

Education

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education |

Overview

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First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives and experiences must inform current and future Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum.



Alberta's Commitment

In Alberta, it is mandatory that current and future Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum includes student learning outcomes specific to First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives and experiences, as well as content on the significance of residential schools and treaties.

Alberta's commitment to mandatory First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives and experiences in curriculum was reaffirmed on March 27, 2014, at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) event in Edmonton.

"In the spirit of reconciliation, the Government of Alberta commits that all Alberta students will learn about the history and legacy of residential schools, along with the history of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples of Canada."

Collaboration

Alberta Education is working with First Nations, Métis and Inuit stakeholders to design a framework to support the development of future programs of study, learning and teaching resources and assessments.

To develop curriculum, the ministry continues to collaborate with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Elders, knowledge keepers, teachers and representatives from education stakeholder organizations.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Programs of Study

Aboriginal Studies 10–20–30

Aboriginal Studies 10–20–30 enhances understanding of the diverse Aboriginal cultures within Alberta, Canada and the world.

The goal of Aboriginal Studies is to shift thinking, understanding and knowledge of Aboriginal people, the issues and challenges they face, and the contributions they have made to society.

Students will examine how Aboriginal peoples are striving toward maintaining and promoting cultures and identities that reflect values based on respect for the laws of nature and a continual pursuit of balance among individuals, the family unit, the larger community and global community context.

The term "Aboriginal" refers to First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

Blackfoot & Cree Language and Culture Provincial Programs

Blackfoot and Cree Language and Culture provincial programs are available as options for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. School authorities may also use the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Language and Culture twelve-year (K-12) [program template](#) to develop a language and culture course to meet local needs.

In Alberta, and across Canada, the operation of residential schools resulted in the devastation of First Nations, Métis and Inuit languages and cultures. One path towards reconciliation is to ensure opportunities are available to practice and revitalize languages and cultural traditions and customs.

Blackfoot Language and Culture Programming

Blackfoot is one of the two most commonly spoken Aboriginal languages in Alberta. Within this language is a unique worldview. Blackfoot language and culture is about connections and relationships, tied to the belief that everything is interconnected. The inclusion of Blackfoot in curriculum helps Blackfoot-speaking First Nations communities preserve and revitalize their language. It also helps students become better aware of the Blackfoot worldview.

Cree Language and Culture Programming

The wisdom of Elders is central to language and culture learning according to **Cree** perspective. Elders are the "keepers of knowledge" and it is their guidance that Cree people seek as they strive for balance in all relationships. Learning Cree provides all students with insights into a worldview of spiritual and natural dimensions. The learning of the Cree language can also enhance one's self-esteem by strengthening cultural identity.

Additional Teacher Resources

Alberta Education provides resources and supports to help educators weave First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives and experiences into curriculum. Resources available include:

[Walking Together](#)

A professional development resource providing teachers learning experiences that deepen their understanding of the historical and contemporary issues impacting First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

[Guiding Voices](#)

A curriculum development tool for developers and evaluators to ensure that First Nation, Métis and Inuit content and perspectives are woven into resources in authentic and respectful ways. Programs of Study such as Aboriginal Studies 10-20-30 and First Nations Language and Culture programs can provide educators with additional supports and ideas for weaving perspectives and experiences into their lessons.

[Our Way Is a Valid Way](#)

A professional development tool to help educators deepen their understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives, histories, cultures, traditional practices, protocols, and languages.

[Our Words, Our Ways](#)

This resource will help classroom teachers and staff better serve the needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

[Sample Lesson Plans](#)

These sample lesson plans support Education for Reconciliation through the inclusion of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives; treaty education; and residential schools' experiences, with learning outcomes identified in the current Alberta programs of study.

Each sample lesson plan includes content(s) or context(s) related to one or more of the following aspects of Education for Reconciliation:

- diverse perspectives and ways of knowing of First Nations, Métis, or Inuit, including values, traditions, kinship, language, and ways of being;
- understandings of the spirit and intent of treaties; or
- residential schools' experiences and resiliency.

Professional Learning

Alberta Education is committed to ensuring teachers are supported through professional learning opportunities and teaching resources that support the mandatory inclusion of First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives and experiences in current and future curriculum in Alberta.

Teachers can design learning experiences that shift thinking, understanding and knowledge for all students by weaving First Nations, Métis perspectives throughout curriculum. This provides all students with opportunities to increase inter-cultural understanding and be a catalyst for social change.

Joint Commitment to Action

On June 22, 2016, representatives from Alberta Education, The Alberta Teachers' Association, The Alberta Association of Deans of Education, The Alberta School Boards Association, The Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia, The College of Alberta School Superintendents and The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation signed a Joint Commitment to Action which will ensure all K-12 teachers receive additional training related to First Nations, Métis and Inuit history and culture within the next two to three years.

The Joint Commitment to Action is a positive step forward in honouring Government's commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. As all Albertans have a role to play in reconciliation, this agreement is one pathway to addressing this need.

More information

Links to sites with more information on language and culture.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission	Truth and Reconciliation Commission website
United Nations Forum on Indigenous Issues	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues website
Walking Together	Interactive Walking Together professional development website
Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia	Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia website
Northern Alberta Aboriginal Learning Communities Project	Northern Alberta Aboriginal Learning Communities Project website.

Categories

Curriculum
Aboriginal

Related Information

Aboriginal Studies 10-20-30
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Blackfoot Language & Culture
 Blackfoot Language & Culture Program of Studies

Cree Language & Culture
 Cree Language & Culture Program of Studies