This became adopted as the national Indigenous response to the White Paper. As noted in the preamble to this document, "to us who are Treaty Indians there is nothing more important than our Treaties, our lands and the well being of our future generation" (189). The paper discounted each of the proposed recommendations put forward in the White Paper ending with "Indian lands must continue to be regarded in a different manner than other lands in Canada. It must be held forever in trust of the Crown because, as we say, 'The true owners of the land are not yet born' " (198).

Due to the backlash, the Government of Canada withdrew the White Paper in 1970.

## Reinstatement of Status—Bill C-31

In 1985, Bill C-31 amended the *Indian Act* with the intent of eliminating discriminatory provisions and ensuring compliance with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The amendment had a number of changes including ensuring that an "Indian" woman who married a "non-Indian" man no longer lost her "Indian" status. Furthermore, "Indian" women who had previously lost their status through marriage to non-Indian men became eligible to apply for reinstatement, as did their children.

While Bill C-31 did address some sex-based discrimination, challenges were launched under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* alleging continued residual sex-based and other inequities in the *Indian Act* registration provisions. These challenges resulted in additional legislative amendments to the "Indian" registration provisions of the *Indian Act* through the *Gender Equity in Indian Registration Act*.

## The Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba

In April 1988, the Manitoba government created the Public Inquiry into the Administration of Justice and Aboriginal People, commonly known as the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. The Inquiry was created in response to two incidents: the trial in November 1987 of two men for the 1971 murder of Helen Betty Osborne in The Pas and the shooting death (March 1988) of J. J. Harper, executive director of the Island Lake Tribal Council, following an encounter with a Winnipeg police officer. The Inquiry received over 1200 presentations

and exhibits over the 123 days of hearing. The Inquiry issued its report in the fall of 1991. The concluding words of the *Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry* stated:

Canada's treatment of its first citizens has been an international disgrace. To fail to take every needed step to redress this lingering injustice will continue to bring tragedy and suffering to Aboriginal people, and to blacken our country's name throughout the world. By acting now, governments can give positive expression to the public support and good will we have encountered from Manitobans during the past three years. (Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission, vol. I, ch. 17)

## Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

In 1991, the Government of Canada established the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples in response to a desire to address growing concerns within the Canadian public. Concerns had been raised among the Canadian public, including Indigenous groups, about the Meech Lake Accord negotiated in 1987 between Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and all 10 Canadian Premiers. Furthermore, July 1990 saw the beginning of a 78-day armed standoff between the Kanien'keha:ka (Mohawk) community of Kanesatake, the Sûreté du Québec, and the Canadian army. This became known as the Oka Crisis. These and other events resulted in the establishment of the Commission. The Commission was meant to “help restore justice to the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Canada, and to propose practical solutions to stubborn problems” (Canada, CIRNAC, *Highlights*). The commissioners visited 96 communities, held 178 days of public hearings, reviewed previous inquiries and reports, as well as commissioned many research studies.

When discussing how they analyzed the information when compiling their report, the commissioners stated they did not attempt to solve the supposed “Aboriginal” problem because

Identifying it as an Aboriginal problem inevitably places the onus on Aboriginal people to desist from “troublesome behaviour.” It is an assimilationist approach, the kind that has been attempted repeatedly in the past, seeking to eradicate Aboriginal language, culture and political institutions from the face of Canada and to absorb Aboriginal people into the body politic—so that there are no discernible Aboriginal people and thus, no Aboriginal problem. (Canada, *RRCAP*, vol. 1, 12)

The authors reported their central conclusion could be summarized simply: “The main policy direction, pursued for more than 150 years, first by colonial then by Canadian governments, has been wrong” (Canada, CIRNAC, *Highlights*). The commissioners mentioned how frequently they were reminded throughout the life of the Commission of the limited understanding of Indigenous issues among non-Indigenous Canadians and “of the obstacles this presents to achieving reconciliation and a new relationship” (Canada, *RRCAP*, vol. 5, 82).

