


Education and Training Branch's Indigenous Education Council (IEC) Best Practices Handbook

Métis Nation
of Ontario 

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Métis Nation of Ontario's Education and Training Branch would like to begin by acknowledging the dedication and hard work of those in our communities who have spent years engaging in Indigenous Education Council-related endeavors. Countless hours have been volunteered by our Community Council Representatives. Diligent efforts by the MNO's Education and Training Branch staff have prepared the path that makes the creation of this Handbook possible. We hope that the Education and Training Branch's Indigenous Education Council Handbook will act as a valuable resource as we continue to cooperate in this work.

DISCLAIMER

Please note: This document and its contents are subject to change.
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IMPORTANT ABBREVIATIONS

The list below contains abbreviations that are commonly used throughout the document and in the day to day work of an Indigenous Education Council (**IEC**) Representative.

AEC:	Aboriginal Education Council (outdated; IEC is now the preferred term)
APSET:	Ontario's Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework.
BAP:	Board Action Plan (See Section 7.0)
CC:	Community Council
DSB:	District School Board (K-12)
ELCC:	Early Learning and Child Care
EPA:	Education and Partnership Advisor
ET Branch:	MNO's Education and Training Branch
FNMI:	First Nations, Métis, and Inuit
IEAC:	Indigenous Education Advisory Council (outdated; IEC is now the preferred term)
IEC:	Indigenous Education Council
IPEC:	Indigenous Peoples Education Circle: An organization that brings together FNMI IEC representatives from Ontario's Colleges for the purpose of strategizing. Each College IEC nominates one IEC member to participate in IPEC .
K-12:	Kindergarten to Grade 12
MEDU/EDU:	Ontario Ministry of Education
MCURES:	Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security
MNO:	Métis Nation of Ontario
MOU:	Memorandum of Understanding
MYAPP:	Multi-Year Action Plan for Post-Secondary Education (See Section 7.0)
OCT:	Ontario College of Teachers
PSI:	Post-Secondary Institute

1.0. INTRODUCTION

1.1. WHAT IS AN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL (IEC)? WHY ARE IECs IMPORTANT TO MNO?

What we today call “Indigenous Education Councils” (IECs)¹ were created by the Government of Ontario over successive policy documents as a way of bringing First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) perspectives and voices to bear on the operations of District School Boards (at the K-12 level) and Colleges/Universities (at the Post-Secondary education level). IECs are councils composed of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit representatives, community members, and other educational partners who meet regularly and offer advice and guidance to institutional administrators. IECs were first proposed in 2007’s *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework*:

School boards will strive to... establish First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Advisory Committees that include representation from First Nations, community members, and local Aboriginal service delivery organizations, such as Friendship Centres (20)

This definition was expanded and refined in 2011’s *Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Policy Framework (APSET)*. For Post-Secondary Education, IECs are mandatory for a College/University to receive certain types of funding:

Aboriginal Education Councils (AEC): A mandatory body established by each publicly assisted college or university to ensure that Aboriginal people are consistently and regularly engaged in decision making within the institution. Institutions must ensure that representatives from Aboriginal communities/ organizations have direct access to the board of governors and the senate (e.g., by reserving a seat on the board for an Aboriginal representative or by having the president serve as a member of the Aboriginal Education Council). The establishment of an AEC is required if a college or university is to be eligible to receive targeted Postsecondary Education Funding for Aboriginal Learners (PEFAL). (APSET 40)

Today, all District School Boards and public Colleges and Universities in Ontario have IECs. IECs are important because they allow representatives (such as education employees, volunteers, etc.) from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, including the Métis Nation of Ontario, to offer their perspectives and guidance at the administrative level of the province’s educational systems (K-12 and Post-Secondary). These are opportunities for IEC representatives to advocate for Métis inclusion in course content and extracurricular activities, and to ensure that Métis students are being supported.

¹“IEC” is a general and widely used term, but IECs may adopt a variety of different names for these types of Councils. Ontario’s policy documents have also used numerous terms for this Council that reflect evolving discussions and preferences (for example, from Aboriginal Education Council to Indigenous Education Council).



2.0. MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS



...to encourage academic and skills development and to enable citizens of the Métis Nation to attain their educational aspirations; to promote the history, values, culture, languages and traditions of the Métis Nation and to create an awareness of our proud heritage; to promote Métis artistic and cultural achievement

(Métis Nation of Ontario's Statement of Prime Purpose)

Guided by the *Statement of Prime Purpose*, an important foundational document of the Métis Nation of Ontario, MNO's Education and Training (ET) Branch is committed to helping MNO citizens of all ages attain their educational aspirations. We recognize that there are barriers facing Métis students, and our advocacy efforts are focused on improving Métis student experiences, maximizing support for our students, and seeking greater Métis inclusion and consultation at the institutional level. To that end, IEC representatives can keep these broad goals in mind as they go about the critical task of guiding institutions regarding Métis inclusion.

The ET Branch wants Métis learners to succeed. When dealing with external partners, like Colleges/Universities or District School Boards, the Education and Training Branch advocates for Métis inclusion in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit focused programs and initiatives. Inclusion means ensuring that Métis students are given consideration and support by their educational institutions, and that Métis content is substantively present in a school's course materials and extracurricular activities. Whether this emerges as the development of direct funding supports, targeted education programs, or Métis cultural activities, the Education and Training Branch wants to help schools include Métis, to make Métis students feel welcome and represented. The ET Branch also seeks to be consulted on how Métis content is being developed or included, to ensure that accurate information is being taught. Inclusivity is a proven pathway to improved outcomes.

2.1. COMMUNITY COUNCILS AND EVOLVING CONCERNS

These general notions can be supplemented by a local Métis Community Council (or Councils) if they have different goals for their Indigenous Education Council (IEC) work. These goals will also be accompanied by a list of evolving shorter-term provincial priorities that can be adjusted and speak to emerging concerns. These priorities will be jointly developed between MNO Education and Training staff and active IEC representatives through the Education and Training Branch's annual IEC Engagement Sessions (See Section 4.1. MNO Education and Training Annual IEC Engagement Sessions.)

3.0. INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCILS - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



3.1. INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCILS (IECS)

Indigenous Education Councils are mandated advisory bodies that allow First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives to be brought to Ontario’s K-12 and Post-Secondary education systems. IECs hold meetings throughout the year where their members come together to discuss First Nations, Métis, and Inuit initiatives and inclusion within a District School Board or Post-Secondary Institution. IECs usually have representatives from the District School Board or College/University (such as Administrators, Trustees, Indigenous Education Leads, Indigenous Student Centre Managers, etc.) and members representing local First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities and community organizations (such as education staff, community volunteers, etc.). IECs should:

- Provide IEC representatives all relevant documentation pertaining to IEC work: past meeting minutes, upcoming agendas and topics, action plans, terms of reference, etc.
- Provide adequate time and notification about meetings so IEC representatives can attend
- Give space for IEC representatives to offer their suggestions on discussion items

The Métis Community Council should choose an IEC representative that they trust to vote on their behalf. IEC representatives should be informed on the issues important to their Community Council and vote as the community representative holding those issues and topics above any personal agenda items. IEC meetings are generally structured around Robert’s Rules of Order. (See Section 6.2.1. *Robert’s Rules and Decision Items*)

3.1.1. Indigenous Education Councils: K - 12 District School Board v. Post-Secondary Institutions

Although there are Indigenous Education Councils (IECs) at both the District School Board (Kindergarten - Grade 12, K-12) and College/University (Post-Secondary) levels, there are some key differences in how these spheres function. This is because different education policy frameworks govern each of these different sectors.

Outlined below are some of the most important differences between K-12 and Post-Secondary IECs. If you are in the process of joining an IEC as an IEC representative, you should be aware of what type of IEC you are joining and consider the list below:

- Both **K-12** and **Post-Secondary IECs** have their members work together to develop action plans. **K-12 IECs** create Board Action Plans (BAPs) on First Nation, Métis, and Inuit education. **Post-Secondary IECs** create a Multi-Year Aboriginal Action Plan for Post-Secondary Education (MYAAPP). (See Section 7.0. *Action Plans*).

- **K-12 IECs** work with a school board's Indigenous Education Lead. This position was created by the province to help support the implementation of the *Ontario FNMI Education Policy Framework* (2007). Each board has an Indigenous Education Lead who is responsible for working with the IEC to develop and sign off on the Board Action Plan. Sometimes, the Indigenous Education Lead may be called a different title. **Post-Secondary IECs** do not have a similar position/role.
- **K-12 IECs** may have School Board Trustees participating as members of the IEC. Trustees are locally elected members of the public who form a board (the Board of Trustees) which governs the school board.
- **Post-Secondary IECs** are guaranteed direct access to the University/College's Board of Governors and Senate. This is accomplished by either reserving a seat on the board for an Indigenous representative or by having the president sit on the IEC.
- Colleges/Universities must have a **Post-Secondary IEC** to access certain types of funding (such as Post-Secondary Education Funding for Aboriginal Learners, PEFAL²).
- **K-12 IECs** encourage the participation of FNMI families and parents in school life; this is not the case with Post-Secondary IECs.
- **K-12 IECs** tend to be more active during the regular school year (September to June), with a downturn in activity over the summer break. **Post-Secondary IECs** generally remain active according to their academic calendars.
- In general, **K-12 IECs** tend to be more regular and standardized in their structure and operation. **Post-Secondary IECs**, on the other hand, have a great deal of variation, as each Post-Secondary institute develops its own **Terms of Reference** for its IEC (A "Terms of Reference" is a document that outlines the structure and operation of an IEC). Some **K-12 IECs** also develop their own Terms of Reference.

