Supporting Indigenous Learners in Upper Secondary Education: Background and Reflections from Peer Learning Discussion

The greater choice and diversity of upper secondary education creates great potential to respond to the needs of Indigenous learners. At the same time, the high stakes associated with this level of education make it critical to take steps to promote learners' success. As a group which has historically been marginalised in educational settings around the world, it is essential that Indigenous students receive a supportive environment and the resources to succeed at this level.

In contrast with earlier levels of education, upper secondary education is the moment when the content and organisation of learning starts to differ significantly across the student cohort. Programmes at this level offer students more varied, specialised, and in-depth instruction as well as a higher degree of choice in terms of orientations students might study, programmes they enter, and courses they take. These options respond to students' interests, goals, and levels of prior preparation. The variety they provide supports student progress and completion by delivering education students perceive as relevant and engaging (Stronati, 2023[1]). However, as variety in programme offerings increases, it also solidifies social inequalities that already exist. Across all countries, students' socio-economic backgrounds are associated with their learning outcomes, such that students from more resourced backgrounds have higher learning outcomes and different experiences of pathways.

This policy brief provides reflection and background on the topic of supporting Indigenous learners in upper secondary education from a Peer Learning Discussion hosted by the OECD's Above and Beyond: Transitions in Upper Secondary Education project, which analyses transitions into, through and out of upper secondary education. In December 2021, the project organised an informal discussion with participants from New Zealand and two provinces in Canada (Alberta and Manitoba). The discussion focused on the different systems' experiences of supporting Indigenous learners in upper secondary education, under the lens of parallel histories of colonisation as well as modern efforts to support Indigenous peoples. This policy brief presents a summary of insights shared during this discussion, as well as background on the issues presented by participants. It is not intended as a comprehensive perspective or conclusive research on this topic.

OECD))
BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

Table of contents

FIGURE

TABLES

BOXES

Context

In contrast with earlier levels of education, upper secondary education is the moment when the content and organisation of learning starts to differ significantly across the student cohort. Programmes at this level offer students more varied, specialised, and in-depth instruction, as well as a higher degree of choice in terms of which orientations students might study, the types of programmes they enter, and the courses they take. These options respond to students' interests, goals, and levels of prior preparation, and providing a variety of offerings supports student progress and completion by delivering education students perceive as relevant and engaging (Stronati, 2023[1]).

However, as variety in programme offerings increases, it can solidify social inequalities that already exist. Across all countries, students' socio-economic backgrounds are associated with their learning outcomes, such that students from more resourced backgrounds have higher learning outcomes and different experiences of pathways. In this context, historically marginalised communities risk being oriented – both explicitly and implicitly – to pathways and options that limit opportunities to achieve their potential and constraint their future options into post-secondary education and work. In December 2021, representatives from Alberta and Manitoba (Canada) and New Zealand came together to discuss their journeys towards developing upper secondary systems that are more responsive and supportive for Indigenous learners (Box 1).

This section provides a brief, and therefore necessarily incomplete, overview of the context of Indigenous learners in upper secondary education relevant to understanding the Peer Learning Discussion. As Indigenous learners are not a single entity or monolithic group either within individual countries or internationally, this by no means gives a complete perspective on the context of the Indigenous learners in all upper secondary systems.

Box 1. Informal peer learning discussion on the journey towards supporting Indigenous students in upper secondary

A key activity of the Above and Beyond project is hosting Peer Learning Discussions, which are moderated conversations between small groups of countries on issues that they identify as relevant and urgent.

On 8 December 2021, participants from Alberta and Manitoba (Canada) and New Zealand participated in an informal Peer Learning Discussion to share experiences of their journeys towards supporting Indigenous students in upper secondary education. Also present were listeners from Hawaii (United States), Lithuania, Norway, and South Africa.

Two central questions guided the discussion:

1. What can countries learn from others in the areas of increasing the completion rates of Indigenous students in upper secondary education?

2. What support can be provided to those who do complete upper secondary education to help them achieve at higher levels?

Understanding the scope of a limited and defined discussion

The Peer Learning Discussion aimed to help participants share and understand the development of a few selected major national and regional strategies across the different systems, including the historical

---

context in which they were developed. It is important to note that it was not intended to be a comprehensive overview of policy strategies and approaches pertaining to Indigenous students across the participating systems.

The nature of the Peer Learning Discussion, with participants from different policy areas, naturally meant that the discussion could only provide a limited and partial perspective on Indigenous learners. In particular, this means that the discussion provided less visibility into:

- Regional and local policies which are not formally documented by government institutions.
- Strategies conceptualised and carried out by Indigenous-led organisations and initiatives.
- "Success stories" or formal studies of effectiveness.

The last point was the case for many reasons, including the participants' desire to focus on honestly sharing dilemmas and shortcomings of national education policy towards Indigenous learners, in order to address historical wrongs perpetuated by governments in the name of education. In some cases, participants noted the limitations of the discussion's scope in staying focused at the national level, as in both Canada and New Zealand, Indigenous communities themselves, provincial, regional, or local governments, and representative groups working in conjunction with Indigenous communities, are recognised to be the driver and main authority on policies related to their own community.

Indigenous learners across OECD countries

International estimates of Indigenous peoples

The realities described here affect Indigenous learners worldwide. However, Indigenous peoples differ across countries, as do the means by which each country understands its Indigenous groups. In many countries, the exact scale and numbers of the populations are not precisely known. As previous OECD work has done, this work will utilise the United Nations definition of Indigenous peoples. The United Nations High Commission on Human Rights emphasises that there is no singularly authoritative understanding of what constitutes Indigenous peoples, though different bodies may elect to use various working understandings. This is intentional, as self-identification and self-definition is one of the human rights of Indigenous peoples themselves (Office of High Commissioner on Human Rights, 2023[2]). Box 2 summarises some approaches to how Indigenous peoples are identified around the world, but it does not indicate the presence of a comprehensive or definitive guideline.

Box 2. Considerations for self-definition and Indigenous peoples

According to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, an official definition of "Indigenous" has not been adopted by any UN-system body. However, many bodies take the following understandings into account (United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, n.d.[3]): self-identification as Indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as a member; historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies; strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources; distinct social, economic or political systems; distinct language, culture and beliefs; formation of non-dominant groups of society; and resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities.

Different bodies may create their own understandings balancing subjective and objective criteria for policymaking purposes (recognising the limitations of any such understanding). As an example, Table 1

summarises considerations for evaluating membership from the 1989 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (International Labour Organization, 2019[4]).

Table 1. Explanation of criteria for self-identification

	Subjective criteria	Objective criteria
Indigenous peoples	Self-identification as belonging to an Indigenous people.	Descent from populations who inhabited the country or geographical region at the time of conquest, colonisation, or establishment of present State boundaries. They retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural, and political institutions, irrespective of their legal status.
Tribal peoples	Self-identification as belonging to a tribal people.	Their social and cultural conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community. Their status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions, or by special laws or regulations.

Source: International Labour Organization, (2019[4]). "Implementing the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention No. 169."

Among those OECD member countries which have a specific policy around identifying Indigenous peoples are (non-comprehensively) Australia, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Colombia, Finland, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, and the United States. These countries often collect more data and make more information available on Indigenous peoples. The majority of these countries define Indigenous peoples based on some combination of factors particular to Indigenous peoples: ancestral linkages such as parents and grandparents, self-identification, whether or when an Indigenous language was spoken in the home, and membership in a recognised Indigenous community (OECD, 2019[5]). It is important to recognise that this approach may not always capture the entirety of Indigenous populations. Some individuals could potentially not be part of any Indigenous kinship network, for a variety of reasons. Likewise, definitions related to whether an Indigenous language is spoken in the home can be exclusionary, as there are a variety of historical and social reasons why Indigenous peoples may have been distanced from their ancestral languages.

Different approaches to defining Indigenous populations have different implications for public policy. They can result in changes in how the numbers of Indigenous populations are estimated. For instance, national, province, state, or regional policies sometimes conflict on matters related to self-identification and ancestral linkage, as such data may not be shared across different levels of government and in some countries, may not even be legal to collect as part of the census, where it is considered related to ethnic or racial data. In the Nordic countries, for instance, such data are illegal to collect. While such policies aim to promote inclusion, they may result in the invisibility of some Indigenous communities in the national eye (Per Axelsson, 2020[6]).

