

FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK

*Progress Report
2008*

**This Progress Report covers activities undertaken between 2004 and December 31, 2007.
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POLICY STATEMENT

Alberta Education commits to proactive collaboration and consultation with First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents and communities, and other key education, government, and community stakeholders to implement learner-focused strategies that will:

- *Increase and strengthen knowledge and understanding among all Albertans of First Nations, Métis and Inuit governance, history, treaty and Aboriginal rights, lands, cultures, and languages.*
- *Provide First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners with access to culturally relevant learning opportunities and quality support services.*
- *Develop ministry capacity to address First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner needs effectively.*
- *Report progress on the achievement of expected long-term outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit people, and other Albertans.*

*FNMI Education Policy Framework,
2002*

INTRODUCTION

The Government of Alberta is committed to enhancing the well-being and educational opportunities of Aboriginal peoples in the province. As part of this commitment, a key priority for Alberta Education is to improve First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner success.

In the spring of 1999, a review of the 1987 Native Education Policy was initiated. An extensive public consultation process involving over 5,000 participants laid the foundation for the development of the *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework*.

During the consultations, the First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Education Advisory Committee was established, consisting of First Nations and Métis authorities, other key education stakeholders and government. This committee continues to meet with Alberta Education twice annually to review progress made on implementing the *FNMI Education Policy Framework* and to help set priorities for on-going work.

Since the release of the *FNMI Education Policy Framework* in 2002, Ministry work has been guided by the following five priority strategies:

- Strategy 1.5** Increase First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner access to post-secondary and other adult education and training opportunities and support services.

- Strategy 2.1** Increase the attendance, retention and graduation rates of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students attending provincial schools.

- Strategy 2.2** Increase the number of First Nations, Métis and Inuit teachers and school/institution personnel.

- Strategy 2.4** Facilitate the continuous development and delivery of First Nations, Métis and Inuit courses and professional development opportunities for aspiring and existing administrators, teachers/instructors and school/institution personnel.

- Strategy 4.2** Build working relationships that will contribute to quality learning opportunities for First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners.

In addition to these five priorities, Alberta Education has also addressed several other strategies identified in the *Framework* and these are listed throughout the report.

This progress report describes the work currently underway toward improving the success of FNMI students in Alberta. It provides an update on the progress made since the release of the *Framework* in 2002 and the 2004 Progress Report up to December 31, 2007.

Since the release of the *Framework*, a new Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology was created. Alberta Education continues to lead the implementation of the *Framework*, while Advanced Education remains involved in various initiatives and as a member of the FNMI Education Advisory Committee.

On the following pages, current action and recent progress in FNMI education are referenced against the goals and strategies recommended in the *FNMI Education Policy Framework* and Alberta Education's Business Plan Goals.

Improving FNMI student success is a shared responsibility. It requires continued collaboration among students and parents, Aboriginal communities, various education stakeholders and government to implement strategies to enhance educational opportunities for FNMI learners in the province.

GOAL 1

High quality learning opportunities for all

Current Actions and Recent Progress

Strategy 1.1: *Increase the quantity and quality of First Nations, Métis and Inuit curriculum, language, learning and teaching resources.*

Strategy 4.2 *Build working relationships that will contribute to quality learning opportunities for First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners.*

Aboriginal Language Courses

- Four provincially approved Cree Language and Culture programs of study have been developed:
 - Kindergarten to Grade 12 (Twelve Year) Cree Language and Culture Programs of Study
 - Grade 4 to 12 (Nine Year) Cree Language and Culture Programs of Study
 - Grade 7 to 12 (Six Year) Cree Language and Culture Programs of Study
 - Grade 10 to 12 (Three Year) Cree Language and Culture Programs of Study
- Teaching and learning resources to support these new programs have been identified and authorized. As new programs are implemented and phased in, Guides to Implementation for each program are developed and authorized.
- Programs of Study and Guides to Implementation for the Cree language programs have been posted on the Alberta Education website.
- Alberta Education ensures the community validation of all Aboriginal language programs and support resources is provided by Aboriginal language teachers and language speakers.
- Alberta Education supported the collaborative local development of a Blackfoot Language and Culture program of studies led by the Kainai Board of Education.
- Alberta Education provides support and guidance to provincial and/or First Nation schools who express interest in developing local high school courses to meet the needs of their students (i.e., Nakota Language and Culture).
- Alberta Education provides in-services for Cree Language teachers to support the implementation of Aboriginal languages as part of the Languages Initiative.

