

ENGAGING ABORIGINAL
COMMUNITIES THROUGH
EDUCATION: A
CONSULTATION ON POST-
SECONDARY EDUCATION
NEEDS

Project Report 2014



Mount Saint Vincent University partnered with 8 Mi'kmaw nations in Nova Scotia to identify their post-secondary education needs. Mount's aim was to engage Aboriginal communities in order to gain insight into programming interests and to enhance its existing supports for Aboriginals on campus.

John R. Sylliboy
Aboriginal Student Centre

Acknowledgements

*“We don’t want to make assumptions with respect to post-secondary education needs among
Aboriginals. We will work with the Mi’kmaq on Mainland Nova Scotia as partners to consult on
what these needs are.”*

Dr. Ramona Lumpkin, Mount Saint Vincent President and Vice-Chancellor.

Mount Saint Vincent University would like to acknowledge the following communities, Chiefs and Councils and all their extraordinary leaders, Directors of Education, Health and Economic Development, community members, parents, Elders and most importantly all the students who participated on this consultation project.

Acadia First Nation
Annapolis Valley First Nation
Bear River First Nation
Glooscap First Nation

Indian Brook First Nation
Millbrook Mi’kmaw Nation
Paq’ntkek Mi’kmaq Nation
Pictou Landing First Nation

The Mount was also provided much support and knowledge thanks to the experts who work in Aboriginal tribal organizations/councils:

Confederacy of Mainland Mi’kmaq
Mi’kmaw Kina’matnewey
Native Council of Nova Scotia
Nova Scotia Native Women’s Association
Mi’kmaq Native Friendship Centre
Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat

Aboriginal Advisors and students from the following post-secondary institutions were instrumental in providing first-hand knowledge on needs for Aboriginals on campus:

Acadia University
St. Francis Xavier University
Dalhousie University
Mount Saint Vincent University
Nova Scotia Community College

The Atlantic Aboriginal Advisors Networking Group (AAANG) members provided support and input on the project from the following post-secondary institutions:

Cape Breton University
St. Mary’s University
University of Prince Edward Island
University of New Brunswick

New Brunswick Community College

The project was also successful thanks to the support and guidance provided by the MSVU Aboriginal Advisory and Internal Advisory

MSVU Aboriginal Advisory

Representatives from MSVU:

- **Dr. Ramona Lumpkin**, President and Vice-Chancellor
- **Dr. Elizabeth Church**, Vice-President, Academic
- **Ms. Kelly Gallant**, Associate Vice-President, Communications, Marketing and Student Recruitment
- **Mr. Jeff Hollett**, Associate Vice-President, Student Experience
- **Mr. Art Stevens**, Coordinator of Aboriginal Student Services

External Representatives:

- **Ms. Pamela Glode-Desrochers**, Executive Director
- **Dr. Don Julien**, Executive Director of the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
- **Mr. Spencer Wilmot**, Director, Education & Student Services, Native Council of Nova Scotia
- **Ms. Ann Sylliboy**, Eskasoni – Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey
- **Ms. Catherine Martin**, Mi'kmaw Cultural/Educational Advisor Activist
- **Ms. Jane Abram**, Elder, Millbrook First Nation
- **Professor Tuma Young**, Assistant Professor Indigenous Studies, Cape Breton University
- **Ms. Gail Francis**, Indian Brook First Nation Education Director
- **Ms. Marlene Martin**, Education Advisor, Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
- **Mr. John R. Sylliboy**, Millbrook First Nation

MSVU Internal Advisory

- **Dr. Sal Badali**, Dean, Faculty of Education
- **Dr. Elizabeth Church**, Vice-President (Academic)
- **Dr. Anthony Davis**, Professor, Sociology & Anthropology
- **Ms. Veronica Gore**, MSVU student
- **Dr. Valda Leighteizer**, Assistant Professor and Director and Teacher Education Program
- **Dr. Devi Mucina**, Associate Professor, Department of Child and Youth Study
- **Mr. Art Stevens**, Coordinator, Aboriginal Services
- **Mr. John R Sylliboy**, Program Director, Engaging Aboriginal Communities through Education

Finally, the Mount expresses its sincerest gratitude to the Windsor Foundation which has provided funding to complete this project. This project will contribute greatly to building

supports for Aboriginals on campus.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mount Saint Vincent University engaged 8 Mi'kmaq Nations on Mainland Nova Scotia on a consultation project to identify post-secondary education needs in their communities. The project duration was from January 2013 until April 2014. MSVU hired John R. Sylliboy, Mi'kmaq education consultant and policy analyst, to lead the project.

The Mount project, *Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education*, aimed to engage the Aboriginal community to consult directly with Mi'kmaq, urban Aboriginals and Aboriginal post-secondary students to determine their needs for post-secondary education. The intention is for the Mount to enhance its existing supports on campus, while at the same time gain knowledge on Aboriginal interests in course content and methodology for learning. The project values the true nature of community building and knowledge sharing gained from this experience.

The Mount was aware that consultation would gather rich data regarding Mi'kmaq and Aboriginal interests and perspectives on post-secondary education and on education needs in general. The Mount's main objective is to enhance existing academic supports for Aboriginals on campus. Engaging Aboriginal communities has been extremely rewarding for the Mount because of the opportunity to build partnerships and relations with Mi'kmaq and Aboriginals in Nova Scotia. The true spirit of this project has been to develop trust and goodwill with 8 Mi'kmaq communities by gathering the voices of 147 people, including elected officials, education leaders, Elders, parents, youth and students in post-secondary education. Their insights on post-secondary needs are a main focus of this report and all its findings and recommendations are valuable community knowledge. The Mi'kmaq agree that it is important to share this knowledge to all its partners in order to continue building supports for Aboriginals in post-secondary education.

Knowledge gained from this engagement is the result of strong support and dedication from the Mount's partners on this project, such as the community Education Directors, Tribal Council representatives, post-secondary Aboriginal advisors, Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre for off-Reserve/urban Aboriginals and students from university and college partners and from the internal Mount faculty and staff.

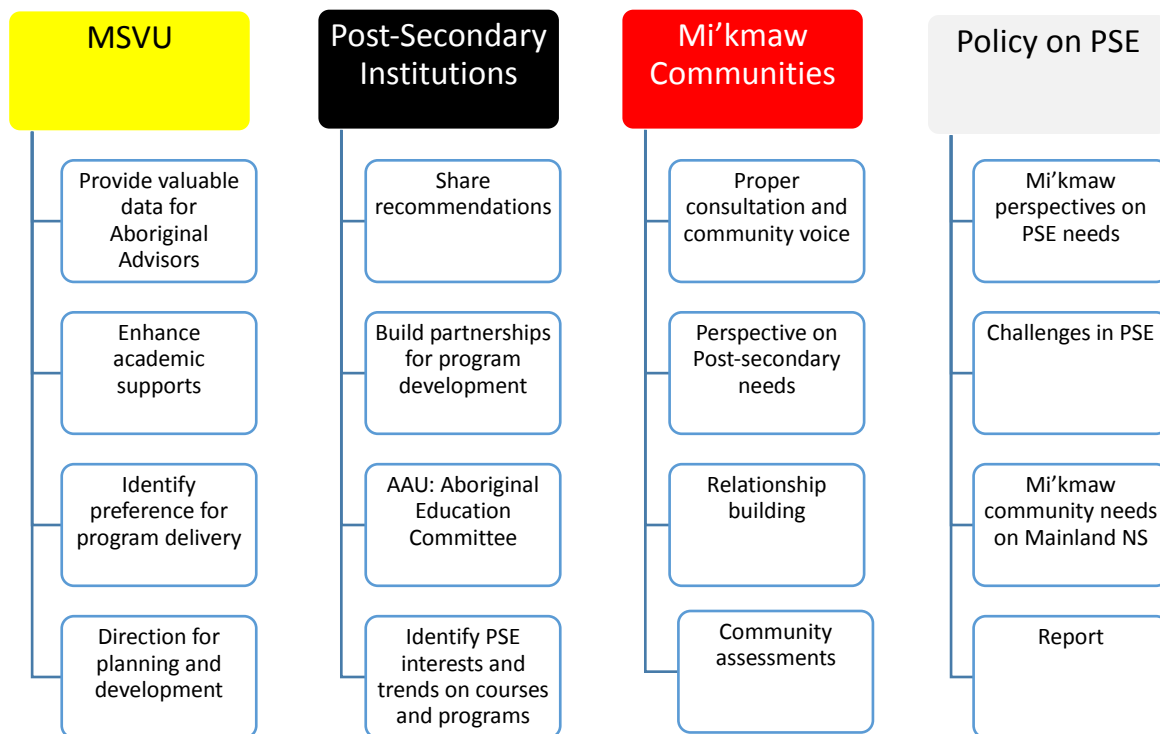
The Mi'kmaq are recognized for their leadership in promotion of self-governance in education. They have worked hard to establish deep roots for its educational foundations based on strong cultural traditions and preservation of language. This is the fundamental motivation for the success of Mi'kmaq education. It will continue to work towards higher standards of education and increased opportunities for the Mi'kmaq and its future generations. The Mount and its peer post-secondary institutions must meet the same stride as the Mi'kmaq in developing and assuring success for its Aboriginal students in their quests for higher learning.

There are many insightful recommendations from the communities and participants, which are outlined in this report. The report highlights common themes from gathered data, which can be further explored by policy makers for Mi'kmaq education; by researchers to identify topics of

research for Aboriginal post-secondary education; for community leadership for community education policy, and, for post-secondary institutions for direction on developing more adequate and sustainable supports and programs for Aboriginal students in Nova Scotia.

This report is part of a process to build closer ties between Mount Saint Vincent University and Mi’kmaq and Aboriginal communities in order to provide a more suitable and equitable education for Aboriginals.

Figure 1 Expected Outcomes and Objectives



The above diagram is a summary of objectives and outcomes from the consultation project. The Program Director was aware of the time required to consult with all 8 Mi’kmaq communities, especially with the objectives and outcomes it aimed to achieve. All of the objectives were met, except the one for in depth community assessments. The idea of conducting community assessments in education was ambitious. The Education Directors recognized such a task would require far more resources than what were available for this project. Therefore, they recommended gathering data on student and community interests, concerns, needs and recommendations for post-secondary education. It is a great start. The Aboriginal Advisory Committee mentioned that there have been community assessments in social and economic development, but a more detailed education assessment would be important for policy and planning to help increase the numbers of graduates in post-secondary.

One of the most important findings in this report is the fact that all 8 Mi’kmaq communities expressed the need for more supports and resources to prepare students for post-secondary

education. It is crucial that students have the right information on post-secondary education and know their options in Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada. In addition to this, education guidance is to provide ample opportunities for students to explore their career options before they even select their post-secondary programs.

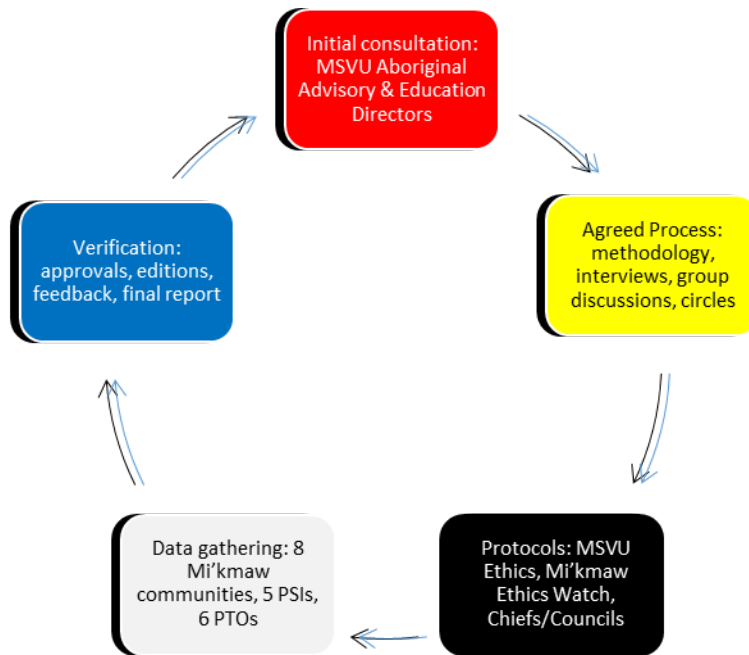
Another unanimous recommendation for post-secondary institutions is to begin building academic supports on campus now. Communities are optimistic that each year there will be more high school graduates entering post-secondary education. Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey collects data on the number of graduates from high school, currently at 87% among MK schools. (Kina'matnewey, 2013) There has been only a slight increase from 2004-2013 in post-secondary graduation rates, whereas it should be increasing each year as more graduates enter university or college. MK's high school graduation rates are impressive, yet graduate rates for post-secondary students is not reflective of this. Check Figure 9 for comparisons for post-secondary attainment. Research is required to look into these statistics in more detail. One theory is that students lack sufficient guidance and career orientation upon entering post-secondary education.

All 8 Mi'kmaw community shared their needs for education supports in their communities, their challenges due to federal funding constraints for post-secondary education, and their successes in supporting their students in pursuit of their education goals. It is clear that Mi'kmaq are resilient and resourceful in their quest to provide opportunities for their students in education despite challenges. However, it is no longer acceptable for communities to assume full responsibility for increasing educational outcomes for its people. This has to be a shared goal by community leadership, students, policy makers, federal and provincial governments and most importantly all post-secondary institutions in the region.

Community Engagement with Mi'kmaq and Aboriginals

Community Engagement is a process that is respectful and inclusive of Aboriginal and Mi'kmaw voices for it to be a proper consultation. The process for consultation was in itself a part of the objective. The project researched what protocols and processes to follow for consultation with Mi'kmaw communities. The diagram below, Figure 2, provides a concept map of this process as a continuous process. Although the project has a start and finish date, the document will be available for future reference.

Figure 2 Consultation Process



Community Partners

Knowledge gained from this engagement is the result of strong support and dedication from the Mount's partners on this project, such as the community Education Directors, Tribal Council representatives, post-secondary Aboriginal advisors and post-secondary students from universities and community college.

Consultation would not be possible without engaging the right people. Community representatives recommended subjects to interview and engage in group discussions at the community level. Community leadership recommended Tribal Council representatives to gain a regional perspective on education needs.

The Atlantic Aboriginal Advisors Networking Group (AAANG) provided support from a University and college standpoint. PSIs with Aboriginal Advisors on mainland Nova Scotia were key to conducting group discussions with Aboriginal students on their campuses. They were instrumental in planning campus meetings. Unfortunately, this process could not include all PSIs, such as private colleges or institutions like King's College or NSCAD because they do not have Aboriginal academic advisors.

Finally, Aboriginals living in the Halifax area were invited for a lunch consultation session by the Friendship Centre. All engagement was a deliberate and planned process thanks to all the Mount's partners and support by the project champions.

Figure 3 Community Partners

Mi'kmaw Communities: Acadia, Bear River, Annapolis Valley, Glooscap, Indian Brook, Millbrook, Pictou Landing, Paq'ntkek Mi'kmaw Nation, Urban Aboriginals

Post-secondary Institutions: Acadia U, STFX, Dalhousie, Mount Saint Vincent University, SMU, and NSCC

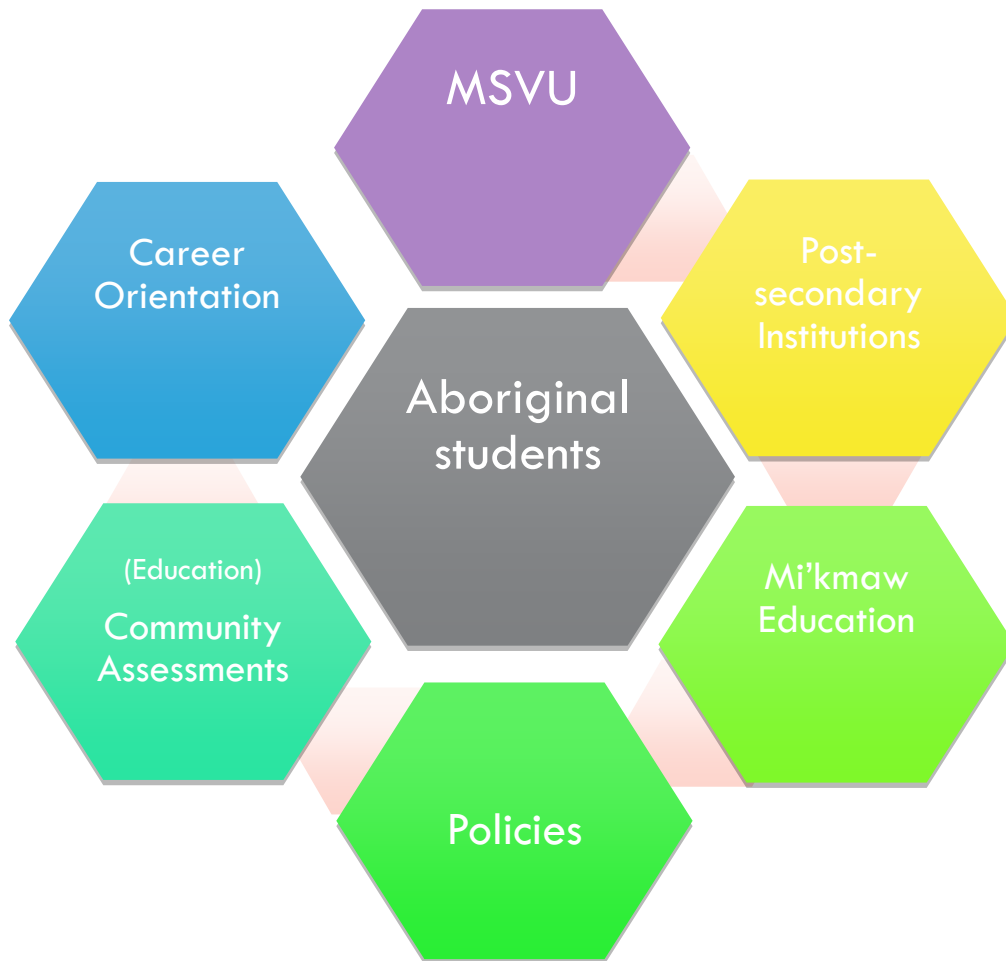
Tribal Organizations: MK, CMM, APCFNC, Native Council of NS, NS Native Women's Association, Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre

Recommendations and Outcomes

There was an overwhelming response to the consultation on post-secondary education needs, which are divided in sub-categories based on common themes. There were specific recommendations related to needs in the communities that were mentioned in interviews or group discussions, including direct recommendations to the Mount and others for post-secondary institutions in general.

Community leaders and directors identified education needs for their students and communities in general. Figure 4 categorizes the themes in six segments with Aboriginal students in the centre as the beneficiaries of these recommendations.

Figure 4 Recommendations



Recommendations for Mount Saint Vincent University

The figure below summarizes the numerous recommendations made specifically to Mount Saint Vincent University. The Education Directors helped to further identify key areas the Mount can focus on to enhance its supports for Aboriginals. They are in no specific order of priority. The Mount is ahead of the game with some key activities. An Aboriginal Advisor is currently working part-time on campus. The Mount inaugurated the Aboriginal Student Centre (ASC) in March 2013, which provides ample space for students who wish to study, use the computers, organize meetings and workshops or just mingle with other Aboriginal students. The Aboriginal Advisor works from the ASC. The Aboriginal Advisor has hosted many cultural, learning and social

activities at the ASC, including frequent Elder visits throughout the academic calendar.

Figure 5 Recommendations for MSVU

Academic

Aboriginal advisor, scholarships/bursaries, student centre, life skills workshops, non-academic resources (child care, housing, transportation), Elder in residence, cultural events and welcoming campus.

Programs

B.Ed, Child & Youth, Aboriginal PhD., Aboriginal content in existing programs: cultural/women's studies, social sciences, course interests: Mi'kmaq language, business, entrepreneurship, and communications

Learning

Blended approach: community/campus learning, community cohorts, NOT much mention of online learning, but all communities mentioned video conferencing capability through First Nations Help Desk

Summary of Community Needs

The assessment of community needs is an important objective for this project. This is an assessment of post-secondary education needs from a community perspective. Included are community education needs in general. It is not to be confused with a community assessment of human resources and level of education in the community. All of the communities recommended assessing each community's level of education, skills and training obtained by Band members. This would provide a community profile of education levels that leadership could use to determine their human resources needs for their economic development projects. This level of community assessment would require both more funding and time to complete than what the Mount's project set out to do. Paq'ntkek completed an assessment of skills and education levels in 2012. (Saint Mary's University, 2012) The recommendation is important because all of the communities expressed it as a need, except Paq'ntkek.

The data from this post-secondary assessment of education needs provides evidence of how similar those needs are in all mainland Mi'kmaq communities. Each community shared their challenges for education attainment. Funding issues are identified as the most important challenge. Communities agree that it is not only shortages in funding that affect students, but criteria for funding post-secondary education must be addressed as well. Post-secondary students concurred that funding policies are outdated and confusing. Students feel that the current four-

year funding models need to be reviewed, and re-designed to try to meet current needs and challenges faced by students. There is a need to update policies so that funding will support programs based on current student trends and interests in post-secondary education. The discussion around funding policies is not new and there are many angles to consider, such as federal funding formulas, community criteria for funding students, increasing tuition costs in post-secondary institutions, and the list goes on. It is expected to be complicated to come up with immediate recommendations; however, Education Directors are reviewing policies with the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq to help address some of the funding and criteria issues.

Education is a high priority in all the communities. Leadership and program directors all agree that achieving higher educational outcomes will elevate social benefits in health, economic stability, employment and overall community development. Program Directors from Education, Health and Economic Development shared their perspectives on post-secondary education needs.

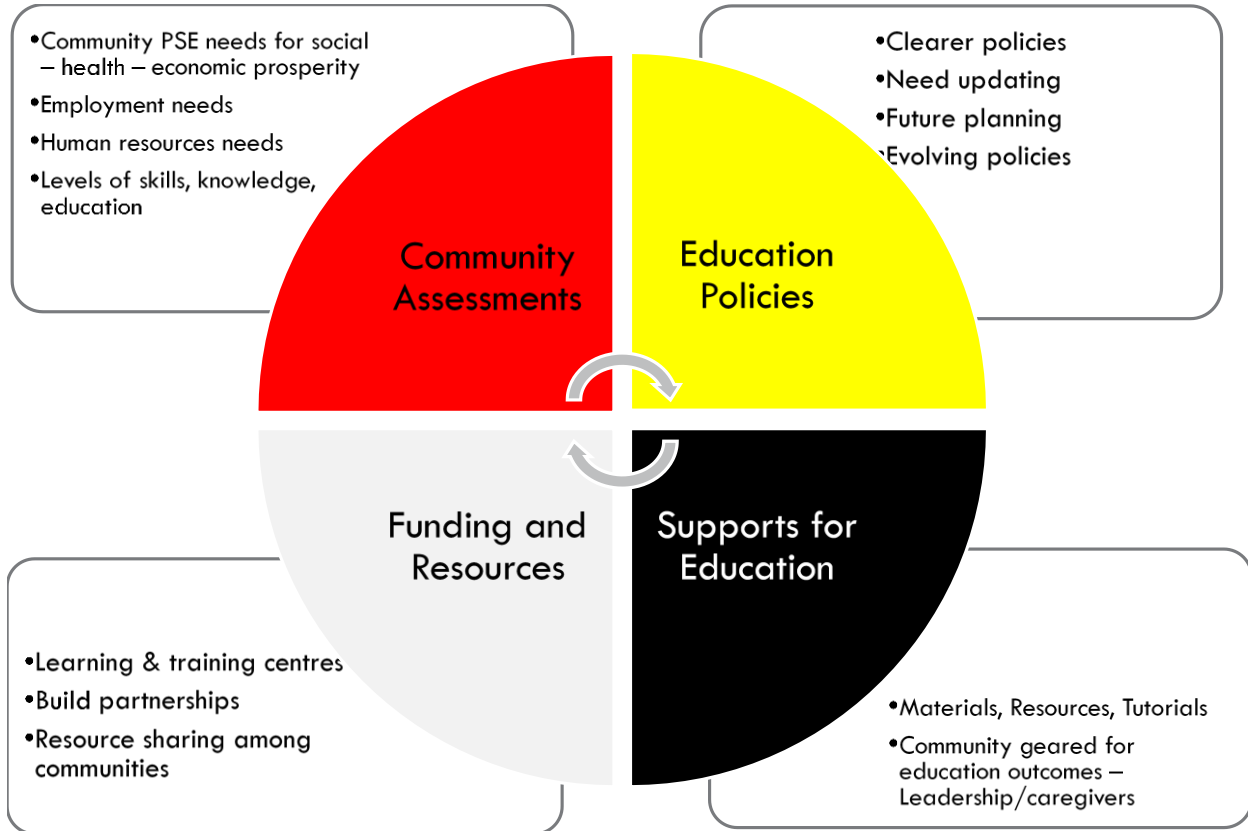
Health Directors identified needs based on health human resources, such as nurses, early childhood educators and social workers. Their perspective also took into consideration students' health needs while in post-secondary education. Health Directors mentioned that some students may face life challenges, such as addictions and mental health issues which would hinder their education. Students need to be healthy in order to be successful at university or college.

Directors of Economic Development shared their perspectives from an employment and career orientation point of view. They work in coordination with Native Employment Officers, who are front line workers, much like academic advisors or career coaches. Many of their recommendations are based on skills and training needs for employment purposes. Their input included strong recommendations for career orientation, preparatory courses for post-secondary education and apprenticeships. Many of their students are mature, single mothers, or young male students, who all face varying challenges in education attainment.

Education Directors offered their perspectives on community needs in a broader aspect. They all agreed that post-secondary needs could not be addressed without addressing all the education needs in the community because education is lifelong learning. They shared their views on needs for: K-12 education, community supports for education attainment, student supports in high school, orientation for post-secondary education, funding issues, policy and criteria for students. They provided most of the recommendations for post-secondary education and institutions in general. EDs were adamant about building solid foundations for Aboriginal students on campus with: bridging programs, mentorships, life skills workshops, career orientations, scholarships/bursaries, Elders in-residence, course content, methodology, and Mi'kmaq language as a course.

The conceptual map below is a breakdown of recommendations for each common theme. The conceptual map uses Aboriginal colours, similar to the Medicine Wheel or the Four Directions model. The segment, Orientation for Post-Secondary Education, summarizes needs related to orientation and career counseling from a community perspective.

Figure 6 Summary of Community Needs similar in all 8 Communities



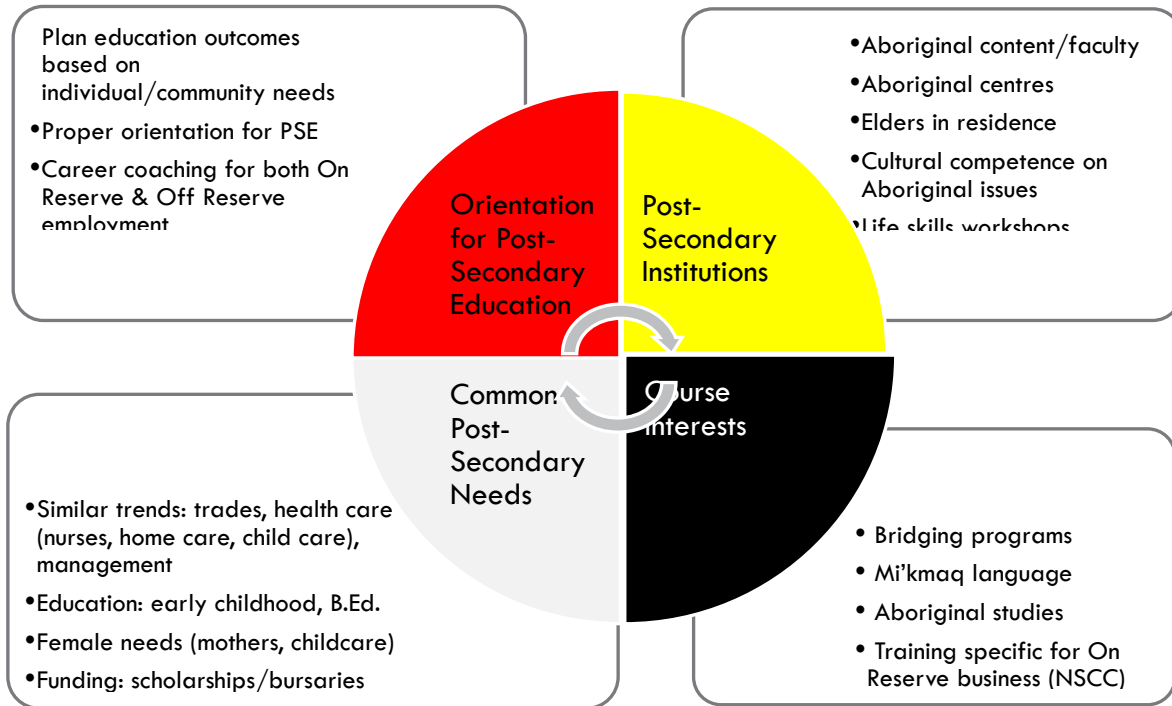
Recommendations for Post-Secondary Education

Again, the wealth of information gained from the consultation is important for PSIs in Nova Scotia. It is important to underscore that these recommendations are specific to Nova Scotia, even though most are transferable to other areas. Communities felt that each region and territory should determine their own needs specific to each culture and ethnic group.

Recommendations were divided into four areas based on common themes using the colours of the Medicine Wheel or Four Directions concept – mainly for visualization.

It is important to touch base on a couple of areas. One is that all of the communities identified post-secondary needs for health, education and trades. The most common education need is in the trades, although a more comprehensive analysis of the findings is required. That way, one can identify the frequency of mentions for each need and interest, so they can be quantified into concrete statistics. The data provided is a combination of all recommendations identifying which needs were mentioned at all consultations in the communities. The Program Director recommends a follow-up analysis to corroborate the Project’s findings. The Internal Advisory recommends this as a potential research study for a graduate student.

Figure 7 Recommendations for Post-Secondary Education in General



BACKGROUND

In 2012, Mount Saint Vincent University was successful in receiving a grant from the Windsor Foundation to initiate the process of paving the way of enhancing supports for Aboriginal students on campus. “Engaging Aboriginal Communities through Education” is a three-year project during which Mount Saint Vincent University plans to lay the foundation for sustained and continuing initiatives to strengthen Aboriginal participation in post-secondary education in Nova Scotia. Funding requested from the Windsor Foundation was used for this project in its initial year.

The project timeline was from 2013-2014. The Project Director was hired for a year-long contract to plan, develop and carry out the project’s objectives. The Mount Saint Vincent Aboriginal Advisory Committee provided initial support and direction, but the project could not have been completed without the support of all eight Education Directors from mainland Nova Scotia:

- Acadia First Nation- Janice Francis
- Bear River First Nation – Tina Dickson
- Annapolis Valley First Nation – Tassa Kennedy
- Glooscap First Nation – Marilyn Perkins
- Indian Brook First Nation – Gail Francis
- Millbrook Mi'kmaw Community – Barry Gloade (Post-Secondary) &

Debbie Gloade

- Pictou Landing First Nation – Sheila Francis
- Paq’ntkek Mi’kmaw Nation – Tanya Francis

The Program Director was hired on a part-time basis, which permitted for a one-year contract instead of a full-time position for shorter months. This was important in having the right length of time to get the best results for the project. The consultation process required enough time for interaction with the community representatives to help coordinate the actual data gathering process. This also allowed sufficient time to go through all the protocol processes required for conducting the consultation with each community.

Mount Aboriginal Advisory Committee

The Mount Aboriginal Advisory Committee was established in 2011 as a first step in addressing the needs of Aboriginal students on campus. Prior to this, President Ramona Lumpkin and Vice President Academic Elizabeth Church conducted their first consultations with Mi’kmaw leaders and educators in Indian Brook, Eskasoni, Millbrook and Waycobah. Initial feedback provided groundwork for senior administration to plant its first seeds of action.