²The Post-Secondary Education Fund for Aboriginal Learners distributes funding for Aboriginal post-secondary education and training through four streams:

- Student Success Fund: provides proposal-based funding to colleges, universities and Aboriginal Institutes for student-focused services and programs that increase the number of Aboriginal learners accessing and completing postsecondary education and training
- Targeted Initiatives Fund: provides grants to educational institutions and/or community-based organizations for time-limited projects that improve program and service delivery, share information and best practices, create new partnerships and approaches to promote pre-apprenticeships and the trades and develop new academic programs
- Aboriginal Skills Advancement Program: a first-of-its-kind program that meets the education and training needs of Aboriginal learners in the nine Matawa First Nation communities in northern Ontario
- Aboriginal Bursary Fund: provided to students at all Ontario colleges, universities and Aboriginal Institutes²

("Supporting Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training," Government of Ontario, <https://news.ontario.ca/en/backgrounder/33370/supporting-aboriginal-postsecondary-education-and-training>)

3.2. MNO COMMUNITY COUNCILS

MNO Community Councils are elected, volunteer-based bodies of MNO citizens that represent a local MNO community within a certain area. Community Councils are crucial, recognized, local governing units. They serve as the voice of the MNO when it comes to Indigenous Education Council (IEC) work. MNO Community Councils will:

- Be regularly updated regarding current IEC representation in their area and any changes that occur in that representation
- Make final decisions on the selection of new IEC representatives
- Receive all IEC meeting notes submitted via the online IEC Meeting Report form

Additionally, Métis Community Councils can take on a more active role in IEC work by:

- Guiding and preparing IEC representatives in their area on important local priorities to discuss at IEC meetings
- Participating, at various levels of involvement depending on the interest and capacity of individual Councils, in the recruitment and assignment of IEC representatives inside of their council area

MNO Community Councils retain authority over their representation on IECs, and can choose to do this work in the manner that best suits the unique needs of the Council. A Council may ask that their IEC representatives prepare an overview or annual report to share with other citizens. Community Councils and the IEC representatives that represent them should be sure to communicate so that expectations are clear. This can be formalized in a written agreement or code of conduct.

- The Métis Community Council remains the voice of authority regarding IEC representation in their area. Education and Training (ET) Branch staff support the Métis Community Council's work, and will only intervene in managing IEC representation if a Métis Community Council lacks the capacity and resources to do so.
- If a Métis Community Council has vacant IEC seats in its area and is unable to find representatives, Education and Training Branch staff will step in to assist with recruitment.
- If a District School Board / Post-Secondary Institution is in an area without an active Métis Community Council, or if the size of the District School Board covers many Community Council areas, ET Branch Staff will work with Community Councils to determine how best to provide representation on the IECs.

3.3. INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Indigenous Education Council (IEC) representatives are community volunteers who represent their local Community Council on an IEC and at IEC meetings. IEC representatives should come from an area that is managed by a Métis Community Council and should work alongside and as an agent of that Métis Community Council in bringing Métis concerns and representation to IEC proceedings. An IEC representative **DOES NOT** need to be an elected member of the Community Council. Ideally, the IEC representative should be an MNO citizen of the region the IEC is located within. IEC representatives will:

- Serve as the Métis voice on District School Board (DSB) and Post-Secondary Institution (PSI) IECs
- Advocate for Métis inclusion in the Indigenous activities of the DSB/PSI, both in the classroom and in extracurriculars.
- Seek visible Métis inclusion on campus
- Provide IECs insight into Métis student experiences and guidance on how to increase Métis inclusivity
- Fill out reports detailing meeting proceedings. These go to both Education and Training (ET) Branch staff and the area Métis Community Council
- Report any issues or problems to ET Branch staff
- Receive and complete training for the role
- Attend the annual Engagement Sessions dedicated to IEC representation

3.3.1. Who can be an IEC representative?

IEC Representatives are selected and approved by their local Community Councils. Representatives do not need to be sitting Council members; Councils may choose to appoint other community members, particularly if current members have other responsibilities to fulfill. Preference will be given to candidates with verified Métis Nation of Ontario citizenship; however, Councils may, at their discretion, consider other individuals they deem qualified for the role. Experience in the education sector is considered an asset.

We welcome and encourage Métis people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives to apply for this role. MNO does not discriminate based on age, race, or sexual/gender identity; one of the strengths of our community is our diversity, and we want that to be reflected on IECs.

3.3.2. Indigenous Education Council (IEC) Representation: Continuity and Transitions

Community Council leadership and personnel change over time. The current leader(s) of a Community Council are the ones that have authority over their Indigenous Education Council (IEC) work. They may choose to replace IEC representatives or approach this work differently; these decisions should be respected. When there is a change of leadership, Education and Training Staff are happy to work with new Council members and to inform them on Education efforts in their area. Education and Training Staff can also provide old documents and Meeting Reports to help situate new Representatives. If you are an IEC representative, you may continue to serve in that role as long as the Council approves; they may wish to speak to you about your participation, or ask that you step aside for a new Representative. If you are a new IEC representative, the Education and Training Staff assigned to your District School Board or College/University may be able to provide you some context and background on our relationship with that institution.

Near the end of every school year, the Education and Training Staff will contact all identified IEC Community Council Representatives and inquire if they intend to carry on in the role for the next school year. This will allow better tracking of active Representatives and vacancies. Gathering this information in advance of the next school year will allow time for a new IEC representatives to be recruited and trained, to enable smooth transitions without any gaps in representation. This information will be shared with Community Councils, who can then have input and make decisions regarding continuing and new IEC representatives.

3.3.3. Note: Education and Training Staff attending IECs:

If a Métis Community Council cannot find a community volunteer, an Education and Training Branch staff member may sit as an interim IEC representative until such time that the Métis Community Council can find or approve a volunteer from their community. If a staff member is acting as an IEC representative, they will still be required fulfill all of the duties associated with the role. They will still be expected to submit IEC meeting reports, receive instruction from the Community Council they are representing, and undergo the training to become an IEC representative. Education and Training Branch staff sitting as an interim IEC representative should have approval from their manager before accepting the role.

3.4. INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL (IEC) SPECIALISTS

IEC Specialists are Education and Training (ET) staff that support the enhancement of IEC representation. By dedicating staff to IEC work, the ET Branch aims to recruit and deploy more IEC representatives, with the goal of assisting Community Councils in having robust representation for all available seats. The ET Branch also seeks to provide improved training to help IEC representatives succeed in their roles, while offering additional support to Métis Community Councils in carrying out IEC-related work. IEC Specialists will:

- Actively recruit and maintain a list of MNO citizens who are interested in serving on IECs
- Provide regular information sessions to Métis Community Councils and citizens about what IECs are, how important IEC representation is, as well as the opportunities, benefits, and responsibilities of the IEC representative role
- Assist Métis Community Councils by providing updates on IEC representation in their area; assisting with IEC representative assignations when a Council lacks capacity
- Manage a communication system that serves as the hub for IEC work. The communication system will:
 - Allow District School Boards (DSBs) and Post-Secondary Institutions (PSIs) to request an IEC representative
 - Allow citizens to express interest in becoming an IEC representative
 - Allow IEC representatives to complete their meeting reports digitally (which can then be shared with ET staff and Métis Community Councils)
 - Address any general questions regarding IEC participation
- Offer an annual Engagement Sessions where IEC representatives come together to discuss the role, strategize, workshop, and provide input on the priorities of IEC representation.
- Manage a training program where incoming IEC representatives will receive the information and skills they need to be effective in the role. This will be supplemented by additional virtual training sessions on specialized topics (such as 'Board Action Plans', etc.).
- Work alongside and in communication with the Kindergarten - Grade 12 (K-12) and Post-Secondary (PSE) Métis Education and Partnership Advisors (EPAs). The EPAs are relationship leads for the Education and Training Branch at these institutions and are meant to be in regular contact with students and staff. They have relevant information to provide to IEC Specialists, and vice versa. If issues regarding IEC work at a school/DSB arise, EPAs and IEC Specialists will collaborate to develop a strategy or solution.

- IEC Specialists will not be interacting with students or school staff regularly. They will only have contact with these parties if an issue particular to IECs arises. They will primarily be interacting with prospective and current IEC representatives, and facilitating their training before transitioning these relationships to assigned EPAs.
- IEC Specialists will also seek to develop relationships with external organizations engaged in high-level work regarding FNMI education, such as the Indigenous Peoples Education Circle (IPEC). The IEC Specialist team may be contacted at iecsupport@metisnation.org.

