

ISSUE IN FOCUS



Celebrating 100 Years

SASKATCHEWAN
CHAMBER of COMMERCE

Indigenous Education Critical to Individual Communities and Provincial Economic Sustainability

Background:

Indigenous people graduate high school at approximately half the rate of non-Indigenous people. The number of Indigenous students at main post-secondary institutions is growing, however this growth is not properly aligned with the overall population growth statistics.

Issue:

This issue results in a personal loss of income and the ability to care for oneself and family to a level enjoyed by most residents. It means businesses do not have access to work-ready people because they may lack the education and skills required for the jobs that are available. The provincial and federal governments pay the costs of health care, policing and incarceration and do not gain tax revenues from under-employed persons to the same extent as happens with fully employed people. There is a discrepancy between the levels of funding that non-reserve (provincially funded) schools receive versus on-reserve (federally funded) schools.

Recommendations:

1. That the Government of Saskatchewan fulfill its commitment in the Saskatchewan Plan for Growth to reduce the disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous graduation rates by 50% while ensuring that the quality of education remains high.
2. That the Government of Saskatchewan consider all opportunities to assist First Nations schools in terms of support services and consider creating a new arrangement between the First Nations and federal government to better align

the collective resources with a shared focus on enhanced student outcomes.

3. That the Government of Saskatchewan and Government of Canada launch an immediate joint review of all post-secondary training programs to evaluate their effectiveness in creating job-ready workers, that their students are able to work and that the value for money meets a higher standard.
4. That the Government of Canada provide adequate and ongoing financial resources in future federal budgets to eliminate the funding gap between on-reserve and off-reserve schools.

History:

Adopted Policy Resolution 2013

Adopted Policy Resolution 2016