The President’s Office, supported by Vice-President Academic and Associate Vice-President Student Experience, met with representatives from the Mi’kmaw community so they would advise on how the Mount can make proactive changes on Campus to become more suitable for Aboriginal students. One of the first steps was to invite all students on campus to self-identify as Aboriginals which enabled the Mount to determine its Aboriginal population. There was also a survey to invite Aboriginal students to share their interests in programming and needs for campus supports. In the first year, there were 28 self-identified Aboriginals, then 60 in year two, and 103 by year three. There are 120 self-identified students for the fall 2014 semester. The Aboriginal Student Centre keeps track of data, in order to maintain communication and promote ASC activities to build supports for students. The ASC will follow up with recommendations from the survey and this report for future planning and strengthening of supports for Aboriginals.

There are reports and documents that indicate the challenges Aboriginals face in post-secondary education in general, which may be useful to provide a general perspective on Aboriginal needs. The Mount’s objective was to engage the Aboriginal population on campus and the Mi’kmaq in Nova Scotia to get a clearer perspective on post-secondary needs for Aboriginals.

The Advisory’s mandate was to provide counsel in areas where the institution could develop initiatives for Aboriginal supports in post-secondary education. MSVU Senior management outlined a three-year action plan that was supported by the Advisory. The plan was simple: start by looking at what the Institution was doing on campus for existing Aboriginal students. Another objective was to identify the numbers of Aboriginal students. This would be accomplished via a campus survey for self-identification. Then, it would engage eight Mi’kmaw communities from Mainland Nova Scotia to determine their post-secondary education needs. This led to the development of a proposal to the Windsor Foundation, which provided a grant to conduct a community educational needs assessment from 2013-2014. Funding was provided to hire a project director and for supports to develop the project for one year.

Mount Saint Vincent University (Project) Internal Advisory Committee

It was agreed from the start that a working committee was essential to providing guidance and support for the development of the overall project. The Program Director consulted with both the Mount Aboriginal Advisory and partner communities on the Committee. The Aboriginal Advisory recommended representatives from the Mount Staff and faculty: VP Academic, Dean of Education, Aboriginal Advisor, Program Director and a student representative from the University. Representatives would be recommended from the community. The Program Director targeted Education Directors (EDs) to champion the project at ground level and they were unanimously supported by community leadership. Each Mi'kmaq community in Nova Scotia has an education director whose role is identified by each community. Mainly, they have leadership roles on education matters ranging from administration, finance management, direction, planning, supervision and policy. Smaller communities have EDs who manage the whole education portfolio from K-12 and post-secondary education. Millbrook divides its education portfolio under two directorates with one supervising K-12 and the other for post-secondary education.

The Project Advisory met on a total of four different occasions for project debriefing sessions and Education Directors were provided ongoing updates. The EDs were the main contacts for the project and provided a wealth of support and knowledge regarding the best approach for the consultation process. The EDs consistently provided feedback on methodology, protocol process, document reviews, draft reviews and final approval for the report.

The internal advisory will use the report in their next steps process, which is to develop strategies for action based on the recommendations. The faculty representatives will be key to identify faculties and programs where recommendations can be directed to.

Project Focus

Community Educational Needs Assessment

The Mount initially wanted to conduct a community educational needs assessment with the target communities. The scope of the project would lead to partnering with eight Mi'kmaq communities on mainland Nova Scotia: Acadia First Nation, Annapolis Valley First Nation, Bear River First Nation, Glooscap First Nation, Indian Brook First Nation, Millbrook Mi'kmaq Community, Paq'ntkek Mi'kmaq Nation and Pictou Landing First Nation.

In the early stages of the project, the Program Director received feedback from the communities that an in depth community educational needs assessment was too ambitious and time consuming given the level of research and consultation required to implement, organize and process complete assessments. Paq'ntkek Mi'kmaq Nation conducted such an assessment with Saint Mary's University that took almost a year with a team of researchers. It would be impossible for the Mount's project to do a similar assessment for each community with the budget at hand.

Consultation on Post-Secondary Educational Needs in Mi'kmaq Communities

The project shifted from individual community assessments on skills, experience and knowledge levels to an assessment on post-secondary educational interests and needs through consultation with Mi'kmaq on Mainland Nova Scotia. This is equally important for the Mount because it would lead to discussions that would provide the Mount direction on program development and how it could enhance its existing services to make the university more attractive to Aboriginals.

The Mount wanted to explore specific areas of existing academic programming that may be linked to interests from Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia. The basis of the consultation was then developed into questions such as:

- What is the range/scope of the educational needs for the community with regard to academic programming? What programs are desired and what age demographic requires access to these offerings?
- What is the community's preferred format for learning, e.g. course delivery on campus, within the local community, online learning or a blended approach?
- Is there interest in an articulation approach where introductory-level courses will be offered in the community and then the final courses offered on campus or via distance?
- Is there an interest in a cohort approach to learning where a group of students studies together throughout their program?
- Is there local expertise which can contribute to program delivery?
- What kind of programs can be offered collaboratively to a number of Aboriginal communities at the same time?
- What are the opportunities for partner institutions to collaborate in providing programs locally?

Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Needs

The Mount also wanted to conduct an assessment of its existing academic programs in education, professional studies, and undergraduate arts and sciences and delivery methods. For example, the institution has considerable capability to offer on-line courses to students at a distance.

In addition to the community consultation and institutional assessment, the Mount saw benefits in sharing the findings with other post-secondary institutions in Nova Scotia and the Atlantic Provinces. The hope is that programming interests and needs identified in this project can serve other institutions, especially in areas the Mount does not offer studies in, such as engineering and medicine, or specific technical studies from community colleges. This project would map out the programmatic needs that would better enable partnership building among the institutions.

Knowledge sharing is one of the key values for this consultation with Mi'kmaq and Aboriginals. It is important to share experiences and challenges from a community perspective as well as from the perspective of students in post-secondary institutions. It was important to gather data on student experiences and successes from their members who pursue post-secondary education. The following are of particular interest to this project:

- Should traditional university approaches to academic and counseling support be tailored to increase retention rates for Aboriginal learners?
- Is there a need for university bridging/transition admissions programs for learners taking non-traditional paths to university?
- Should consideration be given to the implementation of a formal support strategy for online learners?
- Should universities establish tutoring programs specifically for their Aboriginal students?
- Should universities establish peer support groups or "buddy systems" for new students entering university?

These questions were not directly asked to the participants, however, they were answered in one form or another. All of the recommendations and ideas from post-secondary students managed to cover all the bases. There is more time required to process this data, which is the Mount's objective after the Report is shared widely.

The questions were amended for clearer understanding. It was also important for the EDs to look at community interests as well. It was felt that that the questions were only answering the Mount's specific objectives, whereas, Education Directors recommended questions more in tune with post-secondary education in general. Appendix B and C were the questions used for the project. There were two changes made in the guide questions. In **Appendix B**, the questions were more in line with the above mentioned focus of interests, while in **Appendix C**, the questions were further clarified because the first line of questions were considered too academic. In reference to the second set of questions regarding the experience and success of members who pursue post-secondary education, these were not directly asked in the guided questions, but they were common themes shared in the stories from the communities. They are included in the recommendations.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology for *Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education* was also determined through a consultation process with the Education Directors. In the spirit of gathering information, the method had to be community driven in order to identify the specific needs of the community or share knowledge. (Wilson, 2008) There were numerous correspondences between the program director and the communities on the best approach for conducting the consultation. This process was slow, respectful and time sensitive. There was no way the project could be completed without approval from each community. The process required back and forth dialogue with the EDs who were the appointed representatives from the communities for this project. They were approved by the Chief and/or Council in each community.

The project focus was to consult on educational needs and interests in the communities using qualitative research methodology. Therefore, EDs recommended that the project get approval with all review boards including the Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch (MEW) and the Mount's Ethics

Review. Their recommendation was to complete the two previous steps before seeking approval and support from Chiefs and Councils.

The project cleared the Mount's Research Ethics and was deemed to be a quality assurance project as opposed to pure research. Then, the project had to gain support from MEW in order to get the nod from the Chiefs. Community EDs felt that clearing MEW, provided additional accountability and this process acted as a safeguard for collecting data from the communities. As for research methodology, the EDs recommended interviewing individuals and/or groups via discussion circles (talking circles) or individual face-to-face interviews as preferred methods for gathering data.

The nature of gathering data via consultation, interviews and group discussions is qualitative research. MEW suggested respecting process to avoid providing identifiable data in the final report. The communities gave their consent knowing there were enough safeguards in place to protect the identity of individuals who would participate in the discussions.

The project is based on a true spirit of participatory action research because of the interactive process between the community and the institution in methodology, consultation and feedback. The project was designed to involve all participants from the beginning to the end always respecting process, feedback, approvals, recommendations, data gathering, (**Appendices D, E, F**) knowledge sharing and the narratives of the participants, communities and tribal councils. (Wilson, 2008) The Program Director worked hand-in-hand with community representatives and participants. All participants provided feedback on the process, methodology and outcomes for the final report.

Consultation Process

Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education was a consultation project with Mi'kmaq, Mi'kmaq communities on mainland Nova Scotia, Aboriginals residing in urban centres and post-secondary students in universities and colleges in the province. The consultation process itself is part of a capacity building initiative for Mount Saint Vincent University with Aboriginal communities, specifically the Mi'kmaq. The Mount's President's Office was mindful that a respectful process in coordination with each community's protocol for development of this project from start to end was paramount. This project is the first to describe a consultation process between First Nations and a post-secondary institution in Atlantic Canada, which is important knowledge to share with the academy.

The Project Director reviewed literature on how consultation (Alberta, 2013) (Canada G. o., 2011) (Columbia, 2014) (Canada M. -N., 2010) (Scotia N., 2012) and data gathering and/or research (Watch, 1999) should be conducted with Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia and with Aboriginals in general. Engaging Aboriginals through consultation is an approach that should be based on mutual benefits for the Mi'kmaq and the Mount. (Alberta, 2013) (Columbia, 2014) The Mi'kmaq would like to improve the educational outcomes of its people, hence improving their socio-economic conditions. (Columbia, 2014)

This report outlines the process, which will help other post-secondary institutions to benefit from the Mount's experience on consultation with Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia. The process for consultation was agreed on by the Education Directors. The EDs were the community champions for process, implementation and due diligence for the consultation. The Mount Aboriginal Advisory followed recommendations by the EDs, but also provided additional supports from an academic institutional perspective.

My research indicates that there is no record of any similar consultation between Mi'kmaq communities and post-secondary institutions in Nova Scotia on post-secondary education needs. There are numerous reports from post-secondary institutions working in coordination with Mi'kmaq through research by Saint Mary's University; Sobey School of Business for Unama'ki Benefits Office for an economic leakage study (University, 2010) STFX and Mi'kmaq Kina'matnewey (Jeff Orr, 2008); Dalhousie University and Pictou Landing Boat Harbour Project; and numerous research projects from the Atlantic Aboriginal Economic Development Integrated Research (AAEDIRP) (Newhouse, 2013). None of these projects engaged the Mi'kmaq through consultation where two parties are both holders – not stakeholders. (Columbia, 2014)

There are documents outlining the consultation process between First Nations and government, both provincial and federal across Canada (Canada A. a., 2010) (Alberta, 2013) (Columbia, 2014). There is a document that outlines principles for consultation between the Mi'kmaq, the Federal government and Nova Scotia, which is the Consultation Terms of Reference (Canada M.-N., 2010), mainly for treaty rights.

Another helpful document from the Nova Scotia Office of Aboriginal Affairs is their Proponent's Guide (Scotia N., 2012), which the Mount's project refers to for its principles and process. Although this document refers to how engagement shall be conducted with Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia in reference to decisions related to land and natural resources, its principles of engagement are what the Mount's consultation project followed: mutual respect, early engagement, openness and transparency and adequate time to review/respond.

The Guide also recommended steps to follow when engaging the Mi'kmaq, which the Mount referenced for its project. The Mount consultation with Mi'kmaq communities aims to document this process for future post-secondary institutions in similar consultations or engagement on matters related to education.

1. Community Support:

This project could have not been completed without the guidance and support from the community. The first point of contact was with the Education Directors in each of the eight mainland Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq communities. This was conducted through email, follow-up calls and community visits to gain support and direction. Steps one and two took three to four months to complete.

2. Agreed Process for *Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education:*

The engagement process began with 'agreeing to agree' on process. The first task for the PD was

to present the project to the communities and gain initial support from the Education Directors. The first and second steps were completed with visits to each of the communities. There were opportunities for questions, clarifications and input at these meetings. Each community visit provided rich feedback on the project's process, methodology, expected outcomes and direction. During this stage, the EDs recommended that MSVU submit the project for ethics approval, before submitting a letter to Chief and Council for a formal request for support. Engaging communities first to discuss education needs is part of a consultation process that would be followed by the planning stages (Columbia, 2014).

3. Review Boards and Quality Control:

The application to the Mount review board was a two week long process. The project was considered a quality assurance project as opposed to strictly research. Once the Mount gave its clearance, the project was submitted to the Mi'kmaq Ethics Watch. The EDs felt more confident the project would be approved by each Chief and Council if the project cleared MEW. Once this was completed, EDs forwarded letters of request to each respective Chief and Council for approval. MEW provided research and social accountability for all the partners involved and added a layer of due diligence. This process was expected to take at least two or three months with back and forth correspondence, but all tasks were completed in three weeks. The next step was the final approval from the communities for consultation to begin.

4. Community Protocols for Consultation Approval:

Education Directors were the key people to ignite the engines at community level. During the visits in each community, the Program Director gained insight into the best approach to gain community approvals. The easiest process was to submit official requests on behalf of the Mount (**See Appendix D**) to each Chief and Council, along with a briefing note (**Appendix D**) with the project focus and statement of work (**Appendix A**). Part of the plan was for the Program Director to give a project presentation to each Chief and Council, if deemed necessary. Again, the project cleared this process relatively easily. The communities unanimously gave support to the program. This process took approximately four months. Each community responded to the request via email approval, which is stored under lock and key.

This process could have taken longer if the community was not in agreement with any specific outcomes or benefits that align with community interests. Benefits from consultations depend on their objectives: business opportunities, partnership building, negotiations on Treaty Rights, environmental/health/social/cultural impacts, etc., and whether they would be of interest to the community. Education is a high priority for the Mi'kmaq, which is why this project was unanimously given support. Project clarity and continuous communication with the partners were also key factors for the success of gaining support for the project. These are values and principles outlined in the literature on consultation previously mentioned in the report.

5. Consultation Process and Knowledge Gathering:

Education is a priority for the Mi'kmaq. Any time you engage First Nations on priority matters,

such as education, health and socio-economic matters, then effective engagement practices need to be taken into strict consideration. (Ibid.)

This section is covered in more detail under Methodology. However, it is necessary to highlight that this was a guided process. Although the Program Director felt confident that the community representatives would trust that the process was respectful of each community's best interests, he relied on the Education Directors for their guidance and recommendations on who to consult with in each community.

It was agreed that the following people in the community would be targeted for the consultations:

- Leadership: Chief (if possible), Council member
- Directors: Education Director, Health Director, Economic Development/Native Employment Officer
- Educators: identified by leadership and Education Directors
- Community Members: Elders, Parents, youth, post-secondary students in Nova Scotia, Off-Reserve members.

The MSVU Aboriginal Advisory recommended that Aboriginals living in urban centres would be included in the consultation, which were:

- Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) Aboriginal residents
- Other post-secondary students enrolled in the partner universities/college (they were not members from the 8 Mi'kmaq partner communities)

The Program Director recommended that the project consult with Tribal organizations and Councils. In doing so, the project would have regional perspectives on post-secondary education needs in Nova Scotia to complete the individual community-based needs. This provided a cross-reference on gathered data.

6. Accountability and Dissemination:

Again, this project is unique because of its consultation on post-secondary needs with Mi'kmaq and other Aboriginals in Nova Scotia. Therefore, it is a priority for this project to outline this process clearly for transparency and accountability among all partners.

This consultation required continuous communication on many levels. The project relied on both internal and external supports provided by communities with Education Directors (external), MSVU Aboriginal Advisory (external) and MSVU Project Advisory (internal).

Regular updates and briefing notes were provided throughout the duration of the project. There were delays in some of the processes in order to get final approvals from each community and tribal organization, but that would be followed up with emails, calls and visits if needed. An important process to abide by is to provide ample time with other partners to review documents, drafts, and final reports. (Nova Scotia, 2012)

7. Breakdown of Communities and Organizations Consulted

The process by which the consultation was conducted was based on recommendations from community leadership, Education Directors, Aboriginal Advisory and the Program Director. Tribal organizations and urban Aboriginals (off Reserve Mi'kmaq living, studying or working in urban centres) were also included. The following is the breakdown:

- Communities: 67
- 8 Education Directors
- 5 Chiefs
- 5 Health Directors
- 6 Native Employment Officers
- 5 Economic Development Officers
- 8 Councillors
- 30 Community members

- Tribal Organizations: 15
- Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq – 7 including Executive Director
- Native Women's Association of Nova Scotia – 2 including Executive Director
- Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs – 2
- Native Council of Nova Scotia - 1
- Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey – 3 including Executive Director

- Post-secondary Students/Advisors: 41 Students/ 7 Advisors = 48
- Acadia University – 4 including Advisor
- STFX University – 12 including Advisor
- Dalhousie University – 16 including 2 Advisors
- Nova Scotia Community College – 8 including 2 Advisors
- MSVU – 7 including Advisor

- Off Reserve/Halifax: 12
- Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre – 12

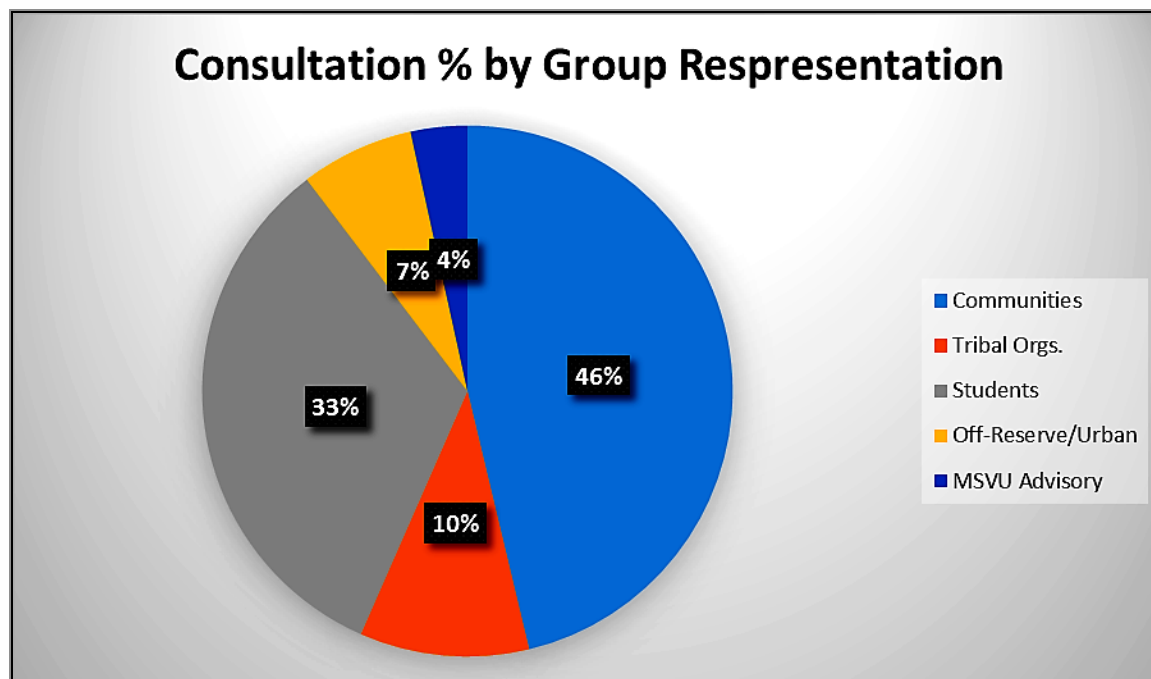
- MSVU Aboriginal Advisory: 5
- 5 members

TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED: 147

The Consultation was extensive and covered much ground. Since it was decided early on that the project cannot assess the community educational levels (skills, training, knowledge and experience) in detail, it was important for the Mount and Project Director to gain as much perspective as possible on post-secondary needs from as many community recommended individuals and college and university students as possible.

The following pie chart gives a percentage breakdown of individuals who participated in the consultation.

Figure 8 Consultation % Chart



FINDINGS AND COMMON THEMES

The main objective of this project was to determine the post-secondary educational needs of mainland Mi'kmaq and Aboriginals in Nova Scotia. This segment of the report is vital for all interested parties, especially target communities and the Mount. The richness of the findings require further in depth analysis in order to determine next steps, including an action plan for the Mount, making further recommendations by matching recommendations with partner post-secondary institutions and working collaboratively amongst partner institutions at the Association of Atlantic Universities level.

The Mount will benefit from these findings greatly because they will open discussions regarding how these needs can be addressed at an institutional level. An internal Aboriginal Advisory for this project will review the findings and make its own recommendations for the Mount.

Community Perspectives on Post-Secondary Education Needs

Representatives from each community offered recommendations, which were similar, yet unique enough for each community. One example is that Millbrook leadership identified needs oriented towards business development and economic outcomes; therefore, fulfilling senior management and administration areas were identified as a high priority. Paq'ntkek identified its needs related

to trades and apprenticeships in order to maintain focus on its mission and vision to lay groundwork and prepare human resources geared for the Highway project. Ideally, it would be in the best interest of economic development policy makers to research this area with more detail to match educational needs with economic development strategies.

Health Directors identified needs in health human resources, such as nurses, early childhood educators and social workers. Their focus was also based on students' health needs while in post-secondary education. Health Directors mentioned that some students may face life challenges, which need to be addressed in order for them to become successful students at university.

Directors of Economic Development shared their perspectives from an employment and career orientation point of view. They work in coordination with Native Employment Officers. NEOs are front line workers that give support to students who wish to complete their GED through Adult Learning Programs. Often they have similar roles as academic advisors or career coaches from universities, but they are in the community. Many of their recommendations were based on skills and training needs in order for students to continue with their post-secondary education. Their input included strong recommendations for career orientation, preparatory courses for post-secondary education and apprenticeships. Many of their students are mature students, single mothers, or young male students who interrupted their studies.

Education Directors offered their perspectives on community needs in a broader aspect, which included K-12, needs for community supports for education attainment, student supports in high school, orientation needs for post-secondary education, funding issues, policy and criteria for students. They provided most of the recommendations for post-secondary education and institutions in general. EDs, were adamant about building solid support foundations for Aboriginal students on campus, including bridging programs, mentorships, life skills workshops so students can transition to urban and campus living much more easily, and orientations to better identify individual interests and career opportunities.

There is a potential for in depth analysis on the report to pull quantitative data on its findings, trends, recommendations and common themes. A faculty member of the internal advisory suggested that a graduate student take the report's recommendations and process the frequency/types of recommendations to establish priorities. This could be done as next steps. The items shared in the report are general findings summarized from the consultations. Again, the items are in no way distributed according to priority or numeric distribution.

1) What are the community's post-secondary educational needs?

- Most communities gave a background on general needs from K-12.
- Career orientation was high on their priority.
- Numeracy and literacy skills for high school students.
- Adult learning programs for mature and returning students.
- Self-confidence and motivation coaching for post-secondary students.
- Community assessments needed to better map out the community planning for implementing training programs and post-secondary educational needs.
- Infrastructure for learning centres with computer accessibility.

- **Most commonly expressed post-educational needs were:**
- Bachelor of Arts programs.
- Trades programs: carpentry, construction areas, industry related, electrical, and plumbing.
 - Health professions: social workers, nurses.
 - Business/Entrepreneurial: administrative – managerial areas, marketing.
 - Sciences, mainly for the health areas.
 - Bachelor of Education (especially to increase the numbers of Educators in Paq’ntkek, Pictou and Indian Brook).
- Early childhood education was mentioned in all communities.
- Communication: public relations.

1a) What programs are in high demand?

- Trades are the growing trend among mature students who have completed GEDs and Adult Learning Programs.
- Bachelor of Arts programs for recent high school graduates. It seems it was the fall back program used as an exploratory program for many students. Further research is required on career orientation, university trends, graduation rates in post-secondary, retention and attrition rates.
- Trades traditionally dominated by males were among the highest in demand: carpentry, electrical, heavy equipment operators, and welding.

1b) Are there specific demographic (age, gender, cultural) post-secondary educational needs?

Common themes based on demographic needs:

- Males are more likely to go into trades programs at community colleges.
- Females are more likely to go into university programs. There is no specific data with respect to the 8 communities which were consulted on this project. The narratives indicate that the trend may be similar. Figure 8 is a chart to identify the level of attainment of university degrees based on only female and male genders from Statistics Canada (Canada S. The Educational Attainment of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada, 2013).

Figure 9 Chart on Levels of Education Attainment

Proportion of Aboriginal people by selected levels of educational attainment, sex and age groups, Canada, 2011

Selected levels of educational attainment	Aboriginal women		Aboriginal men	
	35 to 44 years	55 to 64 years	35 to 44 years	55 to 64 years
	Percentage			
Postsecondary qualifications	55.3	46.5	48.0	47.1
Trades certificate	9.9	10.1	19.3	22.3
College diploma	27.1	21.4	18.3	14.1
University certificate below bachelor	4.6	4.8	2.7	3.2
University degree	13.6	10.2	7.6	7.6

Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

- Males chose fishing as a main route for employment, rather than pursuing post-secondary education.
- Single parent mothers are the majority of students, also increasing in the METS programs.
- Majority of adult learners are mothers.

Quantitative research is required to follow up on trends and demographic interests to develop programs targeting Aboriginal specific gender considerations. It is imperative that PSIs address the needs of women and single mothers.

2) What is the community's preferred format for learning, e.g. course delivery on campus, within the local community, online learning or a blended approach?

- A blended approach was by far preferred by every community interviewed, which was a combination of community hosted course work and campus delivery.
- Online learning was identified as the least preferred approach, although every community mentioned they had video conferencing capacity, which is a form of distance learning. This is one of the most important resources that the communities all possess, which should be explored. The First Nations Help Desk provides support for this technology. The Mount must consider this as an excellent platform for course delivery.
- Community-based learning was recognized for its value especially among mature/returning students, who are often young single mothers. They would be closer to available resources for childcare, housing and source of employment for many.
- Delivery on campus was recommended for recent high school graduates in order to gain an off-community living experience. This is considered important as a survival skill for students to have and to broaden their worldviews.
- The majority of communities made reference to their video conferencing capabilities and would support individual courses delivered this way as part of a blended approach with on campus courses.
- A blended approach where courses begin on campus and then finish final

years in the community was mentioned.

2a) If courses were offered on Mi'kmaw communities, could individuals from neighbouring communities (Aboriginal and Non-aboriginal) attend these classes in order to fulfil the required amount of participants?

- The communities unanimously agreed that this was doable as long as the host community is the priority for funding and seats.
- Shared funding is also possible, but it could present administrative challenges between communities when it comes to processing payments. It was mentioned that communities have had experiences in establishing partnerships for delivery of community programs in health, therefore, those could be regarded as templates for education programs. The recommendation is for communities to work with a regional organization for administration of a program.

3) Is there interest in an articulation approach where introductory-level courses are offered in the community and then the final courses offered on campus or via distance?

- Communities agree this is an excellent way for approaching program delivery.
- Millbrook, Indian Brook, Pictou Landing and Paq'ntkek Mi'kmaw Nation agreed that it is a good approach.
- Valley Nations were more reluctant because their communities would not have the population bases for start-up requirements for any individual community, unless it was a cohort approach amongst those communities.

3a) What is the maximum distance people will travel to a post-secondary institution?

- All agreed that 45-60 minutes is reasonable for travel time to any institution, 2 days per week, not daily.

4) Is there an interest in a cohort approach to learning where a group of students studies together throughout their program?

- All the communities welcome the cohort approach.
- Common concerns were to make the content more agreeable to Aboriginal needs and perspectives.
 - The programs would have to be delivered based on the needs of the community, not on the needs of the institution.
 - Cultural safety or competence was recommended for delivery of community-based programs.
 - There were recommendations made from former hosts of community cohorts to maintain the expected outcomes to be the same as on campus so that students don't feel it is a "watered down" version of a campus program.

4b) What career/study programs would be good for cohort learning?

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Education
- Trades areas
- Business Administrative areas: human resources, management, financing/accounting

4c) Would individuals travel to another Mi'kmaq community to participate in a cohort program?

- The overall response was a YES.
- Transportation was identified as a concern and was recommended to be taken into consideration for planning any cohort program.

5) Is there local expertise which can contribute to program delivery?

- All the communities identified that there is local expertise, but chances are that local experts would be too busy to contribute to program delivery.
- If there are no resources from a given community, then look for them from other communities or even post-secondary institutions. There are many individuals who have been guest lecturers at Dalhousie, Cape Breton University and Nova Scotia Community College.

5a) Are there Masters and PhD graduates in the community that could deliver programs in the community?

- There are more individuals with Masters Degrees than people with PhDs in Nova Scotia.
- There are gaps in the number of graduates in postgraduate levels in general.
- A community assessment of needs is required, similar to the one conducted in Paq'ntkek for each community in Nova Scotia.
- In furthering the conversation, it was also recognized that some communities had gaps in identifying numbers of their graduates in a formal manner, such as with a data tracking tool.

6) What kinds of programs can be offered collaboratively to a number of Aboriginal communities at the same time?

The following programs were identified as programs that can be offered collaboratively to a number of Mi'kmaq communities as cohorts/blended approach/courses (via video conferencing):

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Education
- Trades programs
- Communities are geographically and culturally tied together which has

resulted in the collaboration of resources for many initiatives in health, training, and economic development projects. It would be easy to work collaboratively in program development and delivery.

- Valley Nations identified that this was an ideal approach because of the low populations in their communities
- Communities can host in rotation

6a) What educational needs does this community have which may be similar to other Mi'kmaw communities on mainland Nova Scotia?

- General education needs were similar in all communities.
- The challenges were very common, not to mention experiences for students who expressed the need for proper orientation for post-secondary education.
- There was a huge number of similar demographic needs as well, especially for single parents, or males in traditionally male gendered trades.
- All of the communities expressed the need for community supports in tutoring, orientation, mentorships, and providing incentives for students to continue their education paths.
- There was a common concern about the high school drop-out rate among young male students. Causes for this aren't clear, whereas for young single mothers, it was more apparent that it was due to their early mothering process.
- There is a huge demand on preparatory courses for post-secondary to upgrade literacy and numeracy skills. There are many students in adult learning programs and GEDs with the hope to continue with their education for higher learning.

The following chart gives an estimate of the number of students from the 2012-2013 year, who were funded by the community. The number of students in GED/ALP programs was requested, but not all the communities forwarded this data, except Millbrook and Acadia. These numbers would identify the number of potential post-secondary students, aside from the ones identified by the EDs for the column titled Secondary. The numbers for GED/ALP students is mainly in the hands of NEOs. This lack of data is a gap in identifying complete numbers of potential post-secondary students.

Figure 10 Student Enrolment in 8 Mi'kmaw Communities

Community	Primary	*Secondary	**GED/ALP	***Post-Secondary
Acadia First Nation	29	60		27
Annapolis Valley FN	-	36		-
Bear River FN	-	26		26
Glooscap FN	-	-		28
Indian Brook FN	245	240		
Millbrook FN	111	101		65
Pictou Landing FN	-	-		-
Paq'ntkek	11	13		26
Totals				

* *Secondary studies include: students enrolled in junior high and high school,*
***Students in GED programs, and mature students in Adult Learning Programs.*
*** *Post-secondary includes: university and college programs (funded through Mi'kmaq Employment Training Secretariat).*

Source: Education Directors/Native Employment Officers in each community

7) Has this community/organization partnered with post-secondary education programs in this community or has it partnered with other communities for program delivery?