Estimations of Indigenous populations internationally

The International Labour Organization estimates that Indigenous populations, worldwide, represent about 6.2% of the global population. Of these, it is estimated that 70.5% live in Asia and the Pacific, 16.3% live in Africa, 11.5% live in Latin America and the Caribbean, 1.6%% live in Northern America, and 0.1% live in Europe and Central Asia (International Labour Organization, 2019[4]). Key partners of the OECD such as Brazil and India also have significant Indigenous populations.

There are several OECD countries—notably Australia, Canada, Mexico, New Zealand, and the United States—where there have been extensive data collection efforts towards building a portrait of these

populations' experiences, due to these countries' larger shares of Indigenous populations. Table 2 shares an estimate of these populations based on the countries' most recent national census data.

Table 2. Indigenous populations in selected OECD countries' national census data

Country	Most recent census data	Number of Indigenous people	Percentage of total national population
Australia	2021	812,728	3.2%
Canada	2021	1 807, 250	4.9%
Mexico	2020	23 229,089	19.4%
New Zealand	2018	1 157,478[1]	24.6%
United States	2020	9 666,058[2]	2.9%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2023[7]). "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples." https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples (Accessed October 2023); Canada Census Profile, (2022[8]). "2021 Census of Population." https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?LANG=E&GENDERlist=1,2,3&STATISTIClist=1&HEADERlist=19&SearchText=Canada&DGUIDlist=2021A000011124 (Accessed October 2023); Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía, (2022[9]). "Self-reported indigenous and Afro-Mexican and indigenous population in households based on the 2020 Population and Housing Census." https://www.inpi.gob.mx/indicadores2020/ (Accessed October 2023); Statistics New Zealand, (2018[10]). "2018 Census ethnic group summaries." https://www.stats.govt.nz/topics/society (Accessed October 2023); United States Census Bureau, (2021[11]). "Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics." https://data.census.gov/table?g=010XX00US&d=DEC+Demographic+Profile (Accessed October 2023).

These data pertain to countries with the largest shares of Indigenous population in the OECD. However, countries where the Indigenous population is not numerous also reflect that as with other forms of inclusive education, improving conditions and outcomes for Indigenous peoples has been found to have a positive impact on the non-Indigenous population as well. The OECD notes that successful schools are able to "mainstream local Indigenous values, history, and cultural approaches as part of everyday school life, rather than add-ons targeted only to Indigenous students" (OECD, 2017[12]).

Demographics and outcomes among Indigenous populations in Canada and New Zealand

Regardless of the differences in education systems worldwide, the experience of the colonisation process has had a double impact on Indigenous peoples: it has undermined Indigenous young people's access to their identity, language and culture, and they generally have not had access to the same quality of education as other children in their country (OECD, 2017[12]). For several reasons, including the impact of racism and educational systems designed poorly to support them, Indigenous learners continue to experience lower benefits from mainstream education than the non-Indigenous population, a fact which is well-documented in countries with significant Indigenous populations (Australian Center for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2021[13]) (Brenna, 2014[14]) (Magga, King and Schielmann, 2004[15]).

Peer Learning Discussion Participant: Canada

Indigenous populations in Canada are young, fast-growing, and heterogenous. They comprise hundreds of communities with more than 70 distinct Indigenous languages (Statistics Canada, 2016[16]). The term

---

[1] The 2018 New Zealand census collects data on Māori and Pacific peoples as two separate entities. As both of these are Indigenous populations, these numbers have been aggregated for the purposes of this figure.

[2] The United States collects data on identification as an American Indian or Alaska Native "alone" and "in combination" with another category. This Census Bureau then aggregates both into a single number, presented here in this figure.

refers to individuals self-identifying as First Nations, Métis, and Inuit as recognised in the Constitution Act of 1982. According to Canada's last census (including the National Household Survey, Canada's largest census instrument) in 2021, Indigenous peoples are the country's fastest-growing ethnic population, growing by 9.4% from 2016 to 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2022[17]). Indigenous peoples in Canada are also a young population: the average age of Indigenous people was 33.6 years in 2021, compared with 41.8 years for the non-Indigenous population. Indigenous children aged 14 years and younger in 2021 accounted for one-quarter (25.4%) of the total Indigenous population. By comparison, 16% of the non-Indigenous population was 14 years of age and younger.

In an analysis of the 2011 National Household Survey, Statistics Canada reported that about half of the Indigenous population aged 25 to 64 had a post-secondary qualification and that younger Indigenous people had higher levels of education attainment than their elders, indicating that enrolment and completion rates were on the rise.[3]

Peer Learning Discussion Participant: New Zealand

The Indigenous population of New Zealand includes Māori and Pacific Islander people, who as of 2020 represented 24.6% of New Zealand's population (Statistics New Zealand, 2018[10]). They are the second most populous group nationally after those of European heritage. As in Canada, the population is young and growing. Half of the Māori population will be under 28 years old by 2028 and nearly a third of New Zealand children will be Māori, a figure that will continue growing. Improving educational outcomes for Māori people is an area of great importance to New Zealand, particularly in the context of the growing Māori economy and workforce needs.

Peer learning discussion insights: strategies to support Indigenous learners

The Peer Learning Discussion on supporting Indigenous learners in upper secondary education featured a critical and reflective look back at the major education policy strategies developed and put forth in Alberta and Manitoba (Canada) and New Zealand, systems which are host to some of the world's most numerous Indigenous populations. Based on information shared during the Peer Learning Discussion, this section provides a snapshot of national strategies for supporting Indigenous learners in upper secondary education in these systems. It is not intended to provide a comprehensive review of these education systems or an exhaustive list of the supports available to Indigenous learners.

Overview of national education policy strategies

Participants from Alberta and Manitoba (Canada) and New Zealand, in the course of this discussion, shared reflections on upper secondary policies which fit within the broader context of their two respective educational strategies for improving outcomes for Indigenous learners.

The various strategies have been the subject of groundwork laid and policies adopted and implemented over a process largely spanning the last decade. They are focused on the journey of Indigenous learners from their childhoods to adulthood, rather than any single educational stage as a site for intervention.

---

[3] The 2011 National Household Survey used the term "Aboriginal" to indicate respondents who self-identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. Due to changes in terminology since then, these respondents are referred to collectively as Indigenous in this policy brief.

Box 3. National strategies for the education of Indigenous students

Canada

The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) Indigenous Education Plan, 2019-2022, is a three-year strategic plan with four priority areas that has been designed to provide a more coordinated, strategic approach for provincial and territorial ministers responsible for education to work together to improve Indigenous education outcomes for all learners. The four priority areas cover:

- Supporting Indigenous student success and well-being in education
- Mobilising and disseminating provincial/territorial and international successful practices and proven actions to improve Indigenous education
- Teaching excellence in Indigenous education
- Revitalising Indigenous languages and strengthening Indigenous culture and identity through education.

New Zealand

Commitments to Indigenous education strategy were standardised in a series of Education and Training Acts, most recently in 2020. They build on one of the largest-scale consultations and co-design exercises led in conjunction with Māori communities in 2018, Kōrero Mātauranga (Korero Mataraunga, 2018[18]).

Key components of the Acts include Ka Hikitia Ka Hapaitia, a cross-agency, cross-level strategy setting out how the Ministry of Education will work with education services, Tau Mai Te Reo, the Māori Language in Education Strategy, and Te Tamaiti Hei Raukura, the frameworks for Indigenous curriculum development presently in dissemination stages. The five policy objectives of Ka Hikitia are:

1. Te Whānau: Education provision responds to learners within the context of their whānau.
2. Te Tangata: Māori are free from racism, discrimination and stigma in education.
3. Te Kanorautanga: Māori are diverse and need to be understood in the context of their diverse aspiration and lived experiences.
4. Te Tuakiritanga: Identity, language and culture matter for Māori learners.
5. Te Rangatiratanga: Māori exercise their authority and agency in education.

Indigenous education strategy in Canada

In Canada, the federal, provincial, and territorial governments have a constitutional responsibility for the education of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students. While the government of Canada has a responsibility for the education of students who attend schools on First Nations reserves, provincial and territorial public education systems provide education to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students who attend schools off-reserve.

