**Native Studies Education**

**Part I - Native History**   
**Indian Act:**  first passed in 1876 by Canada. It was, and is, a separate set of laws for Indigenous peoples covering virtually all aspects of daily life (apartheid). It was through the Indian Act that reservations, band councils, and status were imposed.  
  
**Reserve system**:

- reserves stripped natives of their land, culture, language and identity (cultural genocide)

- schools built on the reserves with the goal of educating natives in the European way of   
 life.

- competition between Catholic and Anglican missionaries imposing European

worship and missionaries often ran the schools.

- goal of assimilation of native children meant that traditional ways of life would cease   
 and would no longer be passed on to future generations.

**Residential school era:**    
- abuse, loss of language, culture and identity (late 1890s-1970s)

- federal day schools (following residential school era) were established so that native   
 children could attend school on their reserve. Problem – no native education content   
 (language, literature, culture).

**1950s** - government push to integrate native students into provincial schools with the   
 goal of integrating Indians into Canadian society.

**1969** - Canada revealed a plan for abolishing the Indian Act & phasing out reserves, known as

the 'White Paper''. This act ignited protests by Natives across the country as it meant  
 dispossession of their last remaining land base: the reserves.

**1970s** - Federal government transferring reserve schools to local control (end of   
 residential school era). Bands are required to sign funding agreements; they must   
 follow provincial education standards and guidelines = lack of native content in   
 education.

**1980s** - almost half of native students attending the provincial school system, no Aboriginal  
 content in education and very low student success rates at high school and

post-secondary levels.

**Current Affairs**1. In the mid-1990s the Ministry of Education began to examine the lack of native content in   
 education.

2. The Native Studies MOE curriculum document is out of date (1999).  
3. Native Studies courses are only offered when there is enough enrolment (numbers).  
4. Native Studies courses are offered where Aboriginals live and go to school.  
5. There is no mandatory high school Native History course.  
6. Some Post-secondary institutions have done a good job of offering native courses –   
 Laurentian University and Trent University - degree programs in Native studies.  
7. Laurentian University Concurrent B. Ed program (2003) integrates native education   
 throughout the program, the history of First Nations education is mandatory.

8 . Collaborative projects: Curriculum partnership between Kenjgewin Teg Educational   
 Institute, the Rainbow District School Board and the Ojibway Cultural Foundation.   
 http://www.culture.gov.on.ca/video/premiers\_award\_08\_video\_ojibwe.htm  
9. Use of Geographic Information Systems for land claim settlement and for developing healthy   
 economies on reserves.   
 http://www.nrcan-rncan.gc.ca/com/audpub/aboaut-eng.php

**Other:**   
1. **Apology** from Prime Minister Harper, June 11, 2008  
 http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2008/06/11/aboriginal-apology.html  
2. **Residential lawsuit settlement** Saskatchewan - REGINA 2006 -- largest class-action   
 settlement in Canadian history -- brokered on behalf of thousands of former aboriginal   
 residential school students -- has been approved by the courts (Tony Merchant, Regina   
 lawyer whose firm represents more than 10,000 claimants).

**Part II**

**Report:** **Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework** (2007): *Delivering Quality Education to Aboriginal Students in Ontario’s Provincially Funded Schools*.