- Paqn'tkek, Pictou Landing, Millbrook and Indian Brook have partnered with PSIs.
- Acadia, Bear River, Annapolis Valley and Glooscap have not partnered with larger PSIs, although there were courses offered by NSCC or GED training.

7a) Which?

- CBU in Bachelor of Arts in Millbrook
- CBU in Bachelor of Community Studies in Pictou Landing
- NSCC in various areas
- St. Mary's University in Millbrook
- Dalhousie for its Bachelor of Social Work cohort
- STFX in Bachelor of Education in Indian Brook

For Leadership/Post-Secondary Students

8) What do you perceive to be the main educational needs in the community in the next 10-15 years?

- Funding alternatives for post-secondary education need to be addressed due to the demographic growth, especially when it is recognized that First Nations are the fastest growing ethnic group in Canada.
 - Post-secondary education needs must align with community needs for community development.
 - Communities see business and entrepreneurial programs as the way to building more prosperous communities.
 - Health care professionals will be needed.
 - Retired managerial and administrative positions will need to be filled by adequately skilled and trained people with post-secondary degrees.
 - It is the hope of many education leaders that there be an improvement of graduation rates in science-based programs: engineers, high-skilled technicians, architects, etc.
 - We will continue to need educators.
 - Policies designed for evolving needs of the community for post-secondary education.
 - Communities need to build stronger connections with PSIs.

- Development of long-term strategies for education and employment as a community project.
- Assessments need to be conducted for policy and planning.

8a) What priorities should the community support in education attainment for the community?

- Promote a culture of education in the community at all levels.
- Language was mentioned as a high priority for community cultural interests in Paq'ntkek and Pictou.
 - More educators in general will be needed.
 - More community based learning will be needed to address the gaps young people face in their secondary education.
 - Infrastructure for education centres in the community, not necessarily schools, but learning centres for all areas: community tutorials, upgrading programs, training programs, computer accessibility, community instructors, etc.
 - Day care needs to meet the increasing demand of a fast-growing demographic.
 - Career orientation strategies for younger ages.
 - Encourage more individually based funding approaches with scholarships and bursaries.
 - Preparing students for lifelong learning for career success.
 - Increased funding for students.
 - Improve student retention in secondary and post-secondary education.
 - Community supports for students in general especially in literacy and numeracy skills for post-secondary preparation.

Recommendations

Recommendations from the project were based on the following question:

What are your recommendations for post-secondary institutions in developing programs/providing services to attract more Aboriginal students in universities and colleges?

1) Recommendations For Mount Saint Vincent University:

- On campus orientation for all new Aboriginal students on existing supports
- Life skills training
- Mi'kmaw Language course included in the Cultural studies program
- Aboriginal content and faculty
- Business Administration for Mi'kmaw women
- MSVU can become a university of choice for Aboriginal programming in the future due to its HRM location

- Residential supports for Aboriginal students
- Day care supports for Aboriginals via subsidy programs
- Elder-in-residence
- Aboriginal-based course with transferrable credits, such as in Mi'kmaw language
- Cohort program for Bachelor of Education
- Specialized programming for early childhood education
- MSVU summer preparatory programs for high school students
- Specialized training for orientation/career coaching from MSVU with the guidance counselors in Mi'kmaw communities.
 - MSVU to partner with communities to seek alternative funds for program delivery on communities
 - Summer cohorts for B.Ed. where residences and day care are offered
 - Urban-specific programing to be delivered at the Mi'kmaw Friendship Centre
 - Aboriginal members of the Mount Advisory recommend that the Mount seriously look into developing a PhD in Education for only Aboriginals/Mi'kmaq. There are potentially 20-30 individuals with M.EDs in Nova Scotia alone (rough estimate, it would be important to gather precise data). A PhD cohort would at least begin to address the gap for Aboriginal faculty amongst ALL post-secondary institutions in Nova Scotia. Imagine 20 PhDs distributed among all universities and colleges in Nova Scotia. It would be one of the most significant achievements in education attainment for Mi'kmaq.

2) Recommendations For Post-Secondary Institutions in General:

- More Aboriginal perspectives in content
- Academic supports be designed specifically for Aboriginal students
- Cultural sensitivity for institutions on Aboriginal reality
- Communication strategies for on/off campus supports directed to Aboriginal/Mi'kmaw communities
 - Ongoing orientation programs
 - Obligatory orientation programs for Aboriginal students that communities could partner on
 - Case management approach for monitoring students, especially in first year programs
 - Data tracking for Aboriginal students
 - Promotion of self-identification of Aboriginal students
 - Faculty cultural competency training for community-delivered programs including: individual courses, cohorts and distance education
 - Community colleges need to design programs specific to Aboriginal reality for business model
 - Increased partnerships for apprenticeships targeting Aboriginal students
 - Build ongoing meaningful ties with Aboriginal communities
 - Elders-in-residence
 - Urban-specific programing to be delivered at the Mi'kmaw Friendship Centre

- Mentorship programs for post-secondary students via peer supports
- Ongoing cultural recognition for Aboriginal students on campus: powwows, cultural events, cultural inclusion, diversity awareness on campus to include Mi'kmaw diversity
 - Scholarships and bursaries for Aboriginal students
 - Universities to prepare students for career preparation, such as practicums, career exploration projects, "test drives"
 - Aboriginal faculty
 - Aboriginal courses for all students, not only for Aboriginal students
 - Student centres for Aboriginal students

Education Directors offered to identify the main priorities for Mount Saint Vincent University and for Post-Secondary Institutions.

3) Recommendations from the Program Director:

- Identify research topics recommended during the course of this project. The importance of doing research on the rate of attrition among first year and post-secondary students is needed. There is no solid data on retention rates among first year Aboriginal students in Atlantic Canada. The Atlantic Aboriginal Advisors Networking Group (AAANG) have shared many similar concerns at their meetings. AAANG strongly recommends that the AAU help find funding to do research on post-secondary education, such as stats on retention and graduation rates, trends, challenges, and successes for providing supports on campus. Aboriginal advisors would like to look at this data in order to make informed decisions and recommendations for administration and funding of programs.
- Universities and colleges in Nova Scotia need to combine their efforts and resources to make post-secondary education work for Mi'kmaw students. The combined population of Mi'kmaw students is slowly increasing in all the institutions. PSIs are beginning to track data with respect to Aboriginals in general. It is only a matter of time when the 'fastest growing demographic in Canada' will also be the fastest growing student population on campus in the next 10-15 years. The need to pave the way for Aboriginal students is now when trials and tribulations can be addressed in enhancing supports for them.
- The Atlantic region has to work together to further develop strategies to address Aboriginal post-secondary needs. The Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) is one of many potential groups and associations to build partnerships and to involve high-level decision makers. Other associations which need to take part in this discussion are the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services (CACUSS) and its regional counterpart the Atlantic Association of College and University Student Services (AACUSS). AAANG has been trying to get continued representation with both groups and there is communication with the national group. AAANG has been included as a member of the AAU's Working Group on Aboriginal Education.

- The Federal Government gave Indian Status recognition to nearly 24,000 for Qalipu in Newfoundland. (Canada A. A., 2014) That doubled the population of Aboriginals in Atlantic Canada. There is a growing demand by Aboriginals for more meaningful academic supports now. PSIs need to stop relying on Federal and Provincial funding pots to address the Aboriginal needs on campus. They must develop internal strategies to provide sustainable resources to meet the needs of Aboriginals.
- Universities and funders require data to make informed decisions on resource allocations for hiring Aboriginal advisors and faculty, for opening student centres, and developing programs to provide meaningful education for Aboriginals. It is extremely important that PSIs work towards developing a data tracking tool to gather much needed information on statistics for all things related to Aboriginal students. Research is an ally for Aboriginals when done in good spirit.
- There is no greater need than providing adequate and culturally competent education in post-secondary education. Cultural competence is required at many levels at PSIs, but it must begin with the Faculty who teach Aboriginal students. It must also be provided for researchers, recruiters, and Academic advisors to enhance education exchange between educators and learners. This has to be an ongoing capacity development for all PSIs, but it must be a priority for the Mount as well.
- The Atlantic universities and colleges need to survey their progress in developing and implementing supports for Aboriginal students. The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) conducted a national survey of existing supports for Aboriginals across campuses in Canada. This is a template to conduct a similar survey in Atlantic Canada starting with Nova Scotia where our PSIs must be evaluated on their progress. The study could also be cross-referenced with the study done by the AAU in 2007-2009 (Timmons, 2009). It would provide a snapshot of then and now.

One of the statistics that resonated with the Program Director is that “68% have Elders on campus.” (AUCC, 2013). There are ten public post-secondary institutions in Nova Scotia and only one has an Elder on staff. We are a long way from reaching 68% in Nova Scotia. Of course, it isn’t fair to compare Nova Scotia or even the Atlantic region with other areas of Canada because we do not compare in population density. Who knows, we may even have different needs than our sister Nations farther West. Nevertheless, it does not diminish the importance of conducting an evaluation on our progress in this region. We can establish our own benchmarks. After all, how do we know how to evaluate ourselves, if we don’t have data tracking tools in our PSIs? The Mount can start this work in coordination with AAANG and AAU to develop this.

All the recommendations, including the ones from the Program Director will be brought forward to the Aboriginal Advisory where they could be molded into plans of action and strategy building. This next steps stage will have to be an integrated process between the Aboriginal Advisory and the internal advisory.

MI'KMAQ AND ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Acadia First Nation

Consultations with the Acadia First Nation took place at various times with: the Health Director, EDO, NADACA, Community Outreach Worker, 2 Councillors, Education Director, Native Employment Training Officer and Band members

1) What are the community's post-secondary educational needs?

Upgrading is important especially for adults who have been out of academic studies for some time. This would be the first aspect to address for Acadia. Life skills for post-secondary should be covered from high school so that students heading to post-secondary education will be better prepared.

“We need to get our folks ready for post-secondary education like in math and literacy.”
Community member

1a) What programs are in high demand?

Trades are a major demand. There are people trained in many areas. B.A. programs are the most popular, yet the opinion is that they are quite “useless” because students cannot get jobs.

1b) Are there specific demographic (age, gender, cultural) post-secondary education needs?

The majority of students are mature or adult learners who look for METS funding to go into the trades.

Community members spoke about language, but they feel it is hard to see language being taught in Acadia because there are no teachers. Yet, teaching culture is important for the community. The reserve is the centre of life for a large population of the community. Therefore, culture shock is still a huge factor for students who leave the Reserve to study.

Language should be incorporated into the school system, which is challenging because there is no on Reserve school in Acadia. The whole community student population is spread out across the Valley in approximately 300 square kilometres.

Language is a concern, but there are too many challenges for this when our community doesn't have a school, nor language speakers to teach it. The question is, how do we get Mi'kmaq to our students who attend off Reserve schools? In order for any of those programs to become applicable, they would need Department of Education approval. The most important resource for

successful curriculum application would be Mi'kmaw speaking educators. There are none in the Valley region.

Our young people face life challenges that often push personal quests for post-secondary education to later in life. For example, young mothers need to take care of their children until they are school age, which is commonly when the mothers can go back to school. By then, there has been a time gap of approximately five to seven years since high school. Additional challenges from being out of school have set in by this time. Mature students seek upgrading to prepare themselves for either GED or entrance requirements for post-secondary studies. Young men, who haven't completed high school for various reasons, are in a similar situation. There is no apparent reason why young men leave their studies, except they would like to work, often in the fisheries or other general laborer positions where available, not always in the community.

There are few opportunities for employment in Yarmouth for most people, and less for those without post-secondary education. Acadia recommends that there be a way to hire professionals from various areas in health care and trades, who can rotate their services in neighbouring Mi'kmaw Valley bands.

“However, we can have professionals work in coordination with the other Bands. There would be a need to coordinate a needs assessment of neighbouring communities for human resource sharing for future jobs in health for example.” Acadia Band member.

There is a need for a demographic-based assessment in all Acadia bands.

1c) What areas of careers would this community benefit from?

We have to look at health sciences. We need to look at both on and off Reserve employment availability. We have the facilities and the equipment for many health professions, yet we have no Mi'kmaw doctors, community health nurses, or health care professionals in general. We need to build business and development for the Band for future employment; promotion of entrepreneurship and viable business ventures are solid sustainable ways to accomplish future employment in our community. We want youth to come back and work to build this Nation. We need youth in law, in trades, fishers, and administrative fields as well to replace our future pensioners.

2) What is the community's preferred format for learning, e.g. course delivery on campus, within the local community, online learning or a blended approach?

Acadia/Yarmouth is far from HRM, so in community program delivery is one approach. Acadia would like to have more information about online learning for young adults. They are more adaptable and tech-oriented for this type of learning. Virtual learning models are becoming more attractive. Schools and students are more online savvy, so that may be a future model. Right now, it is a challenge in the community, especially for mature students.

The blended approach is ideal for Acadia, given that it is so far from Halifax. A community hosted program would provide community supports, such as housing,

transportation, and childcare.

2b) If courses were offered in Mi'kmaw communities, could individuals from neighbouring communities (Aboriginal and Non-aboriginal) attend these classes in order to fulfil the required amount of participants?

Yes, as long the priority is given to the host Band. Acadia regards this as the only way to have the required amount of participants for program delivery. The Band would need to approach the neighbouring Valley bands and other Acadia communities to make this option work. Again, the need for community assessments in all Valley Bands is a must.

3) Is there interest in an articulation approach where introductory-level courses will be offered in the community and then the final courses offered on campus or via distance?

Yes, that is a potential approach, but always revisiting the needs of the community. Introductory level courses would work in the community, but more advanced courses would be challenging via distance. Instructors would be needed on site.

What is the maximum distance people will travel to a post-secondary institution?

45-60 minutes driving

4) Is there an interest in a cohort approach to learning where a group of students studies together throughout their program?

There is a GED program at Acadia that works, but that is not to say that other cohorts will work. It is challenging to meet the required amount of participants to fill the minimum requirement for course delivery. Perhaps, programs could be set up to invite people from Yarmouth and Bear River members as well.

4a) What career/study programs would be good for cohort learning?

B.A. for an Acadia community cohort and trades such as: electrical, carpentry, heavy equipment, plumbing, business management, sciences, some health professions and early childhood education.

4b) Would individuals travel to another Mi'kmaw community to participate in a cohort program?

Yes, they would if transportation was to be provided.

5) Is there local expertise which can contribute to program delivery?

There is a gap in the Yarmouth area for higher learned people. There are students who have achieved higher learning without Band funding and who are not on the nominal roll (official count of students funded in a community). People would have to self-identify if they have higher

degrees because they may have been funded outside of community funding.

5a) Are there Masters and PhD graduates in the community that could deliver programs in the community?

Not answered.

6) What kind of programs can be offered collaboratively to a number of Aboriginal communities at the same time?

This is difficult to answer unless communities have conducted a needs assessment in coordination with neighbouring communities. There are possibilities to work with other Mi'kmaw bands by all means.

Acadia leadership would like to see that they incorporate labour market information for Yarmouth, the Valley and Nova Scotia for students, so they could make more informed decisions about their education plans. One challenge faced by any student is not knowing what to choose for a career due to the lack of awareness and information about potential career paths. Students go off to university to discover what to study, instead of knowing what to study upon arrival. This is when they hit walls. Often, if they are unsure of what to study, they choose B.A. programs. This in turn does not give students any guarantee of job security upon graduation. By the time students decide on their programs, a year of their funding has been used up, leaving very little room for completion of targeted degrees. Many end up not completing their programs, or look for community college programs to boost their employment opportunities.

The two funding programs in Acadia come from post-secondary funding and METS. They have collaborated on resource sharing for funding particular students, especially when there are shortages of funds for completion of programs. In all honesty, there are always shortages for students according to the education office.

6a) What educational needs does this community have which may be similar to other Mi'kmaw communities on mainland Nova Scotia?

This would depend on the outcome of this study and completing a needs assessments of Valley bands.

7) Has this community/organization partnered with post-secondary education programs on this community or has it partnered with other communities for program delivery? Which?

Acadia has not partnered for post-secondary programs, but they support the idea of developing a program. This would need much logistics planning and prior needs assessments.

For Leadership/Post-Secondary Students

8) What do you perceive to be the main education needs in the community in the next 10-15 years?

Not answered.

8a) What priorities should the community support in education attainment for the community?

There should be acknowledgement of successes for the students at different levels.

“We need to note their accomplishments. We have to recognize all academic achievements of all our students. They all need to see that they are supported at every level in the community.”

Community Leadership

What happens to folks after they graduate? Acadia would like to establish some sort of data tracking of graduates for human resource management. This would enable the community to rely on Band membership for employment resources.

Mentorship programs are needed within the community. They can also be part of the supports for current high school students. Students can give each other support and talk to the kids in the community at younger ages, so that they feel they are a part of a community education project.

“We need to educate our young people and ADULTS to support and promote our children for education as a community initiative.” Community Member

One of the recommendations for the Chief and Council is to conduct an assessment of educational needs targeting both individuals and the community. Then match where both needs could be met. This would be a process by which a community education policy could be developed. When members’ educational outcomes match the community needs, there would be more assurance for future employment. Although, there are no guarantees for employment anywhere, leadership feels that the community and students would benefit from an educational strategy for more sustainable outcomes for education and employment.

8b) What are the challenges in achieving these priorities?

One of the challenges for the Acadia community is that we are five communities under one administration. There is decent population in Acadia, but the challenge is that it is spread out in a large area. This would need to be addressed before any education or training program can work.

Funding and resources for such a vast area of Acadia bands is challenging in many levels. There is a will, but there are funding shortages for bringing everyone together.

8c) What are your recommendations for post-secondary institutions in developing programs/providing services to attract more Aboriginal students in universities and colleges?

Cross-cultural training and awareness is important for both the students and post-secondary institutions. Students need to know where they are going and what expectations there are for

campus learning, while post-secondary institutions need to prepare themselves to know who their Aboriginal students are as well.

There could be job/career/study fairs for the students in high schools or in the community.

There needs to be social/life/budgeting skills for Acadia students when they get on campus (even prior to campus living).

Institutions need to be aware of students' realities from a Mi'kmaw perspective especially when it comes to knowing about challenges faced by students in pursuit of their education.

There could be an online Mi'kmaw course so students from different institutions can take it.

There is a need to establish contact and communication for the institutions and parents. People are intimidated to ask questions. There could be community meetings and information sessions with post-secondary institutions delivered in the communities.

Test drives at university programs would be beneficial for our students to gather information on potential career interests and what is required from post-secondary education. It is not acceptable for a young person to go to university without having a plan.

Students who arrive at university should be automatically provided with orientation for career counseling from the beginning. This could be a combined effort between students, Aboriginal advisors and parents/caregivers/community funders.

The institutions should have additional assessments for students that come from Mi'kmaw communities, especially students with existing academic supports and challenges. This would allow for case management from the beginning for Aboriginal advisors.

One of the recommendations from Acadia and from other Bands, is that there be research to look at why there is such a high desertion rate of young Mi'kmaw men from high school. It is clear from the narratives that there are more Mi'kmaw women than men in pursuit of their post-secondary studies. There needs to be a study focused on data tracking which would help identify the current Aboriginal students in post-secondary in Nova Scotia.

“We need to build closer relationships with our neighbouring educational institutions.” Acadia
Band Member

Community Profile and Education Chart

Normally, each community partner has a chart, which is a landscape of education for each community. The data was taken from the National Household Survey 2011, but Acadia and Annapolis Valley did not take part in the survey. The reasons for this vary according to Statistics Canada. The remaining six community education charts are included in each respective segment.

Millbrook Mi'kmaw Community

Millbrook consultation included: Community Chief, Education Directors, Health Director, NEO, Educators, Band Members and post-secondary students.

1) What are the community's post-secondary educational needs?

Educational needs in any Mi'kmaw community are quite extensive because one cannot look at post-secondary needs without addressing the educational needs from K-12 as well.

There is a wide variety of needs from a community perspective, such as filling medical and business positions. While the medical sector is limited to only a few positions, the business area requires more options for professionals in more senior positions. As Millbrook continues to grow its businesses, it needs to create more positions in areas such as: accounting, marketing, administration and human resources at different senior level positions.

The health department in Millbrook requires its home care workers to get certified. The community also needs early childhood educators.

There are many people in various programs, but there has not been an assessment of programs in the community.

B.A. programs are in high demand for our students, which could be delivered in the community. This would be a springboard for other programs.

There are no supports or proper evaluations for students with learning challenges. It is even difficult to get individual assessments on specific learning needs due to high costs to conduct such tests.

Younger generations and recent graduates are not the only priority in the community; there are higher numbers of returning and mature students seeking post-secondary education.

Millbrook Band employees and Band members employed elsewhere look towards the community for funding to enhance their capacity development.

METS funds students who have been out of high school (age ranges vary) and for college programs. At times, they require pre-university preparation to boost their science, math or literacy skills, in order to transition from secondary to college programs.

1a) What programs are in high demand?

Many students would like language programs to be part of their studies. Cultural studies should

be included with language from Aboriginal perspectives.

1b) Are there specific demographic (age, gender, cultural) post-secondary education needs?

Mature and returning students are increasing in numbers each year. Many rely on community supports to continue with their education. Many will continue their lives in the community and are good human resources because they want to live and work here. Ages range from 15-30 years of age in the METS programs.

The following are current students' interests for PSE:

- Early childhood education (female)
- Heavy equipment operator (male) - which is not necessarily funded by the community unless the student provides evidence of an employment offer.
- Human services (mainly female), and
- Correctional officers (both genders)
- Industrial preparedness for shipyard, steel, and related areas for the Irving contract.
- B.A. studies: there is an overwhelming number of students in B.A. programs in many universities because they were uncertain of their choices entering programs. It seems that B.A. is the fall back program for many students who are undecided on their career interests.

Millbrook supports as many students as possible in their post-secondary studies, although the funding criteria favours returning post-secondary students and high school graduates.

Post-secondary funding criteria in Millbrook are prioritized accordingly:

- 1) Returning students continuing their post-secondary studies
- 2) High School graduates
- 3) Post-graduate students enrolled in a second undergraduate degree
- 4) Full-time mature students and those who are willing to enroll in a college or university preparation course.

As a long-term strategy, the focus is to guide younger generations into higher degree programs to ensure they have greater opportunities in the labour markets. Meanwhile, returning and mature students fall under short-term strategies because they require immediate employment for economic stability for their families. Their time availability is more constricted due to family and/or current employment commitments. Therefore, career goals are more responsive to student economic needs and time availability, often leaving students to choose shorter programs like certified trades.

1c) What areas of careers would this community benefit from?

Career needs for Millbrook vary. A community assessment is required to specifically identify current human resources and gaps in current and future employment for community economic

development, businesses, and social/health services.

This would also depend on the skills required for those careers. The question Millbrook asks is, should it be trying to provide life skills for students to work on community settings, or should it be providing transferable skills for work outside of the community? There are distinct skill sets required for both.

There are many opportunities for Millbrook members to go into programs to find jobs within Truro or neighbouring New Glasgow or Halifax. Truro is centrally located. Millbrook needs many people in trades, but not on a continued basis. Students graduating from trades will need to look outside of Millbrook for employment sustainability.

Millbrook needs on Reserve adult learning programs and pre-employment programs for their current out-of-school/out-of-work members.

“Not only do our people need to learn how to find employment, they also have to learn how to keep it.” Millbrook member.

Professionalism and capacity development are on an increasing demand for the following:

- Social media training
- Communication
- Human resource matters, like ethics and conflict of interests.
- Continued professional training for all areas

2) What is the community’s preferred format for learning, e.g. course delivery on campus, within the local community, online learning or a blended approach?

Millbrook has hosted numerous programs in the community ranging from upgrading, GED, ALP and Bachelor of Arts.

Millbrook is willing to host another B.A. program when it’s financially feasible. Ideally, it would be delivered in the same format as the Cape Breton University model in the early 2000s. Six courses were distributed throughout the year, which allowed students to receive full-time funding.

Youth are quite tech-oriented, yet online courses are difficult for them. Students require great independent study habits for online courses to work. Students benefit more from hands-on learning in a class environment. In fact, they benefit even more if the work can be done in class as much as possible.

The sentiment is that both in community and on campus learning provide pros and cons. This would greatly depend on whether students are recent graduates versus mature or returning students. Recent graduates are encouraged to continue on to campus learning to broaden worldviews and gain off Reserve living experiences. Mature students, would also benefit from off Reserve living experiences, but they would need time to transition from in community to on campus. They are more dependent on the community and family supports, especially for mothers

who often rely on childcare support, employment, and housing.

On the flipside, the younger generation who face academic challenges would greatly benefit from peer mentoring and group supports found among fellow classmates in community-delivered programs. Social accountability through peer mentoring helps promote a sense of individual accountability.

There are details to keep in mind for community-based programs, such as maintaining the students' focus on their education goals. Students may find it easy to distract themselves with busy community and family matters, especially for parents and employees. The program can be a double-edged sword. Continuous communication is required to keep the individual and group motivated.

Recommendations for successful community delivery are:

- Coordinator is needed to keep the program in motion.
- Non-Aboriginal instructors need cultural competency training.
- Clear outline of expectations and outcomes.
- Mandatory class attendance.
- Culturally inclusive content.
- Culturally inclusive methodology.
- Hiring of Aboriginal instructors as a priority.

Programs in the community faced the following challenges:

- Student time management.
- Coordinating priorities between family/employer and academics.
- Negative peer supports

On campus works best for accountability purposes for recent graduates. Students need to feel that sense of connection to campus life.

“As an educator I would like to see that our students go to the campus. They need to interact with other peoples of the world.” Millbrook educator.

A blended approach may include community, online, and on campus approaches. There would be options open for students to transition in the second year to combine online courses with courses delivered in the community. The third year would be on campus or online.

Another angle is to begin coursework on campus in the first year, then have a combination of on-campus and community courses of the second, while third year will be in the community entirely – reverse transition. This would be one way to address the retention of students to complete the programs. Students would benefit from community supports to finish off their programs in their final year, when financial and burn out factors begin to take their toll on many students. This would be an interesting approach that could be explored.

There is a welding program in coordination with Akerley Campus and the Native Council to look at a model.

2b) If courses were offered on Mi'kmaw communities, could individuals from neighbouring communities (Aboriginal and Non-aboriginal) attend these classes in order to fulfil the required amount of participants?

If there are opportunities for doing so, by all means; students need to get funding for this and Bands need to coordinate payments respectively.

This program delivery is viable, but funding details and management of the program needs to be addressed from the beginning. Once a university goes to the host community, it cedes this program to the community. The community is an equal partner. Program delivery would have to be agreed on, but community needs have to be taken into high priority. Post-secondary institutions would need to plan and coordinate on every level to make the program successful.

3) Is there interest in an articulation approach where introductory-level courses will be offered in the community and then the final courses offered on campus or via distance?

There could be benefits for such an approach for both recent graduates and mature students. This would be an excellent process of transition for all students.

3a) What is the maximum distance people will travel to a post-secondary institution?

The distance from Truro to Halifax is enough of a distance, yet it would be costly to travel that distance daily. This could also become cumbersome for students, not to mention a safety issue during winter.

4) Is there an interest in a cohort approach to learning where a group of students studies together throughout their program?

This cohort approach by Cape Breton University in the delivery of the Bachelor of Arts worked in Millbrook.

Cohorts have many advantages. The instructors would have to be quite knowledgeable about the reality of Mi'kmaw students. There are many things to consider such as the learning styles of Mi'kmaw students, not to mention the wide spectrum of individual academic requirements within a group of 10-15 students.

Millbrook students are currently taking a cohort program in welding at the NSCC Akerley Campus in Dartmouth.

4a) What career/study programs would be good for cohort learning?

There are endless opportunities for cohort learning, such as:

- B.A. would be good cohort.
- Entrepreneur courses or programs.
- Finance and Accounting.
- Bachelor of Social Work geared towards education and counselling as opposed to health
- Bachelor of Science

4b) Would individuals travel to another Mi'kmaw community to participate in a cohort program?

Yes.

There are students who travel from all over Mi'kmaki to attend their Bachelor of Social Work cohort classes in Memramcook, New Brunswick. This program started off as a St. Thomas and Dalhousie University degree program. Students chose which university to graduate from at the end. They travelled from NB, NS, and PEI to meet for one lecture week per month. Of course, this was not so travel heavy because of the design of the program and its location was the most central for most students. Millbrook students graduated from this program.

5) Is there local expertise which can contribute to program delivery? N/A

5a) Are there Masters and PhD graduates in the community that could deliver programs in the community?

The reality is that there are a growing number of people in post-graduate programs, but it is not enough to make a claim that it's a growing trend yet.

There are professionals in the communities, but individuals who have university teaching experience are low in number. There are not a lot of choices for candidates because they are either currently working or there are few options to deliver an all Aboriginal program.

6) What kind of programs can be offered collaboratively to a number of Aboriginal communities at the same time?

Refer to notes above.

Core introductory programs in the form of pre-university preparation could be developed. This project should be able to provide some feedback to the communities with respect to common post-secondary education needs.

Programs that can be offered:

- Pre-employment programs.
- Trades-based programs geared for industries, such as shipbuilding contracts, welding, pipefitting, carpentry, and metal fabrication.

There is still a need for Mi'kmaw lawyers and more teachers in the public school system for our

communities.

6a) What educational needs does this community have which may be similar to other Mi'kmaw communities on mainland Nova Scotia?

There will be minor differences between educational needs among Mi'kmaw students in other communities. Interests may vary with respect to community planning for education outcomes in each community. There would be similar interests in programs for upgrading and GED programs required for mature students, mainly introductory and core programs for a community-based Bachelor of Arts. Other programs for the trade areas would be beneficial. Millbrook is central amongst Pictou Landing and Indian Brook First Nations, which would be a good location to host any program.

7) Has this community/organization partnered with post-secondary education programs in this community or has it partnered with other communities for program delivery?

Millbrook has hosted many programs in the community for both community college and university programs.

7a) Which?

CBU has delivered its B.A. in Millbrook. This is something that could be revisited especially for mature students. In fact, it would be ideal to target both mature and recent graduates; it would be preparatory for campus studies for high school graduates and an easier transition to post-secondary studies for mature students.

There was a first year B.A. program from Saint Mary's University delivered in the community. NSCC delivered a pre-tech program to prepare the students for technical studies that were held in the community and on campus in Truro.

There was a cohort for the Aquaculture program for the Agriculture College. The idea was for people to learn on-the-job, but they ended up going to another program. The lesson learned from this is that programs designed for Aboriginals need to conduct an assessment of interests prior to developing a program. It would provide more assurance that the students enrolled in the program are interested. The AC program was a failure because most of the students did not finish or decided to go into other programs.

According to Millbrook education leaders, there are limitless opportunities to explore in partnership building. There are so many different ways to partner, develop articulation agreements, but PSIs need to be less competitive with each other. Instead, they should approach partnership so that everyone benefits. Institutions can work together to meet a larger objective for the Mi'kmaw community.

Millbrook has also partnered with the Nova Scotia Community College to deliver welding at Akerley Campus, Dartmouth. This was considered a successful program.

For Leadership/Post-Secondary Students

8) What do you perceive to be the main education needs in the community in the next 10-15 years?

University students do not always have a life plan when they enter post-secondary studies. Millbrook students need to see a link between their educations with their future working lives. Students need to be oriented to that mindset.

New policies and future planning are in the works to face funding shortages and growing demands for post-secondary funding supports for Millbrook's ever increasing population.

Millbrook's business side will continue to need graduates from human resources, finance, marketing, and management expertise. For the health area: doctors, nurses, and social workers are needed. In general, there is a low number of Mi'kmaw social workers who can deal strictly with native issues both in the communities and with Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services.

Medical programs require longer periods of time to complete degrees, therefore, funding policies for a medical student was supported from start to finish. This is one way of providing supports for students who want to enter health programs.

Millbrook looks at various options for its training requirements. It will continue to look into the private sector for options, such as Mactech Distance Education. They are known to tailor programs based on industry needs.

Mentorship programs will continue to be explored to provide students more opportunities through apprenticeship agreements, targeting industries and companies that are willing to train Mi'kmaw students and provide pathways to jobs.