In *Volume 5: Renewal: A Twenty-Year Commitment*, the commissioners stated that the themes that served as the foundation for their recommendations included the need for Aboriginal nations to be reconstituted, as bands are an artifact of the *Indian Act*. They argued that Canadians need to understand that “*Aboriginal peoples are nations*. That is, they are political and cultural groups with values and lifeways distinct from those of other Canadians. . . . Only as members of restored nations can they reach their potential in the twenty-first century” (Canada, CIRNAC, *Highlights*).

Other themes included the need for a process through which Nations can assume power, a fundamental reallocation of land and resources, education, and skills for Aboriginal Peoples for governance and self-reliance, and addressing economic development to deal with poverty and despondence.

Aboriginal people need education and crucial skills for governance and economic self-reliance.

Poverty and neglect have resulted in lower educational attainment and a lack of certain essential skills. . . . Educational reforms are not a prerequisite for self-government; the two go hand in hand. Measures must be taken immediately to bridge the gap between current educational attainment and community needs. (Canada, RRCAP, vol. 5, 3)

There were a number of recommendations regarding public education, including recommendation 5.4.1 that stated public education on Aboriginal issues should be based upon the following principles:

- (a) Building public awareness and understanding should become an integral and continuing part of every endeavour and every initiative in which Aboriginal people, their organizations and governments are involved and in which non-Aboriginal governments and stakeholders have a part.
- (b) Public education should involve both the sharing of information and a process of interaction, leading in time to a shared sense of advocacy and of public support.
- (c) Non-Aboriginal organizations and corporations should establish internal mechanisms to make themselves aware of the distinctive needs of Aboriginal people whom they serve or employ and to ensure that they respond to those needs. (Canada, RRCAP, vol. 5, 85)

The recommendations dealing with education were meant to remove impediments to learning that result from a conflict between the culture of the community and the culture of the school. The commissioners believed education needed to provide Indigenous youth with competencies that enable them to function effectively in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous environments. As they noted, “Changes in curriculum and pedagogy are proposed to make education relevant to the tasks of consolidating an adult Aboriginal identity and bridging the divide between school and the workplace” (Canada, RRCAP, vol. 5, 12).

In 2007, the United Nations adopted the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) to protect the rights that “constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world” (Article 43).

While 144 countries supported the motion, 11 countries abstained and four voted against the motion. Canada initially refused to adopt the declaration, as did Australia, New Zealand, and the United States.

In May 2016, Canada officially removed its objector status and Carolyn Bennet, Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, stated, “We are now a full supporter of the declaration, without qualification.” (CBC, *Canada Officially Adopts*)

In their last words, the Commissioners stated:

The direction change must take is toward freeing Aboriginal people from domination by and dependence on the institutions and resources of governments. The end of dependence is something Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people alike profoundly desire. It would be quite unacceptable for First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples to continue to find their autonomy restricted and constrained in the twenty-first century.

Yet renewal of the relationship must be done with justice and generosity. History and human decency demand restoration of fair measures of land, resources and power to Aboriginal peoples. (Canada, CIRNAC, *Highlights*)

The five-volume *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* was released in November 1996. In response, the Government of Canada in 1998, under the authority of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, released a document entitled *Gathering Strength: Canada’s Aboriginal Action Plan*, which built upon “the principles of mutual respect, mutual recognition, mutual responsibility and sharing which were identified in the report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples” (2). In the “Statement of Reconciliation: Learning from the Past” included in the document, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians say, “Our purpose is not to rewrite history but, rather, to learn from our past and to find ways to deal with the negative impacts that certain historical decisions continue to have in our society today” (4).

## Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

In May 2006, the *Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement* was Canada's largest class action lawsuit, and all federal political parties to the *Agreement* approved it. This *Agreement* was seen as an important step in helping to heal the harm caused by the Indian Residential Schools legacy:

The Settlement Agreement represents the consensus reached between legal counsel for former students, legal counsel for the Churches, the Assembly of First Nations, other Indigenous organizations and the Government of Canada. The implementation of this historic agreement brings a fair and lasting resolution to the legacy of Indian Residential Schools. (Canada, *Indian Residential Schools*)

Article Seven of the *Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement* called for the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was officially launched in 2008. As noted in the TRC *Interim Report* (2012), the mission is to “reveal the complete story of Canada's residential school system, and lead the way to respect through reconciliation . . . for the child taken, for the parent left behind” (2).