3.5. MÉTIS EDUCATION AND PARTNERSHIP ADVISORS

Education and Partnership Advisors (EPAs) serve as frontline staff engaging directly with the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education systems in Ontario. There are two teams of Métis Education and Partnership Advisors in MNO's Education and Training Branch: one dedicated to K-12 Education (District School Boards), and one focused on Post-Secondary Education (Colleges/Universities). Métis Education and Partnership Advisors:

- Build relationships and have direct interactions with District School Board (DSB) /Post-Secondary Institute (PSI) staff regularly.
- Work to maximize Métis inclusion in course content and extracurricular activities, and to make sure that Métis students are supported in their educational journey.
- Are assigned to and directly work with specific DSBs and PSIs.
- Cultivate and maintain relationships with Métis Community Councils
- There are many similarities between the work of K-12 and Post-Secondary Métis Education and Partnership Advisors, but there are also some important differences
- Post-Secondary Métis Education and Partnership Advisors operate the Infinite Reach Métis Student Solidarity Network and assist with other Post-Secondary student support programs
- K-12 Education and Partnership Advisors distribute Education Resources, including the K-12 Métis Education Kit, facilitate professional development sessions for teachers, and host an annual Métis Teachers Workshop

3.6. EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE (ELCC)

MNO's Early Learning and Childcare team offers many programs that support Métis Early Learners. If the question of Early Learning or Child Care comes up at your IEC meeting, the IEC representative can contact their Education and Partnership Advisor, who can assist District School Boards in connecting with our ELCC team.

Some of the support and assistance that ELCC can offer includes:

- Support for Early Childhood Educators
- Classroom resources for Early Learning
- Support with access to Child Care through the Subsidy and Stipend Program
- Professional development opportunities for Métis and Non-Métis educators working in the early years sector
- Support with extracurricular activities
- Access to developmental services for Métis children 0-12 and early years advocacy for Métis children 0-8
- And more!

For further information on ELCC's programs and services, please visit their webpage: bit.ly/3UYR40p

You can also contact the ELCC team at:

For ELCC Infrastructure and Partnerships

ELCCPartnerships@metisnation.org

For ELCC Family Supports (Child Care Subsidy, Extra Curricular and Stipend Program)

elccsupport@metisnation.org

For ELCC Events (ELCC Conference, Camps, Socials, Virtual Programming, Bundles and Kits)

elccevents@metisnation.org

For Early Learning Developmental Resource Consultant Team

drc@metisnation.org

4.0. MAIN DUTIES OF THE INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE



This section identifies core responsibilities that fall under the scope of the Community Council Indigenous Education Council (IEC) representative role. This list is not exhaustive, but is instead intended to act as a starting point and guide for Community Councils and their IEC representatives as they engage in working with local District School Board and Post-Secondary Institutions' IECs.

4.0.1. Core Responsibilities:

- Complete the IEC representative training provided by the Education and Training (ET) Branch
- Attend the ET Branch's Engagement Sessions
- Attend IEC meetings
- Contribute to Action Plans and other IEC discussions and developments
- Complete a Meeting Report after attending a meeting

4.1. MNO EDUCATION AND TRAINING ANNUAL IEC ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

Each year, the Education and Training (ET) Branch coordinates Indigenous Education Council (IEC) Engagement Sessions with IEC representatives, elected Council Members, and other interested community members from local Métis Chartered Community Councils. These meetings may involve representatives from individual Community Councils or multiple Councils within a Region, and may be held in person or virtually via video conferencing. Meeting format and participation are determined collaboratively by ET Branch staff and the respective Community Council(s).

Meeting objectives include:

- Discussion of recruitment and training for IEC representatives
- Facilitating collaboration and discussion among ET Branch staff, IEC representatives, and Community Councils
- Gathering feedback and input on the development of IEC tools and materials
- Working collaboratively to identify a Council/Region's IEC goals, as well as any specific issues that may be of importance

For details about the next IEC Engagement Session in your area, or other scheduled events, please contact:
iecsupport@metisnation.org

4.2. INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL MEETING REPORTS

Indigenous Education Council (IEC) Meeting Reports are the most crucial tool for MNO in its IEC work. Having IEC representatives report on each IEC meeting allows Education and Training (ET) Branch staff to gather data across school boards and institutions, pin-point areas of concern, offer targeted support, and provide evidence when doing advocacy at higher levels. The IEC representative acts as the eyes and ears of the MNO and the Community Council. By completing the Meeting Report, the IEC representative relays information to Community Council(s) and ET Branch staff.

Every IEC representative is asked to fill out a meeting report within two weeks of having attended a meeting. The Meeting Report is an online form that has been designed to be completed quickly, requiring only the most important details (see *Section 11.1. Online Forms*). A tutorial on completing Meeting Reports is included in IEC representative training.

Completed reports will be shared with Education and Training Branch staff and the relevant Métis Community Council(s). These meeting reports serve to keep the local Métis Community Council apprised of the ongoing issues and work being done within IECs. It can help inform the directions and priorities they develop for their participation in the education system. The IEC representative acts as an agent for the local Métis Community Council on the IEC, and the Métis Community Council needs to be kept aware of any issues that require attention.

Please see the image on the next page which illustrates the Meeting Report workflow for IEC representatives.

IEC Meeting Report Process



5.0. CLARIFYING THE IEC REPRESENTATIVES' ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. BACKGROUND

This section seeks to clarify responsibilities that fall outside the intended scope of the IEC representative role. The list below may contain areas of important work, but we encourage Community Councils to discuss how to best complete this work without automatically assigning it to their IEC representative.

5.2. RESPONSIBILITIES OUTSIDE OF THE IEC REPRESENTATIVE ROLE

An IEC representative may have other roles, assignments, or expertise that they also perform on behalf of their Community Council, but those are separate responsibilities and should not be confused with the role of an IEC representative. If an IEC representative receives a request outside of the scope of the role, they should bring this request to the relevant party that can fulfill this request, either the Community Council or Education and Training Branch staff. If the request is for something that the IEC representative knows that their local Community Council regularly deals with and fulfills, they should bring this request to the Community Council (and make note of this in the IEC Meeting Report). For any other request, such as advice on curriculum, assistance with increasing Métis inclusion, etc., the IEC representative should contact their assigned Métis Education and Partnership Advisor.

For questions regarding the IEC representative's direct responsibilities see *Section 4.0. Main Duties of the Indigenous Education Council Representative*. The following list highlights some responsibilities that fall outside the scope of the IEC representative role. This list is not exhaustive:

- Providing presentations or acting as an ambassador for cultural or historic Métis topics in the classroom or at school events
- Developing curriculum or other classroom resources
- Attending classrooms or events as a guest speaker/presenter of authority on topics of self-governance, politics, or current events
- Attending District School Board/Post-Secondary Institute/public events to officially represent their local community council
- Providing input or feedback on issues that expressly require the consideration of the elected Community Council
- Using the IEC representative role to further goals or interests that do not align with their Community Council, the MNO, or that are unrelated to the education system
- Acting as signing authority for board documents
- Liaising with any union representatives

5.3. ACCESSING RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

IEC representatives may be asked to provide Métis specific educational resources to a District School Board (DSB) or College/University. If an IEC representative gets such a request, they should contact their assigned Métis Education and Partnership Advisor. The Métis Education and Partnership Advisors can help connect educators at schools to MNO's Curriculum Resource Advisors, a team of specialized Ontario College of Teachers certified educators that can advise teachers on including Métis content in their classes.

The IEC representative is not responsible for assisting a DSB or College/University with developing or implementing Métis specific classroom content; MNO has dedicated, experienced staff that can assist with this work.

If a District School Board or College/University is looking to increase the presence of Métis imagery and symbols, they should be put in touch with the assigned Métis Education and Partnership Advisors, who can then advise schools on acquiring appropriate materials from our regular vendors.

6.0. INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL (IEC) MEETINGS

6.1. USUAL OPERATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Indigenous Education Council (IEC) meetings generally happen 4-12 times a year (i.e. quarterly, monthly, or somewhere in between), depending on the IEC. There are a wide variety of meeting schedules that are not easily summarized. Meetings can occur virtually, in person, or hybrid. IEC representatives are responsible for requesting the IEC's meeting schedule, understanding how the IEC meetings happen, and ensuring that they (the IEC representative) can regularly attend the meetings. IEC representatives should share future meeting dates with Education and Training Branch Staff by including them in their IEC Meeting Report. Whenever possible, Community Councils should identify an alternate representative who can attend meetings when the regular IEC representative is unavailable.

The IEC should provide the IEC representative with the dates and times it has set for upcoming meetings. This should be done with enough time to allow the IEC representative to plan and attend the meeting (i.e., not last minute). Some IECs generate a schedule for all of their meetings in advance, while some IECs decide meeting dates throughout the year. Please share this information with the Education and Training (ET) Branch via the IEC Meeting Report form.

