



FEASIBILITY STUDY
FOR THE PUBLIC COLLEGE DESIGNATION
OF THE NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE

PREPARED FOR
THE NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE



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Global Labour Market Analysis



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FEASIBILITY STUDY NEC NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE PUBLIC COLLEGE DESIGNATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	IV
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 FEASIBILITY STUDY.....	1
1.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND.....	1
1.2.1 PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DESIGNATION.....	2
1.3 PROJECT SCOPE	2
1.4 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY.....	3
1.4.1 PROJECT APPROACH.....	3
1.4.2 PROJECT METHODOLOGY.....	3
FIGURE 1: SURVEY GROUPS AND RESPONSES	5
1.4.3 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK.....	5
2.0 NEC NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE	6
2.1 DESCRIPTION	6
2.1.1 MISSION STATEMENT.....	6
2.1.2 GOALS.....	6
2.1.3 LONGHOUSE PHILOSOPHY	7
2.1.4 CATCHMENT AREA.....	7
2.1.5 ACADEMIC PROGRAMS	7
2.2 GOVERNANCE.....	8
2.2.1 ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY	8
2.2.2 AFFILIATIONS	8
2.2.3 REVENUE	8
2.2.4 INDICATORS OF SUCCESS.....	9
FIGURE 2: NEC FTE's 1999 - 2010.....	9
3.0 ABORIGINAL POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS AND NEED	10
3.1.1 ABORIGINAL POPULATION IN BC.....	10
FIGURE 3: POPULATION DATA (2006 CENSUS)	10
FIGURE 4: PROPORTION OF BC'S POPULATION BY AGE GROUP (2006).....	11
FIGURE 5: ABORIGINAL POPULATION, GREATER VANCOUVER, BY AGE GROUP (2006).....	11
FIGURE 6: ABORIGINAL POPULATION PROJECTED GROWTH IN BC (2011–2026)	12
FIGURE 7: ABORIGINAL STUDENT AGE POPULATION (18-54 YEARS OLD) PROJECTED GROWTH IN BC (2011–2026)	13
3.1.2 LEVELS OF EDUCATION ATTAINMENT.....	13
FIGURE 8: HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION, 25 – 64 YEAR OLDS (2006).....	14
FIGURE 9: PROPORTION OF THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION, AGES 20-54 YEARS (2006).....	14
FIGURE 10: PROPORTION OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE BY AGE GROUP IN BC (2006)	15
3.1.3 SUPPLY OF PUBLIC POST –SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BC	15
FIGURE 11: ABORIGINAL STUDENT GROWTH AT BC'S PUBLIC REGIONAL COLLEGES (2005-2010)	16
FIGURE 12: ABORIGINAL STUDENT GROWTH AT BC'S PUBLIC PROVINCIAL INSTITUTES (2005–2010).....	16
FIGURE 13: ABORIGINAL STUDENT GROWTH AT BC'S PUBLIC REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES (2005–2010)	17
3.1.4 SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE NEC NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE.....	17
3.2 LABOUR MARKET DEMANDS	18
FIGURE 14: LABOUR MARKET OUTLOOK FOR BC (2011 – 2019)	18
FIGURE 15: EXPECTED EMPLOYMENT DEMAND GROWTH BY OCCUPATION SKILL TYPE, BC (2007 – 2017)	19
FIGURE 16: EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	19



FEASIBILITY STUDY: NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE PUBLIC DESIGNATION

FIGURE 17: EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS OF TOTAL JOB OPENINGS, 2017	20
4.0 ABORIGINAL POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BC.....	21
4.1 GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA	21
4.1.1 <i>POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION FRAMEWORK</i>	21
4.1.2 <i>PRIVATE CAREER TRAINING INSTITUTE AGENCY</i>	21
4.1.3 <i>EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE</i>	21
4.1.4 <i>POLICIES TO SUPPORT ABORIGINAL POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION</i>	22
4.2 ABORIGINAL AGENCIES.....	22
4.2.1 <i>FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE</i>	22
4.2.2 <i>INDIGENOUS ADULT AND HIGHER LEARNING ASSOCIATION</i>	23
4.3 GOVERNMENT OF CANADA - ROLE.....	23
5.0 ABORIGINAL POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION ISSUES.....	24
5.1 TRADITIONAL ABORIGINAL EDUCATION.....	24
5.2 CURRENT EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES.....	25
FIGURE 18: ABORIGINAL POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION PARTICIPATION (1996–2006)	25
FIGURE 19: EMPLOYMENT RATES OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION BY CITY (2001)	26
5.3 BARRIERS TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION & LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION	27
FIGURE 20: COMPARISON OF DEGREES AWARDED TO AMERICAN INDIANS: TRIBAL COLLEGES AND MAINSTREAM COLLEGES (1994).....	31
5.4 INTEGRATION OF EDUCATION SYSTEMS.....	31
5.5 ABORIGINAL COLLEGE MODELS	34
5.5.1 <i>NICOLA VALLEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY</i>	35
5.5.2 <i>FIRST NATIONS UNIVERSITY OF CANADA</i>	36
5.5.3 <i>GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE</i>	37
5.5.4 <i>TRIBAL COLLEGES IN THE UNITED STATES</i>	37
6.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS.....	38
6.1 INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS	38
FIGURE 21: STRENGTHS OF THE NEC (INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS)	38
FIGURE 22: WEAKNESSES OF THE NEC (STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS).....	39
6.2 NEC NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE.....	39
6.2.1 <i>BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND NEC SOCIETY MEMBERS</i>	39
6.2.2 <i>FACULTY AND STAFF</i>	40
FIGURE 23: BENEFITS OF PUBLIC DESIGNATION (FACULTY AND STAFF)	41
FIGURE 24: CHALLENGES OF PUBLIC DESIGNATION (FACULTY AND STAFF)	42
6.2.3 <i>CURRENT STUDENTS AND ALUMNI</i>	42
FIGURE 25: BENEFITS OF PUBLIC DESIGNATION (STUDENTS AND ALUMNI).....	43
FIGURE 26: CHALLENGES OF PUBLIC DESIGNATION (STUDENTS AND ALUMNI)	43
6.3 ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY	44
6.4 BRITISH COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT.....	44
7.0 PUBLIC COLLEGE DESIGNATION	45
7.1 PRIVATE ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS.....	45
7.2 PUBLIC ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS	46
7.3 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK	47
7.3.1 <i>COLLEGE AND INSTITUTE ACT</i>	47
7.3.2 <i>BOARD APPOINTMENT PROCESS</i>	48
7.3.3 <i>NICOLA VALLEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY BOARD APPOINTMENT PROCESS</i>	48
7.3.4 <i>DEGREE AUTHORIZATION ACT</i>	48
7.3.5 <i>BC COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS AND TRANSFERS</i>	49
7.4 FUNDING CRITERIA	49
7.4.1 <i>ABORIGINAL POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING PARTNERS</i>	50
7.5 STUDENTAID.....	51
7.6 ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK.....	51



8.0	OPTIONS	53
8.1	OPTION 1: ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	53
8.2	OPTION 2: PURSUE PUBLIC DESIGNATION & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	54
8.3	OPTION 3: PURSUE FEDERATION STATUS & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	56
9.0	RECOMMENDATION	58
9.1	PUBLIC COLLEGE DESIGNATION	58
9.2	GOVERNANCE TRANSITION	58
9.3	ABORIGINAL CONTROL	60
9.4	BC GOVERNMENT MANDATE	61
9.5	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NEC NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE	61
9.5.1	ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY	61
9.5.2	NEC SOCIETY	61
9.5.3	ADMINISTRATION	61
9.5.4	FACULTY	62
9.5.5	STUDENTS	62
	APPENDIX 1: REFERENCES	63
	APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDES	67
	APPENDIX 3: SURVEY QUESTIONS	70
	APPENDIX 4: FOCUS GROUP TOPICS	72
	APPENDIX 5: PUBLIC POST SECONDARY STUDENTS	73
	FIGURE 27: PUBLIC POST SECONDARY STUDENTS 2009/10	73
	FIGURE 28: PUBLIC POST SECONDARY STUDENTS – PROVINCIAL UNIVERSITIES 2006/07	74
	APPENDIX 6: MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION GOALS	75
	APPENDIX 7: NEC PROGRAM AREAS – NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES	79
	APPENDIX 8: COLLEGE AND INSTITUTE ACT EXCERPTS	81
	APPENDIX 9: NVIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS	82
	APPENDIX 10: BC GOVERNMENT BOARD APPOINTMENT PROCESS	83

Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.

United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*
Resolution 61/295, 13 September 2007, Article 14



FEASIBILITY STUDY

NEC NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE PUBLIC COLLEGE DESIGNATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Board of Directors of the NEC Native Education College (NEC) has commissioned this feasibility study to gather the relevant information to consider the opportunity to change from its status as a private non-profit society to a public provincial college within British Columbia (BC). The research for this study involved a combination of secondary and primary research. The secondary review includes key documents and data from NEC, government and other sources. The primary research included interviews with key stakeholders, surveys with NEC Society members, staff, faculty, students and alumni, and a focus group with NEC Society members.

As outlined in this comprehensive report the feasibility of the NEC to receive public designation is not only well supported, but absolutely necessary to meet the growing urban Aboriginal population in the Vancouver area that is currently home to the largest population (40,000) of Aboriginal peoples in BC, which is expected to grow to 62,500 by 2026. At the same time the labour force is anticipating needing large numbers of skilled workers due to both growth and attrition, with 90% of the new jobs requiring at least a high school certificate and over 75% requiring some type of post-secondary education, which NEC could support the growing Aboriginal population to access.

The NEC has a long history of providing culturally relevant post-secondary education for First Nations, Métis and Inuit people from across BC and Canada, and is a key entry-point into the post-secondary system for Aboriginal people who have had difficulties with the secondary and tertiary education, and serving as a proven transitioning opportunity for learners into other post-secondary institutions. NEC currently serves over 300 students per year, and over 200 full-time equivalents.

Public designation for the NEC is supported by the BC Government with NEC to potentially be the flagship Aboriginal college in the post-secondary education system in BC. The NEC has made three previous attempts at a change towards public designation, in order to secure a larger and more stable funding base, and direct connections to other public post-secondary institutions.

However several conditions contribute to the potential for receiving public designation in the coming year, including:

- the unanimous support of the Board, stakeholders, faculty and staff, students and alumni in pursuing public designation;
- the compelling need for access to culturally relevant post-secondary education for the growing Aboriginal population in the NEC catchment area, for both new learners and adult learners and the ability of the NEC to meet these needs in terms of participation and graduation rates, student satisfaction, skills development, job transition, and reducing the unemployment rate;
- the labour market needs for the area and region; the social costs of doing nothing with the largest Aboriginal population in BC where there is the greatest opportunity, and continuing greatest poverty;
- the ability of the NEC to support the Province to realize its commitments in the Transformative Change Accord, and Métis Nation Accord and close the socio-economic gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in BC; and
- the opportunity that public designation of the NEC has to fulfill the goal of public designation of two Aboriginal post-secondary institutes outlined in the (1995) Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Framework.



FEASIBILITY STUDY

NEC NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE PUBLIC COLLEGE DESIGNATION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Board of Directors of the NEC Native Education College (NEC) is considering the move from its status as a private non-profit society towards a public provincial college within the British Columbia (BC) public post-secondary education system. This change is supported by the BC Government for NEC to be the flagship Aboriginal college in the system.

However, many of the key factors leading to the change of status and the resulting new requirements are unclear, particularly institutional accreditation requirements, maintaining Aboriginal control within the provincial board appointment process, and strengthening the relationship of NEC to the Aboriginal community it serves.

This feasibility study, commissioned by the NEC, will address and inform the concerns and issues identified by the NEC Board of Directors and key stakeholders.

1.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The NEC is a non-profit society with a mission to provide “a culturally appropriate and supportive learning environment for Aboriginal learners, within available resources. Non-Aboriginal learners are welcome.”

The NEC has had a long-term partnership with the BC Government through the ministry responsible for the post-secondary system, to deliver post-secondary programming in areas of Adult Basic Education and post-secondary certificates and diplomas. The NEC also partners with multiple organizations to deliver educational programming and related services across BC and Canada.

The NEC is governed by the *NEC Native Education College Society*, as a non-profit agency, and receives annual operating funding from the BC Government through a partnership agreement with Vancouver Community College.

Since its inception in 1967, the NEC has continuously explored different business and designation models in order to provide consistent programs and services to students. Most recently, the NEC has sought to alter its relationship with the BC Government through the following initiatives:

- 1993 NEC application for public college designation, declined
- 1997 NEC application for public college designation, declined
- 2007 organizational viability review, with additional funds provided to NEC to forgo closure

Despite these efforts and the long-standing track record of successfully supporting Aboriginal learners to transition into post-secondary education, to date, an acceptable long-term funding strategy for NEC has not been developed with the BC Government. As the annual operating funds from the BC Government are significantly below the funding levels of public colleges, the NEC's Board of Directors wants to determine the feasibility of the



NEC achieving designation as a public college or institute under the appropriate provincial legislation, and therefore access comparable levels of funds.

1.2.1 PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DESIGNATION

The public designation of a college refers to its accountability to, and primary funding from, the provincial government to maintain daily operations. By contrast, private colleges are either for profit or non-profit educational institutions that are accountable to their ownership and/or board of directors, and do not receive funding to maintain daily operations. Since 1995, the BC Government has supported the approval of two Aboriginal public designations through an Aboriginal educational policy framework. The Aboriginal Education Framework (Framework) is currently being renewed and is expected to be completed in the spring of 2011.

The Framework will support educational quality assurance, which is the primary method by which the province of BC measures the authority and designation of a post-secondary institution, along with legislation “to establish, govern, recognize and ensure the quality of post-secondary education” (Morgan and Louie, 2006, p.6).

Quality assurance relates to the achievement of educational program standards established by institutions, professional organizations, government, and/or standard-setting bodies established by government.

1.3 PROJECT SCOPE

The NEC Board of Directors has commissioned this study to determine the feasibility for public college or institute designation for the NEC. The primary objective of this feasibility study is to answer two main questions:

1. How would provincial public designation further the mission of the NEC?
2. How would such designation further the mission of the BC Government?

The project team anticipates several key issues as additional factors that will be reflected within the overall study:

- Aboriginal control of Aboriginal education, as identified by the AFN (2010a), RCAP (1996), and other research on Aboriginal post-secondary education in Canada;
- Traditional First Nations education practices;
- The historic role of NEC in Aboriginal post-secondary education;
- The funding environment and related policies for Aboriginal education (federal and provincial);
- The educational needs of Aboriginal communities;
- NEC catchment area, and regional Aboriginal demographics;
- Linkages to public and Aboriginal secondary and post-secondary education systems, social service and student funding systems;
- Labour market gaps and needs, as identified by BC Stats, Stats Canada and Aboriginal communities;
- The role of Aboriginal post-secondary graduates in urban and rural economies;
- The barriers to equitable Aboriginal participation in education and the economy;



- Educational policies of national Aboriginal organizations;
- The federal government’s potential role in Aboriginal post-secondary education in BC;
- The funding structures of other Aboriginal post-secondary institutes in Canada; and
- Other relevant issues that may be required to understand the operational context.

1.4 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

1.4.1 PROJECT APPROACH

The research for this Feasibility Study utilized a strengths-based, collaborative approach consistent with local indigenous methodologies that met the needs of the NEC, to examine the feasibility of NEC applying for public college status. This strengths-based, collaborative approach is also consistent with action research, which Stringer (2007) defined as “a systematic approach to investigation that enables people to find effective solutions” (p. 1) that includes directly involving subject and stakeholder in the research (p. 6). Such involvement allows participants to “construct and use their own knowledge” (Coghlan & Brannick, 2007, p. 15), using a strengths-based, collaborative and emergent Indigenous methodology that “cannot undermine the integrity of indigenous persons or communities because it is grounded in that integrity” (Wilson, 2008, p. 60).

1.4.2 PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The research inquiry methods used included a literature review; interviews with key stakeholders and constituents; survey with students, alumni, teaching faculty, staff, and NEC society members; and a focus group with NEC Society members.

This use of more than one source of information is called triangulation, which, according to Glesne (2006), contributes to the trustworthiness of the data. In addition, Glesne has stated, although multiple data-collection methods are the most common form of triangulation in qualitative research, triangulation in order to increase confidence in research findings may also involve the incorporation of multiple kinds of data sources, multiple investigators, and multiple theoretical perspectives (p. 36).

1. LITERATURE REVIEW – SECONDARY RESEARCH

Secondary Research was conducted by reviewing various reports, document, and data. This initial research step informed the development of the survey tool for key stakeholder interviews with approval of the NEC project lead. This collaborative and emergent process guided the remainder of the qualitative research in a strong foundation understanding of the operating environment of the NEC. See Appendix 1 for a list of secondary sources.

The secondary sources included:

- NEC institutional reports, data, policies, and documents, governance policies, and annual reports.
- Provincial related strategies, annual reports and funding agreements, including BC Government funding criteria and commitment in 2007, current BC Government Designation criteria, *College and Institutes Act* (1996)
- Annual reports from related BC institutions such as Nicola Valley Institute of Technology



- Statistics Canada and BC Stats, demographic information, labour market information, etc.
- Annual Reports from public Aboriginal institutes in other parts of Canada and Aboriginal education research (other Aboriginal post-secondary institutes nationally and internationally; barriers and best practices; national and regional policy research)
- Reports, data and documents from other sources

2. INTERVIEWS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS – PRIMARY RESEARCH

Structured telephone interviews were conducted with a variety of stakeholders and respondents involved with the post-secondary system in BC. Interview guides and the interview list were developed by the research team and approved by NEC. See Appendix 2 for the interview guide. The interviews were conducted in January and February 2011 with the following groups:

- NEC Board Members and Administration
- BC Government and the Government of Canada
- Other BC public post-secondary institutions
- Other BC and Canadian Aboriginal public post-secondary institutions
- Constituents and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations that support the public designation of the NEC (Board members; Administration)

3. ON-LINE SURVEYS – PRIMARY RESEARCH

On-line surveys were conducted from January 18 to March 11, 2011 with five distinct sets of respondents: current students, alumni, teaching faculty, staff, and NEC Society members. The survey questions were developed by the research team and approved by NEC. See Appendix 3 for the survey questions.

E-mail requests and a reminder were sent to each set of the respondents from NEC directly, requesting their participation in the on-line survey. Respondents were not asked identifying information such as their name or contact information in order to preserve their confidentiality.

However, respondents were asked to indicate their role with NEC Native Education College. The survey respondents were also asked how long they have been associated with the NEC, in order to evaluate the length of time people have been active with the NEC. Except for current students, the vast majority of respondents have been involved with the NEC for at least one year, and most over three years, indicating at least the opportunity to build a long-term or more informed opinion about the NEC.

A total of seventy responses were received and deemed valid, including sufficient numbers of responses that were received from four of the five groups of respondents, with the numbers slightly low for the NEC Society members.



FIGURE 1: SURVEY GROUPS AND RESPONSES

SURVEY GROUPS	LESS THAN 1 YEAR	1 - 3 YEARS	MORE THAN 3 YEARS	RESPONSE COUNT
Current Student	39.1% (9)	52.2% (12)	8.7% (2)	23
Alumni	11.1% (3)	14.8% (4)	74.1% (20)	27
Faculty	8.3% (1)	58.3% (7)	33.3% (4)	12
Staff	16.7% (2)	25.0% (3)	58.3% (7)	12
NEC Society Member	12.5% (1)	37.5% (3)	62.5% (5)	8

(Source: NEC Designation Feasibility Study, 2011)

4. FOCUS GROUP – PRIMARY RESEARCH

A focus group session with NEC Native Education College Society members was conducted on the evening of March 9, 2011, for two hours, with eight NEC Society members; all NEC Society Members were invited. The Focus Group was chosen for the NEC Society members only, as they had an overall low response rate for the survey, and because they are a key decision-making body in the move towards public designation.

The Focus Group topics were developed by the research team and approved by NEC. The focus group was facilitated and recorded by the research team, generating sufficient responses to validate the previous research findings.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

A key issue that arose in interviews, surveys, and the focus group was the misunderstanding of the term “public designation”, particularly students, alumni, and Society members not connected with the business of post-secondary education. Many people were interpreting the term as referring to opening the NEC to all members of the public including non-Aboriginal and foreign students, or as comparable to a public secondary school. Therefore, a definition of was added in interviews and in the focus group, to clarify the meaning.

1.4.3 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The research findings were analyzed against the criteria identified in the approach:

1. The type of public institution the NEC should be designated as
2. The legislative framework for the designation (under existing or new legislation)
3. The timeline for public designation
4. Requirements for long-term sustainability (capital and operating funds)
5. A potential role for NEC in provincial funding and quality control mechanisms for other Aboriginal institutes
6. The constituencies and organizations that support the public designation of the NEC
7. Strategies to strengthen the case for NEC designation
8. Optional sustainable strategies for a relationship with the Ministry of Advanced Education and public post-secondary institutes



2.0 NEC NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE

2.1 DESCRIPTION

The NEC Native Education College opened its doors in 1967 and became BC's largest private Aboriginal college. The focus is to meet the needs of Aboriginal adult students requiring developmental, vocational, and applied academic programs to access employment or further post-secondary education. The NEC is governed by the NEC Native Education College Society, a non-profit society and registered charitable organization.

The NEC Native Education College offers a learning environment that is culturally rich with small classes that are taught in a traditional longhouse. Students have access to many resources and in-house support that includes, but is not limited to:

- Elders and traditional cultural practices and ceremonies
- Financial Aid
- Counselling and Advising
- Assessments
- Community Resources

2.1.1 MISSION STATEMENT

The NEC Native Education College provides a culturally appropriate and supportive learning environment for Aboriginal learners, within available resources. Non-Aboriginal learners are welcome.

In pursuit of this Mission, the NEC Native Education College will bring about the following results:

- Learners will experience a learning environment that respects and reflects the diversity of Aboriginal culture;
- Learners get the support they need to achieve their educational goals in a way that respects their individual cultural values;
- Learners are prepared for meaningful roles in Aboriginal communities and society in general;
- Graduates are prepared for employment or go on to further their education;
- Graduates receive recognition in the form of a certificate, diploma or degree;
- There is an informed respectful working relationship amongst Aboriginal groups; and
- The public is better informed on Aboriginal educational issues.

2.1.2 GOALS

- To develop, manage and operate an Aboriginal education facility;
- To facilitate the participation of people of Aboriginal ancestry in educational and community affairs;



- To help to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal people through the development and delivery of culturally relevant and academically rigorous curriculum and innovative programs and services that are responsive and responsible to Aboriginal peoples;
- To promote the well-being of Aboriginal peoples at the community level through the development and delivery of educational programs and activities in cooperation with Aboriginal communities;
- To provide facilities that are accessible to community groups to further the mission and goals of the Society;
- To develop programs, facilities and methodologies that provide access to skills, knowledge and technology appropriate to the future well-being of Aboriginal peoples in cooperation with agencies of government and non-governmental organizations; and
- To improve understanding between Aboriginal groups, to inform the general public of Aboriginal issues, and to inform the Aboriginal communities of the purpose of education and the programs and services of the Society.