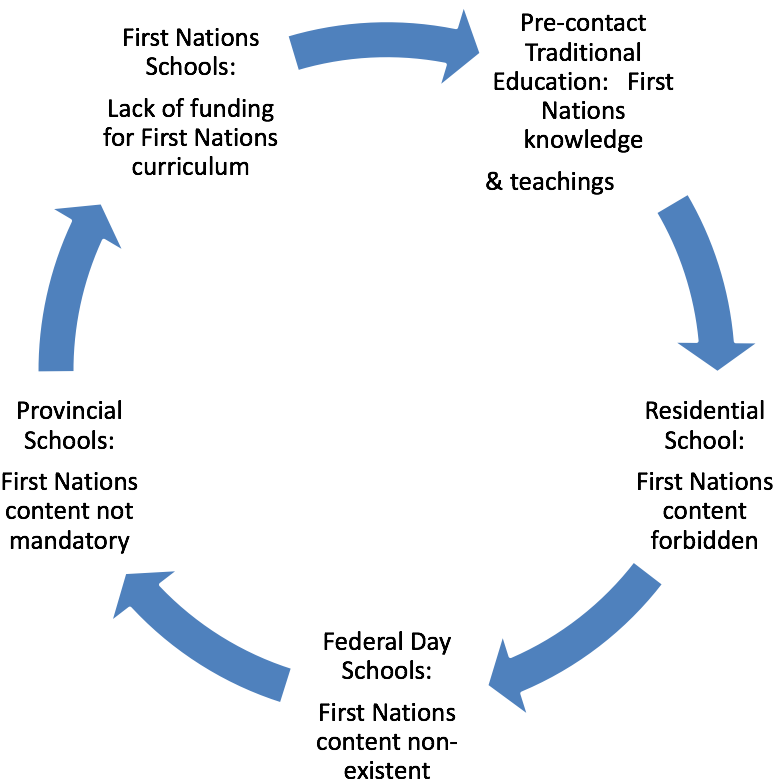
**Issues affecting Aboriginal achievement**:   
1. Lack of awareness – teachers are not aware of the particular learning styles of Aboriginal   
 students.  
2. Lack of understanding among schools and school boards about Aboriginal culture, history and   
 perspectives.  
3. Lack of available native curriculum documents, books and materials produced by Native   
 people.  
4. Intergenerational mistrust of the education system due to the residential school system.  
5. Poor sense of identity due to marginalization in the school system and society.  
6. Alcohol, drug and physical abuse on reserves.  
7. Lack of educated Native role models.  
8. Lack of qualified native teachers due to low post-secondary graduation rates.  
9. Neglect or abuse of ‘status’.

**Framework Principles:**

1. Excellence and Accountability

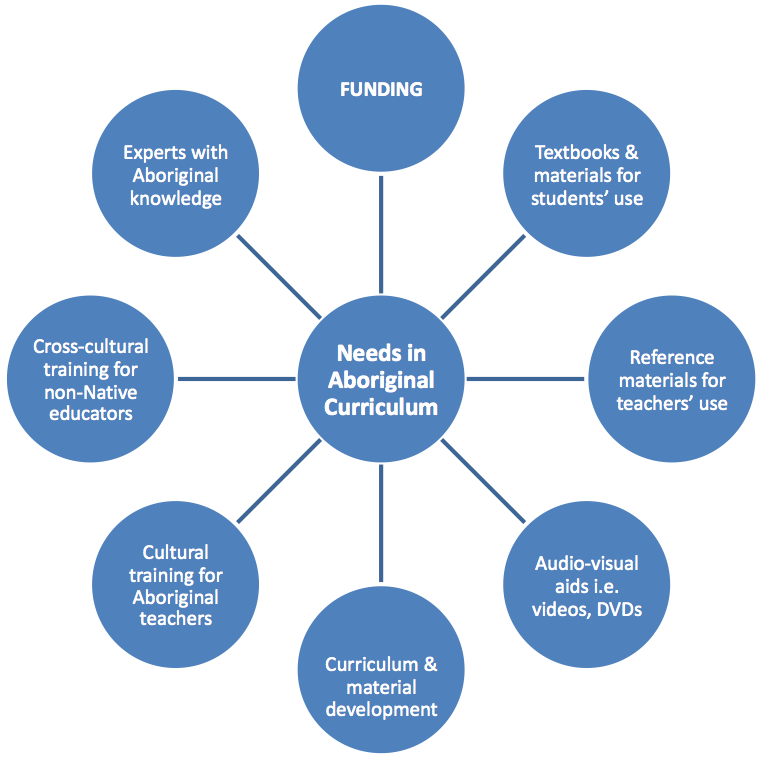
2. Equity and Respect for Diversity  
3. Inclusiveness, Cooperation and Shared Responsibility  
4. Respect for Constitutional and Treaty Rights

**Historical Context:**



Dr. Emily J. Faries (2004). *Research Paper on Aboriginal Curriculum in Ontario,*pg 4.

**First Nations needs:**



Dr. Emily J. Faries (2004). *Research Paper on Aboriginal Curriculum in Ontario,*pg 9.

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