Aboriginal Studies 10, 20, and 30

- The first provincial program in Aboriginal Studies was developed in 2002 in partnership with Elders, educators, and Alberta Education staff. The course content for Aboriginal Studies 10, 20, and 30 deals with FNMI history and contemporary issues in Alberta from a diverse Aboriginal perspective.
- Three student resources for Aboriginal Studies 10, 20, and 30 were published in 2004/2005.
- Teacher Resource Manuals to support the program were developed in 2006 and are now available from the Learning Resources Centre.
- Licensed by Alberta Education, the *Earth Voices Video Series* from Earth Magic Media features 129 interview segments, organized according to themes for Aboriginal Studies 10, 20, and 30 Programs of Study. The videos are for use by Alberta teachers, students, and parents.
- *Aboriginal Perspectives - Aboriginal Studies 10* received an award from the Book Publishers of Alberta Association in June 2005. In May 2006, *Contemporary Issues - Aboriginal Studies 30* also received an award from the Book Publishers of Alberta Association. *Peoples and Cultural Change - Aboriginal Studies 20* was nominated for this award in 2006.

Current Actions and Recent Progress

- Alberta Education continues to review and authorize support resources to enrich the Aboriginal Studies program. Recent authorized resources (between January 8, 2008 and May 6, 2008) are listed on the Alberta Education website at www.education.alberta.ca/teachers/resources/connection/may2008/aboriginal/abres.aspx

Social Studies K-12 Curriculum

- FNMI perspectives on governance, history, treaty and Aboriginal rights, lands, cultures and language have been infused into the revised Social Studies program. This new curriculum is being phased in over five years.
- The new Kindergarten to Grade 3 program was implemented in September 2005, Grades 4 and 7 were implemented in September 2006 and Grades 5, 8 and 10 were implemented in September 2007. Grade 6 and 9 programs were optional for 2007. In 2008, the Grade 11 infused curriculum will be released and Grades 6, 9, and 12 will be implemented in 2009. (Strategies 1.11 & 1.12)
- Student basic resources to support the new curriculum implementation have been published and resources for remaining grades are currently in development. Recent authorized resources (between January 8, 2008 and May 6, 2008) are listed on the Alberta Education website at www.education.alberta.ca/teachers/resources/connection/may2008/curriculum/social.aspx

Infusion of Aboriginal Content into the K-12 Curriculum

- First Nations and Métis people are directly involved in development, review and approval of curriculum and learning resources to address history, lands, rights, languages, culture and contemporary perspectives on governance, education, science and wellness (Strategies 1.11 & 1.12).
- The Curriculum and Learning and Teaching Resources Branches work to ensure that FNMI perspectives are infused into the Programs of Study and the resources, across all grade levels and all subject areas.
- Aboriginal teachers and community members are included in focus groups and external and internal review teams.
- A Curriculum Online Handbook is being developed to support the infusion of FNMI perspectives into the curriculum. Collaborative meetings with Elders and community advisors support the written and digital content for the curriculum handbook to authentically reflect an appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal perspectives and experiences.
- In 2005, Alberta Education's Special Programs Branch and FNMI Services Branch completed the development of *Our Words, Our Ways: Teaching First Nations, Métis and Inuit Learners*. This resource is intended to assist teachers to deliver Aboriginal perspectives in core curriculum. The resource is available in English and French from the Learning Resources Centre and has been posted on the Alberta Education website.
- Since 2004, the professional development opportunity, *Aboriginal Perspectives Day*, is provided for administrators, teachers and staff at the annual Social Studies Summer Institute offered by Alberta Education and the Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia.

