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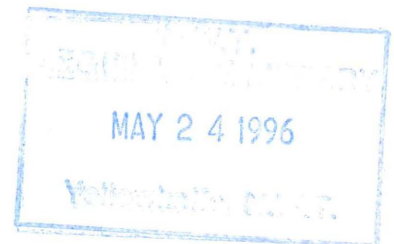
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Final Report

Metis Nation Education Research Project



Submitted By

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I. Background

The Metis Nation - Northwest Territories was formed in 1972 and today provides a strong and effective voice for the Metis of the Northwest Territories. In developing its mandate, the Metis Nation - Northwest Territories, in its Constitution, has set out a number of objectives (set out below) that have a direct impact on the promotion of Metis identity, culture and history. It is this mandate that provides direction to the Metis Nation - Northwest Territories to support, enhance and increase awareness and participation of its membership within the education system.

Today, education for the Metis of the Northwest Territories presents a unique challenge. While there has been an increased interest to address the inadequacies of the current system, it is unclear whether the concerns of the Metis are being properly recognized or addressed. In recognition of this, the Metis Nation - Northwest Territories has taken the initiative to undertake an education research project that will identify those problems and successes of the current system as it relates to Metis education.

The objectives of the Metis Nation - Northwest Territories are:

- **To promote the identity, and recognition of its membership.**
- **To promote the history, culture and role of its membership in the development of the Northwest Territories.**

The Metis Nation - Northwest Territories, in working to promote the above objectives, in 1988 established the Metis Heritage Association, which has the following objectives:

- **To institute and maintain programs promoting a pride of heritage among the Metis people of the Northwest Territories.**
- **To institute and maintain programs promoting the culture and traditions of the Metis people of the Northwest Territories.**
- **To institute and maintain programs for the advancement of education among the Metis people of the Northwest Territories.**
- **To institute and maintain programs to deal with social problems among the Metis people of the Northwest Territories.**

- **To establish a cultural centre for the Metis people of the Northwest Territories.**
- **To promote the role of the Metis youth and elders in the communities and in this respect to establish and maintain Youth and Elders' Councils.**

In response to the above objectives of the both the Metis Nation - Northwest Territories and the Metis Heritage Association and our knowledge in Metis education issues, we are pleased to present this final project report on Metis Education in the Northwest Territories.

This final submission of the Metis Nation Education Research Project has been prepared primarily in response to:

- ⇒ Objectives of the Metis Nation - Northwest Territories and the Metis Heritage Association.
- ⇒ Quantifiable discrepancies of Metis participation and success rates within the current education system.
- ⇒ Our experience with respect to education issues facing the Metis of the Northwest Territories.
- ⇒ Our knowledge and experience in the collection, compilation and presentation of relevant and useful data.

II. Methodology

Our approach to this project is the delivery of a product that will increase awareness and participation by Metis people in the education of their children at all levels of the education system. The key to achieving this end is access to information that has been previously gathered, compiled, quantified and qualified with respect to problems and successes experienced or achieved by the Metis under the current education system.

The Metis Nation of the Northwest Territories has prepared this report by:

- Compiling and reviewing information;
- Identifying outstanding issues; and
- Recommending strategies to:
 - ⇒ Develop a common understanding of the education issues facing the Metis Nation and to recommend ways to improve the achievement of Metis students;
 - ⇒ Identify and clarify graduation rates and statistical information of Metis Students in the NWT;
 - ⇒ Clarify and help common understanding of education issues through the collection of relevant research by the Metis Nation - NWT, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and others. This may include research information on the identification of education issues by Metis parents, students and teachers in Fort Smith recently carried out by the Metis Nation as well as past surveys and reports prepared by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment;
 - ⇒ Identify means for Metis heritage to be included in northern school curricula;
 - ⇒ Review and clarify funding and quality of current post secondary education. The Metis Nation is proposing to change the definition of Metis to ensure prioritization of post secondary funding for the NWT Metis.

- ⇒ Identify the ways to empower local Metis parents, Metis students and communication education councils in Metis communities so that excellence in education is achieved.

III. Issues

A. Overall Graduation Rates in the Northwest Territories

| NWT Graduation Statistics 1981-92 | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Graduates by Ethnicity | Total graduates | Academic Diplomas | General Diplomas |
| Non-native | 1,690 | 602 | 1,088 |
| Inuit | 349 | 32 | 317 |
| Dene | 180 | 22 | 158 |
| Metis | 203 | 42 | 161 |
| Total | 2,422 | 698 | 1,724 |

The breakdown shows that 86 per cent of the academic diplomas were earned by Non-native students; the Metis stood second at 6 per cent; the Inuit at nearly 4.5 per cent; followed by the Dene with about 3.5 per cent. Non-native students also earned 63.1 per cent of the general diplomas; followed by the Inuit, 18.4 per cent; the Metis at 9.3 per cent, and; the Dene at 9.2 per cent. As a representative sample of yearly graduation rates, we will refer to the Grade 12 statistics for the 1988-89 enrollment by ethnic origin and grade, and cross reference it with graduation statistics for that year.

| Grade 12 enrollment versus graduation by ethnicity for 1988-89 school year | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Student ethnicity | Enrollment | Graduated |
| Non-Native | 253 | 129 |
| Inuit | 81 | 35 |
| Metis | 40 | 15 |
| Dene | 38 | 17 |

Remember, these figures are based on statistics which exclude the 95 per cent of the Aboriginal students who began school but never graduate in the Northwest Territories (GNWT, 1989). If these students were to remain in school, aboriginal graduation and enrollment figures would escalate.

1. Profile of a Dropout

About five per cent of the school population quits school before graduating, every year averaging about 800 pupils per year (High School Participation Rate 1985-

90). It would be fair to say that these students are disenfranchised Aboriginal students whose personal development has been retarded by personal problems in the home, poverty and parental apathy.

Twenty to 30 per cent of the students in the NWT are affected by poverty. School funding formula consultation with the boards showed that there needs to be improved student support (*PEOPLE: OUR FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE, Education, Culture and Employment*). Sixty four per cent of those students who have left school report that their household receives social assistance, compared to 43 per cent of those students still in school. (*Lesson for All: Factors Contributing to Early School Leaving in the Northwest Territories, Volume I - Community Report*)

The report seems to confirm GNWT discussions with local education authorities and a 1984 study by the Canadian Health Attitudes and Behaviours Survey that “suggest that some young people in the NWT may not receive proper nourishment to function well in school. This could be one reason why many community members see economic circumstances in the home as a factor in early school leaving.”

Substance use or abuse by the student or another household member is most frequently cited as negatively affecting schooling. One half of students who were surveyed said their schooling was affected by activities in the home. The low graduation rates also contribute directly to NWT unemployment. Figures show that two-third of the NWT's unemployed have Grade 9 or less education; over 54 per cent received social assistance at one time or another in 1992, and; 35 per cent of the young people aged 15-24 also required some kind of assistance.

2. Factors That Affect Dropouts

According to *Lessons for All: Factors Contributing to Early School Leaving in the Northwest Territories, Volume I - Community Report*, there is a slow process of social alienation, familial disenfranchisement and slow school response that contribute to kids quitting school.

i) School factors

Students who quit had:

- minimal home/school contact
- problems with school work, teachers, and school rules

- likely failed a grade
- little or no interaction with other students
- poor school attendance

ii) Home factors

These students also tended to:

- live in poverty
- live in an overcrowded home
- work at home/consider a wage occupation important
- non-participation in household decisions

iii) Personal factors

The students also:

- used alcohol/exposed to a suicide
- had unrealistic expectations of the future
- were clear of education's purpose and value
- had strong peer relationships

iv) Community factors

Students were unclear of the quality of community life and were uncertain about the future of the community.

v) Cultural factors

Fifty of the 58 students surveyed who were not in school were aboriginal.

