ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

2012 - 2013
MFNERC VISION

“Support First Nations to develop and implement a comprehensive holistic educational system inclusive of First Nations languages, world views, values, beliefs and traditions with exemplary academic standards, under First Nation jurisdiction.”

MFNERC MISSION

“To help First Nations improve education for all learners to achieve: mino-pimatisiwin (Cree/Ojibway/Oji-Cree) | honso aynai (Dene) | tokataliya wichoni washte (Dakota)”
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The Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre Inc. (MFNERC) Board of Directors would like to extend greetings to all community members of the First Nations in Manitoba. We would like to thank you and acknowledge you for the work that you do in your communities and for your continued support for the work of the Centre.

MFNERC continues to provide services for 58 First Nations schools as they strive to improve the quality of education for over 16,500 students who attend on-reserve schools. This year marks 14 years that the organization has existed. There continues to be many success stories and improvements in all areas as MFNERC specialists provide services in many critical areas including special education, assessment technology, numeracy, science, land-based education, literacy, school planning, early childhood and First Nations languages and culture. MFNERC also continues to provide training and professional development opportunities for those who work directly with the children in our communities. It is through mutual support and collaboration that we can continue to ensure that children benefit from the best education possible that honours their identity as First Nations people.

We acknowledge the education directors and school administrators working in our First Nations as they strive to ensure that schools are safe and effective learning centers. We thank and acknowledge the school staff, the local school boards, and parents and community members who all play a critical role in the education of our children.

The MFNERC Board of Directors is committed to continuing to work with all partners in First Nations education and supporting education endeavors that respect our treaties and honours our traditions, languages and culture.

Thank you to our leadership for continuing to serve Manitoba First Nations. We wish you all the best. Ekosani, Miigwetch, Mahsi-cho, Pidamaye, Thank you!

Nora Murdock
A/Chairperson, MFNERC Board of Directors

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**MFNERC BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Edwin Jebb, *Vice-Chairperson, School Board Member, Opaskwayak Cree Nation*

Grand Chief Murray Clearsky, *Southern Chiefs Organization (SCO)*

Nora Murdock, *Interim Chairperson, Fisher River Cree Nation*

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Barry Bone, *Councillor/Director of Education, Keeseekowenin First Nation*

Liz Merrick, *Director of Education, Long Plain First Nation*

Alvin Grieves, *Director of Education, Oxford House Cree Nation*
On behalf of the staff and Board of Directors of MFNERC, I am pleased to present a brief summary of the activities undertaken for 2012/2013.

MFNERC was established in 1998 by the Chiefs of Manitoba with a mandate to provide second and third level services to the First Nations controlled schools. First level service is provided by school staff directly to students. Second level service is provided to those individuals in First Nations who work with students in various capacities. It is my belief that by providing services such as professional development to enhance best practices or effective programming in First Nations schools, quality and standards will improve. In addition, if the methods and strategies based on the latest research and best practice, including linguistic and cultural relevance, are utilized, opportunities for educational success for First Nations schools will increase. Third level services include research and curriculum development which also benefits the students, especially curriculum materials and resources in relevant areas.

MFNERC staff work directly with the schools to facilitate processes, to provide professional development or to facilitate networking. Our role is similar to a school board of a provincial school division. The primary difference is the provincial school boards have jurisdiction; in our case, the Manitoba Region of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) have jurisdiction over the schools we serve.

I am a strong believer of the collective and that the schools benefit from working interdependently. In Manitoba, there are 58 First Nation schools, which are administered by 49 First Nations. Essentially these First Nations are one-school systems with little or no support for second and third level services provided in all other jurisdictions. Imagine what could be done with all aspects of education if schools worked interdependently supported by proper funding of a First Nations support system.

At one time our people effectively taught and instructed the children and youth in values, morals, trades, leadership skills, counselling skills, survival skills, philosophy, civic responsibility, organizational skills, beliefs, and spirituality. All the necessary skills were taught in order for the nations to survive and flourish. Learning activities were based on the premise of look, listen, learn and live. This was our education system and the beauty of this system was that it was failure proof. It was pragmatic and it was life-long learning which resulted in “mino-pimatisiwin (Ojibway, Cree, Oji-Cree); honso aynai (Dene) and tokatakiyawichoni waste (Dakota).”

Now in its 14th year, the Chiefs-in-Assembly and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC), has amended the mandate of the Centre to offer enhanced second level services (school division-type services) while moving towards the development of First Nations Education Systems. All services are based on needs as identified by the First Nation, MFNERC continues to be governed by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, and the authority remains with the First Nations.

In closing, I believe that the Centre has made a difference for our schools as prior to the establishment of MFNERC, First Nations schools had little support outside of their own community. It is my belief, that if our people proactively pursue educational opportunities, our youth of today and tomorrow, who will be graduating from our schools, will receive the necessary education to acquire the skills required to meet the future with full confidence and a competitive edge.
On behalf of MFNERC, a sincere thank you is extended to all of the education authority/school board members, directors of education, principals, vice-principals, teachers, resource teachers, educational assistants, Elders and especially the students from the First Nations who have participated in MFNERC meetings, roundtable discussions, workshops, and conferences this past year. Thank you to all of our partner organizations whose valuable contributions assisted us in providing services and resources to the schools.

In addition, our sincere appreciation is extended to the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, and directors of education who had the vision and foresight to create MFNERC in 1998. They realized that by working together, MFNERC would benefit all First Nation schools and students in Manitoba. We congratulate the AMC on 25 years of providing a strong unified voice for Manitoba First Nations.

I also thank the MFNERC Board of Directors, for their continued support and guidance, Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada, First Nations and Inuit Health, Environment Canada and the Province of Manitoba for their funding and in-kind support, and last, but not least, the staff of the Centre for their dedication and commitment during this past year.

Ekosani, Miigwetch, Mahsi-cho, Pidamaye, Thank you!

Lorne C. Keeper
Executive Director

MFNERC ELDERS COUNCIL

Mabel Bignell, Opaskwayak Cree Nation
Jim Cote, Waywayseecappo First Nation
Ruth Myron, Long Plain First Nation

Harry Bone, Keeseekoowenin First Nation
Evelyn Myran, Fisher River Cree Nation
Gilbert North, Oxford House Cree Nation

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

In 1998, AMC established MFNERC through resolution to provide coordinated second and third level education services to Manitoba First Nation schools in accordance with the Gathering Strength guidelines.

In May 2000, the Chiefs-in-Assembly of the AMC passed a resolution to provide ongoing support for MFNERC. The Chiefs-in-Assembly continued to support MFNERC in accordance with the resolutions passed by the Chiefs on May 25, 2000 in Opaskwayak Cree Nation and on May 30-June 1, 2006 in Dakota Tipi First Nation.

Many priorities initially expressed by First Nations such as increased special education funding and implementation of provincial ELA, mathematics and science curriculum have been completed. However, First Nations schools require long-term educational support to realize education transformation which will result in increased quality and standards in First Nations education.
GOVERNANCE

On May 30, 2005 MFNERC became incorporated. However, as a result of the authority and direction set out by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs’ resolutions, MFNERC remains governed by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Executive Council of Chiefs and Chiefs-in-Assembly.

Authority over education remains with the individual First Nation Chief and Council. As a part of the First Nations education system, the Government of Canada, through AANDC, retains the treaty and fiduciary responsibility for First Nation education.

Utilizing a community-based school planning process, First Nations identify programs, budgets and professional development or capacity development that are required to implement the plans. MFNERC provides the professional development and/or other supports that are identified.