The IEC should provide the IEC representative with a copy of the Action Plan. IEC representatives should be allowed to contribute to new versions of these plans as they are developed, in collaboration with the other IEC members. The IEC representative should share these plans with ET Branch via the IEC Meeting Report form. If the IEC is withholding important documents from the IEC representative, this should be reported using the online form. (See Section 11.0. *Online Forms and Resources*)

If an IEC has a "Terms of Reference," or some other document that structures and defines the operation of the IEC's work, please share it with the ET Branch using the online form. Any other relevant IEC documents shared with the IEC representative can also be included within the Meeting Report, which will be shared with their Community Council and Education and Training Branch staff.

The list below includes some of the documents that an IEC representative should request:

- IEC Terms of Reference
- Board Action Plan (See Section 7.0 *Action Plans*)
- Previous Meeting Minutes or Meeting Reports
- Documents that outline code of conduct or standing rules.

Generally, IEC meetings should be respectful gatherings of FNMI representatives who discuss and guide a school/school board's Indigenous initiatives. All of the representatives should be treated respectfully and allowed to share their thoughts on the issues at hand. It is the responsibility of the IEC chair(s) and the school/District School board that IEC meetings are well-organized and well-operated. If an IEC representative finds that an IEC is not operating inclusively and respectfully, please communicate immediately with the assigned EPA.

6.1.1. Preparing for an IEC Meeting

IEC representatives should review all documentation sent by the IEC in advance of the meeting. IECs will often send agendas, documents for review, as well as the notes/minutes from past meetings. IEC representatives should arrive at the meeting prepared to discuss these documents and the listed agenda items. These documents should be shared with the MNO via the online Meeting Report form. Any questions can be directed to the assigned Métis Education and Partnership Advisor for discussion and clarity.

If there are important decision items that require the input of the Community Council, then either the IEC should provide, or the IEC representative should request, that the IEC representative be given reasonable time to bring these items to the Community Council.

6.2. PARTICIPATING IN AN IEC MEETING

If an IEC representative is beginning a relationship with an IEC, there is one primary issue that should be their central focus: Métis inclusion. As the voice of the Community Council in the room, the IEC representative will want to ensure that Métis students are being recognized and incorporated into the First Nations, Métis and Inuit initiatives happening at a school/within a school board. This includes things like:

- Inquiring about Métis-specific cultural events and workshops when discussing extracurricular programming
- Assessing whether the school(s) have Métis imagery and symbols that are included alongside other Indigenous imagery (such as First Nations and Inuit artwork)
- Establishing the extent to which Métis content is being included in coursework; recommending Métis content be included as part of coursework

Although the IEC representative may ask questions about Métis inclusion in these different areas, it is not the IEC representative's job to fulfill requests for inclusion. If a school or school board wants to add Métis programming to its events calendar, increase Métis imagery, or include more Métis content in coursework, they should be connected with their assigned Métis Education and Partnership Advisor (EPA) who can then refer the school to staff and community members who specialize in these areas. IEC representatives help connect the schools with resources, but are not the resources themselves. If schools refuse to include Métis content, this should be reported using the online form and further follow up can be handled by Education and Training Branch Staff.

6.2.1. Robert's Rules and Decision Items

Robert's Rules of Order, often shortened to Robert's Rules, is a manual designed to assist in the smooth process of parliamentary procedure. Some form of these guidelines is used throughout a variety of contemporary organizations and governments. Several IECs follow Robert's Rules process during their meetings. The IEC will vote on decision items at the scheduled IEC meetings. The Community Council should choose an IEC representative that they feel they can trust and empower to vote on important issues, on behalf of the council. The IEC representative should have a good relationship with the Métis Community Council they represent and gain an understanding of the Council's preference on issues related to handling decisions and voting. If the Community Council or their IEC representative are finding themselves in need of guidance on how to navigate complex issues or decision items, they can consider connecting with the assigned Métis Education and Partnership Advisor (EPA) for assistance. (See Section 8.2. Seeking Resolution to Complex Issues)

6.3. COMMON INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL (IEC) MEETING SCENARIOS

In this section, you will find some examples of common scenarios or questions that Indigenous Education Council (IEC) representatives can ask as they build a relationship with an IEC. These are examples of some common scenarios where the Education and Training (ET) Branch would recommend advocating for Métis inclusion. IEC representatives may encounter discussions about some of these topics, or they may encounter different topics altogether. Hopefully, these examples act as a guide to what advocating for inclusion looks like and can be brought to bear on all kinds of situations where the Métis have an opportunity to be included in a District School Board's (DSB) or Post-Secondary Institution's (PSI) Indigenous initiatives

6.3.1. SCENARIO: Extracurriculars/Events

Question: Are there any Métis-specific events or activities scheduled for this year?

Answer 1: No, we do not have any Métis events on our calendar.

Follow up: If a school or school board is not including Métis-specific content in their Indigenous programming, urge them to start doing so. For Métis students to feel like members of the school's Indigenous community, the Métis needs to be explicitly reflected in the events, imagery, and content of the school. Let the other IEC members know that Education and Training Branch Staff are ready and willing to help bring Métis content to the school, and offer to connect the school staff in charge of event planning/programming with the assigned Métis Education and Partnership Advisor. If a school does not include Métis events, this should be noted in the Meeting Report (See Section 8.2. *Seeking Resolution to Complex Issues*).

Answer 2: Yes, we have Métis events scheduled for this year.

Follow up: If a school/school board has already included Métis specific activities, this is a good state of affairs. The IEC representative should follow up to find out exactly what Métis events are scheduled, and if the IEC is working with the MNO, their own Métis staff, or community members to host these events. Information about Métis events should be included in the Meeting Report.

6.3.2. SCENARIO: Symbols

Question: Are there any Métis symbols on your campus or in your classrooms? Is Métis imagery being included alongside First Nations and Inuit imagery? If your school(s) are developing new FNMI spaces, are the Métis being reflected in those spaces?

Answer 1: No, we do not have any Métis imagery.

Follow up: If an IEC indicates that their school(s) are not including Métis-specific imagery alongside other on-campus Indigenous imagery, urge them to start doing so. For Métis students to feel like members of the school's Indigenous community, Métis needs to be explicitly reflected in the events, imagery, and content of the school. Let the other IEC members know that Education and Training Branch staff are ready and willing to help bring Métis symbols and imagery to the school, and offer to connect school staff with the assigned Métis Education and Partnership Advisor. If a school does not include Métis imagery, this should be noted in the Meeting Report (See Section 8.2. *Seeking Resolution to Complex Issues*).

Answer 2: Yes, we have Métis symbols and imagery at our school(s).

Follow up: If an IEC indicates that their school(s) have Métis imagery and symbols, try to gather more information about what exactly they have and where it is displayed. Sometimes, people may not be aware of the distinct imagery of Métis culture, and might mistake another group's cultural symbols for Métis. Details about a school's Métis imagery and symbols should be included in the Meeting Report.

6.3.3. SCENARIO: Coursework

Question: Is Métis content being included in the classroom / coursework?

Answer 1: No, we are not currently using any Métis content in our coursework.

Follow up: If an IEC indicates that their school(s) are not including Métis content, inquire if they would be willing to start. They can be informed that MNO's Education and Training Branch has many good resources they could share and distribute to teachers (these resources will have already been shared with the District School Board at the K-12 level, but the individuals at the IEC might not be aware of them if the recipient of these resources at the Board did not distribute them). If they show reluctance, make a note of this and report it to Education and Training Branch staff. If they are willing to include Métis content, contact your assigned Education and Partnership Advisor, who can help connect the school with our resources and curriculum specialists.

Answer 2: Yes, we already include Métis content in our courses.

Follow up: In this circumstance, there are a couple of things that the IEC representative can do. One path is to ask some follow-up questions: What is the Métis content and where is it included? Who created this content? Was it a Métis person? Was the MNO consulted to make sure the content is accurate and correctly portrays Métis history and culture? Does the school have access to and promote the resources that MNO has created for educators (or collaborated on for educational use)?

Consider: The IEC representative can ask the IEC to have their school(s) share their course outlines and content. These can be passed on to Education and Training Branch's curriculum specialists so that we can ensure the information is correct, and to offer useful suggestions to improve content.

6.3.4. SCENARIO: “Indigenous” vs “First Nations, Métis, and Inuit”

If an Indigenous Education Council’s school(s) is primarily using the term “Indigenous” to refer to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students, culture, etc., the IEC representative can outline the Education and Training (ET) Branch’s preference for “First Nations, Métis, and Inuit” instead of “Indigenous.” This more accurately represents all three Indigenous peoples in Canada by naming them specifically, and it also signals that a school or school board is explicitly inclusive of all three groups. For many people, “Indigenous” is synonymous with “First Nations,” and some Métis students might feel unsure if a school’s “Indigenous” community includes them unless the Métis are explicitly included in naming, imagery, and events.

6.3.5. SCENARIO: Referrals

In response to an IEC representative’s advocacy, a school or school board may ask for assistance with bringing more Métis content to the school(s). In these situations the IEC representative should contact the assigned Métis Education and Partnership Advisor (EPA). The EPA can directly assist the IEC in getting in some of this content into their school(s), and they can also refer some requests to other dedicated staff and teams within the Education and Training Branch that may be able to answer these kinds of requests.