2.1.3 LONGHOUSE PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of the NEC Native Education College Society is founded on the principles upheld by the Elders of our respective nations. The values of our people are contained in the teachings of our Elders – to protect our spirituality, our culture and our land. We will uphold these ideals; live them to the best of our abilities.

2.1.4 CATCHMENT AREA

NEC directly serves the Greater Vancouver area, with specific focus on Vancouver, as its physical location is in the centre of the City of Vancouver, near Main Street and 5th Avenue, accessible along major transportation routes. Indirectly, it serves the Aboriginal population of BC and western Canada as a flagship Aboriginal controlled post-secondary educational institution. NEC provides a comprehensive range of educational services to many Aboriginal people as their first introduction to the Greater Vancouver area.

2.1.5 ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

NEC delivers post-secondary education based upon approved curriculum, with additional supports and focus to help Aboriginal students succeed in the entry and transition into post-secondary education. The NEC manages its academic programs through an Education Council.

The NEC has an impressive student retention rate of 80% (2010/11), with a focuses on four main program areas, which are as follows:

a) **Aboriginal Adult Basic Education (AABE)**

The NEC provides the AABE program which leads to BC Adult Graduation Diploma. Classes are offered at the fundamental, intermediate, advanced and provincial levels. Cultural components included First Nations Studies, protocol teachings and role modeling, and Northwest Coast Button Blankets.

b) **Post-Secondary Certificate Programs**

Post-secondary certificates are awarded in Applied Business Technology, Aboriginal Tourism Operations, Aboriginal Justice Studies, Aboriginal Early Childhood Education, Family and Community Counselling and Northwest Coast Jewellery Arts programs.



c) Post-Secondary Diploma Programs

Post-secondary diplomas are awarded in the Aboriginal Tourism Management and Family and Community Counselling programs.

d) Non-Credit Programs

Other non-credit programs include the FirstHost workshops on customer service are delivered throughout BC by a network of trained facilitators.

2.2 GOVERNANCE

The NEC Native Education College is a non-profit society and registered charity that is governed by a Board of Directors who are elected from the eligible voters of the society's members. Full membership, required for voting in the society, is open to people of Aboriginal ancestry who are interested in the education of Aboriginal community members. Associate membership, non-voting, is available to all community members.

2.2.1 ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY

The NEC Native Education College acknowledges the traditional territories of the Four Nations in the Greater Vancouver Area: Musqueam Nation, Squamish Nation, Tsawwassen Nation and the Tsleil-Waututh Nation.

We recognize that as Aboriginals, we are many people. We celebrate the diversity of our ways as a source of strength within our nations. Thus in diversity we find unity.

2.2.2 AFFILIATIONS

NEC is affiliated with Vancouver Community College and Simon Fraser University. NEC has also continued to be affiliated with educational organizations such as:

- Association of BC Career Colleges Association
- Association of Canadian Community Colleges
- Indigenous Adult Higher Learning Association (IAHLA)
- Post-secondary institutions in BC
- The Private Career Training Institutes Agency of BC (PCTIA) renewed the accreditation of the institution for another five years

2.2.3 REVENUE

The NEC derives most of its revenues from provincial and federal government agencies, and Aboriginal post-secondary education tuition fees from students. NEC funders include:

- Government of BC through the ministry responsible for post-secondary education
- BC Ministry of Health
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
- City of Vancouver, Social Planning Department
- Coastal Corridor Consortium
- Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society (ACCESS)

First Nations and Aboriginal communities across BC and Canada continue to provide tuition



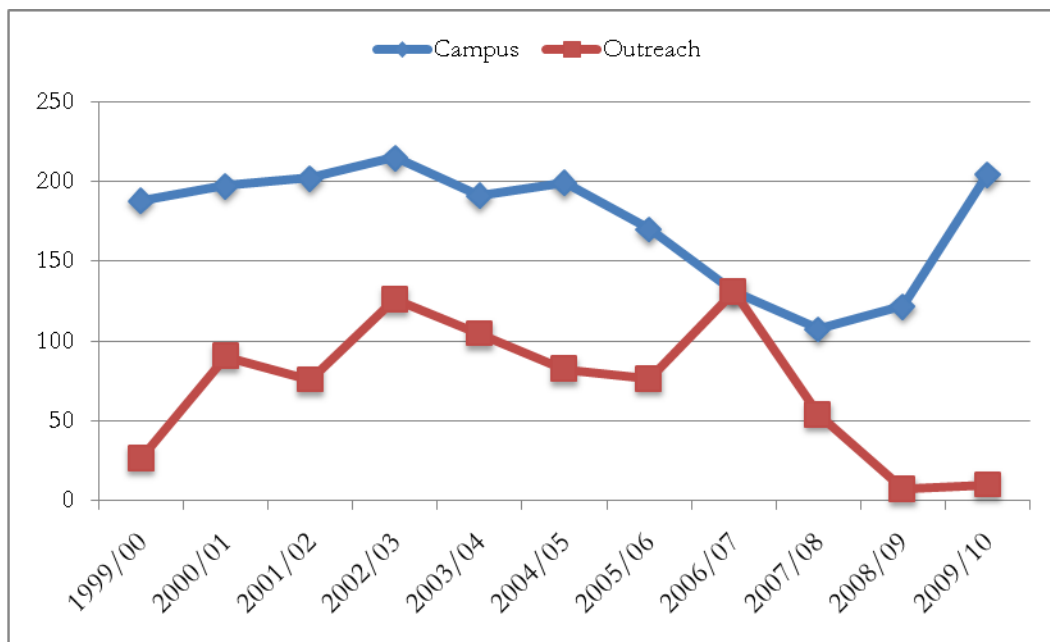
for students in NEC's programs. As well, funding was received through the Aboriginal Training and Education Program, a BC government initiative, to launch the Health Care Assistant program using the provincial curriculum.

2.2.4 INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

For 2009/10, 264 students attended the college, with 204 full-time equivalents (FTE's), with a retention rate of 83%, and 106 graduates. This was the highest number of learners attending the NEC Vancouver campus since 2002/03. The increase in enrolment over recent years was largely due to an increase in Aboriginal Adult Basic Education students, up to 113 FTE's in 2009/10.

The figure below shows the rise and fall of the FTE's at NEC over the past eleven years, and includes both the students at the NEC main campus and outreach students at other facilities.

FIGURE 2: NEC FTE'S 1999 - 2010



3.0 ABORIGINAL POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS AND NEED

The NEC is located in the traditional territory of the Musqueam, Tsawwassen, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations, and near the Semiahoo, Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations, as well as dozens of First Nations from the Sunshine Coast and Fraser Valley.

The main catchment area of NEC is the Greater Vancouver area, but it serves the Aboriginal population of the whole province, as well as Aboriginal people from other First Nations and Aboriginal communities across Canada.

3.1.1 ABORIGINAL POPULATION IN BC

The 2006 Census identified 196,075 Aboriginal people in BC, about 4.8% of BC's 4,113,487 people. As of 2011, the number of Aboriginal people in BC is estimated at 205,414, compared to 4,590,300 for the total BC population. Just over half the Aboriginal people in BC are women at 51.6%, compared to 48.4% for men. The Aboriginal population in Vancouver is also more mobile, with 7.3% of the Aboriginal population moving from other parts of BC within the previous five years, and 8.1% from other parts of Canada or beyond.

In the direct catchment area of the NEC, the 2006 Aboriginal population in the Greater Vancouver Regional District was 40,310, which is 4.8% of the region's population and 20% of BC's Aboriginal population. The Aboriginal population in the City of Vancouver was 11,145, 2% of the City's population, or 5.7% of BC's Aboriginal population, which makes it the largest municipal Aboriginal population in the province. The table below presents the population figures for the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations of the areas.

FIGURE 3: POPULATION DATA (2006 CENSUS)

AREA	NON-ABORIGINAL POPULATION	ABORIGINAL POPULATION
British Columbia	3,917,412	196,075 (4.8%)
Greater Vancouver	2,076,271	40,310 (1.9%)
City of Vancouver	566,896	11,145 (2.0%)

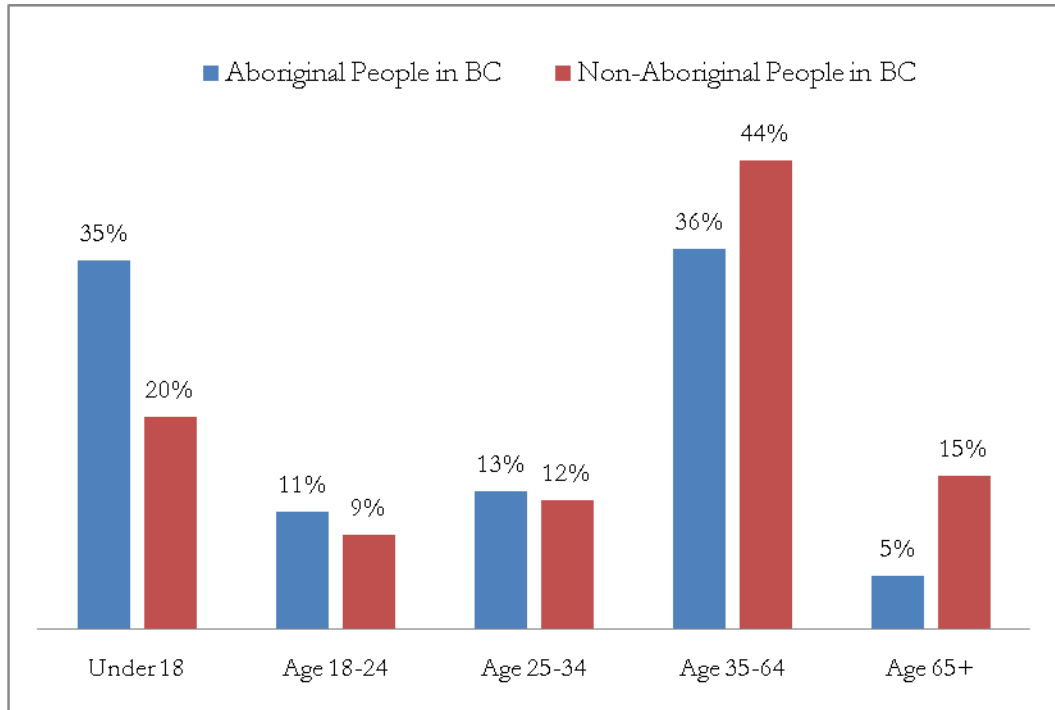
(Source: BC Stats, 2006)

The Aboriginal population in BC and Canada is significantly younger and faster growing than the non-Aboriginal population. In 2006 the median age for the Aboriginal population in BC was 28 years old, compared to 41 years old for the non-Aboriginal population. The younger population is especially significant when looking at typical student ages of people in their twenties and thirties.

The charts below show that over one-third of the Aboriginal population in BC was under 18 years of age in 2006, compared to one-fifth for the non-Aboriginal population. The second chart shows that half the population of the Aboriginal people in the Greater Vancouver area are under 35 years of age.

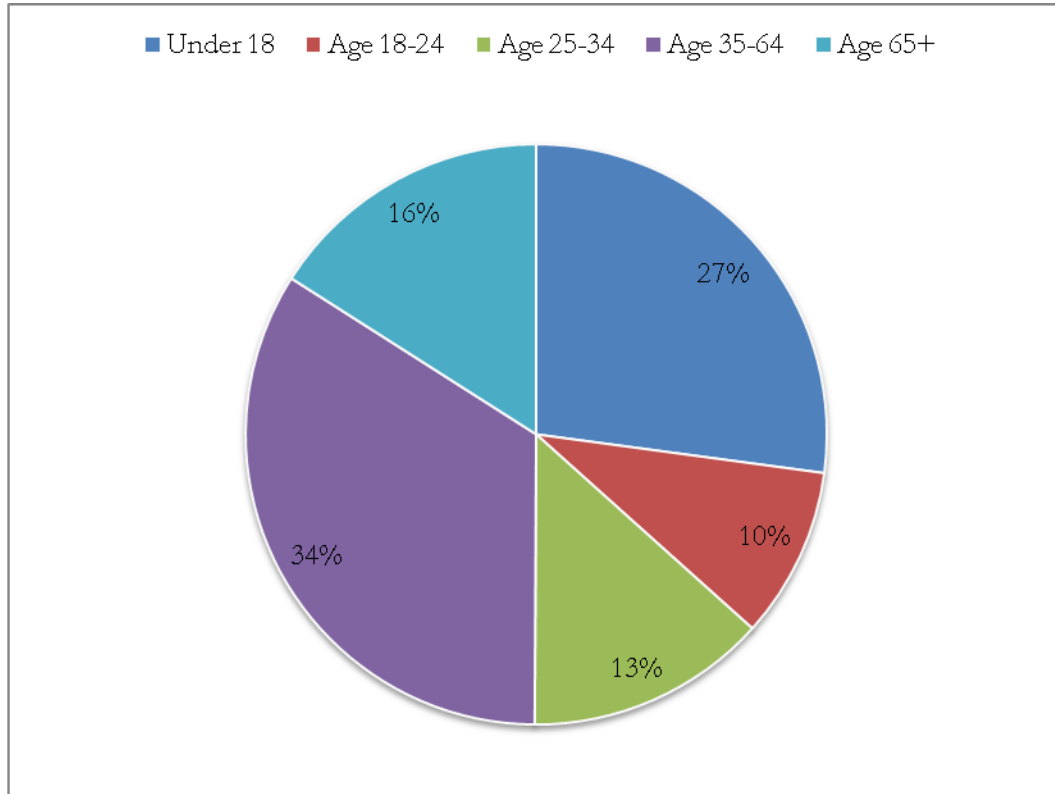


FIGURE 4: PROPORTION OF BC'S POPULATION BY AGE GROUP (2006)



(Source: BC Stats, 2006)

FIGURE 5: ABORIGINAL POPULATION, GREATER VANCOUVER, BY AGE GROUP (2006)



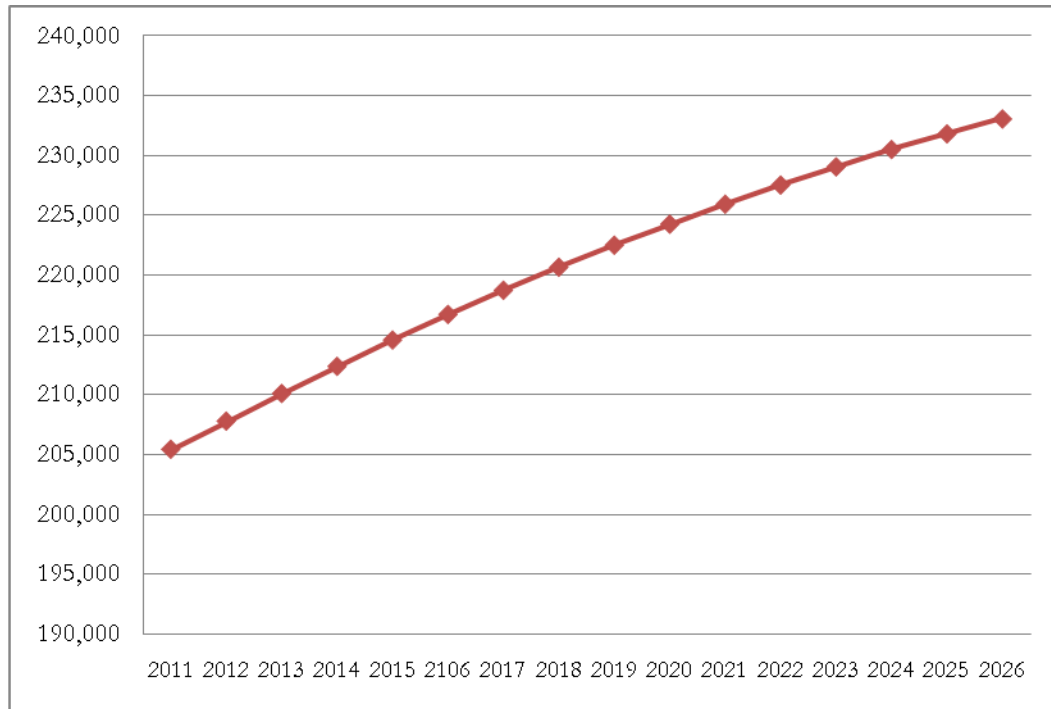
(Source: BC Stats, 2006)



The Aboriginal population in BC is also expected to grow faster than the non-Aboriginal population. By 2016, there will be an estimated 216,000 Aboriginal people in BC, and by 2026 over 230,000 Aboriginal people. The first chart below shows an estimated projection of the Aboriginal population in BC. The second chart below shows the projected growth of the typical Aboriginal student age population in BC for 18 – 54 year olds, from 110,347 in 2011, down to 112,128 in 2016, and back up to 114,377 in 2026.

Should the projected Aboriginal population remain in the NEC catchment area of Greater Vancouver in similar proportions, in 2026, there will be 46,000 Aboriginal people in Greater Vancouver, of which 22,540 will be between 18 and 54 years old.

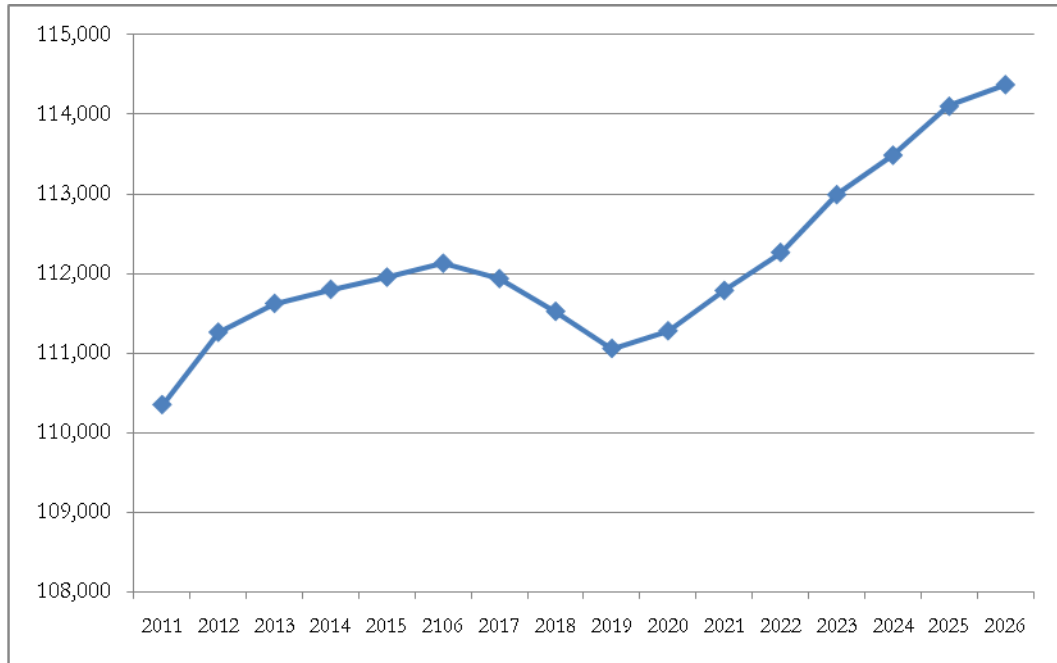
FIGURE 6: ABORIGINAL POPULATION PROJECTED GROWTH IN BC (2011–2026)



(Source: INAC-CMHC, 2007)



FIGURE 7: ABORIGINAL STUDENT AGE POPULATION (18-54 YEARS OLD) PROJECTED GROWTH IN BC (2011–2026)



(Source: INAC-CMHC, 2007)

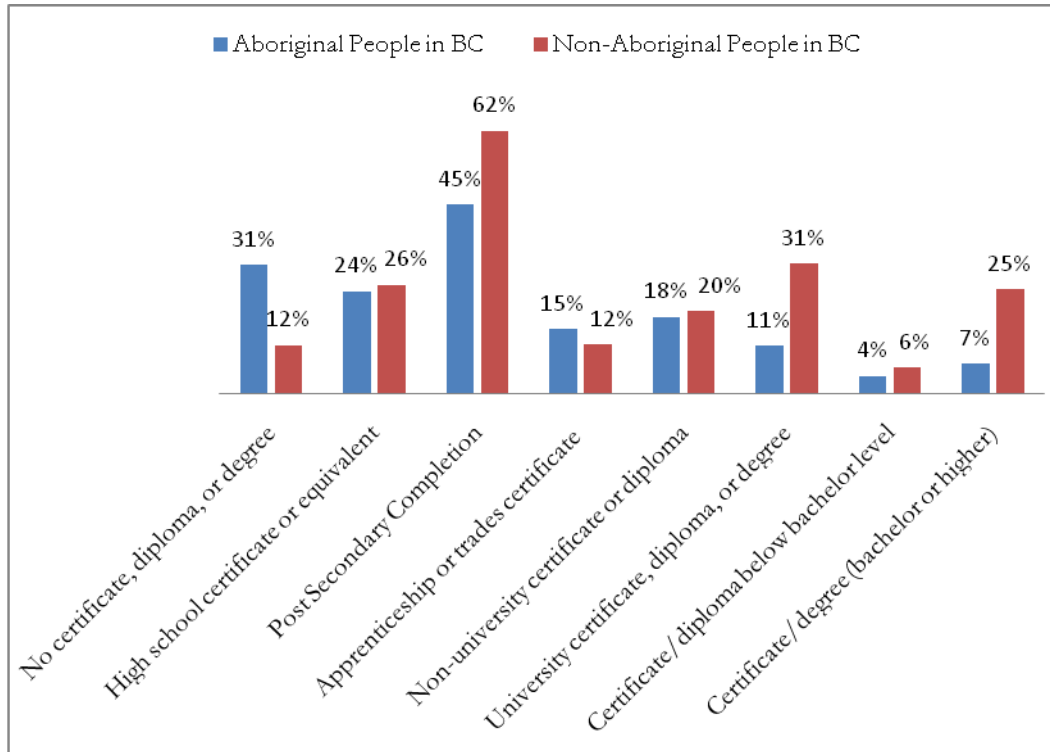
3.1.2 LEVELS OF EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

Within the Aboriginal community, the Aboriginal population has overall lower levels, rates and completions of education attainment than the non-Aboriginal population. Even in key areas such as mathematics, the participation of Aboriginal students is lower compared to non-Aboriginal students. In 2002/03 in BC’s public schools, only 9% of Aboriginal students took Math 12 with a 75% success rate, compared to 36% of the non-Aboriginal students with an 88% success rate.

Both charts below show the Aboriginal population in BC is significantly over-represented in those without secondary or post-secondary completion, and significantly under-represented in post-secondary completion compared to the non-Aboriginal population.