Conditions thought to contribute to early school leaving

vi) Family/societal factors

- poverty
- minority ethnicity
- family breakdown
- child abuse and neglect
- family problems such as alcohol

- lack of “educational resources” at home
- low value placed on schooling (in the home)
- uncertainty about the benefits and rewards of education
- low parental involvement in education

vii) **School policies and practices**

- uninviting school climate
- lack of appropriate course offerings
- inappropriate instructional materials
- school policy on grade retention
- appropriate teaching styles
- emphasis on rote learning
- lack of adequate counseling services
- failure to identify and respond to student needs and characteristics

viii) **Personal factor**

- slow self-esteem
- lack of life goals
- loss of hope for the future
- poor self-discipline
- desire to work and make money
- alcohol or other drug abuse
- inability to resist negative peer pressure
- repeated failure in school
- alienation from other students, teachers, family and self
- lack of participation in school sponsored activities

B. Education Curricula

LEARNING: LET'S GET IT RIGHT, A Comprehensive Survey of Metis Education in the Community of Fort Smith, (June 1995), is the basis for the comments included under this heading, as well as in the sections regarding Native Studies, and Resources and Staffing.

1. Student Outlook

Metis students in JBT School and P.W. Kaeser High School consistently identified that Math, English and Social Studies gave them trouble.

2. Aspirations

68 Metis students in JBT School in Fort Smith from Grades 4 to 7 were cognizant of education being crucial to their futures. Two students explicitly stated they wanted a life on the land after graduation, the rest mentioned interests in mostly professional occupations, followed by trades.

It was nearly unanimous in students from JBT and PW Kaeser school that they expected to continue their education via post secondary schooling. Awareness of the importance of education to their aspirations are evidence of a growing consciousness among students that education is a stepping stone to future occupations.

This seemed to confirm survey findings that showed 93 per cent of all students know the “kind of work they would like to do in the future. They see themselves working on a variety of different occupations and economic sectors but jobs in the service, transportation and health/medical industries are preferred.”

Most PWK students planned to enter post-secondary studies in college or university. For example, four of the five Metis students in Grade 12 planned to continue their education.

3. Improvement

It was nearly unanimous among the 40 PWK Metis students who were interviewed that summer courses would be helpful to finish grade levels or to make up for failed courses. Two other suggestions that were given particular emphasis were:

- new teachers
- more courses.

4. Teacher Outlook

i) Standards

Teachers at JBT School “agree that high standards must be maintained to ensure our students success in their future academic and vocational endeavours in the north or the south,”

"Most JBT staff agree that if students complete an academic grade 12, they are very prepared for university, especially those who have marks in the 70's."

PWK students compared favourably, high or higher with students down south and from northern rural communities, according to the teachers.

ii) Apprenticeship

JBT teachers generally approved apprenticeship programs because not all students are academically inclined and require other options for job skills and the subsequent quality of life it may contribute to.

Ten of 15 PWK staff agreed that an apprenticeship program would help students who are not academically inclined, but stressed that the funding must come from outside sources, instead of being funded by the school.

Indeed, it is thought in many circles that schools and other educational institutions unfairly sponsor cheap labour for the private sector.

C. Native Studies

1. Student Outlook

Metis students roundly felt that Metis language and culture was lacking in northern studies and language courses, and that they would be interested in hearing elders speak in class. They also urged that more camping and field trip activities be conducted.

2. Teacher Outlook

"The majority of the JBT staff don't think there is enough Metis culture in the social studies curriculum. The curriculum seems appears to be a vague guideline, offering little in the way of resources, leaving it up to teachers to dig up their own material... it is merely an outline."

Resource material constantly presents a problem, as one PWK teacher discovered:

- “when the new Northern Studies course started in 1991 the NWT Metis Association could provide me with no material to help.”
- English and math are crucial to the students’ future job occupations, are being eroded as cultural and language classes replace time and resources.
- JBT teachers also felt that native studies and language programs impinged on funding for basic school programs, and that parents must reinforce the teachings at home or in the community.
- Students “seem to enjoy learning from” hunters and trappers who are invited to the school.
- JBT teachers recommended that the Dene Kede Curriculum be used for Kindergarten to Grade 6.
- The Teacher Education Program was seen as one small step in promoting a love for school and learning, a way to demonstrate that education is a priority with students and parents, and the means to produce qualified aboriginal teachers and native language instructors.
- PWK teachers “insist the TEP students get their degree in education before they take over a classroom.”
- It was recommended that language teachers be found in the community and taught how to teach a class.

3. Priority

Teachers and aboriginal leaders must meet to develop an educational program, discuss strategies, learning theories and child development. High profile aboriginal public role models must be brought to the students, as well, to stress the importance of education. “I do not feel cultural education should be a priority for the school. Culture should be taught at home - cultural classes/groups could be organized on weekends/evenings.” It depends, as one person wrote, on the value placed on cultural education in the families. “Some feel it is important, while others feel it is not.” “Many (interviewees) stated the opinion that the families and/or the community should accept the responsibility of educating their own children in their culture.”

D. Resources and Staffing

The “problem is in getting instructors and accessing resources,” wrote one respondent. Alternative education, students of Arctic College attendees, native studies and fiscal restraint are contributing to an increasing strain on staff and resources in Fort Smith. Teachers also identified counseling and tutoring as areas where students lacked support. There “needs to be money available for cultural activities.”

1. Demands of Transient College Student Population

Concern over the growing demands on the school system by children of college students focused on pupils from rural communities who were behind on grade levels, as well as increasing special demands they exerted on the system. Rather than getting more funding and programs to handle the student immigration from smaller, rural communities, teachers were concerned over imminent cutbacks and fewer staff.

“The problem is the system,” one teacher wrote. “not the transient students. We need an added program for the transient students within our system.”

Why? Because transient students pose additional strain on the staff and resources, which increase the distance and decrease the relationship between teachers and students.

Alternative programs such as Star Quest help some students, however, it takes staff away from the growing mainstream classes, and exerts pressure on those who deliver mainstream programs.

2. Proposed Solutions

The South Slave Divisional Board must resolve it with the Department of Education and acquire special funding for Fort Smith. As for student tutoring and counseling, personal education plans could prompt parental supervision of disciplined study times.

E. Community Empowerment

1. Poor Communications

The Community Education Council was a sore point with PWK staff, who felt that public relations, encouraging public input and concentrating on policy should

replace the secretive nature of the meetings, and a damaging focus on day-to-day school matters.

“There should be far better and more communication between the CEC and the teaching staff,” say JBT staff.

“It’s a very complicated issue – the problem is not impersonality – the problem is generally a BAD relationship between the school and the families in this community. Both parents and teachers have not enough power in the education system. Decisions are made by people who know little – if anything – about the needs of the students and the curriculum.”

Barriers to clear communications were low parent-teacher contact, parental distrust of the education system and lack of parental supervision in student studies. Presumably, then, we can assume that current the teacher-parent relationship is hindered by the lack of a proper framework for mutual, reasonable dialogue.

2. Proposed Solutions

Increase parental involvement in controlling their children’s education, including cultural education. Parents must monitor the children’s personal education programs, keep in close contact with the teachers, and ensure that homework is complete.

F. Priorities in the Strategic Plan

1. Technology

Information networks – “Classrooms without walls” – will be crucial to future educational development across the Northwest Territories, from Kindergarten to post-secondary education, as well as in adult education and apprenticeships.

Information networks offer economical and feasible access instead of centralized programs, as well as opportunities for government and aboriginal organization

staff in rural areas to boost their command over new technologies, thus equipping them to use the latest tools.