Between 2010 and 2014, the Commission held seven national events. Over 9000 Indian Residential School Survivors registered to attend these events, and it is presumed that more attended than registered. Furthermore, it is estimated that over 155,000 individuals attended the national events. In addition, regional events and “town halls” were organized, as well as 238 local hearings in 77 communities across Canada.

In December 2015, the *Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* included 94 Calls to Action. A number of the Calls to Action dealt specifically with education, and under the heading “Education for Reconciliation” appear Calls to Action 62, 63, and 64, which the Manitoba government has made a commitment to address. *The Path to Reconciliation Act* (2016, updated 2017), based on the principles of respect, engagement, understanding, and action, requires an annual report outlining the progress Manitoba has made toward reconciliation.

In the TRC's final report, when discussing transforming the education system and creating respectful learning environments, the commissioners wrote the following:

The Commission believes that to be an effective force for reconciliation, curriculum about residential schools must be part of a broader history education that integrates First Nations, Inuit, and Métis voices, perspectives, and experiences; and builds common ground between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. The education system itself must be transformed into one that rejects the racism embedded in colonial systems of education and treats Aboriginal and Euro-Canadian knowledge systems with equal respect. (239)

# Appendix B: Seven Principles from *First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework*

The Manitoba draft *First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (Indigenous Inclusion Directorate and Manitoba Education and Training) places the Mamàhtawisiwin initiative under the goal of “Increase awareness and understanding among Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators and students about Indigenous Peoples’ histories, cultures, traditional values, contemporary lifestyles, and traditional knowledge systems.”

*Mamàhtawisiwin* aligns with the Framework Principles in the draft *First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework*. It is further responsive to a provincial need identified through the *K-12 Framework for Continuous Improvement* annual reports from and follow-up visits to school divisions across the province as they strive to close achievement gaps and increase Indigenous learners and their families’ sense of belonging in Manitoba schools. As well, the document is connected to the Numeracy and Literacy Strategy. Aspirational targets have been identified for Indigenous learners through this strategy.\*

Finally, the document is also in line with the *Manitoba Collaborative Indigenous Education Blueprint for Universities, Colleges and Public School Boards* with the goal to embed Indigenous knowledge and content within early education and onward to post-secondary levels.

The Manitoba draft *First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (Indigenous Inclusion Directorate and Manitoba Education and Training) is founded on seven high-level principles.\*

1. Recognition of Indigenous Peoples in the *Constitution Act, 1982*  
The government of Manitoba recognizes First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples as they are recognized by Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, which recognizes and affirms the existing Aboriginal and Treaty Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada.
2. Acknowledgement of the Holistic Philosophy of Lifelong Education  
The government of Manitoba acknowledges First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples’ holistic philosophy of education as a lifelong journey. These philosophies and pedagogies will guide the design, development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of educational programs, services, and supports that respect First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples’ identities, languages, values, and traditions.

\* Note: The intergovernmental advisory group had some suggestions for re-wording within the principles. These suggestions are something to be considered by the Indigenous Inclusion Directorate in finalizing the draft document.

3. Respect for Indigenous Peoples' Diversity in Manitoba

The government of Manitoba respects Manitoba's diverse First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples' histories, cultures, languages, and bodies of Indigenous knowledge and ways of being. As a result, the government of Manitoba is committed to ensuring that all Manitobans become better informed about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples' histories, cultures, traditional values, contemporary lifestyles, and traditional knowledge, as well as the shared history of early settlers and Indigenous Peoples.

4. Responsive to Indigenous Learners' Strengths

The government of Manitoba will be responsive to Indigenous learners by using a strengths-based approach when providing culturally relevant and appropriate curriculum content and activities within supportive teaching and learning environments.