Learning Technologies

- The *Earth Voices Video Series* from Earth Magic Media is now available to students, teachers and parents through the LearnAlberta.ca website (www.learnalberta.ca). The collection of videos features interviews with Aboriginal Elders, athletes, artists, activists, business people, educators, journalists, musicians and politicians, most of whom are from Alberta. The videos are part of the *Earth Voices*

Current Actions and Recent Progress

Video Series I and *II*, and are licensed by Alberta Education from Earth Magic Media for exclusive use by Alberta teachers, students and parents. These resources are correlated to Grade 10, 11, and 12 Aboriginal Studies.

- Twenty-seven new interviews have been recently added to the *Earth Voices Video Series*. In addition, a “Full Video List” button was added to the interface to provide easy access to all 129 videos.
- Learning Technologies Branch has digitized two videos authorized by the Learning Technology Resources Branch: [Dion of the Kehewin](#) and [Hungry Wolf of the Blood Tribe](#). These resources are correlated to elementary Social Studies.
- Work continues on the development of a digital resource on traditional and contemporary artists that will support outcomes in Aboriginal Studies 10.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Community Liaison Certificate Program: Based on Alberta Commission on Learning Recommendation No. 36

- Bow Valley College, in cooperation with Alberta Education and the FNMI Community Liaison Advisory Committee, has completed the development of a FNMI Community Liaison Certificate Program. This program prepares graduates to work as community liaisons, building positive relationships among FNMI students, their families and other members of their community with the goal of increasing the success rate of FNMI students in the school system.
- The first online course—FNMI Community Liaison Role and Responsibilities—was available in October 2006 through Bow Valley College. Since that time, online courses have been offered on [eCampusAlberta](#), which supports a number of courses for online delivery by public colleges in Alberta.

Western and Northern Canadian Protocol (WNCP)

- Alberta Education participates on the WNCP Aboriginal Languages and Cultures Working Group and Director’s Table and serves as co-lead on projects under three Charters:
 - Charter 1: Promote and enhance the WNCP Aboriginal Languages and Cultures website to support teaching and learning, and to share information about learning resources. The charter was redeveloped for a fresh new look and completed March 2008. Posting and publishing of information is currently in progress. The website will be complete and functional by September 2008.
 - Charter 2: Develop guidelines for ensuring cultural appropriateness and accuracy of learning resources. This project proposes to develop a guideline tool for validating cultural appropriateness, historical accuracy, respect for diversity, and identifying bias and stereotyping to be incorporated in learning resources that can be used by educators and learners. Alberta Education has undertaken extensive work on a validation process, utilizing the wisdom and guidance of Elders as the primary research process used to gather information.
 - Charter 3: Develop *Our Way is a Valid Way of Knowing: A Professional Development Resource for Teachers K- 12 to Support WCP Common Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Culture Programs*. Alberta Education’s FNMI Branch serves as co-lead on this project. Its purpose is to produce a professional development document to support teachers and to build and strengthen common understandings for the successful infusion of FNMI world views into the curriculum.

GOAL 2

Excellence in student learner outcomes

Current Actions and Recent Progress

Strategy 2.1: *Increase the attendance, retention and graduation rates of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students attending provincial schools.*

Improving student success in school using innovative technology

In fall 2007, a call for proposals was issued by Alberta Education to all publicly funded school jurisdictions and charter schools for research-supported proposals that explore the use of technology to improve student engagement and success in high school. These 24 projects reflect how new, innovative approaches in the classroom are being explored to help Alberta's students succeed in school. Two of these projects focus specifically on the success of FNMI students.