Technology will also offer options for developing summer school programs for students that require it, as well as access to a wider assortment of courses unavailable in their communities. Most importantly, students get the opportunity to be educated in their home communities.

The Metis Nation Education Specialist, proposed in the recommendations, could monitor the success of distance learning techniques, and how best to adapt teaching and learning as technology plays a larger role in academic education and vocational training.

Equipping students with hands-on knowledge of information networks will also allow them to prepare for post-secondary education. They will be able to browse and submit "paperless" applications to post-secondary institutions as post-secondary registrations go "on-line." Already, the province of British Columbia has instituted such technology, saving time, paper, postage and days of processing time. Ontario is currently creating a similar system.

Computer familiarity is also crucial to future employment. Statistics Canada reported that nearly 70 per cent of all employed persons used computers at work in 1994, compared to over 50 per cent who used computers in 1989.

2. Decentralizing Education

"The NWT needs to develop a home-grown work force. To reach this goal, we need more Grade 12 graduates. In the early 1980s, Grades 10 to 12 were offered in only six communities. Mr. Speaker, with the implementation of Grade 12 in Fort Good Hope this fall, all NWT students have an opportunity to complete their senior secondary education within their region. This improved access has had a positive effect on participation rates. There are now 761 students in Grade 12 – twice as many as there were five years ago." – Honourable Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment

Technology allows for the increased access to and capacity for a wider range of learning in the communities, but expanding the grade levels and post-secondary education programs in the communities will prime the graduates and students who require the information networks, raising overall graduation rates.

G. Funding

School boards and teachers are finding themselves increasingly in a bind over eroding funding and increasing roles to play in students' social welfare. Roll backs are being legislated into salaries of already overworked teachers, and such policies have led to broken off negotiations. Inevitably, school boards and teachers will feel the effects in salaries, benefits and working conditions.

School boards will be increasingly involved in financial management rather than, for example, philosophical discussion regarding early childhood education. Students will feel the ultimate effects in quality of education, and that is why parents, leaders and industry must step in to offer cooperative approaches in tutoring programs and scholarships to fill the gaps in staff and resources that the policy makers are creating.

The Northwest Territories also faces difficult decisions in Student Financial Assistance, according to *PEOPLE: OUR FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE, Education, Culture and Employment*, which estimates Aboriginal grants will increase dramatically from just over \$10 million in 1995 to nearly \$23 million in year 2010. Cost management may come from:

- limiting the number of years of assistance;
- reducing or eliminating remissions on loans;
- introducing a means test;
- lowering the level of funding available to students;
- providing funding based on success; and
- directing Student Financial Assistance towards priority occupations.

Clearly, these are challenges that land claim beneficiaries and Metis leadership can tackle with a reasonable degree of confidence in the short term. Why? Because they have the framework, upcoming infrastructure and clearly established education and training programs as priorities.

H. Post Secondary Education

More Metis students must remain in school and graduate before they can take advantage of post-secondary education. However, planning must begin on devolving post-secondary funding to the district governments under the land claims. Why? Because the demand for Aboriginal post-secondary grants is predicted to rise dramatically and it must be reviewed to make it more sustainable.

Currently, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment wants to review Student Financial Assistance. Two options, lowering funding and limiting the number of years that students may access it, are troubling because they undermine student aspirations. Other factors also deserve scrutiny.

Tuition fees jumped up 7 per cent from last year, on average, from \$2,179 in 1994-95 to \$2,333 in 1995-96, and it appears they will climb even higher. Federal and provincial contributions to universities are falling, and student fees are rising dramatically, such as Ontario's 10 per cent hike last year. There are also considerations of privatization; Queen's University, for example, offers a \$20,000 12-month MBA program which is funded wholly by student fees.

The GNWT must consult land claimants on changes to policies, programs, services and legislation, because they will be devolved as self-government is implemented. Student Financial Assistance will eventually be devolved, so land claimants deserve input into the financial review.

IV. Recommendations

1. **Resources to procure an Educational Specialist to the Metis Nation of the Northwest Territories.**

Objective: To enhance the partnership between Metis peoples and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, and increase Metis graduation rates.

Activities: Developing Metis tutoring programs; evaluating current models; monitoring the work plan in the education strategy, and identifying education priorities that contribute to developing a Metis educational plan; increasing the involvement of all Metis locals, leaders, Community Education Councils, and divisional boards of education; monitor the evaluation and accountability framework on student achievement, board and school reviews, staff evaluation and reporting to parents, as contained in Towards Excellence, which identifies numeric and literary skills as barometers of overall achievement; identifying how land claims may interact with Community Learning Networks, as identified in the education strategy.

2. **Metis communities and Metis leaders must demonstrate more leadership in relation to education.**

Objective: To increase Metis ownership of public education, provide role models and clarify to students that education is a priority, as identified in the Action Plan for Priorities of the Metis Nation of the Northwest Territories, thereby assisting students to stay in school.

Activities: Develop Metis tutoring programs, and volunteer time and skills to help the students who attend; participate in cultural education programs; help develop cooperative cultural education programs that reflect local culture and traditional knowledge; increase involvement in divisional boards of education, Community Education Councils and parental contact with teachers and school administration.

3. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment must ensure that the strategic plan is implemented.

Objective: To monitor and evaluate the work schedule and communicate progress with stakeholders.

Activities: Release annual performance reviews of the strategy; update the Metis Education Specialist who can report to the Metis headquarters and the communities and in particular, ensure that strategic plans in relation to the use of technology and decentralization are enacted to increase access to education, which is key to offering post-secondary and adult upgrading programs; ensure that grade expansion continues in the communities.

4. Industry must initiate cooperative educational activities across the Northwest Territories, and not just in land claim areas.

Objective: To demonstrate corporate good will, increase the profile of education in relation to final employment, initiate a relationship with schools, and promote Metis peoples.

Activities: Provide incentives for staff to volunteer as tutors; increase scholarships; provide role models.

5. Evaluate the feasibility of a summer semester or on-line courses for students who wish to obtain passing grades or improve their marks.

Objective: To increase student performance.

Activities: The Metis Education Specialist will consult parents, Aboriginal leaders, students and the department on the need and viability of a summer semester program; evaluate whether information networks can provide the support and courses required for summer school.

6. School administration and teachers must increase communications with parents and the communities.

Objective: Improve relationships with Metis people.

Activities: Make recommendations for full-time liaison officers to serve as a primary link between the schools and the communities; encourage more parental involvement in activities that contribute to secondary links such as parent-teacher days, science fairs, career days and other school events.

7. **The Department of Education, Culture and Employment must re-examine Native Studies.**

Objective: To make cultural education more relevant and voluntary to students in a cooperative approach with communities.

Activities: In the long-term, cooperate with the Metis Education Specialist to develop a voluntary cooperative cultural pilot program that includes back-to-the-land activities such as instruction by Metis elders, as well as camping and field trips; include Metis elders, leaders and parents to assist teachers on a curriculum that covers inherent rights, land claim agreements, self-government and cultural activities; in the short-term, provide Native Studies teachers with copies of Framework for Learning Materials, Curriculum Development, by the Metis Heritage Association.

The recommendations are meant to make school control and administration as progressive as possible by increasing parental involvement, encouraging Metis leaders and organizations to take ownership of student education and to initiate pilot projects that will serve as examples of future programs in training and education, cultural education, tutoring programs and other stay-in-school strategies.

Land claim areas were considered as the rational choice for implementing comprehensive education programs because they provide infrastructures and a climate that fosters long-term employment and training opportunities.

Particular attention must be paid to land claim implementations, such as Nunavut's preparation to increase its Inuit managerial staff to 300 by the year 1999, with the rest of the support staff to be trained afterwards. With all due respect, though, it is one case of four that may be used.