7.0. ACTION PLANS

7.1. WHAT ARE ACTION PLANS? HOW DOES ONE CONTRIBUTE TO AN ACTION PLAN?

One of the tasks of the IEC is to develop Action Plans. Although both District School Boards (DSBs) and Colleges/Universities have action plans, the parameters of these plans are different. The following sections contain excerpts from the policy frameworks that discuss the role and purpose of Action Plans for both K-12 DSBs (Board Action Plans) and Colleges/Universities (Multi-Year Aboriginal Action Plans for Post-Secondary Education).

When it comes to contributing to Action Plans, the approach will likely be similar whether an IEC representative sits on a K-12 or Post-Secondary IEC. As Action Plans are developed, the Representative should voice the need for Métis consideration and inclusion in the development of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit initiatives.

IF...	THEN...
The IEC is thinking about increasing cultural activities and extracurriculars	Métis-specific activities should be explicitly included as part of these plans.
New courses or content is being developed for the classroom	Métis should be substantively included in these resources, or effort allocated to developing and including Métis-specific resources.
A school is creating a FNMI targeted hiring initiative	Measures should be put in place to ensure members of all three Indigenous groups are recruited, so there is balanced representation at the DSB/school.
The IEC representative has ideas and insights to offer regarding the Action Plan	They should share their ideas and insights with the other IEC members. The IEC representative can also share any particular concerns or input that the Métis Community Council wants to have brought to the development of these plans.
A school is developing or revising an Indigenous Identification Policy	IEC Representatives should request time to consult with MNO Staff on these documents. Focus should be placed on the recognition of MNO Citizenship and the inclusion of MNO representation in appeals processes.

7.2. CITATIONS: K-12 DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD ACTION PLANS (BAPS)

“The planning and development of the BAPs is meant to help boards target resources and supports in ways that will help improve the engagement, learning, achievement, and well-being of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students. The BAP may include strategies and activities related to enhancing programming supports for Indigenous students (e.g. literacy intervention and experiential learning opportunities), supporting student transitions, engaging First Nation communities and Indigenous parents and families, developing communication resources to promote self-identification and awareness, and creating governance structures and positions to support Indigenous education.” (*Strengthening our Learning Journey 38*)

[This has been identified as a practice producing positive results] “Meaningfully engage Indigenous Education Advisory Councils and First Nation, Métis, and Inuit community partners and organizations by co-developing Board Action Plans for Indigenous Education with them.” (*Strengthening our Learning Journey 52*)

“The ministry continues to encourage district school boards to review and analyse their Indigenous student self-identification data during the Board Action Plan process with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit parents/families and communities and Indigenous Education Advisory Councils (IEACs) to:

- Build understanding of Indigenous student self-identification;
- Increase the number of students/families that choose to self-identify; and
- Inform targeted strategies for improving Indigenous student achievement and well-being.

In addition to self-identification data, the ministry also encourages school boards to continue to use data and evidence from a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, feedback from the results of programs and initiatives, internal and external research, and evaluation studies, to inform their planning and programming. Partnerships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit parents, communities, and organizations continue to be essential to supporting Indigenous students.” (*Strengthening our Learning Journey 63-64*)

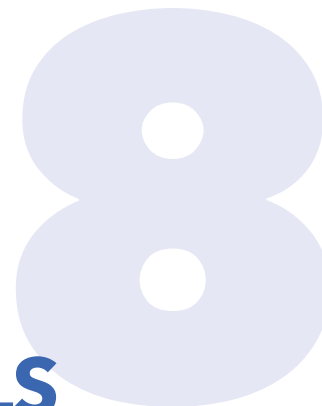
7.3. CITATIONS: POST-SECONDARY MULTI-YEAR ABORIGINAL ACTION PLANS FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION (MYAAPPS)

“With the consolidation of targeted Aboriginal postsecondary education funding in 2009-10, the Ontario government now requires all postsecondary education institutions to report annually on their investments in Aboriginal education in a Multi-Year Action Plan for Post-secondary Education (MYAPP). Colleges and universities are required to develop their action plan under the direction, and subject to the approval, of Aboriginal Education Councils (AECs). AECs or similar governing bodies are required to be in place for colleges and universities to be eligible for public funding to support Aboriginal students and programming related to Aboriginal education in their institutions.” (APSET 21)

[Regarding a strategic direction to increase accountability and reporting] “Fully implement a funding approach for postsecondary education institutions that will be used for their Aboriginal-specific initiatives, as identified in institutional Multi-Year Aboriginal Action Plans for Postsecondary Education, and that will be based on actual activities and results achieved.” (APSET 23)

“In order to better manage, monitor, and evaluate its overall investments in Aboriginal postsecondary education initiatives, the ministry in 2009-10 announced a new consolidated funding approach to Aboriginal postsecondary education. This new approach is administered primarily through post-secondary education institutions, which request funding by completing a Multi-Year Aboriginal Action Plan for Postsecondary Education (MYAAPP). Each year, the ministry also administers a number of special projects designed to support positive outcomes for Aboriginal learners.” (APSET 34)

8.0. WORKING WITH INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCILS WHO DO NOT UNDERSTAND OR LACK KNOWLEDGE REGARDING MÉTIS IDENTITY



The Indigenous Education Council (IEC) is meant to be a place where District School Boards or Colleges/ Universities engage with local First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities in discussions on how to safely and respectfully include Indigenous languages, culture, history, perspectives, and ways of knowing and learning on their campuses and in their classrooms.

We would like to reiterate that the role of an IEC representative is not to be an expert on Métis history, culture, or issues that pertain to Canadian political or legal systems. An IEC representative uses the tools and resources available to advocate for the inclusion of Métis perspectives on campus and in classrooms. When it comes to matters of specialized knowledge, an IEC representative will seek to connect the IEC with the Community Council or Métis Education and Partnership Advisor (EPA) to find individuals with the appropriate knowledge and skill sets.

In some IEC meetings, an IEC representative may experience situations in which Métis people and heritage are not included or even considered in the IEC's work. Generally, this comes from a lack of knowledge and understanding that Métis people are a recognized Indigenous group who are distinct and separate from their First Nations and Inuit counterparts. Fortunately, this does not usually come from a place of malice or hostility. With a respectful and consistent voice advocating for Métis inclusion, the IEC representative can build a relationship of understanding and inclusion in the IEC space.

We hope that with this Handbook we can provide IEC representatives with the resources, tools, and insights to respectfully engage with IEC members and help them better understand the Métis perspective by advocating for the inclusion of Métis.

8.1. MANAGING AND RESPONDING TO INAPPROPRIATE OR HOSTILE BEHAVIOUR

Unfortunately, there may be times when other members of an IEC engage in unprofessional, inappropriate, or hostile behaviour. These behaviours can focus on topics that attack the legitimacy of the Métis and are without merit. At times groups become fearful that the inclusion of other First Nations, Métis, and Inuit voices will diminish their own and let that fear guide their actions. These behaviours often stem from a myriad of complex political issues related to the long history of colonial government mismanagement, oppression, and suppression of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples in Canada.

The legitimacy of the Métis as an Indigenous group is well-established and is not up for debate. As an IEC representative, it is not your role to be subject to this type of behaviour and you are not expected to engage. If you find yourself the target of hostile behaviour, please consider the following:

- 1. Remember, your well-being is most important.** Take a deep breath and check in with yourself. Are you feeling anxious, uncomfortable, unsafe, or unable to continue with the meeting? That is perfectly okay. There is no need to push yourself to continue with the meeting.
- 2. Remember, you are not required or expected to respond to this behaviour.** Your initial gut reaction may be to try and engage or respond to this type of behaviour. Emotions may be running high and what you say in the heat of the moment may be something you regret later on. Refusing to engage in a retort or debate is an acceptable and, in most cases, preferable option.
- 3. Consider excusing yourself from the meeting.** The leadership structure at an IEC should not allow or permit hostile or inappropriate behaviour towards anyone. If you find yourself in this situation, then the IEC has systemically failed by not prioritizing the establishment of a safe and professional environment. You should feel no further obligation to engage with the IEC at this time.
- 4. Consider connecting with your community and support network for assistance.** Having been in this difficult situation you may at first just want to “brush it off” or “leave it alone”. You must consider how an unpleasant and hostile interaction may affect you in the short or long term. Talking with a trusted friend, family member, therapist, or healthcare provider is always a great option.
- 5. Remember to inform your Community Council and assigned Métis Education and Partnership Advisor.** The Education and Training (ET) Branch is equipped to address these problems and issues. ET Branch staff can engage with the school to advocate for outcomes that work toward resolution and understanding within the school’s organization, and to address problem individuals or inappropriate behaviour that may be occurring. (See Section 8.2. Seeking Resolution to Complex Issues)

8.2. SEEKING RESOLUTION TO COMPLEX ISSUES

IEC representatives may encounter serious issues and complex situations. Sometimes, these issues will exceed the IEC representative's duties, training, and comfort. There are supports in place to assist IEC representatives in these situations, and pathways for seeking resolution that go beyond the scope of the IEC representative role.