- **Osihtatan (Cree for "Let's Create") in Northland School Division:** This project will focus on the creation of media and fine arts products in fine arts and core subjects to improve student engagement and retention. Technologies will include interactive whiteboards, digital cameras, digital video, desktop computers and specialized software.
- **Project VITAL at the Boyle Street Education Centre in Edmonton:** The Visual Interactive Teaching and Learning (VITAL) project seeks to improve the engagement of at-risk and FNMI students with their own learning and school. Technologies supporting this project include interactive whiteboards and computer software applications.

Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI) Projects

- Seven AISI projects are exclusively aimed at providing direct assistance for Aboriginal students as part of Cycle 3 (2006-2009) of AISI. These projects include strategies to increase student attendance, improve performance on Provincial Achievement Tests, provide cultural awareness and professional development for staff, provide student support and promote parental involvement.
- Alberta Education currently provides approximately \$77 million per year to school jurisdictions for AISI projects. AISI aims to improve student learning through projects that reflect the unique needs and circumstances of school jurisdictions. Some of these projects specifically target Aboriginal learners.
- In the second cycle of AISI (2003-2006) approximately \$1.4 million of AISI funding was allocated to AISI projects that identified Aboriginal learners as part of their student population.
- The 2007 AISI Conference extended, for the first time, an invitation for two administrators/teachers from each First Nation school to attend the conference as observers.

Description of Cycle 3 AISI Projects Targeting FNMI Students (2006-2009)

1. **Community Connections - Northern Lights School Division**
Improve student attendance at Kikino School and Caslan School and meaningfully engage communities of Kikino and Buffalo Lake to participate in instructional efforts of the schools. The project features a number of key aspects designed to develop respect as a way to gain a deeper level of sensitivity, understanding and appreciation of differences.

Current Actions and Recent Progress

2. **Junior High Literacy in Northland School Division** - Northland School Division
Provide ongoing and comprehensive professional development at the school level and move students forward in literacy. Provide in-services for junior high teachers and literacy assessment and learning strategies for students.
3. **Cultural Dance** - Northern Lights School Division
Offer a Cultural Dance program at Lac La Biche to encourage students to become part of the school culture and increase attendance. A full time Cultural Dance instructor will work with students over the next three years and act as a resource person to infuse Métis culture into the school.
4. **Numeracy Instruction in Northland School Division** - Northland School Division
Improve mathematics achievement. Provide professional development opportunities for all numeracy teachers through training in the "First Steps in Mathematics" program by their school's numeracy coach. Schools will implement strategies to develop teacher capacity and improve student numeracy from Kindergarten to Grade 8.
5. **Safe and Caring Schools (Wabasca)** - Northland School Division
Increase parental involvement, communication and relationships at the school level. The project will follow the Safe and Caring Schools and Communities project that was initiated in the four Wabasca area schools. The project will use restorative justice strategies to improve student conduct and behaviours at the school.
6. **S.T.A.R.S. (Students At Risk Succeed)** - Lakeland Roman Catholic Separate School District
Increase achievement of at-risk students. The project will focus on closing the achievement gap between low-performing and high-performing students in reading and numeracy, specifically problem solving. It will target K-12 students identified as at-risk.
7. **Students and Teachers - Making Assessment Real** - Holy Family Catholic Regional Division
Develop assessment instruments to help differentiate classroom instruction. The project will bring more formative assessment into classrooms, will involve students in their own assessment, and will review report cards and reporting systems. Teachers will observe each other teach and engage in collaborative conversation about their teaching and student learning as forms of professional development.

Strategy 2.4: *Facilitate the continuous development and delivery of First Nations, Métis and Inuit courses and professional development opportunities for aspiring and existing administrators, teachers/instructors and school/institution personnel.*

FNMI School-Community Learning Environment Project

- Alberta Education provided \$1.5 million to support 16 school jurisdictions with significant Aboriginal student populations to develop and implement the FNMI School-Community Learning Environment Project. The purpose of the project was to increase student achievement, enhance parental/community engagement, and develop an appreciation of Aboriginal cultures, history and worldviews.
- Professional development for staff was an integral part of this project. In partnership and collaboration with the six Regional Consortia, Alberta Education developed a training manual to support the delivery of in-service sessions to assist school staff, central office personnel, school councils and school boards. The training was designed to develop a better understanding, respect, and appreciation for Aboriginal cultures among school staff and to improve the school-community learning environment for Aboriginal learners throughout the province.
- The pilot projects and data collection were conducted in 2005/2006.