The increase in population for Millbrook puts additional strains on keeping up with education needs for all students. The plan is to continue to build educational supports for students in the following areas:

- Continue to encourage on Reserve tutor supports
- Reinforce study habits throughout K-12 for better preparation for post-secondary
- Encourage students to tackle math and science from earlier ages
- Build supports for numeracy and literacy skills for secondary students
- Develop a culture of career-minded youth
- Develop a mentorship program to encourage students into trades programs
- Provide orientation to match students to careers in the best way possible

There is a growing need of university graduates for administration and management areas, while trades required are: carpentry, plumbing, industries, and trucking.

Funding is one of the biggest challenges facing Millbrook.

One of the main priorities is to revisit funding policies. Criteria should focus on proper student orientation in order to fund students with clear education and career goals.

8a) What priorities should the community support in education attainment for the community?

An important component for a community assessment is to find out how many graduates Millbrook has both on and off Reserve. Ideally, this assessment would identify which post-secondary institutions and what programs students are graduating from. It would provide analysis of student interests, trends, and provide the community a clearer perspective on community human resource needs. This way, students could be directed to study careers which are currently needed in the community. In fact, a community assessment could be completed to determine what perceived employment needs there will be in the next 5-10-15 years in Millbrook.

The community sees value in making education more meaningful for younger students. The need for multidisciplinary and multidirectional educational approaches to engage Mi'kmaw students during their educational attainment is critical. There is a need to develop specific programs to encourage students to build Math and Science skills.

“We need to reverse the trend – we want our kids to love math, not hate it.” Millbrook Leader

Kids in junior high and high school need to explore their career options from an early age. They need to be introduced to potential careers from an early age. The objective is to match the employability interests of students at a younger age. When they leave secondary school, they should have a clearer vision of their career goals.

“We need more role models.” Millbrook Parent.

The community aligns students in summer programs through Service Canada funding. For example, post-secondary students are matched with available jobs to gain experience in their area of study. Students were aligned with carpentry, early childhood education and in administrative positions when available. This program benefits students to spark career interests or by providing university students with much needed job experience. Programs like this need to be further explored to include off Reserve employment partnerships for Millbrook students. If Millbrook cannot provide the experience, why not encourage students to explore opportunities where students reside, such as in urban areas? In fact, universities and colleges would be excellent places to hire students for summer student employment.

8b) What are the challenges in achieving these priorities?

It was mentioned previously that there are community educational needs, along with perceived community needs for the next 10 or 15 years. There are individual and community challenges for educational attainment. The following are what students and community members have shared about individual student-based challenges:

- Lack of motivation, which is a killer in education retention in both

secondary and post-secondary studies

- Individual life experiences interfere with education paths (early parenting)
- Lack of career orientation
- Lack of education supports in family settings
- Students lack self-confidence in their abilities to succeed in education and careers.

Community-based challenges:

- Funding shortages due to rapid increase of community members
- No assessment of community needs for professionals and human resources
- Not enough career orientation for students for post-secondary studies
- Individuals struggle with breaking away from cycles of dependency with social assistance programs
 - Employment opportunities in the community lack long-term economic sustainability for those who want to break away from social assistance programs
 - There are not enough opportunities or supports for graduates to develop businesses on Reserve after graduating from trades programs.

There is a huge gap in specific sectors in human resources, accounting, finance, and medical professions, especially those needed in the community: doctors, nurses, chiropractors, and social workers. There are both organizational and community needs.

Adequate training space for a computer lab in Millbrook is required to develop community hosted programs, such as ALP, GED and even potential university programs/courses.

8c) What are your recommendations for post-secondary institutions in developing programs/providing services to attract more Aboriginal students in universities and colleges?

Millbrook recommends that NSCC and Halifax-based universities go into negotiations with nearby Mi'kmaw communities to establish meaningful community-institutional relations, partnerships for potential program development and funding agreements and to build recruitment and retention strategies for Mi'kmaw students. Cape Breton University is a model for building community relations with Unama'ki communities. There is a similar need for a mainland institution to step up to the plate for mainland Bands.

Universities and Colleges should require Aboriginal students to self-identify for IPP needs in order to get further orientation and recommendations for academic supports.

All Aboriginal students should get mandatory induction for academic supports and life skills as part of post-secondary preparedness.

Peer supports via cohorts are highly effective for student accountability and program retention. These are important for both campus and in community delivery.

There needs to be instructors who are capable of teaching with dynamic learning models to engage students at various levels and academic needs.

Aboriginal students require employment preparedness training to be weaved into curriculum development for trade programs delivered on Mi'kmaw communities, which include communication skills, interviewing, writing resumes, job searching and professionalism.

Mi'kmaw language should be taught on mainland Nova Scotia.

There are folks that feel that on the mainland it is too late for language preservation, but there is always hope. Universities can encourage and support this process.

There are technological and online resources in the communities to take advantage of for language learning.

Life skills workshops should be included as part of mandatory preparedness for on campus learning, especially where there are Aboriginal advisors.

- Community colleges need to focus on how our graduates can develop business models for on and off Reserve. What will be required for tradespeople is to know how to develop their careers off Reserve as well. This is where specific cultural requirements need to be addressed for trade programs.

Cape Breton University's *Elmitok*, a transition year program, uses a blended approach worth mentioning, especially as a model for community-campus learning. The first year of the program is delivered on the Eskasoni First Nation as a cohort. The second year is a blended approach, where students begin their transition on to campus learning. Finally, the third year is transitioned on campus completely.

The Mount's B.Ed. should implement Aboriginal/Mi'kmaq history/culture into its program as mandatory content. It would set apart the Mount's B.Ed. program as the most culturally competent program in Atlantic Canada. This could be offered as an online course for other B.Ed. programs in Atlantic universities.

There is a recommendation that this consultation project include best practice models for Aboriginal programming in Nova Scotia.

“Education is a lifelong learning process for the Mi'kmaq, therefore, universities need to develop programs that match Mi'kmaw perspectives on education.” Millbrook Leadership

Community Profile

The following chart (Canada S. NHS Profile, Millbrook 27, IRI, Nova Scotia, 2011, 2013) gives a description of Millbrook's characteristics in education. It is important data for policy advisors and leadership to determine growth and trends in education. The long form survey is a valuable source of data collection for First Nations, where such detailed information is collected and

stored by Statistics Canada.

This data and this report would provide much needed data for Millbrook and other communities to begin their own community assessment of needs, in education, skills and training development. In more careful observation of the statistics outlined in the chart below, one can identify that the numbers do not match up to exact totals. The author of this report reviewed the reference notes for each chart, where it was expressed to use the data with caution. They are included in this report because they provide a landscape of the educational attainment for each community.

NOTE: For further detailed explanations for all the charts in each community, users were directed to the following: **For any comments on collection, dissemination or data quality for this variable, refer to the Education Reference Guide, National Household, Catalogue no. 99-012-X2011006.** (Canada, 2011)

Figure 11 Millbrook Education Chart

Education			
Characteristic	Total M F		
Total population aged 15 years and over by highest certificate, diploma or degree	570	285	285
No certificate, diploma or degree	205	120	85
High school diploma or equivalent	115	50	65
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	245	115	125
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	75	55	20
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	85	25	60
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	25	15	15
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	55	20	35
Bachelor's degree	40	20	25
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	15	10	10
Total population aged 25 to 64 years by highest certificate, diploma or degree	365	180	185
No certificate, diploma or degree	90	50	40
High school diploma or equivalent	75	30	40
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	200	90	110
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	60	40	15

College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	70	20	50
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	25	10	15
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	50	20	30
Bachelor's degree	35	15	20
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	15	0	10
Total population aged 15 years and over by major field of study - Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) 2011	570	285	280
No postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	320	170	155
Education	20	10	15
Visual and performing arts, and communications technologies	0	0	0
Humanities	10	0	10
Social and behavioural sciences and law	35	10	20
Business, management and public administration	55	20	45
Physical and life sciences and technologies	0	0	0
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	10	10	10
Architecture, engineering, and related technologies	55	50	10
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	10	0	0
Health and related fields	20	0	15
Personal, protective and transportation services	20	10	10
Other fields of study	0	0	0
Total population aged 15 years and over by location of study compared with province or territory of residence	570	285	280
No postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	320	170	150
With postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	245	115	130
Location of study inside Canada	240	110	130
Same as province or territory of residence	215	95	120
Another province or territory	20	10	10
Location of study outside Canada	10	10	0

Source: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=1210003&Data=Count&SearchText=Milbrook%2027&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=All&B1=All&TABID=1>

Bear River First Nation

Consultation in Bear River included: Education Director, Health Director, Economic Development Officer, Off Reserve members, and Post-Secondary Education students.

1) What are the community's post-secondary educational needs?

Bear River is not a huge community and it's very rural. I would like to see youth get careers for existing positions in our community, like accounting, nursing, or training in health services. This is transferable knowledge that could be used elsewhere. We need administrative areas filled by people with respective degrees and/or certified programs.

We need access strategies for our students who have proximity and funding challenges. There are students who will not leave or cannot afford to leave the community for post-secondary education.

The costs associated with post-secondary education have rapidly increased in recent years on a per capita basis because of increasing tuition costs and the high cost of living. Students now need computers, personal telephones and internet services, which are all added costs that funding cannot cover. Then, students who have been out of their studies for seven to ten years will not necessarily have the required skills for using higher technology now required for post-secondary studies.

We need an assessment of learning styles for our students.

“IPP...has become an “Indian Policy Program.” Bear River member.

There is a need for students to finish their high school degrees. Students face many challenges, such as low self-esteem and lack of motivation to strive for higher learning. Students are often streamlined with IPP, which are considered barriers for students to go further in their studies.

The community has to reach out to our youngsters, in order to assure they grasp their interests and nurture them from younger ages to succeed.

“*We need to set an example and stewardship to our young people.*” Bear River Health Director

1a) What programs are in high demand?

There is a community need for health care professionals that coincides with a regional demand for health care providers such as: certified homecare and continuing care professionals, nurses, LPNs, etc. There is an aging population for both the Reserve and the town of Bear River, therefore health care professions are an increasing need. University and college degrees are required.

Generally, students go into B.A. programs. There are students in silviculture and forestry programs as well, which seems to show that interests are specific.

1b) Are there specific demographic (age, gender, cultural) post-secondary education needs?

Bear River has more females looking for post-secondary education than males. Generally, younger males are currently employed in the fisheries. The fisheries have a stronghold on young males' interests because of its nature to provide sustainable income. However, it affects the potential for students to look at other careers. There are needs for carpentry or electrical professionals, yet men prefer to go fishing. Community leaders expressed the need to motivate the younger male population into post-secondary education.

There is a strong tendency for Bear River students to go into traditionally 'male' programs, like trades offered at community colleges; nevertheless, they do not always look at what is in high demand for the region. Students are provided with lists of programs, which are funded by the Band, but they seem to always lean towards their preferred traditional trades.

Funding for programs stipulates which areas should be funded based on the local economy and labour market demands, however they do not take into consideration the wide range of diversity among students, nor the interests of women or community required professionals. This is considered to be a barrier for education attainment.

1c) What areas of careers would this community benefit from?

Bear River would benefit strongly with programs that build entrepreneurship. This would be a valuable asset for business development opportunities in the community. Immigrants come to Canada with a drive to become entrepreneurs and small business owners. This is something Bear River program directors feel should be encouraged among its members.

The Unama'ki Benefits Office conducted a leakage study for bands' services which are paid out of community. (University, 2010). Imagine all the community dollars that are going to off-Reserve contractors for numerous services which could be filled by Bear River members. Bear River and Valley Bands need to look at a similar study to see where their gaps are. Only then, can they determine what professions to target through their education programs.

The health department would like to see that alternative medicines and healing practices be explored as holistic approaches for health care in the community.

2) What is the community's preferred format for learning, e.g. course delivery on campus,

within the local community, online learning or a blended approach?

A blended approach would be an ideal delivery model. The community college from Digby offers courses that can be partnered with Bear River. Online learning would be challenging for any student who lacks its required skills and discipline.

Mi'kmaw students are hands-on learners. They benefit from apprenticeships and job shadowing programs because of the hands-on approach to learning. This needs to be taken into consideration when developing programs.

There are three sites for video conferencing in Bear River. It is more probable that some students take courses via virtual classrooms, rather than travel to Halifax. However, if there is an option for a community-hosted program, then members would choose that option.

There are people that may benefit from a program that has a blended approach, especially mothers and people who work near here because it would reduce the costs associated for travel and housing, not to mention childcare.

2a) If courses were offered on Mi'kmaw communities, could individuals from neighbouring communities (Aboriginal and Non-aboriginal) attend these classes in order to fulfil the required amount of participants?

Community members think this would work. It would depend on the financing of the course. Cohorts may be offered on the Reserve, in the neighbouring town or even in Yarmouth.

Glooscap, Bear River, Annapolis Valley, and Acadia are a kinship, which often work together on programs in health through CMM. It would make much sense to coordinate program delivery in any of the communities or take turns in hosting parts of a programs in either community. The four communities share common circumstances, which would enable partnership opportunities for education programs.

3) Is there interest in an articulation approach where introductory-level courses will be offered in the community and then the final courses offered on campus or via distance?

Introductory level courses delivered in the community or at a nearby larger urban centre are definite options, rather than traveling to Acadia University or Halifax.

3a) What is the maximum distance people will travel to a post-secondary institution?

Traveling to Digby and Yarmouth is doable according to people in Bear River, but anywhere farther would be more challenging because of logistics and traveling costs.

4) Is there an interest in a cohort approach to learning where a group of students studies together throughout their program?

Bear River would benefit from this approach because it would offer a sense of peer support for its students. The challenge is to get enough participants for any program to begin in Bear River

due to its low population. The only option would be to coordinate a cohort with other Mi'kmaw communities in the Valley.

4a) What career/study programs would be good for cohort learning?

A variety of programs could be developed in the community, as long as there is interest and enough people. There has to be a practical aspect for a program to be developed on the community, such as employment opportunities at the end of the program. It cannot be developed unless there are achievable outcomes at the end; there has to be incentives and reachable goals for the people to accept any cohort program, like employment.

4b) Would individuals travel to another Mi'kmaw community to participate in a cohort program?

Bear River members know that the only way to get your education is by leaving the community anyway; a cohort in another community would be a good option.

5) Is there local expertise which can contribute to program delivery?

See next question.

5a) Are there Masters and PhD graduates in the community that could deliver programs in the community?

There is one PhD candidate from this community and she is booked to the maximum on projects and studies.

6) What kind of programs can be offered collaboratively to a number of Aboriginal communities at the same time?

6a) What educational needs does this community have which may be similar to other Mi'kmaw communities on mainland Nova Scotia?

There are essentially similar needs at all Band levels with respect to administrative, entrepreneurial, health, and certified electrical, carpentry, and industrial professionals. The Valley is a high tourism-oriented area, but jobs related to tourism are mainly seasonal. There are so many opportunities to work in unison with other Mi'kmaw nations to develop tourist-based industries in those communities. Graduates are needed in related areas to develop this vision for the Valley area Bands.

A kinship approach for the four Valley bands in developing education programs is a definite possibility. There are existing partnerships through resource sharing in health programs. This is a template for communities that could cost share. The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq (CMM) could provide the administrative supports like they do for health programs.

7) Has this community/organization partnered with post-secondary education programs in this community or has it partnered with other communities for program delivery?

Which?

NSCC provided a project for Level 4 Adult Learning Program (ALP).

17 people took a Heritage Interpretive Course. People who graduated from this program are resource people with transferable knowledge.

For Leadership/Post-Secondary Students

8) What do you perceive to be the main education needs in the community in the next 10-15 years?

It is an aging population in this region, so the health professions will be in high demand. The promotion of entrepreneurship for youth is also vital for future employment sustainability and growth for graduates.

Bear River people are concerned with the future of the community. The sentiment is that Bear River may be in danger of 'extinction' as a full status Mi'kmaw nation because the community is losing its young population due to people moving away for work, school, and social commitments, such as marriages or families outside of the community. This will affect the number of members with full status, which in turn will affect funding social programs for the older populations. If the current trend continues, there will be little or no population left in the community to assure the existence of a culture. Community members have experienced this reality with the decline of the Mi'kmaw language, where only a few Elders speak the language.

The hope of the community is that through education, there will be an upsurge of interest to focus on the prosperity of the community through strong cultural education, even though some people feel that it is too late for language revival.

"We need to match people and careers according to their interests" Bear River member.

8a) What priorities should the community support in education attainment for the community?

One member thinks that the biggest priority is to get the students through high school first. Education goals have to be individually based because the community is so small in population. The community has to support each individual on their education pursuits, which would result in overall community success.

Bear River people need to broaden their minds on what education is. Any stumbling blocks for education attainment need to be addressed. The community has to provide students with the life skills to prepare for post-secondary education. The community needs to find ways to say 'yes' instead of 'no' in funding students' education. The community has to establish its own criteria for funding students, rather than always follow external funders' criteria.

Students need to be led to more funding sources, such as scholarships and bursaries, rather than rely on "Indian money." The reality is that students should be encouraged to see funding from

outside the community as well.

The community needs to celebrate the successes of each and every individual for all levels of education attainment. It has to be institutionalized in the community and continuous. This would demonstrate the community's support and motivation for educational outcomes.

8b) What are the challenges in achieving these priorities?

Motivation is one of many challenges faced by young people in Bear River. Leaders agree that it is a priority to lead people away from the poverty cycle and toward careers and community.

FUNDING will always be a challenge. Review the previous statements regarding funding shortages, which affect housing, travel, childcare, etc.

8c) What are your recommendations for post-secondary institutions in developing programs/providing services to attract more Aboriginal students in universities and colleges?

Programs for single mothers need to be addressed, which need to take into account childcare, transportation and housing requirements. Young, single mothers require more non-academic supports than any other students, yet they are the most successful in completing their programs.

There is potential for opportunities with articulation agreements between community colleges and universities to target specific Aboriginal interests in: entrepreneurship, business administration, management and health programs.

If universities and colleges could explore specific Aboriginal interests to develop more dynamic articulation agreements, then students would have more options for post-secondary education.

There needs to be a study to map out the needs of the Mi'kmaw communities in the Valley, then match them with existing programs in community colleges, MSVU and other post-secondary institutions. It will identify gaps and program interests for the Valley bands, which then could determine what direction to move in developing specific target programs. It is a proactive approach for partnership building with Mi'kmaw communities in the Annapolis Valley.

Post-secondary institutions are not directly responsible for Mi'kmaw students' lack of housing, social supports, life skills development, and childcare, however they should give supports in other areas which may aid in offsetting overall costs for students like: tuition reductions, book loans, tutorial supports, community preference tuition costs, etc.

Social Work programs should be designed for education needs as well as health care needs. This would be a right step in the direction of education counseling and career orientation.

Community Profile

The following chart (Canada S. , Bear River (Part) 6, IRI, Nova Scotia (Code 1203009) (table),

2013) of Bear River is a landscape of education. It is important data for policy advisors and leadership to determine growth and trends in education. The long form survey is a valuable source of data collection for First Nations, where such detailed information is collected and stored by Statistics Canada.

Figure 12 Bear River Education Chart

Education Characteristic	Bear River (Part) 6, IRI Nova Scotia (Census subdivision)		
	Total	Male	Female
Education			
Total population aged 15 years and over by highest certificate, diploma or degree	75	40	40
No certificate, diploma or degree	30	20	10
High school diploma or equivalent	10	0	10
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	35	10	25
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	10	0	10
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	20	10	15
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	0	0	0
Bachelor's degree	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	0	0	0
Total population aged 25 to 64 years by highest certificate, diploma or degree	65	35	30
No certificate, diploma or degree	20	15	0
High school diploma or equivalent	10	0	0
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	35	15	20
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	0	0	10
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	20	10	15
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	0	0	0

Education Characteristic	Bear River (Part) 6, IRI Nova Scotia (Census subdivision)		
	Total	Male	Female
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	0	0	0
Bachelor's degree	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	0	0	0
Total population aged 15 years and over by major field of study - Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) 2011	75	40	40
No postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	45	30	15
Education	0	0	0
Visual and performing arts, and communications technologies	0	0	0
Humanities	0	0	0
Social and behavioural sciences and law	0	0	10
Business, management and public administration	10	0	0
Physical and life sciences and technologies	0	0	0
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	0	0	0
Architecture, engineering, and related technologies	10	10	0
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	0	0	0
Health and related fields	0	0	0
Personal, protective and transportation services	0	0	0
Other fields of study	0	0	0
Total population aged 15 years and over by location of study compared with province or territory of residence	80	40	40
No postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	45	25	15
With postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	35	10	20
Location of study inside Canada	35	10	25
Same as province or territory of residence	30	10	20

Education Characteristic	Bear River (Part) 6, IRI Nova Scotia (Census subdivision)		
	Total	Male	Female
Another province or territory	0	0	0
Location of study outside Canada	0	0	0

Source: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=1203009&Data=Count&SearchText=Bear%20River&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=Education&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=1>

Indian Brook First Nation

The consultation in Indian Brook included: Chief, 2 Councillors, Education Director, Native Employment Officer, Economic Development and Education Teams, Off Reserve Members, and post-secondary students.

1) What are the community's post-secondary educational needs?

Indian Brook would like to conduct a community assessment of educational needs, starting with the existing programs with NSCC.

Indian Brook is exploring options for a program with MSVU for B.Ed.

Indian Brook has a policy for students with respect to funding that permits full-time students to receive an allowance, but it does not apply for part-time students with three courses or less.

Recruitment of students for the program with MSVU is challenging because the pilot offered only one course at a time. This would not permit students to receive full funding. The main difficulty is that candidates for the B.Ed. are currently employed. It is not usual for full-time employees to receive full-time funding for post-secondary education.

Students expressed interest in attending a full-time program but they have full-time employment and family commitments as well. Time commitments required for academic studies add challenges to guarantee full program delivery.

Program delivery in the community would be challenging for any institution if there is not a guaranteed minimum number of participants, which is often between 12 and 15.

The community is caught in a sensitive situation where there is an expressed need for educators in the community, yet there are funding and time commitment challenges faced by students. The policies in the community are established to provide full-time students with appropriate funding, yet part-time students are not eligible under the current pilot course offered by the Mount.

How could students attend full-time programs and work full-time while in school?

Indian Brook will provide a place for students to receive their classes, but the abovementioned challenges need to be addressed before it can move forward.

Community-based learning is the best option for Indian Brook given the nature of its student representation. There are large numbers of single mothers who are in the Adult Learning Program offered in the community. The NEO office estimates that 90% are female clients who wish to pursue post-secondary education.

The education leaders would like to see Mi'kmaw perspectives and worldviews be included in a B.Ed. program, or any program that is delivered on the community for that matter. The community setting would provide enormous opportunities to invite speakers, Elders, knowledge holders and motivational leaders in the courses.

Students need to have university preparatory programs to build strong bases in literacy and numeracy skills. There is a huge demand for programs to support upgrading, employment preparedness training, and build motivation amongst students in order to prepare them for post-secondary education. This preparation would also serve as a source for pre-employment training, where students would see the links made between education and employment.

“You could be an awesome student, but an ineffective worker.” Indian Brook member

Education needs include building life skills for both education and employment. The economic development team considers it a high priority for their students to be prepared to graduate with adequate degrees and certifications, but with high sense of professionalism for the workforce.

1a) What programs are in high demand?

There is definitely a need for essential skills in literacy and numeracy in order to prepare Indian Brook members for post-secondary education. Many people need upgrading and GED courses.

Indian Brook is currently hosting an ALP program to prepare its members for higher learning and job readiness.

Students need one-on-one interviews for all grade 12 students to determine their interests for post-secondary education. This could be done in various means, such as establishing a “test drive” program for post-secondary to explore career interests. This is similar to the NSCC model for career cruising. Many students do not know what they want to study, therefore such a program would offer them a taste of various careers in order to make more informed decisions on their post-secondary studies. It is common for students to go into B.A programs because they are

not sure what to study leaving grade 12. They hope for the best upon arriving on campus.

“B.A. programs are not enough for finding a job anymore because graduates now need specializations in order to find jobs anywhere.” Indian Brook member.

Trades in high demand are high: welders, pipe fitters, carpentry, iron workers, brick layers.

1b) Are there specific demographic (age, gender, cultural) post-secondary education needs?

We are looking for more female representation in these programs. The majority of our clients are female. They are young single mothers, who had not finished their grade 12. We need to look at their needs more specifically, such as, child care, travel costs, logistics, housing, etc.

“There are no transition programs for our young people to get away from a culture of dependency. There needs to be a course on life skills for transitioning from community dependency to economic independence and personal finance.” Indian Brook member.

1c) What areas of careers would this community benefit from?

There is a high need for various trades: welders, pipe fitters, carpenters, iron workers, brick layers, plumbers, oil burner technicians, and electricians. Although there are folks in trades who find it challenging to sustain work in the community.

Indian Brook is a large community with many needs. There are needs ranging from trades to administrative positions and various education areas, such as: early childhood educators, all areas of education, and health professionals: nurses, LPNs, doctor, dentist, dental assistant, etc.

We need to look at doing an asset mapping of our community needs and professions.

2) What is the community’s preferred format for learning, e.g. course delivery on campus, within the local community, online learning or a blended approach?

Mature students have children and families; it is too difficult to go to the city to take programs on campus. The blended approach is ideal for this community. There could be an opportunity to reverse the delivery so that students attend classes on campus at the initial part and end their program in the community. This would help with retention of students until the end of the program, especially for B.Ed. when practicums are usually reserved for the final year.

There is a general interest for course delivery in the community, yet it is important that young people experience on campus education as well.

It would be best if the instructors deliver courses in the community. There are students who take B.A.s and B.Eds. who would be interested in attending a full-time MSVU program. There would be a need to survey the students to determine the uptake.

There are people who are currently employed by the Band, who wish to see a full-time program

in the community. They have expressed concerns about part-time learning, which would take far too long to graduate. It is recommended that MSVU and Indian Brook negotiate the intricate details of a program delivery on Reserve, including expectations, timeframes, methodology, and options for individual learning. Students would need to see a schedule of a complete program so they can plan their educational journey. Students will buy into a program if they are part of its planning. Options need to be left open for students who want to transfer to campus learning, or for those who want to explore distance learning. Community-based learning is welcome in Indian Brook, but there needs to be better planning for it to succeed.

Community-based learning and a blended approach are ideal in Indian Brook. The education team expressed the following:

- Online courses may work with some community members, but the majority would prefer interactive classes between the instructors and the students.
- Campus experience is important to build life skills for younger generations.
- There are many mature learners who haven't experienced living off Reserve. Many students have expressed an interest in campus delivery and/or doing their B.Ed. practicum off-Reserve.

2a) If courses were offered on Mi'kmaw communities, could individuals from neighbouring communities (Aboriginal and Non-aboriginal) attend these classes in order to fulfil the required amount of participants?

There are enough Indian Brook members to fill the required seats easily. According to the Native Employment and Education offices, there are waiting lists for programs as it is. Therefore, there should be enough interested members for program delivery in the community.

3) Is there interest in an articulation approach where introductory-level courses will be offered in the community and then the final courses offered on campus or via distance?

This is a viable approach for this community. Or this could be reversed as well, where the final number of courses could be offered in the community.

3a) What is the maximum distance people will travel to a post-secondary institution?

The NEO office says it's hard to determine this because there are so many students who come from various backgrounds. There are students willing to relocate when there is no choice, but if there is access to transportation, then they would be willing to travel to Pictou, Truro, Halifax, or even NSCC in Dartmouth to attend college.

4) Is there an interest in a cohort approach to learning where a group of students studies together throughout their program?

There would be definite interest in developing a cohort program here.

4a) What career/study programs would be good for cohort learning?

Indian Brook has experience in hosting cohort programs in the community. CBU delivered a B.A. program. Then STFX delivered a B.Ed. program. Both were viewed by the community as successful programs.

There would be interest in developing cohorts for trades. There is interest in business administration, accounting, medical office assistant, or any administrative careers because of the labour demands in the area.

With trades, it is expensive to set up shops in the community. There are no labs for science programs. NSCC was supposed to have a mobile training unit for Indian Brook. The community provided input for programs in welding, pipe fitting, sheet metal working, and carpentry. The programs have yet to begin.

4b) Would individuals travel to another Mi'kmaw community to participate in a cohort program?

If transportation was provided, it would work even better. Costs for travel need to be included in the proposal.

5) Is there local expertise which can contribute to program delivery?

The B.A. and B.Ed. programs invited Mi'kmaw instructors from other communities to teach in these programs.

5a) Are there Masters and PhD graduates in the community that could deliver programs in the community?

There are three PhD candidates, but they were concentrating on their studies at the time this report was being drafted.

6) What kind of programs can be offered collaboratively to a number of Aboriginal communities at the same time? N/A

6a) What educational needs does this community have which may be similar to other Mi'kmaw communities on mainland Nova Scotia?

Refer to the previous questions. It is important to include the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre as a potential partner for delivery of programs.

Work readiness and pre-employment programs would be beneficial for everyone in Mi'kmaw communities.

7) Has this community/organization partnered with post-secondary education programs in this community or has it partnered with other communities for program delivery?

Indian Brook partnered with NSCC, STFX, and CBU to deliver programs in the community.

7a) Which?

There are potential projects that could be partnered for trades, B.Eds. and B.A.s.

For Leadership/Post-Secondary Students

8) What do you perceive to be the main education needs in the community in the next 10-15 years?

The actual needs of the community are so varied. We need to develop strategies to position Indian Brook with a solid workforce for both on and off Reserve.

We will need degrees in entrepreneurship and business administration.

We need to keep pace with the labour market needs and encourage our people to plan their career paths around them.

8a) What priorities should the community support in education attainment for the community?

Indian Brook leadership, economic development and education offices concur that the following are priorities:

- Provide supports for students to stay in school. There are no incentives for students to work and study, if they are faced with many day-to-day life challenges. (CBC, 2014)
- Build strong study skills for secondary students in order to prepare them for post-secondary education.
- A training centre to house all pre-employment training and pre-university courses, including programs for upgrading, adult learning and high school completion.
- Develop support programs for tutoring, parent involvement, childcare, and community activities to encourage post-secondary education.

There are initiatives from the Chief's office to promote literacy among young learners. Chief Rufus Copage often visits the local schools to give reading workshops and listen to students' interests.

“I work with the students. I try to mentor kids to read. I got my GED through the military and I am proud of that. I attend all the schools in the area because I want the kids to see that our leadership supports them and wants the best educational outcomes for our community.”

Chief Rufus Copage

Indian Brook leadership supports fresh ideas for building community relations in the area of education. One recommendation is to promote interschool exchanges between schools in the area, so that they are able to learn what students' needs are across the board. Leadership also gets involved in promotion of career exploration and hosting career fairs in the community. Many

schools take part in these activities to further support education outcomes for the community.

Chief Copage visits classrooms to maintain a direct relation with students to get a feel of what they think and feel about their needs, goals and aspirations. It is important for the Chief to be in direct contact with the students.

-8b) What are the challenges in achieving these priorities?

Leadership puts a major emphasis on education in the community. They will explore all ideas to improve the education outcomes for its members. There is a school for primary and secondary education, but there is a need to continue enhancing programs for adult learners as well.

Funding, academic supports and resources are constant challenges, which affect the quality of education in all communities. The need is there, the will is there, but the funding resources are topped.

Social determinants such as: high unemployment, addictions, poverty, and so on take a toll on the level of education in the community. There are people with low literacy rates and there are people who have no sense of self confidence to pursue their education. It is described as a desperate reality.

There are many challenges related to access into colleges and universities. Seat availability is limited. Indian Brook would like to see that post-secondary institutions establish meaningful partnerships with Mi'kmaw communities, especially in program development, and increase seat availability. There is an absolute requirement for PSEs to develop programs that will graduate Mi'kmaq as very high skilled and knowledgeable professionals in order to be more competitive in the labour market.