In challenging situations, it is important that the IEC representative connects with their assigned Métis Education and Partnership Advisor. As the frontline staff contact for District School Boards, Post-Secondary Institutions, and MNO Community Councils, the Métis Education and Partnership Advisor is best suited to assist with these issues. A Métis Education and Partnership Advisor can advise on different approaches an IEC representative can take when confronted with an issue. Métis Education and Partnership Advisors can also assist IEC representatives in tactfully completing Meeting Reports that include difficult subjects. Even if a situation is challenging, the IEC representative should strive to complete the Meeting Report (as long as doing so does not imperil their well-being, see Section 8.1). Education and Training Branch Staff will collect and preserve accounts of negative experiences and utilize this information to locate trends, or present it to our ministry partners when advocating for change.

To support the IEC representative, the Métis Education and Partnership Advisor can take the Meeting Report to their network of MNO Education and Training Branch Staff, local Community Council members, and DSB and PSI Staff to seek the appropriate means to escalate and/or resolve issues.

In some cases, an IEC representative may hope for an immediate result to a specific issue. The IEC representative should understand that when working with large systems such as education, immediate results may not be possible and, even if they are, for privacy reasons, the outcomes may not be able to be shared. This process may at times appear opaque and can be frustrating for everyone involved but, in some cases, this cannot be avoided. We encourage all involved in IEC work to continue the work with an understanding that change takes time and is not always transparent. The Métis Education and Partnership Advisor will seek to keep the IEC representative apprised of the progress and outcomes of these situations as appropriate.

If an IEC representative or local Community Council is unable to reach their Education and Partnership Advisor, or requires further assistance with IEC-related matters, they are encouraged to contact the IEC Specialist at iecsupport@metisnation.org.

The role of the IEC representative remains focused on having an MNO presence and local representation at IECs. This is accomplished by attending IEC Meetings, participating in IEC Meetings, and reporting on IEC Meetings.



9.0. HOW WE STRATEGIZE: MEETINGS, INFORMATION SHARING, DATA COLLECTION

9.1. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The Education and Training team consults with the MNO Community Councils, IEC representatives, and other appropriate external partners to identify and address common themes, important topics, and difficult issues related to the work of Indigenous Education Councils. Our Annual MNO IEC Engagement Sessions (see Section 4.1.) provides a space where a unified voice on MNO-related IEC issues can be developed. These engagements also allows for the creation of shared approaches and strategies concerning the future of this important work.

9.2. HOW THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING BRANCH COLLECTS AND USES DATA

The Education and Training (ET) Branch places the utmost importance on ensuring the sovereignty and confidentiality of the data it collects. The Indigenous Education Council (IEC) representative is a position filled by passionate volunteers. When taking part in IEC work, both the Métis Community Councils and ET Branch want to be as safe and effective as possible.

Through the IEC Specialist role, the Education and Training (ET) Branch is seeking to solidify the foundation of IEC work with an evidence-based approach. By collecting data from Community Councils, IEC representatives, and community education partners, the ET Branch can highlight common themes and recurring issues that are experienced by everyone involved in IEC work across the province. This helps us to design training, tools, and resources that address topics important to as many IEC representatives as possible.

9.2.1. Methods for Data Collection

- Conducting surveys of our Métis Community Councils, IEC representatives, and community education partners.
- Review and identify common themes from the submitted IEC Meeting Reports.
- Get direct feedback from IEC representatives at our Annual IEC Engagement Sessions.
- Métis Education and Partnership Advisor reports and feedback.

10.0. RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

In 2024, the MNO Education and Training Branch (via its IEC Specialists) launched new systems for recruiting and training Indigenous Education Council (IEC) representatives. These systems seek to increase the number of volunteers participating in IEC work, and to ensure that we have representation at every IEC. These systems help to prepare IEC representatives, so that they feel capable and confident in participating in IEC meetings. More details on these two efforts are outlined below.

10.1. RECRUITMENT

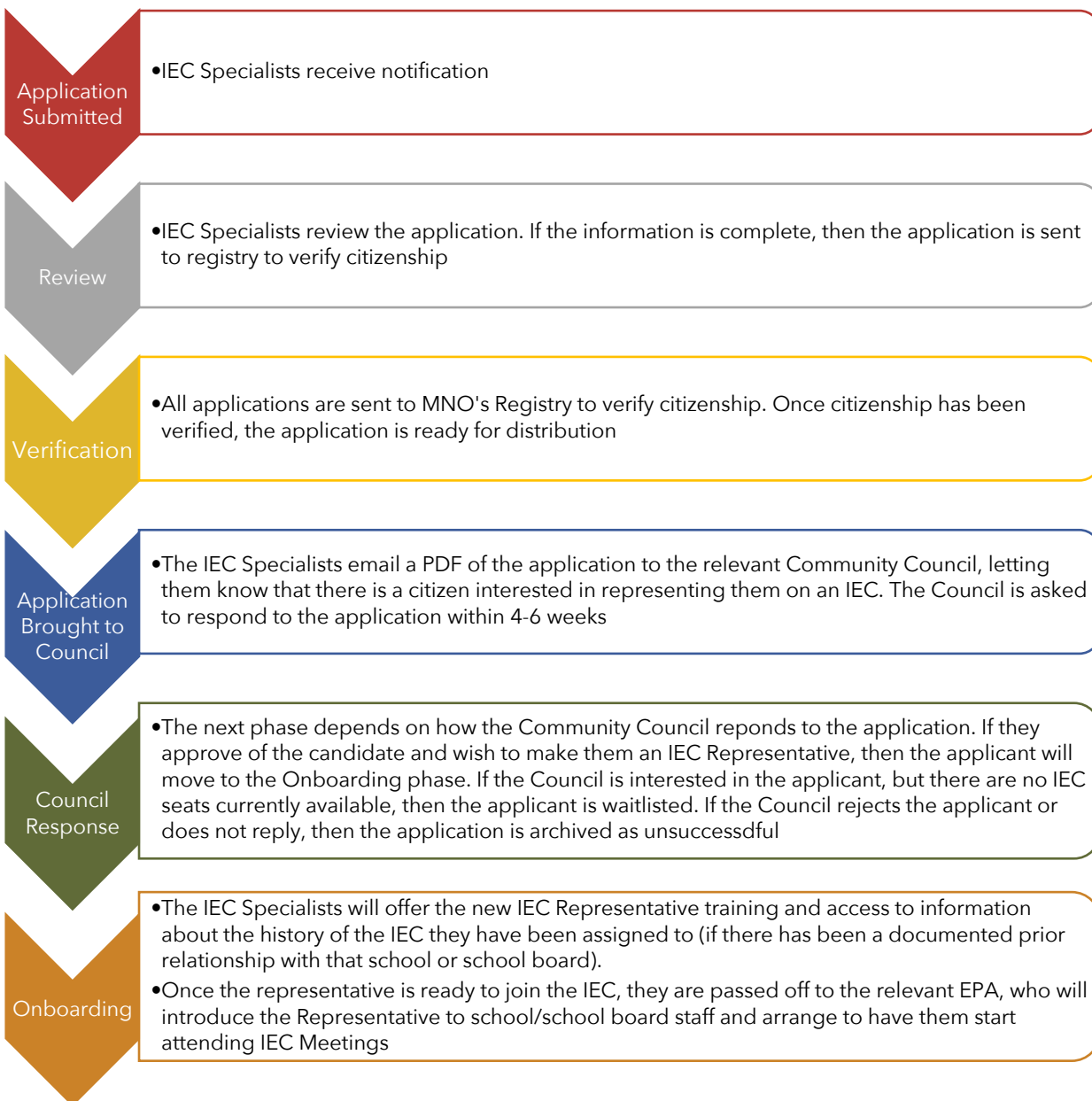
The Indigenous Education Council (IEC) Specialists utilize a multipronged approach to increase awareness of the IEC representative role and to help connect Community Councils with prospective IEC representatives. The following initiatives are targeted to support this effort:

- **Information Sessions:** IEC Specialists facilitate information sessions for interested MNO citizens. These sessions are currently offered in two formats: live virtual discussions and self-guided learning modules. These sessions will explain what IECs are, how MNO engages IECs through Community Councils, and what the IEC representative role looks like. Attendees who might be interested in volunteering as an IEC representative will be encouraged to fill out the online application.
- **Online Application for IEC representatives:** The IEC Specialists manage an online application that any MNO Citizen can use to express their interest in becoming an IEC representative. The IEC Specialists evaluate and sort the applications (based on location, availability, etc.), and bring potential IEC representatives to Community Councils for their consideration. Councils may then wish to have a conversation with potential candidates, have them sign a Code of Conduct, etc. (each Council has authority on how it chooses to interact with potential IEC representatives). The intention of this application is to help expedite the filling of vacant seats, and remove some of the administrative burden from Community Councils.
- **Targeted Recruitment Efforts:** MNO's Education and Training Branch has on-going and long-standing relationship with many Métis people in the province who are engaged with the education system: teachers, post-secondary students, etc. The IEC Specialists will utilize these contacts to make sure that different demographics of our nation are aware of opportunities on IECs—particularly those individuals that might have some experience, expertise, or professional background in the education system. We also identify and utilize different channels for advertising and disseminating information about IEC work, so that more citizens are aware of IECs and have the opportunity to volunteer as an IEC representative.
- **Other recruitment activities,** such as attending in-person events and hosting information tables, will be considered on a case by case basis, responsive to cost and staff availability.