Current Actions and Recent Progress

- The report, *FNMI School-Community Learning Environment Project: Promising Practices*, was published in May 2007 based on the findings of the FNMI School-Community Learning Environment Projects. This report provides new knowledge and insight into effective practices in FNMI education and is available on the Alberta Education website at <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/fnmi/projects.aspx>

Promising Practices in FNMI Education: Based on Alberta Commission on Learning Recommendation No. 40

- The Commission recommendation called for "providing choices for Aboriginal parents for the education of their children." During the 2007/2008 school year, the FNMI Services Branch provided 43 professional development sessions to school authorities on promising practices. Alberta Education released *Promising Practices in FNMI Education: Case Studies* in May 2007. An in-depth case study of effective practices was conducted of two of the School-Community Learning Environment Projects pilot schools mentioned above. This report will be updated each year to highlight two school jurisdictions demonstrating promising results for FNMI students. <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/fnmi/projects.aspx>

High School Completion

- In November 2007, Alberta Education hosted the two-day conference *Promising Practices to Enhance High School Completion amongst FNMI Students*. The focus was on sharing promising practices in FNMI education and high school completion in Alberta. The conference explored the following three themes: current research, educational leadership and assessment for learning, and effective school practices.

Professional Development for Teachers

- Professional Development and Aboriginal Awareness sessions about FNMI cultures are provided for teachers in Alberta on request. The resources developed by Alberta Education—*Aboriginal Studies 10, 20, 30, Our Words, Ours Ways*, and other FNMI resource materials—form the foundation for the information and related activities provided for teachers in Alberta by the FNMI Services Branch.
- These sessions are intended to assist teachers to build common understandings about FNMI cultures and communities in Alberta, and to provide information, ideas and strategies for building relationships, thereby encouraging the success of FNMI learners.

Assessment of Aboriginal Learners 2005: Symposium on Learning

- In October 2005, Alberta Education led a symposium focused on the assessment of Aboriginal learners in a unique partnership with the Alberta Assessment Consortium and the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium. The purpose of the one-day event was to bring participants together to collaborate and share success stories of programs and research related to the assessment of FNMI students in Alberta. Presenters included school jurisdictions and researchers in educational assessment from the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary.

Grade Level of Achievement Reporting

- Grade Level of Achievement Reporting involves teachers providing Alberta Education with their judgment of their students' level of achievement (based on the results from a variety of classrooms assessments throughout the school year), expressed as "at, above or below" grade level. This information is the teacher's judgment of their student's achievement in meeting the Program of Studies outcomes in Grades 1 to 9 Language Arts and Mathematics.

Current Actions and Recent Progress

- Following the pilot phase in provincial jurisdictions, Alberta Education invited First Nation Education Authorities in Treaty areas 6, 7, and 8 to participate in the Grade Level of Achievement Reporting Initiative.
- Information sessions were held in 2007 for Superintendents, Directors of Education and Principals from all three Treaty areas.

Memorandum of Agreement with Teacher Preparation Institutions (January 2004)

- Under the 2004 Memorandum of Agreement between the Government of Alberta and post-secondary institutions with teacher preparation programs, each of the institutions are required to periodically report their progress in addressing “teacher education about Aboriginal culture and appreciation of First Nations, Métis and Inuit issues.”
- In 2006, the Deputy Minister hosted a dialogue on FNMI Topics in Teacher Preparation with representatives from Advanced Education, teacher preparation institutions, teacher employers, First Nation colleges, education stakeholders from FNMI communities, Aboriginal teacher education programs, the Alberta School Boards Association, the College of Alberta School Superintendents, and the Alberta Teachers’ Association.