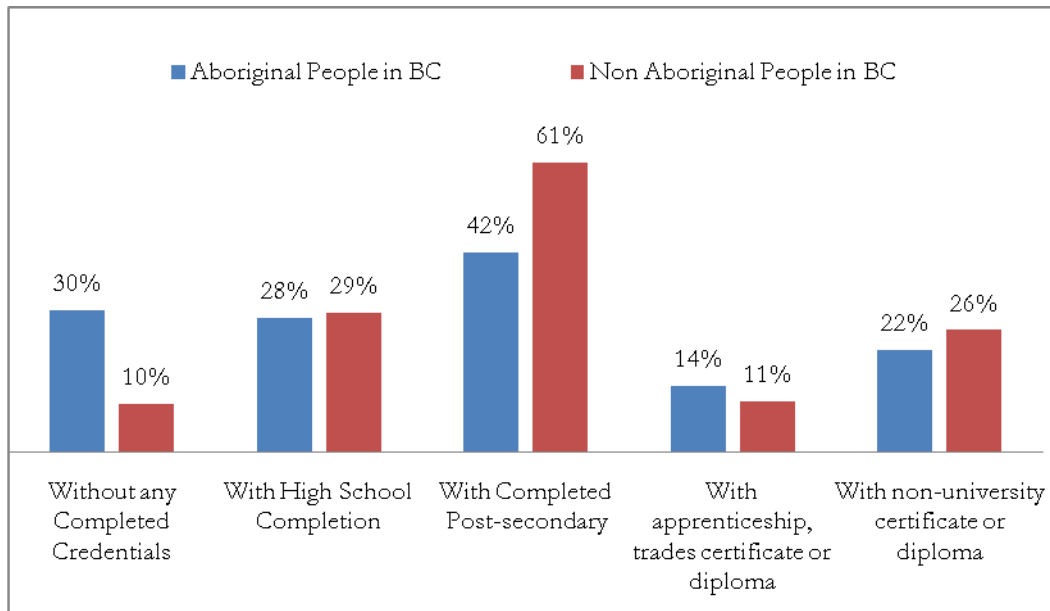


FIGURE 8: HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION, 25 – 64 YEAR OLDS (2006)



(Source: BC Stats, 2006)

FIGURE 9: PROPORTION OF THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION, AGES 20-54 YEARS (2006)



(Source: BC Stats, 2006)

There are some slight differences in the education attainment by gender. Women tend to have completed at least some post-secondary education at slightly higher rates than men. Of



women aged 25 – 64, 48.0 % had some post-secondary education, compared to 41.6% for men.

As well, Aboriginal people tend to attend post-secondary education later than the non-Aboriginal population. The prime school attendance ages for the non-Aboriginal community ages 20 – 24, saw 33.8% of Aboriginal people attend school, compared to 52.4 % for the non-Aboriginal community. The table below shows that Aboriginal people pursue education at later stages in significant proportions.

FIGURE 10: PROPORTION OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE BY AGE GROUP IN BC (2006)

YEARS	15-24 YEARS OLD	25-34 YEARS OLD	35-44 YEARS OLD	45-54 YEARS OLD
Total Aboriginal	25,860	25,610	29,615	26,430
In School Aboriginal	14,940	4,785	3,965	2,635
In School Aboriginal	57.8%	18.9%	13.4%	10.0%
In School Non-Aboriginal	66.1%	20.5%	10.4%	6.9%

(Source: BC Stats, 2006)

3.1.3 SUPPLY OF PUBLIC POST –SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BC

The public post-secondary education system in BC serves almost 500,000 students a year through twenty-seven institutions, divided into four categories, depending upon the focus and catchment area of the institution:

- 11 Regional Colleges
- 4 Provincial Institutes
- 8 Regional Universities
- 4 Provincial Universities

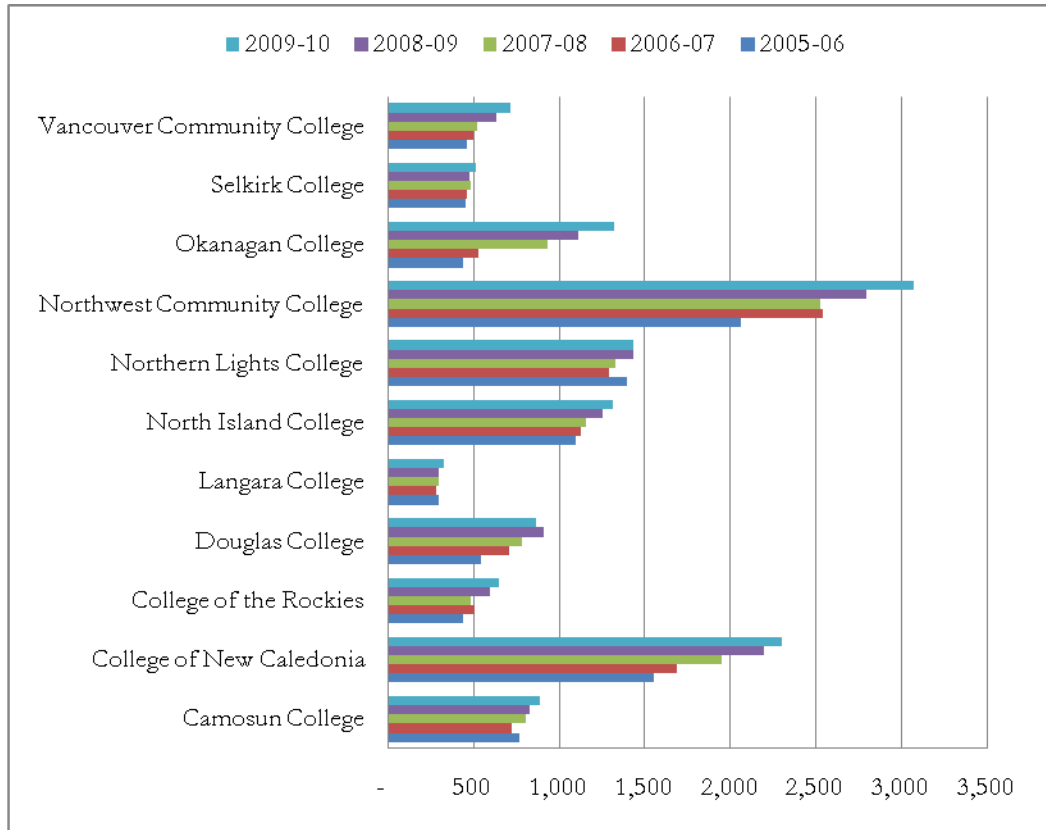
Appendix 5 presents the data on the numbers of students by headcount at each public institution, including the number of Aboriginal people at the Regional Colleges, Provincial Institutes, and the Regional Universities. The figures for the four Provincial Universities are for earlier years, and do not include the numbers of Aboriginal people.

The three diagrams below show the growth of the numbers of Aboriginal students at each public institute for the Regional Colleges, Provincial Institutes, and the Regional Universities respectively. In total, these institutions served 22,985 Aboriginal students in 2009/10, or 7.1% of the total number of students.

As expected, the largest numbers of Aboriginal students are served by the Northwest Community College and the College of New Caledonia, which are home to the largest proportions of Aboriginal people in the province. Both Colleges also saw the largest increases in the numbers of Aboriginal students. NVIT, although smaller in overall size, saw a 70% increase in the number of Aboriginal students over the same time frame.

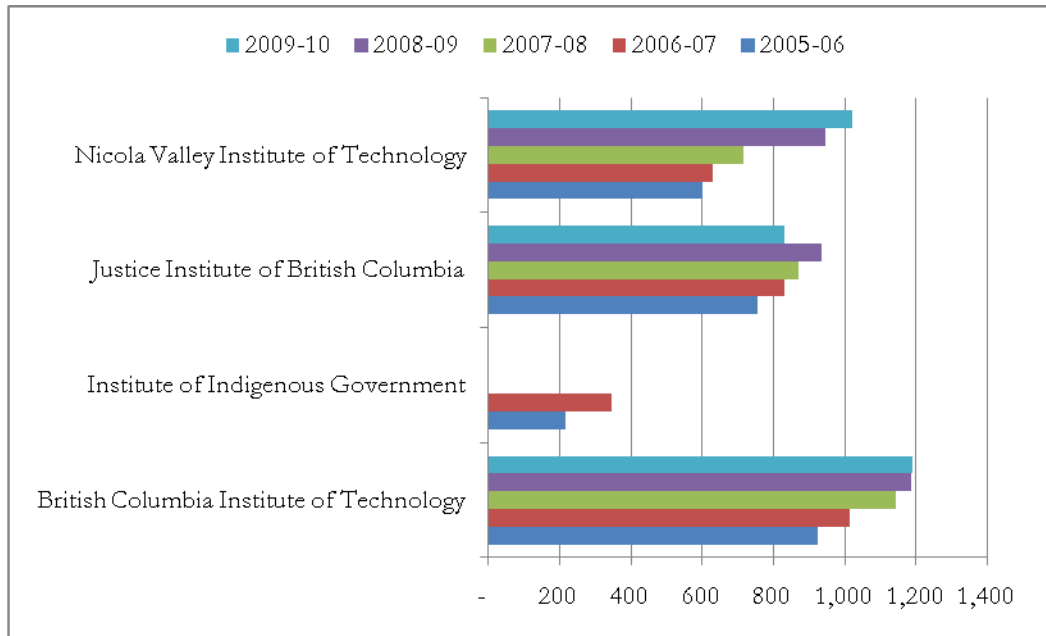


FIGURE 11: ABORIGINAL STUDENT GROWTH AT BC'S PUBLIC REGIONAL COLLEGES (2005-2010)



(Source: Ministry of Regional Economic and Skills Development, 2010)

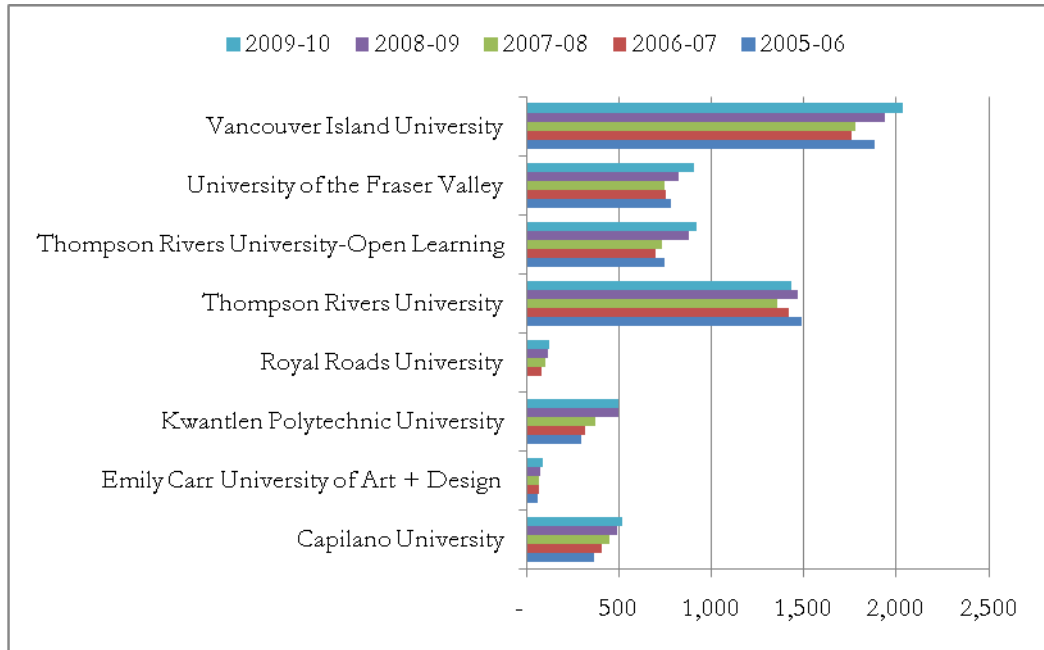
FIGURE 12: ABORIGINAL STUDENT GROWTH AT BC'S PUBLIC PROVINCIAL INSTITUTES (2005-2010)



(Source: Ministry of Regional Economic and Skills Development, 2010)



FIGURE 13: ABORIGINAL STUDENT GROWTH AT BC'S PUBLIC REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES (2005–2010)



(Source: Ministry of Regional Economic and Skills Development, 2010)

3.1.4 SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE

The figures point to two areas of significance for the NEC:

- 1) The current system of secondary and post-secondary education in BC does not well-serve the needs of the Aboriginal community. First Nations and Aboriginal leaders in BC and nationally, as well as the BC and Canadian Governments, have all recognized this issue, and are implementing various reforms, including within BC, the consideration of the NEC as a public post-secondary institution. The NEC has had a large role in upgrading the skills of Aboriginal learners without high school diplomas to prepare them for other post-secondary learning and achievement.
- 2) There is a well-established need and demand for additional post-secondary education that meets the needs of new Aboriginal learners, and upgrade the skills Aboriginal adults, with significant room within the BC post-secondary education system to more meaningfully integrate systems for expanding services to meet the growing needs of the Aboriginal population overall.
- 3) The NEC has a proven history with the Aboriginal communities to provide culturally relevant public post-secondary education and transition programs, as well as being a primary mechanism to overcoming obstacles of engagement “with urban Aboriginal peoples [that] requires special effort because their voices are diffused”, and where “there is no formal system or entity in place to facilitate dialogue between Aboriginal interests and government” (MARR, 2011, p. 10).

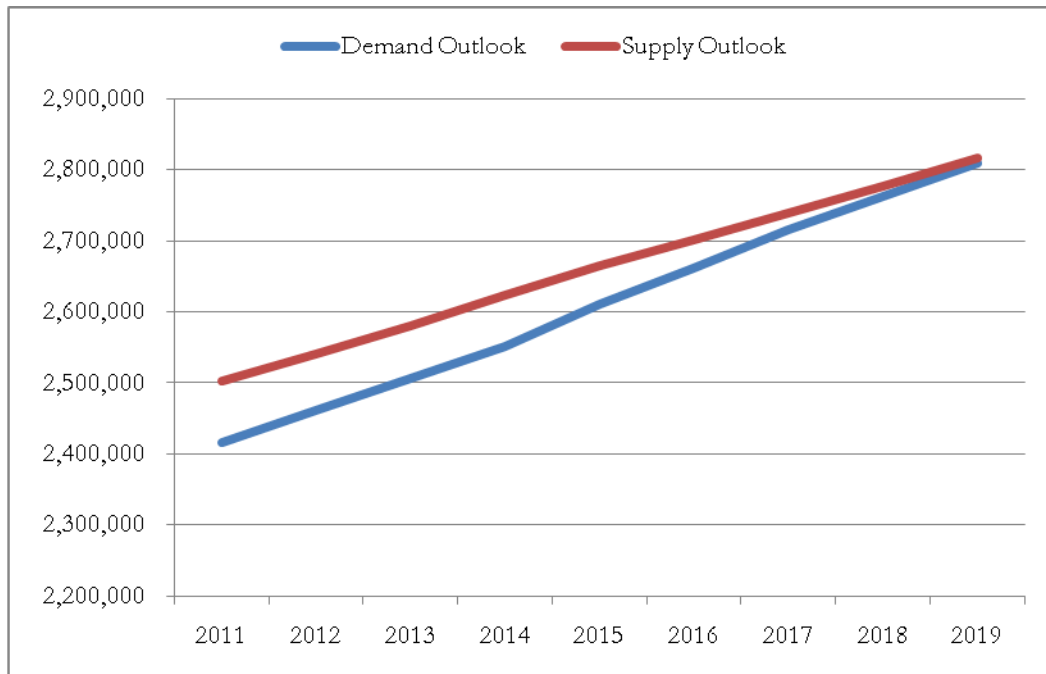


3.2 LABOUR MARKET DEMANDS

The nature of the BC, Canadian and North American labour markets are changing drastically. Just a few short years ago, chronic unemployment adversely affected many communities, particularly marginalized groups like Aboriginal people. However, we are now in a situation where the projected retirements of large portions of the existing workforce, combined with economic growth will create thousands of opportunities in the labour force.

The figure below shows the projected labour market outlook for BC over the next nine years. The demand for workers is expected to grow quickly, eventually meeting the supply of workers in the province. This is a very unique situation, where there will be virtually full employment for all those with the skills to match the demand. Throughout most of the province’s economic history the supply of workers has always exceeded the demand for workers by a significant margin. This scenario of very slight differences between the supply and demand for workers means that the economy should hire all skilled workers as available.

FIGURE 14: LABOUR MARKET OUTLOOK FOR BC (2011 – 2019)



(Source: *Work BC Labour Market Outlook*. P.12)

Within this demand for skilled workers, and particularly in the new jobs to be created, the largest growth areas are in health care, the sciences, and other industries and occupations requiring some type of education and training. There will be a high demand for the skilled trades, such as carpenters and drivers, as well as health care workers, educators, managers, and many types of sales and retail opportunities. The table below shows the expected employment demand growth by occupational skill area.



FIGURE 15: EXPECTED EMPLOYMENT DEMAND GROWTH BY OCCUPATION SKILL TYPE, BC (2007 – 2017)

MAJOR OCCUPATION SKILL TYPE	AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH RATE	NEW JOBS	SHARE OF NEW JOBS
Health	3.7%	58,330	17.7%
Natural and Applied Sciences	2.4%	38,980	11.8%
Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport	1.7%	13,060	4.0%
Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion	1.4%	28,130	8.5%
Processing, Manufacturing & Utilities	1.3%	13,910	4.2%
Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators	1.1%	44,110	13.4%
Sales and Service	1.0%	61,540	18.7%
Management	1.0%	23,490	7.1%
Business, Finance and Administration	1.0%	41,300	12.5%
Occupations Unique to Primary Industry	0.9%	7,050	2.1%
All Occupations	1.4%	329,890	100%

(Source: COPS, BC Unique Scenario 2007 – 2017)

The table and chart below show the education requirements of the expected new jobs, indicating that 90% of the jobs will require at least a high school certificate, and three-quarters of the jobs will require more than high school.

FIGURE 16: EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

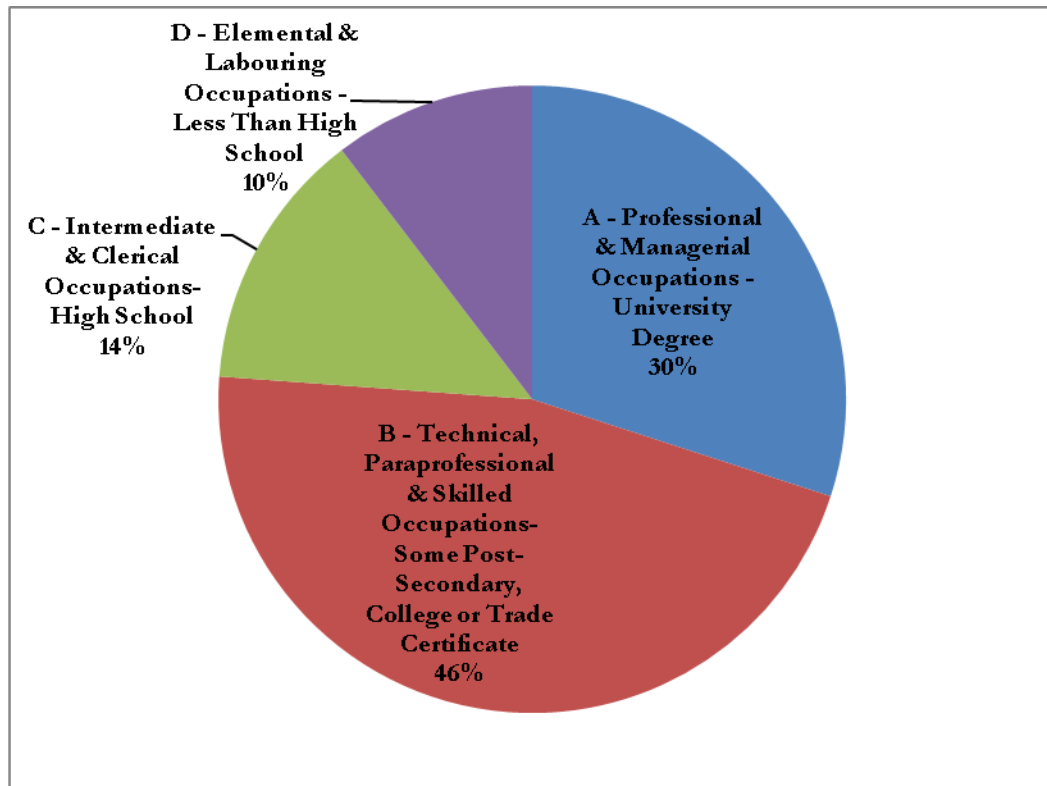
SKILL LEVEL - EDUCATION & TRAINING NORMALLY REQUIRED	2007 EMPLOYMENT	NEW JOBS TO 2017	ATTRITION TO 2017	TOTAL OPENINGS
A – Professional & Managerial Occupations - University Degree	555,060	101,310	161,630	262,940
B - Technical, Paraprofessional & Skilled Occupations - Some Post-Secondary Education, College or Trade Certificate	968,460	163,370	241,180	404,550



SKILL LEVEL - EDUCATION & TRAINING NORMALLY REQUIRED	2007 EMPLOYMENT	NEW JOBS TO 2017	ATTRITION TO 2017	TOTAL OPENINGS
C - Intermediate & Clerical Occupations - High School Diploma	404,330	34,540	83,300	117,840
D - Elemental & Labouring Occupations - Less Than High School	338,490	30,690	60,370	91,060
Totals	2,266,340	329,910	546,480	876,390

(Source: COPS, BC Unique Scenario 2007 – 2017)

FIGURE 17: EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS OF TOTAL JOB OPENINGS, 2017



(Source: COPS, BC Unique Scenario 2007 – 2017)



4.0 ABORIGINAL POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BC

4.1 GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

4.1.1 POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION FRAMEWORK

In Canada, provincial governments are responsible for the primary, secondary, and post-secondary education system. In BC the responsibility for post-secondary education is exercised by the Ministry of Advanced Education. As discussed above, the Ministry has designated twenty-nine public post-secondary institutions classified as follows:

- 4 Provincial Universities
- 8 Regional Universities
- 4 Provincial Institutes
- 11 Regional Colleges

These public institutions are the largest and most significant training provider in the system. They grant degrees, certificates and diplomas and are regulated by the *Degree Authorization Act* and the BC Council on Admissions and Transfers (BCCAT) as a means of providing comparability and transparent levels of quality. The *Educational Quality Assurance Act*, which is voluntary, is also another mechanism that ensures education quality, as described in more detail in the sub-section below. In BC, degrees are granted and regulated through the Degree Quality Assessment Board and the BCCAT to ensure that the degrees, certificates and diplomas granted have validity and can be judged by outside agencies.

There are also 17 private and out-of-province public post-secondary institutions that are regulated through the *Private Career Training Institutes Act* with many that are small, and with a single or narrow focus. They grant diplomas and certificates, but only a few grant degrees. They are regulated by the Private Career Training Institutes Agency (PCTIA), which is described in more detail in the sub-section below.

For the most part, post-secondary education in BC at the degree level is provided through public institutions. Private institutions tend to focus on shorter, more practical courses, most often for private tuition, and quite often targeting specific groups of people, such as immigrants, certain industries, or Aboriginal learners. Currently there are over 350 private training institutions registered in BC, with over 170 accredited by PCTIA.

4.1.2 PRIVATE CAREER TRAINING INSTITUTE AGENCY

PCTIA is the BC Crown agency responsible for private training institutions in the province with authority under the *Private Career Training Institutions Act* (SBC 2003, Chapter 79), Regulations (BC Reg. 466/2004), and Bylaws. It maintains a long and rigorous accreditation standard that ensures private institutes operate under the highest educational standards possible.

4.1.3 EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE

Education Quality Assurance (EQA) is a quality assurance designation that identifies BC public and private post-secondary institutions that have met or exceeded provincial government recognized quality assurance standards and offer consumer protection.



