



# BRIEFING NOTE

## Post-Secondary Education Engagement Report

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**To:** Chiefs in Assembly  
**From:** COO Education Sector  
**Date:** May 24, 2023  
**Purpose:** Post-Secondary Education Review Report and Work Plan

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### ISSUE

First Nations in Ontario have completed a First Nations led review of the federal First Nations post-secondary programs and developed a regional engagement post-secondary education report that includes 41 recommendations. The Chiefs and Technical Committee on Languages and Learning now brings the final regional report and accompanying work plan to the Chiefs in Assembly for approval.

### BACKGROUND

- In 2019, the Federal Government committed \$7.5M nationally over three years for First Nations to conduct a post-secondary engagement process to support First Nations in their development of comprehensive and integrated First Nations post-secondary education (PSE) regional models that are responsive to First Nations' priorities and needs.
- COO Resolution 16/18 mandates the Chiefs and Technical Committee on Language and Learning (CTCLL- formerly the First Nation Education Coordination Unit) to undertake a First Nations led review of the Post-Secondary Student Support Program and report back to the Chiefs in Assembly with any resulting recommendations from the review.
- Primary engagement activities were initiated and completed through the Provincial-Territorial Organizations (PTO's), Independent First Nations (IFN), unaffiliated First Nations and the Indigenous Institutes.
- A Post-Secondary Engagement Committee (PSE Committee) was established consisting of representatives from each of the PTO's, the IFN, Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Six Nations of the Grand River, and the Chiefs of Ontario.
- The Chiefs of Ontario (COO) provided support to First Nations in carrying out engagement activities by developing a number of tools including survey workshops, master surveys, focus group workshops, timelines and presentations and provision of supplemental reports.

### ANALYSIS

Decades of insufficient federal funding and supports have resulted in inadequate First Nations education infrastructure, insufficient student outcomes and low socio-economic outcomes. Reports developed as part of the Ontario region PSE review

process indicate that the federal Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) and associated policies, are not meeting their stated objectives. The PSSSP was found to undermine, rather than support, Inherent, Treaty and Aboriginal rights to education.

## **CURRENT STATUS**

The community-led engagement resulted in 41 community driven broad regional recommendations to address a wide variety of needs. These recommendations were agreed upon by the PSE Committee and are presented in the *Ontario Region Post-Secondary Education Engagement Report*. The recommendations include the following thematic groupings:

**Post-Secondary Costs Funding** - fair and equitable funding to First Nation learners that is based on student post-secondary need

**Transitional Programming** – supports for transitions into and out of post-secondary from various starting and end points

**Administration** – First Nations must have the authority, control, and adequate resources to develop and implement their own post-secondary support systems

**Informational** – First Nation PSE support staff must have access to all of the information required to support learners

**Relationships** – funding to support relationship building and information sharing with other communities, institutions and learners

**Indigenous Institutes** – sufficient, predictable core funding for Indigenous Institutes

**Federal/Provincial Government** – calls for changes to the provincial and federal funding programs and policies for First Nation learners

**Mainstream Post-Secondary Institutions** – increase responsiveness to the wide-variety of needs of First Nation learners

It is intended that First Nations will now use this report as a baseline to begin developing and negotiating models that meet their unique needs.

To support the continuation of the work, the PSE Committee developed a work plan for implementation of the broad regional recommendations that will serve to support and improve post-secondary education funding, policies and access for all First Nations learners and institutes.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Chiefs in Assembly approve the *Ontario Region Post-Secondary Review Final Report* and support the work plan to implement the recommendations.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- DRAFT Ontario Region Post-Secondary Review Final Report and Work Plan