Provincial and territorial ministers responsible for education, both individually and collectively through the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada, have made Indigenous education a priority, and have committed to continue their work to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's

education-related calls to action.[4] Between 2007 to 2015, the Commission documented the truth of survivors, their families, communities and anyone personally affected by the residential school experience. Upon completing its work, the Commission released a comprehensive report on the policies and operations of the schools and their lasting impacts. (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015[19]).

Indigenous education strategy in New Zealand

New Zealand's Indigenous education strategy emphasises a commitment to inclusion and relevance through language and curriculum. It is notable for institutionalising the national availability of Māori-medium mother tongue instruction, which consists of learning in Māori for a minimum 51% of instructional time. Māori is also available as a subject in most English-medium schools as a language elective. There is also a national Māori curriculum based on Māori educational philosophy, Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, and nationally accredited wānanga, state-owned Māori institutions which offer certificates, diplomas, and degrees at all educational levels. These are accredited as tertiary institutions but may provide training and certification at the secondary level as well.

Understanding national policy approaches to supporting Indigenous learners at upper secondary level

Policy approaches focused on support, reform and growth

During the peer learning discussion, countries shared policies to support Indigenous learners at the upper secondary level specifically (Box 1). The policies discussed often navigated a balance between three major trends:

- **Support approaches:** Providing targeted support to Indigenous learners and families navigating the existing secondary system.
- **Reform approaches:** Addressing existing issues in the system to improve its inclusiveness to Indigenous learners.
- **Growth approaches:** Acknowledging and incorporating Indigenous knowledge into systemic reform to benefit all students.
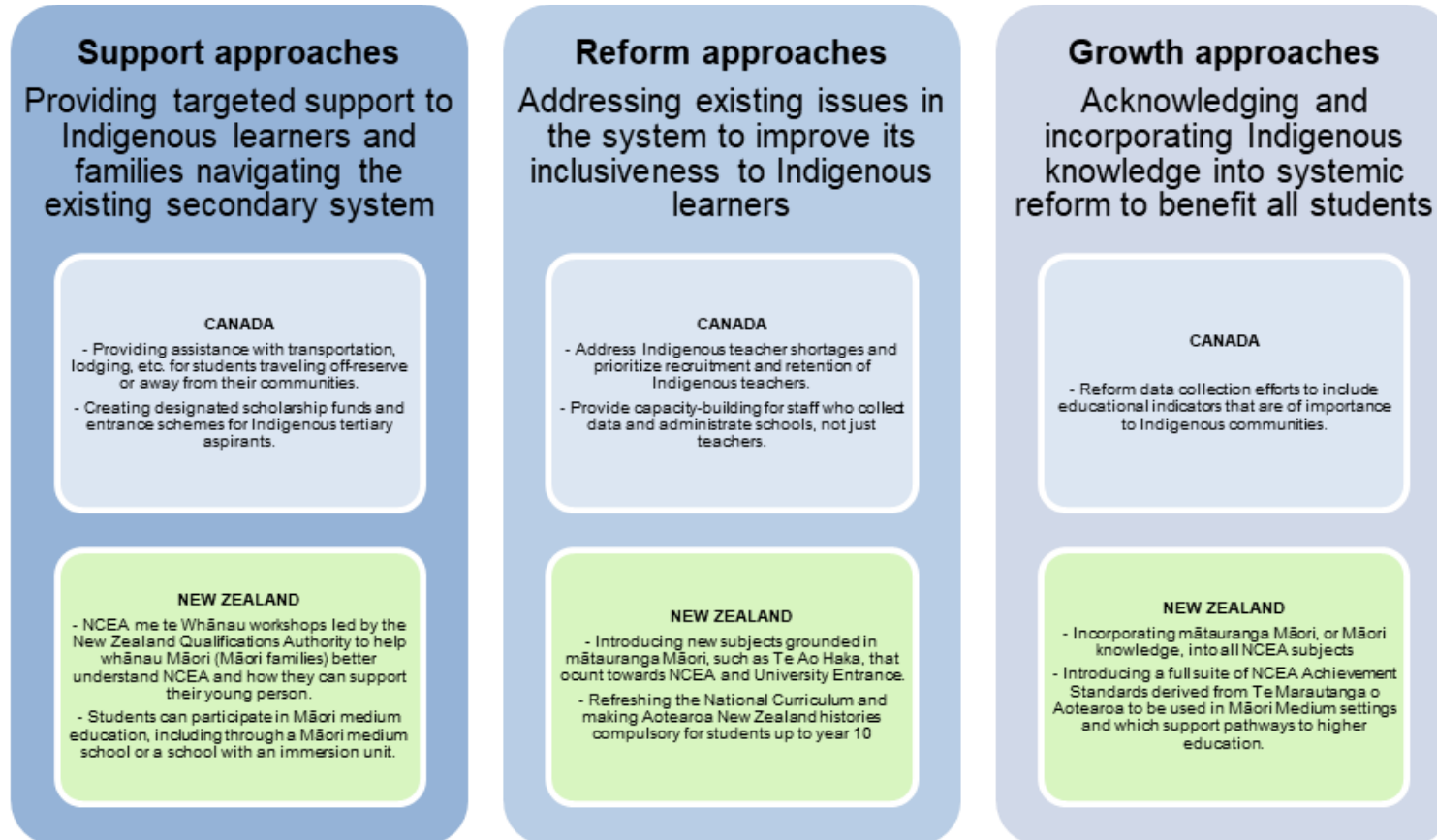
The participants described national strategies that were designed to improve outcomes within all three approaches. While they may not be formal or named approaches, their conceptual underpinnings were common across the participants' discussions and characterisations of various policies.

Ensuring that actions are taken within all three approaches—characterized in this brief as *support*, *reform*, and *growth* in Figure 1—can ensure that Indigenous learners are supported in both the short- and long-term. The figure describes general strategies discussed by participants from both Canada and New Zealand, which can serve as examples of each approach.

---

[4] The final report included Ten Principles for Reconciliation and 94 Calls to Action that speak to all sectors of Canadian society (The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015[23]).

Figure 1. Summary of support, reform, and growth approaches to supporting Indigenous learners from Peer Learning Discussion

This diagram showcases a variety of approaches described by country participants at the 2021 peer learning discussion on supporting Indigenous learners. For the sake of understanding how these approaches relate to one another, specific examples have been categorised into support, reform, and growth approaches.

Support approaches

Providing targeted support to Indigenous learners and families navigating the existing secondary system

CANADA
- Providing assistance with transportation, lodging, etc. for students traveling off-reserve or away from their communities.
- Creating designated scholarship funds and entrance schemes for Indigenous tertiary aspirants.

NEW ZEALAND
- NCEA me te Whānau workshops led by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority to help whānau Māori (Māori families) better understand NCEA and how they can support their young person.
- Students can participate in Māori medium education, including through a Māori medium school or a school with an immersion unit.

Reform approaches

Addressing existing issues in the system to improve its inclusiveness to Indigenous learners

CANADA
- Address Indigenous teacher shortages and prioritize recruitment and retention of Indigenous teachers.
- Provide capacity-building for staff who collect data and administrate schools, not just teachers.

NEW ZEALAND
- Introducing new subjects grounded in mātauranga Māori, such as Te Ao Haka, that count towards NCEA and University Entrance.
- Refreshing the National Curriculum and making Aotearoa New Zealand histories compulsory for students up to year 10

Growth approaches

Acknowledging and incorporating Indigenous knowledge into systemic reform to benefit all students

CANADA
- Reform data collection efforts to include educational indicators that are of importance to Indigenous communities.

NEW ZEALAND
- Incorporating mātauranga Māori, or Māori knowledge, into all NCEA subjects
- Introducing a full suite of NCEA Achievement Standards derived from Te Marautanga o Aotearoa to be used in Māori Medium settings and which support pathways to higher education.

Source: Peer Learning Discussion, 8 December 2021.