8c) What are your recommendations for post-secondary institutions in developing programs/providing services to attract more Aboriginal students in universities and colleges?

The following are recommendations made by Indian Brook for post-secondary education:

- More academic guidance and career orientation is required on campus.
 - Tutoring programs on campus.
 - On campus orientation should include: academic and non-academic supports (health services, food bank, bus transportation, social supports)
 - Provide ongoing activities/workshops: scholarships, bursaries, writing centres, cultural themes, socializing, etc.
 - Elder-in-residence provides a sense of community connection for students.
- Supports go beyond academic supports.

Recommendation for MSVU course delivery in Indian Brook:

- In reference to any program delivery in the community, MSVU,

community education leaders, and students, need to negotiate all details to determine the best options for everyone concerned.

- There needs to be a case management approach with an ongoing evaluation strategy to see if the program is meeting the established outcomes.
- MSVU can partner with other institutions for curriculum development and delivery. MSVU and NSCC have articulation agreements, which could springboard to many opportunities for delivery in Mi'kmaw communities like Indian Brook. Indian Brook needs early childhood educators for its education program. This is offered at NSCC, which students can ladder into the Child and Youth Studies at the Mount. Students would then have an opportunity to finish if they choose to with a certification at NSCC or continue to pursue a university degree at the Mount.

Indian Brook Chief and education leaders held a consultation meeting with MSVU President Ramona Lumpkin in November 2013. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity to brainstorm ideas for partnership building. Chief Copage invited the Mount to host an education/career fair for early 2014, which was held in March with great success. The Mount coordinated the event with the Indian Brook education and employment training offices.

Indian Brook recommends searching for alternative funding to deliver a community B.Ed. program for the students currently enrolled in a MSVU course before student interest is lost. This is recognized as high priority for Indian Brook. Its recommendation is to host a meeting with the seven teachers who are interested in a B.Ed. to determine next steps if there is enough interest.

Indian Brook is a large community with a variety of needs. Education is a high priority for leadership and directors of training and education programs. There is a growing demand and resources cannot always keep up with those demands. There are waiting lists for students for upgrading, GED and ALPs. The community spirit for education is growing. The community has strong leaders that can develop a rich education program. They are making miracles happen, but resources are needed to improve and strengthen their ongoing efforts to provide educational opportunities for Indian Brook youth and members.

Community Profile

The following chart (Canada S. NHS Profile, Indian Brook 14, IRI, Nova Scotia, 2011, 2013) of Indian Brook is a landscape of education. It is important data for policy advisors and leadership to determine growth and trends in education. The long form survey is a valuable source of data collection for First Nations, where such detailed information is collected and stored by Statistics Canada.

Figure 13 Indian Brook Education Chart

Education Characteristic	Indian Brook 14, IRI Nova Scotia (Census subdivision)		
	Total	Male	Female
Education			
Total population aged 15 years and over by highest certificate, diploma or degree	770	335	435
No certificate, diploma or degree	270	130	145
High school diploma or equivalent	170	70	100
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	330	140	190
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	110	70	40
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	130	50	85
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	25	0	20
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	65	15	50
Bachelor's degree	45	10	40
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	15	0	15
Total population aged 25 to 64 years by highest certificate, diploma or degree	520	235	280
No certificate, diploma or degree	105	55	50
High school diploma or equivalent	125	55	70
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	290	120	165
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	90	60	30
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	115	45	75
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	25	0	15
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	60	15	50
Bachelor's degree	45	10	35
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	20	0	15
Total population aged 15 years and over by major field of study -	775	335	435

Education Characteristic	Indian Brook 14, IRI Nova Scotia (Census subdivision)		
	Total	Male	Female
Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) 2011			
No postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	440	200	245
Education	25	0	20
Visual and performing arts, and communications technologies	0	0	0
Humanities	15	0	10
Social and behavioural sciences and law	45	10	40
Business, management and public administration	45	10	30
Physical and life sciences and technologies	0	0	0
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	10	0	10
Architecture, engineering, and related technologies	70	55	15
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	15	10	0
Health and related fields	40	10	30
Personal, protective and transportation services	60	35	25
Other fields of study	0	0	0
Total population aged 15 years and over by location of study compared with province or territory of residence	770	340	435
No postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	440	200	245
With postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	330	140	190
Location of study inside Canada	310	125	185
Same as province or territory of residence	295	120	175
Another province or territory	15	10	10
Location of study outside Canada	20	15	10

Source: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=1208014&Data=Count&SearchText=Indian%20Brook&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=Education&B1=All&Custom=&>

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Pictou Landing First Nation

The Pictou Landing Consultation included: Education Director, Health Director, NEO, Director of Economic Development, Post-secondary students, and community members.

1) What are the community's post-secondary educational needs?

Leaders in Pictou Landing consider that all professions and careers should be explored. There needs to be an opportunity for each student to pursue their career goals. People are starting to take advantage of higher education. There are more people going to PSE now because there is a demand for higher degrees in the labour market. There is a huge correlation between adults who are unemployed and those who would benefit from post-secondary education, although there is no data. The issue is trying to get them into programs that are meaningful to them. There are life situations that get in the way, such as early parenting, health issues, personal challenges, and lack of motivation, which is a plague. It seems that there are quite a few students in high school who are not yet sure what they want to study.

Pictou Landing lists the following as urgent educational needs:

- Sustainable funding sources from all potential partners, not only AANDC.
- Career guidance for our students.
- Transportation is a challenge and this needs to be addressed.
- Career fairs are successful ways for information sharing. They expose students to options other than fisheries, maintenance and construction. Students need to see more opportunities, but they also need to see themselves in their chosen careers.

Pictou Landing members seek funding for post-secondary education or training from two funding sources. High school and university students get funding through its community Education office, which is funded by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC). However, if students want to upgrade or go into the trades, including college programs, then they get funded through the economic development. Members work with the Native Employment Officer (NEO) to map out their program interests and career goals. Service Canada funds communities through sub-agreements between the communities and the Mi'kmaq Employment Training Secretariat (METS). (Secretariat, 2014)

Economic Development coordinates its program objectives in the community for employment projects and skills development while the education office puts together projects targeting its post-secondary students. There are moments when clients do not meet funding criteria from either office, which then requires a coordinated effort from both offices to look at individual case

needs. Although, there are no actual policies for this combined strategy for funding community members for post-secondary education, it can be highlighted as a best practice for a case management approach. These unwritten policies are guidelines more than strict black and white rules as long as the student or client's needs are being met.

There are specific and general needs for Pictou Landing First Nation (PLFN). There is a strong need for a Bachelor of Arts program. On the other hand, there are many individuals in the community who would benefit from life skills and time management training before attending university or college. Pre-university training is an extremely important process for both mature and high school students. The community requires pre-university preparatory courses to provide upgrading for its students, especially members who wish to return as mature students. At this current time, an ALP is a high priority, which provides essential skills for employment and for post-secondary education.

The education department outlined key target needs to strengthen its educational outcomes for its Band members. There has to be a long-term strategy that looks at education from a lifelong learning perspective. Supports need to be built in from early childhood education, elementary and secondary, especially for grade 12. This needs to continue during post-secondary education and even beyond university years. Education is a continuum according to the education office.

“There will always be something new to learn.” PLFN Community Member.

A long-term strategy to build in supports aside from the current ones is part of the vision to develop a foundation of lifelong learners. There are areas where continuous extra-curricular supports will be key to providing skills for Pictou Landing students to post-secondary education listed in the following:

- Ongoing student assessments to identify learning gaps at early ages;
- Extra-curricular supports such as community-based tutorials to enhance literacy and numeracy skills;
- Mi'kmaw speaking educators at all levels;
- Mentorship programs for children, youth and adults alike;
- Career exploration programs beginning at lower grades, right through grade 12 and during post-secondary studies

“We need to get rid of the four walls and roof approach and deliver our content outside...look at ways to deliver courses that is respectful of “L’nu” (Mi’kmaq) reality and worldview.”

Sheila Francis, Education Director

Career guidance is a definite need for Pictou Landing students. At the time of this report, PLFN was in the process of developing its Pictou Landing Career Exploration Project. This pilot program will encourage students in Pictou Landing to become career-minded prior to enrolling in post-secondary education. (More information is available by contacting John R. Sylliboy, Facilitator for the PLCEP)

PLFN has encouraged various projects to give support to their younger school-aged children and

to spark their interests in careers in science and health through hosting summer science camps. Career fairs would definitely expose children to options aside from fishing, such as industry, construction, and maintenance. The health centre has successfully provided field placements for nursing students and social workers. However, there is a need for more health care professionals from the community.

Training programs do not always lead to permanent positions in the community. Many programs are one-offs for upgrading skills or delivering programs for community members, nevertheless employment strategies need to be in place prior to developing training or education programs.

Many of the training programs are reactionary needs for individuals who need immediate upgrading and training for employment purposes as opposed to proactive long-term post-secondary assessment needs and strategies.

1a) What programs are in high demand?

The labour market is not what always drives the post-secondary needs in PL. It is a combination of what is available for employment during off-season fishing and individual interests for careers. Fishing is highly regarded as the main employment interest for many community members, so any programs that will permit fishers to work in other areas during the off season will determine what program interests can be promoted.

“Our people are not always prepared to work away from our communities. This is the same for our students that go into the programs for the post-secondary education. We are coddling them too much at times. They need to experience life to grow.”

Pictou Landing community member

The education office would like to see community members in programs, like:

- Early childhood education
- Language teaching
- Speech language therapy

Economic development and health directorates expanded on to the list by including the following:

- Journey tradespeople: electricians, carpenters, plumbers
- Business administration areas: finance
- Health areas: mental health and addictions, social workers, nurse

PLFN underscored the need for Mi'kmaw scientists, technicians, engineers, and health professionals, such as doctors, dentists, occupational therapists, and physiotherapists for all Mi'kmaki. Pictou Landing and other Mi'kmaw communities have high indices of health issues, which will need more adequate care, hopefully from Mi'kmaw health professionals. It is suggested that more training opportunities should include health and science components so that more students can pursue these careers.

1b) Are there specific demographic (age, gender, cultural) post-secondary educational needs?

High school kids need continued academic and community supports to make their transition into post-secondary studies easier, such as community-hosted tutorials and life-skills development for off-Reserve living. Mature students need both academic and non-academic supports (transportation, childcare, continued education supports) in order to prepare for post-secondary education as well. The majority of mature students are single mothers.

There are individuals who deal with mental health and addictions issues. Part of their healing is to get back on track in the pursuit of their life dreams. If there is no orientation or guidance for people, then their recovery may stall. The process of healing is often an additional barrier for going to school and finding a job. In addition to this, students afflicted with mental health matters often suffer from stigmas because of their health. It becomes a very difficult cycle to break. The community engages people in upgrading programs, but they fall short of providing anything substantial or long-term.

Single parents have definite needs. There are challenges for parents who try to pursue their education because they need more supports, such as childcare, transportation, income subsidy, and motivation to even have the right mindset.

1) What areas of careers would this community benefit from?

The education office in PLFN sees a need for early childhood educators and Mi'kmaw educators who think and speak the language. It would like to see Mi'kmaq spoken among its professionals in the community. This would prepare the next generation to follow the same policies in order to preserve language use in the community.

The economic development area supports more community members to enter in journeymen trades, construction, and industry. There was reference made to the Unam'aki Economic Benefits Office (UEBO) *Unama'ki Economic Leakage Study Phase II* (University, 2010), which highlights areas where there are potential business opportunities in trades for on-Reserve services for Unama'ki. PLFN sees potential in: plumbing, electrical, and construction services (new construction and repairs maintenance).

"We need to look at entrepreneurial areas as well, labour market studies, and how our people can go into business." PLFN Economic Development

2) What is the community's preferred format for learning, e.g. course delivery on campus, within the local community, online learning or a blended approach?

A blended approach is ideal because it has the most success with people learning in the community. Online, or distance learning, has been tried without much success, but the community has videoconferencing available if that is chosen as a source of course delivery.

2a) If courses were offered in Mi'kmaw communities, could individuals from neighbouring communities (Aboriginal and Non-aboriginal) attend these classes in order to fill the required amount of participants?

This would always depend on funding available to host a program. PLFN hosted the CBU Bachelor of Community Studies in 2013. Students were invited from other Mi'kmaw communities. The program was open to anyone who wanted to enroll, including non-Aboriginals. The challenge was the funding situation. The minimum requirement was 12 participants for program delivery, but it ended up with 8 at the end. There is interest to continue this program, which is currently at a standstill. Students continued with the program on an individual basis.

3) Is there interest in an articulation approach where introductory-level courses will be offered in the community and then the final number courses on campus or via distance?

There is much potential for this to work in PLFN.

According to some community members, this would work as long as barriers are addressed for: transportation, housing, income, welfare, etc.

3a) What is the maximum distance people will travel to a post-secondary institution?

Pictou Landing folks would prefer to travel as close as possible to nearby institutions like STFX in Antigonish or NSCC in Stellarton. It would also depend on the costs associated for travel. The recommendation is to build in the costs of travel in developing the program.

4) Is there an interest in a cohort approach to learning where a group of students studies together throughout their program?

There is interest in continuing to support the one that was started by CBU in 2013. One of the recommendations for hosting a cohort program is to coordinate it with nearby communities where each participant community can take turns hosting courses throughout the duration of the program.

There are delivery models that can be tried. As mentioned before, videoconferencing and distance education can be explored. The distance courses can be quasi-distance where instructors have face-to-face sessions in the community bi-weekly or Saturday sessions.

5) Are there Masters and PhD graduates in the community that could deliver programs on the community?

There is one person from PLFN who can help deliver a course. The community recognizes that there is a need to get more post graduates, but the priority is to address the immediate needs for current post-secondary students. There are other post graduates from other communities, who can be guest lecturers.

6) What kind of programs can be offered collaboratively to a number of Aboriginal communities at the same time?

PLFN sees great potential in developing an Adult Learning Program in order to prepare students for post-secondary studies. A general certificate program of some sort could be developed that

would enable students to apply to other degree programs.

An example of a model program that can be explored to fill the gap of early childhood educators is the Aboriginal Head Start On-Reserve (AHSOR), which was funded by First Nations Inuit Health Branch. Students were provided funding to get their credentials at New Brunswick Community College as an online program. This would be an excellent area for Pictou and other Mainland Bands to approach the Nova Scotia Community College for partnership building.

6a) What educational needs does this community have which may be similar to other Mi'kmaw communities on mainland Nova Scotia?

There are commonalities in needs among the communities that would benefit from a partnership learning experience. It is best to look at the recommendations that other communities share to determine the needs as well.

7) Has this community/organization partnered with post-secondary education programs in this community or has it partnered with other communities for program delivery? Which?

Cape Breton University and Nova Scotia Community College have collaborated on program deliveries on the community.

The health department has valuable experience in partnering for program delivery in areas such as child welfare, health delivery costs and resource sharing. There could be program delivery cost-sharing opportunities between communities and district health authorities. This is worth pursuing to gain additional funding supports for community delivery of health programs.

There is an agreement for a health care training program between PLFN and the New Glasgow area. It is palliative care training between PLFN and the local Black community with 10 seats from the District Health Authority and the hospital. This would be a definite model to follow.

For Leadership/Post-Secondary Students

8) What do you perceive to be the main education needs in the community in the next 10-15 years?

The highest paid positions in the community are filled by many non-Aboriginals in Pictou Landing. Therefore, a community strategy to encourage young people into management positions is a high priority. It is a hard pill to swallow to have community people with higher degrees having to search for jobs outside of the community. This reality is a growing concern because it demonstrates that PLFN will have to develop strategies that match post-secondary education needs with that of employment priorities for economic and social development.

PLFN would benefit from conducting a human resource assessment that would inform on its community's training and education needs.

Mentors from all levels, ages, and demographics are needed. In fact, Mi'kmaq speaking people from the community who have graduated from post-secondary education should be celebrated as mentors and it would also serve as a means to encourage language use.

Part of the mentorship program would be to have students shadow community administrative positions and to encourage summer students to gain first-hand knowledge in finance, accounting, human resources, management, leadership, and education and health.

Pictou Landing could use a multipurpose education and training centre where various educational services could be provided such as early childhood centre and an adult learning / training centre. It would have to be equipped with technology to meet current labour demands for computer literacy.

“We have a band-aid approach for education and employment matters, but are not yet making real structural and strategic approaches for our young people. We are working to change that.”
Debbie Dykstra, PLFN Director of Economic Development.

8a) What priorities should the community support in education attainment for the community?

The community needs to work together to plan an education strategy. PLFN receives funding for training and education, but there is a need to look at what the community priorities are, in order to develop a plan to meet short, medium- and long-term goals in education outcomes that match both individual and community needs. Input from students is important so that they feel part of this plan. After all, their success will determine the success of the overall plan. It would be a win-win situation for everyone.

Students need to see that there are available careers in the community, and/or in the surrounding labour markets.

PLFN recognizes that such efforts need to be led by a community champion who could be hired as a coordinator to assess, plan, and build an educational strategy. Ideally, this person is able to work with various levels of involvement in the community.

PLFN needs infrastructure for training and education as mentioned before. It is currently in the process of developing this idea further.

One of the recommendations from PLFN program directors is for education, social, economic development and health departments to coordinate their supports for students. At times, students require more than academic or financial supports, but health needs as well in order to be on solid footing for post-secondary education. Again, whether there is a need for policies in case management strategies for post-secondary students would be dependent on a community assessment. As long as there are coordinated efforts among interested parties to provide consistent supports via case management, then it would be a proactive approach to building additional academic supports right in the community. One leader mentioned using a medicine wheel approach where the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of students are

provided adequate supports to prepare a student for post-secondary education.

8b) What are the challenges in achieving these?

FUNDING is the basis for everything.

METS funding policies are not necessarily aligned with the needs of the students in their socio-economic, geographical, cultural, or individual levels. This limits students in many areas because programs would only be funded if there is a labour market analysis through employment projections and so on. How does one encourage students to go into trades that do not match individual goals and interests? It would be a definite set up for failure. The NEO works to develop strategies to ensure that students' interests are taken into consideration.

PLFN has come to adopt strategies for funding programs through a coordinated approach by education and economic development. It takes creativity and organization to work with existing guidelines, but their efforts have proven to be beneficial because it enables individuals to enter programs of their interest and capacity.

8c) What are your recommendations for post-secondary institutions in developing programs/providing services to attract more Aboriginal students in universities and colleges?

PLFN would like to promote a test-drive program to simulate an on campus experience for its secondary students, such as an orientation week on campus at MSVU.

The post-secondary institutions need to keep in mind that traditional program delivery models are challenging because of the minimum number of students required. There needs to be a concerted effort made by all parties to expand this opportunity to include students from other Bands.

The other biggest hurdle is for universities to meet the community's needs. In order for any program to work, the priority has be the community's perspective.

A recommendation is to develop intensive summer courses at MSVU where childcare and housing are provided. Kids would be at daycare while parents attend classes.

The community recommends there be post-secondary preparation programs for on campus supports, life skills and finance for Aboriginal students entering MSVU.

MSVU could provide a career orientation capacity development for community grassroots support workers. This could also include specific training for the NEO reps for career training and counselling.

Community Profile

The following chart (Canada S., NHS Aboriginal Population Profile, Pictou Landing, Indian band area, Nova Scotia, 2011, 2013) of Pictou Landing is a landscape of education. It is important data

for policy advisors and leadership to determine growth and trends in education. The long form survey is a valuable source of data collection for First Nations, where such detailed information is collected and stored by Statistics Canada.

Figure 14 Pictou Landing Education Chart

Education Characteristic	Total	Male	Female
Education			
Total Aboriginal identity population aged 15 years and over in private households by highest certificate, diploma or degree	285	155	130
No certificate, diploma or degree	115	70	50
High school diploma or equivalent	55	25	30
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	110	55	55
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	60	40	25
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	25	10	20
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	10	10	10
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	10	0	0
Bachelor's degree	10	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	10	0	0
Total Aboriginal identity population aged 15 to 24 years in private households by highest certificate, diploma or degree	80	50	25
No certificate, diploma or degree	60	35	20
High school diploma or equivalent	15	10	10
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	10	0	0
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	0	0	0
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	0	0	0
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	0	0	0

Education Characteristic	Total	Male	Female
Bachelor's degree	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	0	0	0
Total Aboriginal identity population aged 25 to 64 years in private households by highest certificate, diploma or degree	185	90	95
No certificate, diploma or degree	50	25	25
High school diploma or equivalent	40	20	25
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	95	45	50
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	50	30	20
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	30	10	15
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	10	10	0
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	10	0	0
Bachelor's degree	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	0	0	0
Total Aboriginal identity population aged 25 to 34 years in private households by highest certificate, diploma or degree	60	30	25
No certificate, diploma or degree	25	10	10
High school diploma or equivalent	20	10	10
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	25	10	10
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	15	10	0
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	10	0	10
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	0	0	0
Bachelor's degree	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	0	0	0
Total Aboriginal identity population aged 35 to 64 years in private	125	60	65

Education Characteristic	Total	Male	Female
households by highest certificate, diploma or degree			
No certificate, diploma or degree	30	15	10
High school diploma or equivalent	20	15	15
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	75	35	45
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	40	20	20
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	20	10	15
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	10	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	10	0	10
Bachelor's degree	10	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	10	0	0
Total Aboriginal identity population aged 15 years and over in private households by major field of study - Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) 2011	285	150	135
No postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	175	95	80
Education	10	0	10
Visual and performing arts, and communications technologies	0	0	0
Humanities	0	0	0
Social and behavioural sciences and law	10	0	10
Business, management and public administration	20	10	10
Physical and life sciences and technologies	0	0	0
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	0	0	0
Architecture, engineering, and related technologies	25	20	0
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	0	0	0
Health and related fields	10	0	15
Personal, protective and transportation services	35	25	10

Education Characteristic	Total	Male	Female
Other fields of study	0	0	0
Total Aboriginal identity population aged 15 years and over in private households by location of study compared with province or territory of residence	285	150	135
No postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	180	100	80
With postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	110	55	55
Location of study inside Canada	105	55	50
Same as province or territory of residence	100	50	50
Another province or territory	10	0	0
Location of study outside Canada	10	0	0

Source: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/aprof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=BAND&Code1=630024&Data=Count&SearchText=Pictou%20Landing&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=12&A1=Education&Custom=&TABID=1>

Paq'ntkek Mi'kmaw Nation

The Paq'ntkek consultation included: Education, Native Employment Officers, Economic Development and Health Offices, Community members, Councillors, and Post-secondary students.

1) What are the community's post-secondary educational needs?

Paq'ntkek directors of health, education, and economic development concur that the best approach is for the community to study what its post-secondary education needs are. Post-secondary education must fit the needs of the community. There are so many options for students, yet there are challenges to making the right career fit with the right need for the community. The community approach is more reactionary to individual needs, rather than on community strategies for long-term goals, but this reality is changing rapidly.

Paq'ntkek worked with St. Mary's University Business Development Centre in 2012 to conduct a community assessment (University, 2010) of education levels (skills, knowledge, experience, and degrees), which identified what skills would be required for its economic development goals for

its Highway project.

The most relevant piece from the report for this consultation project is that Paq'ntkek identified that there are 40 students with incomplete post-secondary programs. The report also states the need for further research on the reasons why students did not complete their degrees in post-secondary. One of the recommendations in the report is for community members to have a pre-training assessment to determine their level of knowledge and training skills. This report is a template communities can use for their community assessments.

The Education and Native Employment offices fund university and college through Post-Secondary funds and METS. There are numerous community programs to support the educational initiatives, but the community would like to strengthen certain areas to improve post-secondary success, such as:

- Apprenticeships: red seals are needed to give apprenticeships
- Mentorship programs
- Career orientation for youth
- Life skills preparatory courses for university and college

“We need our youth to think about their future.” Community leadership

The areas of post-secondary needs identified by the community on this consultation are:

- Health professionals
- Tradespeople
- Science programs

There are various projects which aim to build First Nation business in order to provide employment for community members with specialized training and skills. The federal initiatives are from AANDC, such as the Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business (PSAB), and the Aboriginal Business Development Program. The Province of Nova Scotia signed the Aboriginal Set-Aside Procurement Strategy in 2008. The sentiment remains that Mi'kmaq are only getting leftovers from these projects. The set-aside criteria (Scotia, 2008) will not be an option for all Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw communities.

Paq'ntkek took the bull by the horns and is in the process of laying groundwork for economic development strategies to enhance employment opportunities through community enterprise projects. Its vision is to capitalize on Nova Scotia's 5-Year Highway Improvement Plan and align its infrastructure under a planned “Generalized Future Land Use” and the “Highway 104 Paq'ntkek Interchange Location Study Area.” The community would be linked directly on the highway and be able to tap into its traffic volume to bring solid business to its “Highway 104 Commercial Project.”

Paq'ntkek is developing important employment strategies. It received \$1.3 million dollars from a Skills and Partnership Fund through Canada's Economic Action Plan. As a result 161 community members have been trained for the commercial project. (Paq'ntkek Mi'kmaw Nation, 2014)

1a) What programs are in high demand?

Paq'ntkek identified trades being in high demand in the community. This coincides with the amount of NSCC graduates outlined in the 2012 assessment report. According to community directors, the popularity of trades is high, but at the same time it is challenging to find a sustainable job in the community where most people want to remain. Retention becomes an issue for graduates in trades because they are attracted to better employment opportunities out West. The only trade employable right now in Paq'ntkek is carpentry, nevertheless, the community does foresee more employment and training to take place in the near future.

1b) Are there specific demographic (age, gender, cultural) post-secondary educational needs?

There is interest in encouraging more male youth into post-secondary education. It was mentioned that there is a good success rate of high school graduates, but the number of young male high school graduates needs to increase. This gap is carried over into post-secondary education with the highest success in community colleges. This may be due to the fact that there are direct routes to employment after completion of degrees.

1c) What areas of careers would this community benefit from?

The current training aligns with the phases of the development of the highway project, which were identified by the skills assessment:

- heavy equipment operators
- carpenters
- long-haul truckers
- tradespeople
- business development and administration
- adult care and education

Further information on Paq'ntkek's current focus on training and post-secondary education are available on its website by following this link: <http://paqntkek.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/January-2014.pdf> (Paq'ntkek Mi'kmaw Nation, 2014)

2) What is the community's preferred format for learning, e.g. course delivery on campus, within the local community, online learning or a blended approach?

A blended approach is the most popular format for learning. The majority of Mi'kmaw students are hands-on learners. The majority will learn if they are actively involved in the whole process of their learning.

The community underutilizes its videoconferencing technology, which would be a viable means of delivering some courses.

2a) If courses were offered in Mi'kmaw communities, could individuals from neighbouring communities (Aboriginal and Non-aboriginal) attend these classes in order to fulfil the required amount of participants?

This is common practice among Mi'kmaw communities. This would be a welcomed approach for Paq'ntkek.

3) Is there interest in an articulation approach where introductory-level courses will be offered in the community and then the final courses offered on campus or via distance?

Paq'ntkek is open to any proactive ways of increasing opportunities for education and training for its members. It would be a good way to entice people in the community to take introductory level courses on Reserve.

What is the maximum distance people will travel to a post-secondary institution?

Refer to 4.b for this answer.

4) Is there an interest in a cohort approach to learning where a group of students studies together throughout their program?

There is definite interest for Paq'ntkek to explore options for learning. The community is dedicated towards furthering all education and training opportunities. The prior information on the proactive planning around the Highway project is a clear mission and vision towards exploring all potential projects.

4a) What career/study programs would be good for "cohort" learning?

Trade programs are successful cohorts in the community. There are numerous projects, which Paq'ntkek is involved in. It would be a matter of reviewing where they are in their development stages to determine with more precision what cohorts are priority. Again, the community identified industry based trades mentioned in question 1.c.

4b) Would individuals travel to another Mi'kmaw community to participate in a cohort program?

80% of Paq'ntkek people have relocated for either work or education. It would be no problem for people to travel to other communities if necessary to receive coursework.

5) Is there local expertise which can contribute to program delivery?

There are people in Paq'ntkek who could teach in courses if offered in the community. It would be a matter of organizing timeframes and availability by potential candidates.

5a) Are there Masters and PhD graduates in the community that could deliver programs on the community?

Yes, there are local experts to deliver individual courses. In fact, the community would like to see more Mi'kmaw instructors included in community-based programs.

6) What kind of programs can be offered collaboratively to a number of Aboriginal communities at the same time?

Paq'ntkek is a community building Nation with partnership building expertise, which is noted in its numerous projects on the go, both at provincial and federal levels. It is also a community that works with Mi'kmaq through regional involvement on tribal councils and organizations.

Paq'ntkek is a leader in community partnership building through training, including submitting joint proposals for project funding with Pictou Landing First Nation. The two communities have a long history of collaboration on projects through health and economic development.

It is natural to work with our neighbouring Mi'kmaw communities, as we have been doing for eternity.” Rose Lewis, Paq'ntkek Director of Lands and Economic Development

6a) What educational needs does this community have which may be similar for other Mi'kmaw communities on mainland Nova Scotia?

Education needs are very similar in our communities in Nova Scotia, perhaps the only difference is what specific professions are required for each community. There are communities that need more skills and trades, perhaps others more education or sciences. The point is that all communities are structured around similar funding policies. This project should identify what those are and that can be used later for planning the next steps.

7) Has this community/organization partnered with post-secondary education programs in this community or has it partnered with other communities for program delivery? Which?

There have been partnerships with:

- University of New Brunswick for First Nations Business Program
- Cape Breton University for Bachelor of Arts
- Aboriginal programs for training

For Leadership/Post-Secondary Students

8) What do you perceive to be the main educational needs in the community in the next 10-15 years?

Paq'ntkek has a clear plan for community development, which is the reason it had its own skills assessment conducted in 2012. It has been the driving force for economic development and the source of planning for education and training for its Band members.

Challenges in employment retention and labour market needs are slowly being ironed out in the

community by implementing skills and training strategies to match the highway project needs as well as mapping out long-term goals for education and employment for its community members to live prosperous lives in Paq’ntkek.

There was a comparison made in how Nova Scotia is successful in recruiting professionals from overseas to fill jobs in various sectors, such as in health and industry. The question is why can’t our Mi’kmaw communities fill these employment sectors? The impression is that the Mi’kmaq are less competitive when it comes to filling in positions for various health and industrial sectors. Paq’ntkek leadership feels that Mi’kmaq will eventually play a more prominent role in the future, but the changes need to be addressed now. Education is a high priority for the Paq’ntkek community because it is what will provide jobs for people.

The main education needs in the community come from the assessment report in conjunction with how the highway project develops. There will be many opportunities for education, such as:

- Entrepreneurship training
- Business administration
- Human resources
- Management areas
- Leadership and governance
- More trades to fit the current/ongoing needs during various phases of project development
- Mi’kmaw educators to continue to build on the cultural landscape of the community
- Tourism sectors

8a) What priorities should the community support in education attainment for the community?

The community did identify the following areas it must support for education attainment:

- Facility for education and training
- On Reserve preparatory programs (life skills, literacy and numeracy) for post-secondary education
- Continue with plans to deliver life skills for parents
- Day care facility open all year round
- Transportation needs have to be addressed

“We need mentors. We need male mentors.” Economic Development office.

8b) What are the challenges in achieving these priorities?

Students have identified their frustration with their choices for programs due to lack of orientation and uncertainty in their selections. Many students go from program to program.

There are two approaches Paq’ntkek would like to see implemented:

1) Individuals get orientation at much younger ages so that each student will map out his/her options for high school and post-secondary education.

2) Students get mentoring at earlier ages in order to build self-confidence and motivation for setting life goals.

In relation to building motivation among students, they need to see that education offers the best option for achieving life goals. Achieving that life goal is an incentive to continue to progress through secondary and post-secondary course work.

Paq'ntkek identifies one of the challenges that young people currently face in Atlantic Canada as the need to look for jobs farther away from home, such as out West. Communities in general will suffer from Mi'kmaw emigration. The community is conscious of this rapid increase of people leaving communities, especially young men. It works hard to try to keep the population here for education, training and employment.