5. Inclusive, Consultative, and Inter-ministerial Approach

The government of Manitoba and its education entities and institutions, along with other government departments, will use an inter-ministerial approach to build on new and existing First Nations, Métis, and Inuit-specific educational partnerships and strategies in consultation with families, communities, organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure that specific educational programs, services, and supports are meeting First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners' needs.

6. Innovative Approaches and Methodologies

The government of Manitoba is committed to ensuring that evidence-based decision making will be guided by culturally sensitive, appropriate approaches and methodologies associated with research, evidence, and results-based evaluation.

7. Equitable Access to Quality Education

The government of Manitoba is committed to providing the resources required to enable First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples to achieve educational outcomes within educational systems that provide access to high-quality, culturally relevant, and meaningful education.

# Appendix C: Canadian Council on Learning's Key Attributes of Indigenous Learning

While inclusive education benefits all students, there are certain characteristics that have been identified as particularly important in Indigenous learning. After a review of the literature, the Canadian Council on Learning (5-7) identified seven key attributes.

- Learning is holistic: The learning process engages all aspects of the individual—emotional, physical, spiritual, and intellectual. Individual learning is part of the collective, which extends beyond family, community, and nation to Creation. All knowledge is relational and interconnected among humans, animals, plants, the environment, and the Creator. It is not fragmented or compartmentalized.
- Learning is lifelong: The Medicine Wheel, for example, shows learning as a lifelong process beginning from before birth through childhood to old age. Knowledge and wisdom are passed to younger people and this cycle repeats itself through generations.

Indigenous knowledge comprises the complex set of technologies developed and sustained by Indigenous civilizations. Often oral and symbolic, it is transmitted through the structure of Indigenous languages and passes on to the next generation through modeling, practice, and animation, rather than through the written word. . . . Indigenous knowledge is typically embedded in the cumulative experiences and teachings of Indigenous peoples rather than in a library.  
– Battiste (qtd. in Munroe et al. 321)

- Learning is experiential: Learning occurs by doing, often in the community or natural environment. Learning is connected to lived experiences, including through regular community interactions, such as ceremonies or storytelling. Isumaqsayuq is the Inuit concept of learning through observation and imitation, occurring through activities such as preparing food or hunting.
- Learning is rooted in Indigenous languages and cultures: Language reflects Indigenous world views and, through language, cultural learning is transmitted across generations. Indigenous languages are inseparable from Indigenous identity and the preservation of knowledge systems.
- Learning is spiritually oriented: Essential to Indigenous world views is spiritual development that reveres all life and affirms the interconnectedness of all beings. Spiritual experience is equated with knowledge that is manifested through ceremony, vision quests, and dreams. Therefore, knowledge is sacred and seeking knowledge is a spiritual quest. As Battiste explains, “when the spirit is absent, learning becomes difficult, unfulfilling, and, perhaps, impossible” (Battiste and Tunison).

- Learning is a communal activity: Parents and family are the first educators and are advocates and decision makers for all children and youth. Elders play a key role as facilitators of lifelong learning, teaching about responsibilities and relationships, and reinforcing intergenerational knowledge and identities. They can play an important role in linking students, educators, families, and communities to Indigenous cultures and traditions.
- Learning combines Indigenous and Western knowledge: Learning is not static, but rather an adaptive process that finds the best in both traditional and contemporary knowledge. The concept of “two-eyed seeing” speaks to learning from a balance of both types of knowledge, thus strengthening learning for all. Two-eyed seeing “encourages learning to see from one eye with the best in the indigenous ways of knowing and from the other eye with the best in the mainstream ways of knowing, and most importantly, learning to see with both eyes together—for the benefit of all” (Bartlett).

In the Braided Rivers model, two streams represent two knowledge systems equally. “Both streams start at the same place and run beside each other in equal strength. They come together on the riverbed and then they move away from one another. Each stream spends more time apart than together. In the model, when they do converge, the space created is one of learning, not assimilation.”  
– Arago-Kemp and Hong 8

# Appendix D: Resources

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