Identifying common policy features

Common elements across all strategies and policy mechanisms discussed included:

- **Providing specialised, culturally relevant settings where Indigenous students can receive support and thrive.** Ensuring that Indigenous students have opportunities to learn about their histories, cultures, and languages, as well as build community together to deal with the challenges of the school environment, is key to supporting their well-being (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 2021[20]). These opportunities can build confidence and fluency in one's own identity (particularly for marginalised identities), keep strong relationships with home communities, and create a community for peer protection and support against discriminatory treatment or structural racism. In New Zealand, participants shared that Māori learners experience more positive outcomes in Māori-medium education than general education. Other ways to provide specialised learning settings might include support groups and mentorship communities.

- **Developing a teaching body that is equipped and trained to support Indigenous students by addressing recruitment, retention, preparation, and evaluation of school staff**. Capacity development within an education system involves not only the development of skills among school staff to address diversity, but also recruitment practices that ensure the profile of staff closely matches the diversity of the student body. Canada's national strategy, in particular, features provisions specifically for recruitment of Indigenous teachers.

- **Providing more non-instructional support and services to help schools, not just teachers, develop their capacity to support Indigenous students**. Services such as counsellors, psychotherapists, trauma therapists and social workers can be particularly relevant for students from diverse backgrounds. These services can also help students find solutions collaboratively with school leadership to address their constraints, find resources, and prevent interruption of schooling.

Above all, strategies stressed the importance of deepening engagement with parents and guardians and recognising the positive contributions of Indigenous communities to education, which contrasts with a prevailing view in some systems that Indigenous communities are dis- or under-engaged. Engaging local communities, parents and families is important for schools who seek to create inclusive and equitable school environments, including through school governance structures. (OECD, 2021[21])

Addressing implementation challenges

In the case of both New Zealand and provinces and territories in Canada, their strategies and policies to support Indigenous learners represent initiatives and actions which have been long in the making and are founded upon a long history of Indigenous scholarship and advocacy within both countries. As such, participants from both countries identified some key needs in the area of implementation, some of which were discussed during the peer learning event. Participants mentioned that, as the stage at which Indigenous communities are often able to significantly shape practices and how policies are enacted, implementation is critical to the success of any initiatives.

Participants shared considerations focused not only on promoting inclusion, but on allowing Indigenous communities to take the lead and determine the best method of implementation. They highlighted that without this mindset there was a risk of perpetuating patterns of exclusion whereby education policymaking and data collection have failed to meet the needs of Indigenous communities, or to respect their right to self-determination, privacy, and self-governance. Participants from both countries mentioned the need to include these considerations during implementation to promote inclusion and ensure that the historical roots of issues Indigenous communities face, and the ruptures in trust that they brought about, are addressed by those in power.

Foremost among the implementation considerations described were:

1. Planning co-design and listening initiatives, often large-scale, to actively solicit perspectives from the relevant communities and make it clear how their input is being used. Participants from both Canada and New Zealand mentioned that sharing *how* data would be acted upon, rather than simply for what purpose it was being collected, was a key element of building trust and collecting data ethically within communities. As a Canadian participant mentioned, it is critical that all parties understand and act upon the understanding that "data is not intended to blame Indigenous students. Data is intended to hold education systems accountable." Participants noticed that in the context of supporting Indigenous learners, researchers should understand the ways in which data may not provide the full picture: it may obscure the strengths and resilience of these communities, hold them to externally-imposed standards which are not their own priorities, and propagate false narratives of failure or deficit on the part of Indigenous communities rather than acknowledging that uneven outcomes are the product of systemic racism and historical injustices.

2. Expanding the support system to include other adults beyond teachers and school staff: adults in the community, siblings and relatives, family beyond parents, community workers and researchers who are involved via collecting data, designers of services and youth programming, mentors in areas such as sports and the arts, employers and apprentices, and many other presences in the life of students.

3. Data collection efforts which are comprehensive, ethical, transparent, and varied in modality, in order to ensure that professionals, researchers, staff, and invested parties within Indigenous communities themselves can access the research instruments, datasets, and responses, while still respecting student privacy. This includes collecting data on the indicators important to Indigenous communities, not simply the indicators identified by policymakers.

Context on Indigenous learners' experiences in upper secondary education

Peer learning discussion participants from Canada and New Zealand jointly noted that historically, mainstream upper secondary education has often been a challenging and hostile environment for Indigenous students for a variety of reasons. As such, their approaches were often intended to address one or more of the specific challenges described in this section. They acknowledged that in many cases, the story of Indigenous learners in education is one of achievement, resilience, and empowerment in the face of how education policy itself has often been a force working against their success. This section provides background on selected challenges of Indigenous learners in upper secondary education, mentioned by peer learning participants from Canada and New Zealand.

Reckoning with the aftermath of historical colonialist practices in education systems

Indigenous families have suffered a history of centuries of education policy being an instrument of the colonial state. Policies within the formal school system such as residential schools, missionary activity, banning of Indigenous languages, and many others have contributed to an environment of inequality and deprivation in the past, and which is unwelcoming to Indigenous identities in the present. Due to this history of intergenerational trauma, trust still has not been built between many Indigenous youth and families and the school system (Milne and Wotherspoon, 2020[22]).

Residential schools are one well-known example of such policies, though their focus differed from country to country. Some commonly expressed purposes for the establishment of residential schools by colonial powers included missionary work, public health, literacy in colonial languages, and employment schemes for rural Indigenous youth. However, they were one of the primary instruments used to implement colonial goals of assimilation and erasure. As Canada's Truth and Reconciliation project states, the residential

schools were implemented "not to educate [Indigenous peoples] but to break their links to their culture and identity." (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015[19]) Their traumatic effects have been detrimental and lasting in many countries which had such a system:

- In **Canada**, many Indigenous people are survivors of a residential school system in which children were taken forcibly from their families and subjected to abusive treatment including forced religious conversion, child labour, corporal punishment, food and medical deprivation, and sexual abuse (The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015[23]). This history has been long-lasting and the last residential school closed in 1996. (Union of Ontario Indians, 2016[24]) At the start of the 20th century, it was estimated that public health conditions in Canadian residential schools were so poor that anywhere from 47-75% of students discharged from these residential schools died shortly after returning home (Hanson, 2020[25]).

- In **New Zealand**, the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Abuse in Care began inquiries in 2018 and documented longstanding practices of systemic cultural and racist abuse of Māori communities by the state. Māori youth were viewed with distrust by government authorities, were identified as "potential" delinquents, and brought at disproportionate rates into children's court. The Commission cites data to the effect that by the 1970s, one in 14 Māori boys and one in 50 Māori girls were living in State institutions, alienated from their communities and culture, and many in school today are the children of those formerly in care. It identifies educational neglect, such as keeping students home from school without a valid reason, as a form of abuse suffered by young people in care. Disproportionate representation of Māori children in care continues to this day (Royal Commission of Inquiry on Abuse in Care, 2020[26]).

- In **Mexico**, schools known as *internados* followed a slightly different model based on hostels and accessibility to educational opportunity in cities. Rural families recall these schools as an example of schools which "served individuals and damaged communities" in that they were a reason for Indigenous youths' migration to cities, which damaged the historical cohesion of regional communities (Dawson, 2012[27]).

- In **Scandinavia**, residential schools were part of broader policies prohibiting and criminalising the use of Sami language among the Sami people (Smith, 2009[28]).

- In **Australia**, having a family member who attended a residential school is associated with a lower probability of completing high school (Cherubini, 2010[29]).

- In the **United States**, children who later became parents of the present generation of Indigenous students themselves were often raised apart from their families, and as such, did not have parental figures and role models available (Mackety and Linder-VanBerschot, 2008[30]).

The legacies of such abusive educational systems are often still visible within Indigenous families' experiences with schooling. Initiatives such as Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and New Zealand's Royal Commission of Inquiry on Abuse in Care represent examples of systems reckoning with these histories. If systems and individual schools have not engaged in such a process, this continues the cycle of distrust. For instance, a community of Indigenous parents in the United States described how a district continued to feature a genocidal historical figure positively in its curriculum and the name of a school, despite being aware of the hurtful legacy this figure had on the Indigenous school community (Milne and Wotherspoon, 2020[22]).