EQA provides one standard provincial seal that can be recognized globally as symbol of quality education. The EQA seal allows students to easily identify which provincial institutions the government of BC recognizes as having met quality assurance standards, and that offer consumer protection to learners. It is a voluntary designation available to all BC public and private post-secondary institutions, and governed by the BC Government and the BC Council for International Education.

4.1.4 POLICIES TO SUPPORT ABORIGINAL POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

In November 2005, the BC Government, Government of Canada, and the Leadership Council representing the First Nations of British Columbia signed the *Transformative Change Accord* to:

- close the social and economic gap between First Nations and other British Columbians
- reconcile Aboriginal rights and title with those of the Crown
- establish a new relationship based upon mutual respect and recognition

In 2007, the BC Government launched the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Strategy to fulfill the post-secondary component of the Transformative Change Accord. Its vision is that:

Aboriginal post-secondary education outcomes are comparable to those of non-Aboriginal learners, and that public institutions and Aboriginal organizations and institutions play appropriate roles and are supported by the combined resources of the federal and provincial governments.

Aboriginal organizations and communities work collaboratively with public post-secondary institutions in developing and implementing Aboriginal Service Plans and Aboriginal Special Projects initiatives. Representatives from Aboriginal groups participate in working groups and policy tables (e.g., performance indicators).

Success of the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Strategy and Action Plan is monitored as follows:

- Aboriginal student enrollment and percentage of overall student enrollment in post-secondary education
- Highest level of education attained and number of credentials issued to Aboriginal students on an annual basis
- A range of performance indicators will be developed in collaboration with the MOU Partners, which includes key Aboriginal organizations and governments, relevant Ministries, public and private post-secondary institution representatives and the federal government

See Appendix 6 for highlights of the BC Government's Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Strategy.

4.2 ABORIGINAL AGENCIES

As First Nations and Aboriginal communities have recognized the need for more culturally relevant secondary and post-secondary education systems that meet the needs of Aboriginal learners, two key organizations in BC have been developed to enhance post-secondary education for Aboriginal people since 1995.

4.2.1 FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE

The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) is a non-profit society with a mandate from the First Nations Summit to: *facilitate discussion about education matters affecting*



First Nations in BC by disseminating information and soliciting input from First Nations. It was established in May 1992 by participants at a provincial First Nations Education Conference held at the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre.

FNESC provides administrative support to the following organizations:

- First Nations Schools Association (FNSEA)
- Indian Studies Support Program (ISSP)
- Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA)

4.2.2 INDIGENOUS ADULT AND HIGHER LEARNING ASSOCIATION

The Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) was formed at the request of Indigenous controlled Post-Secondary Institutes and Adult Learning Programs to address and further the mutual interests of all Indigenous controlled Learning Centres in BC. The organization receives administrative support from the FNESC.

The IAHLA mandate includes the following activities:

- to collect and disseminate relevant information to assist Indigenous adult and higher learning agencies in their provision of education services
- to undertake research that will benefit Indigenous adult and higher learning agencies throughout BC
- to facilitate networking and information sharing activities, such as conferences, meetings, and workshops
- to support collective professional development and training opportunities
- to undertake other support activities at the direction of Indigenous adult and higher learning agencies
- to solicit funding as necessary to undertake the activities listed above

4.3 GOVERNMENT OF CANADA - ROLE

The Government of Canada has responsibility for Aboriginal people, but most funding is concentrated on First Nations “status” people living on-Reserve lands, which accounts for less than half the Aboriginal population in BC and Canada. Within this framework, the Government of Canada provides limited funds to First Nations for expenditures on post-secondary education. First Nations funding for post-secondary education has not been adjusted in over twenty years, despite the sharp increase in the costs of post-secondary education, the population growth and the number of Aboriginal people seeking a post-secondary education.

The Government of Canada also provides funds of a limited basis for specific projects and programs, through particular funds, some of which may allow for post-secondary education costs.



5.0 ABORIGINAL POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION ISSUES

In considering public designation, it is important to understand: the traditional system of Aboriginal education; the current needs and barriers of Aboriginal higher learners within the mainstream public post-secondary system; and the need to support the integration of both systems to support the success of Aboriginal learners in BC.

5.1 TRADITIONAL ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

In BC, the foremost leading researcher on First Nations education is Dr. Lorna Williams who asserts that “since time immemorial, the traditional First Nations education system was a sophisticated system of information intergenerationally transmitted knowledge both declarative and procedural processes” (Geraldine Bob, Marcuse, Nyce, & Williams, 1993). Traditional Aboriginal education processes were embedded in social institutions, both formal and informal, occurring over a person’s lifetime. Traditional Aboriginal ways of knowing always focused on all aspects of the task including cognitive, emotional, physical and spiritual components (pp. 40–41).

Traditional education was delivered through oral narratives and the distinct axiology, ontology, and epistemology of each Nation, which were relayed over thousands of years. Oral narratives were categorized as: informal personal stories; teaching and formal narratives that imparted values, beliefs, and lessons; and sacred stories that were remembered word for word. The most significant of these oral narratives were creation stories. The education goals, morals and values were broadly understood by the community, and in particular by Elders who were the designated teachers and traditional knowledge keepers.

When examining these foundational values, Saunders, Redwing, and Hill (2007) cited a deep level of respect, relevance, and reciprocative learning common in Aboriginal teaching and learning. One local First Nation states that, according to the theory of *Tswalk* (Atleo, 2004), there is a sacred understanding of connection, also known as *hershook-ish tsawalk*, which is translated to mean everything physical and metaphysical in our reality is one (p. xi). This includes a sense of belonging through connectedness to their extended family, culture, and nature as a natural support system (Bowman, as cited in Marchant, 2002, p. 9).

Embedded within the traditional education system were First Nations values that are distinct to each Nation, but can be generalized to include “sharing, non-competitiveness, politeness, not putting oneself forward in a group, allowing others to go first, being reluctant to speak out, present rather than future orientation, and norms of non-interference” (Whitbeck, Hoyt, Stubben, & LaFramboise, 2001, p. 50). Perhaps the most important value that is common to indigenous peoples in BC is the deep respect and relationship Aboriginal peoples hold with the land, demonstrated through origin stories and oral narratives that form the basis of the traditional Aboriginal education system and identity.

The traditional Aboriginal education system was elegant, sophisticated and met the individual needs of learners throughout their lifetime. This system came to an end when residential schools were imposed upon Aboriginal peoples in 1870. Harper (as cited in Government of Canada, 2008) described residential schools as “a sad chapter in [Canada’s] history” (para. 1). According to the Assembly of First Nations (2010b) residential schools were established with

The clear objective of both missionaries and government was to assimilate Aboriginal children into the lower fringes of mainstream society where children were ripped apart from their families, forcibly removed by priests,



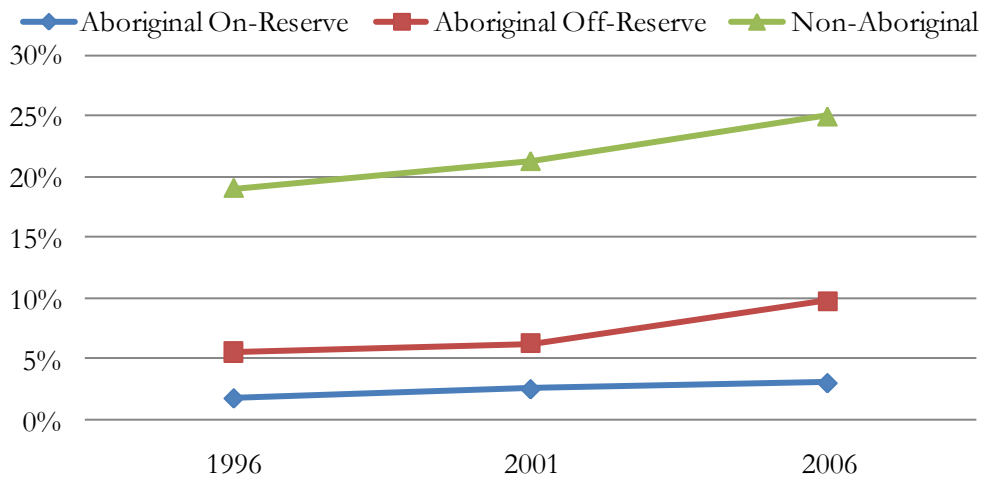
Indian Agents, and police officers to receive a sub-standard education (para.2).

The residential schools were administered by religious groups who had little or no training in education and whose legacy was physical and sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and the death of many innocent children. The legacy of residential schools is a high level of distrust by Aboriginal peoples in mainstream education.

5.2 CURRENT EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

Within Canada, the educational needs of Aboriginal peoples are increasing due to the population growth rate and the interest of Aboriginal peoples to participate in post-secondary education; however, funding limitations are an increasingly significant barrier to Aboriginal student participation (ALMD, 2010a, p. 4). Nationally, funding barriers for Aboriginal learners are compounded by: the freezing of funding since 1996 by INAC (First Nations Education Council, 2008, p. 9); and education costs that have risen 74% for the typical undergraduate program since 2002 (First Nations Education Steering Committee, 2008, p. 5). Despite these needs, Aboriginal learner participation is increasing, but at rates still well below those of other Canadians, as outlined in the figure below.

FIGURE 18: ABORIGINAL POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION PARTICIPATION (1996–2006)



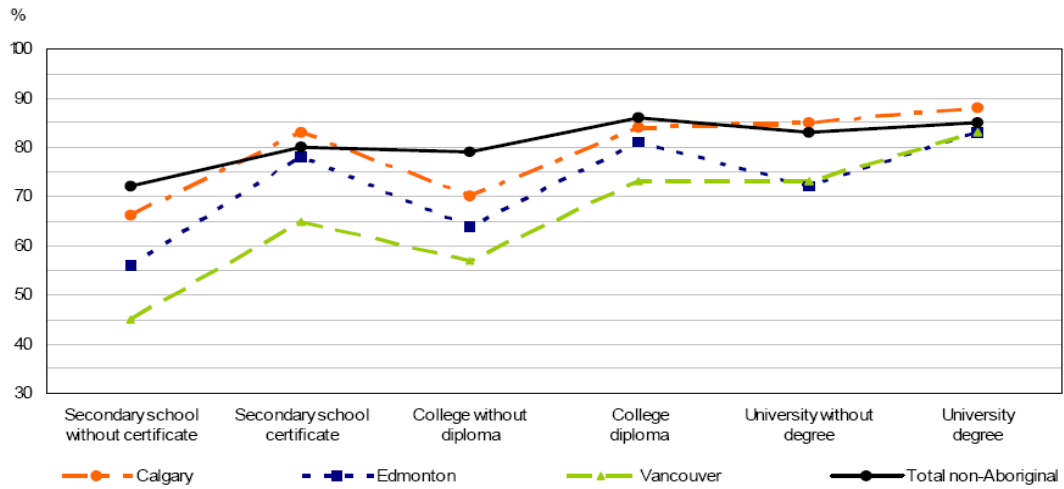
(Source: INAC, 2010)

According to Mendelson (2006) there is approximately a 10% gap in BC between the number of existing Aboriginal non-university PSE graduates in 2001 and the additional number of learners that would have had to have graduated nationally on or before 2001 from colleges or acquire trade certificates in order to have had parity with the total population (p. 26).

In BC this gap increases dramatically to 291% when the gap for Aboriginal university graduates is examined, requiring an additional 3,232 Aboriginal learners attending university each year for twenty years to achieve parity (p. 28). This is particularly poignant when improved educational attainment is viewed as key to future Aboriginal participation in the labour market and economic success, and yet current research indicates that it is only Aboriginal learners who complete university who enjoy parity in employment.



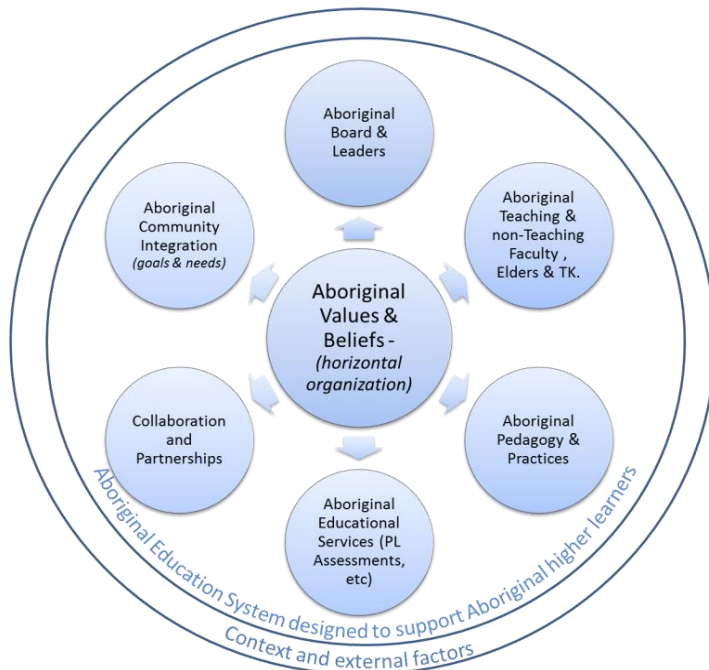
FIGURE 19: EMPLOYMENT RATES OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION BY CITY (2001)



(Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2001))

The most predominant finding in the current research on the needs of Aboriginal high learners is that the integration of culture through a culturally relevant educational system, built upon Aboriginal values, is the most successful. Neegan (2005) asserts that Aboriginal education is at the heart of the struggle of Aboriginal people to regain control over their lives and their communities (p. 12).

Within BC's Aboriginal educational system this is exercised through IAHLA, where Aboriginal control is a priority with the intent of maintaining the integrity and effectiveness of this system. This system is seen throughout all levels of leadership within an IAHLA institute from: the Aboriginal board; to Aboriginal administrative staff who ensure Aboriginal community needs are integrated and responded to; Aboriginal instructors and Elders who develop relevant pedagogy, instructional methods and practices that include Aboriginal traditional knowledge; and finally to educational service providers who work closely with Aboriginal communities and organizations to maximize resources and provide comprehensive supports.



Extensive evidence has suggested that within mainstream public institutions one component of the Aboriginal post-secondary system of education cannot be established without Aboriginal peoples, or without the remaining parts of the Aboriginal education system, and maintain any degree of effectiveness.

However, progress is being made by some mainstream public post-secondary institutions that are increasingly adopting instructional methods like constructivism, which are consistent with Aboriginal traditional learning methods (Battiste and Henderson, 2000) and values. Specifically, constructivism supports the integration of Aboriginal values that include: harmony and unity, holistic perspectives, expressive creativity, and non-verbal communication (Pewewardy, 2002, p. 38), which are motivated by cooperation rather than competition, prefer shared decision-making processes, defer authority, and do not want to be perceived as being either above or below the status of others (Kawagley & Barnhardt, 1998).

In addition, greater awareness of other instructional methods that support Aboriginal learners, such as experiential learning and service learning, are increasing in use. One important note within the research however is that despite early research on Aboriginal learners Aboriginal peoples learn through multiple intelligences, and do not learn through one learning style. Battiste (2002) asserts that

Indigenous pedagogy values a person's ability to learn independently by observing, listening, and participating with a minimum of intervention or instruction.... They do not have a single homogenous learning style as generalized in some teaching literature from the 1970s and 1980s (p. 15).

Other aspects of indigenous pedagogy are: mentorship and apprenticeship learning, learning by doing, learning by deep observation, learning through listening, telling stories and singing songs, learning in community, learning by sharing and providing service to the community (Williams and Tanaka's (2007). Classroom strategies that have proven successful for Aboriginal learners include: sharing knowledge in relationship, sharing classroom control and responsibility, negotiating timelines, using humour in addition to metaphor, stories, sharing circles, deep observation, designing space for reflective learning, providing positive expectations and supporting achievement of these expectations, learning through role models and role modelling, experiential and situated learning, through local protocols (Mixon, 2008c).

The NEC, as an Aboriginal institute of higher learning, is a culturally relevant institute that integrates traditional knowledge and respects protocols to empower learners and build upon, deepen, and celebrating the learners' own cultural knowledge, beliefs and values, and allowing them to "build cultural strengths thus enhancing self-concept" (Battiste, 2002, p. 15). The long track record of success of the NEC that is modestly shared and well-respected within the local Aboriginal community is an excellent example of the success of Aboriginal institutes of higher learning.

5.3 BARRIERS TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION & LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION

In examining the educational systems of BC, Canada, and the traditional education system of Aboriginal peoples it is important to understand that educational systems, and indeed all systems and organizations are built according to the dominant culture's values (Hofstede, 1984, p. 81). According to Hofstede, the culture becomes crystalized in the institutions (p. 82). Currently, BC's educational system is built upon the European system, and European values, which are "the unconscious bedrock [that] is the source of a fundamental impediment" (Richard, 1991, p. 4).



Geert Hofstede is an internationally leading sociologist who has conducted perhaps the most comprehensive international study of how cultural values affect the workplace and organizational systems. Hofstede argues that the notion of western modern management is crumbling and that many generalizations, applied in differing cultures are, in fact not justified. According to Hofstede, there needs to be a deeper understanding of the range of culturally determined value systems that exist, and which should be taken into account when transferring management ideas. As this applies to post-secondary education systems, Hofstede's findings indicate that the most significant deviation affecting the post-secondary systems in BC occurs in the motivating values of individualism vs. collectivism. Canadians rank highest for individual motivation (2010), which conflicts with Aboriginal people's group-based value. This difference can be seen in values and behaviours exhibited by both educational systems, both of which are relevant for each culture but not easily transferable across cultures.

From this perspective it is much easier to understand this fundamental impediment within the BC mainstream public post-secondary system where there is a gross under-representation of Aboriginal peoples at the governing level, within administration, and with faculty who overall represent less than 1-2% of employees. In fact, the ALMD Framework (2007-2010) states that:

Major impediments influencing the participation and completion rates of Aboriginal learners in post-secondary education include lack of Aboriginal involvement in the decision-making process, overlapping Federal and Provincial jurisdictions, cultural variations, systemic bias, lack of relevant programming, financial limitations, and geographic distance from post-secondary centres (p. 8).

Indeed, there is a significant lack of systems analysis within existing research to support Aboriginal peoples' participation in higher learning, with the vast majority of research focusing on barriers and practices that exist as "islands of innovation with too little influence on institutional structures" (Williams et al., 2005, p. vii). In fact, Aboriginal learners' accessibility to higher education is not a single issue; rather it involves an understanding of systems, Aboriginal epistemology, and the multiple system aspects that must be present.

These aspects and the transformation strategies that would be required in mainstream public post-secondary institutes to support Aboriginal higher learners would take decades of work and a radical shift in the organizational culture of these institutes to resolve the following barriers:

- Lack of Aboriginal leadership representation within public-post secondary institutions;
- Insufficient number of Aboriginal leaders with decision making authority involved at all levels within mainstream institutions;
- Insufficient numbers of Aboriginal teaching faculty;
- Insufficient awareness and knowledge of Aboriginal epistemologies, values and issues;
- Assessments that are not culturally relevant;
- Lack of Aboriginal culture in curricula;
- Lack of flexibility in program delivery that is blended, work placed, or includes upgrading;
- Lack of culturally relevant course materials and resources;



- Lack of mentors and role models;
- Lack of indigenized academic counselling;
- Insufficient numbers of Aboriginal Advisors;
- Insufficient numbers of Elders in residence, who share traditional knowledge and cultural activities
- Lack of culturally relevant services;
- Lack of culturally relevant personal and financial counselling;
- Insensitivity and lack of support for referrals for housing and daycare;
- Weak relationships and partnerships with the Aboriginal community;
- Lack of awareness within Aboriginal communities to support learner readiness and transition; and
- Lack of awareness of Aboriginal culture with faculty and staff that can mitigate racism.

[Compiled from ACCC (2005), Battiste and McLean (2005), Human Capital Strategies (2005), Williams (2008), Katenies Research and Chignecto Consulting (2006), Malatest (2002, 2004), and Mixon (2008a).]

Supporting this, McCue (2006) asserts that low Aboriginal post-secondary participation is “the result of at least three factors: An unresponsive college and university community that was either unaware of or unsympathetic (or both) to the Aboriginal population; a lack of support, financial and otherwise, from the federal government, and last but not least, the failure of the elementary-secondary education system to prepare Aboriginal students for post-secondary studies (p. 1). McCue contends that the system is broken and “needs to be replaced, not repaired” (p.7). If these systemic barriers are not resolved, planning and initiatives intended to increase Aboriginal post-secondary education participation and completion rates “will continue to be a process of patchwork, temporary policies, and institutional responses that, in the end, gloss over the fundamental problem” (p. 7).

From a systems perspective Williams, Berger, & McClendon (2005) assert that “change is difficult in higher education. . . [where] the values and organizational dynamics of higher education are unique and especially problematic for making foundational and cultural change” (p. 2). It is easier to consider what it means to create transformational change when one unpacks the multiple layers of organizational culture within colleges and universities, where transformation can only take place when second, third and fourth order changes that transform the shared values, assumptions, normal and beliefs of the institute are made. This level of required transformation explains why “surface-level change is more likely to occur than transformation” (p. 10).

The most evident systems model of success for minority higher learners is the legislated development and integration of African American Colleges and American Indian Tribal Colleges into the American system of higher learning. Although African American and American Indian Colleges were initially established through the second *Morrill Act* in 1890, this integrated system that supports culturally relevant education experienced tremendous success once these institutes began to receive institutional accreditation in 1928 (College View, 2010). According to the Tribal Colleges Association (2010),

In 1975, the first version of the *Tribally Controlled Community College Act* was introduced as Senate Bill 1017. The first U.S. Senate hearing, October 1975, established a congressional record and history for future legislation and was



signed into law as the first *Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act*, December 1978, by President Jimmy Carter. The key justification for the law was: (1) geographic isolation of the tribes, (2) access to mainstream higher education opportunities lacking for tribal populations, (3) cultural disparities with mainstream or non-Indian society, (4) student success more likely when education offered locally and in community setting, (5) local control in providing higher education to tribal members, and (6) no local tax or state funding available to the schools.

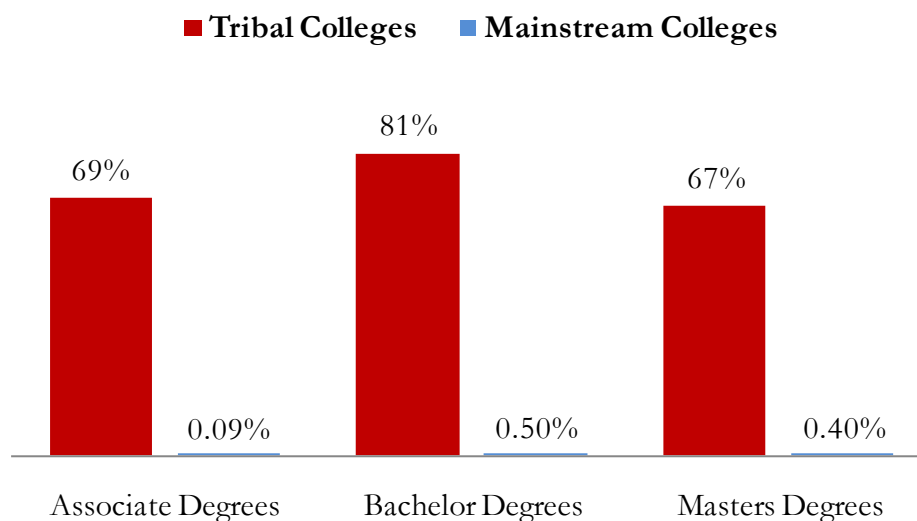
The White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities, a presidential executive order initially signed by Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, made millions of federal dollars available from federal agencies to TCUs, along with access to other resources. Opportunities for special funding have opened up at the Department of Education's Title III Higher Education office, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Commerce, NASA, the Center for Disease Control, and other federal agencies. Land Grant status for designated tribal colleges and universities was included in 1994 by Congress in the U.S. Agricultural legislation which allowed for equity funding, access to research and extension programs, and other infrastructure grants and loans offered by agencies, Rural Development.

