

## **Aboriginal Education Advisory Councils**

Jurisdiction: Manitoba

Contact: Helen Robinson-Settee

Level: K-12, Post-secondary

Theme: Community Consultation

### Description of Practice:

The Aboriginal Education Directorate (AED) is a shared service between Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth and Manitoba Advanced Education and Literacy. The AED has a mandate to ensure that Manitoba's education and training systems are responsive to the needs of Aboriginal peoples. Upon an external review of the Aboriginal Education Directorate, it was suggested that the AED develop an Advisory Council to ensure that Aboriginal learning needs are met and that the AED has a direct link to community members and front line workers. The report suggested that the Council consist of Aboriginal people who work within education and who can provide advice, guidance and recommendations on matters as they relate to Aboriginal people within the K-12 education system and within post-secondary education, training and employment. Upon receiving this recommendation, the AED developed two Aboriginal Advisory Councils. In April 2004, the Aboriginal Education Directorate Advisory Council (AEDAC) was established and, in March 2006, the Advanced Education Training and Literacy Aboriginal Advisory Council (AETLAAC) was formed. The AEDAC focuses on the K -12 education, whereas the AETLAAC focuses on post-secondary education, training and employment areas.

### Background:

The structuring of the AEDAC and AETLAAC advisory councils began with inter-departmental meetings to determine what sector group representation was needed on an advisory council. These first meetings consisted of developing a draft sector group membership list and a draft Terms of Reference. Subsequent meetings were committed to identifying potential members.

### Development:

Council members are appointed by the Departmental Deputy Minister. Each council meets 4 times per year and reports annually to the Departmental Deputy Minister through the Director of the Aboriginal Education Directorate.

### Evidence:

Each council's annual report appraises the Deputy Ministers of all activities carried out by the said Council for the previous year's activities. The annual report is presented to the Deputy Minister at an annual meeting of the Council. Each Deputy Minister has an active relationship with each of the Advisory Councils and the Councils' advice and comments are given credence and are acted upon in proactive ways. Having a close link to the Deputy Minister helps to strengthen the relationship among department and council members. It also ensures that the AED has support in initiatives that directly contribute to the educational needs of community members. Additionally, networking among council members allows the various sectors to identify existing gaps. Membership groups are able to identify potential overlap of services and create partnerships that can build upon existing programs and services. This process is beneficial to the various sector groups and to the departments.

Adaptability:

When identifying potential members, the AED was cognizant in ensuring that the council was representative of Aboriginal peoples across Manitoba. The structure of the councils includes representatives from northern, southern, rural and urban areas. Diversity is also celebrated by ensuring that there is equal representation of gender, youth, Métis, First Nations, Inuit and non-status groups included in the council membership.

Further information:

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