Reflecting Indigenous learners' own goals and definitions of success

While modern education systems often incorporate inclusive, human-centred goals, one of the fundamental purposes of formal schooling in all societies is to help young people identify and develop skills and knowledge that will eventually help them to transition smoothly into the labour market. (Stronati,

2023[1]). National labour market needs are for the most part determined outside Indigenous communities, often with little input from them. Peer learning participants shared that Indigenous learners often feel upper secondary education does not reflect their goals and values, imposing externally-determined definitions of "success" rather than equipping them with the competencies to define and achieve both globally and culturally relevant definitions of success.

Impact of separation from home communities and role models to attend upper secondary education

Secondary school (across lower and upper secondary) is often a stage of education when Indigenous students must separate from their families, their community, and the cultural context in which their primary schooling has taken place. In countries where Indigenous communities can live on reservations, most well-resourced upper secondary education facilities tend to be off reserves or communities (Let's Talk On-Reserve Education Survey, 2017[31]). In the United States, for instance, 93%of all Native American students in 2014 attended schools off-reservation (Brenna, 2014[14]). In countries without a reservation system, Indigenous communities who live on ancestral land, which may often be located in isolated areas, may still lack access to upper secondary education, or where options do exist, they may be limited. For instance, Indigenous young people in Australian rural areas were less likely to be able to access vocational courses than their counterparts in metropolitan and suburban areas (Bandias, Fuller and Larkin, 2013[32]).

As a result, many Indigenous students travel great distances to attend secondary school, whether moving elsewhere for secondary school or commuting to secondary schools far from home. In some countries, such as the United States, secondary schools serving Indigenous students may often be boarding schools, which necessitate long separations from home, lower levels of adult supervision, and disconnection from a supportive community (Hektner and Jong, 2007[33]). Indigenous students report that transitioning to an unfamiliar environment can be traumatic. In the United States, students who leave home communities to study often suffer due to inadequate food, shelter, and clothing, as well as low housing allowances in unfamiliar or dangerous neighbourhoods (Harper and Thompson, 2017[34]).

Maintaining connection to community role models and providing more role models within school systems

Exacerbating the sense of cultural disconnection or severance mentioned in the peer learning discussion, schools in many countries struggle to recruit and retain Indigenous teachers, policymakers, and school administrators, particularly at the secondary level. In Brazil, for instance, the 2005 census revealed that among teachers who taught within indigenous schools, about 90% were of indigenous background, but only 13.39% taught at the secondary level, a figure which is considered low even considering the comparatively smaller numbers of secondary schools (Guilherme and Huttner, 2015[35]). In many countries, distance is a significant barrier for these teachers: the further away a school is from a metropolitan area, the more difficult it is to recruit, retain, and support quality teachers (White, 2016[36]). In some countries, rural postings are seen as "hardship duties," and teachers are given a bonus for teaching in rural schools before returning to a metropolitan center (Hickling-Hudson and Ahlquist, 2004[37]).

Historically, some Indigenous teachers have reported that when recruited, their qualifications may be questioned and they may have been made to feel unwelcome in the school environment (Wilson, 1991[38]). Perhaps as a result of such experiences, countries experience high staff turnover at Indigenous-majority schools or among Indigenous teachers (Beaulieu, 2000[39]).

Critical roles beyond teachers

During the Peer Learning Discussion, participants from both Canada and New Zealand described a dearth not only of Indigenous teachers at the secondary level, but also of staff (within schools, policymaking organisations, academia, and research organisations) with the requisite experience and cultural sensitivity who could play other roles critical to implementing educational policies, particularly curriculum. Participants noted that a lack of representation in the design of upper secondary education went beyond simply a lack of teachers and students. They described a historical lack of opportunities for Indigenous peoples to build ownership, benefit from representation, and exercise agency of their leaders, models, and researchers across all roles in education. The functions which could be supported by such staff might include:

- Data collection and analysis
- Monitoring, assessment, and evaluation, particularly in high-stakes examinations
- Mediation and navigation of cultural and historical dynamics in implementation.

Describing the need to include more Indigenous policymakers at upper secondary level and better utilize the research and contributions of those who are present, participants from both countries noted that it is critical to address the lack of quantitative data while at the same time honouring the strong availability and utility of qualitative data, stories, history, and anecdotes in which Indigenous peoples have expressed their experiences. When Indigenous school staff are present and given power throughout all levels of the school environment, from leadership to teaching to policy to evaluation, they are able to exercise their agency and expertise on aspects of school structure which are unwelcoming to Indigenous students (Plevitz, 2007[40]).

Removing barriers to family engagement in navigating high-stakes moments in upper secondary education

Family advocacy, in terms of advising, identifying opportunities, sharing social norms, and providing role models, is often key to success at the upper secondary level, particularly as student choices at this level are highly influenced by family input (UNESCO, 2000[41]). Learners make and are subject to a number of high-stakes decisions at this level which are often influenced by their families and communities (Perico E Santos, 2023[42]). Teachers and school staff have described a pattern of low parent involvement among Indigenous families (Mackety and Linder-VanBerschot, 2008[30]), however, the schooling environment itself can be unwelcoming for Indigenous parents and guardians for a variety of reasons.

Supporting exposure to structure and practices common at upper secondary level

First and foremost, knowledge of orientation at the upper secondary level (i.e. orienting students to different programmes, subjects and pathways that influence their future options) and how parents can intervene is a matter of exposure and often of generational advantage. Such parental knowledge has been linked to a family's socio-economic advantages in terms of educational and social capital (e.g. tertiary education completion, homeownership, etc.) (Morley, 2014[43]) which also affects aspiration formation, particularly for rural young people. (Byun et al., 2012[44]). Research by Australia's Closing the Gap Clearinghouse, an initiative of the national Institute of Family Studies, adds to the advantages which build capital for such intervention and support practices: parental level of educational attainment, ethnic or cultural backgrounds similar to those primarily represented in school's student body, parents' previous experiences and beliefs of school, parents' sense of self-efficacy to help their children succeed at school, and different ideas of what it means to be educationally helpful (Walker, 2008[45]).

Indigenous parents, if they themselves have had lower levels of participation and completion in upper secondary and post-secondary education themselves, may be less likely to acquire this exposure through their own school experiences (for example, in one historical example, being unaware that children had

been enrolled in programmes which did not provide a pathway to tertiary education until it was too late to intervene (Wilson, 1991[38]).

Acknowledging the logistical burden of intervention and support practices

Intervention and support practices also constitute a tremendous logistical burden on Indigenous families. Systems and avenues for engagement, such as parent-teacher conferences, school websites, and others may often be designed around the needs of middle-class parents living in cities. Indigenous families are more likely to experience financial constraints leading to working in multiple jobs at the same time, irregular working hours, lack of childcare, lack of computer access, and lack of transportation to schools (Mackety and Linder-VanBerschot, 2008[30]). In Australia, researchers noted the assumptions inherent in school requests for parents to provide an environment for academic tutors (i.e. assigned by the school to support students' academic work) in an uninterrupted, "comfortable home space," despite the fact that 22% of Indigenous families at the time lived in overcrowded conditions, and 35% lived in accommodation in need of repair (Plevitz, 2007[40]).

Historically, Internet access and digital literacy has also been a factor, and the pace of change may be uneven depending on digital infrastructure across countries: in the United States, Indigenous parents have previously reported not being able to regularly access school websites, or in some cases not even being made aware they existed despite being a relevant source of updates (Mackety and Linder-VanBerschot, 2008[30]). In Mexico, policymakers observed greater engagement with their children's education on the part of Indigenous parents when efforts were made to provide information formerly in digital format in paper format in rural areas (World Bank, 2015[46]).

Acknowledgment on the part of school staff of how Indigenous learners' support systems and practices may look

Another barrier is contending with school personnel's expectations of the way that intervention, support, and advocacy should look. At times, these expectations of support are not culturally sensitive to possible realities of Indigenous life. For instance, some schools may anticipate or seek out a particular type of parent involvement specifically (such as attending parent-teacher conferences or monitoring a school website), or of family involvement only at lower levels of education. In circumscribing their understanding of support practices to these narrow definitions, schools have not been able to account for the role of grandparents and other elders in Indigenous life, and thus to meaningfully engage these figures. (Bamblett, 2015[47]) Indigenous communities have also been depicted by some researchers as lacking motivation to pursue education, without consideration that their goals and motivations may present in ways that school staff are unaccustomed to seeing (Crivello, 2011[48]).