Research on American Indian education outcomes mirror the experience of Canadian Aboriginal peoples including specifically the less than 1% of indigenous peoples employed in mainstream institutions, the low rates of high school graduation, post-secondary participation and graduation rates in mainstream educational institutions. To resolve this issue the United States has legislation that actively supports the development of culturally and regionally relevant accredited colleges that are locally and culturally controlled by their own tribes, which place “significant value on the students' culture and incorporating it into the college experience in a holistic manner” (Laden, 2009, para.7), similar to IAHLA institutes.

In this integrated model of combined systems Tribal Colleges are “able to achieve higher retention and graduation rates for Native American students than mainstream institutions can” (para. 7), similar to improved outcomes for African Americans attending African American College, which are significantly better than those of mainstream colleges (Allen, 1992; Davis, 1994; Sellers, Chavous & Cooke, 1998). The figure below compares the 1994 success rates of American Indian learners at Tribal Colleges and mainstream colleges in the United States.



FIGURE 20: COMPARISON OF DEGREES AWARDED TO AMERICAN INDIANS: TRIBAL COLLEGES AND MAINSTREAM COLLEGES (1994)



(Source: Laden, 2010)

5.4 INTEGRATION OF EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Recognizing the potential of integrating cultural education systems within BC to meet the growing population and needs of Aboriginal higher learners, Williams (2008) recommends that:

- 1) The BC Government should create policy and legislation that establishes a more integrated post-secondary education system in BC by recognizing the unique and critical role of Aboriginal institutes.
- 2) Recognizing the need for academic quality assurance, which will facilitate student mobility, efficiency of the system, as well as mutual accountability, IAHLA will work with Aboriginal institutes to create an effective and thorough quality assurance system based upon high standards and rigorous review.
- 3) The BC Government should support the establishment of effective, respectful partnerships between Aboriginal institutes and mainstream public post-secondary institutes through policy development, support for research of best practices, and the promotion of dialogue and exchange. These efforts should include mechanisms for a widespread sharing of expertise and resources to enhance the effectiveness of the new integrated post-secondary education system.
- 4) Aboriginal representatives and the provincial government should engage the federal government in a review of the respective contributions and roles of Canada, BC, and Aboriginal Nations within an integrated BC postsecondary education system.
- 5) Aboriginal institutes in British Columbia should have access to funding from the BC Government that will strengthen their programs and enhance their contributions to an integrated provincial post-secondary education system. In particular, funding should be provided to support Aboriginal institutes in developing their capacity as post-secondary programming “hubs,” enabling them to develop specific expertise in areas of critical importance to Aboriginal communities and peoples.



- 6) The “Provincial Education Number” (PEN) utilized by the Ministry of Education and soon to be used by public post-secondary institutions should be used throughout the new integrated model of the BC post-secondary education system. Using a consistent data collection mechanism will ensure that the resulting data is comparable.

Williams’ recommendations can be effectively achieved through supporting the integration of systems, and the public designation of NEC as a public post-secondary system. An integrated system would meet Williams recommendations by; enhancing NEC’s educational quality assurance; supporting partnership development between NEC and other public post-secondary institutes; increasing awareness and respect for the contributions and role of Aboriginal people in BC’s economy; increasing funding for NEC; and allowing the NEC to fully utilize the new PEN. In addition, integrating the systems would enhance the capacity of IAHLA institutes, Aboriginal communities, and Aboriginal learners.

There are few alternatives to integrating systems, with the only logical cost effective option being to integrate systems, with the status quo being reliance upon an irrelevant inflexible system that is resulting in continuing low outcomes for the growing Aboriginal population, negatively affecting Aboriginal learners, their communities, and the BC economy.

The most predominant finding in current research on the needs of Aboriginal higher learners is that a culturally relevant educational system, built upon Aboriginal values, is the most successful. In BC, the Aboriginal educational system is made up of IAHLA members where Aboriginal control is a priority with the goal of maintaining the cultural integrity and effectiveness of this system. The Aboriginal education system is developing at an accelerated pace, and includes: all Aboriginal leadership at the Aboriginal board level, Aboriginal administrative staff, Aboriginal instructors, Aboriginal Elders, and Aboriginal education service providers.

This system is integrated strongly with the community to ensure that programs meet the needs of the communities it serves industry and supports local economic development. This system ensures that culturally relevant pedagogy is used in the development of programs instructional methods and practices, guided by Aboriginal Elders. Many leading IAHLA institutes have formal and informal protections for Aboriginal intellectual property. This system also ensures that educational services are integrated with Aboriginal communities and organizations to maximize resources and provide comprehensive culturally relevant educational service supports.

Overall this culturally relevant system of education is built upon the values, beliefs and culture of Aboriginal peoples. IAHLA institutes hold a “holistic view of education aimed at the development of the spiritual, emotional, physical and intellectual aspects of its students” (Stonechild, 2006, p. 109). This system of culturally relevant education empowers learners, “build[s] cultural strengths thus enhancing self-concept” (Battiste, 2002, p. 15), and results in an approximate “75% success rate at Aboriginal-controlled institutions” (RCAP, as cited in Stonechild, 2006, p 103-104). The *Best Practices in Increasing Aboriginal Post-Secondary Enrolment Rates Report* (2002) affirms that

almost all Aboriginal education dollars are spent in universities and programs that are not under Aboriginal control. Many of the interviews conducted and literature reviewed for this study demonstrate that whenever Aboriginals are given control over their own programs or institutions, there have been higher rates of success in Aboriginal enrolment and graduation” (Malatest, p. 45) [and]

“best practices for Aboriginal post-secondary enrolment and retention strategies depend upon Aboriginals exerting control over their own



education. A fundamental shift in the post-secondary system would depend on the initiation of increased Aboriginal control at the institutional level” (p. 46).

More recently, within mainstream public institutions the success rates of Aboriginal learners are slowly improving, however “despite these improvements only 4 out of 10 Aboriginal peoples complete a post-secondary education compared to 6 out of 10 non-Aboriginal students, and a non-Aboriginal person is five times more likely to have a university degree than an Aboriginal person living on reserve, and almost three times more likely than an Aboriginal person living off reserve” (RESO, 2007, p. 2).

Some mainstream public post-secondary institutions and instructors making progress by introducing progressive instructional methods like constructivism that are consistent with Aboriginal traditional learning methods (Battiste and Henderson, 2000). Mainstream public post-secondary institutions are also starting to introduce some aspects of constructivist teaching through programs that offer experiential learning and service learning, but again these are new instructional methods being developed and taught primarily by non-Aboriginal employees who have little understanding of Aboriginal peoples, values and culture.

Overall, as mainstream public post-secondary institutes strive to build their organizational capacity to better serve the needs of Aboriginal learners it is important to note that component(s) of the Aboriginal post-secondary system of education cannot be duplicated without the remaining parts and achieve any degree of effectiveness. In fact, given the critical shortage of Aboriginal peoples leading or employed by mainstream public post-secondary institutions the progress of indigenizing mainstream public post-secondary institutions will take decades. In fact, Williams, Berger, & McClendon (2005), assert that “change is difficult in higher education. . . [where] the values and organizational dynamics of higher education are unique and especially problematic for making foundational and cultural change” (p. 2).

It is easier to consider what it means to create transformational change when one unpacks the multiple layers of organizational culture within colleges and universities, where transformation can only take place when second, third and fourth order changes that transform the shared values, assumptions, normal and beliefs of the institute are made. This level of required transformation explains why “surface- level change is more likely to occur than transformation” (p. 10).

Within the BC post-secondary system there is room for both organizations to be supported. Evidence of such an integrated system can be found in the American post-secondary system that has legislated change to support not only American Indian Tribal Colleges, but also African American Colleges. These culturally relevant educational systems that are integrated into the state and national systems of education in the United States are realizing improved participation and graduation rates.

In the United States, African American and American Indian Colleges were initially established through the second Morrill Act in 1890, this integrated system that supports culturally relevant education experienced tremendous success once these institutes began to receive institutional accreditation in 1928 (College View, 2010). Thirty-three of the thirty-six American Tribal Colleges are accredited public post-secondary institutes. This culturally relevant Aboriginal educational system has proven ability to “able to achieve higher retention and graduation rates for Native American students than mainstream institutions can” (Laden, 2009, para.7), as outlined in the Figure 19 above. Similarly, African Americans attending African American Colleges also demonstrate outcomes that are significantly better than those of mainstream colleges (Allen, 1992; Davis, 1994; Sellers, Chavous & Cooke, 1998) establishing proven success for a regional integrated educational system.



5.5 ABORIGINAL COLLEGE MODELS

Within Canada and BC, Aboriginal post-secondary institutes operate without a federally negotiated and recognized Aboriginal infrastructure, system, a legislative framework, 2nd and 3rd level services (Mendelson, 2008, p. 11). As a result Aboriginal post-secondary education institutes operate within the mainstream system, according to commonly agreed-upon models summarized by Barnhardt (as cited in Stonechild, 2006) as follows:

- The Assimilationist Model
 - The Integrated Model
 - The Federated Model
 - The Independent Model
- 1) **The Assimilationist Model**, “in which programs for Indigenous peoples are controlled by the university system, and are designed with the premise that the goal of education is to assimilate Indigenous people into society” (p. 104).
 - 2) **The Integrated or Enclave Model** is one wherein the Aboriginal values and beliefs are integrated within the institute. This model is very difficult to achieve, with the only successful example found within this research being the Deakin Institute in Australia.
 - 3) **The Federated Model** is demonstrated by the First Nations University at the University of Saskatchewan. The First Nations University of Saskatchewan and the Wilp Wilxo’oskwhl Nisga’a Institute are both federally accredited post-secondary institutes.

The First Nations University of Saskatchewan is “financially and administratively separate from the University of Saskatchewan proper, yet benefits from having access to the resources and expertise of a mainstream university” (p. 105). The First Nations University and the Wilp Wilxo’oskwhl Nisga’a Institute both have affiliation agreements with mainstream public post-secondary institutes for the delivery of programming.

These federated institutes and those included as affiliate model institutes operate in partnership with mainstream public post-secondary institutes through affiliation agreements to broker and deliver programs:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Aboriginal Learning Centre | • Anishinabek Educational Institute |
| • Blue Quills First Nations College | • Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig (Centre of Excellence in Anishinaabe Education) |
| • Kayas Cultural College | • Jake Thomas Learning Centre |
| • Old Sun Community College | • Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute |
| • Red Crow Community College | • Nunavut Sivuniksavut College |
| • First Nations Technology Institute | • Seven Generations Education Institute |
| • Oshki-Pimache-O-Win (OSHKI) Education and Training Institute | • Wahsa Distance Education Centre |
| • Gabrielle Dumont Institute | • Akitsiraq Law School Society |
| • Alderville Learning Centre | |

Most of these institutions operate with a combination of Federal and Provincial funding, as well as other funding agreements for specific education and, or training programs (i.e.



Service Canada). This is also the most common model in BC, and is how most of the 36 IAHLA members operate.

- 4) **The Independent Model** is defined as fully controlled and operated provincially accredited Aboriginal post-secondary institute, such as NVIT. This model allows for the maximum degree of Aboriginal control of the institution, program development, and instructional methods and practices that can be achieved within Canada's current public post-secondary system.

In examining several independent Aboriginal controlled higher education institutes, Barhardt stated that there is a "deliberate effort to create an institution that is defined by, and has as its first consideration, the educational needs of the people they represent, and only secondarily have they concerned themselves with their relationship to other tertiary institutions" (Barhardt, as stated in Stonechild, 2006, p. 105).

5.5.1 NICOLA VALLEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

The Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT) was formed as a private institute in 1983 by the Coldwater, Nooaitch, Shackan, Upper Nicola and Lower Nicola First Nations. On September 01, 1995, NVIT was designated a Provincial Institute under the *British Columbia College and Institute Act*, as "a First Nation governed public post-secondary institution" (NVIT, 2010b, para. 5).

Prior to receiving public designation NVIT was funded through Federal and Provincial funding agreements, and agreements with other institutions. This type of funding structure was a "struggle from year to year" (K. Tourand, personal communication, January 28, 2010). Led by the late Chief Gordon Antoine, from the Coldwater Indian Band and Grand Chief of the N'lakapamux Nation, the NVIT Board determined that in the best interests of supporting Aboriginal learners that NVIT would pursue provincial public designation and "went into it with their eyes open".

During the designation process, in consultation with the BRDO, as a provincial institution NVIT felt that they lost control of the Board by having the five founding Nations in Nicola Valley reduced to two seats. Tourand advised that this was the only way in which NVIT felt that they lost control. Tourand recommended that "you need strong board leadership to relinquish control, but still maintain the desire to deliver quality education".

The NVIT Board continues to stand firm in requiring that the Board remain all directors of Aboriginal descent. Tourand also stated that NVIT has "no political bodies on our board, which allows us to do good work. The board cannot hold political positions. We do not mix band politics with the running of the institution".

Following the public designation process NVIT began receiving funding directly from the province of BC, similar to that of other public post-secondary institutions. Tourand stated that after public designation and with increased funding "it was no longer day to day", and that they gained stability, an enhanced reputation, and credibility over private designation. According to Tourand, NVIT now actively uses a Board competency matrix to determine Board representation to identify and respond to recommendations from the BRDO when additional skills and competencies are recommended. See Appendix 9 for the current list of NVIT Board of Directors.

Tourand stated that the competency matrix is an important step for the NEC to take control of Board representation by defining the competencies, skills, and representation that they wish to see represented on the NEC Board to effectively govern the institution. In the case of NVIT the Board ensures that it is representative of the constituent base it serves by



requiring that all Board members are of Aboriginal descent, including two seats from the founding bands.

Tourand stated that once the competency matrix and representation is determined consultation with the BRDO, decisions on the Board appointments would follow Aboriginaly defined interests and would strengthen Aboriginal control, which the NEC Board would then be responsible to maintain. Tourand stated that the primary lesson learned by NVIT leadership, from the public designation processes, was the rigorous reporting required, which is now undertaken by two full-time dedicated staff), and required software upgrades. Tourand did in closing recognize, however, that the biggest benefits from the public designation process was the increased funding that now allows NVIT to pay the same wages as other public post-secondary institutes, allows NVIT to recruit and retain better faculty, and offer their staff a college pension plan. Finally, Tourand stated that partnerships and relationship building is key to their success.

Currently, the governance processes at NVIT is determined both by NVIT's identity as an Aboriginal educational institute and by the *College and Institute Act* (NVIT, 2010, para. 1). Aboriginal control and representation is asserted through NVIT's Bylaw A.1.3 Part C (1) (a), which states that the NVIT board is composed as follows:

C. Board Composition:

(1). The NVIT Board is composed of:

(a) 8 or more persons appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

i. Board vacancies will be publicly posted, after which a list of Aboriginal nominees, ranked by the NVIT Board or Board Executive Committee, will be submitted to government.

ii. The nomination of Board members will be structured to reflect the provincial mandate of the institution while maintaining a connection to its founding bands.

The institutions 'founding communities' will be provided the opportunity to fill two seats on the board, suiting a publicly posted nomination process as above when vacancies occur.

The remaining seats will be publicly posted for Aboriginal "members-at-large" when vacant, with nominated seats able to draw from anywhere in BC, including Nicola Valley (NVIT, 2009, p. 3).

It is interesting to note that in the organizational development of NVIT, similar to that of Tribal Colleges in the United States, that accreditation as a public post-secondary institute enhanced organizational capacity, funding, and increased enrollment. For NVIT their enrollment rates were similar to that of NEC currently, and have increased to more than 500 FTE's in the current academic year.

5.5.2 FIRST NATIONS UNIVERSITY OF CANADA

According to Dr. Shauneen Pete, Interim President, First Nations University of Canada, which started 35 years ago as a Federated Institution, began in partnership operating as a cultural institute out of the University of Saskatchewan. The partnership became federated with the University of Regina, supported in large part by INAC through ISSP. The current challenge is jurisdictional recognition of federal treaty rights and provincial authority.

The First Nations University continues to operate with funding from the province, and with federal funding currently provided through the INAC ISSP that is formalized through a memorandum of understanding with the University of Regina. The accreditation for



programs is provided in partnership with the University of Regina and the First Nations University Academic Council through two levels of approval (January 31, 2010, personal communication).

5.5.3 GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE

As a federated or affiliate modeled organization, the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research Inc. (GDI) was formally incorporated as a non-profit corporation in 1980, to serve the educational and cultural needs of the Saskatchewan Métis and Non-Status Indian community. The GDI is designated as the official educational arm of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S). It offers a variety of accredited educational, vocational and skills training opportunities for the province's Métis in partnership with the University of Regina, the University of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology, the province's various regional colleges and the Métis Employment and Training of Saskatchewan Inc.

As a completely Métis-directed educational and cultural entity, GDI is unique in Canada. At its inception, GDI focused on education through cultural research as a means to renew and strengthen the heritage and achievements of Saskatchewan's Métis. It soon became apparent, however, that the GDI would need to become more directly involved in education if it were to fully serve the multifaceted needs, including the employment needs, of Saskatchewan's Métis community.

As a result, the GDI began developing Métis-specific curriculum and historical publications. It also began to train Aboriginal teachers and to deliver programming contracted from the province's universities, colleges and technical institutes. Most of the GDI programs are fully accredited and recognized, community-based, offer transition programming, culturally appropriate, and integrate academic and personal counselling. GDI programs include BA Science, ABE, Skills and Training.

5.5.4 TRIBAL COLLEGES IN THE UNITED STATES

Within Canada there are no other independent provincially accredited post-secondary institutes, other than NVIT. Within the U.S. there are 36 tribal colleges, who are members of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium who work to influence federal policies on American Indian higher education. According to Meg Goetz, Vice President Advocacy, from the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, “33 of the 36 Tribal Colleges are accredited institutions” (Goetz, January 31, 2010, personal communication), with the remaining three operating through federated or affiliation agreements. The accredited Tribal Colleges are recognized by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Association of Community College Trustees, Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges and Higher Learning Commission.

According to the IAHLA Chair, Verna Billy-Minnabarriet, the leading models of Aboriginal post-secondary education in the U.S. are derived from best practices of the Navajo Technical College, the Haskell Indian Nations University (Alaska), and Brown University (Billy-Minnabarriet, January, 27, 2011, personal communication).



6.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS

This study sought out direct input from a variety of stakeholders through three methods of primary research in order to incorporate thoughts and opinions relevant to the future of the NEC. Section 1.4.2 above describes the research methodology in detail.

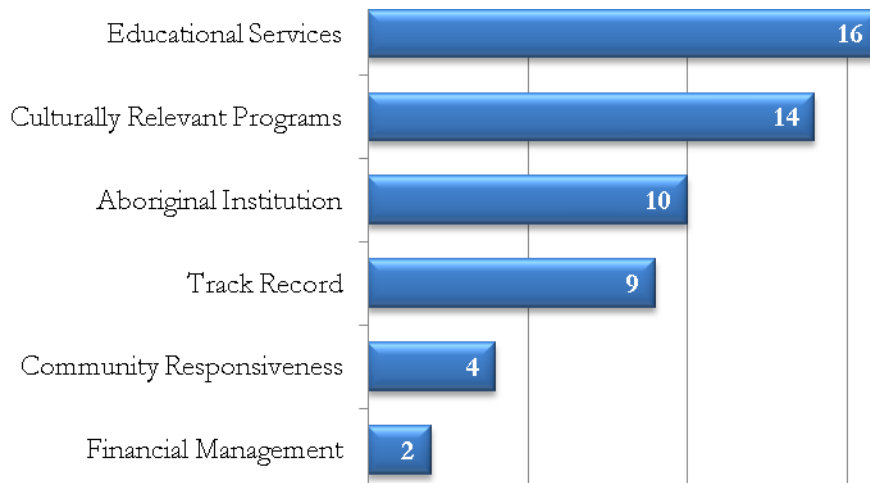
A large group of industry stakeholders which included twenty representatives from government, the Aboriginal community and interested agencies, were interviewed. Surveys were conducted with five distinct sets of respondents within the NEC, and a focus group with NEC Society members who provided further input and validation of the results.

The overall conclusion from the research findings is that there is overwhelming and unanimous support from stakeholders, the Board, communities, faculty and staff, students and alumni for NEC to pursue public designation to meet the needs of the growing Aboriginal population.

6.1 INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS

Overall, industry stakeholders were supportive of the move towards public designation status of the NEC if it helped strengthen the NEC and address shortcomings. Strengths of the NEC identified by the stakeholders included the Aboriginal control of the institution, and the setting, which includes the building and welcoming and supportive environment for Aboriginal people, and for people with barriers. The educational services and culturally relevant programs were the most common strengths identified by stakeholders. See the figure below for a summary of what stakeholders stated as the strengths of the NEC.

FIGURE 21: STRENGTHS OF THE NEC (INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS)



(Source: NEC Designation Feasibility Study, 2011)

The industry stakeholders also identified shortcomings of the NEC that could be addressed by a move to public designation and increased funding. The most common issue identified was the educational quality including the transferability of programs and courses to other public post-secondary institutions, and the ability to prepare students for the rigors of the other institutions in the system. The lack of funding and budget stability in addition to the



resulting high staff turnover and the ability to attract top faculty was identified as a top concern. The figure below presents a summary of the perceived weaknesses of the NEC.

FIGURE 22: WEAKNESSES OF THE NEC (STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS)



(Source: NEC Designation Feasibility Study, 2011)

The change to public designation and the expected increase in available funding is also expected to enhance the accountability and strengthen governance and Board issues. The added funds and educational quality and reporting requirements can also raise the academic bar for Aboriginal students and add new programs and services, which would strengthen the NEC’s reputation and aid in recruitment.

6.2 NEC NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE

6.2.1 BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND NEC SOCIETY MEMBERS

The NEC Board of Directors commissioned this feasibility study on a public college model, but did so with several key reservations.

The Board and NEC Society members are very proud of the system of programs and supports that address many of the needs, particularly cultural needs of the NEC students. The high response rate and support of NEC alumni to this study, and the frequent numbers of NEC Society members, and staff who are also alumni attest to the success and comfort that the NEC provides Aboriginal people.

They also expressed pride in the long-term success of the NEC, as it has been in operation for over forty years. As such, it has generated a significant reputation and often serves as a point of first contact for many Aboriginal people moving to Vancouver. Besides a strong reputation, NEC has also acquired land, buildings, equipment and furniture valued at over \$2 million and assets over \$7 million, a significant achievement for a non-profit society.

The most specific concern expressed by all Board members was the potential loss of Aboriginal control of the NEC under a public model. The Aboriginal control of the NEC is maintained through the NEC Society, voting procedures and Board members, and expressed



through the system or Aboriginal supports to students.