Strategy 2.5: *Improve mechanisms to measure First Nation, Métis and Inuit learner success.*

Measurement and Reporting:

- In 2004, Alberta Education implemented the *Aboriginal Learner Data Collection Initiative* that promises to produce reliable data on Aboriginal student achievement that will assist system improvement and accountability. In 2007/2008, Alberta Education worked with FNMI stakeholder groups to develop a progress report that will help measure how well the education system is meeting the needs of Aboriginal students and where improvements may be made.

Strategy 3.1: *Increase the literacy opportunities for First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and adults.*

Literacy Project

- The Aboriginal family literacy component of the Parent-Child Literacy Strategy was initiated in 2003/2004 under the FNMI Education Policy Framework. Projects are funded up to \$40,000 per year as part of the Family Literacy Initiative Fund administered by Alberta Advanced Education and Technology, Community Programs Branch.
- Alberta Education participates on the cross-ministry Aboriginal Family Literacy Advisory Committee, which meets approximately four times per year to provide information and advice to Advanced Education and Technology’s Aboriginal family literacy project manager and to support the Aboriginal component of the Parent-Child Literacy Strategy.
- In 2006/2007, a total of 53 Family Literacy Projects were funded in communities throughout the province. Eight projects are specifically targeted for Aboriginal families and communities. The remaining 45 projects also serve Aboriginal families. In 2005/2006, approximately 8 per cent of parents and 9 per cent of children participating in family literacy programs in Alberta were Aboriginal.

Literacy/Numeracy Consultation Initiative

- In 2005, Alberta Education initiated province-wide consultations to address the issue of low literacy/numeracy levels of students in Kindergarten to Grade 3.

Current Actions and Recent Progress

- Five consultation meetings were held throughout Alberta to gather data from parents regarding their children's learning. The goal was to provide recommendations that would ensure that K-3 students learn the essential foundation skills for later academic success and to address the needs of students not achieving the literacy and numeracy outcomes by the end of Grade 3 as set out in the Program of Studies.
- In addition to the five consultation meetings held throughout the province, one meeting was held in Edmonton for FNMI parents.
- The next step for this Initiative is to create a plan for the development of diagnostic materials as well as to complete a review of recent research related to literacy and numeracy skills development for K-12 students, including FNMI students, students with special education needs and students whose first language is not English.

Strategy 5.1: Enhance performance measurement, performance assessment and results reporting.

Aboriginal Learner Data Collection Initiative

- The *FNMI Education Policy Framework* identified the need to create mechanisms through consultative processes to measure and improve FNMI learner success. The Aboriginal Learner Data Collection Initiative (ALDCI) was implemented in September 2004 to identify Aboriginal learners in the province. The data collected by Alberta Education helps to assess the educational attainment of Aboriginal learners and the effectiveness of the education system. To collect this data, a voluntary Aboriginal identity question is included on registration forms in the K-12 and post-secondary systems.
- In fall 2005, the Ministry developed promotional items (poster, brochure and parent information sheet). These items were mailed to all schools in the province. Promotional materials about the Initiative are available on the Alberta Education website at <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/fnmi/aldci.aspx>.
- In January 2007, school jurisdictions began receiving their own FNMI student results for internal analysis to make program improvements.

Strategy 5.4: Improve Ministry awareness and understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit history, lands, rights, languages and cultures.

Professional Development for Education Department Staff

- In 2005/2006, Alberta Education developed and piloted a two-day Aboriginal Awareness workshop for Alberta Education staff, to improve knowledge, awareness and understanding of FNMI history, cultures, and current issues in education. (Strategy 5.4)
- Four workshops were held in 2006/2007 for department staff with a condensed one-day session for Executive Team. This workshop is now an ongoing course, open to all Education staff, through the Ministry's Training and Development program.