The First Nation Student Success Program (FNSSP) administered by MFNERC currently supports the notion of authority remaining with First Nations with letters from individual Chiefs giving MFNERC a mandate to facilitate assessment, performance measurement and data collection, school planning, literacy, numeracy, and student retention. In turn, MFNERC uses the governance model that has developed over the years to implement the program.

Focus groups, working groups, surveys and education directors’ meetings are used to support change and new programming. The process has emerged as an effective means of representation that supports decision-making. A new program is reviewed by the education directors and revised if necessary. The education directors make recommendations to the AMC Executive Council of Chiefs who, in turn, present the program to the Chiefs-in-Assembly, and a resolution is passed if the Chiefs-in-Assembly agree. The Chiefs-in-Assembly have unanimously supported general education initiatives as recommended by education directors and the Executive Council of Chiefs although the Chiefs sometimes assert additional caveats or adjustments.

The Centre’s work is also supported by the MFNERC Board of Directors which includes education directors and Chiefs representation as well as revolving representation by MFNERC Elders Council members. In addition, MFNERC is a standing agenda item at the Executive Council of Chiefs and education directors’ meetings for reporting and presentation of new programs or issues for discussion.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIP

- ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA CHIEFS
- EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF CHIEFS
- MFNERC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- MANITOBA FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION DIRECTORS
- MANITOBA FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTRE
SERVICES OVERVIEW

MFNERC services are holistic and address First Nations’ expressed needs to the degree possible, depending on the level of funding. Currently, MFNERC is funded through various contribution agreements with AANDC, specifically, New Paths for Education, Special Education Enhancement, First Nation Student Success Program (FNSSP), Education Partnerships Program (EPP) and Skills Link Program. In 2012-2013, other funders included Environment Canada, Aboriginal Health Human Resources Initiative (AHHRI), and First Nations and Inuit Health (FNIH).

The main focus for MFNERC is coordinated First Nation educational capacity development which translates into professional development by MFNERC specialists from the various program areas. Professional development is delivered in a variety of ways via community-based support, regional gatherings, virtual methods, and two conferences annually. Professional development is also accredited and non-accredited.

The Centre has been promoting school planning, literacy, numeracy and student retention, classroom assessment and data collection to support planning and development since the beginning of service delivery. In addition to these basic priorities, MFNERC also provided additional supports to address prioritized needs. There has been extensive movement toward increased quality and standards in First Nations schools. This is evident by an annual increase in the number of school plans completed, and more coordinated requests for specific areas of professional development to address priorities of schools, as well as other qualitative or anecdotal information. However, this increase is not documented with province-wide assessment results or other quantitative data due to the fact that First Nations schools and MFNERC did not have the infrastructure, capacity in terms of human and material resources, or training to implement assessment and data collection to the degree necessary.

However, with the new sources of funding available since 2009, through the FNSSP and the EPP, it became possible to provide extensive training and implementation of assessment for/as/of learning in First Nations schools. There is now infrastructure such as databases and technician support services available to First Nations schools to support accountability to parents and the First Nation with the introduction of province-wide assessment, as well as, data collection.

Now that the basic components of leadership, classroom instruction best practices, assessment and data collection are being put in place, MFNERC can increasingly focus on First Nations education transformation. With leadership and support provided by the Support Services Department including Integrated Programs, First Nations Language and Culture Program, as well as the Research and Development Program supporting cross-curricular development, enhanced programming will include increased development and implementation of land-based education, infusion of First Nations traditions into the curriculum, and utilization of culturally appropriate methods and strategies of learning. Elders will continue to support development.

Networking utilized by Special Education has proven successful in supporting educational improvement and increased confidence of resource teachers to provide support to students and colleagues in First Nations schools. The new source of funding will continue to allow MFNERC to support networking via technology in the near future and to explore more innovative programming and supports in the areas of resource acquisition and support services for First Nations schools.
MFNERC has five departments: Administration and Human Resources; Finance and Communications; Service Delivery; Information Technology; and Support Services.

The departments and programs work together toward the MFNERC mission and vision.

MFNERC Programming
All programs address student retention; however, in relation to the various funding agreements, AANDC has isolated student retention under specific guidelines. Therefore, according to the FNSSP agreement, student retention is specific to First Nations languages and cultures as well as specific projects outlined in the proposal.

Administration, Human Resources, Finance and Communications
Administration and finance ensure that the strategic plan and annual work plans are developed and implemented; reports are submitted according to specific timelines; budgets are managed and quality control mechanisms are functioning efficiently. They provide leadership and support to staff, facilitate program and service delivery and coordinate and support staffing and staff supervision.

Communications supports all areas of MFNERC in terms of public relations, conference planning, website development, graphic design and other supports in the area of multimedia.

Service Delivery
Special Education; Interdisciplinary Training Initiatives; Governance; Educational Leadership; School Planning, Curriculum and Instruction; Student Learning Assessment and special projects.

Information Technology
Data Management, Technician Support, Technology in the Classroom and Wapaskwa Virtual Collegiate.

Support Services
First Nations Languages and Cultures; Early Childhood (Early Years); Research and Development; Integrated Programs; and special projects.
DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS

Best practices, informed by academic research and extensive experience working with First Nations, are promoted through the various departments utilizing a service delivery team approach. The teams support five service delivery areas serving 49 First Nations, 58 schools and five language areas in geographically diverse locations spanning the province of Manitoba.

Professional Development
To address capacity/human resources development and expressed needs for locally based support services for First Nations schools, accredited and non-accredited professional development is provided. MFNERC provides accredited training on behalf of the province of Manitoba in the areas of administration and special education provincial accreditation. Accredited training is also provided in partnership with various universities and colleges. All training is specific to professional development for staff working in First Nations schools/education and the courses and programs are developed by MFNERC in accordance with various institutional criteria and standards.

Team Approach to Service Delivery
The primary service delivery team is made up of a school planning specialist or the team leader; literacy, numeracy and science specialists; special education specialists, as well as, language and culture specialists. Although the teams would ideally consist of five specialists in each area, in some cases such as science, Technology in the Classroom and special education, there are one, two or three specialists to serve the whole province.

Program Areas
1. School Planning
2. Governance and Leadership
3. First Nations Languages and Cultures
4. Student Learning Assessments
5. Integrated Programs: Land-Based Education and Science
6. Training Initiatives
7. Special Education
8. Best Practices in Curriculum, Instruction, Programming and Material Resources
9. Early Childhood
10. Performance Measurement and Database Management
11. Wapaskwa Virtual Collegiate
12. Interdisciplinary Training Initiatives
13. Research and Development
14. Information and Technology
15. Technology in the Classroom
School planning

School success is promoted through the various departments working together in teams of specialists. The other programs provide secondary support to the teams or specific services. Some programs, such as the Interdisciplinary Training Initiatives, serve the whole province thus supplementing the work of the teams through accredited professional development or human resources development required to implement innovative or required programming in First Nations schools.

The school plan identifies general priorities including a vision. The general priorities are developed further to address specifics, with short and long-term implementation plans that support student success and retention including a special education plan.

Highlights

Goals and objectives were set out for each school in literacy, numeracy, student retention, and special education. The focus of the school year has been to provide teachers with opportunity to implement and reach targets outlined in the school success plans. Additionally, throughout the upcoming school year there will be an emphasis on improving communication methods for the school plan to allow for ease of alignment activities.

The team leaders facilitated meetings with school administrators to review the school plan at the beginning, middle and end of the school year, and any time throughout as required by the First Nation. The discussions were centered around achievement and planning to improve outcomes for all students. This entailed a review of the mission, vision and goals, discussion of any possible revisions, and establishing milestone dates to review implementations and progress of school plan. Literacy, numeracy and special education plans were also reviewed in conjunction with school plan. All schools have school plans that reflect community priorities and student needs.
The teams promoted Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in First Nation schools. A PLC is the school staff working as a community to improve student learning. School staff worked on developing a school culture where they are permitted time to meet regularly, work together openly, consult and collaborate with one another to improve teaching and learning practices in school.