Land claims is fostering joint ventures in training and education programs, both in industry and government, and so a dialogue in business and political forums must begin shaping future opportunities in this area. After all, training and post-secondary education must support employers' and students' needs.

Adult education, post-secondary courses and other forms of schooling must continue to be decentralized and offered in rural communities via new programs and long distance education.

V. CONCLUSION

The Honourable Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment stated in the Legislative Assembly on December 14, 1995, that "given the current fiscal climate, the participation of all stakeholders is essential to improving services. There is no doubt that we must identify new approaches to support program and service delivery."

The Metis Nation of the Northwest Territories has previously requested the secondment of a Metis Education Specialist and were unsuccessful. However, in light of the partnership approach the Department is taking, and in the wake of the the GNWT's community empowerment initiative, it is incumbent upon the GNWT to provide the resources that will allow the Metis Nation - NWT to employ a Metis Education Specialist.

The specialist would have a variety of duties in fostering community involvement in school administration and operations; increasing parental and Metis leadership participation in students education; developing Metis tutorial programs; enhancing school-parental relations; proposing a relevant alternative to Native Studies in a community-based cooperative cultural education program; as well as monitoring the strategic plan's implementation schedule, and; the accountability framework on student achievement, board and school reviews, staff evaluation and reporting to parents, as contained in *Towards Excellence*.

The Metis Nation - NWT's action plan identifies education as career-oriented in professional occupations, or leading into vocational training programs. Education is recognized as the foundations to the people's future political and economical success. Increased Metis involvement in the schools takes the form of increased support in the Kindergarten to Grade 9 levels, proposed counseling and tutorial programs to secondary students and an overall review of public education and how it is delivered in the Northwest Territories.

This position of Metis Education Specialist would be a one year pilot project (refer to Appendix "C") and concentrate on the work plan in the educational strategy in *PEOPLE: OUR FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE, Education, Culture and Employment*, as well as priorities in the *Action Plan for Priorities of the Metis Nation of the Northwest Territories* (refer to Appendix "B"). In particular, the specialist would:

- develop an overall Metis education plan according to initiatives contained in the *Action Plan For Priorities of the Metis Nation of the Northwest Territories*, and increase the involvement of Metis locals, Leaders, Community Education Councils, and divisional boards of education;
- evaluate current tutorial programs, and develop a pilot program for a Metis tutorial program;
- monitor the evaluation and accountability framework on student achievement, board and school reviews, staff evaluation and reporting to parents; and
- identify how land claims and the community wellness initiatives (strategy) may interact with Community Learning Networks.

Appendix "A"

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Appendix "B"

ACTION PLAN FOR PRIORITIES OF THE
METIS NATION OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

A discussion paper for the 1992 Metis Nation
Assembly with recommendations for action to
implement the priorities established by the
Metis Nation Assembly in 1991.

Prepared for the Metis Nation by Ben Hubert
with the assistance of Roland Bailey

September 1992

BACKGROUND

The territorial and national Metis leadership have done a masterful job in securing recognition, rights and benefits for the Metis people of Canada. The Metis today have a secure place in the national and territorial constitutional and political agenda. In emphasising the common heritage and strength of Metis people generally, the territorial and national leadership has secured a status for Metis in Canada that has been denied you in the past. The challenge now for The Metis Nation in the Northwest Territories is to achieve the full potential that this status offers. To do that the Metis Nation can build on the strengths of its members in the communities and locals. The draft action plan that follows is intended to serve as a framework for action to produce long term growth of the Metis Nation in the Northwest Territories.

MISSION STATEMENT

An action plan like this should start from a focused statement that clearly sets the purpose of the Metis Nation in the Northwest Territories. A draft mission statement is recommended to the assembly for discussion:

THE METIS NATION IS DEDICATED TO THE GROWTH AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ALL METIS PERSONS WHO TOGETHER WILL PROTECT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND ^{SOCIETY} WORK TO PROMOTE AND ENHANCE THEIR CULTURE, ECONOMY AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE METIS HOMELAND OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES.

This statement is not intended to force all Metis in the Northwest Territories into the same mold. It should do just the opposite. It should reassure all Metis in the Northwest Territories that the Metis Nation will work to assist their growth and strength at the individual, family and Local level and thereby strengthen the Metis Nation as a whole. Just as cooperation by combining regional strengths at the national level achieved results far exceeding regional efforts of the past, so in the Northwest Territories can the Metis become stronger by working from the voluntary combined strength of the individual locals. Such cooperation will truly establish the Metis people as a nation and ensure that the purposes of the draft mission statement are accomplished.

INTRODUCTION TO THE DRAFT ACTION PLAN

The 1991 Metis Nation Assembly set priorities that the Metis People of the Northwest Territories expected to be addressed by the Metis Nation Executive.

The 1991 short term priorities (12 months) in order of importance to the people participating in the priority setting workshop were:

- accomplish their goals
2. improve education for Métis students
 3. secure medical benefits for Métis
 4. promote economic development programs for Métis
 5. reduce alcohol and drug problems
 6. enhance Métis history and culture
 7. resolve land claims
 8. improve Métis entrepreneurial skills
 9. support youth
 10. improve funding for Métis housing

In considering long term priorities (5 Years), the 1991 assembly set three priorities:

- ** 1. secure adequate funding so that the Métis Nation and it's locals may accomplish their goals
 2. improve Métis Education
 3. resolve Métis land claims
 4. promote economic development among the Métis
- ** amended as per RESOLUTION #4-11-07-93 (attached)

Some of these priorities can be addressed with funding (education and economic development) while others, like land claims, depend on the political environment. This draft action plan concentrates on those priorities that can be tackled by the Métis Nation for its members with appropriate funding. For example, the Métis Nation can develop a strategy for Métis education, secure funding and go on to implement the plan for the benefit of Métis students. On the other hand, establishing a Métis land base in the Métis Homeland is not that simple, it requires the ongoing participation of other independent parties whose priorities and agenda cannot be set by the Métis Nation alone.

The order of the items addressed in this plan will follow that established in the list of short term priorities set by the 1991 Métis Nation Assembly in Fort Simpson.

EDUCATION

The goal of the Actions recommended for Métis education is for each Métis student to become qualified for the post secondary career oriented education and/or training of the student's choice.

Education for Métis was rated the highest in both short and long term priority categories at the 1991 Assembly. Statistics show that there is a very high dropout rate for aboriginal students in the NWT. There may be some remedies for that problem for Métis students.

It would be unrealistic to establish a separate primary and secondary school system for Métis students completion grade 12, but methods can be found that will see more Métis students completing grade 12. Statistics for the mid - 80's show that up to 40% of all Métis Students were either not entering, or were dropping out of high school. This can be reduced. A person without a high school education cannot expect to enter post

secondary education or training programs without significant upgrading. When enrolment quotas limit entry for many programs, persons requiring upgrading will not be considered.

A two pronged action plan for Metis education is recommended. One would be aimed at community support for education in kindergarten to grade 9; the other could provide counselling and tutorial support for Metis students in community grade 10, regional high schools, and Arctic College.

There are several issues that apply to both levels of education. More emphasis on Metis Heritage and Culture is needed when preparing the curriculum; and, there needs to be more effort placed on assessment and providing a more effective learning program for school children with special needs.

Kindergarten to Grade 9:

The effectiveness of an education system in the primary and junior levels is in a large part dependant on the learning environment established in the home and community. It is important that every Metis Local establishes a school support group that can work with the principal and teachers to provide a quality program that equips students for further education and training. Emphasis on education in the home, by community leaders and elders will help establish and maintain a healthy school environment. Agreeing together that the school is charged with providing a high quality program can send important signals to pupils on the need for diligence and effort on their part. With appropriate public support the school, family and community working together can provide a mutually supportive program; a program that prepares the student for further education, either in the home community or elsewhere.