Other concerns or questions included:

- the process for selecting Board members under a public designation system
- educational quality standards and the transferability of courses and programs
- the continuation of Aboriginal programs and supports for students
- the opportunity to expand programs and services to students
- the ability to plan financially with stable funding
- the ability to compensate faculty and staff members in an increasingly competitive labour market
- would designation enhance the capacity to access funding for students
- additional funds to enhance learning resources, day care, housing, Aboriginal cultural activities, and outreach to Aboriginal secondary students

Society Members are concerned that the level of educational quality is mired by the need for accredited courses and the college's inconsistent record of academic success, especially when students move on to other institutions. Over 40% of respondents feel that the level of educational quality is not sufficient to meet the needs of students and the requirements of other academic institutions.

Approximately 72% of the respondents feel that stronger partnerships would assist NEC with improving its educational standards. Many respondents also voiced their opinion that increasing staff and faculty wages would lead to the best possible education team.

All respondents chose stronger credit transfer links to the public post-secondary system, improved education standards, and stable funding as the most important benefits for the NEC if it was designated as a public post-secondary institution. Just over half of the respondents feel that the greatest challenge for NEC if it was designated as a public post-secondary institution is that the college would be less accountable to the Aboriginal community and that it would be difficult to develop and enforce policies and educational quality.

NEC Society members also expressed concerns over the implications if the NEC does not achieve public designation, what will be the future of the institution. Achieving public designation would allow the NEC to plan financially, but without that status and funding, the NEC would only be able to plan in much shorter timeframes.

6.2.2 FACULTY AND STAFF

The respondents amongst the teaching faculty and administrative staff members agree that the strengths of the NEC are the culturally sensitive learning environment of committed and empathetic staff with low-barrier entry requirements.

Staff respondents feel that the greatest weakness of NEC is a lack of funding; stability at senior management levels; continuity in the Board, competencies and experience in admissions, administration staff and student assessments. However the teaching faculty overwhelmingly feels that other than the lack of funding, the challenges and weaknesses of NEC are directly related to the smallness of the school.



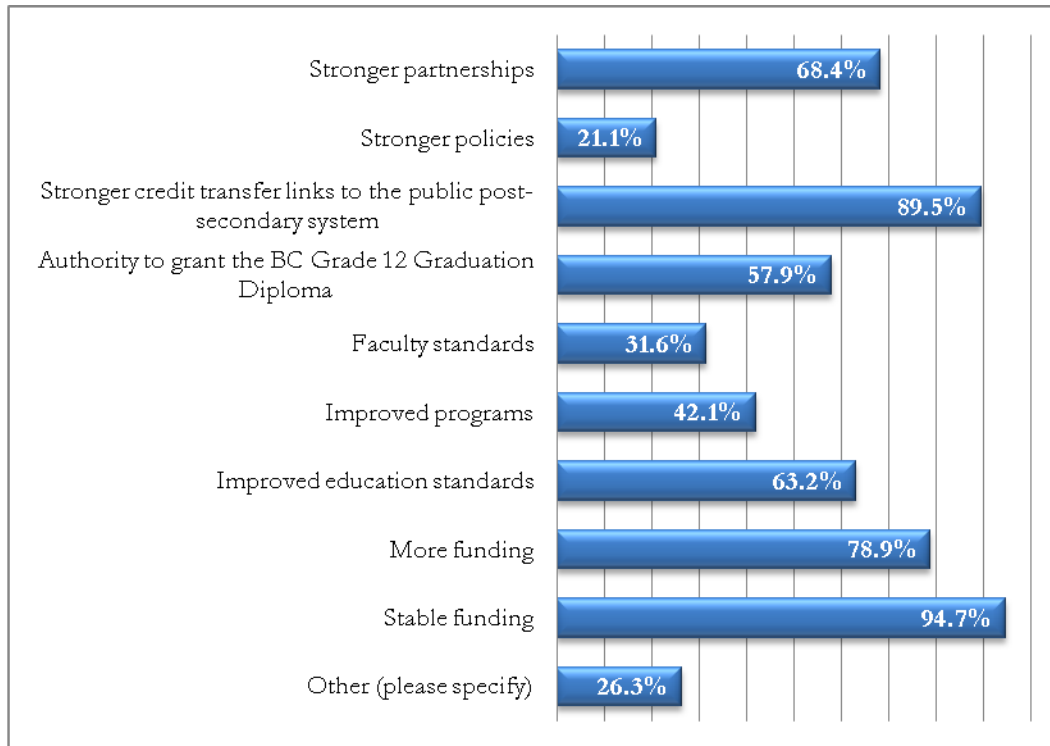
Almost 60% of staff and teaching faculty feel that level of educational quality is satisfactory and that students are receiving, “the best possible level of educational quality in the given financial conditions.” A further 30% feel that the quality of education is not at a satisfactory level to meet the needs of students and the requirements of other academic institutions. The quality and/or standards have been questioned when some NEC students move to other post-secondary institutions and are severely challenged.

Both staff and faculty feel that creating stronger partnerships and increasing education standards will help to improve the educational quality of NEC. As well, both groups concur that more and stable funding, along with stronger credit transfer links to the public post-secondary system, would be the greatest benefit for the NEC and Aboriginal people if NEC were to become a public post-secondary institution. The majority of respondents believe the challenges would be developing and enforcing consistent educational quality. They see the greatest challenge for Aboriginal people is that the college would be less accountable to the Aboriginal community. The teaching faculty is also concerned that there will be challenges developing and enforcing policies.

In order to improve its programs and services, teaching faculty and staff believe that improved education standards and increased funding to be the most critical issue. From the staff perspective, they believe the following changes are crucial: increased marketing and funding; increased standards for teachers; and, more communication between members of different departments and management. A need for capacity building, greater adherence to college policies and more funding are what the teaching faculty view as important to make the necessary changes at NEC.

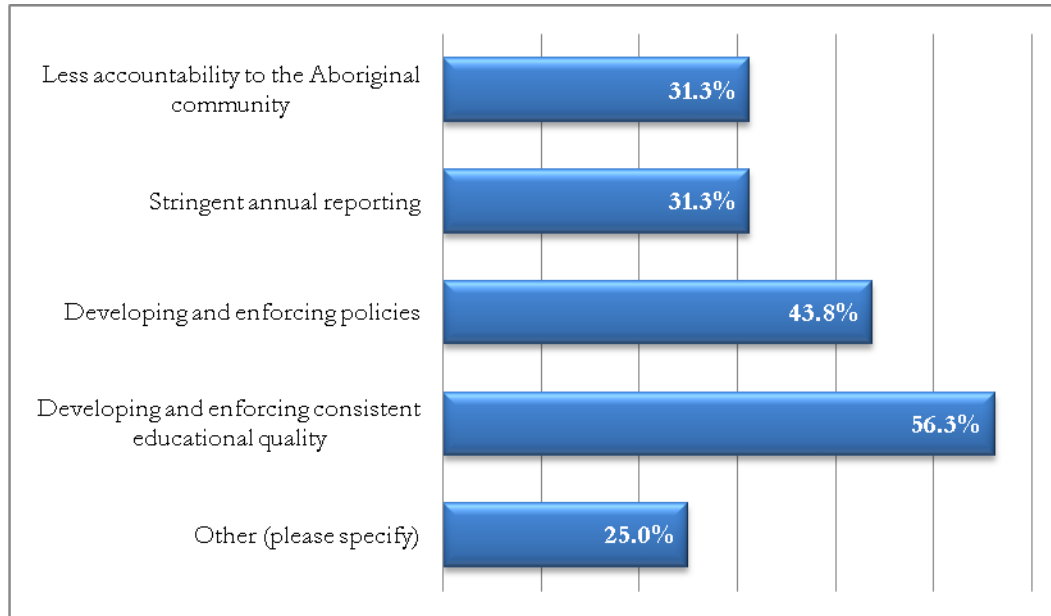
Overall there is a sense of optimism for NEC to become a public institute while there is concern of being able to hold on to cultural components and the NEC’s way of teaching within a government driven curriculum.

FIGURE 23: BENEFITS OF PUBLIC DESIGNATION (FACULTY AND STAFF)



(Source: NEC Designation Feasibility Study, 2011)

FIGURE 24: CHALLENGES OF PUBLIC DESIGNATION (FACULTY AND STAFF)



(Source: NEC Designation Feasibility Study, 2011)

6.2.3 CURRENT STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

Current students most commonly stated that they enjoy the atmosphere created at the NEC by the supportive staff. Students appreciate the Aboriginal culture content and that they are surrounded by many positive role models. They feel that the greatest weaknesses are the small facility, a lack of marketing, and that school policies regarding tardiness and absenteeism are not upheld.

Of current student respondents, 65% feel the level of education that they receive at NEC is sufficient to meet the needs of students and the requirements of other academic institutions. Over half of the respondents believe the NEC could improve its educational quality standards by creating stronger partnerships and stronger policies. Most of the respondents felt that NEC could improve its programs and services by creating stronger partnerships. About 30% of respondents felt equally that stronger policies and improving its education standards could improve NEC’s programs and services.

Many of the Alumni respondents felt that the NEC’s weakness lies in its lack of program accreditation and that the materials and programs need to be updated. The Alumni also stated that there is some concern for cohesiveness amongst the Board members. More than half of the Alumni believe that developing and enforcing consistent educational quality would be the greatest challenge for Aboriginal people.

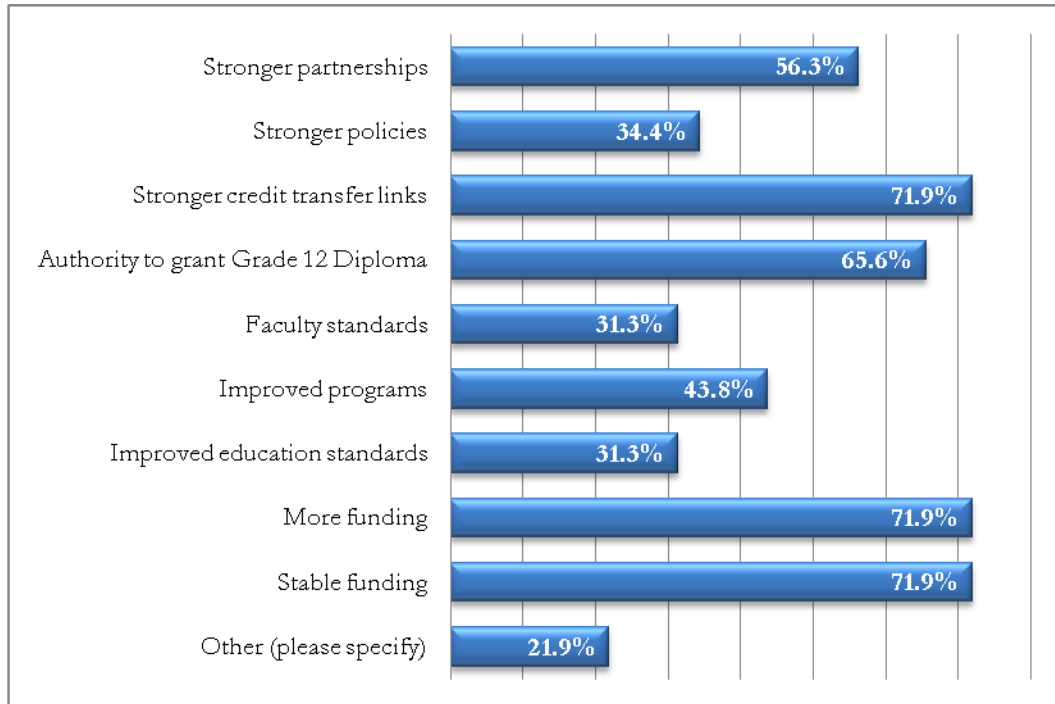
The majority of current students and alumni see the most important benefits for the NEC if it was designated as a public post-secondary institution to be more stable funding and stronger credit transfer links to the public post-secondary system, as well as having the authority to grant the BC Grade 12 Graduation Diploma.

Approximately 60% felt that the greatest challenge for NEC if it was designated as a public post-secondary institution is that there would be less accountability to the Aboriginal



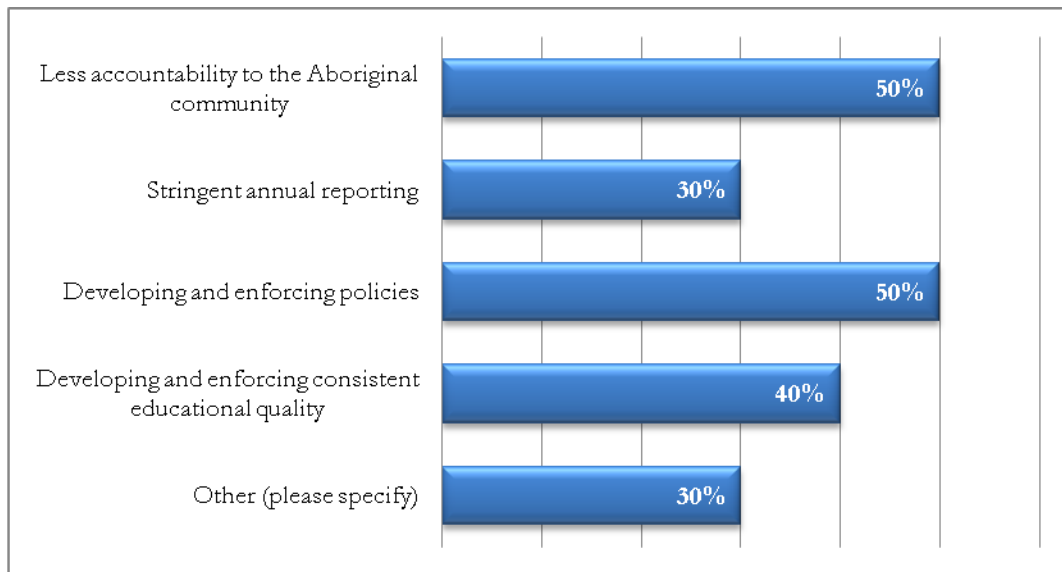
community. There is concern amongst current students and Alumni that if NEC becomes a public college, the school will lose its unique flavour as an Aboriginal institution. See the figures below for a summary of survey responses to the benefits and challenges of public designation.

FIGURE 25: BENEFITS OF PUBLIC DESIGNATION (STUDENTS AND ALUMNI)



(Source: NEC Designation Feasibility Study, 2011)

FIGURE 26: CHALLENGES OF PUBLIC DESIGNATION (STUDENTS AND ALUMNI)



(Source: NEC Designation Feasibility Study, 2011)



6.3 ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY

The concerns of Aboriginal communities are primarily focused upon meeting the developmental needs of Aboriginal higher learners in post-secondary education and supporting their success in meaningful employment post-graduation. In recent research on Aboriginal communities needs in the NEC catchment area, Aboriginal communities and learners identified that the key areas of concern are; meeting the needs of Aboriginal learners in education and employment, according to current and future industry trends; and meeting the developmental needs of Aboriginal communities.

The figure in Appendix 7 summarizes the top priorities (voted on by community leaders and Aboriginal students indicating preferences of 30% and above) programming needs, as identified in the research on Coastal Corridor Consortium Aboriginal Community Post-Secondary Education Needs Framework (Mixon, 2008), along with what NEC currently delivers and where there are gaps and opportunities.

6.4 BRITISH COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT

Representatives of the BC Government interviewed for this study indicated that there was overall support for the change in designation of the NEC to a public institution. Officials recognized the unique role the NEC plays in the Aboriginal community and the benefits of the environment and system of cultural and personal supports. The officials also cited the benefits to NEC of improved educational quality to further enhance the programs already delivered by NEC. There was an understanding that there are benefits in the NEC retaining control by the Aboriginal community, and the flexibility for this to existing within the public post-secondary education system, similar to the practices of NVIT.



7.0 PUBLIC COLLEGE DESIGNATION

7.1 PRIVATE ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS

Until such time as the NEC is designated as a public institution, it is required to maintain PCTIA designation. According to the PCTIA Accreditation Audit Report (2010) the areas of development that NEC has developed includes:

1) ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

Authorities and responsibilities for instructional quality, and are clearly assigned in accordance with institutional policy.

2) FACILITIES AND INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

An effective process is used to identify and allocate adequate resources (including physical resources, equipment, laboratories, etc.) to achieve the outcomes of the program and courses and to implement, maintain, and improve the institution's quality management. Specifically, not using the computer lab as a classroom and "the recent relocation and restructuring of the Student Learning Centre operated by the Learning Facilitator" (p. 16) "to ensure confidentiality" (p.17), upgrading the Aboriginal Justice Department multi-media equipment (i.e.: eliminating VCR's with DVD's) "to accommodate more flexible classroom use" (p.17), and "considering establishing a daycare" for students' children and to provide hands-on ECE learning experience.

3) INSTRUCTORS/ FACILITATORS

Instructor/ facilitator qualifications and experience enable quality delivery of programs. Specifically, NEC must: ensure that the instructors for the Family and Community Counselling program are hired with or supported to obtain a Bachelors degree and have a minimum of 24 months of occupational experience; a 360 degree review is recommended for instructors/ coordinators; and ECE instructors become familiar with the Early Learning Frameworks approach to pedagogical narrations.

4) ACADEMIC POLICIES AND STUDENT SERVICES

- Prospective and continuing students receive effective information and guidance to assist with making informed decisions on their program of study;
- Student learning outcomes are accurately, effectively and fairly assessed;
- Students receive accurate and timely advice on their learning progress; and
- Where applicable, the institute has effective policies and procedures regarding credit transfer and recognition of prior learning.

Specifically, NEC must create program outlines for the Aboriginal Tourism Program; review all student files to ensure that necessary documentation such as criminal record checks, TB test results, and doctors certificates are contained in student files; Coordinators are involved in the admissions processes; more information is provided for scholarships and bursaries; update ECE information to include requirement for 500 hours of work for licensing; update Special Needs program in Student handbook regarding practicum; CU articulation agreement to ensure English 12 requirements are met; ensure all references to the registry be termed ECE registry; undertake a thorough examination of the Justice Program to ensure that stated learning outcomes are being



taught; issue formal progress reports to students prior to the partial refund deadline; provide PCTIA with current formal transfer/articulation agreements and ensure the accuracy of the 2010-11 Program Calendar/ Website, in this regard.

5) PROGRAM DELIVERY

Offsite practical/ workplace components are effective and integrated into the curriculums. Specifically, NEC must ensure that the Program Advisory Committee membership is confirmed and is operational before November 2010; and ensure that Coordinators secure placements for practicum students and fully utilize the practicum policies and procedures and maintain comprehensive documentation.

PCTIA (2010) also urgently recommended filling the Academic Dean's position "with an appropriately qualified senior educational administrator who has the educational, teaching and management experience appropriate for the size and program mix of the institution and who is responsible for maintaining programs and evaluating instructors" (p.14)", which is critically important to the college operation and "without whom "the college is not in compliance with PCTIA by-laws" (p.14).

Finally, PCTIA recommended that if enrolment grows that NEC should consider building additional space. Again, all of these considerations have been addressed to the satisfaction of PCTIA.

7.2 PUBLIC ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS

Education Quality Assurance (EQA) was established by the province of BC and is administered by the BC Council for International Education (BCCIE) on behalf of the Ministry of Advanced Education which establishes all EQA policies, including eligibility requirements. EQA provides one standard provincial seal that can be recognized globally as a symbol of quality education and consumer protection (BC EQA, 2010, p.1).

EQA is a voluntary designation that recognizes public and private post-secondary institutions which have met quality assurance standards that are recognized by the BC Government. BC is the only province with a consolidated list of public and private post-secondary institutions branded with the provincial EQA seal as an assurance to deliver and issue top quality post-secondary education. The EQA Registry is published on BC's EQA website and is updated daily to reflect any changes in an institution's EQA Designation status.

The EQA designation is used to promote BC as an education destination of choice and enables both domestic and international students to easily recognize institutions that have met quality assurance standards that government recognizes. BC Council for International Education, an independent international education society, administers the EQA program on behalf of government and promotes and markets EQA designated institutions.

Although the EQA policy and procedure manual focuses primarily upon use of the EQA brand terms of use, it does outline eligibility requirements, which are: that a public post-secondary institute is a legal body; is a not for profit society under the *BC Societies Act*; and provide and deliver an educational program in BC.

For the NEC to be eligible for EQA designation, issued annually on May 1st, it must meet the Ministry recognized quality assurance standards that include: meeting the quality assurance (accreditation) standards as set out under the PCTIA Regulation and Bylaws; and [be] in good standing with the PCTIA and the Ministry. The Ministry also determines suitability (BC EQA, 2010, p.1).



To receive EQA designation the NEC would have to be in good standing with PCTIA, and conform to EQA brand usage agreements. According to the BC EQA (2010) applicant suitability, as determined by the Ministry, would require that NEC to:

- Comply with the terms and conditions of the EQA;
- Demonstrate a strong reputation and character to operate in the public interest;
- Demonstrate a high level of financial integrity, including the sources of funding;
- Not have any outstanding civil judgments, be involved, or involved with an individual/organization involved with criminal activities or involved in any legal proceedings against NEC; and
- To register for StudentAID BC designation.

It is important to note that EQA designation decisions are not subject to appeals or reconsideration (p.10).

7.3 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Ministry of Advanced Education, responsible for Aboriginal post-secondary education developed a Framework (1995) with a mandate that includes:

- Recognizing the role of both public institutions and Aboriginal institutions and organizations in achieving strategic priorities;
- Supporting an appropriate balance of Aboriginal post-secondary education and training opportunities based upon current number of students served, geographic distribution of institutions, regional population and participation rates, appropriate configuration of educational programming, and fiscal considerations; and
- Utilizing existing resources and maintain Federal contributions (p. 9-10).

The strategies the policy framework sets-out includes providing for the designation of public Aboriginal controlled institutions (p.10). The framework also states that the important role of Aboriginal controlled institutions will be recognized by establishing a framework by which to designate an Aboriginal post-secondary institution as independent under the *College and Institute Act*.

Establishing an accredited, independent Aboriginal institution allows Aboriginal people to share in decision-making to a degree consistent with the Government-to-Government relationships currently being negotiated. At the same time, institutions will be accountable for achieving goals of increased participation, program relevance and quality, affordability, and accountability.

Designation under the Act will be determined in accordance with criteria established by the Province. The application of these criteria will ensure that Aboriginal controlled institutions achieve articulation and equivalent accreditation standards with public post-secondary institutions.

7.3.1 COLLEGE AND INSTITUTE ACT

The BC *College and Institutes Act* is the legislation that governs the requirements of public colleges and institutes, the institute's board of governors who oversee operations and finances, and the institute's academic governance structures for credentials, curriculum and academic standards. Legislation for other post-secondary institutes include the *University Act*, the *Royal Roads University Act*, and the *Thompson Rivers University Act*. Specific areas within the



College and Institutes Act that are important for the NEC that outline designation and the board composition of public post-secondary institutes are sections 5 and 9 (See Appendix 8).

7.3.2 BOARD APPOINTMENT PROCESS

Within BC, all Board nominees for public post-secondary institutes must be routed through the Board Resourcing and Development Office (BRDO).