**Mini-Regionals**

It has been a very successful year for mini-regionals this fiscal year. Sergeant Tommy Prince School, Isaac Beaulieu Memorial School, Pinaymootang School, Joe A. Ross School, Oscar Lathlin Collegiate, and St. Theresa Point Middle School volunteered to host a mini-regional for their surrounding schools. They each facilitated a two-day conference on topics identified by their respective schools and each school showcased the best they had to offer for their students and community. MFNERC service delivery teams assisted and supported the schools with the planning, organizing, and conducting the conferences. The turnout for each mini-regional varied from low to high but it gave the schools an opportunity to network and share common issues and positive outcomes with each other. Participant feedback gathered from conference evaluation forms was positive and also included recommendations for future mini-regionals. All five mini-regionals impacted 764 school staff.
FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES AND CULTURES PROGRAM (FNLC)

The First Nations language and culture specialists provide supports to language program development and planning as well as implementation, including development of outcomes and assessment related to language immersion and language as a subject area. In addition, these specialists provide support to MFNERC staff to integrate or infuse culture and language into all organizational programming as well as curriculum and assessment. Training is provided to language immersion teachers, as well as, language teachers who teach the language as a subject in the school.

Support is provided to five First Nations language groups with each First Nation utilizing its own dialect. There are several models of language immersion and teaching language in a classroom setting as a subject for schools located in First Nations. To support language teachers, MFNERC also provides the services of a language IT information specialist to assists teachers in utilizing technology in their classrooms.

Highlights

The FNLC program is an integral part of the school teams that incorporate the First Nations language and culture into the planning of education programs. This year, the FNLC program has provided much needed resources to First Nations schools. Many of the schools now have curriculum documents that have been developed and language and culture books that can be utilized as teaching tools in the classroom.

First Nations language instructors (67) participated in two Language Instructor Regional Training workshops. The two-day workshops provided an opportunity for instructors to network and share acquired resources; various presenters demonstrated application, implementation and teaching methods for language instruction. These training sessions were very successful in providing professional development and training in language instruction for language teachers.
Regional language group sessions (6) were held for leadership, Elders, and language teachers. These sessions provided educational information on First Nations languages, presented planning models for language programming and also provided methods of teaching language in the classroom. Participants (144) attended the language group gatherings from 46 First Nations in Manitoba.

The sharing of First Nations language program development resources to First Nations schools was a required commodity to revitalize First Nations languages. Participants at conferences, gatherings and meetings were grateful for the language program materials and they enjoyed presentations on language programming to enrich the planning of community based programs. The networking and sharing of current language and culture programs is providing the necessary information in building capacity for the establishment and development of language and culture programming in the First Nations schools.

Before You Know It Program and Smart Boards
Professional development was provided for teachers to utilize culturally and linguistically appropriate software as an instructional aide. The Before You Know It (BYKI) program requires the input of First Nations languages into BYKI computer software to create language learning technology for students.

Eighty-three language and culture teachers, computer instructors and technicians from First Nations schools received training on Smart Board application and implementation of the BYKI software program. Participants appreciated the training received to enhance teaching instruction in the school.

The First Nations schools, the language instructors, and IT technicians appreciated the resources and training that were provided through regional training sessions and First Nations school visits. The IT specialist has provided one-on-one IT services to 37 schools and has completed four demonstration training sessions on Smart Board application and usage for the schools. Smart Board application is a welcomed new and innovative tool for language instruction. This tool together with the BYKI software has increased and enhanced the language programs in the First Nations schools.
STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENTS

Assessment for/as/of learning supports teachers to deliver effective and quality classroom instruction to meet the learning needs of each student. The data or reports derived from this assessment process will also inform First Nation educational planning and provide information to all First Nations stakeholders and most importantly parents.

Highlights

Roundtable Sessions
Specialists facilitated six roundtable sessions for Grade 3 (Reading Comprehension, Numeracy), Grade 7 (Student Engagement, Number Sense and Skills), and Grade 8 (Reading Comprehension, Expository Writing) Provincial Assessments for Year 1 Schools. Year 1 schools have trained, implemented and started their formal reporting cycle for Provincial Assessments. The next step is to collect and use the student learning assessment data over time to inform instructional and school planning in the areas of literacy, numeracy and student retention. Altogether, the roundtables brought together 21 Grade 3 teachers, 27 Grade 7 teachers and 27 Grade 8 teachers to review the strengths, challenges and next steps for collecting and using evidence of learning from the Provincial Assessments to improve student and school success.

Elders’ Forums
Elders’ forums (3) were successfully held early in the school year with transcripts of proceedings recorded on DVDs for future editing and use as a visual/oral support to complement a written draft document on Manitoba First Nations Learning and Assessment Model.

Elders’ recommendations and feedback from the roundtables will be used to build on classroom-based assessment and formative assessment knowledge gained by classroom teachers trained to use the materials for the Provincial Assessments. Teacher-made assessment tools and a focus on student self-assessment are the spinoffs from the training offered from this initiative. First Nations school teachers will use professional knowledge and application of assessment tools
based on the values and educational goals of the First Nation community and school in service to their children's learning needs.

**Provincial Assessment Training**

In total, 366 classroom teachers and school administrators have successfully completed Part 1 and Part 2 assessment training. One hundred and six (106) was our baseline training group for 2013-2014 and didn't include the newly assigned teachers and newly hired teachers that join the school assessment teams.

Staff turnovers posed a challenge each school year. Schools are monitored to ensure there are trained teachers in place to collect and report on all the provincial assessments. Due to the comprehensive training materials and engagement strategies, the provincial assessment training was delivered in two parts. For this fiscal, 34 newly hired teachers were trained on Part 2 of the Provincial Assessments (Grade 3 Reading Comprehension, Grade 8 Reading Comprehension and Grade 7 Number Sense and Skills). Therefore, the same 34 teachers and school administrators representing Year 1 and Year 2 schools will require Part 1 training on the Provincial Assessments to complete their training. Part 1 training includes Grade 7 Student Engagement, Grade 8 Expository Writing and Grade 3 Numeracy. Also, larger schools (with student population over 1,000) require more than one grade level teacher be trained on the Provincial Assessments.
INTEGRATED PROGRAMS: LAND-BASED EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

The schools prioritized literacy, numeracy and student retention. However, there is also a need to promote science and science related careers to support human resources development in First Nations. Therefore, MFNERC continues to promote science planning and professional development including the various science fair related programming and land-based science projects that are extremely successful in promoting science.

Highlights

11th Annual Manitoba First Nations Science Fair Program (MFNSF)

This program ensures an ongoing focus on science education within First Nations schools and provides a context for dialogue between teachers and science teacher development through a spiral design. The annual MFNSF exhibition is culmination of the MFNSF Program, which provides context for ongoing teacher and student mentorship and science program development within our schools.

The 11th Annual MFNSF was held on February 15-16, 2013, at the Max Bell Centre, University of Manitoba, after eight years at Red River College (RRC). With the phenomenal growth over the past several years, the space available to us at RRC simply became too small. It is expected that the Max Bell Centre will be our new home, and the U of M our partner and facility sponsor for many years to come. This year the event was attended by 347 students from 25 First Nation schools.

This year’s event featured several extension events including Robotic Games, “Invent an Alien,” Electronics Adventures, and astronomy shows along with the science fair exhibition. Guest speaker, Solomon Trimble, from Twilight and PhD student in science at the University of Oregon, shared his research in epidemiology.
and his passion for math and science with the students; he made quite an impact. The cast of 60 judges included 30 scientists and professors, who generously volunteered their own time, or took time off work to contribute to the success of this event, and MFNERC staff.