All this sounds fine in theory, but how can we make it work? Is it possible for each Metis Local to work with the local school(s)? In addition to local support groups, it is recommended that the Metis Nation executive secure professional help for the Metis Locals, especially those in communities without high schools. This resource person would work with the Metis Local support groups as they develop a working relationship with their school's teaching staff.

The Metis Nation can also address concerns at the political level in cases where the legitimate concerns of its people are not being addressed by the Department of Education.

High School and Arctic College

Statistics show that most Metis in the labour force have completed grade 9 but almost half have not completed grade 12. Although these statistics were collected in 1985, the trend today seems similar. The action taken to improve this situation should

emphasise a program that serves the aspirations of all Metis high school students to achieve their full potential.

Grade 10 is a significant change in education from the junior program of grades 7 to 9. Usually it involves fewer subjects which are taught more often per week, especially in the semester system now followed in NWT high schools. It therefore requires much more diligence on the part of the student. Many are not prepared for this and may become discouraged. This is compounded for students who may be away from home for the first time and living in a boarding home or hostel.

A counselling and tutorial program, if approved by the Metis Nation assembly, will seek funding for a pilot program for 1992/93 during which the program would be developed and initiated at one high school for the spring semester before it is implemented for all high schools, community grade 10 and Arctic College in 1993/94. This program would have several features including:

- notice and description of services to Metis students prior to fall enrolment at school;
- registration in the program by Metis students wishing to receive help from counsellors and tutors;
- matching students with counsellors and tutors and establishing a schedule for study sessions;
- follow-up with school and family by counsellor/tutor.

This program will emphasise the need for a high school education that is necessary for post secondary education in the trades, and southern technical schools and universities. It is acknowledged that Metis students attending these schools may also need counselling and other assistance. With enough money the program may be expanded in the future to serve students in the south.

Adult Education

Many Metis Locals are involved in the Pathways Program which is in the early stages of implementation. It is important that the resources for this program are aimed at the most needy areas in each community so that those adults participating in the program become more able to participate in economic opportunities and the overall leadership for, and management of family and community issues.

In addition to these specific educational initiatives the Metis Nation should request and participate in an overall review of public education and how it is delivered in the Northwest Territories. This review should examine issues like the high dropout rate in both junior and high school, the high number of "graduates" who do not meet requirements for the post secondary education or training of their choice, the role of

the family and community in operating the schools, and the many related issues that delivering an effective educational program depend on.

It is recommended that:

- the Metis Nation secure the services of an education professional to assist the locals in their efforts to improve education for their children, and
- each Metis Local establish a school support group to work with schools in Kindergarten to grade 9, and
- the Metis Nation establish a program for counselling and tutoring Metis high school and Arctic College students.
- the Metis Nation request and participate in an overall review of public education and how it is delivered in the Northwest Territories.

MEDICAL BENEFITS FOR METIS

The Metis leadership both at the territorial level and the national level have stressed the need for equality of treatment of aboriginal people in Canada. The Metis Nation in the Northwest Territories is confident that health benefits for Metis will be in place as soon as a formal enumeration of Metis persons in the Northwest Territories can be completed and verified. This is necessary to accurately estimate the funding needed to extend health benefits to Metis patients.

It is expected that Metis will thereafter receive the same medical services as are provided to Dene, Inuit and Inuvialuit.

It is recommended that:

- the Metis Nation leadership continue to work with the GNWT to complete the Metis enumeration and then secure the necessary funding for health services to Metis.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR METIS

In recent years efforts into economic development for Metis have been channelled through the Metis Development Corporation. MDC was established in 1977 by the Metis Association of the Northwest Territories, as it was known at the time, and its Locals. The 1979 Assembly in Ft. Smith endorsed MDC as the "economic arm" of the Metis Association. Corporate direction established at the time included a mixture of business and social goals and objectives which included:

- maximize value of shareholders' investment;
- develop land and resources and produce goods and services in an overall context of social responsibility;
- be a good corporate citizen in all communities where the corporation operated;
- assist regions and communities to establish an economy and society which reflect Metis values and lifestyle.

These broad goals and objectives and numerous sub-objectives which followed were developed in a very different economic climate than we have today. In 1977 there was a very real expectation of mega-project resource development in the Metis homeland as well as a land claim settlement which would deliver significant amounts of cash that could facilitate independent participation in resource development and other economic ventures for the benefit of Metis people. In 1992, 15 years since MDC was established, there has been much less resource development than expected, and there has not been a land claim settlement for most of the Metis people.

MDC has examined its operations to respond to today's economic realities and to find better ways to serve its Metis shareholders in particular, and the Metis people of the Northwest Territories generally. This review has raised several questions on how MDC can better fill the economic development role expected of it by its shareholders and the Metis people generally.

1. Are the goals and objectives of MDC as developed in 1977 adequate for today's economic environment and the new corporate structure of MDC?
2. Can the MDC board serve its shareholders and also be an effective voice for Metis economic development at the local and regional level?
3. How can MDC be more effective in communicating its corporate message to its shareholders and to the Metis people generally?
4. How can MDC fulfil its original role as economic development advisor to the Metis Nation and business consultant to Metis Locals, individual Metis entrepreneurs and businesses?

The authors of this draft action plan are fully aware that MDC is an independent corporation controlled by a board of directors that are accountable to MDC shareholders and not to the Metis Nation. Regardless of these facts, the authors believe that MDC remains a tool that can serve Metis people in the future. In reviewing priorities in 1991, the Metis people indicated that economic development for

Metis must be addressed. In developing an economic development strategy the Metis Nation should perhaps first answer a fundamental question:

Is MDC the preferred vehicle for Metis economic development in the Northwest Territories for business opportunities where either the risk and/ or equity required is greater than an individual can handle?

In answering that question several characteristics of MDC might be considered.

1. MDC is 100% Metis owned.
2. Every Metis person in the Northwest Territories is eligible, for a nominal sum of \$5.00, to be a voting shareholder in MDC.
3. MDC has a multi-million dollar asset base from which to serve its shareholders.
4. MDC has 15 years experience in the northern economic environment managing investment, participating in joint ventures, managing properties, and more recently, ownership in retail, service and tourist businesses.
5. MDC has a strong track record in establishing a partnership with government funding programs to serve aboriginal people in and entering the business world.
 - MDC delivers the CAEDS (Canadian Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy) program in the western Northwest Territories under contract to the Government of Canada.
 - MDC owns 50% of a lending institution with a pool of capital accessible to Metis and Dene entrepreneurs.

The authors of this draft action plan would advise that the Metis Nation confirm MDC as the preferred vehicle for Metis investment and economic development where the risk and /or equity necessary is greater than individual Metis business persons can handle. In doing so, the Metis Nation could request that MDC further develop consulting and advisory services to Metis entrepreneurs and businesses so that Metis persons are better equipped in preparing for business opportunities at the community level. Perhaps more important than preparation of entrepreneurs for business is the help and advice necessary to stay in business. Many northern businesses fail because the owner/operator lacks skills in managing cash, especially when the business starts with debt that requires monthly interest payments. Services to businesses should include "after care" for entrepreneurs entering the business world.

There may be numerous business opportunities emerging in response to the GNWT implementing the decentralization and privatization recommendations of the Beattie

report. MDC is well positioned to explore opportunities in partnership with, and provide support and assistance to local Metis entrepreneurs and businesses.

Some economic development programs that are currently available to northern businesses make a distinction between communities, and between aboriginal and non-aboriginal applicants and route the application accordingly. The response time for programs that deal with non-aboriginal applications for capital is generally shorter than that of its aboriginal counterpart. The Metis Nation Executive should request a review of the policies that create such discrimination as well as the procedures that result in costly delays for aboriginal applicants.