The Nova Scotia high school and post-secondary curriculums do not recognize the "L'nu" perspective in university and at provincial levels. It is contradictory for Academics and curriculum developers to not accept Mi'kmaw and Aboriginal perspectives as part of knowledge sources. Elders should be included in the curriculum development.

8c) What are your recommendations for post-secondary institutions in developing programs/providing services to attract more Aboriginal students in universities and colleges?

One of the concerns with programs in the community is that academic people are only promoting Western ways of knowing and learning without taking into consideration the needs of the Mi'kmaw learners. The leaders in Paq'ntkek highly recommend that if post-secondary institutions develop programs in Paq'ntkek or any other Mi'kmaw community, then Mi'kmaw perspectives need to be included in content and methodology and encourage Aboriginal instructors to teach the courses. It is imperative that instructors use methodologies that fit the needs of the Mi'kmaw learners.

"Community colleges are willing to take our money, but not develop programs to better fit our community's needs." Community Member.

University practicums should include community-based experiences and involvement for higher level degrees. This will provide graduates with designated skill sets for employment for their specific interests. This is for all people, not only Mi'kmaq. There is an opportunity for people to do internships on Mi'kmaw communities.

Universities are selling education, but not preparing graduates for jobs." Paq'ntkek Community Member

Education core courses need to be developed for Mi'kmaw schools and should include

indigenous ideas of teaching and learning. Math and sciences require more time for learning through experience and hands-on involvement, similar to how Mi'kmaq learn through cultural teachings. MSVU can benefit from implementing more Indigenization in core education courses, so all educators will have some knowledge with respect to Mi'kmaq.

Post-secondary institutions should coordinate their efforts to develop a resource guide that can be shared in all the Aboriginal communities in the Atlantic and Canada. This resource guide can provide information on:

- On campus services and supports
- Pamphlets for scholarships and bursaries available for Aboriginal students
- Aboriginal content availability

MSVU needs to look at a case management approach for Aboriginal student education:

- Students need a whole picture approach for education: spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental
- Peer support for students by students, mentors, Elders, Advisors
- Scholarship opportunities should be made available for the Aboriginals
- Ongoing education supports should be built in to their programs from the beginning

Community Profile

The following chart (Canada S., NHS Aboriginal Population Profile, Antigonish, Subd. B, SC, Nova Scotia, 2011, 2013) of Paq'ntkek Mi'kmaw Nation is a landscape of education. It is important data for policy advisors and leadership to determine growth and trends in education. The long form survey is a valuable source of data collection for First Nations, where such detailed information is collected and stored by Statistics Canada.

Figure 15 Paq'ntkek Education Chart

Education Characteristic	Total	Male	Female
Education			
Total Aboriginal identity population aged 15 years and over in private households by highest certificate, diploma or degree	320	160	160
No certificate, diploma or degree	95	45	45
High school diploma or equivalent	45	35	20
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	180	80	100

Education Characteristic	Total	Male	Female
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	60	45	20
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	70	20	50
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	40	15	25
Bachelor's degree	30	15	15
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	0	0	0
Total Aboriginal identity population aged 15 to 24 years in private households by highest certificate, diploma or degree	90	50	40
No certificate, diploma or degree	50	35	15
High school diploma or equivalent	30	10	15
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	0	0	0
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	0	0	0
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	0	0	0
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	0	0	0
Bachelor's degree	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	0	0	0
Total Aboriginal identity population aged 25 to 64 years in private households by highest certificate, diploma or degree	215	105	110
No certificate, diploma or degree	35	0	0
High school diploma or equivalent	15	15	0
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	165	75	85
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	60	45	15
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	65	20	45
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	0	0	0

Education Characteristic	Total	Male	Female
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	40	15	25
Bachelor's degree	35	15	15
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	0	0	0
Total Aboriginal identity population aged 25 to 34 years in private households by highest certificate, diploma or degree	40	0	35
No certificate, diploma or degree	0	0	0
High school diploma or equivalent	0	0	0
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	40	0	35
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	0	0	0
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	0	0	0
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	20	0	15
Bachelor's degree	25	0	15
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	0	0	0
Total Aboriginal identity population aged 35 to 64 years in private households by highest certificate, diploma or degree	170	95	80
No certificate, diploma or degree	35	0	0
High school diploma or equivalent	10	15	0
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	120	70	55
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	50	40	0
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	50	15	35
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	20	10	0
Bachelor's degree	10	10	0
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	0	0	0

Education Characteristic	Total	Male	Female
Total Aboriginal identity population aged 15 years and over in private households by major field of study - Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) 2011	45	0	35
No postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	0	0	0
Education	0	0	0
Visual and performing arts, and communications technologies	0	0	0
Humanities	0	0	0
Social and behavioural sciences and law	0	0	0
Business, management and public administration	0	0	0
Physical and life sciences and technologies	0	0	0
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	0	0	0
Architecture, engineering, and related technologies	0	0	0
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	0	0	0
Health and related fields	0	0	0
Personal, protective and transportation services	0	0	0
Other fields of study	0	0	0
Total Aboriginal identity population aged 15 years and over in private households by location of study compared with province or territory of residence	40	0	30
No postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	0	0	0
With postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	40	0	35
Location of study inside Canada	40	0	35
Same as province or territory of residence	45	0	35
Another province or territory	0	0	0
Location of study outside Canada	0	0	0

Source: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp->

pd/aprof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=1214006&Data=Count&SearchText=Afton&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=12&A1=Education&Custom=&TABID=1

Glooscap First Nation

Consulted were the following: Chief, Director of Administration, Councillor, Education Director, Health Director, 3 Community Members and Post-secondary students

1) What are the community's post-secondary educational needs?

Glooscap First Nation identified various needs ranging from community college trade certificates to university degrees. Glooscap leadership encourages students to explore as many options as possible for employment opportunities and careers.

Trades needed in the community are:

- Carpentry
- Mechanical trades
- Various services in maintenance areas

As for higher degree programs, business administration and entrepreneurship are identified as needs. Although, there are people needed as:

- Consultants: education, health, business
- Managers: entrepreneurs, business administrators
- Policy makers; community, economic development, social, culture
- Certified property managers
- Early childhood educators
- Health care providers: nurses, addictions and mental health workers
- The Mi'kmaw Language is also a high priority for Glooscap

1a) What programs are in high demand?

Glooscap has a total of 28 post-secondary students. Examples of current interests of some students are:

- 3 in kinesiology
- 2 in chemistry
- 2 in psychology

1b) Are there specific demographic (age, gender, cultural) post-secondary education needs?

We have approximately 28 students in a mixture of community college and university programs and the number is expected to increase.

There are many mothers who decide to go to school later in life. Associated needs for mothers are very specific; therefore, their costs are generally higher. METS will cover transportation in some instances. The funding sources from METs and CMM are not distributed equally and that is not fair to the students.

1c) What areas of careers would this community benefit from?

Refer to Question #1 for this.

2) What is the community's preferred format for learning, e.g. course delivery on campus, within the local community, online learning or a blended approach?

Community-based learning, mixed with a blended approach is preferred by Glooscap, although it is understood that there are challenges because of the low numbers of students for enrollment.

2a) If courses were offered in Mi'kmaw communities, could individuals from neighbouring communities (Aboriginal and Non-aboriginal) attend these classes in order to fulfil the required amount of participants?

Partnerships with neighboring communities would be ideal for a blended approach to work. The university needs to explore video conferencing because communities have this technology.

3) Is there interest in an articulation approach where introductory-level courses will be offered in the community and then the final courses offered on campus or via distance?

There is interest, but it is also agreed that such a program would be difficult to explore for Glooscap. Again, it would be important to look at developing a program in coordination with Annapolis Valley and Bear River, or other communities.

3a) What is the maximum distance people will travel to a post-secondary institution?

People would travel from Glooscap to Kentville to attend the NSCC or to Halifax which is 80 kilometres away.

4) Is there an interest in a cohort approach to learning where a group of students studies together throughout their program?

There is an interest for this approach.

4a) What career/study programs would be good for cohort learning?

An upgrading cohort would be ideal for post-secondary preparedness. It would provide opportunities for students to get an outside experience in other communities, First Nation or otherwise, if not on campus. If there is a blended approach for cohort learning, then part of the delivery could be set in Glooscap or another nearby location and the other part on campus.

4b) Would individuals travel to another Mi'kmaw community to participate in a cohort program?

Glooscap members would go as far as Annapolis Valley First Nation for a community-based program.

5) Is there local expertise which can contribute to program delivery?

There is both local expertise and members who can teach courses at the University level.

5a) Are there Masters and PhD graduates in the community that could deliver programs in the community?

There are community members with Masters Degrees.

6) What kind of programs can be offered collaboratively to a number of Aboriginal communities at the same time?

People in the community are aware that Glooscap is a small community, therefore, it is very important to see if other communities can partner up for a program that all agree on. It can be done.

6a) What educational needs does this community have which may be similar to other Mi'kmaw communities on mainland Nova Scotia?

Glooscap is in a similar situation as other communities in the Valley area. There are similar challenges and even similar interests to explore the entrepreneurial side of things. There is potential for developing partnerships for trades programs or university/college preparatory courses.

7) Has this community/organization partnered with post-secondary education programs in this community or has it partnered with other communities for program delivery?

Glooscap hasn't necessarily partnered to host a program in the community, nevertheless it provides students opportunities to enter upgrading courses at local adult schools and NSCC. There were no post-secondary programs delivered in the community.

7a) Which? N/A

For Leadership/Post-Secondary Students

8) What do you perceive to be the main education needs in the community in the next 10-15 years?

Glooscap can explore career fair models similar to the Aboriginal Health Human Resources

Initiatives (Secretariat A. P., 2014) funded programs that were delivered in coordination with Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nation Chiefs Secretariat or Indspire (formerly National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation) regional career fairs.

A communication strategy is needed for students to explore potential opportunities in the labour force. There ought to be information sharing opportunities between the three Valley Bands (Glooscap, Annapolis and Bear River), which could also align with developing strategies and projects targeting youth for career orientation.

The community recognizes challenges for students to get adequate orientation and guidance for the endless opportunities on employment and career choices.

Funding is the main reason students do not get the adequate orientation for post-secondary education. Glooscap would like to explore alternative funding resources to develop guidance supports in the community. Students are currently funded through the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq for post-secondary education or through the METS. Funding criteria and policies often limit what programs students can apply to.

8a) What priorities should the community support in education attainment for the community?

Glooscap representatives agree that the following are priorities:

- Provide leadership in orientation and guidance.
- Partnerships need to be provided for education programs in trades.
- A system of student accountability for funding is required.
- Build pride and culture in the community so students will be grounded with strong principles for success.
 - The community needs to host education and career fairs.
 - The Aboriginal Support Worker, employed at the Annapolis Valley Board level, can coordinate with the Glooscap Education worker to develop strong strategies for student orientation and motivation for post-secondary education to be delivered both in the schools and in the community.
 - Community can provide funds for job shadowing and mentoring programs as summer employment.
 - Parents need supports as well for counseling their children for post-secondary education.
 - There should be opportunities for student-parent/caretaker guidance sessions on the community for post-secondary sessions.

8b) What are the challenges in achieving these?

The community recognizes the challenges for students in getting adequate orientation and guidance on the endless opportunities for employment and career choices.

“We need to talk with our students about opportunities” Community leadership

Funding is the main reason students do not get the adequate orientation for post-secondary education. Glooscap would like to explore alternative funding sources to develop guidance supports in the community.

Students are currently funded through the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq for post-secondary education or through the METS. Funding criteria and policies often limit what programs students can apply to.

Glooscap would also like to see more Aboriginal Support Workers for secondary schools who would provide proper orientation for post-secondary education.

8c) What are your recommendations for post-secondary institutions in developing programs/providing services to attract more Aboriginal students in universities and colleges?

- Post-secondary institutions (PSI) should provide on campus career explorations for Aboriginal students. Students would benefit from information sessions on campus.
- PSIs need to provide strategies for the ongoing process of recruitment.
- PSIs need to collaborate with each other to develop Aboriginal supports.
- Communities need to partner with PSEs for delivery and planning of programs.
- Why not establish Mi'kmaw Immersion Programs established with our fellow communities that are predominantly Mi'kmaq speaking Nations?
- There are organizations, like CMM, that could administer programs for delivery among its partners including PSEs.
- PSEs need to have cultural training on Aboriginal reality so students can attend university without stigmas and racism.
- Students who are not socially adapted to off Reserve life need life skills supports.
- Students should be encouraged to register with their respective PSE Aboriginal Advisors when they start school, so they could establish a communication link from the get go.
- Students need support prior to arriving on campus. Universities should provide information packages for Aboriginal students on existing supports. This way, they would also know what knowledge gaps can be addressed prior to moving on campus.

Community Profile

The following chart (Canada S. , NHS Profile, Glooscap 35, IRI, Nova Scotia, 2011 , 2013) Glooscap First Nation is a landscape of education. It is important data for policy advisors and leadership to determine growth and trends in education. The long form survey is a valuable source of data collection for First Nations, where such detailed information is collected and stored by Statistics Canada.

Figure 16 Glooscap First Nation Chart

Education Characteristic	Glooscap 35, IRI Nova Scotia (Census subdivision)		
	Total	Male	Female
Education			
Total population aged 15 years and over by highest certificate, diploma or degree	45	25	20
No certificate, diploma or degree	25	15	10
High school diploma or equivalent	10	0	0
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	15	0	10
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	0	0	0
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	0	0	0
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	0	0	0
Bachelor's degree	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	0	0	0
Total population aged 25 to 64 years by highest certificate, diploma or degree	30	10	15
No certificate, diploma or degree	10	0	0
High school diploma or equivalent	0	0	0
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	10	0	10
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	0	0	0
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	10	0	0
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	0	0	0
Bachelor's degree	0	0	0
University certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level	0	0	0
Total population aged 15 years and over by major field of study - Classification of	45	20	25

Education Characteristic	Glooscap 35, IRI Nova Scotia (Census subdivision)		
	Total	Male	Female
Instructional Programs (CIP) 2011			
No postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	35	20	15
Education	0	0	0
Visual and performing arts, and communications technologies	0	0	0
Humanities	0	0	0
Social and behavioural sciences and law	0	0	0
Business, management and public administration	10	0	0
Physical and life sciences and technologies	0	0	0
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	0	0	0
Architecture, engineering, and related technologies	0	0	0
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	0	0	0
Health and related fields	0	0	0
Personal, protective and transportation services	0	0	0
Other fields of study	0	0	0
Total population aged 15 years and over by location of study compared with province or territory of residence	45	25	20
No postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	30	20	15
With postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	15	0	10
Location of study inside Canada	10	0	10
Same as province or territory of residence	10	0	10
Another province or territory	0	0	0
Location of study outside Canada	0	0	0

Source: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=1207027&Data=Count&SearchText=Glooscap&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=Education&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=>

1

Annapolis Valley First Nation

Consultation included the following people: Chief, Social Welfare Office, Economic Development Officer, Health Director, Education Director, and two Councillors

1) What are the community's post-secondary educational needs?

Annapolis Valley First Nation's educational needs are based on its vision for community development for projects around tourism, business development and entrepreneurship. It would like to motivate its community members to pursue post-secondary education based on that vision.

The community expressed the urgency of language preservation because there is only one Elder who speaks Mi'kmaq. There is a need to rescue the language for the future generations. There has to be efforts to reverse this for the Annapolis Valley First Nation.

The following educational needs were identified:

- GED and upgrading programs.
- Community members feel that Mi'kmaq language needs to be pushed through curriculum development.
- AVFN would like to consult with the community members on needs and interests for post-secondary education; this is a priority.
- There is a need for Mi'kmaq speaking teachers to work with students in off-Reserve schools. This should be funded by the Province.
- There has to be a strategy to motivate students into math and science courses in high school.

“Language is a priority. It is the root of our culture.” Chief Janette Peterson

1a) What programs are in high demand?

The main interest for the majority of the 10 post-secondary students is Bachelor of Arts.

1b) Are there specific demographic (age, gender, cultural) post-secondary educational needs?

Language is the biggest cultural need for everyone on the community.
It is a priority.

- 90% of the AVFN post-secondary education students are women, who have academic, social and financial needs in relation to housing and childcare.
- The young male population should be targeted for education and training opportunities.

1c) What areas of careers would this community benefit from?

- Business Administration
- Entrepreneurship
- Trades: carpentry, journeymen, industries, etc.

2) What is the community's preferred format for learning, e.g. course delivery on campus, within the local community, online learning or a blended approach?

The preferred format for learning is a blended approach between courses offered in the community and others on campus. AVFN believes if there was a program offered in the community that it would be successful.

2a) If courses were offered in Mi'kmaw communities, could individuals from neighbouring communities (Aboriginal and Non-aboriginal) attend these classes in order to fulfil the required amount of participants?

Program delivery in other communities would be much more successful if transportation and meals were covered. AVFN recognizes the importance of partnerships for delivery of programs in the communities, especially with Glooscap First Nation.

3) Is there interest in an articulation approach where introductory-level courses will be offered in the community and then the final courses offered on campus or via distance?

The community representatives involved in this consultation all agreed that an articulation approach of this type would be good. They could partner with NSCC and/or Acadia University.

3a) What is the maximum distance people will travel to a post-secondary institution?

AVFN estimate their members would travel 15 – 20 minutes in time, or as far as the NSCC, Acadia University or another Mi'kmaw community in the region. Most of the students attend Acadia University unless selected programs are not offered there.

4) Is there an interest in a cohort approach to learning where a group of students studies together throughout their program?

It was a definite yes for AVFN.

4a) What career/study programs would be good for cohort learning?

A B.A would be a good start for a cohort.

4b) Would individuals travel to another Mi'kmaw community to participate in a cohort program?

Glooscap and Bear River are potential partners for a cohort program.

5) Is there local expertise which can contribute to program delivery? N/A

5a) Are there Masters and PhD graduates in the community that could deliver programs in the community?

There are two Masters in Education graduates in AVFN. They would be valuable resource for delivery of programs in the community.

6) What kind of programs can be offered collaboratively to a number of Aboriginal communities at the same time?

AVFN believes that Bear River and Glooscap would partner on a program. A survey of needs for the communities would be required. AVFN would like to see the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education as potential programs that could be offered as cohorts. They also recommend that students build their capacities for post-secondary education through preparatory courses, upgrading or an adult learning program.

6a) What educational needs does this community have which may be similar to other Mi'kmaw communities on mainland Nova Scotia?

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Education
- Entrepreneurship /Business Administration

7) Has this community/organization partnered with post-secondary education programs in this community or has it partnered with other communities for program delivery?

There have been no partnerships for post-secondary education programs delivered in AVFN.

7a) Which? N/A

For Leadership/Post-Secondary Students

8) What do you perceive to be the main education needs in the community in the next 10-15 years?

AVFN sees a future in tourism and related industries for its community. It would be important to align their educational needs with their future economic development projects in tourism, management, hotel industry and related careers. The community values its priority in education and employment. Community development is part of a cycle in which education is a main part. Education is key for moving forward with their vision for prosperity.

“We are in the business of creating business. We need to look into building capacity in all areas. We want to be sustainable and we can only do that through education.” Economic Development Office

8a) What priorities should the community support in education attainment for the community?

Community leaders feel that motivation is required to keep youth engaged in their pursuit of career goals. This needs to be an ongoing process which begins at a young age, even before junior high.

“The pursuit of dreams is part of the process of education for youth.” AVFN Leadership

The following are the priorities for education attainment in AVFN:

- There needs to be strong guidance counseling for high school students in their course selection in preparation of post-secondary education.
- Career orientation is required early in secondary education, even prior to high school.
- GED students require preparatory courses, including upgrading in literacy and numeracy skills.
- Education needs have to be addressed for young mothers.
- Kids have to be nurtured for education goals in younger grades.
- The community has to give recognition for student successes in education.
- Parents require supports for education leadership and motivation as part of community initiatives for developing a culture of education.
- Elders have to be involved in the education process for students.
- The community has to promote a culture of education within the families.
- Students need to see that high school is not enough and that university is the way to go.

8b) What are the challenges in achieving these priorities?

Funding is one of the most challenging for everyone in the community. Targeting the right programs for the right students is important. There is a need for orientation.

We need an assessment of needs for the whole community.

8c) What are your recommendations for post-secondary institutions in developing programs/providing services to attract more Aboriginal students in universities and colleges?

- Students need life and study skills training during their initial year of post-secondary education.
- Mi'kmaw language must be taught at university.
- Specific orientation for Aboriginal students is required upon arrival on campus.
- Transition year programs should be explored for post-secondary education.
- First Nation communities and post-secondary institutions need to coordinate to develop support programs.

- Communication is required between post-secondary institutions, campus academic advisors and community education workers (Education Directors and/or Aboriginal Support Workers) on individual academic needs.
- Post-secondary institutions can host education fairs on Reserve and invite all Valley Bands to attend.

Community Profile and Education Chart

Normally, each community partner has a chart, which is a landscape of education for each community. The data was taken from the National Household Survey 2011, but Acadia and Annapolis Valley did not take part in the survey. The causes for this vary according to Statistics Canada. The remaining six community education charts are included in each respective segment.

Tribal Councils and Organizations

Consultation included the following tribal organizations:

- Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
- Native Women's Association of Nova Scotia
- Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat
- Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey
- Native Council of Nova Scotia

Tribal councils and organizations provide a regional perspective on community needs. The Mount Aboriginal Advisory has representation from Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, the Native Council of Nova Scotia and Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey. During the early days of the project, it was suggested by the Advisory to include the tribal councils in this consultation. The following points are from discussions with representatives from these organizations. People who work in capacities such as: executive directors, education advisors, skills and training coordinators, and managers of education, social or economic development portfolios were interviewed. The Native Women's Association of Nova Scotia provided valuable insight into womens' perspectives and concerns for post-secondary education.

Mi'kmaq students' performance measures in Nova Scotia are improving. The percentage rate of high school graduates in provincial and Band operated schools was 87.7% in 2012-2013 compared to the national rate of 35%. (Jamaias DaCosta, 2014) The Report also demonstrates increasing numbers of students entering post-secondary education; there were 380 students from MK Bands in 2004 and 518 by 2014. There was a gradual increase, which leveled out at approximately 420 students per year. (Ibid).

“Mi'kmaw students are on the right track in Nova Scotia. Now, we have to increase their graduation rates in post-secondary education, especially in science programs and build research capacity.” Dr. Don Julien, Executive Director, Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq

Twenty or thirty years ago, GED programs were offered in the communities to meet students' interests in pursuing post-secondary education. Generally, many of those students graduated with Bachelor of Arts degrees. By the mid-80s, graduate rates increased in social work, education, arts, political science, etc. During that time, it was common for recent university graduates to find employment on the Reserve, tribal organizations or government.

Since the 90s, students have been encouraged to go into areas such as business, law and some health careers. Health careers began to take off due to many initiatives by the federal government, especially in the early to mid-2000s, such as Aboriginal Health Human Resources Initiatives (AHHRI). The point being made is that priorities were often dictated by outside agencies, such as the federal government, its funding policies, external labour market demands and socio-economic development strategies for community development. Leadership followed recommendations from external agencies in reference to what was best for the communities. Priorities for post-secondary education shifted often, mainly dictated by the outside world. In reality, it has only been since 1997 when the Mi'kmaq took control of their education through the creation of Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey. Then regional organizations and tribal councils played important roles in developing policies and building regional strategies for education and establishing funding priorities. This increasingly improved the self-governance in education among the Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia.

Slowly, Mi'kmaq developed their own policies and strategies for education outcomes. The tide turned to favour Mi'kmaw interests and priorities. Nevertheless, it has been in very recent years that communities were encouraged to refocus their energies to plan their outcomes based on community needs and priorities. Communities recognize the importance of assessing their education needs in order to build policies that strengthen their goals for community economic development and sustainability. This very consultation project underscores the need expressed by every community and tribal organizations.

The future of post-secondary funding from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AAANDC) is uncertain according to many of the Mi'kmaw education leaders who shared their opinions on this project. The failure of Bill C-33 shook the foundations of self-governance in education for First Nations. It is crucial that current funding agreements are "milked for what they're worth" because there is no certainty that funding will continue in the next two or three generations. Tribal organizations are concerned that policies need to be created in each community to put future education funding aside, before post-secondary funding pots run dry.

1) What are the communities' post-secondary educational needs?

Mi'kmaw post-secondary students should have the option to study their language and culture. There is no post-secondary institution that teaches Mi'kmaq aside from Cape Breton University. There is a strong need for this course in Halifax.

Communities need more resources for post-secondary preparation in areas such as:

- Tutoring for math and sciences
- Early assessment of academic challenges and strengths
- Career exploration to begin in earlier grades 7-9

- Propaganda for education, career paths, and employment
- Parent programs to support education for their children
- Mentorship programs to support education goals

The Native Women's Association of Nova Scotia identified the following areas needed for Aboriginal women and recommends the Mount partner for development of programs in:

- Education technology
- Leadership
- Governance
- Business
- Women's Rights
- Resolution of conflicts, negotiation and mediation
- Public policy
- Public Relations
- Communications

One matter to keep in mind when determining the post-secondary education needs is not to steer all the students into specific programs because of immediate community needs or funding criteria only. There has to be careful consideration of employment opportunities in the community or in nearby labour markets. It is extremely important that students get the proper guidance for their post-secondary studies. There are no second chances because of the increasing numbers of people seeking funding for post-secondary education. Students need to be more certain than ever.

There are many students in the Mi'kmaw communities who have various academic supports and have IPPs. There are no current statistics, but it would be important to research this area on Mi'kmaw students. It seems students with IPPs do not have the same opportunities for post-secondary education as students in academic programs because of the lack of continued supports in post-secondary education. IPP students are left to their own devices upon entering college or university. It is a challenge for students to identify that they need academic supports upon arrival at university or college.

A Mi'kmaw language and culture course is a high priority for all students in post-secondary education. Tribal representatives recognize the importance of lifelong learning from early childhood education to post-secondary as a vital cultural component for Mi'kmaw education. It is simply a way of being for Mi'kmaq to be continuously involved in their cultural perspectives. What better way to ensure a comprehensive education than by making post-secondary studies more meaningful for Mi'kmaw students than by developing a course for Mi'kmaq?

A multidirectional and multidisciplinary approach is recommended for developing programs for Mi'kmaw students, especially for engaging them in math and science. More effort is required for awakening interest among primary students. They have to be conditioned to believe that math and science are not difficult.

1a) What programs are in high demand? N/A

1b) Are there specific demographic (age, gender, cultural) post-secondary educational needs?

There is an increasing demand by single mothers, which has to be considered in planning program development for post-secondary studies.

There are absolute concerns when it comes to gender specific programming because many of the trades are traditionally targeted for men, which in many instances is not equal opportunity. Native Women's Association of Nova Scotia (NWANS) regards this as hindrance for women. Women are not always consulted with respect to issues affecting women, their families and their communities, so this project is important in sharing the perspective of Aboriginal women.

University programs are not designed for Aboriginal women, even though Universities, such as the Mount, are recognized for women's studies. Native Women's Association identifies that Aboriginal women's needs are similar to those of many other women, but the reality from which Aboriginal women come is very different. In one breath, the President of Nova Scotia Native Women's Association underscored this point:

“There is childcare, poverty, community adversities, child welfare, child poverty, suicide, social illnesses, addictions, family, violence, health issues...”

Cheryl Maloney, President, NS Native Women's Association

NWANS identifies the following items with respect to gender specific needs for post-secondary education:

- Women must be consulted with on their needs for post-secondary education.
- Policies for post-secondary education must be designed with women, mothers, youth, and mature students in mind.
- There is a need for research on Aboriginal women's issues in Nova Scotia.
- Women must be included in programs for science, environment, energy, resource management and Aboriginal knowledge.
- Mentoring for young Aboriginal women is a strong component which needs to be included in program development

2) What is the community's preferred format for learning, e.g. course delivery on campus, within the local community, online learning or a blended approach?

The blended approach is the most popular choice in the majority of the organizations and tribal councils interviewed. This includes both community-hosted programs blended with on campus programs. Community based programs would address the needs of women, especially mothers, because there are more supports in home communities for child care, housing and transportation than on campus.

STFX partnered with Indian Brook for a B.Ed. with a blended approach. There were courses delivered in Indian Brook and at a summer institute on campus.

2a) If courses were offered in Mi'kmaw communities, could individuals from neighbouring communities (Aboriginal and Non-aboriginal) attend these classes in order to fulfil the required amount of participants?

This approach will need to give the community priority for seats. If there are leftover seats, then it can be opened up to invite students from outside the community.

3) Is there interest in an articulation approach where introductory-level courses will be offered in the community and then the final courses offered on campus or via distance?

There are many people employed in communities who require upgrading and professional development in areas such as: communications, public relations, governance, business administration, leadership, etc. It would be ideal if a post-secondary institution developed a program with accredited courses that people in communities could take to gain professional development for their current employment. Later they could transfer the credits to other programs if there was a desire to further their education.

MSVU will need to conduct a community assessment on needs for post-secondary education to determine interest and commitment from the communities and their members. It should include: mode of delivery, content and program selection. Proper process is essential for planning, development, delivery and ongoing evaluation for a successful community program. Part of the planning must include a strategy for continuity of higher learning, practicums and job placements. It is just as important to graduate from the program as it is to find a job for the graduates.

Any program development in a community must take into consideration the community and student interests, in order to have a successful program.

3a) What is the maximum distance of travel are you willing to commute to attend a post-secondary institution? N/A

4) Is there an interest in a cohort approach to learning where a group of students studies together throughout their program? N/A

4a) What programs are of interest to the community for cohort learning? N/A

4b) Would individuals travel to another Mi'kmaw community to participate in a cohort program?

A cohort approach is ideal for mature students, but recent high school graduates should have their on campus experience. If there is an opportunity to have students experience a cohort program on campus, then it should be explored as an option.

5) Is there local expertise which can contribute to program delivery? N/A

5a) Are there Masters and PhD graduates in the community that could deliver programs in

the community?

There are people who can contribute to post-secondary education in many ways from resource people to professors. There are researchers, educators, advisors, content developers, and cultural advisors who can all provide valuable assistance for curriculum development and delivery.

6) What kind of programs can be offered collaboratively to a number of Aboriginal communities at the same time?

A pre-university preparatory course or program needs to be developed to prepare on Reserve students for post-secondary studies with emphasis in:

- Literacy and numeracy enhancement
- Life skills: budgeting, housing, social supports, living in urban centres
- Study skills and time management
- Career orientation and course planning

There could be Valley programs with partnerships between Glooscap, Annapolis Valley, Bear River and Acadia Bands Then there could be another program for Millbrook, Paq'ntkek and Pictou Landing. Indian Brook is large enough to host its own program. There are many approaches for cohorts and community-based programs that need further exploring. Many of these communities have delivered programs in other areas, like health and economic development. There is no reason why an education program could not be developed.

6a) What are the educational needs in the area that are common in this Mi'kmaw community which are similar to other communities?

7) What are the opportunities for partner institutions to collaborate in providing programs locally?

This was answered in other sections.

7a) Has this community delivered/hosted any post-secondary educational programs?

Not applicable.

7b) Which partner institutions have delivered programs in the community?

CMM communities have hosted programs on Mainland Nova Scotia. The following are a few mentioned in this report:

- Indian Brook and STFX for B.Ed.
- Pictou Landing and CBU for Bachelor of Community Studies
- Millbrook and CBU for Bachelor Arts
- NSCC had partnerships with Millbrook, Pictou Landing and Indian Brook
- Indian Brook and MSVU for B.Ed. (individual courses, not a full-fledged program)

For Leadership/Post-Secondary Students

8) What do you perceive to be the main education needs in the community in the next 10-15 years?

Education directors are looking at current trends for post-secondary education among their students. They are aware of the importance of developing policies for potential funding challenges, evolving criteria for funding students, community versus individual interests for education outcomes, and more. One of many goals expressed by tribal organizations is for an alignment of health, social and education programs to develop strategies for long term education outcomes.