Along with the 60 gold, 102 silver, and 150 bronze medals awarded at the fair, four students were selected to represent the MFNSF at the Canada-Wide Science Fair. Congratulations to our four national finalists:

Tara Brass, Little Saskatchewan, “The Effects of Flooding on the Community’s Water Chemistry”

Destiny Desmarais, Little Saskatchewan, “Soil Chemistry & Flooding in Little Saskatchewan”


National Science Fair Program: Canada-Wide Science Fair

Maintaining affiliation with Youth Science Canada, MFNERC prepares students selected to represent the MFNSF at the Canada-Wide Science Fair (CWSF), and supports this delegation. Under this program, the four outstanding junior high or senior high students who participate in the MFNSF are selected and provided eight weeks of direct and intense mentorship to raise the level of their work and presentation, and then taken on to participate in Canada’s annual national competition, the CWSF. This process provides growth to a whole new level for those students in their personal academic level, as well as, raising the bar for everyone when they return to participate at the provincial level in the MFNSF the following year. Three teachers, one from each school were also sponsored to go to the CWSF, which also serves as an excellent PD opportunity for teachers.

The 2013 delegation will include projects from Little Saskatchewan First Nation and Fisher River Cree Nation. Attendance of our delegation at the upcoming CWSF will mark the 10th year that students from the MFNSF have competed at the national level.
INTERDISCIPLINARY TRAINING INITIATIVES

Various other programs provide secondary support or specific services to the teams and/or First Nations. Some programs serve the whole province such as the Interdisciplinary Training Initiatives (ITI) thus supplementing the work of the service delivery teams through accredited professional development or human resources development required to implement innovative or required programming in First Nations schools. The participants in the training are individuals employed by the First Nations schools, preferably individuals who will remain in the First Nation for an extended period of time to address staff turnover — a major concern in First Nations schools. With the continued efforts toward a systematic approach to First Nation education, the role of the ITI, in partnership with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, will become increasingly important to transformation of First Nations education.

Highlights

Para Educator Program (PEP)
This program was designed to provide paraeducators with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to assist students with lessons under direct supervision of the classroom teacher and/or the resource teacher, monitor and report to the classroom teacher on student progress, assist in the preparation of learning materials and environment, and perform other support functions as required. The practical component of this program allows the participants to apply their skills in an educational setting. To date, over 200 paraeducators have graduated from this program.

MFNERC Training Initiatives and the University College of the North (UCN) Faculty of Education celebrated the completion of the PEP in the communities of Bloodvein First Nation (4 graduates), Tataskwayak Cree Nation (8 graduates), Pinaymootang First Nation (7 graduates), and Poplar River (12 graduates). The online program included six graduates from Fisher River Cree Nation, O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation, Sagkeeng First Nation, Lake Manitoba First Nation and Kinonjeoshtegon First Nation. There were 37 graduates who earned their accredited educational assistant certificates from both UCN and MFNERC. Congratulations to the Para Educator Program Class of 2013!
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

Information Technology focuses on school improvement initiatives through support of technology services. This program supports all other programs in developing online and distance education courses, providing graphic design support, and is responsible for the MFNERC web page.

To support the lack of qualified computer technicians in First Nations and lack of funds to hire technicians, technology technicians provide services to schools through utilization of technology in the classroom and administration of the school. Their services are essential to ensure that networks are functioning effectively. Services are provided in a variety of ways including telephone or online support services as well as community visits.

Highlights

iPads and Tablets in the Classroom Project

In September 2012 iPads and tablets were introduced to grade 1/2 classroom at George Saunders Memorial School, York Landing First Nation. This action research project was carried over from the previous year with the same group of students who advanced from kindergarten to Grade 1. It was expected that these tablets would often be used separately by the two grade levels in the classroom, but in reality the entire class used the iPads, often at the same time. Even though there were a few technical challenges, including slow Internet and Apple TV glitches, the tablets were considered a major boost to the classroom. From the results of this intervention, it is expected there will be a major increase in the use of tablets in the school over the next few years. As expected, the use of the iPads has shown an increase in keeping students engaged in their learning along with noticeable improvement in literacy and numeracy.

Laptops in the Classroom Project

The Laptops in the Classroom Project began at Garden Hill First Nation High School. The computer hardware (25 laptops) and peripherals (printer, headphones, backpacks) were acquired
and the software instalments, along with computer configurations and preparations, took place. The delivery and setup of the classroom laptops will take place at the start of the new school year. Productivity software including Microsoft Office, Kobo, Kindle (ebook readers), GIMP (Photo editing), Movie Maker (video editing), Sketchup and more will be installed on each laptop before delivery to the school. This will enable students to have the resources required to take high school ICT credit courses.

Introduction to Information and Communication Technology, Computer Science and Engineering

This action research project was requested by some schools and will be offered upon request. This project will enable students to further explore and develop technological knowledge and skills introduced in the IT and technology program. Students and teaching staff will be given the opportunity to design and create products and/or provide services related to the various technological areas such as IT, computer science and computer engineering. Students and staff will be working with a variety of technology tools, equipment, software and programming languages commonly used today. Students will develop an awareness of environmental and societal issues, and will begin to explore secondary and post-secondary education and training pathways leading to careers in technology related fields.

Advanced Robotics and Electronics

Research was conducted to find higher level Robotics and Electronics for high school students, and work was completed on the initial design of an electronics program to follow the existing IGNITE program currently offered by MFNERC. This program will use intelligent and programmable robots, and will introduce electronics and robotics to high school students. Students will program, assemble, repair, and configure the robotics. They will also develop a basic understanding of interfacing, controlling, and programming robotics driven by software that can make the robotics “intelligent.” Through this program students will develop an accurate understanding of what computer engineering is, and the work it involves.

As a part of the IGNITE kits, the LEGO robots were available to two schools. A number of the 211 students involved were able to build and program robots. In addition to use in the schools, several robots were used in demonstration and participation activities during the Manitoba First Nations Science Fair held in Winnipeg in February 2013.
SPECIAL EDUCATION

Speech and Language Pathologists (SLPs), two of who accessed their specialized training through the ITI program, provide services to a limited number of schools. This is an area that increases exponentially as awareness increases. The SLPs supervise and provide support, including methods and strategies to para educators trained through an MFNERC program to deliver programming to students who require this specific support. They also work with the ITI Team to deliver accredited professional development, if time permits.

One Special Education Specialist attempts to address the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students in First Nations schools, who have limited or no access to specialized support or equipment and materials, by providing professional development to teachers and para educators as well as parents if at all possible. The specialist partners with mainstream support systems to encourage delivery of services to First Nations.

Special Education Specialists also provide support to resource teachers in the areas of FASD, crises intervention, innovative methods and strategies for teaching special needs students, special education planning, training to use specific assessment instruments, recommending special education resource materials, methods and strategies to assist teachers help students with exceptionalities and so on.

Highlights

Special Education Support

Approximately one-third of the services were devoted to assisting resource teachers in running their programs more effectively. Due to the continued high turnover of resource teachers in First Nations schools, this individualized assistance will continue in order to run resource programs as efficiently as possible.

Approximately 80 per cent of the visits to First Nations schools involved assisting other school staff, which could be education assistants, principals, classroom teachers, school teams, or the entire school staff, and presenting at mini-regionals. It is evident that school staff other than just the resource teacher are in need of support from the special education specialists. Such support is necessary for the concept of inclusion to come to fruition.