Despite these challenges, there are many cases in which Indigenous families do provide a high level of support to their learners, but may find their contributions disregarded or minimized due to other factors, including:

- **Discriminatory treatment in assessing families' contributions:** In some cases, Indigenous parents do provide high levels of support, but as in the case of low-income parents, their contributions may not be taken into account. Discriminatory treatment is a factor: in Canada, education advocates note that "negotiating" tasks which often play a role in upper secondary education (such as requesting retakes of examinations, appealing a placement into a particular class, or requesting extra credit or independent study opportunities) are typically more successful for English-speaking, university-educated, middle- and upper-middle-class parents (Kidder, 2011[49]).

- **Pressure from school authorities:** Indigenous parents have indicated that they sometimes had no choice but to cooperate with schools' recommendations for students' educational placement, regardless of whether they agreed (Mackety and Linder-VanBerschot, 2008[30]).
- **School engagement only in disciplinary cases:** First Nations parents in Canada have reported experiencing distrust when they attempt to engage, due to schools' contacting them only in cases of problems. They describe a desire to be "invisible" to school authorities rather than attract negative attention which places blame on them for their children's performance (Frieze, 2014[50]). In the United States, Indigenous parents have noted that schools tend to call students only for disciplinary issues, creating a situation which one parent described as "teachers becoming my enemy as much as they were [my child's]" (Mackety and Linder-VanBerschot, 2008[30]).

Analysing how the structure of learning environments may reflect and perpetuate systemic racism

Manifestations of systemic racism in upper secondary structures

Participants from both Canada and New Zealand described inequalities in the way that Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners, as well as their knowledge and experiences, are valued and treated within secondary education systems. In both countries, this was particularly visible in vocational educational settings, in which discriminatory informal streaming practices led to higher representation of Indigenous young people in vocational tracks, regardless of their academic performance.

Some mentioned examples of ways in which racism affected the way that students engaged with the structures of upper secondary education included:

- Stereotyping of Indigenous students leading to discouragement from pursuing academically oriented pathways.
- Dismissal or undervaluation of students' own preferences and aspirations in choosing academic programmes.
- School inflexibility in adapting the requirements of certain pathways to constraints of Indigenous life (e.g. students' distance from schools and need to complete some components remotely).
- School stakeholders' prioritisation of employment immediately after graduation superseding other concerns, priorities, and desires from their upper secondary experience that Indigenous students expressed.
- Beliefs among school stakeholders that Indigenous subjects or topics of knowledge constituted less rigorous or competitive preparation for particular programmes.

In some cases, peer learning discussion participants described the structure of upper secondary qualifications themselves as exposing sites for unequal treatment, in particular:

- **Pathway and programme selection.** Participants referred to the body of research that Indigenous learners are streamed into lower-level or preparatory courses at rates higher than their non-Indigenous peers, even when their performance is equal to or better than that of their non-Indigenous peers (Yunkaporta et al., 2014[51]). Indigenous students are also disproportionately represented in VET pathways in many countries: for instance, in Australia, they complete secondary education at half the rate of non-Indigenous peers, but are twice as likely to participate in vocational programmes. Such selection can limit possibility and propagate negative stereotypes about student potential, as opposed to the desired outcome of responding to individual student needs, providing engaging curriculum, and connecting students to stable economic futures. (Helme, 2005[52]):

- **Marking practices.** Studies of teacher grading practices have shown that when Canadian teachers believed that students were of Indigenous ancestry or additional language learners, they were consistently marked lower than their counterparts despite identical records of prior achievement (Riley and Ungerleider, 2019[53]).

- **Transitions into tertiary education.** For instance, participants from New Zealand described how secondary students who chose to pursue Māori language options for education, as they had at primary level, were penalized by the structure of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) qualification, the main school leaving qualification in New Zealand. In the levels of proficiency assigned within the NCEA, their traditional language course of study was treated as less rigorous, and in some cases did not have a clear transition to tertiary education.

- **Disciplinary and behavioural norms.** Researchers in Australia and New Zealand identify norms in upper secondary which exercise a detrimental effect even when no overt discrimination is present; e.g. a school curriculum built on the assumption of regular and uninterrupted attendance, which does not account for unavoidable absenteeism due to such factors as incarceration, family need, or cultural obligations. Another such norm is behavioural evaluation which penalises Indigenous students for cultural practices, such as in some cases showing respect by avoiding eye contact (Plevitz, 2007[40]).

Safety issues in the environment of secondary school

Both historically and in the present, secondary school has been an unsafe environment for Indigenous learners all over the world. A landmark historical ethnography of Sioux high school students' experiences in Canada noted that the structure of secondary school, with its harsh disciplinary measures and inflexible pace, was unable to accommodate the trauma of cultural separation. It was noted that students' inability to perform at school had little to do with their inherent capabilities, and more to do with the hostile environment: racism, behaviour patterns different from their own, alien cultural norms, and economic stress (Wilson, 1991[38]). In a report presented by the government of British Columbia (Canada), Indigenous students continue to highlight toxic types of social racism that they experienced at school, not only overt discrimination, but historic negative stereotypes, the perpetuation of inaccurate beliefs, and failure to acknowledge contributions by Indigenous peoples to Canadian society. (Hughes-Adams and Grass, 2016[54]).

The natural socialisation process of increased digital and social media engagement by young people at upper secondary level may influence how unsafe or safe the environment is as well. For instance, Sámi young people in the Nordic countries have pointed out that social media is a prominent site of encountering racist and discriminatory attitudes (United Nations Regional Information Center for Western Europe, 2021[55]). This is corroborated in Australia, where secondary-aged Indigenous young people described online racism as a common experience which both school authorities and elders in their communities often were not familiar enough with to address (Rice et al., 2016[56]).

Compounding such encounters, Indigenous learners are not always able to trust adults in the school environment, such as their teachers, to resolve issues, and so may be forced to choose educational strategies which minimize their contact with teachers. In New Zealand, Indigenous secondary students in a survey of their experiences overwhelmingly identified the quality of their in-class relationships with teachers as the main determinants of their educational achievement, (Bishop et al., 2012[57]). In the past, researchers in the United States and Canada have documented exclusionary behaviour on the part of teachers, such as giving terse answers to questions from Indigenous students and addressing them with their back turned (Wilson, 1991[38]). In Canada, some Indigenous students conveyed that teachers historically tended to rationalise discriminatory behaviour when it was pointed out (Wilson, 1991[38]). In the United States, parents reported how teachers would commonly mis-identify students' anger as a behaviour problem, rather than recognising it as a reaction to classmates' racist remarks or exclusionary behaviour

(Mackety and Linder-VanBerschot, 2008[30]). In such settings, Indigenous learners would view one another as their strongest support network and source of protection in the school environment, such that they would occasionally skip school in favour of supporting their classmates (Wilson, 1991[38]), a trend which participants shared may be likely to continue in absence of specialised learning settings or support communities.

Ensuring that Indigenous knowledges are part of curriculum and pedagogy at a level appropriate for upper secondary students

Addressing disengagement by providing culturally relevant, respectful curriculum and pedagogical practices

At the secondary level of education, ensuring curriculum content and structure which is relevant to the needs of young adults, and which caters to the diversity of all young adults, is critical to supporting all students (UNESCO, 2005[58]; Brussino, 2021[59]) (UNESCO, 2005[58]) (Brussino, 2021[59]). Indigenous students and their cultural, social, and economic experiences have historically been excluded from or misrepresented within the school curriculum in their countries, which contributes to disengagement or ultimately self-selection out of school. In the United States, for instance, the state government of North Carolina linked the high dropout rate among its Indigenous secondary learners to a lack of support for their cultural duality, and how their experience affected their journey through adolescence (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2004[60]). In Australia, advocates have suggested "an unequivocal link" between culturally unresponsive curriculum and the downward national trend of Indigenous student achievement (Yunkaporta et al., 2014[51]). The Australian government's 2021 report on supporting Indigenous students describes a link between Aboriginal students who reported that their teacher had a good understanding of their culture and their aspirations to participate in tertiary education (a predictor of completing upper secondary school). Their feeling that their teacher had such an understanding declined over the course of their educational experience, and was lower at the secondary level than at any point in the years before (Australian Center for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2021[13]).