The BRDO is responsible for:

- establishing guidelines for all provincial appointments to agencies
- ensuring that all provincial appointments are made on the basis of merit following an open, transparent and consistent appointment process
- ensuring that appointees receive appropriate orientation and ongoing professional development with respect to agency governance issues

The goal of the BRDO Appointment Process is to select the most qualified men and women having the highest personal and professional integrity to serve the public on the Province's boards, agencies and commissions. The Governing Principles of the appointment process are merit based; transparent; consistent; probity; and proportionate.

A flow chart that outlines this process is included in Appendix 10.

7.3.3 NICOLA VALLEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY BOARD APPOINTMENT PROCESS

In order to assure Aboriginal control of Aboriginal education, NVIT has established a process, consistent with the BRDO policies, where the NVIT Board/ Executive submits a Request for Appointment (RFA) and Notice of Position to the BRDO. The NVIT Board then selects potential candidates from their established criteria and competency matrix to ensure that the Aboriginal candidate possess the competencies, skills, and experience necessary to enhance the sound performance of NVIT and are: reflective of the provincial mandate of the institution; with two standing seats for the 'founding bands'; and with remaining seats for BC Aboriginal members-at-large (NVIT, 2010, p.2).

NVIT then submits the list of suitable candidates to the BRDO, who in consultation with NVIT ensures that NVIT's preferences are taken into account. According to the BRDO "ultimately, it is the government's responsibility to appoint directors, ideally, after consultation with the organization, the organization should be satisfied that the appointee has the skills and knowledge necessary to enhance the effectiveness of the board and will be a good fit with the board culture" (BRDO, 2006, p. 1). The BRDO and NVIT then submit their recommendations for Order in Council appointment that proceeds to Cabinet for final review and approval.

7.3.4 DEGREE AUTHORIZATION ACT

British Columbia's public post-secondary colleges, and three public institutes, are established under the *College and Institute Act*. The act provides the colleges and institutes with authority to grant associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates; colleges to grant baccalaureate degrees with an applied focus, and institutes to grant baccalaureate and master's degrees with an applied focus. The Minister may also require an institution to establish a method for accrediting postsecondary courses.

All degree programs must be approved through the legislative processes established under the *Degree Authorization Act* and most undergo rigorous quality assessment processes. The BC Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) is a provincial Board appointed by the Minister of Advanced Education for the purpose of assessing the quality of proposed degree, diploma



and certificate programs at public and private institutions in BC, and recommending approval (or not) to the Minister. The DQAB can conduct both institutional and program reviews using a set of rigorous academic criteria and processes including peer review of degree proposals.

7.3.5 BC COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS AND TRANSFERS

The BC Council on Admissions & Transfer (BCCAT) oversees the BC Transfer System, enabling important links between the BC post-secondary institutions, the education ministries, and the public and private education sectors. All BC public institutions are automatically admitted to membership in the BC Transfer System.

The BCCAT is a non-profit, public agency that is funded by the provincial government and operates by promoting collaboration among BC post-secondary institutions. BCCAT facilitates admission, articulation, and transfer arrangements among BC post-secondary institutions for the benefit of students. This involves: providing coordination and support for transfer and articulation in the BC system, promoting student mobility through system-wide collaboration and extensive research on student movement and credit transfer, and developing and managing online resources to assist students in their education planning.

The BCCAT bases admission decisions on the provincial oversight and rigorous quality assessment processes that include ensuring that all accredited public institutions adhere to the annual accountability framework, and that all degree programs are assessed and meet the requirements for approval under the DQAB.

7.4 FUNDING CRITERIA

According to the existing Aboriginal education framework (1995), funding for Aboriginal public post-secondary institutions will be provided through a formula consistent with public institutions which includes support and administrative services allocated according to established Ministry guidelines. Institutions will become eligible for capital funding after a five year period. Recognizing the responsibility of the Federal Government to maintain a 25% funding ratio, the BC Government will likely begin negotiations with the Federal Government toward funding the costs of publicly designated Aboriginal institutions. This funding combination for Aboriginal education is what the First Nations University is currently renewing and would be an essential component to maximize funding for the NEC.

In addition, the BC Government may enter into discussions with Aboriginal people and the Federal government, regarding the establishment of a Provincial Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Endowment Fund, to obtain corporate and other donations and investments for any Aboriginal institution designated under the *College and Institute Act*.

According to the existing Aboriginal education framework, criteria for designation as an independent public post-secondary Aboriginal institution accredited under the *College and Institute Act* will require that the NEC has:

- Goals which provide the foundation for developing autonomy and self-reliance and have the support of Aboriginal leadership;
- Appropriate governance structures to a degree consistent with that required of public institutions under the *College and Institute Act*;
- An established affiliation agreement with a public institution for a minimum period of 5 years;
- An established student population of 300 for a minimum period of five years;



- Demonstrated standards required for articulation with public institutions and recognized levels of accreditation;
- An institutional evaluation demonstrating accountability to the learner through quality curriculum standards and teaching practice; and
- Demonstrated educational practices and a statement of purpose with a formalized educational plan of programming to achieve its mandate, goals, and objectives and fiscal plans for achieving these purposes.

Requests for designation will also be assessed in the context of province-wide criteria which include:

- Geographic distribution of Aboriginal controlled institutions and numbers of students served and the extent to which programs for Aboriginal learners are available from public and private institutions;
- Participation rates and the extent to which participation is being met by public post-secondary institutions or partnership agreements within college regions;
- Fiscal considerations including available funds within a fiscal year; and
- Federal-provincial cost-sharing above current expenditures.

The existing Aboriginal education framework (1994) identifies that through the above guidelines and criteria, provision is made to allow smaller institutions, which are not eligible for a stand-alone designation, to form a consortium with a Provincially designated Aboriginal institution, under a common governance structure, subject to approval by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council.

Provincial recognition of the role of Aboriginal management of post-secondary education and training was established by Cabinet approval in 1995, of two new public institutions, the Institute of Indigenous Government, located in Vancouver, and NVIT in Merritt, British Columbia (p.15-16).

Given that the IIG ceased operations, the proven success of NVIT, and that that the current Aboriginal education framework is planned to be renewed in the spring of 2011, the above recommendation calls for a smaller institution such as the NEC.

The evaluation of the 2007-2010 Strategy will be guided by members of the British Columbia Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners Table (ALMD, 2010, p.5). The Partners Table is a working group of the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners.

7.4.1 ABORIGINAL POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING PARTNERS

The Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners (PSE Partners) vision is to also improve the participation rates of Aboriginal learners. The PSE Partners do this by building on success to date, collectively identifying needs, and implementing strategies. The goals and priorities of the PSE Partners are: student financial support; support for Community PSE Coordinators/ Administrators; Institutional support; and Data Collection and Reporting. The Partners Table includes:

- BC Assembly of First Nations
- BC First Nations Human Resources Labour Council
- First Nations Education Steering Committee



- Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association
- Métis Provincial Council of BC
- United Native Nations Society
- BC College Presidents
- University Presidents' Council of BC
- Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
- Ministry of Advanced Education
- Ministry of Economic Development
- Indian and Northern Affairs and Northern Development
- Service Canada

The PSE Partners also have working groups for funding, data mapping, and the Aboriginal Learning Links website, nominal roll and adult education, and developmental standards term certificate (languages), which supports a number of initiatives of the First Nations Education Steering Committee, IAHLA and those of the partner members.

7.5 STUDENTAID

StudentAid BC helps eligible students with the cost of their post-secondary education through loans, grants, bursaries, scholarships and special programs. NEC is designated as a StudentAid BC institute.

7.6 ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

All public institutions are subject to an annual accountability framework, established in 2003/04, which has two purposes:

- 1) To benefit students by ensuring they receive quality education and educational opportunities relevant to their needs and the needs of the labour market.
- 2) To benefit all residents of the province by ensuring the public post-secondary system's ongoing contribution to social and economic development.

All public post-secondary institutions which receive the majority of their funding from the provincial government are subject to a detailed accountability framework every year by the Ministry of Advanced Education. The provincial post-secondary accountability framework emphasizes institutional performance and quality through the establishment and measurement of key performance indicators, which includes:

- Key Data Sources
- Standards Manual
- Institutional Service Plans and Reports

A NEC with public college designation would improve AVED performance in several strategic areas:

- An immediate increase in the number of Aboriginal people in the public post-secondary system



FEASIBILITY STUDY: NEC NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE PUBLIC DESIGNATION

- An overall increase in the number of Aboriginal post-secondary learners as NEC expands
- An increase in the number of post-secondary credentials awarded, and an increase in the overall number of credentials awarded to Aboriginal people
- An increase in the student satisfaction with post-secondary education
- Student assessment of the quality of instruction
- Student assessment of skill development
- Student assessment of the usefulness of knowledge and skills in performing job
- An increase in employability of Aboriginal people



8.0 OPTIONS

The following represents the scope of options that the NEC has in terms of developing the organizational capacity of the NEC to meet the future needs of Aboriginal higher learners. The options include: continuing to develop the organizational capacity of the NEC; pursuing public designation and on-going organizational development; and establishing strategic partnerships for federated designation. These options and recommendations are derived from the primary and secondary research findings and intended to include specific and comprehensive organizational development recommendations for the long-term success of the NEC.

8.1 OPTION 1: ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

NEC can continue to develop its organizational capacity and engage the Aboriginal community and stakeholders, through strategic initiatives that build the long-term organizational capacity of the institution. The focus of these efforts is recommended to be on organizational development and continued engagement efforts, which include:

a) GOVERNANCE (BOARD)

- Competency Matrix - Undertake planning with the Board to develop a competency matrix with the existing Board and determine optimum competencies and skills that would benefit the institution and the learners. This matrix should include: legal, accounting, governance, and industry expertise from the program areas that NEC wishes to develop expertise in, as outlined in the section below (c) Education and Educational Services. Update governance policies and incorporate the competency matrix requirements, the appropriate nomination, and appointment processes.
- Annual Planning - As a part of the Board's annual planning, it is recommended that the NEC refine its vision and mission statement to prioritize the self-determined considerations required in the long-term for public designation, and enhanced organizational capacity. It is also recommended that the Board refine the definition of who the constituents are of the NEC in order to support the organizational capacity development, accountability, and evolution of governance policy.
- Governance Training - The Board is also recommended to continue to undertake governance training to support its leadership capacity and development towards a governance policy Board. These governance development processes are considered best practices in leading organizations and should be undertaken regardless of intent to pursue public designation.

b) MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS (PRESIDENT)

- Employment Policies - Update minimum hiring standards and training for faculty that meet or exceed the established standards within other post-secondary institutes.
- Administration Policy Working Group - Develop an administration policy working group that prioritizes capacity development with the objective of understanding, adhering to, and recommending policies that support the NEC determined organizational capacity goals of the organization.
- Enhance Partnerships - Establish and strengthen NEC's affiliation agreements with other public-post secondary institutes to support NEC program transferability for learners, with training organizations to enhance funding for strategic programs, and



enhance the reputation of the NEC. This could include partnerships also with AVED for an NEC transition strategy, the FNESC to participate in the evaluation research, with the Partners Table to participate in the renewal of the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Framework.

- Enhance Reporting - Enhance reporting to align with the parameters established within the accountability framework. It is recommended that this includes hiring a dedicated staff person responsible for on-going community and annual provincial reporting. According to the President of NVIT, one of the key lessons learned was that in order to meet reporting requirements, NVIT hired two full-time dedicated staff to fulfill the on-going and annual reporting requirements of a public post-secondary institute (K. Tourand, personal communication, January 28, 2010).
- On-going Engagement - Undertake on-going engagement with the objective of informing constituents and stakeholders about public designation; discern their interests and goals for the NEC. These efforts will support strengthening the “strong reputation and character of [the NEC to] operating in the public interest”, consistent with BC EQA Ministerial suitability requirements. It is also recommended that this engagement be undertaken in cooperation with the NEC Program Committee to support planning to identify the programming needs of the Aboriginal community.

c) EDUCATION AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES (PRESIDENT)

- Research and Program Planning - Enhance the Education Council’s Terms of Reference, or as a separate project with the Education Council, undertake research and planning that will support the identification of key programs the NEC wishes to develop expertise in. This research and planning should identify: what the learner needs are, what the community needs are, what the labour market are, and where there is a market advantage for NEC within the post-secondary community.

From the research undertaken within this feasibility study from existing programming this may include: Aboriginal Basic Education through an enhanced NEC Transition Strategy; Aboriginal Early Childhood Education, and the potential development of a daycare; Counselling programs that are enhanced in partnership with other post-secondary institutions; Aboriginal Tourism Training programs; and e-learning.

- Enhance Student Services Staffing – Hire additional student services staff dedicated to providing educational services and personal planning support to meet the needs of learners.

8.2 OPTION 2: PURSUE PUBLIC DESIGNATION & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In addition to the recommendations outlined above in Option 2, it is recommended that the NEC undertake the following to develop organizational capacity and prepare to apply for public designation. It is important to note within this section that it is written to provide options and recommendations, rather than a step by step process for public designation, which is not outlined in any current research documents. The following relies upon the existing Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Framework, which is currently being reviewed and renewed.

a) GOVERNANCE (BOARD)



- Competency Matrix - Undertake planning to develop a Board competency matrix and update NEC Board Composition policies accordingly, consistent with BRDO requirements. Consistent, with the best practices demonstrated by NVIT, the First Nations University, and the U.S. accredited Tribal Colleges it is recommended that governance policies include ensuring that there are no political appointments. The “new” Board should be nominated as soon as possible.
- Political Strategy – The Board is also recommended to develop a political strategy that will include the development of a proposal to AVED for the public designation of the NEC, in consideration of the recommendations included within this report, and in order to support the interests of the community identified within this research that indicates overwhelming support for NEC public designation. This political strategy will require the development of strategic partnerships as outlined in the following list.
- Planning - Undertake planning and identify public designation as a priority and update the NEC vision and mission statement to reflect this priority, along with all related requirements.
- Ministry of Advanced Education - Following the development of a the Board competency matrix, and a proposal for public designation, the Board is recommended to implement a political strategy that will support public designation with AVED and Cabinet, initiate negotiations, and the initiatives identified within an NEC 2011-2016 Business Plan, as outlined below in (b) Management and Operations.
- Strategic Partners – Partnerships will be critical for the NEC moving forward, and the most important for public designation is the participation of the NEC in the planning for the new Aboriginal Education Framework, in order to ensure it supports the objectives of the NEC to pursue public designation. It would also be important to advise VCC of the intent to pursue public designation and enlist their support. As the only other existing Aboriginal public-post secondary institute in Canada the NEC must develop a working partnership with NVIT. The NEC should also consider partnerships with IAHLA, FNES, and other organizations that can support NEC’s public designation.
- Enhance Reporting - In consideration of the reporting requirements established within the accountability framework, and the recommendations of NVIT’s President, it is recommended that the NEC, establish a research department and hire two dedicated staff who would be responsible for on-going community and annual provincial reporting. This includes posting all relevant requirements on the NEC website and including them into the annual report, for example Board representation, minutes, governance and management policies, Education Council membership, minutes.
- Establish an Elders Council - Consistent with the best practices to integrate cultural knowledge more meaningfully within post-secondary education, as undertaken by NVIT with the development of an Elders Council, the NEC is recommended to undertake planning to establish an Elders Council and update policies accordingly.

b) MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS (PRESIDENT)

- PCTIA – Maintain PCTIA designation of NEC’s intent to pursue public designation and enlist their support.



- Education Council – Review and enhance the work of the Education Council, according to legislative requirements.
- Placement Policy - Establish an educational work placement policy for students who must undertake placements as a part of their education.
- Assessments - Enhance the capacity of the NEC for student assessments as a part of course delivery.
- Business Plan - Develop a five year business plan with clear measures of success that ensures that the NEC is well resourced, includes all possible risks, and establishes a critical path for the NEC. This plan should include a formalized education plan of programming to achieve the NEC's mandate, goals and objectives and fiscal plans for achieving these purposes.

c) EDUCATION AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES (PRESIDENT)

- Research and Program Planning - Enhance the Program Committees Terms of Reference to develop an education plan within the business plan for the NEC that meets the requirements of BCCAT.

It is important to note that as outlined within the public designation section of this report that there are important deadlines that must be considered, for example: the immediate need to engage with the partners table to incorporate considerations for the NEC public designation; the deadline for a proposal that should consider Ministerial budget planning for the new fiscal year, requiring the proposal to be submitted before November 2011, for budget approval in the winter of 2011, and submitting for the EQA designation before May 1, 2012.

Beyond the planning recommendations outlined above, anticipated next steps should NEC decide to pursue public designation would include negotiations with the Board on budget requirements, informed by the NEC business or strategic plan, and FTE counts, which would dictate core funding. This final funding agreement would be formalized through a budget letter for Board approval. Once funding is secured the NEC could hire new faculty, consistent with the enhanced hiring policy, hire new staff and purchase new accounting software for a new reporting department, and implement capital improvements as outlined in the five year business plan.

8.3 OPTION 3: PURSUE FEDERATION STATUS & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In addition to the organizational development recommendations outlined in options 2 and 3, the NEC may pursue obtaining federated status similar to that received by the First Nations University and the Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute. Both institutes operate through affiliation agreements to broker programs, but retain administrative and financial autonomy, however degrees are granted by the host university.

Although this option does not maximize Aboriginal control, autonomy, and the systemic change indicative of the independent model, this option if the NEC were to pursue affiliation with a non-Aboriginal post-secondary institute it would establish a stronger reputation and standing in the post-secondary community for the NEC. The NEC may however, wish to pursue federated status with NAIT who is pursuing university status. This would maintain the integrity of the NEC, while also building the capacity of the NEC over the long-term.

To pursue federated status the NEC would need to establish a goal of moving towards greater financial autonomy and develop the organizational capacity of the NEC through the



recommendations outlined in Options 2 and 3. The NEC would also need to initiate discussions with a university or NVIT to develop an affiliation agreement. As well, the NEC may need to or wish to become a member of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC). The AUCC does not perform formal quality assurance functions, but it does maintain membership criteria that address the primary mission of institutions; the range of program offerings; the breadth and depth of programs; the nature of members' relationship with parent institutions; the size of enrolment; institutional focus on scholarship, academic inquiry, and research; and compliance with the principles of academic freedom and responsibility.

The host university or NVIT would be reviewed by an AUCC Visiting Committee that reports to the AUCC Board of Directors on a variety of items and recommends a decision on whether the applying institution is providing education of university standard. Pending an affiliation agreement with a host university and membership with the AUCC, the NEC would then be considered a federated college.



9.0 RECOMMENDATION

9.1 PUBLIC COLLEGE DESIGNATION

It is the finding of this research team that the NEC has the unanimous support of the Board, stakeholders, Aboriginal community, staff and faculty, student and alumni support to pursue public designation as a public post-secondary institute.

As outlined earlier, there is not a clear step by step process to submit a proposal to the Ministry of Advanced Education for public college designation, rather there are a complex set of designations, accreditations and considerations that need to be taken into account in developing a proposal for public designation for Ministry of Advanced Education, and ultimately as determined by Cabinet. In summary the proposal should build upon the work of this feasibility study and articulate a compelling case for public designation that includes:

- 1)The unanimous support of the Board, Stakeholders, Faculty and Staff, Students and Alumni in pursuing public designation;
- 2)The compelling need for access to culturally relevant post-secondary education for the growing Aboriginal population in the NEC catchment area, for both new learners and adult learners and the ability of the NEC to meet these needs in terms of participation and graduation rates, student satisfaction, skills development, job transition, and reducing the unemployment rate;
- 3)The labour market needs for the area and region;
- 4)The social costs of doing nothing with the largest Aboriginal population in BC where there is the greatest opportunity, and continuing greatest poverty;
- 5)The ability of the NEC to support the Province to realize its commitments in the Transformative Change Accord, and Metis Nation Accord to close the socio-economic gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in BC;
- 6)The opportunity that public designation of the NEC has to fulfill the goal of public designation of two Aboriginal post-secondary institutes outlined in the (1995) Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Framework, given that the IIG failed; and
- 7)Include an understanding of the political strategy that Board will pursue to support public designation of the NEC to meet the needs of the growing Aboriginal population.

The proposal would also need to include an overview of the identified program areas of expertise that the NEC will pursue, along with any new or existing affiliation agreements that support this. It will need to include a summary of educational services, operational needs, capital needs, and human resource needs derived from the business plan or strategic plan.

The options provided above are intended to support the long-term organizational capacity development of the NEC therefore; in pursuing any of the options the NEC will enhance its long-term viability and success. A detailed summary of the considerations that the NEC must be aware of in pursuing public designation are as follows:

9.2 GOVERNANCE TRANSITION

According to the BRDO processes, the required steps to transition NEC into public designation are as follows:



- Developing a competency matrix to identify the collective competency, skills and experience of the Board, and identify any areas for development.

Competency Matrix

NEC would need to review its existing board and develop a competency matrix that identifies what competencies, skills, and experience the current board members have and those that are required for the Boards. This matrix should be updated each time there is a board vacancy. This matrix is required by the Ministry, the BC EQA, and the BRDO and is intended to ensure that the board enhances the effectiveness of NEC. Some considerations include: governing capacity; representative of the constituent base served; and expertise in industries as they relate to programs offered.

i. Governing Capacity

Board members who contribute to the governing capacity of the organization, according to the BRDO (2007) have:

- high ethical standards and integrity in professional and personal dealings;
- good judgment;
- appreciation of the responsibilities to the public;
- ability and willingness to raise potentially controversial issues in a manner that encourages dialogue;
- ability to be flexible, responsive and willing to consider others' opinions;
- capable of a wide perspective on issues;
- ability to work as a team member;
- no direct or indirect conflict of interest with the director's responsibility to the organization; and
- strong reasoning skills (p. 9).

Board members who contribute to the governing capacity of the organization also possess key competencies that are relevant to the operation of the organization, which includes: accounting / financial management skills; legal expertise; knowledge and experience with government regulatory environment; governance expertise; and post-secondary education expertise.

ii. Representative of Constituent Base

Included directly within the by-laws of NEC is the need for Board members to be Aboriginal people in BC, NEC Society members at large. For NEC the specific criteria that would be required within the matrix should be representative of the Aboriginal communities served and stakeholder Aboriginal groups. This requires NEC to consider their constituent base, current operating area, and planned operating area. This would include the local Nations, urban Aboriginal organizations, and possibly where NEC has satellite offices (Bella Coola, Prince Rupert, Vanderhoof, Enderby, and Mount Currie).

iii. Industry Expertise

Members should also have expertise in the program areas that NEC has developed strengths in, including:



- Aboriginal Adult Basic Education
- Early Childhood Education
- Counselling
- Tourism
- Business

The Ministry of Advanced Education (1995) Aboriginal Education Policy Framework also outlined criteria for designation as an independent accredited Aboriginal institute under the *College and Institute Act* require that the Board should consider, including:

- Goals that are supported by Aboriginal leadership and aim to develop autonomy and self-reliance;
- A governance structure comparable to that of a public institution under the *College and Institute Act*;
- An established affiliation agreement with a public institution for a minimum period of five years;
- An established student population of 300 students for a minimum period of five years;
- Demonstrated standards required for articulation with public institutions and recognized levels of accreditation;
- An institutional evaluation demonstrating accountability, quality curriculum standards and teaching practices; and
- A statement of purpose with a formalized educational plan of programming to achieve its mandate, goals and objectives and fiscal plans for achieving these purposes.