Special Education Summer Institute 2012

The 14th Annual Summer Institute was held August 13-17 at the Victoria Inn in Winnipeg. The theme for the summer institute was Effective Supports for Special Education. Throughout the school year, the Special Education Program Team supports schools with effective strategies to enable students with special needs to participate in a school program. Twenty (20) participants received 25 credit hours from Manitoba Education.
BEST PRACTICES IN CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, PROGRAMMING AND MATERIAL RESOURCES

The school implementation plans include a professional development plan to support teacher implementation of best practices in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and other programming. Material resource acquisition is also addressed, to the degree possible, to ensure implementation of best practices. The approach is based on the premise that improving teaching practice will result in increased success of students and will promote student retention if the best practices are maintained over the long-term.

Highlights

MFNERC submitted a proposal to AANDC under the FNSSP near the end of the fiscal year that included the purchase and distribution of literacy, numeracy and integrated science materials and resources to support the remote and isolated schools. Over $1.1 million in resource materials and IT equipment were received by these schools. Another proposal was submitted for the other schools not classified as remote and isolated by AANDC, to enhance the Classroom Libraries Project with $1.2 million in additional resources. Under both initiatives, 306 classrooms will have received over $2.3 million in resources.

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Libraries

This early childhood literacy program is for children from birth to age five with the intent to foster a love of reading among preschool children and their families by mailing them a free (age appropriate) book each month. By the time a child enrolled in the program reaches kindergarten, they will have received 60 books!

A partnership was formalized with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library where MFNERC will cover the shipping costs of the free books. The partnership entails a literacy strategy for providing a free children’s book monthly to each eligible child in 20 isolated schools.
Classroom Libraries Project (Kindergarten to Grade 8)

The proposal funds enhanced the Classroom Libraries Project that was designed to provide schools with reading materials to be used by kindergarten to Grade 8 students. The purpose was to provide the teachers and students with access to high quality reading materials to be used in four critical instructional activities appropriate for students in kindergarten to Grade 8. The books included materials for reading to students, shared reading, guided reading, and independent reading for students in kindergarten to Grade 4. Materials for Grade 5 to Grade 8 consisted of books to read to students, class sets of novels for novel studies, and sets for use in literature circles. The books include a range of genres and topics comprised of mathematics, science, social studies as well as stories that represent First Nations people. This will help teachers use the ideas developed in their cross-curricular plans to reinforce language arts in all subject areas.

Kindergarten to Grade 4

Materials were provided to 120 kindergarten through Grade 4 classrooms. The books provided in the Classroom Libraries Project can be used by the teacher to provide a balanced reading program. Teachers should read aloud to students, provide instruction to the whole class and in smaller reading groups, and provide time for students to practice reading independently. The read-aloud materials support independent reading practice and guided reading by providing the background knowledge and vocabulary for successful word identification. The six-packs of books provided for guided reading support, read-aloud and independent reading provide the strategies needed for making meaning from text. The teachers also received Big Books for Shared Reading. The teacher will give shared reading lessons with the Big Books to model the reading process. Teachers can read the story to students first and then read together with students — preparing them for independent reading. The books provided for independent reading practice support the decoding instruction by allowing students to process common spelling patterns, words parts and comprehension skills. A variety of books for each of these instructional activities were provided in the MFNERC Classroom Libraries Project.

Teachers were also provided with reading materials on CDs. Using the listening stations provided, students are able to practice their reading while listening to the recorded stories. Teachers were also provided with word study games that can be used to develop and strengthen word study skills.

Grades 5 to 8

Literature circles (small groups of students reading the same novel) are effective in providing students opportunities for authentic reading and development of comprehension skills. The six-packs of novels provided in the Classroom Libraries Project will let students select a variety of books on a specific theme. The class sets will enable the teacher to introduce students to processes used in literature circle groups. Teachers should also use the texts to read aloud to students, thus, improving their language skills and vocabulary. Shared and demonstrated reading materials are provided for teaching the students comprehension skills.
The materials included in the project can be used in the study of social studies, science and mathematics and connected to cultural activities. This supports cross-curricular planning and application of English language art skills in all subject areas.

Students are provided with an electronic dictionary/thesaurus. This gives students the materials required to edit their written responses prepared in the literature circles. Students will use the electronic dictionaries to improve their spelling and to develop written vocabularies. Teachers in 94 classrooms (Grades 5-8) have received these materials.

School Staff Support

MFNERC literacy specialists supported schools by assisting with the organization and monitoring of the materials. Some schools have established book rooms where these materials are stored so that teachers can select materials to meet the range of needs of the students in their classrooms. Teachers are signing out the materials and returning them when the students no longer need them.

This also fits into the work that the specialists have focused on with curricular unit planning in literacy development. The additional materials for the teaching of reading and concepts in social studies, science, and mathematics also help with the application of reading skills in other subject areas. The representation of First Nations people and cultural activities in the resources support the concept of identity and pride. The personal connection that students can make with texts leads to a greater awareness of content. This is part of the cross-curricular planning that the literacy and numeracy specialists have been completing in the schools, with the assistance of the other MFNERC specialists.

Early Years Mathematics Libraries

MFNERC purchased and distributed early years mathematics libraries to 20 schools in remote and isolated First Nations to support numeracy programming.

Integrated Science Resources

Additionally, MFNERC purchased and distributed materials and equipment for the remote and isolated First Nations that support programming for increased literacy, numeracy, and student engagement through integrated, relevant, real-world curriculum and hands-on, multi-modal learning activities. Professional development was also provided to teachers on use of this material and equipment to promote:

- Hands-on demonstration, investigation, and exploration of the real world using modern equipment and technology
- Development and completion of integrated projects that provide both a need for and a context for an ever increasing amount of reading, writing, and mathematics
- Integration of literacy and numeracy across a rich and relevant core curriculum exploring the natural world

Each school was provided with an extensive set of science materials to support the teaching of biology, physics, and chemistry topics in the middle years. This equipment will enhance hands-on and project-based science in the classroom.
Before You Know It (BYKI) Program Equipment

The Centre purchased and distributed over $264,000 of IT equipment for 17 additional schools to support integration and wider usage of the BYKI program as a means of increasing literacy rates within First Nations.

With the distribution of laptops, Smart Tables and PCs completed in February, the schools that received equipment used them immediately in their classroom instruction. The Smart Tables are a relatively new technology for language programs to use within their instruction of the early years programming.

The BYKI program has been implemented throughout the entire province of Manitoba and each of the schools has used it within their classroom instruction.

Printing, Publishing and Video Production Centre

To further support school programming and promote student retention, the Centre secured equipment for printing and publishing education resources for First Nations schools. Partnerships have also been established between Manitoba Education, Kwayaciiwin Education Resource Centre in Sioux Lookout, Ontario, and the Manitoba Indian Cultural Education Centre for the acquisition and sharing of educational resources.

The Centre is in the development stage of printing and publishing linguistically and culturally appropriate stories, resource materials and teaching aids that will help First Nations retain their language and culture. Schools will also have the capacity to publish their own resources and students’ work through this new venture. Production of a collection of storybooks, curriculum resources, videos and posters in early literacy and family literacy will be available to all First Nation schools.
CONFERENCE AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Two major conferences provide educators an opportunity for annual professional development tailored to the unique requirements of working within a First Nations school environment.

Highlights

14th Annual Lighting the Fire Education Conference

At this year's conference close to 1000 delegates converged at the Victoria Inn Hotel & Convention Centre on May 9-11, 2012. This year’s theme was Learning Communities, Achieving Success. Keynote speakers included Dr. Thierry Karsenti, Canada Research Chair in Information and Communication Technology in Education. Professor Karsenti spoke extensively about the importance of using technology as a teaching tool. He also shared amusing stories about the challenges he had as a student in the ‘80s trying to bring his professors up to speed in the age of technology. He shared the staggering statistics on the incredible amount of student usage in the world of technology, whether it is Googling information or texting via their cell phones.

