

Improving Outcomes for Indigenous Students in Ontario

September 29, 2021

[Education](#)

Ontario is investing \$23.96 million in targeted supports for First Nation, Métis and Inuit students, in addition to the existing funding for school boards in the 2021-22 school year to improve overall outcomes and increase graduation rates among students from these communities.

The investments outlined below, which come from Priorities and Partnerships Funding for 2021-22 unless otherwise noted, will support Indigenous partners, school boards and other education stakeholders in producing high-impact supports that provide equitable, culturally appropriate, positive and safe learning environments for Indigenous students while strengthening Ontario's education system and improving well-being for First Nation, Métis and Inuit learners.

Promoting Equity and Well-Being

- The Ontario government is increasing funding to \$2.55 million for up to 15 Alternative Secondary School Sites with urban Friendship Centres to support Indigenous students completing their Ontario Secondary School Diploma and to prepare students for workplace readiness, skills development and training, and/or for transitions to provincially funded secondary schools or post-secondary education institutions.
- The Ministry of Education recently approved sustainable, multi-year funding agreements for an investment of \$3.19 million in First Nation education. The investment will strengthen existing partnerships with the Chiefs of Ontario and First Nation Provincial Territorial Organizations and provide stable funding for the length of the agreement, 2021-2024. The new investment will support reconciliation and student success with the goal of promoting higher graduation rates and transitions into post-secondary and employment opportunities for First Nation students.
- \$850,000 for the Métis Nation of Ontario that goes towards collaborating with school board administrators and educators in the learning of Métis knowledge and the integration of this knowledge into Indigenous education programs and initiatives, as well as multi-year funding for three years starting in 2020-21 for a total of \$406,000 for the River Program, an Alternative Secondary School Program that provides academic and cultural supports to Métis students.

Centring Indigenous Knowledge

- \$300,000 towards supporting Tungasuvvingat Inuit's capacity to support Inuit communities and ensure that the Inuit perspective is included in Indigenous education programs and initiatives.
- \$1 million towards collaborating with the Métis Nation of Ontario to support school board administrators and educators in the learning of Métis knowledge and the integration of this knowledge into Indigenous education programs and initiatives.
- \$2.25 million invested in community- and school-based language revitalization programs aimed at supporting Indigenous-languages learning and increasing the number of Indigenous-languages teachers at provincially funded schools, including supporting the community-led "Anishinaabemodaa" – "Let's speak Ojibwe" Initiative.

Building Trusting Relationships

- \$175,000 in federal funding towards supporting Grand Erie District School Board in co-developing an engagement plan with the Six Nations of the Grand River First Nation and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to support Indigenous students and the various nations represented in the urban community through system-wide cultural competency training, dedicated Indigenous resources in English and French in school libraries, and Indigenous-language resources. This funding would also establish a task force to support the board's senior leadership in understanding inclusion and equity from an Indigenous lens to enhance Indigenous students' experience in the education system.

Culturally Appropriate Student Support

- Ontario is providing \$3.923 million in project-based funding to the Indigenous Graduation Coach Program, which will enter its third year, to assist school boards for the recruitment of Indigenous Graduation Coaches at targeted secondary

schools to support Indigenous student achievement and well-being.

- In addition, the province is investing \$500,000 each for 2020-21 and 2021-22 in mental health and addictions funds to expand the Indigenous Graduation Coach program over the summer of 2021 to support students transitioning from remote First Nation communities in Grade 8 to provincially funded schools in Grade 9.
- The ministry is continuing to invest \$350,000 towards the Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneurship Program, administered by the Martin Family Initiative, which gives First Nation, Métis and Inuit students in Grades 11 and 12 an opportunity to earn two senior Business Studies credits while also experiencing Indigenous content, hands-on activities, guest speakers and business mentors, and funding opportunities. Through this program, participating students from 12 schools across 10 school boards in Ontario develop entrepreneurial skills and learn how to create and establish their own small businesses.

Building System Capacity

- Ontario is investing \$162,000 from mental health and addictions funds in Trauma Informed Workshops delivered by the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres to provide education system leaders, including Indigenous Education Leads, tools to implement trauma-informed practices to better support Indigenous students in the public education system and their families.
- The province is providing \$4 million in dedicated and sustainable funding to Nishnawbe Aski Nation communities to support partner-led activities addressing First Nation student safety and transitions between First Nation-operated schools and provincially funded schools, and respond to recommendations from the Seven First Nation Youth Inquest.
- The ministry is making available \$690,000 in application-based funding to support school boards to subsidize Guidance and Career Education Additional Qualification courses for eligible teachers who are registered with the Ontario College of Teachers and self-identify as Black, Indigenous or racialized to support them to become guidance teacher-counsellors.

Additional Resources

- [Ontario To Strengthen Mandatory Indigenous Learning in School Curriculum](#)

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