All requests for designation as an accredited, independent Aboriginal institution will also be assessed in the context of Province-wide criteria which include:

- The geographic distribution of Aboriginal-controlled institutions, the numbers of students served and the extent to which programs for Aboriginal learners are available from public and private institutions;
- Participation rates and the extent to which participation is being met by public institutions; and
- Fiscal considerations

9.3 ABORIGINAL CONTROL

The loss of Aboriginal control of the NEC Board within the public designation process was identified by the NEC Board as the single biggest fear in considering public designation. However, based upon the direction identified by the BC Government through the Transformative Change Accord and the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Strategy, as well as expressed support from BC Government officials, Aboriginal control of NEC Board can be maintained in a public designation of the NEC, similar to how NVIT maintains a fully Aboriginal board to effectively govern the institute. While the NEC Board would be subject to the BC Government process, it has expressed specific interest to maintain an all-Aboriginal board to maintain the integrity of Aboriginal education offered through the NEC.



As well, the experiences of NVIT and its success with an all-Aboriginal Board of Directors, re-emphasizes the necessity and benefits of an all-Aboriginal Board and maintaining Aboriginal control within the larger system.

9.4 BC GOVERNMENT MANDATE

Through the Transformative Change Accord and the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Strategy, the BC Government has recognized the need to engage Aboriginal learners, and for the Aboriginal community to lead that change. Specifically, Ministry of Advanced Education staff has also recognized the benefits to the BC Government of a public NEC within the larger public post-secondary system.

As NVIT serves as the only Aboriginal provincial institute, the NEC would be the only Aboriginal college within the system with a regional focus on the Greater Vancouver area, and the only public Aboriginal college in Canada.

A public NEC would also benefit the BC Government by helping to meet the obligations under the Transformative Change Accord, the Metis Nation Accord, and the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Strategy through the enhancement of the Aboriginal programs, educational quality, and improved transition rates of Aboriginal learners that the NEC could provide with more stable funding and enhanced education quality standards.

9.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NEC NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE

9.5.1 ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY

If the NEC were to become a public post-secondary institution, the most significant impact for the Aboriginal community as a whole is the continuation of the NEC as a flagship Aboriginal controlled post-secondary institution, that is strengthened financially and in its standards.

The second significant change is that NEC Board members will be able to be chosen from the larger pool of Aboriginal people across the Greater Vancouver region and across the province.

9.5.2 NEC SOCIETY

The NEC Society could see a significant change with public designation as the Board members will most likely no longer be exclusively nominated from the Aboriginal NEC Society members only. However, a new process that maintains Aboriginal control of the Board, and most effectively serves the Aboriginal community would be part of the planning for a competency matrix that would in the long-term strengthen the organizational capacity of the NEC.

9.5.3 ADMINISTRATION

The change in reporting requirements outlined in the accountability framework, and adherence to these standards, would be a significant change for the administration to establish, learn and maintain new procedures in compliance with the public post-secondary system. However, as NEC already provides some reporting to the Ministry of Advanced Education for funding, the change need not be so large and would enhance the NEC's accountability to the Aboriginal community.

As well, the additional funds for NEC could be used to supplement or upgrade existing staff members. Administrative staff are represented by a collective agreement with the BC Government Employees Union (BCGEU), which may require certain articles to be amended



due to exemptions of public colleges from legislation, as identified in the *Colleges and Institutes Act*.

9.5.4 FACULTY

Standards and requirement of faculty members would be in accordance with the EQA system, which is similar to the PCTIA recommendations currently under development. Additional funds to the NEC could also be used to bring faculty pay levels comparable to other public post-secondary institutions. Faculty are represented by a collective agreement with the BCGEU, which may require certain articles to be amended due to exemptions of public colleges from legislation, as identified in the *Colleges and Institutes Act*.

9.5.5 STUDENTS

The most significant benefits from a successful transition to a public designation for students would be the additional funding to: hire, and retain, quality faculty; increase the quality and transferability of courses; enhance Aboriginal specific long-term programs and supports; enhance the facility and improved educational quality standards; and enhanced reputation and partnerships that support learner transferability. Most of all students would benefit from the continued existence of the NEC.

Many students would also benefit from receiving Band funding to attend the NEC, which is currently more difficult when the NEC is designated as a private college.



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APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDES

1. What do you feel the strengths of the NEC are?
2. What do you feel the weaknesses or challenges of the NEC are?
3. Describe the level of Educational Quality Standards that you feel NEC provides?
4. Is this level sufficient to meet the needs of students, and the requirements of other academic institutions?
5. How could NEC improve its Educational Quality Standards?
6. If the NEC pursues public designation how would this further the mission of the NEC?
7. What do you see as challenges within the designation process for NEC?
8. What do you think the benefits of public designation would be for NEC and the Aboriginal communities they serve?
9. Do you think there would be any challenges for NEC becoming a public post-secondary institution?
10. If the NEC received public designation how would this further the mission of the province for Aboriginal learners?
11. Which parts of the Aboriginal community do you think the NEC represents and serves?
12. Does NEC sufficiently serve the Aboriginal community?
13. How does NEC serve the Aboriginal community?
14. How is NEC accountable to the Aboriginal community?
 - a. Are there shortcomings, if so what are they?
15. How could the NEC improve its Programs and Services?
16. What changes do you think are needed at NEC to achieve these improvements?
17. Who else do you feel is important to interview and why?



INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS

Francesca de Bastiani, Aboriginal Partnerships Unit
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Helen Boyce, Manager, Trades
ACCESS

Verna Billy-Minnabarriet, Chair
IAHLA

Ken Clement, Education Table
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FEASIBILITY STUDY: NEC NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE PUBLIC DESIGNATION

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Christa Williams
First Nations Summit / Education Steering Committee

Rosalind Williams, Post Secondary Program Administrator
Skwxwú7mesh úxwumixw Education Department

Chrystalynn Wilson, Education and Skills Development Manager
Tsawwassen First Nation



APPENDIX 3: SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Please indicate the status which best describes your role with the NEC Native Education College. Please choose all responses that apply:
 - Current Student
 - Alumni (past student)
 - Teaching Faculty
 - Staff
 - NEC Society Member
2. From your experience, what are the strengths of the NEC Native Education College?
3. From your experience, what are the weaknesses or challenges of the NEC Native Education College?
4. From your experience, describe the level of educational quality that you feel the NEC Native Education College provides?
5. In your opinion, is this level sufficient to meet the needs of students and the requirements of other academic institutions? Please select one response:
 - Below satisfactory level
 - Not satisfactory
 - Neutral
 - Satisfactory
 - Exceeds level
6. How could the NEC Native Education College improve its educational quality standards? Please select all responses that apply:
 - Stronger partnerships
 - Stronger policies
 - Faculty standards
 - Improved programs
 - Improved education standards
 - Other (please specify)
7. What do you see as the BENEFITS for the NEC Native Education College if it was designated as a public post-secondary institution? Please select all responses that apply:
 - Stronger partnerships
 - Stronger policies
 - Stronger credit transfer links to the public post-secondary system
 - Authority to grant the BC Grade 12 Graduation Diploma
 - Faculty standards
 - Improved programs
 - Improved education standards
 - More funding



- Stable funding
 - Other (please specify)
8. What do you see as the CHALLENGES for the NEC Native Education College if it was designated as a public post-secondary institution? Please select all responses that apply:
- Less accountability to the Aboriginal community
 - Stringent annual reporting
 - Developing and enforcing policies
 - Developing and enforcing consistent educational quality
 - Other (please specify)
9. What do you see as the BENEFITS for Aboriginal people if the NEC Native Education College was designated as a public post-secondary institution? Please select all responses that apply:
- Stronger partnerships
 - Stronger policies
 - Stronger credit transfer links to the public post-secondary system
 - Authority to grant the BC Grade 12 Graduation Diploma
 - Faculty standards
 - Improved programs
 - Improved education standards
 - More funding
 - Stable funding
 - Other (please specify)
10. What do you see as the CHALLENGES for Aboriginal people if the NEC Native Education College was designated as a public post-secondary institution? Please select all responses that apply:
- Less accountability to the Aboriginal community
 - Stringent annual reporting
 - Developing and enforcing policies
 - Developing and enforcing consistent educational quality
 - Other (please specify)
11. How could the NEC Native Education College improve its programs and services? Please select all responses that apply:
- Stronger partnerships
 - Stronger policies
 - Faculty standards
 - Improved programs
 - Improved education standards
 - Other (please specify)
12. What changes are needed at the NEC Native Education College to achieve those improvements?
13. Are there any other concerns or suggestions you have regarding the NEC Native Education College pursuing designation as a public post-secondary institution?



APPENDIX 4: FOCUS GROUP TOPICS

1. What do you feel are the strengths of the NEC?
2. What do you feel are the weaknesses of the NEC?
3. How could NEC improve its programs and services?
4. What changes are needed at NEC to achieve those improvements?
5. Describe the level of Educational Quality that you feel NEC provides?
6. Is level sufficient to meet student needs?
7. Is it sufficient to meet the requirements of other academic institutions?
8. How could NEC improve is Educational Quality Standards?
9. What do see as challenges with public designation for NEC?
10. What do you see as the benefits of public designation for NEC?
11. If the NEC received public designation how would this further:
 - The mission of the NEC
 - The mission of Province of British Columbia
 - Aboriginal Learners
 - The Aboriginal Community
12. Which parts of the Aboriginal community does NEC represent & serve?
13. How does NEC serve the Aboriginal community?
14. Does NEC sufficiently serve the Aboriginal community?
15. How is NEC accountable to the Aboriginal community?
16. Any other comments, questions or concerns on the issue of NEC pursuing status as a Public Post-Secondary Institution?



APPENDIX 5: PUBLIC POST SECONDARY STUDENTS

FIGURE 27: PUBLIC POST SECONDARY STUDENTS 2009/10

PUBLIC POST SECONDARY INSTITUTION	TOTAL STUDENTS	ABORIGINAL STUDENTS	PROPORTION OF ABORIGINAL STUDENTS
Regional Colleges			
Camosun College	18,485	890	4.8%
College of New Caledonia	9,600	2,305	24.0%
College of the Rockies	12,310	650	5.3%
Douglas College	24,615	865	3.5%
Langara College	19,140	330	1.7%
North Island College	9,460	1,315	13.9%
Northern Lights College	7,590	1,435	18.9%
Northwest Community College	20,445	3,075	15.0%
Okanagan College	11,170	1,325	11.9%
Selkirk College	22,880	515	2.3%
Vancouver Community College	18,485	715	0.5%
Total College Headcount	155,695	13,420	8.6%
Provincial Institutes			
British Columbia Institute of Technology	40,900	1,190	2.9%
Justice Institute of British Columbia	30,445	830	2.7%
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	1,240	1,020	82.3%
Total Institutes Headcount	72,585	3,040	4.2%



PUBLIC POST SECONDARY INSTITUTION	TOTAL STUDENTS	ABORIGINAL STUDENTS	PROPORTION OF ABORIGINAL STUDENTS
Regional Universities			
Capilano University	13,345	515	3.9%
Emily Carr University of Art + Design	4,250	90	2.1%
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	17,610	500	2.8%
Royal Roads University	4,445	125	2.8%
Thompson Rivers University	12,800	1,435	11.2%
Thompson Rivers University-Open Learning	13,210	920	7.0%
University of the Fraser Valley	14,590	905	6.2%
Vancouver Island University	17,370	2,035	11.7%
Total Universities Headcount	97,620	6,525	6.7%
Total All	325,900	22,985	7.1%

FIGURE 28: PUBLIC POST SECONDARY STUDENTS – PROVINCIAL UNIVERSITIES 2006/07

PROVINCIAL UNIVERSITIES	TOTAL STUDENTS
University of British Columbia	47,016
Simon Fraser University	23,645
University of Victoria	18,841
University of Northern British Columbia	3,561
Total Large Universities Headcount	93,063



APPENDIX 6: MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION GOALS

MINISTRY GOAL: Close the educational gap for Aboriginal learners

MINISTRY OBJECTIVE: A.

Increase the access, retention, completion and transition opportunities for Aboriginal learners

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Implement Phase I: Aboriginal Service Plans. Objectives include:

- Increase the number of Aboriginal students entering post-secondary education.
- Increase the number of students completing programs and the level of credentials awarded.
- Enhance the Indigenization of the academy.
- Increase choice and access by alternate program delivery including: community-based program delivery; on-line learning.

Learning/ connectivity/ Broadband and interfacing with BCcampus.

- Increase programs and services for Aboriginal students including: Elders in Residence programs; Anti-racism policies and training; Aboriginal culture and content reflected in curricula; student support services (i.e., Coordinators, Counselors, and mentors) and early intervention; increase mentors and role models; outreach and public awareness.
- Increased partnerships between public and private institutions and Aboriginal communities.

Reduce Financial Barriers

- Establish an Aboriginal Scholarship Endowment.
- Provide funding support to the Chief Joe Mathias Scholarship.
- Target Alberta Centennial Scholarship to Aboriginal learners.
- Increase Adult Basic Education Student Financial Assistance.
- Work with partners to explore options for enhancing federal support for Aboriginal learners.

Increase Participation in Strategic Programs

- Increase access, participation and completion rates for Aboriginal learners to help British Columbia address labour market shortages by targeting sections/classes for programs identified as key priorities (e.g., Health, Business, Teacher Education).

Support Aboriginal Learner transition

- Aboriginal literacy.
- Capacity building for First Nations near treaty.
- Link with Graduate Student Strategy.
- Province-wide transition projects.



MINISTRY OBJECTIVE: B. Increase the receptivity and relevance of post-secondary institutions and programs for Aboriginal learners

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Gathering Places

- Initiatives to make the post secondary institutional environment more supportive by increasing the number of welcoming and gathering places at public institutions.
- Explore business and other government partnerships.

Expand Relevance of Programs and Receptivity of Institutions

- Expanded Aboriginal Special Projects Fund.
- Language Curriculum.

Enhance Aboriginal Representation on Institutional Governance Bodies

- Implement a policy-based approach to enhance Aboriginal participation in decision-making processes and representation on institutional governance bodies.

MINISTRY OBJECTIVE: C. Strengthen Partnerships and Collaboration in Aboriginal post-secondary education

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Strengthened Agreements and Partnerships

- Encourage and explore opportunities to improve affiliation agreements between public and private Aboriginal institutions.
- Encourage and strengthen partnerships between public institutions and Aboriginal communities and organizations through Aboriginal Service Plans.
- Revise Ministry policy regarding Aboriginal institutions based on Campus 2020 recommendations.
- Continue to work with MOU partners and other ministries to ensure ongoing communication, collaboration and advice.

MINISTRY GOAL: Effective and accountable programs and services implementation and delivery

MINISTRY OBJECTIVE: D. Ensure effective measurement and progress monitoring

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

System-wide Data Tracking

- Develop system-wide standard for data collection and tracking.
- Effective strategic planning and program management based on reliable data tracking.
- Develop inventory of institutional Aboriginal support services, Aboriginal programs, and relevant institutional/community data.



Performance Measures

- Develop new performance indicators based on Aboriginal achievement.



MINISTRY GOAL	MINISTRY OBJECTIVE	<p align="center">APPENDIX STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS</p> <p align="center">*all actions are interconnected and meet various objectives</p>
<p>Close the educational gap for Aboriginal learners</p>	<p>A. Increase the access, retention, completion and transition opportunities for Aboriginal learners</p>	<p>Implement Phase I: Aboriginal Service Plans. Objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of Aboriginal students entering post-secondary education. • Increase the number of students completing programs and the level of credentials awarded. • Enhance the Indigenization of the academy. • Increase choice and access by alternate program delivery including: community-based program delivery; on-line learning; Learning/connectivity/Broadband and interfacing with BCcampus. • Increase programs and services for Aboriginal students including: Elders in Residence programs; Anti-racism policies and training; Aboriginal culture and content reflected in curricula; student support services (i.e., Coordinators, Counselors, and mentors) and early intervention; increase mentors and role models; outreach and public awareness. • Increased partnerships between public and private institutions and Aboriginal communities. <p>Reduce Financial Barriers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an Aboriginal Scholarship Endowment. • Provide funding support to the Chief Joe Mathias Scholarship. • Target Alberta Centennial Scholarship to Aboriginal learners. • Increase Adult Basic Education Student Financial Assistance. • Work with partners to explore options for enhancing federal support for Aboriginal learners. <p>Increase Participation in Strategic Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access, participation and completion rates for Aboriginal learners to help British Columbia address labour market shortages by targeting sections/classes for programs identified as key priorities (e.g., Health, Business, Teacher Education). <p>Support Aboriginal Learner transition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal literacy. • Capacity building for First Nations near treaty. • Link with Graduate Student Strategy. • Province-wide transition projects.
	<p>B. Increase the receptivity and relevance of post-secondary institutions and programs for Aboriginal learners</p>	<p>Gathering Places</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives to make the post secondary institutional environment more supportive by increasing the number of welcoming and gathering places at public institutions. • Explore business and other government partnerships. <p>Expand Relevance of Programs and Receptivity of Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded Aboriginal Special Projects Fund. • Language Curriculum. <p>Enhance Aboriginal Representation on Institutional Governance Bodies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a policy-based approach to enhance Aboriginal participation in decision-making processes and representation on institutional governance bodies.
	<p>C. Strengthen Partnerships and Collaboration in Aboriginal post-secondary education</p>	<p>Strengthened Agreements and Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and explore opportunities to improve affiliation agreements between public and private Aboriginal institutions. • Encourage and strengthen partnerships between public institutions and Aboriginal communities and organizations through Aboriginal Service Plans. • Revise Ministry policy regarding Aboriginal institutions based on Campus 2020 recommendations. • Continue to work with MOU partners and other ministries to ensure ongoing communication, collaboration and advice.
	<p>Effective and accountable programs and services implementation and delivery</p>	<p>D. Ensure effective measurement and progress monitoring</p>



APPENDIX 7: NEC PROGRAM AREAS – NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

PROGRAM AREA	NEEDS	CURRENTLY DELIVERED	GAPS & OPPORTUNITIES
Business Technology Diploma (100%) <i>Intended to meet the professional, scientific, and technical services needs in the GVRD.¹</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Technology • Small Business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied Business Technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance current program • Partnership with Chinook
Aboriginal Tourism <i>Intended to meet the retail trade, accommodation, and food service needs of the GVRD.²</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Essentials (Emerit)³ • Food Safe • WHMIS Level 1 • Serving it Right 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Host • Aboriginal Interpreter Credential Program • Aboriginal Community Tourism Trainer • Aboriginal Ecotourism Field School • Aboriginal Tourism Programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Developmental/ Transition Programs that are community based (90%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Assistant • ABE: English, Computers, Math, Socials, Science, Education & Career Planning (40%). • Essential Skills (TOWES Testing/ Training) • College Prep, including communication in PSE environment, study/reading skills, test prep, time management, writing skills, critical thinking, English 11/12, and Math 11/12, & First Nations History. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Adult Basic Education • College Connections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine ABE to more closely meet community needs • Refine College Prep program to meet community needs, and transferability requirements for Math and English 11/12. • Essential Skills enhancement with ACCESS
Science/ Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal HCA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Aboriginal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with NVIT/

¹ Statistics Canada 2001 Professional, Scientific & Technical Services 91,715

² Retail Trade 116,520 and Accommodation & Food Services 81,560 (13,305/68,250)

³ Source: Tourism Opportunities for Aboriginal Youth in the GVRD (Mixon, 2006).



FEASIBILITY STUDY: NEC NATIVE EDUCATION COLLEGE PUBLIC DESIGNATION

PROGRAM AREA	NEEDS	CURRENTLY DELIVERED	GAPS & OPPORTUNITIES
Programs (85.7%) <i>Intended to meet the health care and social services industry needs.⁴</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal Nursing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Childhood Education (NEC) Aboriginal Health Care Aid (NEC) NVIT Aboriginal Nursing/ VCC RN Program 	VCC to support providing pre-requisites for nursing programs, i.e.: biology, anatomy, etc.
PSE Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Instructors (85.7%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NVIT NAID Program VCC PIDP Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Trades (10%) <i>Intended to meet the manufacturing industry needs in the GVRD.⁵</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carpentry Plumbing Mechanics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal Essential Skills for the Trades (NEC & ACCESS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance trades training with ACCESS
Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anthropology FN Languages Aboriginal Economic Development Social Workers (83%) Governance and Leadership (100%) First Nations Administration for Program Managers (100%) Introduction to community economic development (CED) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NVIT currently delivers FN Administration Program Family & Community Counseling (NEC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IP protocol agreement with local FN, work in partnership with UBC for Coast Salish Language Program Partner with NVIT to deliver components of FN Administration Program Governance Policy Program in partnership with ? Introduction to CED, partnership with NVIT/SFU
Early Childhood Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ab. ECE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

⁴ Statistics Canada 2001 Health Care & Social Services 99,355

⁵ Statistics Canada 2001 Manufacturing 99,055.



APPENDIX 8: COLLEGE AND INSTITUTE ACT EXCERPTS

College and Institute Act [RSBC 1996] Chapter 52, Part 3 — Colleges and Provincial Institutes, Designation of Colleges and Provincial Institutes

Section 5

1. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may designate any of the following:
 - (a) a college;
 - (b) the area of British Columbia that is the college region of a college designated under this section;
 - (c) and (d) [Repealed 2008-24-19.]
 - (d) a Provincial institute.
2. On designation under this section, an institution is a corporation consisting of the members appointed to its board under section 9.

Section 5.2

The *British Columbia Institute of Technology* is continued as a corporation consisting of the members of its board.

Board Composition

Section 9

1. A board is composed of
 - (a) 8 or more persons appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council,
 - (b) one person on the faculty of the institution and elected by the faculty members,
 - (c) 2 students elected by the students,
 - (d) one person who is part of the support staff and elected by the support staff,
 - (e) the president, and
 - (f) the chair of the education council.
2. Despite subsection (1), the board of the *Justice Institute of British Columbia* is composed of
 - (a) 8 or more persons appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, and
 - (b) the president.



APPENDIX 9: NVIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINISTRY APPOINTED MEMBERS		
Neil Sterritt (Chair) Gitanmaax Band	BC Aboriginal member-at-large	term ends July 2012
Shane Coutlee (Vice Chair) Lower Nicola Band	NVIT's founding communities	term ends November 2011
Sharon Lindley Upper Nicola Band	NVIT's founding communities	term ends January 2012
Harold Calla Squamish Nation	BC Aboriginal member-at-large	term ends July 2011
Lyndale George Skidegate First Nation	BC Aboriginal member-at-large	term ends July 2011
Garry Merkel Tahltan Nation	BC Aboriginal member-at-large	term ends September 2012
Gabrielle Ollinger Cowessess First Nation	BC Aboriginal member-at-large	term ends January 2011
Angela Wesley Nuu-chah-nulth Nation	BC Aboriginal member-at-large	term ends January 2011
ELECTED MEMBERS		
Catharine Crow	NVIT Faculty Representative	term ends December 2010
Clint Garcia	NVIT Support Staff Representative	term ends December 2011
Terena Hunt	NVIT Student Representative	term ends July 2011
Karen Johnson	NVIT Student Representative	term ends July 2011
EX-OFFICIO NON-VOTING MEMBERS		
Ken Tourand	NVIT President	
Lara Condello	NVIT Education Council Chair	



APPENDIX 10: BC GOVERNMENT BOARD APPOINTMENT PROCESS