All the communities in the region need more science and health professionals, not only trades and social science professionals. There should also be more graduates in the technological fields, researchers, architects, engineers, and environmental sciences. In order for this to happen, a strong commitment from communities is required to begin encouraging younger kids to explore science programs. Targeting young students is important in building strong academic minded students geared for math and science careers.

Communities have to address retention issues among their graduates who have difficulty finding employment back on the Reserve. The question communities ask is, how do we keep our people here once they graduate? There are not many upward movements in Band Administrations or in Aboriginal organizations like the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq. It is challenging to retain graduates in their home communities, therefore many move to find work in urban centres.

One of the recommendations is for communities to encourage their Band members to target their career interests to match the needs of the nearby local labour market, especially in industry, health care and/or tourism and services. This would offer increased opportunities for work, if not on the Reserve, at least near their homes.

In addition to this, students need to be provided additional training for off Reserve employment, such as workshops on: paying income taxes, labour policies, workplace professionalism and even life skills. It cannot be assumed that students who have lived on Reserve all their lives are prepared with such skills. It is best to provide all necessary training so that students will have a better chance for success.

8a) What priorities should the community support in education attainment for the community?

“We need to save money now for our kids' future university education.” Education Director

Exploring alternative funding for post-secondary education is a high priority. Communities need to establish strategies for funding future students. Communities need to provide guidance for seeking scholarships, bursaries, and student loans. This is where the importance of career and education orientation is required. There has to be funding provided for this area.

Students need to assume more responsibility for looking for their own alternative/additional funding. There is no guarantee that current funding sources and policies will exist in 10 or 15 years from now, so it is best to prepare students now for this process.

Students need to be encouraged to enter into sciences rather than just Arts. Students have been steered away from sciences and academic courses in high school because traditionally these courses were considered “too difficult.” Advisors preferred that students take courses that they would graduate within their funding cycle of four years. Science programs on average required longer time periods to graduate. In the last ten years, students have begun exploring the health field, but they're still not near the level mainstream Canadians are at. Mi'kmaw students need to be oriented towards technology and science fields.

Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey has authority over education, which is highly regarded as a model of self-governance in the area of education in Canada. Only a privileged number of First Nations in Canada have reached this depth of Aboriginal based education. (Magazine, 2014) MK is conscious of its need to develop strategies to build a curriculum that balances both provincial curriculum and one that is culturally based for the Mi'kmaq. As the world evolves, so do the Mi'kmaq. Mi'kmaw education is developing strong education foundations, but it's also conscious that it needs to move with the young population as well. It needs to be two steps ahead in curriculum and policy development to meet the needs of the fastest growing demographic in Canada. There needs to be a focus in math and sciences, in order for Mi'kmaq to become more competitive in the labour market in 10 – 15- 20 years, yet maintaining strong roots in culture and language – ideally.

“We have been conditioned to believe that science and math are too hard.” MK Education Advisor

Parent and caregiver involvement in their children's education is a key component for developing a culture of education in the community, or social capital. (McMullin, 2004) This has to be supported by community initiatives as well, such as building supports for tutoring, reading, homework clubs, and strategies to promote more math and science interests for all grades, including mentoring parents to be career coaches.

Students living on Reserve have to be made aware of the endless opportunities for careers and that post-secondary education is key. Students will have to have a clear education plan for themselves for this to be effective. They have to link education to their life plan. It is the only way to increase the numbers of Mi'kmaw and Aboriginal graduates in all fields.

Funding is an ongoing challenge in all of the communities. All Mi'kmaw communities will need to address their funding shortages in the face of a growing population.

The fastest growing demographic in Canada is Aboriginals under 25 years of age. If the population in Nova Scotia is approximately 15,000 Mi'kmaq, then there are approximately 7,500 people under 25 years of age in 2014. Imagine the numbers of Mi'kmaq that will be knocking on the doors of PSIs all over Nova Scotia in 8-12 years from now, especially when Mi'kmaw

Kina'matnewey is averaging a 87% high school graduation rate every year in Nova Scotia.

There will be an increasing challenge to prepare the young students for post-secondary education. It is of utmost interest for the MK to coordinate all efforts with leadership in Mi'kmaw communities to begin addressing those issues now.

Career orientation has to be an ongoing process for students that begins at an early age. There are online resources, such as: <http://careers.novascotia.ca/careerplanning>, <http://careers.novascotia.ca/quizzes> (careercruising.com is the one our school used) among others on the same webpage that guidance counselors could use for junior and high school students. This would be a great way to spark career orientation in secondary schools with Mi'kmaw students.

“We need to groom our students as early as junior high for post-secondary education”
Spencer Wilmot, Native Council of Nova Scotia

A community system for tracking data of graduates would provide leadership with community asset mapping. This tool could make it easier for education policy development and planning. It would provide much needed statistics to identify program interests, university/college preferences, job placement success rates, gender trends, gaps and success rates. There are sensitive issues to address, such as individual and community privacy, design and implementation, as well as information storage. Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey in coordination with the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq have the capacity and experience to develop and coordinate such an ambitious program.

Leadership and employees working with youth and students should get sufficient training and upgrading to guide students in pursuit of post-secondary education. Community people responsible for education, training and employment continuously require capacity development on education planning, policy, and lifelong learning models.

Education advisors from this sector are reviewing policies with the objective of redefining and re-establishing priorities and criteria for funding. This is an integral process with communities, education directors and their leadership. Demands on post-secondary funding are rapidly growing as more students graduate each year.

Tribal representatives are optimistic that funding challenges are being addressed more creatively by pooling resources through partnership building and the development of regional strategies to increase numbers of graduates in post-secondary education.

In the duration of this report, MK and CMM were in the process of developing projects to help prepare students towards post-secondary education.

MK hosted the *Nova Scotia Aboriginal Youth Skilled Trades Fair* in Halifax with 80 Mi'kmaw junior high and high school students from 12 Mi'kmaw communities in Nova Scotia. Students explored ten skilled trades, apprenticeship processes and funding, education and training opportunities.

In early 2014, Pictou Landing First Nations youth were provided an opportunity to explore the right fit for their interests and career options while in their high school years. Pictou Landing partnered with the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq through the Mi'kmaq Project for Innovation and Collaboration (MPIC) to develop the *Pictou Landing Career Exploration Program (PLCEP)*.

The aim is for similar projects to be promoted by Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq among its member communities. This would depend greatly on available funding and buy in from both Mi'kmaq communities and potential funding partners like the Province of Nova Scotia.

8b) What are the challenges in achieving these priorities?

Challenges were identified in the discussions expressed in other sections.

8c) What are your recommendations for post-secondary institutions in developing programs/providing services to attract more Aboriginal students in universities and colleges?

Communication strategies targeting Aboriginal students are needed from all post-secondary institutions. Mount Saint Vincent must promote its supports for Aboriginal students in order to attract more Mi'kmaq.

“The Mount has to come to our communities to show our Mi'kmaq students what it has to offer.”
Marlene Martin, CMM Education Advisor

Admission criteria have to be reviewed, especially in sciences and health programs. Seats need to be set aside for these programs specifically targeting Mi'kmaq students.

Universities need to develop programs inclusive of Aboriginal ways of knowing. Each university must honour each respective territory they are located on. In reality, each university must integrate ways of knowing from that territory. Aboriginal perspectives must be weaved into Western ways of knowing. Dr. Don Julien shared this insight. The institution should be a basket into which Aboriginal ways of knowing are interwoven in its foundations. Right now, universities have “eggs” representing Aboriginal perspectives sitting in the basket as opposed to being part of the basket. The eggs are not permanent components that make up the basket. There is a huge difference when Aboriginal perspectives (eggs) sit in the basket, rather than make up the framework of the basket.

Finding ways to improve retention of students in post-secondary education is recommended. Research is necessary to determine why students leave their studies in the first year. There is no collected data with respect to Mi'kmaq students and their retention, attrition and graduation rates. It is agreed by education leaders that completing first year studies is a positive indication that students will succeed in graduating from their programs. The question still remains, why do so many students leave their first year studies? One theory is that students go to university or college not knowing what their career goals are. Again, research, research, research.

The best approach is for MSVU is to partner with the Mi'kmaq to develop a Mi'kmaw language and cultural studies course. There needs to be creativity around curriculum development, planning and course offerings.

Universities need to hire more Aboriginals to teach, to conduct research, to present as guest lecturers, and to provide a sense of cultural visibility among the staff and administration.

A university may conduct an environmental scan of potential PhD candidates. There are increasing numbers of Aboriginals in post-graduate studies. It would be important for a university to encourage a doctorate program targeting Aboriginals, even as a pilot program.

Mount Saint Vincent University is known for excellence in developing programs for under-represented groups. It is only natural that the Mount expands its existing programs to include Aboriginal perspectives in its Women's and Cultural Studies with emphasis on Mi'kmaw culture. In fact, the Mount should assume leadership in developing a Women's Aboriginal Studies.

The Bachelor of Education at MSVU must include content such as: Treaties, Indian Residential Schools, Mi'kmaw history and culture, just to name a few.

Why not do the same for the sciences? Is there a program in Canada or elsewhere that offers Science-based cohorts on the community? It is important to develop a cohort with science degrees to be delivered on Reserve.

Universities need to alter their criteria for hiring professors to teach university and college courses. There are very low numbers of Aboriginals with PhDs in the region. In order for universities to hire Aboriginals, their selection criteria has to be more proactive in recognizing non-Western based academic credentials, such as a candidate's life experiences, community-cultural-traditional knowledge, and language expertise. There are gifted knowledge holders in Mi'kmaki who would be excellent professors if given the opportunity. All it takes is one university to take the initiative.

Education must provide life skills and worldviews for students to be able to work in their communities or anywhere else. It must have a balance of all objectives. On the other hand, students must be prepared to assume that their post-secondary education is their ticket to finding work.

Educators agree that PSIs that have Aboriginal centres must have them properly equipped with academic resources, computers and study, socializing and resting areas.

“Aboriginal centres have to have more than walls, windows and doors. They must have a spirit for people and learning properly balanced.”
Ann Sylliboy, MK Post-Secondary Advisor

Post-Secondary Students and Aboriginal Advisors

Consultation included the following post-secondary institutions' Aboriginal advisors and Mi'kmaq/Aboriginal students:

- Mount Saint Vincent University
- Acadia University
- Dalhousie University
- STFX University
- Nova Scotia Community College
- St. Mary's University (there was no opportunity for a consultation meeting with SMU students, but the university is a partner on this project).

The Atlantic Aboriginal Advisors Networking Group (AAANG) is considered a partner that supported this consultation project from the beginning. The perspectives shared by the Aboriginal advisors are extremely important because of the nature of their work. They are frontline workers on campus who deal with Mi'kmaq/Aboriginal students on a daily basis. They witness firsthand what stresses Aboriginal students deal with on campus. They are an invaluable resource for their students who consider them not only advisors, but as sisters, brothers, uncles, aunts, and friends.

1) What are the community's post-secondary education needs?

Students shared their views on what they would like to see for their communities. This correlated with what community leaders consider as education needs in general. The following are some of their recommended needs:

- Nurses
- Social workers
- Educators – early childhood, language, culture
- Business degrees
- Management
- Human resources
- Communications – Public relations
- Community services
- Environment areas

The following are what students would like to see in their communities in support of post-secondary education:

- Elected leaders with degrees or some sort of solid education background
- Band employees in managerial and leadership positions with appropriate degrees
- Mentor programs for stay-in-school programs and for higher learning

- Clearer funding policies for post-secondary
- Community supports during secondary education such as: tutoring for math and writing skills
- Better orientation for post-secondary opportunities

“We all have different interests for university. We don’t all want to be doctors, teachers or lawyers, but we want to be able to help our people.” 2nd Year Dalhousie student

1a) What programs are in high demand?

Ideally this question was meant to look at what students' current studies are, but students also expressed what their interests are for future studies even though many were in other programs. The following are areas students mentioned as potential areas of study as majors, minors, or concentrations and/or courses.

University Programs/Courses

- Mi’kmaw Language and Culture
- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Education
- Early Childhood Education
- Indigenous Studies
- Business for Women
- Aboriginal Environmental – Resource Management – Community Development
- Treaty Rights
- Tourism in Aboriginal Context

Community College Programs/Courses

- Heavy equipment operators
- Tech areas – generally in all areas
- Industrial instrumentation
- LPN
- Industrial sectors: oil and gas
- Electrical
- Community studies
- Recreation
- How to start a business On Reserve
- Early childhood education
- Esthetics - cosmetology

Students felt that learning Mi’kmaw language should be a main priority for cultural preservation. Languages are dying quickly and universities can play a major role in reversing this trend by implementing these specific courses. Language courses will allow students to maintain a source of connection to their culture while on campus. Universities need to know how important it is for

Mi'kmaw students to integrate Aboriginal content into coursework as much as possible.

The last topic led to intense discussions about hiring Aboriginal people to teach courses at university. Students were quick to point out that there are other courses being taught: Russian, Spanish, Arabic, and Mandarin, but not Mi'kmaq. They also identified that Mi'kmaw instructors don't have the required university credentials to teach on campus. They became more expressive and proud when they discussed how Mi'kmaw knowledge holders, such as Elders, have superior level of knowledge than any PhD. Elders have lifelong learning behind them as credentials to teach Mi'kmaq and culture at university.

“Universities should be honoured to have Elders teach on campus.” John R. Sylliboy, MSVU
Grad student

1b) What programs (of study) would this community benefit from?

There are needs for university preparatory courses to help students transition into post-secondary education with greater ease. There could be a transition year, or camps for life skills hosted in the communities. This could be done in partnership with various communities and universities.

1c) Are there specific demographic (age, gender, cultural) post-secondary education needs?
N/A

1d) What areas of careers would this community benefit from? N/A

2) What is the community's preferred format for learning, e.g. course delivery on campus, within the local community, online learning or a blended approach?

All the above are viable approaches for community-based learning.

Students expressed their concerns for community based programs with the following:

- Communities and universities are developing programs without providing real outcomes at the end, such as jobs.
- Community hosted programs are considered too 'watered' down because they cater to every single need of its students, which may prove counterproductive for students who want to go to post-graduate degrees because they wouldn't have the "real" credentials.
- In relation to the last point, students feel that the benefits of community hosted programs are not always the same. Students recommend that community hosted programs have similar or higher expectations, so that students will feel competent in finding jobs or continuing with higher learning.
- There needs to be more structure for delivering programs on Reserve so that students get the real feel of campus rigor.

- Students will not have the opportunity to learn and share from other cultures, worldviews and life realities if they stay on Reserve.
- Community programs do not offer a chance for students to acquire survival skills required for future off Reserve employment. Students leaving the Reserve for university develop a sense of resilience against the outside world.

PSE students put higher value on the benefits of community-based programs because:

- Students are provided with many community, peer and environmental supports.
- Employees can usually continue working while studying.
- Transportation costs are reduced.
- Child care for parents/caregivers is much more readily available in the community.
- Additional supports for upgrading can be implemented in community-based programs to enhance students' academic skills.
- A blended approach which starts in the community is a positive way to transition to eventual campus settings.
- It provides an opportunity for many people who feel they lost their chance for post-secondary education.
- Mature students benefit from all of the above mentioned supports that will provide even more opportunities for more members.

Their recommendations for developing programs to be hosted in the community are:

- Community hosted programs must provide similar benefits for students as on campus, such as practicums, on campus seminars, and presentations.
- University instructors must be culturally competent or be trained to be.
- Program development and curriculum must be designed to meet the needs of the students
- Evaluation processes must be continuous to ensure program consistency and effectiveness.
- Students must be offered opportunities to transition to campus settings

when they feel prepared.

- Ongoing supports must be equal to what supports exist on campus especially for literacy and numeracy skills.
- If language is a barrier for Mi'kmaw students, then community programming would help ease this source of stress for students.

2a) If courses were offered in Mi'kmaw communities, could individuals from neighbouring communities (Aboriginal and Non-aboriginal) attend these classes in order to fulfil the required amount of participants?

If a program were to be hosted on a community, it would bring much needed finances to community programs. There are communities that are isolated and it's natural that other people in similar circumstances will benefit as well.

This would also provide an opportunity to share Mi'kmaw culture with other people. There are many non-Aboriginals who would benefit from cross-cultural sharing with Mi'kmaq. This activity may provide an opportunity for neighbouring towns to share with Mi'kmaw communities for relationship building. Students welcome this idea.

3) Is there interest in an articulation approach where introductory-level courses will be offered in the community and then the final courses offered on campus or via distance?
N/A

3a) What is the maximum distance of travel are you willing to commute to attend a post-secondary institution? N/A

4) Is there an interest in a cohort approach to learning where a group of students studies together throughout their program?

4a) What programs are of interest to the community for cohort learning? N/A

4b) Would individuals travel to another Mi'kmaw community to participate in a cohort program? N/A

There are stigmas for in community programs which need to be dealt with. Refer to Question #2.

5) Is there local expertise which can contribute to program delivery?

5a) Are there Masters and PhD graduates in the community that could deliver programs on the community?

NA, because the group discussion is with on campus students.

6) What kind of programs can be offered collaboratively to a number of Aboriginal communities at the same time?

There could be programs that are offered in sciences, education, and administration.

Mi'kmaw language is one of the courses that can be offered to a number of communities, especially as an online course.

An important consideration when working with cohorts is being able to provide options for individual students who wish to separate from the group and take advantage of online/on campus courses so they can have a wider choice of course selections.

If there are cohorts, then there should be continuous guidance programs for orientation after the degree is completed to explore options for higher learning or for career counseling.

It is best to consult with students about exploring this option.

6a) What are the educational needs in the area that are common in this Mi'kmaw community which are similar to other communities? N/A

7) What are the opportunities for partner institutions to collaborate in providing programs locally?

The strongest recommendation was for universities to collaborate to develop a Mi'kmaw course on the mainland or the Halifax Regional Municipality.

7a) Has this community delivered/hosted any post-secondary education programs? N/A

7b) Which partner institutions have delivered programs in the community? N/A

These questions were not answered during discussions with students.

For Leadership/Post-Secondary Students

8) What do you perceive to be the main education needs in the community in the next 10-15 years?

Students expressed the need for Mi'kmaw communities to work together to look at a broad scope of the labour market, so students know what their options are before going to university both on and off Reserve.

“We need to spark peoples’ interests in various programs outside of the traditionally selected programs, like B.As.” Aboriginal Academic Advisor

Reserves need to look at developing mentoring programs for their students at all levels.

Why not look at a community inventory of needs? There are trends and patterns of interests in areas common among students. Communities need to develop future economic development based on what students want to pursue as careers as well.

Students are frustrated with not finding jobs. They commented that there are communities where individuals have two jobs, which prevents recent graduates an opportunity for work. Communities need to assess their employment strategies for future graduates so they would be aware of reachable employment targets in the community.

Most people are guided towards the Arts, but not Sciences. There needs to be more information about all opportunities. Students need to know the types of careers that could work in the communities and in Nova Scotia.

Why not explore non-traditional health professions, like yoga instructors, massage therapists, alternative medicine for future employment in the community?

“We need to build a culture of determination to succeed. There needs to be a way to open the eyes of all students to all opportunities.” NSCC Student

Students feel frustrated that funding policies are difficult to comply with because of strict time limits. There should be policies to support students in completing their programs from start to finish within reasonable time frames. Four years of funding is never enough to complete an undergrad for a majority of students.

There are guidance counselors who are overwhelmed by dealing with students’ diverse life challenges on a daily basis, let alone having time for proper career orientation during high school. Communities need to provide students with proper and adequate career exploration.

Students recognize that communities need to engage in exploring areas that will bring independence, self-governance, and leadership in their communities. They know that they have to assume much of the responsibility in challenging the system to make it work for them. They have to lead the way for a new generation of Mi’kmaq to become engineers, architects, scientists and researchers.

8a) What priorities should the community support in education attainment for the community?

There needs to be summer life skills programs in the community to prepare students for their post-secondary studies. This needs to be brought to community leadership. Students are not always aware what is in store for them when they get to university. Perhaps, communities can partner with universities to deliver summer camps, which in turn could be potential recruitment for the post-secondary institutions.

There should be labour placement programs for Aboriginal graduates in practicums, internships, apprenticeships, or even job shadowing programs as part of training and skills development provided by the community. Aboriginal students are not always hired immediately for jobs outside of their communities. This program will provide students with work experience and higher chances of finding the right employment for their skills and knowledge.

Courses need to be developed in the community to prepare high school students for post-secondary education. There could be a summer program for life skills in the communities before the fall semester.

8b) What are the challenges in achieving these priorities?

“Funding is a challenge for everything. Universities need to see the opportunities of our future youth and find ways to address gaps even when funding is limited.” Aboriginal Academic Advisor

8c) What are your recommendations for post-secondary institutions in developing programs/providing services to attract more Aboriginal students in universities and colleges?

Recommendations for post-secondary education in general:

Universities can develop partnerships specifically for Aboriginal students in practicums, internships and employment building programs for recent graduates. This needs to be implemented into the curriculum. Or there could be a coordinated effort by the community and the university to develop such a program.

There has to be articulation agreements between institutions that accept and acknowledge Aboriginal courses/programs/studies in Nova Scotia and the Atlantic provinces.

Language courses should be respectful of where the institutions are located, such as Mi’kmaq in Nova Scotia or Maliseet and/or Mi’kmaq in New Brunswick. It would not make sense to teach Cree in this territory.

Universities do not provide enough information with respect to options for undergraduate degrees besides Bachelor of Arts programs. There needs to be a program for career orientation at the beginning of first-year on campus to determine the right program for each student. Students often only rely on peer orientation.

There should be weekend university camps to reach out to high school students, which can be part of career orientation and recruitment strategies.

One of the needs expressed by first and second-year students was to make it mandatory for students to meet with Aboriginal Advisors (where applicable) for supports, guidance and orientation early at the beginning of their studies. The recommendation is to have at least one or two visits at the beginning of their first semester on campus.

Advisors and student centres are important for student supports. There has to be a time and place for students to be able to vent about their challenges on campus. That time will provide an opportunity to look at ways to address some of the challenges they face. This could be individual or group sessions. Students need someone to listen from their own culture in their own space.

If there is no centre on campus, then the university should assign safe spaces on campus for Aboriginal students. Students could use the spaces for personal, cultural and academic use.

Students often will not express their need for supports. Many students are left to their own devices when it comes to pursuing their post-secondary education. There are students who don't have anyone to push them along at home and Aboriginal advisors have been extremely supportive in their educational journeys.

“Our parents didn't have that (career orientation) for us. We need to get that sense of orientation from our advisors, peers, a group, and so on. This would help out with stress and dealing with procrastination. I am in my 3rd year and I am just “getting it” now, but for many it is too late.”

STFX Nursing student

There needs to be on campus workshops on life skills, finance management, tutoring supports, and network building.

Students need a database of academic and non-academic supports both on and off campus. There should be a general list of on-campus/off-campus resources amongst all post-secondary institutions.

Cultural competency and sensitivity training are essential for faculty regarding Mi'kmaw and Aboriginal related issues.

Aboriginal graduates should be celebrated on campus as a means for motivation, building mentorships, sharing success stories and demonstrating student diversity.

There has to be active ongoing promotion of university and colleges where students are continuously exposed to propaganda on careers, education opportunities in the high schools, community halls, health centres, etc. There needs to be more effective communication strategies in place for career orientation for high school students to see academic options.

Universities and communities can collaborate in knowledge building for students so that they can share their culture with pride rather than feel defensive when they are put on the spot in class when it comes to Aboriginal content.

How could students defend themselves in racist situations? Students feel that if they had a base knowledge of our cultural identity to share with other students in class, then at least it would be a step in the right direction. Basic things include: Treaty Rights, Indian Act, Indian Residential Schools, history, etc.

Specific Recommendations for MSVU

The Mount can promote existing courses and programs to include more Aboriginal/Mi'kmaw content, such as in education, social sciences, and cultural studies. The idea would be to invite faculty who deliver content to evaluate how Aboriginal themes can be included in their courses to enhance them. This would provide an important learning for all students in those courses. It is understood that there are courses, which would not have Aboriginal content. It is also important

to recognize the importance of including Aboriginal content in programming such as in Education, Nutrition, Child and Youth Studies, Cultural Studies (Mi'kmaw specific), Women's Studies. There are courses which must include Aboriginal content (if not applied), such as all the humanities courses: Anthropology, Sociology, Canadian History, Research courses, Philosophy, etc.

The Mount could take leadership in developing supports to help enhance the preservation of Mi'kmaw culture. There are many people outside of Mi'kmaw culture that can benefit from learning about our language and culture. Elders, knowledge holders and language instructors can be brought in more frequently and/or contracted as guest lecturers.

The Mount can offer a similar course like CBU's "*Elmitek*" for the Halifax or mainland region. This program is a community-based program where introductory courses are offered in an Aboriginal setting, which later are re-integrated back on campus in the second year.

There are programs at the Mount that require language components, where Mi'kmaw could be included if Aboriginal students want to take them instead of French for example.

Students mentioned that they could bring what they learned back to the community as ambassadors for recruitment, peer mentorships and job placements. There could be employment opportunities for recent graduates through MSVU summer employment, for example. The Aboriginal Student Centre has hired Aboriginal students to help with promotion of Centre's activities. In fact, Glooscap First Nation and MSUV partnered to hire a student from Glooscap to work at the ASC last summer 2013. Glooscap provided the funding to pay the student's wages, while the Mount hosted the summer placement for eight weeks.

"It seems that MSVU has made quite a bit of effort in its recruitment strategy in the last two years. All of sudden, one is more aware of what Mount offers for our students. This wasn't the case when I was looking for my undergrad." B.Ed. student at St.FX.

Post-secondary students are key participants on this consultation project. They are the reason the Mount and its peer institutions are looking at ways to enhance supports for Aboriginals in post-secondary education. They are the main characters in all the discussions behind this consultation project. It is at the root of past, current and future students' persistence, resilience and determination which make their recommendations the most important for the success of this project.

Off Reserve / Urban Aboriginals

The Mount had an opportunity to share with Mi'kmaq and Aboriginals who live, study and work in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). One of the consultation meetings was held at the Native Mi'kmaq Friendship Centre. The Mount Aboriginal Advisory recommended that the project include the urban Aboriginal voice as well.

Dr. Ramona Lumpkin attended the meeting held at the Friendship Centre in November 2013.

There was an invite sent out by the Friendship Centre to host the discussion. There were 22 participants at the beginning of the discussion and 12 by the end who attended all or part of the discussion. Many of the participants were individuals doing their ALP program at the Friendship Centre.

Participants shared their experiences with post-secondary education and education in general. There was a mix of mature students, youth and Elders in the group. There was no time to go through every question for a full discussion, but key areas were discussed. The following are their recommendations.

Post-Secondary needs are:

- Bridging programs for post-secondary education are required for mature students especially for computer literacy, numeracy and research skills.
- A partnership between the Mount and the Friendship Centre could be explored to develop a bridging program to be hosted at the Friendship Centre. This would be open for all students transitioning from Mi'kmaw communities to urban centres.
- Life skills workshops could be developed and hosted in partnership with the Mount and the Friendship Centre in order to provide knowledge for students how to live and study in urban centres.
- The need for childcare, affordable housing and transportation are challenges faced by people in Halifax. The Friendship Centre sees a great opportunity to partner with the Mount to research on the services provided in the city to help support post-secondary students. There needs to be an assessment of available essential services, both academic and non-academic, because they provide supports to help determine the well-being of students living in the city.
- The Friendship Centre could provide the Mount a wealth of knowledge for all the cultural resources that exist in the city – especially people: guest speakers, Elders, language instructors, guest lecturers and potential students.
- The Friendship Centre is open to developing programs with communities nearest to the Friendship Centre. This was also a shared sentiment by Glooscap and Indian Brook with respect to partnership building.
- Thanks to the discussion at the Friendship Centre, Dr. Lumpkin and Pamela Glode-Desrochers, Executive Director, have held more discussions on exploring ideas for a partnership on post-secondary initiatives. Pamela Glode-Desrochers is also the newest Aboriginal Advisory member at the Mount.

The Friendship Centre is a small representation of off Reserve residents and urban Aboriginals who were included on the Consultation project on post-secondary needs, but an extremely important voice for this project. There were numerous students from the post-secondary

institutions who took part in the discussions, who are from other urban settings. Their numbers are low, but their voices were heard. Halifax residents who work in the communities, but live in Halifax or Off Reserve, also shared their perspectives on what needs should be addressed to improve post-secondary education outcomes for Aboriginals. Their input is included in the discussions with post-secondary students and in community settings.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education” is only the beginning of building meaningful relationships with the Mi’kmaq and Aboriginals in Nova Scotia. This project has ignited discussions on how to improve post-secondary education for Mi’kmaq and Aboriginals at Mount Saint Vincent University.

Nova Scotia Chiefs are optimistic that “First Nations education is on the right track” (Googoo, 2014). Despite the failure of Bill C-33 for First Nations in Canada, the Mi’kmaq in Nova Scotia continue to strengthen its self-governance in education through Mi’kmaw Kina’matnewey. In fact, MK was exempt from the education bill altogether. (CBC, 5 models of First Nations control of education in action, 2014)

Ideally, Mi’kmaw Kina’matnewey will only have true self-governance if Mi’kmaq have control of their education from K-PhD. This may happen in 10-15 years or less. In the meantime, Mi’kmaq will continue to build partnerships and explore options with post-secondary institutions that are willing to champion their cause, like the Mount has done in the last four years.

This project has brought forth discussions on successes and shortcomings in post-secondary education over the past 20-30 years. Many of the Mount Advisory members expressed a bit of concern that things are extremely slow to change at universities. Their question is how will the Mount make a difference to improve the quality of education for Aboriginal post-secondary students? The Program Director assures that the Mount is on the right track to get the process and product through respectful means by engaging Aboriginals.

Building Supports for Aboriginal Students in Mount Saint Vincent University

The Mount has taken great strides in the last three years to enhance its services, which shows in positive outcomes:

- The Mount formed an Aboriginal Advisory to provide expertise on direction and input to build supports for Aboriginals on campus.
- The Mount hired an Aboriginal Advisor, which it shares with the Nova

Scotia Community College.

- The Aboriginal Student Centre was opened in March 2013 to provide a space specifically for Aboriginal students.
- The Mount is developing ways to keep track of non-sensitive data on Aboriginal students for retention, attrition and graduation rates since 2011.
- Students were given the opportunity to self-identify as Aboriginal on their admission form.
- The Mount increased its self-identified Aboriginal population since 2011 by 200%. In 2011-12, there were 29 self-identified Aboriginal students. In 2012-13, the number jumped by just under 100% to 60. In 2013-14, the number reached a 120 students or an increase of just over 200% since the first year.
- The attrition rate for Aboriginal students is 4% according to the Aboriginal Student Centre.
- The Aboriginal Student Centre conducted its first online survey to help identify post-secondary education needs of its Aboriginal population. This was part of the consultation with Mount students. A second survey is scheduled for 2014 as a follow up to this project.
- The Aboriginal Student Centre also initiated an assessment of internal supports and services on Campus. The assessment also included Faculty to get a snapshot of what courses and programs include Aboriginal content, research and faculty.
- The Aboriginal Student Centre (ASC) has been the focal point of Aboriginal student activity. It has hosted weekend and summer camps for high school students, held workshops on career orientation, budgeting, academic supports and orientations, discussion circles, guest speakers, Elder visits, and numerous student interest based activities for culture and language. The ASC hosted four students for summer employment to help provide supports for student who gained capacity development from this Project. The Centre was the centre of logistics for this Consultation Project.
- The next step is for the Mount to follow up with this data to explore ways to combine the expressed interests of faculty and researchers with recommendations made in this project.