On the second day, Dr. John Hansen, member of the Opaskwayak Cree Nation, spoke about his experience in academia as well as the challenges. He shared a model of restorative justice based on the stories, educational principles, values and practices of the Cree culture.

Over the three days, 40 workshops were offered that gave educators the opportunity to learn, to be inspired and to network with each other.

The student essay winners, Athena Stepanow (Jr. winner), Chemawawin School, and Carlton Richard (Sr. winner), Otter Nelson River School, read their insightful essays to an audience of close to a thousand people. The winners took part in a speech workshop, with actor of stage and film
Ryan Black, at the Manitoba Theatre for Young People.

The Maria Ross Awards Banquet honoured three recipients this year: Bertha Ross of Cross Lake First Nation, Lizzie Daniels of Long Plain First Nation and Audrey Solider of Swan Lake First Nation. A performance by Neechie Neil, Neil Diamond impersonator, rounded out the evening and made it a memorable one.

The 14th Annual First Nations Circle of Knowledge & Practices Conference was held at the Holiday Inn South, Winnipeg, October 18-19, 2012. The number of participants in attendance at this year’s event was 678. Sylvia McAdam, Indigenous scholar, was the keynote speaker on the first day.

This conference provides educators an alternative for professional development from the provincial SAG day. We have seen an increase in delegate registration from other school divisions within Manitoba. There were over 20 workshops during the two days, including a variety of workshops including classroom strategies, technology in the classroom and First Nations culture.

The opening ceremonies showcased the five years of success the Roots of Empathy program has had, by inviting the children and families who participated in the anti-bullying program.

MFNERC Newsletter/Website Content

The development of the new MFNERC website has increased traffic and raised interest from individuals and groups. With info@mfnerc.com added to the website, numerous inquiries have been forwarded to MFNERC communications from educators, students and the general public interested in First Nations education and history. There are many new exciting features on the revamped website including the Interactive Map, which showcases the traditional names of Manitoba’s First Nations, and quarterly issues of The Arrow, the Centre’s newsletter which features First Nations school profiles and achievements in First Nations education.
PRIVATE HOME PLACEMENT (PHP)

The PHP program was one of the five priority areas as part of the Education Partnerships Program (EPP) requested by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. MFNERC conducted ongoing partnership meetings with AANDC, Manitoba Education, and First Nations to review the completed research and the development work from the previous years. In March, the draft PHP documents were reviewed and ratified by the directors of education. On June 19, 2012, a resolution was passed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly supporting the 2012-2013 PHP work plan activities. In addition, the PHP Review Team provided ongoing support to presentations of the recently published PHP Framework, PHP Handbook and the PHP Program Review Report to select stakeholders, at regional conferences hosted by MFNERC, including individual First Nations. The PHP information sessions and meetings began in September 2012.

Highlights

The Centre maintained the ongoing partnership meetings with AANDC, Manitoba Education, and First Nations to support the follow-up of the PHP Framework and handbook and community information sessions.

During this fiscal year, presentations were conducted for the political leadership at the AMC Chiefs-in-Assembly on June 19-20, 2012, and to the directors of education at the March 2013 meeting. Both groups were provided an overview of the PHP program project activities to date.

At the June 2012 meeting, a Briefing Note and a Resolution of the PHP Program were submitted to the AMC Executive Council of Chiefs for their review. Following the presentation on the completed PHP documents, the resolution was passed by the Chiefs in attendance. A follow-up presentation was planned to prepare the next steps for the AMC, AANDC and Manitoba Education.

A draft communications protocol document was also completed and sent to the PHP Review Team for their review. The content of the draft document includes (a) Background and Introduction, (b) Goals and Objectives, (c) Target Audience, (d) Key Messages, (e) Implementation, and (f) Evaluation sections.
Community Information Sessions

In addition to contacts made to the individual First Nations managing a PHP Program, two presentations at the mini-regional conferences at Opaskwayak Cree Nation on January 17, 2012, and at St. Theresa Point First Nation occurred. Participants were informed about PHP activities and the documents developed as a result. They had the opportunity to review the documents, to provide feedback, and to make suggestions for further action.

Information was shared with 20 First Nations managing a PHP program on the three completed documents and the availability of information sessions at the community level.

PHP Review Report

The 2012 PHP Review Report provided the following recommendations to improve the educational services to First Nations students through the PHP program:

Summary of Recommendations

1. That MFNERC and its partners ensure the PHP program has adequate funding support.

2. That MFNERC and its partners ensure that the PHP program offers a continuum of standardized services from one system to the other including assessments, placement, transitional programs, tracking and communication.

3. That MFNERC and its partners develop and implement standardized PHP program and services.

4. That MFNERC and its partners ensure the PHP program has standardized counselling and academic supports.

5. That MFNERC and its partners develop professional standards for the PHP program.

6. That MFNERC and its partners ensure continued research and knowledge development to enhance the PHP program.

7. That MFNERC and its partners establish a Task Force/Implementation Committee to support PHP program reform.
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Early Childhood programming with a transition to school is a major unmet need in First Nations despite the fact research indicates early childhood education is essential to the success of school programming or success of students. MFNERC delivers early childhood programming that addresses bullying through the Roots of Empathy and Seeds of Empathy programs in partnership with Healthy Child Manitoba Office (HCMO). There is also research into early childhood programming that will transition the child from early childhood to school-based learning with support to parents highlighted as a major need in the School Improvement Initiative evaluation report. The program also supports First Nations language acquisition.

Highlights

Roots of Empathy (ROE)

Roots of Empathy is an evidence-based classroom program that has shown significant reductions in levels of aggression among schoolchildren by nurturing social/emotional competence and increasing empathy in kindergarten to Grade 8 students. Of the 28 Roots of Empathy instructors that were trained this year, 11 attended the mid-year training and are expected to receive their Roots of Empathy certificates in the fall of 2013. For the instructors not delivering the program this year, both the Roots of Empathy specialist and early years specialist will assist them in the delivery of the program in the 2013-2014 school year.
Seeds of Empathy (SOE)
The SOE training was provided to new early childhood programs/teams to increase the number of First Nations delivering the program with the goal to foster social/emotional competence and early literacy. SOE was designed to build upon the existing caring and trusting relationships between early childhood educators (ECEs) and the children within their programs. In training early childhood educators to follow a curriculum which promotes the building of caring, peaceful and civil societies through the development of empathy in children and adults, the hope is that pro-social behavior will increase and aggression will decrease.

Two professional development sessions were delivered to 11 First Nations and 83 staff during the 2012-2013 year to promote the ongoing education of the SOE team members/ECEs, helping foster the development of empathy and emotional literacy, build social and emotional understanding and develop positive attitudes towards early literacy skills in the participating children.

Provision of professional development and opportunities for networking sessions is part of the Seeds of Empathy’s commitment to continue educating ECEs. Not only are there goals for the children participating in Seeds of Empathy, but there are also goals for the ECEs delivering the program. Ongoing professional development is designed to enhance and expand the skills and knowledge of the ECEs in specific areas.
PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND DATA COLLECTION

The performance measurement component supports the schools to access infrastructure, human resources, as well as, programs to collect data as required and prepare reports for stakeholders and parents. Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP) principles are respected.

Highlights

All 53 signed-on schools will be set up on the Maplewood Data Management System by September 2013. A migration strategy is underway to move schools with a local Maplewood server into MFNERC’s Hosted Maplewood Enterprise. The migration will occur during the summer break to allow time to transfer the data. The technicians will contact each school to coordinate changes.