It is recommended that:

- the Metis Nation reaffirm MDC as the preferred vehicle for investment and economic development, and,
- the Metis Nation executive work with MDC to secure personnel from government and/or industry on secondment, or secure funding for MDC to hire professional personnel to provide business development, planning and after care services for Metis business people in the Northwest Territories.
- the Metis Nation request a review of government policies that distinguish between applicants resulting in costly delays for aboriginal applicants.

REDUCE ALCOHOL AND DRUG PROBLEMS

The Metis Nation cannot reduce alcohol, drug and solvent abuse problems for its members. Little, if anything, can be done in the absence of the will by the individual to change his or her habits and related behaviour. Society is generally aware of the pain and suffering that is caused by abuse of alcohol and drugs and the related family and spousal violence. The Metis leadership is powerless to change the habits of its members. It can however set an example of sobriety and promote a standard of zero tolerance for violent and other abusive behaviour against children and spouses. The Metis leadership can stand up and say it will not hide the truth about member's addictions and related problems, rather it will encourage openness and honesty so that members with problems can be encouraged to seek treatment, recovery and then contribute to the overall healing that is needed in the community.

The Metis Nation leadership could also consider developing a code of conduct that each Metis Local president and director might volunteer to adopt. The code would promote sobriety, honesty and zero tolerance for abuse and violence.

Developing, adopting and putting a code of conduct into daily use and promoting a process of openness and healing from past abuses will help establish a strong and healthy Metis Nation.

It is recommended that:

- the Metis Nation leadership develop a voluntary code of conduct with respect to the use of alcohol and non prescription drugs, which will also promote zero tolerance for spousal assault and family violence.
- the Metis Nation seek financial and personnel resources to assist Locals in the healing necessary to recover from past problems of alcohol abuse and related behaviour; and
- materials be developed to sensitize Metis youth to the costs and effects of alcohol and substance abuse.

METIS HERITAGE AND CULTURE

The Metis Nation is blessed with an abundance of healthy pride in the heritage its elders bring to it. There has been an active program of heritage documentation, preservation and publication by the Metis Heritage Association.

Although funding is important in the work of the Metis Heritage Association, it is equally important to its work for the Metis people to volunteer their effort and knowledge, especially in documenting the written and oral history of the elders, and the Michif language of many of the elders. Without a larger effort that may come only by way of volunteers, the materials for publishing Metis heritage and culture in books, tapes and video for Metis and the general public will not be possible.

The recent developments in northern native broadcasting provide a further opportunity to produce examples of Metis history, art and music for broadcast throughout northern Canada.

It is recommended that:

- the Metis Heritage Association remain the organisation charged with documenting and publishing Metis heritage and culture in the Northwest Territories, and
- the Metis Nation draw the attention of funding agencies to the inequality of funding that is provided for the documentation and preservation of Metis heritage, culture and language when compared to other aboriginal organizations, and

- the Metis Heritage Association be encouraged to continue work in:
 - Metis oral history,
 - Metis written history,
 - the Michif language of the Metis,
 - Metis heritage materials for school curricula.

SETTLE METIS LAND CLAIMS

Resolving the outstanding Metis land claim in the Northwest Territories is in part tied to the ongoing constitutional evolution of self government for aboriginal people in Canada. The Metis leadership cannot set the land claims schedule or agenda without the cooperation of other parties at the territorial and national levels. This action plan is therefore unable to offer detailed proposals to settle the Metis land claim.

Nevertheless, it seems realistic to assume that the right for Metis self government will be established either in the national constitution, or by bilateral negotiations with the Government of Canada. Realizing the full potential of self government for the Metis and implementing the Metis land claim will require leadership and management training.

It is recommended that:

- funding for leadership and management training for Metis be incorporated into the overall self government and land claim negotiation strategy when it is developed.

IMPROVE METIS ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS

This subject is addressed in the recommendations regarding the Metis economic development.

SUPPORT FOR METIS YOUTH

The challenge of ensuring wholesome and productive activities for youth is a problem faced by all of society. Several of the initiatives proposed in this action plan (like education) are aimed directly at Metis young people. Activities for youth can be created when project monies are available for specific activities, like the shoreline clean-up of Great Slave Lake funded by the Arctic Environment Strategy. Programs specifically for youth by the Metis Nation headquarters however would take away from initiatives that should be addressed by families and communities. It would be improper for the Metis Nation to conduct activities for people and communities that they could and should do better for themselves.

The staff and resource people at the Metis Nation remain available to help the Locals in preparing funding proposals and implementing projects that have been funded.

FUNDING FOR METIS HOUSING

Housing in the Northwest Territories is a program of the NWT Housing Corporation managing monies that are guaranteed by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. They provide for two types of housing:

- publicly owned housing that is rented to low income families at a subsidized rent, and
- home owner assisted houses (HAP).

Most of the houses funded in the western NWT are HAP homes which cost about one tenth of that of low rental homes when one considers the life time costs of the unit. Many Metis families are in homes they have built themselves without government help. Some Metis families live in HAP homes. Both require ongoing maintenance.

In a time of shrinking budgets for social housing it is important that the existing housing stock is kept in good repair since it will be much cheaper to keep it up than to replace it.

Also, existing programs of the NWT Housing Corporation do not provide assistance for Metis people in the larger communities. While HAP homes are built in Ndilo and Dettah, Metis in Yellowknife may not be eligible for HAP support because the program does not operate where there is an active housing market.

From time to time there is an opportunity for a Local to embark on a housing project at the community level. The Metis Nation supports such initiatives and should encourage all Locals to pursue such opportunities with the appropriate funding partner.

It falls within the mandate of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation to invite the Metis Nation into the process of developing, implementing and reviewing its programs. The Metis Nation requests that the "tripartite agreement" which provides for such participation for the Metis Nation be implemented.

It is therefore recommended that:

- the Metis Nation monitor housing policies and programs to ensure that programs like HAP and HIP (home improvement program) continue and that funds are available to assist Metis elders, single Metis parent families and Metis families in poverty to maintain their homes in acceptable condition, and

- NWT Housing Corporation programs be reviewed so that Metis in larger urban centres are eligible for support on the same basis as if they live in smaller, more remote communities.
- the NWT Housing Corporation activate a "tripartite agreement" which provides for Metis participation in planning and designing housing policies and programs.

METIS NATION FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The following summary shows how the funds available to the Metis Nation have shrunk in recent years. Funding for Metis Locals however remains an important target for Metis Nation monies and should continue and increase.

The money available to the Metis Nation will not support new programs at headquarters or with the Locals. Like headquarters, the locals are called on to do more with less. The action plans that are described here will all require new funding. Those that treat the priorities established at the 1991 assembly in an acceptable manner should be endorsed so that funding for them can be pursued.