School staff face a lack of a practical and accurate understanding of structural inequalities and their relation to achievement (Stacey, 2022[61]) or of teacher training, opportunity, power, and resources to identify and challenge Eurocentric or colonial curricular content and assessment practices (Yunkaporta et al., 2014[51]). In most countries, this understanding and associated skills are not part of teacher education. As a result, school personnel's training in representing Indigenous knowledge may often end at stereotypes and striking images from primary education (as one Australian Aboriginal learner put it, "boomerangs, dance, digeridoos, and social problems" (Hickling-Hudson and Ahlquist, 2004[37])).

Initiatives in many countries exist to address this discrepancy in curricular relevance. In 2023, the Toronto School Board voted to make a course on Indigenous texts and authors compulsory as part of its Grade 11 English language and literature credits. According to news sources, the chair noted that the purpose of the reform is to "give students a sense of Indigenous voices, of Indigenous authors, of the Indigenous experience in Canada, which is part of our responsibility in fulfilling the calls to action in truth and reconciliation, but also a great opportunity for students to have that learning that the vast majority of Canadians never had growing up." Presently, the course is taught in 29 out of 110 secondary schools in Toronto. The curriculum materials share the same learning objectives and areas as existing compulsory English content and explore Indigenous literary, oral, media, and cultural texts.

Supporting and incorporating upper secondary education in Indigenous as well as mainstream languages

A common theme which emerged among participants in the discussion was the underutilisation of practices aiming to strengthen Indigenous languages, cultures, and identities. In Latin America, New Zealand, and the Nordic countries, Indigenous families often speak a home language different than that of mainstream instruction. Language proficiency exacerbates inequalities at upper secondary level, as systems may assess students based on their initial language level rather than their cognitive abilities and task performance (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2021[62]). Participants in the peer learning discussion described a move towards a new aspirational era of education policy, in which language-based empowerment is at the forefront of reforms. However, there is still work to be done in ensuring that this advancement continues at the secondary level. In New Zealand, for instance, Māori-medium education was described as strong at the early childhood level, but rarer for young adults. In Canada, apprenticeships and learning opportunities were available to Indigenous learners, but required fluency primarily in English and/or French.

When Māori-medium students transition to English-speaking educational environments, they continue to experience positive academic outcomes (Hill, 2016[63]). In Mexico, the Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo's (National Council for Education Development) programme for Indigenous affairs found higher attendance and completion rates when funding programmes related to Maya language acquisition (Center for Native American Youth, n.d.[64]). Likewise, language education initiatives for young learners aim to revitalize the use of the Sami language in Finland (Keskitalo, Uusiautti and Maatta, 2012[65]).

Despite the success of these programmes at lower levels of education, they are still scarce in secondary, particularly when it comes to the technical language required for vocational specialisation (Despagne, 2013[66]). Virtually no secondary textbooks or materials exist at a systemic level in most systems, and those that do may include basic grammars, dictionaries, and second-language materials more suitable for young learners (Magga, King and Schielmann, 2004[15]). Leslie Harper, president of the National Coalition of Native American Language Schools and Programs in the United States, shares that federal policies are often misaligned with the reality of tribal communities and revitalisation efforts. For instance, she notes that standards for accrediting and funding programmes have often been paternalistic in nature (for instance, the requirement that Indigenous language speakers be trained at teaching colleges, which do not teach the relevant languages) (Beck, 2018[67]).

Above & Beyond

This policy perspective was prepared by the Above & Beyond team at the OECD, which analyses transitions into, through and out of upper secondary education, classified across international systems as ISCED 3. The project identifies practices – such as pathway design, careers guidance, qualifications, and technologies – that enable learners, to develop and make informed choices about their future. It addresses both general and vocational orientations and focuses on the role that upper secondary education plays within a perspective of lifelong learning.

For more information

Contact: Hannah Kitchen, project leader, hannah.KITCHEN@oecd.org

See: OECD Above & Beyond Project

References

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023), *Aboriginal and Torres Stait Islander Peoples*, https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples. [7]

Australian Center for Education Statistics and Evaluation (2021), *Supporting Aboriginal students to attain the HSC*, https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/educational-data/cese/publications/research-reports/supporting-aboriginal-students-to-attain-the-hsc. [13]

Bamblett, L. (2015), *Aboriginal advantage: an insider look at an Aboriginal community*, https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/Vis/vis1415/AboriginaladvantageLect. [47]

Bandias, S., D. Fuller and S. Larkin (2013), *Vocational education, Indigenous students, and the choice of pathways*, Commonwealth of Australia, https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED541750.pdf. [32]

Beaulieu, D. (2000), "Comprehensive Reform and American Indian Education", Vol. 39/2, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/David-Beaulieu-2/publication/265579244_COMPREHENSIVE_REFORM_AND_AMERICAN_INDIAN_EDUCATION/links/55b90a4108ae092e965b24d1/COMPREHENSIVE-REFORM-AND-AMERICAN-INDIAN-EDUCATION.pdf. [39]

Beck, A. (2018), *Native Language Schools are Taking Back Education*, https://www.yesmagazine.org/social-justice/2018/04/19/native-language-schools-are-taking-back-education. [67]

Bishop, R. et al. (2012), "Professional development, changes in teacher practice and improvements in Indigenous students' educational performance: A case study from New Zealand", *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 28/5, https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0742051X12000273. [57]

Brenna, S. (2014), *Why are Native students being left behind?*, Teach for America, https://www.teachforamerica.org/one-day/magazine/why-are-native-students-being-left-behind. [14]

Brussino, O. (2021), "inclusion, Building capacity for inclusive teaching: policies and practices to prepare all teachers for diversity and inclusion", *OECD Education Working Papers*. [59]

Byun, S. et al. (2012), "The Role of Social Capital in Educational Aspirations of Rural Youth", *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 77/3, https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1549-0831.2012.00086.x?casa_token=SobS0vAmvH0AAAAA:JopjGWwFoU3rXLYEMIU1whFLEZrR6E5OJA8QZrzozI75zN2-3amAmGRZaABeepPLDv7Vyyw6bJkPsLA. [44]

Canada Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population (2022), *Statistics Canada*, https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?LANG=E&GENDERlist=1,2,3&STATISTIClist=1&HEADERlist=19&SearchText=Canada&DGUIDlist=2021A000011124. [8]

Center for Native American Youth (n.d.), *Fast Facts on Native American Youth and Indian Country*, https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/files/content/upload/1302012%20Fast%20Facts.pdf. [64]

Cherubini, L. (2010), "An Analysis of Ontario Aboriginal Education Policy: Critical and interpretive perspectives", *McGill Journal of Education*, Vol. 45/1, https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/mje/1900-v1-n1-mje1464685/1000027ar.pdf. [29]

Crivello, G. (2011), "'Becoming somebody:' youth transitions through education and migration in Peru", *Journal of Youth Studies*, Vol. 14/4, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13676261.2010.538043?casa_token=7JoQ04AEJu8AAAAA:HxeobNkaTQlZghaNAVLbb1od16cFOs7aUoUbxPogk4G71ZwQ703yWMKnxgQ6nThBPqcACmZUjgfj. [48]

Dawson, A. (2012), "Histories and Memories of the Indian Boarding Schools in Mexico, Canada, and the United States", *Latin American Perspectives*, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0094582X12447274. [27]

Despagne, C. (2013), "Indigenous education in Mexico: Indigenous students' voices", *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education*, Vol. 7/2, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/15595692.2013.763789. [66]

Frieze, S. (2014), "First Nations Parental Involvement in Education", *BU Journal of Graduate Studies in Education*, Vol. 6/2, https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1230715.pdf. [50]

Guilherme, A. and É. Huttner (2015), "Exploring the new challenges for indigenous education in Brazil: some lessons from Ticuna schools", *International Review of Education*, Vol. 61, https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11159-015-9503-z. [35]

Hanson, E. (2020), *Indigenous Foundations*. [25]

Harper, A. and S. Thompson (2017), "Structural Oppressions Facing Indigenous Students in Canadian Education", *Fourth World Education*, http://ecohealthcircle.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/FWJ-structural-oppressions.pdf. [34]