Maplewood Library is also available to all hosted Maplewood schools and the updated Provincial Report Card format is available on the Hosted Maplewood Enterprise.

MFNERC technicians are in the process of configuring local Maplewood servers for schools with limited bandwidth, with phase 1 of these deployments scheduled for summer 2013.

Student Attendance Results:

(Average monthly student attendance for the 2012/2013 school year for FNSSP schools)

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<th>Dec</th>
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RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The Research and Development Program (RDP) is responsible for research and development related to First Nations curriculum development and school board training. This program coordinates oral and action research to facilitate consultation and to gather data from Elders and others, as well as, academic research.

Highlights

Grassroots Adult Anthology
The RDP initiated the development of an anthology to host the original literature and art work of emerging adult First Nations writers, poets, artists, and photographers. The Grassroots Anthology is the first publication of MFNERC that showcases a collection of short stories, poetry, art work and photographs to present a literature and visual representation source for the use on the First Nations schools and inspire the youth. The anthology will be printed in summer 2013.

First Nations Educational Leadership Strategy
This year, the First Nations Educational Leadership Strategy was developed which required the guidance of a working group consisting of content experts in First Nation education. The purpose of the working group was to develop a certificate program on educational leadership for First Nation education directors. The working group used data gathered from a training needs assessment survey completed by education directors. Throughout the year, based on the consultation meetings, the working group developed a concept paper based on the needs identified by education directors on the required topics for effective leadership, management, and administration of their specific education programs. It was also deemed that the leadership strategy be developed with accreditation through the Province of Manitoba (Teacher Certification Branch) and MFNERC as a post-secondary institution. The accreditation of the leadership strategy is still in progress. The initial activity stemming from the consultation was the First Nations Knowledge: Traditions,
Culture, Language and Educational Leadership Summer Institute held in August 2012. Following this, a course on the Treaty Education Initiative was delivered in January 2013 in partnership with the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba. Consultation on future courses and the certificate/diploma program is still ongoing. The ultimate goal is to develop a provincially accredited certificate/diploma program on leadership for First Nation education directors.

**Instructional Resource Centre (IRC)**
Both the Winnipeg and Thompson Instructional Resource Centres have established a system on the MFNERC website (www.mfnerc.com) supporting the capability for online access to the IRC collections. This process allows users/clients to access an updated list of materials for research and borrowing.
WAPASKWA VIRTUAL COLLEGIATE (WVC)

The Wapaskwa Virtual Collegiate provides courses that are not available in First Nations schools since most schools do not have the capacity or budget to offer high school courses that are high cost given their low enrollment particularly, in the sciences and mathematics.

Highlights

WVC continued to partner with Credenda Virtual High School, Desire2Learn and Elluminate Live. The cost-sharing benefit of having WVC’s learning management system, Desire2Learn, hosted on the Credenda server continues to be financially beneficial. Students and staff from WVC log into courses, which route through Credenda Virtual High School, in Saskatchewan. The arrangement continued to make available WVC’s courses to our student population here in Manitoba.

The web conferencing tool, Elluminate Live, provides WVC with the ability to have live synchronous classes. Students enrolled in WVC classes have a single point of entry into the Learning Management System, Desire2Learn, through unique user names and passwords assigned by WVC principal. Elluminate Live remained functional and adequate during the fiscal year for staff and students.

WVC has maintained instructional development services and tools for course development. Software and equipment were available to both staff and students. Alien Skin software has been purchased by media developers to help with video integration of content with Desire2Learn. Adobe products such as Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Dreamweaver and Flash have been upgraded to newer versions and have been purchased for all WVC course developers/instructors. Developer software such as MathType and SnagIt are available. Where possible, free software is evaluated and utilized for instruction, such as Geogebra.

The following 11 courses were delivered to over 170 students in 2012-2013:

1. Grade 9 Math
2. Grade 9 Science
3. Grade 9 Social Studies
4. Grade 10 Introduction to Applied and PreCalculus Math
5. Grade 10 Science
6. Grade 10 Geography
7. Grade 10 ELA
8. Grade 11 PreCalculus Math
9. Grade 11 Biology
10. Grade 11 Physics
11. Grade 11 ELA (Comprehensive)

In September 2013, WVC will receive a school code from Manitoba Education to become an accredited Manitoba high school, a major milestone for WVC!
FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION SYSTEM (FNES) INITIATIVE

Under the direction of the Board of Directors and with the support of the Chiefs of Manitoba, MFNERC continues to assist the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) to develop First Nations Education Systems. Resolution JUN-12.06 was passed by the AMC Chiefs-in-Assembly amending the mandate of MFNERC to offer enhanced second level services (school division-type services), while continuing work on developing enhanced education systems for First Nations including third level services (department of education-type services) such as facilitating the development of education law templates (local/aggregate), accreditation, certification, curriculum development, training, advocacy and other supports required by First Nations in Manitoba.

Highlights

A total of five meetings, forums, or gatherings were held to facilitate the engagement process with the education directors and Chiefs. The engagement with Chiefs and education directors was facilitated through a Chiefs’ forum which was held November 28-29, 2012 and at the 2012-2013 education directors’ meetings. The AMC, Southern Chiefs’ Organization (SCO), Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) and education directors were given information packages on the FNES initiative.

MFNERC continued work on the enhanced education system(s). Five research reports were completed in the following areas:

3. Programming and Funding for On-Reserve Education Systems.
4. Programming and Funding for Off-Reserve Education Systems.

All reports are currently in the editing phase and will be made available to First Nations stakeholders in the near future.

A draft education act template was developed and will be utilized to inform discussion. Engagement with First Nations Chiefs and education directors regarding the contents of the template will be the next step in the process.
ROSEAU RIVER ANICINABE FIRST NATION PILOT PROJECT

July 2011, the leadership of Roseau River Anicinabe First Nation (RRAFN) approached AANDC on the inadequate programming, services and funding available to their community. AANDC consequently approached MFNERC, which resulted in a pilot project that would send a team of MFNERC staff to Ginew School, in an effort to improve the overall functioning level of the school. MFNERC was created to provide education services to Manitoba First Nations-operated schools in Manitoba, but under this three-year partnership, Ginew School would be the first school that MFNERC would be administratively responsible for.

Through this pilot project, MFNERC has worked with the First Nation community, as well as with AANDC to support development and implementation of a school improvement plan that focused on student achievement in the areas of literacy and numeracy. It was anticipated that the end result of the project would lead to the development of a “First Nation School of Excellence”.

RRAFN/MFNERC Partnership fulfills a key component of resolution JUN-12.06. RRAFN/MFNERC Partnership was signed on August 24, 2012, granting MFNERC School Division status.

RRAFN/MFNERC project continued with the signing of the agreement, hiring of staff and the implementation of the strategic plan.

The overall objective is to help advance achievement of the students of RRAFN and, under the terms of the existing agreement, both parties will share ideas and recommendations and strive toward the achievement of the following educational goals:

1. Overall improvement of academic functioning in Ginew School in assessment, student engagement and retention.
2. Increased staff retention rates.
3. Enhanced positive school and community relations.
4. Enhanced participation by students and staff in sports and extra curricular activities.

5. Building positive self-identity and self-confidence in First Nation students through exposure to Anishinabe traditions, beliefs, values and language.

6. Inclusion of all students regardless of giftedness and remedial or special need.

7. Creating and ensuring better linkages between early childhood, elementary and secondary school for the First Nation students.

8. Development of a plan for the provision of services such as professional development and training.

9. Ensuring the development of an evaluation process of student progress and achievement to be carried out through a divisional K-6 assessment protocol (literacy and numeracy) as well as the Grade 3/7/8 provincial assessments.

10. Preparation of biannual results to date to be discussed and shared among the First Nation leadership, MFNERC and AANDC.