IEC Specialists and Métis Education and Partnership Advisors work with each Community Council to determine their needs, and develop plans suited to those needs. For example, if a Community Council has filled all vacant IEC seats in its area, the IEC Specialists might dedicate more time to supporting those IEC representatives, whereas a Council with many vacant seats might require support with recruitment, etc.

IEC Specialists will work in tandem with Community Councils to spread the word about IECs and IEC opportunities. Community Councils may be able to contact and advertise to their community in unique ways (such as established mailing lists, social media, etc.).

IEC Representative Application Process



10.2. TRAINING

If an MNO Citizen has successfully applied to become an IEC representative and has been approved by their Community Council (or if they are directly appointed by the Community Council President), they will be offered training from Education and Training Branch Staff to familiarize themselves with IECs and the role of the IEC representative. There are two core components to the training:

Independent Study Using Online Video Modules and Materials. Once an IEC representative has been approved by their Community Council, they will be provided with the information needed to enroll in our online learning platform. They will be assigned a number of courses to complete, which will provide them with crucial knowledge that will help them fulfill the role. Knowledge will be assessed with quizzes, and IEC representatives will be given a credential upon completing this training: Certified IEC representative.

Virtual Face-to-Face Training with MNO's IEC Specialists. After completing the online training, IEC representatives will have the option to schedule a virtual session with the IEC Specialists. This virtual face-to-face training will allow participants to ask any questions they may have about IEC work.

These core training activities will be coordinated with the academic year. The IEC Specialists will be most actively recruiting and training new IEC representatives over the Spring and Summer, with the goal to have them ready to start on IECs at the beginning of the new school year in September.

This core training will be supplemented in a number of different ways. IEC Specialists will develop optional online training materials for IEC representatives that want to continue learning and expanding their knowledge. The IEC Specialists will also occasionally hold virtual training sessions on a specific topic. In addition to this, the annual IEC Engagement Sessions may also include training/workshop components.

11.0. ONLINE FORMS AND RESOURCES

11.1. ONLINE FORMS

There are currently 3 forms that have been developed for streamlining processes related to IEC work. These forms and applications are for use by Indigenous Education Council (IEC) Representatives, prospective IEC representatives, and schools/schoolboards. Links to these forms are available on MNO's IEC Webpage, as well as through Sync (See Section 11.2: Sync Instructions).

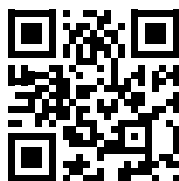
- 1. IEC Meeting Report:** IEC representatives should file a report after every meeting using this online IEC Meeting Report form. bit.ly/3U4tjm0
- 2. IEC representative Application:** MNO citizens can apply to become an IEC representative. bit.ly/444yXcH
- 3. Request an IEC representative:** If a District School Board or Post-Secondary Institute needs an IEC representative, they can fill out this request form alerting us to the vacancy. bit.ly/4aV6SXk

11.2. SYNC INSTRUCTIONS: WHAT IS SYNC? HOW DO YOU ACCESS SYNC?

Sync is an online cloud file system that MNO's Post-Secondary Education team uses to share important files with partners and volunteers. Many of the files relevant to the Indigenous Education Council (IEC) representative role can be found and downloaded from Sync. Below is the link and password needed to access the file system. Note: since this is an online file system, internet service is required to access these files, and downloads may use bandwidth.

Link: bit.ly/3JoVEie

Password: mno



- 1.** Use the provided link (click or copy it into an internet browser) to travel to the Sync folder. The above QR Code can also be scanned to take you to the Sync folder. This folder is password-protected. Input the provided password and click "submit."
- 2.** The main folder/directory will now be open. This folder contains subfolders named according to which type of files they contain; clicking on one of these folders provides access to further folders and files.
- 3.** You can preview a file (.doc or .pdf) by clicking on it.
- 4.** In the preview screen, the document will appear on the left. To download the document, click the "download" button on the right side of the screen. If assistance is required, there is a "help" button for technical support in the upper right corner. The "<" button on the upper left of the screen will close the preview and take you back to the folder. This can also be used to navigate back to the main folder.

Note: not all files in the Sync folder can be previewed. Some will only have the option to be downloaded.

11.3. LIST OF RESOURCES ON SYNC

- All Province of Ontario FNMI Educational Policy Documents and Frameworks
- Information on current Métis Education and Partnership Advisor Assignments (i.e. which staff member is working with each specific District School Board and Post-Secondary Institute) and their contact information
- Templates of letters for Community Council and IEC representatives to use
 - * A letter of introduction for Community Council Reps newly joining an IEC, which also explains how MNO's IEC work functions
- A digital copy of the Education and Training IEC Best Practices Handbook
- Promotional materials on the programs and services available to students, including posters, rack cards, and brochures
- Promotional and informational videos, webinars, and training sessions

12.0. WHO TO CONTACT

If you are an Indigenous Education Council (IEC) representative, your primary staff contact regarding IEC work will be the Métis Education and Partnership Advisor (EPA) that is assigned to that District School Board or College/University. The assignments and contact information for EPAs can be found in the Sync folder (*Section 11.2. Sync Instructions*). If an IEC representative or local Community Council is unable to reach their Education and Partnership Advisor, or requires further assistance with IEC-related matters, they are encouraged to contact the IEC Specialist team at iecsupport@metisnation.org, which will put you in direct contact with MNO's Indigenous Education Council Specialists. If there is a specific issue or complaint that you would like to raise, you can include it in your Meeting Report (*Section 11.1*), or contact your Métis Education and Partnership Advisor directly.

If you are a Council President, or a Council Member, you can also contact the assigned Métis Education and Partnership Advisor with any questions about Indigenous Education Councils or other facets of K-12 or Post-Secondary education. If you require assistance with Indigenous Education Council specific tasks (i.e. Recruitment, Training, using the online forms, etc.), please contact the Indigenous Education Council Specialists at [**iecsupport@metisnation.org**](mailto:iecsupport@metisnation.org)

Primary Contact: The Métis Education and Partnership Advisor assigned to the District School Board or College/University in question (List and Contact Information on Sync, *see Section 11.2. Sync Instructions*).

Secondary Contact: IEC Specialists, [**iecsupport@metisnation.org**](mailto:iecsupport@metisnation.org)

13.0. ONTARIO GOVERNMENT'S EDUCATION POLICY DOCUMENTS RELATED TO INDIGENOUS EDUCATION AND INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCILS

Below is a list of Ontario's policy framework documents that govern First Nations, Métis, and Inuit educational work in the province. Copies of these documents are available on Sync (see Section 11.2 for instructions on accessing Sync). The next section of this Handbook includes the relevant sections of these policy documents that address the work of IECs. Although familiarity with the policy documents could be useful for an IEC representative, this is not a requirement for the role. MNO's Education and Training Branch has dedicated IEC Specialists who can assist IEC representatives with any questions or concerns regarding these documents.

The broad theme of these documents is that the province of Ontario wants Indigenous learners to succeed in their education and participate in the labour market to an extent equivalent to their non-Indigenous peers. To achieve this, the education systems will recognize the unique needs of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners and will seek to positively incorporate content on the history and culture of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, which will be taught to all students. Indigenous nations and organizations will be asked for their input through mechanisms like the IEC. A core component of the policy frameworks is the need for the identification of FNMI students so populations can be established and data tracked more precisely.