GOAL 3

Highly responsible and responsive education system

Current Actions and Recent Progress

Strategy 1.2: *Increase the availability of relevant K-12 and post-secondary information resources and services for First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners, parents and communities.*

FNMI Education Webpage

- In June 2007, Alberta Education launched a new FNMI education section on the Alberta Education website at www.education.alberta.ca/FNMI/. This web page consolidates the links to all Alberta Education information, documents and resources for FNMI education in one central location, ensuring that information about FNMI programs and initiatives are accessible to the public and education stakeholders in Alberta and other jurisdictions.

Strategy 1.3: *Encourage First Nations, Métis and Inuit participation in governance structures in school jurisdictions and post-secondary institutions.*

Aboriginal Parent and Community Engagement Project

- In 2006, the FNMI Education Advisory Committee identified improving Aboriginal parental and community engagement as a key priority in order to improve the attendance, retention and graduation rates of Aboriginal students. This priority was incorporated into Strategy 2.2 of the *2007-2010 Alberta Education Business Plan* to encourage “school authorities to develop and implement strategies to improve community and parental engagement in the education of FNMI students.” A pilot research project was developed with FNMI stakeholders and will be implemented in two to three school communities in 2008.

Strategy 3.3 *Increase the linkages between education and employment for First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners.*

Government of Alberta FNMI Workforce Development Action Plan

- Alberta Education participates on the steering committee for this cross-ministry initiative led by Employment and Immigration. In 2007, a draft Action Plan was developed that identifies ways in which the education system can support FNMI people in transitioning and participating in the workforce and economy.

Strategy 4.2: *Build working relations that will contribute to quality learning opportunities for First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners.*

Building Relationships

- Government is building on the relationships established during the 1999 Native Education Policy Review and the development of the *FNMI Education Policy Framework*. Alberta Education continues to dialogue with Aboriginal communities and education stakeholders. The FNMI Education Advisory Committee continues to have a role in setting priorities for education initiatives implemented under the *FNMI Education Policy Framework*.

Current Actions and Recent Progress

Cross-jurisdiction Initiatives

Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC)

- In 2004, CMEC identified Aboriginal Education as one of three priorities, along with literacy and post-secondary education. In March 2005, an Aboriginal Education Action Plan was approved with the following three objectives: Identifying and sharing best practices; strengthening evidence-based decision-making; and, developing a framework on teacher training. Alberta Education is part of CMEC's Aboriginal Education Working Group and contributes to ongoing work on these initiatives along with Advanced Education and Technology.

First Minister's Meeting

- The First Minister's Meeting (FMM) on Aboriginal issues (including education) was held on November 24-25, 2005, in Kelowna, B.C. The Government of Canada announced commitments to First Nations communities in health, education, housing, economic opportunities, and relationships. First Ministers and National Aboriginal leaders have proposed a 10-year plan to close the gap in quality of life between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians.

Strategy 4.3: *Identify and reduce barriers to First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner success.*

Pilot Options for First Nations Education

- The Government of Alberta is committed to enhancing the well-being and educational opportunities of Aboriginal peoples in the province. While remaining sensitive to the jurisdictional complexities, Alberta works with First Nations and the federal government on issues in First Nations education such as tuition agreements, self-government, teacher recruitment and retention, early childhood development, school systems, and parental engagement.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Programs

- The development of a FNMI Education monograph in its final draft will be published March 2009. The monograph will provide schools and school authorities with an overview of the essential elements of an effective FNMI education program.

CONCLUSION

A commitment to maximizing First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner success

The previous sections illustrate Alberta Education's current and recent work toward enhancing the well-being and educational opportunities of FNMI peoples in the province. The Ministry is committed to ensuring that the life-long learning aspirations and potential of FNMI individuals and communities are realized through a responsive and accountable education system. Alberta Education will continue to review the *FNMI Education Policy Framework*, to identify what has been achieved to date, which areas of FNMI education may need to be strengthened and to set strategic priorities for FNMI education throughout the education system in Alberta.