Hektner, J. and J. Jong (2007), "Developing a Prevention Plan for an American Indian Boarding School: Strengthening Positive Peer Culture", *Journal of American Indian Education*, Vol. 46/1, https://jaie.asu.edu/sites/default/files/461_2007_3_hektner_jong.pdf. [33]

Helme, S. (2005), "Indigenous students and Vocational Education and Training in Schools: Ladder of Opportunity or Corrugated Iron Ceiling?", *Australian Jouranl of Education*, Vol. 49/2, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/000494410504900205. [52]

Hickling-Hudson, A. and R. Ahlquist (2004), "Teachers as "two-year tourists" in an Australian state school for Aboriginal children: dilemmas of curriculum, agency, and teacher preparation", *Journal of Postcolonial Education*, Vol. 3/1, https://eprints.qut.edu.au/3502/8/3502.pdf. [37]

Hill, R. (2016), "Transition from Māori-medium to Englishmedium education: emerging findings of a pilot", *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, Vol. 19/3, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13670050.2014.980777. [63]

Hughes-Adams, G. and S. Grass (2016), *Racism in Schools: A Barrier to Education among Aboriginal Students*, https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/ways-to-learn/aboriginal-education/abed-antiracism-research.pdf. [54]

Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (2022), *Self-reported indigenous and Afro-Mexican and indigenous population in households based on the 2020 Population and Housing Census*, https://www.inpi.gob.mx/indicadores2020/. [9]

International Labour Organization (2019), *Implementing the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples COnvention No. 169.*, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_735607.pdf. [4]

Keskitalo, P., S. Uusiautti and K. Maatta (2012), "How to make the small Indigenous cultures bloom? Special traits of Sámi education in Finland", *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, Vol. 15/1, https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1000215.pdf. [65]

Kidder, A. (2011), *Parent advocacy: the good, the bad, and the ugly*. [49]

Korero Mataraunga (2018), *Korero about the future of Maori education*, https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/education-conversation/what-you-told-us/korero-about-the-future-of-maori-education/. [18]

Let's Talk On-Reserve Education Survey (2017), *Let's talk on-reserve education: Survey report*, https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1509019844067/1531399883352. [31]

Mackety, D. and J. Linder-VanBerschot (2008), *Examining American Indian perspectives in the Central Region on parent involvement in children's education*, https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED502499.pdf. [30]

Magga, O., L. King and S. Schielmann (2004), *The challenge of Indigenous education: practice and perspectives*, UNESCO, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000134773. [15]

Milne, E. and T. Wotherspoon (2020), *Schools as "Really Dangerous Places" for Indigenous Children and Youth: Schools, Child Welfare, and Contermporary Challenges to Reconciliation*. [22]

Morley, D. (2014), *Engaging Indigenous parents in their children's education*, https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/277aadfe-f766-42ed-b93b-86da29d1917e/ctgc-rs32.pdf.aspx?inline=true. [43]

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (2004), *Our voice, your voice, one voice: nurturing American Indian families for school success*, https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED484679. [60]

OECD (2021), *Promoting inclusive education for diverse societies: a conceptual framework*, https://doi.org/10.1787/94ab68c6-en. [21]

OECD (2019), *Linking Indigenous Communities with Regional Development*, https://doi.org/10.1787/3203c082-en. [5]

OECD (2017), *Promising Practices in Supporting Success for Indigenous Students.*, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264279421-en. [12]

Office of High Commissioner on Human Rights (2023), *About indigenous peoples and human rights*, https://www.ohchr.org/en/indigenous-peoples/about-indigenous-peoples-and-human-rights. [2]

Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (2021), *Promoting Inclusive Education for Diverse Societies*. [20]

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2021), "Young People with Migrant Parents", https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/young-people-with-migrant-parents_6e773bfe-en.
[62]

Per Axelsson, C. (2020), *The challenge of Indigenous data in Sweden*, Routledge, https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/oa-edit/10.4324/9780429273957-7/challenge-indigenous-data-sweden-per-axelsson-christina-storm-mienna.
[6]

Perico E Santos, A. (2023), *Managing student transitions into upper secondary pathways*, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/managing-student-transitions-into-upper-secondary-pathways_663d6f7b-en.
[42]

Plevitz, L. (2007), "Systemic racism: the hideen barrier to educational success for Indigenous school students", *Australian Journal of Education*, Vol. 51/1, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/000494410705100105.
[40]

Rice, E. et al. (2016), "Social media and digital technology use among Indigenous young people in Australia: a literature review", *International Journal for Equity in Health*, Vol. 15, https://equityhealthj.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12939-016-0366-0.
[56]

Riley, T. and C. Ungerleider (2019), "Imputed Meaning: An Exploration of How Teachers Interpret Grades", *Action in Teacher Education*, Vol. 41/3, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01626620.2019.1574246.
[53]

Royal Commission of Inquiry on Abuse in Care (2020), *Tāwharautia: Pūrongo o te Wā, Interim Report*.
[26]

Smith, A. (2009), *Indigenous Peoples and Boarding Schools: A Comparative Study*, https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/E_C_19_2009_crp1.pdf.
[28]

Stacey, M. (2022), "Deficit discourses and teachers' work: the case of an early career teacher in a remote Indigenous school", *Critical Studies in Education*, Vol. 63/1, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17508487.2019.1650383?src=recsy.
[61]

Statistics Canada (2022), , https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220921/dq220921a-eng.htm.
[17]

Statistics Canada (2016), *The Aboriginal languages of First Nations people, Métis and Inuit*, https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/98-200-x/2016022/98-200-x2016022-eng.cfm.
[16]

Statistics New Zealand (2018), *2018 Census ethnic group summaries*, https://www.stats.govt.nz/topics/society.
[10]

Stronati, C. (2023), *The design of upper secondary education across OECD countries: managing choice, coherence and specialisation*, OECD, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/the-design-of-upper-secondary-education-across-oecd-countries_158101f0-en.
[1]

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015), *The Survivors Speak*, https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Survivors_Speak_English_Web.pdf.
[23]

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015), *Canada's Residential Schools: The HIstory, Part 1*
[19]

(Origins to 1939), https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Volume_1_History_Part_1_English_Web.pdf.

UNESCO (2005), *Secondary Education Reform: Towards a COnvergence of Knowledge Acquition and Skills Development*, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000142463.   [58]

UNESCO (2000), *Parents and learning*, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000125451.   [41]

Union of Ontario Indians (2016), "An Overview of the IRS System", https://www.anishinabek.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/An-Overview-of-the-IRS-System-Booklet.pdf.   [24]

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (n.d.), *Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous Voices*, https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session_factsheet1.pdf.   [3]

United Nations Regional Information Center for Western Europe (2021), *The Sámi: We are the natives of this country*, https://unric.org/en/sami-we-are-the-natives-of-this-country/.   [55]

United States Census Bureau (2021), *Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics*, https://data.census.gov/table?g=010XX00US&d=DEC+Demographic+Profile.   [11]

Walker, B. (2008), "Parents' involvement in their children's education.", *Family Matters*, https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/277aadfe-f766-42ed-b93b-86da29d1917e/ctgc-rs32.pdf.aspx?inline=true.   [45]

White, S. (2016), "Extending the Knowledge Base for (Rural) Teacher Educators", *Australian and International Journal of Rural Education*, Vol. 25/3, https://search.informit.org/doi/pdf/10.3316/aeipt.215619.   [36]

Wilson, P. (1991), "Trauma of Sioux Indian High School Students", *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, Vol. 22, https://anthrosource.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdfdirect/10.1525/aeq.1991.22.4.05x1194x.   [38]

World Bank (2015), *Mexico Improves Access and QUality of Education for Marginalized Communities*, https://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2015/04/01/mexico-improves-access-and-quality-of-education-for-marginalized-communities.   [46]

Yunkaporta, T. et al. (2014), "Winangay Bagay Gaay: Know the river's story", *Curriculum Perspectives*, Vol. 34/3, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/T-Yunkaporta/publication/330496180_Winangay_Bagay_Gaay_Know_the_river's_story/links/5c464e1592851c22a386f658/Winangay-Bagay-Gaay-Know-the-rivers-story.pdf.   [51]

This Education Policy Perspective has been authorised by Andreas Schleicher, Director of the Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD.

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document, as well as any data and any map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and are under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.