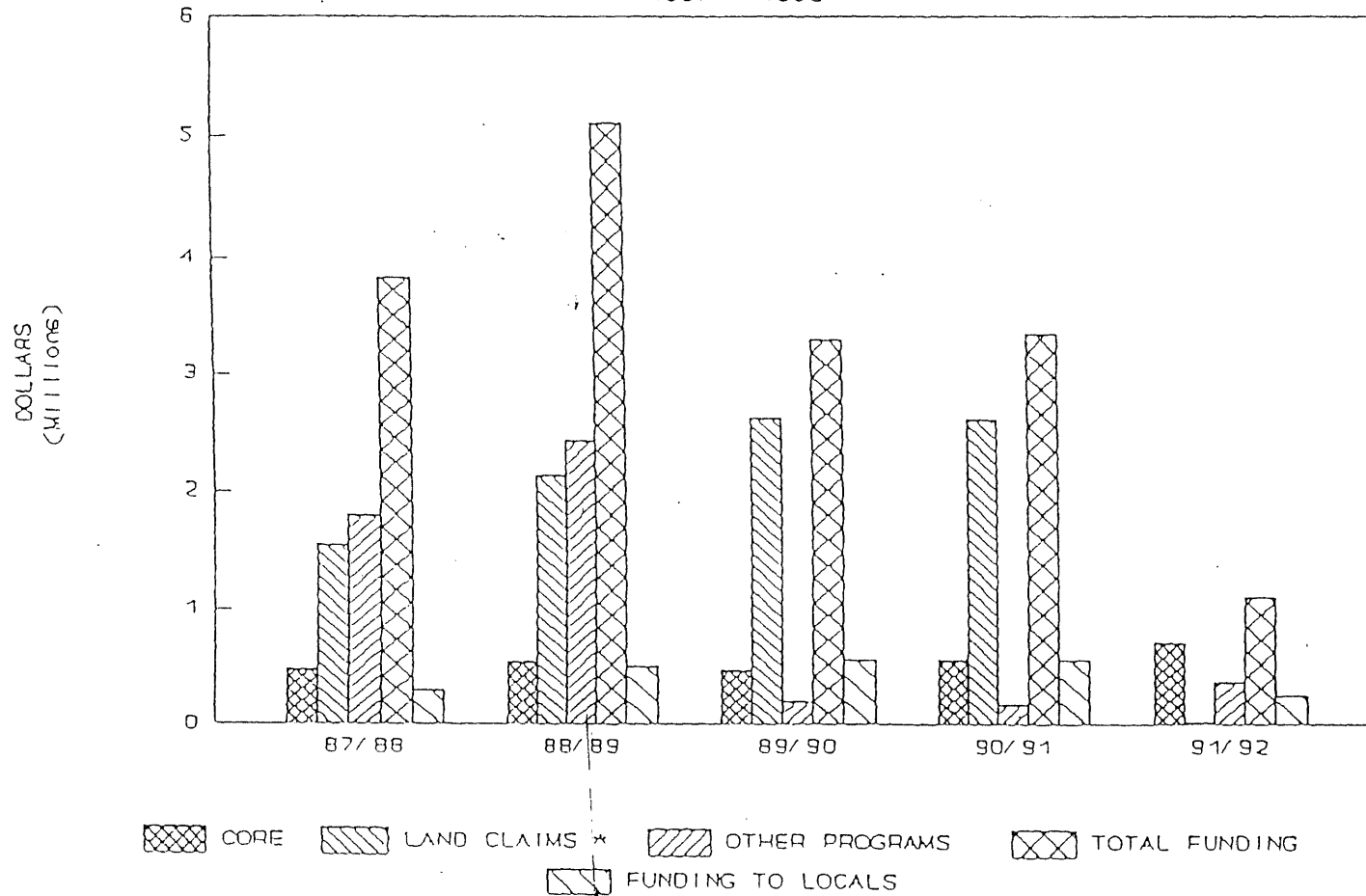
Funding alone however cannot produce results. Volunteer efforts are needed, especially in the education and heritage work that is recommended. Money cannot duplicate the effort of dedicated volunteers working for the benefit and growth of others.

It is recommended that:

- the inequality of core funding for Locals be brought to the attention of federal agencies who provide funding for aboriginal institutions, and that core funding for Locals be part of the land claims and self government negotiation strategy.

METIS NATION FUNDING SUMMARY

1987 - 1992



* LAND CLAIMS FUNDING WAS TERMINATED IN NOVEMBER 1990.

A Metis Centre

The Metis Nation Executive also wishes to explore the issue of building a Metis Centre. This facility would provide office space, a library and a resource centre for the Metis Nation and its committees, and for the Metis Heritage Association. It would also provide a moderate public display area for showing Metis heritage and culture, in addition to providing a hall and rooms for local meetings, Metis Nation board meetings and Metis social and fund raising events. A facility such as this may cost a sum of capital that would be paid for with the present annual rent (\$77,324. in 1992). At today's interest rates, a mortgage of nearly 1 million dollars could be served by the annual sum paid for rent.

It is recommended that:

- the Metis Nation Board of Directors explore an optimum location and the financial feasibility of establishing a Metis Centre to provide office and related space for Metis Nation needs.

RESOLUTION

Whereas the Metis Nation of the Northwest Territories has established priorities for action, and

Whereas the Metis Nation in assembly has reviewed a draft action plan with recommendations for addressing the priorities,

Be it resolved that this 20th Assembly of the Metis Nation accept the draft action plan and specifically direct its executive and board as follows:

For Education, that:

in the short term,

- the Metis Nation secure the services of an education professional to assist the locals in their efforts to improve education for their children, and
- each Metis Local establish a school support group to work with schools in Kindergarten to grade 9, and
- each Metis Local support the development of an effective program for children with special needs; and
- the Metis Nation establish a program for counselling and tutoring Metis high school and Arctic College students and apprentices; and
- Metis heritage and culture be incorporated into local school curriculum programs; and
- the Metis Nation work with the Locals to ensure that adult education and training programs like Pathways are aimed at the most pressing needs of the community; and

for the long term,

- the Department of Education with the participation of the Metis Nation conduct a comprehensive review of education programs, procedures and standards as well as public school administration and management in the Metis Homeland.

For Medical Benefits, that:

- the Metis Nation leadership continue to work with the GNWT to complete the Metis enumeration and then secure the necessary funding for health services to Metis.

For Economic Development, that:

- the Metis Nation reaffirm MDC as the preferred vehicle for investment and economic development; and,
- the Metis Nation executive work with MDC to secure personnel from government and/or industry on secondment, or secure funding for MDC to hire professional personnel to provide business development, planning and after care services for Metis business people in the Northwest Territories; and
- the Metis Nation executive request a review of the GNWT Economic Development strategy, especially as it applies to the classification of communities and Metis economic development affected by it.

For Alcohol and Drug Problems, that:

- the Metis Nation leadership develop a voluntary code of conduct regarding the use of alcohol, solvents and non prescription drugs, which will also promote zero tolerance for spousal assault and family violence; and
- the Metis Nation seek financial and personnel resources to assist Locals in the healing necessary to recover from past problems of alcohol abuse and related behaviour; and
- materials be developed to sensitize Metis youth to the costs and effects of alcohol and substance abuse.

For Metis Heritage and Culture, that:

- the Metis Heritage Association remain the organisation charged with documenting and publishing Metis heritage and culture in the Northwest Territories; and
- the Metis Nation draw the attention of funding agencies to the inequality of funding that is provided for the documentation and preservation of Metis

heritage, culture and language when compared to other aboriginal organizations; and

- the Metis Heritage Association be encouraged to continue work in:
 - Metis oral history,
 - Metis written history,
 - the Michif language of the Metis,
 - Metis heritage materials for school curricula.

For Settlement of Metis Land Claims, that:

- funding for leadership and management training for Metis be incorporated into the overall self government and land claim negotiation strategy when it is developed.

For Metis Housing, that:

- the Metis Nation - NWT support its affiliated Locals in certain housing projects within their geographic areas; and
- the Metis Nation monitor housing policies and programs to ensure that programs like HAP and HIP (home improvement program) continue and that funds are available to assist Metis elders, single parent Metis families and Metis families in poverty to maintain their homes in acceptable condition, and
- NWT Housing corporation programs be reviewed so that Metis in larger urban centres are eligible for support on the same basis as if they live in smaller, more remote communities; and
- the NWT Housing Corporation implement the tripartite agreement which allows for formal participation by the Metis in formulating housing policies and programs.

For Locals Core Funding, that:

- the inequality of core funding for Locals be brought to the attention of federal agencies who provide funding for aboriginal institutions and that core funding for Locals be part of the land claims and self government negotiation strategy.