Mount Saint Vincent University must take advantage of its momentum to continue its process to make education more meaningful for Aboriginals. There are numerous opportunities to explore. The recommendations from the participants outlined in this report are extremely reasonable and achievable with the right spirit and determination by all participants. Indeed, funding is and always will be the most identified challenge when it comes to education. Nevertheless, the

Mount is aware of this and is looking at creative and dynamic ways to look at the funding issues. For example, the Mount partnered with Nova Scotia Community College to cost-share the position of the Aboriginal Advisor. There are administrative wrinkles which need to be ironed out, but both institutions are open to exploring options for resource sharing. This will be a model for many institutions to develop further.

The report identifies recommendations for community leadership, policy makers, post-secondary institutions and Mount Saint Vincent University. The objectives and outcomes from this project have been achieved in identifying needs for post-secondary education. Nevertheless, its long term outcomes are yet to be determined. The recommendations need to be explored to plan strategies for action.

Recommendations can be categorized in the following areas for the Mount and Post-secondary institutions:

- Recruitment: orientation, career planning, bridging, outreach and building relations with Aboriginal communities
- Retention: ongoing academic and non-academic supports, data tracking, scholarships/bursaries
- Course interests: Mi'kmaw language and Aboriginal studies
- Cultural competence for faculty and institution frameworks (mission and vision, logistics, academia, etc)
- Partnership building for Aboriginal program development and course studies amongst post-secondary institutions

Mount Saint Vincent University has the will to address the recommendations outlined in this report. Of course, there are important considerations to address, especially with sustainability of programs through financial commitments. The following stages will address the recommendations into plans of action, always based on existing resources. The Program Director recommends that the Mount Aboriginal Advisory identify priorities based on the recommendation from this report as part of the next steps process. It would also be of great value for the process to continue communication with Mount's partners to continue with a spirit of collaboration with the Aboriginal community.

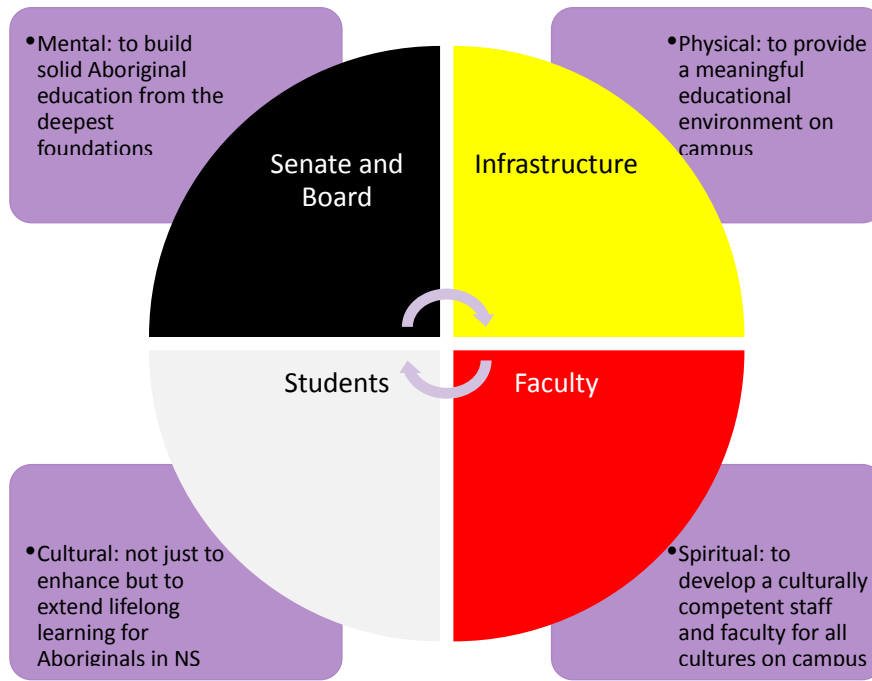
This report provides a clearer understanding of what Mi'kmaw identify as priorities and needs for post-secondary education. It also captures the voice of all those participants from Mi'kmaq communities, urban centres and most importantly from post-secondary students who are living their post-secondary education experience.

The best approach for the Mount is to continue working with the Aboriginal Advisory to share a sense of vision and accountability for the development of equitable and competent supports for Aboriginals on campus.

The Advisories have played an important role in the development and guidance of this project. They can continue to work in coordination to help indigenize and balance all of Mount's foundations in a Medicine Wheel concept: Senate and Board (Mental), Infrastructure (Physical),

Faculty & Staff (Spiritual) and Students (Cultural). See below:

Figure 17 MSVU Building Supports in a Medicine Wheel Concept (why does this repeat? Not sure I am seeing the whole picture – figure missing?)



“Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education” is a great start for the Mount to lead by example to enhance its supports for Aboriginals. The Mount must continue its positive path by implementing action plans and strategies to enhance supports. Here is an opportunity for the Mount to assume leadership in developing Aboriginal curriculum and content for education in Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada. It can capitalize on its numerous existing partnerships to follow up on the recommendations from the Aboriginal and Mi’kmaq community.

The next step is for the Internal Advisory to polish its lens to look from within its most inner foundations, the “Mental” and the “Spiritual” cores, to begin assessing its programs to make meaningful connections with Aboriginals on campus. By doing so, it would also address the “cultural” and “physical” as well as directly providing benefits for all diversity on campus.

Universities and colleges in Nova Scotia need to combine their efforts and resources to make post-secondary education more accessible and meaningful for Mi’kmaq students. The combined population of Mi’kmaq students is slowly increasing in universities and colleges. They are beginning to track data with respect to Aboriginals in general. It is only a matter of time before the fastest growing demographic in Canada will also be the fastest growing student population in universities in the next 10-15 years. The need to pave the way for Aboriginal students is now when trials and tribulations can be addressed in enhancing supports for Aboriginals. Mount Saint Vincent University can explore this vision and align its mission to embrace Aboriginal post-secondary education in Nova Scotia.

Terms and Acronyms

ED	Education Directors
NEO	Native Employment Officer
EDO	Economic Development Officer
METS	Mi'kmaq Employment & Training Secretariat http://www.mets.ca/
AANDC	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
CMM	Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq http://www.cmmns.com/
APC	Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat http://www.apcfn.ca/en/
NCNS	Native Council of Nova Scotia http://ncns.ca/
NSNWA	Nova Scotia Native Women's Association
MK	Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey http://kinu.ca/
NADACA	Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling Association of Nova Scotia http://nadaca.ca/
GED	General Education Degree
ALP	Adult Learning Program
AC	Agriculture College, now part of Dalhousie University
PSE	Post-secondary education
PSI	Post-secondary institution
L'nu	Mi'kmaw person, singular.
L'nuk	Mi'kmaw people.
NSCC	Nova Scotia Community College
NBCC	New Brunswick Community College
MSVU	Mount Saint Vincent University or the Mount
Dal	Dalhousie University
STFX	Saint Francis Xavier University
UNB	University of New Brunswick
UPEI	University of Prince Edward Island
MUN	Memorial University
CBU	Cape Breton University, also on campus is Unama'ki College of Cape Breton
IPP	Individual Program Plan
ASC	Aboriginal Student Centre at the Mount.
AAU	Association of Atlantic Universities
AUCUSS	Atlantic Association of College and University Student Services
CACUSS	Canadian Association of College and University Student Services http://www.cacuss.ca/
	Friendship Centre - Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre http://www.mymnfc.com/

Terms

Aboriginal(s) – this word is capitalized throughout the report as a sign of respect from the report author.

Mi'kmaki - Mi'kmaw territory which includes the four Atlantic provinces and the Gaspé region

in Quebec

Mi'kmaw/Mi'kmaq – used alternately depending on its use. Mi'kmaq as a stand-alone is a noun: **The Mi'kmaq live in Nova Scotia.** If used as an adjective, then it becomes Mi'kmaw. **The Mi'kmaw culture is vibrant in Nova Scotia.**

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Appendices

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ENGAGING ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES THROUGH EDUCATION PROJECT

Project Statement of Work

Date: March 7, 2013

Mount Saint Vincent University
166 Bedford Highway
Halifax, NS, B3M 2J6

Engaging Aboriginal Communities through Education

Project Details

1.1 Program Description

Mission/Purpose of Mount Saint Vincent University

A leader in flexible education, applied research, and a personalized approach to education, Mount Saint Vincent University is nationally recognized among undergraduate universities in Canada for our success in Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council grants and for having one of the lowest student-to-professor ratios. The Mount is committed to providing the best university experience for all members of our community and to developing thoughtful, engaged citizens who make a positive impact on their world.

Mission

- At Mount Saint Vincent University, we are committed to academic excellence, and our passion is a rich and rewarding university experience.
- We are dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge: scholarship, teaching, and intellectual endeavour of the highest quality, and we promote accessibility through flexible learning opportunities and services.
- We are inspired by our strong tradition of social responsibility and our enduring commitment to the advancement of women.
- Our people are our foundation and our relationships are built on respect and accountability.

Vision

We will be the national leader in creating the best university experience for all members of our community and in developing thoughtful, engaged citizens who make a positive impact on their world.

Values

- Academic Freedom
- Accountability
- Creativity
- Engagement
- Professionalism
- Respect

Problem Being Addressed by the Proposed Project

“Post-secondary education is widely recognized as a powerful equalizer in Canadian society in many aspects of life—from health to economic security to general well-being. Nevertheless, Indigenous peoples in Canada are poorly represented in post-secondary institutions across the country relative to other Canadians. And despite significant efforts to address the problem, the gap is growing. Aboriginal participation in post-secondary education has not kept pace with the growth experienced by the rest of the population.” Don Drummond and Bob Watts, Co-Chairs, Conference on Indigenous Issues in Post-Secondary Education: Building on Best Practices,

School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, June 2011.

Social, cultural, economic and geographic factors combine to create serious obstacles to post-secondary education for Aboriginal Canadians, lowering their participation and attainment rates. It is estimated that nationally, one in five non-Aboriginal Canadians will obtain a post-secondary degree, whereas only one in 33 Aboriginals will do so (National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation). The statistics show little difference in Atlantic Canada. In an age when low educational attainment is linked to weak participation in the workforce, poor health, and an unending cycle of poverty and social disorder, these numbers tell a bleak tale. Canada's Aboriginal peoples can play a key role in our country's future prosperity, but it is incumbent on our educational institutions to help ensure that such an outcome is possible.

A report submitted to the Atlantic university presidents in the fall of 2010 by an Association of Atlantic Universities Working Committee on Aboriginal Issues noted that "a robust and voluminous body of policy studies has been conducted related to Aboriginal issues in post-secondary education in Canada over the past fifteen years, commencing with *'Gathering Strength': The Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (1995). This major national commission has been followed by Aboriginal postsecondary policy studies by the Council of Ministers of Education, the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, the Auditor General of Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, the Assembly of First Nations, the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, and the Canadian Deans of Education as well as by significant numbers of independent researchers. Recurring themes evident in these studies suggest that while Canadian universities are attempting to be more effective at responding to the needs of Aboriginal peoples, they have a long way to go to redress the historical underrepresentation of Aboriginal peoples in post-secondary institutions."

Barriers to Aboriginal post-secondary participation cited again and again in these policy studies include social conditions on reserves (poverty, low educational attainment of parents, high drop-out rates from high school); lack of adequate funding to cover educational expenses; distance of reserves from universities (students in rural areas must leave their family and social networks and incur substantial moving and living costs); and lack of mentors or role models to encourage Aboriginal youth to pursue higher education. Further, studies tell us that those Aboriginal students who surmount such barriers and enroll on our campuses confront additional challenges once they arrive. Among these challenges, these students often feel isolated as they move from a familiar to an unfamiliar society and culture. They fail to see themselves—their language, culture, and history—reflected in the university curriculum. They may lack study skills and tools for academic success. They feel they have no one to speak with who understands their particular background and needs and can provide them with critical support. Many of them did not go straight to university from high school but are older and feel alien among their eighteen-year-old peers.

Community Group Targets

Mount Saint Vincent University has a long history of providing access to education for under-represented populations – initially to women, who at the Mount's founding in 1873 faced

significant barriers to educational participation, and in subsequent years to working adults, low-income students, and those who were first in their family to attend university. We have not, however, directly addressed the educational needs of Aboriginal students, and while we do not collect such data formally, informal feedback suggests that the number of Aboriginal students who enroll at the Mount is quite low. Eighteen months ago, we set out to remedy what we judged to be a gap in our educational outreach.

Our first step was to establish an Aboriginal Advisory Committee, made up of leaders from Aboriginal communities in mainland Nova Scotia as well as the University's President, Vice-President Academic, and Associate Vice-President Student Experience. The Committee met for the first time in the summer of 2011, with a mandate to advise the University on the steps it should take to create change at the Mount—change that would enable the University to attract more Aboriginal students to pursue post-secondary education and that would enhance those students' chance for success. Based on frank and thoughtful input from Committee members, the Mount's senior leadership developed and presented to the Committee an action plan to guide the University in its initiatives over the next three years.

The action plan has two overarching goals: first, to strengthen the Mount's programs and services for our current population of Aboriginal students, which we estimate to number around 20 (we have recently added an option for students to self-identify on their admissions forms so will have more accurate numbers in the future); and second, to consult more broadly with the eight mainland Mi'kmaw First Nations communities as to the post-secondary educational needs of their members which the Mount might help to address. (Our initial focus will be on the mainland communities because of their closer proximity to the Mount and because Cape Breton University has well-established and successful programs serving the five Cape Breton Mi'kmaw communities.)

1.2 Key Program Objectives (what, how, when, and where)

The six objectives listed below have been identified by our Aboriginal Advisory Committee as foundational to our endeavour. The first five of them are targeted for the most part at services for existing (and future) students who enroll at the Mount, while the sixth will guide our efforts at identifying educational programs and delivery modes that are of importance to the Mi'kmaw communities and that the Mount or other universities in the province might be able to offer.

1. Establish a designated Aboriginal Friendship Centre on campus where Aboriginal students can meet to socialize and study. [Year One and on-going]

On campuses across the country, the establishment of a gathering place or friendship centre for Aboriginal students has been identified as critical to giving those students a "safe space" and mutual support as they make the transition to university life. Our Aboriginal Advisory Committee ranks this Centre as a top priority.

2. Hire an Aboriginal Student Advisor for two days a week, with his/her office located in the Friendship Centre. The Advisor will be well-grounded in the educational needs of Aboriginal

students and will be trained to direct students to a broad range of services on our campus – financial aid, study skills, career planning, e.g. The Advisor will also offer guidance to other student services personnel as to additional supports needed by students. [Year One and on-going]

Again, universities across the country have found that the presence of an Advisor who is Aboriginal and has knowledge of Aboriginal culture and history is a key factor in student success, and the need for this position is strongly endorsed by our Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

3. Conduct a campus inventory to identify individuals who are currently engaged with Aboriginal communities through their research and to catalogue existing courses that incorporate Aboriginal content. [Year One]

Curriculum change is a consultative and long-term process on university campuses. We will look for future opportunities to introduce new courses of interest to Aboriginal students (e.g., language, culture, history), but our first step will be to create an inventory of resources already present on campus, upon which we can build in the future.

4. Explore the feasibility for a part-time Bachelor of Education cohort program to be offered on site within specific Aboriginal communities. [Year One]

A member of our Aboriginal Advisory Committee who is Director of Education at Indian Brook First Nation has requested this program on behalf of her community and a tentative plan is under development.

5. As part of the Mount's participation in "Human Resource Capacity Building in Early Childhood Programs and Services for Mi'kmaw Communities in Nova Scotia," set curriculum for a Mi'kmaw language and culture course to be offered within the program. [Year One]

Within the past year our Child and Youth Studies Department has begun working to incorporate Mi'kmaw content into the Child and Youth Studies degree program for delivery to a cohort of Mi'kmaw child service workers.

6. Undertake a Community Educational Needs Assessment within Nova Scotia's eight mainland Mi'kmaw communities. [Year One and Two]

The budget we present below reflects the costs of all the initiatives outlined and the University's contribution to those costs. Support is requested from the Windsor Foundation to assist in particular with the costs of number 6, the Community Educational Needs Assessment, as follows:

The Community Educational Needs Assessment

Both our research and our findings from our Aboriginal Advisory Committee reinforce the fact that, in order to engage more Nova Scotia Aboriginals in post-secondary education, we need to learn more about the particular educational interests and needs of their specific communities. We have learned from our Aboriginal Advisory Committee that this will best be accomplished by having members of our senior staff visit the communities to talk one-to-one with their leadership.

Among the questions we will explore are the following:

- What is the range/scope of the educational needs for the community with regard to academic programming? What programs are desired and what age demographic requires access to these offerings?
- What is the community's preferred format for learning, e.g. course delivery on campus, within the local community, online learning or a blended approach?
- Is there interest in an articulation approach where introductory-level courses will be offered in the community and then the final courses offered on campus or via distance?
- Is there an interest in a cohort approach to learning where a group of students studies together throughout their program?
- Is there local expertise which can contribute to program delivery?
- What kind of programs can be offered collaboratively to a number of Aboriginal communities at the same time?
- What are the opportunities for partner institutions to collaborate in providing programs locally?

We will conduct our assessment with the Mount's existing academic programs (in education, professional studies, and undergraduate arts and sciences) and delivery methods (for example, we have considerable capability to offer on-line courses to students at a distance) in mind. At the same time, we will also gather information that will be useful to our sister institutions in the province. The Association of Atlantic Universities Working Committee on Aboriginal Issues referenced above has called upon the Atlantic Universities to "forge a common direction for all Atlantic Universities related to a blueprint for change in Aboriginal post-secondary education." We recognize that Mount Saint Vincent University will not be able to serve all the programmatic needs identified in our Community Educational Needs Assessment. Therefore, we also plan to share our findings with our colleagues at other Nova Scotia universities and consult with them regarding their capacity to offer programs as well as the possibility of joint program offerings.

In addition to the information we plan to gather about priorities for academic programming and delivery methods, we will also use the consultation with Aboriginal communities to ask further questions related to the experience and success of their members who pursue post-secondary education. The following are of particular interest to this program:

- Should traditional university approaches to academic and counseling support be tailored to accommodate the needs of and increase retention rates for Aboriginal learners?
- Given the marked disparity between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal high-school graduation rates, is there a role for Nova Scotia's universities in assisting communities to prepare high school students for post-secondary studies?
- Is there a need for university bridging/ transition admissions programs for

learners taking non-traditional paths to University?

- Should consideration be given to the implementation of a formal support strategy for online learners?
- Should universities establish tutoring programs specifically for their Aboriginal students?
- Should universities establish peer support groups or "buddy systems" for new students entering university?

1.3 Community Needs Assessment Methodology

We know from our discussions with the Advisory Committee that our needs assessment must be done through face-to-face meetings between senior administrators at the Mount and leaders within each community. The assessment will in fact be a means of establishing relationships between the Mount and those communities and will allow us to demonstrate our respect, willingness to listen, and readiness to engage where desired and appropriate.

Such meetings can be expedited through the assistance of a project director who is Aboriginal and has expertise in Aboriginal post-secondary needs. The project director, John R. Sylliboy, will work on half-time basis for a one-year period to undertake the following responsibilities:

1. Consult internally with Mount personnel to become knowledgeable about our program offerings, delivery methods, and student services, and to identify any gaps in our services.
2. Consult internally with Aboriginal students on our campus to gain their perspective on the Mount's current strengths and weaknesses in serving Aboriginal educational needs.
3. Visit the Chief and Director of Education at each of the 8 mainland Mi'kmaw communities to explain the nature of our project and gather preliminary data in response to our questions.
4. Assist in scheduling visits by senior administrators at the Mount (President, Vice-President Academic, Associate Vice-President Student Experience, Deans) to each of the communities.
5. Accompany Mount administrators on the community visits.
6. Analyze data gathered and prepare a report, with the results to be reviewed by each community and members of the Mount community, including Aboriginal students, before the report is finalized.
7. Organize a half-day workshop for representatives from the Aboriginal communities and Nova Scotia universities to disseminate survey results and discuss action steps in response to the survey's findings.

Sustainability of Initiative

The Mount has made a long-term commitment to enhancing its educational outreach to Aboriginal communities and will include this commitment within its core operating budget. The Aboriginal Student Centre was launched on February 28, 2013, as a permanent space on our

campus. There is an Aboriginal Advisor currently working on a continuing staff position shared with the Nova Scotia Community College. As educational needs are identified within Aboriginal communities, we will promote our existing course offerings that are suited to those needs. Our strengths in distance education and our experience in offering cohort-based education at off-campus sites will allow us to provide courses through those modalities when requested, assuming there is a sufficient enrolment base (and courses offered through distance education may serve the needs of a number of different communities, thus building the necessary enrolments). Through our relationships with the other Nova Scotia universities, we will also connect communities with universities who offer programs not available at the Mount.

1.4 Evaluation

Evaluation under this program will be ongoing and success will be measured as follows:

1. Aboriginal Student Centre

The Centre will be furnished and functional during the coming academic year and we anticipate that it will be frequented regularly by our Aboriginal students. We will survey Aboriginal students at the end of the academic year to assess their satisfaction with the Centre.

2. Aboriginal Student Advisor

An advisor was hired in fall 2012, with services to be shared by the Nova Scotia Community College (two days a week on the Mount's campus and three days a week at NSCC). We will survey Aboriginal students at the end of the academic year to gauge their satisfaction with the advisor. Success will also be reflected in an increase in recruitment and retention of Aboriginal students over the next three years, and we will track those figures through our Registrar's office. Within three years our goal is to, at a minimum, double the number of Aboriginal students enrolled at the Mount.

3. Campus Inventory

Over the next twelve months the Mount will complete a campus community inventory which identifies individuals on campus who are currently engaged in research on Aboriginal issues or Aboriginal community development and who are willing to serve as liaison with various Aboriginal groups, communities and organizations. In addition, the inventory will identify courses taught on our campus which incorporate Aboriginal knowledge and content. Completion of the inventory will be the short-term measure of success, but long term we expect to increase and strengthen research and community development projects related to Aboriginal interests and to add additional courses to our curriculum that incorporate Aboriginal content.

4. Part-time Bachelor of Education Cohort Program

The Mount will complete its feasibility study during academic year 2012-13. Success in the first phase will be measured by the enrolment of a cohort of students in this program and their subsequent completion of the program. Long term, we will seek to offer the program in additional communities where interest is strong. (The provision of additional highly qualified Aboriginal teachers within the school system has been identified as a high priority within Nova Scotia's Aboriginal communities.)

5. Early Childhood Education Program for Mi'kmaw Child Service Workers

We will complete course design for a Mi'kmaw language and culture course within our Child and Youth Studies program within the coming academic year and work to deliver the CYS degree program to a cohort of Mi'kmaw child service workers the following year. Long-term success will be reflected in our delivery of the program and the successful completion of a cohort of Mi'kmaw students.

6. Community Educational Needs Assessment

Success of this program component, both short- and long-term, will be measured by:

- Completion of the needs assessment by the end of 2013.
- Subsequent promotion to each community of educational opportunities available at the Mount that are suited to that community's expressed needs. Such opportunities can include attendance on-site as a Mount student; enrolment as a distance education student; or participation in cohort-based programs offered within the communities where enrolment is sufficient (typically 15 students).
 - Increased enrolment and retention at the Mount of Aboriginal students (a target of, at minimum, doubling, the number enrolled within the next three years).
 - Dissemination to the other Nova Scotia universities of the results of our needs assessment and their engagement in meeting the identified educational needs.

1.5 Community/Target Group Awareness

To promote the program, Mount Saint Vincent University will work in partnership with the following groups and organizations that will also benefit from *Engaging Aboriginal Communities*:

- The 8 mainland Mi'kmaw Communities
- The Mount's Aboriginal Advisory Committee
- The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
- The Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents (CONSUP)

- Nova Scotia Community College
- The Union of Nova Scotia Indians
- Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey
- Native Council of Nova Scotia
- Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre

Appendix B

August 20, 2013

Consultation Questions for Discussion for Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education

Methodology for the consultation is a combination of individual interview and group discussions. Community representatives agreed that these methodologies are the best approach for working with individuals in communities. The following are the base questions, which may require clarification/explanation depending on each individual/group each discussion. They are the following:

1) What are post-secondary educational needs in the community?

- What programs are in high demand?
- Are there specific demographic (age, gender, cultural) post-secondary education needs?
- What areas of careers would this community benefit from?

2) What is the community's preferred format for learning, e.g. course delivery on campus, within the local community, online learning or a blended approach?

- If courses were offered on Mi'kmaw communities, could individuals from neighbouring communities (Aboriginal and Non aboriginal) attend these classes in order to fill the required amount of participants?

3) Is there interest in an articulation approach where introductory-level courses will be offered in the community and then the final number offered on campus or via distance?

- What is the maximum distance people will travel to a post-secondary institution?

4) Is there an interest in a “cohort” approach to learning where a group of students studies together throughout their program?

- What career/study programs would be good for "cohort" learning?
- Would individuals travel to another Mi'kmaw community to participate in a cohort program?

5) Is there local expertise which can contribute to program delivery?

- Are there Masters and PhD graduates in the community that could deliver programs on the community?

6) What kind of programs can be offered collaboratively to a number of Aboriginal communities at the same time?

- What educational needs does this community have which may be similar for other Mi'kmaw communities on mainland Nova Scotia?

7) Has this community/organization partnered with post-secondary education programs on this community or have partnered with other communities for program delivery?

- Which?

For Leadership/Post-Secondary Students

8) What do you perceive are the main education needs in the community in the next 10-15 years?

- What priorities should the community support in education attainment for the community?
- What are the challenges in achieving these?
- What are your recommendations for post-secondary institutions in developing programs/providing services to attract more Aboriginal students in universities and colleges?

Wela'lin,

John R. Sylliboy
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Appendix C

August 30, 2013

Consultation Questions for Discussion for Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education

Methodology for the consultation is a combination of individual interview and group discussions. Community representatives agreed that these methodologies are the best approach for working with individuals in communities. The following are the base questions, which may require clarification/explanation depending on each individual/group each discussion. They are the following:

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Wela'lin,

John R. Sylliboy

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Appendix D

September 5, 2013

Dear Chief and Council,

On behalf of the Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU), I would like to request support and collaboration on the “Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education” project. The project duration is for one year from February 2013 until February 2014. I was contracted as Program Director to work in collaboration with our Mi`kmaw communities.

The MSVU aims to work with 8 Mi'kmaw communities on mainland Nova Scotia to assess the needs for post-secondary education. This project will gain knowledge from each First Nation on educational needs from a community perspective.

The project will also help determine how the Mount can strengthen its programs and services for current and future Aboriginal students on campus. In fact, the university is at the beginning stages of assessing its coursework and support services offered on campus. I am working with Art Stevens, Aboriginal Advisor, for this portion of the project to gain insight from our current Aboriginal population.

I have met withas an initial meeting to introduce the project and seek guidance on next steps. Their recommendation was to seek support by submitting a letter of request through Chief and Council.

Therefore, the MSVU would like to request the following:

- Support for the “Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education” project by giving approval to collaborate with the Mount Saint Vincent University to conduct an assessment of education needs inwith community members, educators and leadership.
- Approval to invite(and potential alternative representative to act as SO AND SO’S proxy) to represent the community on the Advisory Committee. This committee would guide and provide feedback on methodology, protocols, and process. This will be done through ongoing correspondence via email. There will be at least two face to face meetings with the whole project Advisory.

Once First Nation gives its approval with the abovementioned request, MSVU will proceed with the next steps, which is to coordinate with on the selection of participants for the consultation process. The Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch (MEW) and Mount’s Ethics Review have approved the project to work in the communities. The final approval is required by Chief and Council.

The engagement process will follow strict guidelines of mutual collaboration and knowledge sharing between the Mount and each Mi'kmaw community throughout the project’s development.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me with the coordinates below. I am available to give a presentation to Chief and Council to further provide clarification about the “Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education.”

Wela’lin,

John R. Sylliboy
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Appendix E

August 20, 2013

Re: Briefing Note on “Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education” Project

John R. Sylliboy has been contracted as Program Director for the duration of the project from February 2013 until February 2014.

In 2011, the Mount established its Aboriginal Advisory Committee where recommendations for action would work with two overarching goals: first, to strengthen the Mount’s services for its existing Aboriginal students; and second, to consult with eight Mi’kmaw First Nations as to the post-secondary educational needs of their members which the Mount might help to address.

Six objectives were identified by the Advisory to help meet the goals.

1. Establish a designated Aboriginal Friendship Centre on campus where Aboriginal students can meet to socialize and study. **The Aboriginal Student Centre was inaugurated in March 2013.**
2. Hire an Aboriginal Student Advisor for two days a week, with his/her office located in the Friendship Centre. The Advisor will be well-grounded in the educational needs of Aboriginal students and will be trained to direct students to a broad range of services on our campus – financial aid, study skills, and career planning. **Art Stevens was hired in October 2012.**
3. Conduct a campus inventory to identify individuals who are currently engaged with Aboriginal communities through their research and to catalogue existing courses that incorporate Aboriginal content. **John and Art conducted a student survey in April 2013 on current services. The next step is to assess current and potential courses via faculty input during summer/fall 2013.**
4. Explore the feasibility for a part-time Bachelor of Education cohort program to be offered on

site within specific Aboriginal communities. **Indian Brook is hosting the B.Ed. program with 12 students in the first year, which was launched winter 2013.**

5. As part of the Mount's participation in "Human Resource Capacity Building in Early Childhood Programs and Services for Mi'kmaw Communities in Nova Scotia," set curriculum for a Mi'kmaw language and culture course to be offered within the program.

Within the past year our Child and Youth Studies Department has begun working to incorporate Mi'kmaw content into the Child and Youth Studies degree program for delivery to a cohort of Mi'kmaw child service workers.

6. Undertake a Community Educational Needs Assessment within Nova Scotia's eight mainland Mi'kmaw communities. [Year One and Two]

Each Mi'kmaw community agreed to work collaboratively on the project. The Project's Consultation Questions were approved by Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch (MEW) and by the Mount's Ethics Review as quality assurance.

The engagement process will follow strict guidelines of mutual collaboration and knowledge sharing between the Mount and each Mi'kmaw community throughout the project's development.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me with the coordinates below. I am available to give a presentation to Chief and Council to further provide clarification about the "Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education."

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Appendix F

Consultation Consent Form

Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education

You are invited to participate on a consultation project for Mount Saint Vincent University in coordination with eight (8) Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Nations because you are a resident on this Mi'kmaw community as one of the following: community leadership, educator, youth (not under 14), parent, or an Elder.

Purpose

The purpose of this consultation project is for the Mount in coordination with the Mi'kmaw communities on mainland Nova Scotia to assess their post-secondary education needs. This project aims to complete this consultation to include the perspectives from each participant Mi'kmaw Nation and from Off Reserve populations.

Procedure

The procedure involves taking part in a group discussion or Sharing Circle that will take approximately 90 minutes. Your responses will be confidential and we do not collect identifying information such as your name, email, or address.

The discussion questions are open ended questions, which is to lead into conversation and sharing of ideas. If questions are unclear, please feel free to ask for clarification at any point during the discussion.

Risks and Benefits

You will be asked to take part in the answering of questions in response to determining the educational needs for this community. There are no personal questions to help mitigate the level of personal data associated with the overall discussion. No identifiable information will be included in the final report.

There are no direct monetary benefits for the consultation. The risk level of this project consultation is considered to be minimal.

The consultation will help determine how the Mount can strengthen its services for current and future Aboriginal students on campus. The overall objective is to enhance educational opportunities for Aboriginals in Nova Scotia.

Confidentiality

We will do our best to keep your information confidential. All data is stored under lock and key at the Mount. To help protect your confidentiality, the final report will not contain information that will personally identify you. The report from this consultation project will be used for knowledge sharing with Aboriginal communities and post-secondary institutions.

This consultation project has been reviewed according to Mount Saint Vincent University and Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch for ethics procedures involving human subjects.

Voluntary Nature of the Consultation

Your participation on this consultation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate. If you decide to participate in this discussion or personal interview, you may withdraw at any time. If you decide not to participate in this consultation or if you withdraw from participating at any time, you will not be penalized.

Contact

This consultation project is being conducted by Program Director, John R. Sylliboy from the Millbrook Mi`kmaw Community and a Mount faculty member of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me with the coordinates below.

Wela'lin,

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