13.1. ONTARIO'S EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORKS AND REPORTS

13.1.1. K-12 (District School Boards)

- Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2007)
- Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Students: Developing Policies for Voluntary, Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification: Successful Practices for Ontario School Boards (2007)
- Sound Foundations for the Road Ahead: Fall 2009 Progress Report on Implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2009)
- A Solid Foundation: Second Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2013)
- Implementation Plan: Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2014)
- Strengthening our Learning Journey: Third Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2018)

13.1.2. Post-Secondary (Colleges and Universities)

- Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Framework (2011)
- Achieving Results through Partnership: First Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework (2015)

13.2. RELEVANT CITATIONS FROM POLICY DOCUMENTS

13.2.1. Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2007)

“School boards will strive to... establish First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Advisory Committees that include representation from First Nations, community members, and local Aboriginal service delivery organizations, such as Friendship Centres” (20)

13.2.2. Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Students: Developing Policies for Voluntary, Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification: Successful Practices for Ontario School Boards (2007)

[Regarding the Toronto District School Board’s development of their IEC] “One of the key challenges in creating an Aboriginal Advisory Committee is ensuring that the committee is representative of the diversity of Aboriginal peoples in that community. The Advisory Committee member indicated that the TDSB was successful in building a committee that is inclusive, reflects the diversity of Aboriginal Peoples, and is effective, and suggested that this committee is a good model for other school boards to consider.” (23-24)

“One way the committee supported the self-identification process was to advise the board on the clarification of language, so that it was reflective of the diversity of Aboriginal peoples. It is important for boards to understand the different dynamics of Aboriginal communities, as well as the diverse needs and aspirations of Aboriginal children and youth. Boards need to be aware of the reasons why some students may not complete their education and the types of supports they need to succeed, such as financial support, and culturally appropriate counseling.” (23)

13.2.3. Sound Foundations for the Road Ahead: Fall 2009 Progress Report on Implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2009)

“Approximately 40 per cent of boards that participated in the survey indicated that they had established an Aboriginal education advisory committee. These committees are generally perceived as being inclusive. They include First Nation, Métis, and Inuit community members, as well as teachers, trustees, and family members of Aboriginal students.” (14)

"Results of the work of advisory committees include relationship building, information sharing, development of self-identification policies, and development of strategies to facilitate input from Aboriginal community members or to address specific perspectives or concerns." (14)

13.2.4. A Solid Foundation: Second Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2013)

"First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Advisory Councils. In 2012, 50 school boards reported that they had established First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Advisory Councils (compared with 30 boards in 2009). The councils have facilitated and supported deepening Framework implementation within their boards by developing working relationships with the community, sharing information, identifying promising practices and working collaboratively on improving self-identification policies." (43)

13.2.5. Implementation Plan: Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2014)

"The implementation of the Framework within school boards and schools recognizes... that school boards, schools, and Aboriginal communities all benefit from mutual information sharing about governance in their respective organizations and that this sharing, in turn, helps strengthen meaningful and reciprocal relationship building, engagement, and collaborative work to ensure the success of Aboriginal learners. For example, boards will continue to establish formalized processes such as First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Advisory Councils to support local implementation of the Framework by developing relationships with their communities, sharing information, identifying promising practices, and enhancing collaborative work." (6-7)

13.2.6. Strengthening our Learning Journey: Third Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2018)

"Many school boards and schools, in partnership with Indigenous Education Advisory Councils, are seeking to enhance Indigenous parent and family participation in school life by adopting more culturally relevant approaches to help engage parents." (36)

"The Ministry of Education continues to support school boards in the development of Board Action Plans (BAPs) on Indigenous Education. The planning and development of the BAPs is meant to help boards target resources and supports in ways that will help improve the engagement, learning, achievement, and well-being of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students. The BAP may include strategies and activities related to enhancing programming supports for Indigenous students (e.g. literacy intervention and experiential learning opportunities), supporting student transitions, engaging First Nation communities and Indigenous parents and families, developing communication resources to promote self-identification and awareness, and creating governance structures and positions to support Indigenous education. A Board Assessment Tool was also developed to assist with examining progress to date and identifying key priority areas moving forward. Education Officers from the ministry's Indigenous Education Office have also been available to provide support and outreach for the development of BAPs." (38)

"The ministry provided funding to district school boards through the Grants for Student Needs: Indigenous

Education Grant to support a dedicated Indigenous Education Board Lead in each of Ontario's seventy-two school boards and four school authorities. The Indigenous Education Board Lead supports the school board in its engagements with Indigenous communities, partners, and organizations as it develops BAPs and implements the Framework." (38)

"In 2014, the ministry released the *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework Implementation Plan*, which indicated that all school boards would establish formalized processes, such as establishing Indigenous Education Advisory Councils (IEACs), to support local implementation of the Framework. The IEACs could help guide school boards and schools in building stronger relationships with their communities, sharing information, identifying promising practices, and enhancing collaborative work to support First Nation, Métis, and Inuit student achievement and well-being." (38)

"The ministry has set the following expectations for Indigenous Education Leads and the IEACs. The Indigenous Education Lead will:

- Work to establish a board IEAC (if the board does not have one in place);
- Work closely with the IEAC to develop and implement the BAP;
- Collaborate with the IEAC as part of the planning process, in order to ensure that the BAP is reflective of local demographics and student/community needs
- Obtain sign-off from the IEAC on the BAP.

There is an acknowledgement and understanding that IEAC structures and processes vary across boards, and that in some boards and communities more needs to be done to increase their effectiveness. During engagement sessions, Indigenous partners expressed concerns about authentic, meaningful participation in BAP development. While some felt that their BAPs were truly collaborative and co-created, others said they had not been provided with an opportunity to participate, or had been invited to participate only after the BAP had been developed. Indigenous partners said that BAPs need to fully and deliberately include the input of community partners, and that there needs to be greater participation among community partners in the development of BAPs." (39)

"Target specific efforts to engage First Nation, Métis, and Inuit parents in their children's school life, and work with the Indigenous Education Advisory Council to find new, more culturally appropriate and culturally relevant, approaches to increase parental participation." (52)

"Meaningfully engage Indigenous Education Advisory Councils and First Nation, Métis, and Inuit community partners and organizations by co-developing Board Action Plans for Indigenous Education with them." (52)

"The ministry continues to encourage district school boards to review and analyse their Indigenous student self-identification data during the Board Action Plan process with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit parents/families and communities and Indigenous Education Advisory Councils (IEACs) to:

- Build understanding of Indigenous student self-identification;
- Increase the number of students/families that choose to self-identify; and Inform targeted strategies for improving Indigenous student achievement and well-being

In addition to self-identification data, the ministry also encourages school boards to continue to use data and evidence from a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, feedback from the results of programs and initiatives, internal and external research, and evaluation studies, to inform their planning and programming. Partnerships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit parents, communities, and organizations continue to be essential to supporting Indigenous students." (63-64)

"However, it is clear from both the data and what we heard from teachers, board staff, advisory council members, and Indigenous community members that there is still room for improvement. Through their planning processes, boards and schools should work in partnership with local Indigenous community partners, including Indigenous Education Advisory Councils. Boards and schools, along with their Board Indigenous Education Leads, will continue to identify resources and supports that will help improve the engagement, learning, achievement, and well-being of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students. Analysing achievement results provides insight into the impact of targeted strategies and enhances the ability of the ministry, boards, and Indigenous partners to design initiatives that increase the success of Indigenous students." (68)

13.2.7. Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework (2011)

"With the consolidation of targeted Aboriginal postsecondary education funding in 2009-10, the Ontario government now requires all postsecondary education institutions to report annually on their investments in Aboriginal education in a Multi-Year Aboriginal Action Plan for Postsecondary Education (MYAAPP). Colleges and universities are required to develop their action plan under the direction, and subject to the approval, of Aboriginal Education Councils (AECs). AECs or similar governing bodies are required to be in place in order for colleges or universities to be eligible for public funding to support Aboriginal students and programming related to Aboriginal education in their institutions. The ministry will continue to engage with postsecondary education institutions when developing standardized performance tools and approaches to be used to evaluate the impact of current policy and determine future policies." (21)

“Review and assess ministry-supported decision-making, planning, advisory, and/or governance bodies (e.g., Aboriginal Education Councils, Local Training Boards) to ensure that they continue to involve Aboriginal people in the development, planning, and evaluation of, and decision making related to, publicly assisted initiatives.” (25)

“Aboriginal Education Councils (AEC). A mandatory body established by each publicly assisted college or university to ensure that Aboriginal people are consistently and regularly engaged in decision making within the institution. Institutions must ensure that representatives from Aboriginal communities/organizations must have direct access to the board of governors and the senate (e.g., by reserving a seat on the board for an Aboriginal representative or by having the president serve as a member of the Aboriginal Education Council). The establishment of an AEC is required if a college or university is to be eligible to receive targeted Postsecondary Education Funding for Aboriginal Learners (PEFAL).” (40)

13.2.8. Achieving Results through Partnership: First Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework (2015)

“The aspirational aspects of the framework have provided Aboriginal education councils/circles, educators, and leaders with the opportunity to plan local initiatives that reflect the principles contained in the policy framework. In fact, the framework has influenced the degree to which Aboriginal postsecondary education and training initiatives are emerging as priorities within publicly funded institutions. Educators can refer to the policy framework as Ontario’s formal direction on Aboriginal postsecondary education and training. The document also provides guidance to assist educators in pragmatic ways with achieving the frameworks goals.” (3)

“To promote Aboriginal community participation, the ministry supported the development of Aboriginal Education Councils in publicly funded colleges and universities. Since the launch of the framework, all publicly funded colleges and universities have established Aboriginal Education Councils.” (7)

[This refers to the organization called the Indigenous Peoples Education Circle (IPEC), whose work interfaces with IEC work at colleges in the province] “The IPEC meets regularly with the ministry to discuss progress achieved by colleges and community councils, and supports the academic achievement of Aboriginal learners within the Ontario college system as an intermediary for college Aboriginal Education Councils. IPEC’s membership includes college educators, counsellors, and administrators from across the province who also work directly with the Aboriginal Education Councils. Brought together by a shared vision of building and supporting a continuum of education that promotes Aboriginal learners’ access to and success within the Ontario college system, IPEC works toward creating opportunities for colleges and their Aboriginal Education Councils to articulate the needs and interests of Aboriginal learners and to share effective practices in the college setting.” (11)