For a Metis Centre, that:

- the Metis Nation Board of Directors explore an optimum location and the financial feasibility of establishing a Metis Centre to provide office and related space for Metis Nation needs.

And further, that in pursuing these actions the results be implemented in the spirit of the Mission Statement for the Metis Nation adopted by this Assembly as follows:

THE METIS NATION IS DEDICATED TO THE GROWTH AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ALL METIS PERSONS WHO TOGETHER WILL PROTECT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND WORK TO PROMOTE AND ENHANCE THEIR CULTURE, ECONOMY AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE METIS HOMELAND OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES.

Social

NOTE: THE ABOVE RESOLUTION IS PROVIDED HERE FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE READER. FOR A FORMAL COPY OF THE RESOLUTION GIVING THE MOVER AND SECONDER PLEASE REFER TO THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE 20TH ASSEMBLY OF THE METIS NATION FOR AUGUST 9, 1992.

Appendix "C"



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

BOX 1375, YELLOWKNIFE, N.W.T. PHONE (403) 873-3505 FAX 873-3395

X1A 2P1

November 15, 1994

Honourable Richard Nerysoo
Minister of Education, Culture and Employment
Government of the Northwest Territories
P.O. Box 1320, Yellowknife X1A 2L9

Dear Mr. Nerysoo

Secondment of an Education Specialist

The Métis Nation - Northwest Territories has always placed a high priority on the education of our youth. Our Assemblies have continually raised the matter and other concerns associated with the education system in the N.W.T. Numerous resolutions have been passed addressing the issues and concerns of our membership and the need to ensure that our youth are encouraged to continue with their schooling and go on to post secondary institutions. We must stop paying lip service to the phrase "our children are our future" and institute concrete initiatives to ensure that the educational needs of our children are met.

The Secondment of an Education Specialist would assist the Métis Nation to develop its initiatives on a firm foundation and would develop links between the Métis Nation, Schools, Community Education Councils and Divisional Boards of Education.

Attached is a position paper that outlines the responsibilities for the Education Specialist position and states the desired outcome of the project. I hope this will assist you in preparing a paper for Cabinet consideration. We feel the time is right for taking positive action.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Paulette
Vice - President

Secondment of an Education Specialist to the Métis Nation

COPY

Our Vision

The Métis Nation - Northwest Territories has always placed a high priority on the education of our youth. It is our desire to institute concrete initiatives to ensure that the educational needs of our children are met. The Education Specialist would undertake the following:

- A community based, one year pilot project.
- The overall objective should be to harness community resources to provide support for students to reach their full potential, by staying in school and making the right academic choices.
- To help the community understand its own capabilities.
- To provide support for parents through parenting workshops.

Background

Research has shown that caring, experienced, and skilled adults have a powerful impact on the future success of young people. Many youth need additional adults to provide them with opportunities for growth in self-esteem, academic ability and personal responsibility. Improved parenting skills and the availability of mentors and role models can have a profound effect on young people.

Goals:

Long term

- improvement in the number of students graduating from the school system
- improvement in understanding the choices available to students upon completion of high school.

Short term

- provide support systems to students and parents
- encourage students to stay in school, using tutors, mentors and peer counseling
- encourage development of community capabilities

Desired Outcome

This pilot project will produce a model for developing community capabilities. A final report will document the process used in the community to provide support systems and make recommendations for future use. Possible sources of funding for tutor programs and scholarships will be documented.

Qualifications and Skills required for 'Education Specialist'

- Education background, education degree, teacher training or equivalent practical experience.
- Thorough understanding of education in the NWT.
- Must be able to promote and explain the philosophy of education.
- Counseling skills and experience.
- Public relation skills and public speaking.
- Must be prepared and comfortable undertaking home visits with parents.
- Organizational skills.
- Research and writing.
- Computer literate.
- Mentoring training.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Education Specialist

- To develop strategies to empower the community to become actively involved in supporting education.
- To work cooperatively with the school, school community counsellor, Community Education Council and the Divisional School Board.
- To undertake Mentor training.
- To study tutor program used by Inuvialuit Education Foundation.
- To work cooperatively with the community schools.
- To focus attention from grade 6 - 12 for tutor program
- Set up support structures for learning, in cooperation with the school organize:
 - Tutors
 - Study hall
 - Role models/Mentors
 - Self esteem workshops
 - Peer counseling
- Set up support structures for parents, facilitate the organization of:
 - Parenting skills workshops
 - Child development courses
 - Home visits
 - Help parents understand course selection at high school
- Facilitate interagency meetings
- Make the community aware of educational alternatives, through scholarships and leadership programs.
- Research funding possibilities for tutor program and parent workshops.
- Write monthly progress reports to the Métis Nation
- Complete a final report.

Other considerations

Ideally, the appointment would commence at the beginning of August to allow for orientation, research and training before the school year gets under way. There would also be time at the end of the school end to assess what was accomplished during the year and complete the final report.

Consultations

The following people were consulted during the preparation of this paper. Their positive contributions are acknowledged. Should this project receive approval, their expertise would be valuable in fine tuning the duties and responsibilities of the Education Specialist position.

Cheryl Fennell
Policy Advisor, GNWT Education

Carole Lane
Coordinator Student Support, GNWT Education

Malcolm Farrow
Director Operations, Training and Development, GNWT Education

Mildred Klassen
Inuvialuit Education Foundation, Inuvialuit Regional Development Corporation.

Ray Carr
Peer Resources, National Mentor Training, Victoria B.C.

Possible Locations for the Project

Possible communities for this pilot project are indicated below.

| Community | Inuit | Dene | Metis | Non-Aboriginal | Total population | School Board |
|-------------------|-------|------|-------|----------------|------------------|--------------|
| Fort Resolution | 0 | 217 | 241 | 57 | 515 | South Slave |
| Fort Smith | 65 | 439 | 821 | 1155 | 2480 | South Slave |
| Hay River | 30 | 308 | 667 | 2201 | 3206 | South Slave |
| Hay River Reserve | 0 | 207 | 5 | 4 | 216 | South Slave |
| Lutselk'e | 0 | 268 | 0 | 18 | 286 | South Slave |

| Community | Inuit | Dene | Metis | Non-Aboriginal | Total population | School Board |
|----------------|-------|------|-------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Aklavik | 432 | 238 | 81 | 50 | 801 | Beaufort-Delta |
| Fort McPherson | 17 | 591 | 91 | 60 | 759 | Beaufort-Delta |
| Inuvik | 1114 | 370 | 324 | 1398 | 3206 | Beaufort-Delta |
| Sachs Harbour | 111 | 0 | 2 | 12 | 125 | Beaufort-Delta |
| Tuktoyaktuk | 804 | 18 | 9 | 87 | 918 | Beaufort-Delta |

| Community | Inuit | Dene | Metis | Non-Aboriginal | Total population | School Board |
|------------------|-------|------|-------|----------------|------------------|--------------|
| Fort Liard | 0 | 384 | 36 | 65 | 485 | Deh Cho |
| Fort Providence | 0 | 531 | 61 | 53 | 645 | Deh Cho |
| Fort Simpson | 5 | 556 | 153 | 428 | 1142 | Deh Cho |
| Jean Marie River | 0 | 45 | 0 | 4 | 49 | Deh Cho |
| Kakisa | 0 | 39 | 0 | 0 | 39 | Deh Cho |
| Nahanni Butte | 0 | 85 | 0 | 0 | 85 | Deh Cho |
| Trout Lake | 0 | 61 | 4 | 1 | 66 | Deh Cho |
| Wrigley | 0 | 160 | 1 | 13 | 174 | Deh Cho |

Working Together

The Métis Nation is seeking the opportunity to work cooperatively at all levels of the education system. We would like to direct and administer the project in a negotiated partnership arrangement with the Department of Education.