**Highlights**

**Literacy Achievements**

All students have been assessed using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. The first assessment was conducted in November/December 2012. Student results were recorded and shared with the teachers.

In March 2013, students were reassessed and the results were shared with the classroom teachers and the resource teacher. Students will be reassessed for the third time in May/June 2013. Overall, literacy accomplishments included:

- Increased reading levels in most classrooms
- Emphasis that the school is placing on literacy is filtering down to the classroom level
- Instruction is geared towards student needs
- Programming/assessments being done consistently across grade levels
- Materials received in the school to support programming and instructional strategies
- Collected information for Grade 3 and 8 assessments
- School-wide celebration of reading (I Love to Read promotion)
- Identified need for alignment of assessment and development of assessment framework
- Early Development Instrument (EDI) (2nd round) conducted for kindergarten students
- PAST-R
- Development of unit plans for early literacy
- Draft form of writing continuum
Numeracy Achievements

Early numeracy activities were introduced to support and enhance student learning and retention in math concepts, number sense, number operations, algebraic reasoning and problem-solving. As a result students were more engaged in math learning with hands-on activities with routine. However, math instruction and learning could be supported and enhanced cross-circularly through ELA, science, social studies, First Nation language and culture, etc.

The 2012/13 school year have seen a lot of growth for the administrator, teachers and students at Ginew School mathematically, for they are more aware of the need and support in student assessment, student engagement, retention in numeracy and the necessary textual and hands-on resources at the school. Overall, numeracy accomplishments included:

- Began the process of making the framework for school generated assessment
- Training was provided on spiral planning
- Problem solving teacher resources were shared and used
- Reporting Grade 3 & 7 began
- Mentoring in the school occurred
# Five-Year Financial Summary

## 2009 - 2014

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<td>2012</td>
<td>$17,413,103</td>
<td>$17,413,103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>$23,870,860</td>
<td>$23,870,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>$24,010,346</td>
<td>$24,010,346</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>2009 - 10</th>
<th>2010 - 11</th>
<th>2011 - 12</th>
<th>2012 - 13</th>
<th>2013 - 14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AANDC</td>
<td>$5,452,757</td>
<td>$5,111,800</td>
<td>$4,867,253</td>
<td>$4,927,119</td>
<td>$4,927,119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>$1,892,000</td>
<td>$1,892,000</td>
<td>$1,922,000</td>
<td>$1,892,000</td>
<td>$1,892,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FNSSP</td>
<td>$2,500,000</td>
<td>$5,002,522</td>
<td>$8,450,000</td>
<td>$12,736,488</td>
<td>$12,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPP</td>
<td>$1,399,823</td>
<td>$2,013,883</td>
<td>$1,526,856</td>
<td>$2,352,143</td>
<td>$2,998,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Contribution Agreements</td>
<td>$940,339</td>
<td>$522,304</td>
<td>$404,117</td>
<td>$500,352</td>
<td>$500,352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus Returned</td>
<td>$(31,532)</td>
<td>$(60,023)</td>
<td>$(117,123)</td>
<td>$(23,497)</td>
<td>$(23,497)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AANDC - GINEW School</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total AANDC</strong></td>
<td>$12,153,387</td>
<td>$14,882,486</td>
<td>$17,413,103</td>
<td>$23,870,860</td>
<td>$24,010,346</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Other Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>2009 - 10</th>
<th>2010 - 11</th>
<th>2011 - 12</th>
<th>2012 - 13</th>
<th>2013 - 14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>$(23,497)</td>
<td>$(23,497)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Other Revenue</strong></td>
<td>$12,153,387</td>
<td>$14,882,486</td>
<td>$17,413,103</td>
<td>$23,870,860</td>
<td>$24,010,346</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2009 - 10</th>
<th>2010 - 11</th>
<th>2011 - 12</th>
<th>2012 - 13</th>
<th>2013 - 14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries &amp; Benefits</td>
<td>$6,281,968 (48%)</td>
<td>$7,627,642 (51%)</td>
<td>$8,581,779 (46%)</td>
<td>$11,071,405 (46%)</td>
<td>$14,184,627 (57%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>$1,627,976 (13%)</td>
<td>$1,874,322 (12%)</td>
<td>$2,435,692 (13%)</td>
<td>$2,576,241 (11%)</td>
<td>$2,981,665 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects, Resources, Admin &amp; Other</td>
<td>$5,090,007 (39%)</td>
<td>$5,490,889 (37%)</td>
<td>$7,440,369 (40%)</td>
<td>$10,575,230 (44%)</td>
<td>$7,610,613 (31%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$12,999,951</td>
<td>$14,997,853</td>
<td>$18,457,840</td>
<td>$24,222,876</td>
<td>$24,776,906</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Surplus (Deficit)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2009 - 10</th>
<th>2010 - 11</th>
<th>2011 - 12</th>
<th>2012 - 13</th>
<th>2013 - 14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surplus Returned</td>
<td>$15,572</td>
<td>$48,081</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$261,861</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

##Staffing Comparison

- MFNERC Staff: 101, 108, 123, 137, 139
- Information Workers: 10, 21, 26, 37, 46
- GINEW Staff: 3, 34, 208
- Total: 111, 129, 152, 208, 217

### Revenue 2012 - 13

- **New Paths**: 52%
- **Special Education**: 44%
- **FNSSP**: 10%

### Expenditures 2012 - 13

- **Salaries & Benefits**: 46%
- **Travel**: 10%
MFNERC partners with a wide variety of Education and First Nations organizations for the advancement of our First Nations schools, communities and youth. We thank them for their continued support, dedication, and commend them on their shared vision.

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
Aboriginal Peoples Television Network
Aboriginal School of Dance
All Nations Print Ltd.
American Indian Science and Engineering Society
Archives of Manitoba
Assembly of First Nations
Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
Association of Canadian Archivists
Brandon University
Credenda Virtual High School
Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Environment Canada
Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations
First Nation Education Steering Committee
First Nations and Inuit Health, Health Canada
Fort LaBosse School Division
Frontier School Division
Government of Manitoba
Healthy Child Manitoba Office
InformNet
Interlake Reserves Tribal Council
Island Lake Tribal Council
Keewatin Tribal Council
Kwayaciwin Education Resource Centre
Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
Manitoba Education
Manitoba First Nations Daycares and HeadStart Programs
Manitoba First Nations Education Authorities
Manitoba First Nations Schools
Manitoba Hydro
Manitoba Indian Cultural Education Centre
Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.
Manitoba School for the Deaf
Marzano Research Laboratory
Mikmaw Kina’matnewey
Native Communications Inc.
Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre
Red River College
Royal Astronomical Society of Canada
Southeast Resource Development Council
Southern Chiefs Organization Inc.
St. Boniface Research Centre
Swampy Cree Tribal Council
The Dollywood Foundation of Canada
The Grand Council of Treaty #3
The Manitoba Teachers’ Society
Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba
Turtle Lodge, Anishinabe Mikinack Kinamakamik Inc.
University College of the North
University of Manitoba
University of Saskatchewan
University of Winnipeg
West Region Tribal Council
Winnipeg School Division
Youth Science Canada
CONCLUSION

We have attempted to provide a snapshot of highlights from the 2012/2013 fiscal year in order that all stakeholders are familiar with the role MFNERC plays in assisting First Nations delivery of quality and culturally appropriate education programs. Our strength lies in the support we receive from our leadership, First Nations in general and the educators.

We will continue to perform the necessary research, both academic and from Elders, or experiential learning, to facilitate processes and professional development to meet the expressed needs of First Nations. Our role is that of a support unit for the First Nations education system that exists in Manitoba. We are committed to excellence in First Nations education.