

TOWARDS SELF-GOVERNMENT: A MANDATE FOR THE NINETIES

MANDATE

THE GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE OF NATIVE STUDIES AND APPLIED RESEARCH INC.



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A MANDATE

FOR THE NINETIES

for

**THE GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE OF
NATIVE STUDIES AND APPLIED RESEARCH INC.**

February 1, 1992



**MISSION
OF THE
GABRIEL DUMONT
INSTITUTE OF NATIVE
STUDIES
AND
APPLIED RESEARCH INC.**

**"To promote the renewal and
development of Métis culture and
to design and deliver educational
and cultural programs for and
about Métis people."**

INTRODUCTION

THE NEED FOR A NEW MANDATE

The Métis people of Saskatchewan have an agenda to re-establish Métis self-government and to take hold of the twenty-first century. The next few years will be critical ones for defining the ways in which Métis institutions will relate to federal and provincial governments. Services to Métis people must be prioritized at the community level and plans made for implementation and delivery in a way which is meaningful and beneficial.

As the only Métis-controlled post-secondary education institution in Canada, the Gabriel Dumont Institute must be involved in the nation-building process. With more than a decade of experience in education and research, the Institute will be instrumental in development and education of a professional and technical infrastructure for the Métis Nation.

EDUCATION IS THE KEY

Education and training are pivotal to the future of the Métis nation. The vicious cycle of unemployment, poverty and low education achievement have prevented the Métis from becoming full participants in the skilled labour force and community economic development.

Successful schooling and permanent employment translate into more income, healthier lifestyles, independence and increased self-esteem. Jobs today require more schooling than when our fathers worked in the bush or on the farm. We must train our children for the jobs of the future by providing them with the knowledge, skills and experience which they need, in ways that enhance their Métis identity. Our goal is to prepare them to be strong, proud and independent Métis citizens.

THE MÉTIS NATION NEEDS PEOPLE EDUCATED TO TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF NATIONHOOD: INFORMED CITIZENS, PROFESSIONALS, POLITICIANS, BUREAUCRATS AND BUSINESS PEOPLE. GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE MUST WORK TO SEE THAT THE DREAM OF MÉTIS SELF-GOVERNMENT BECOMES A REALITY. WE MUST PREPARE.

PUTTING THE CHALLENGE IN PERSPECTIVE

Métis people are fully aware of their low education levels and recognize the importance of raising basic education to provide a foundation for higher learning and skill development.

In the 1989/90 GDI Community Training Needs Survey, Métis people ranked "upgrading to high-school level training" as the most needed opportunity in their communities.

The non-Aboriginal population of Saskatchewan is aging, and young working-age people are leaving the province. In contrast, the Métis population is young and growing with almost 50% under 15 years of age.

Canada is looking toward educated Aboriginal people to make up a significant segment of the country's future workforce.

Métis people are under-educated and unskilled for the new jobs which are predicted for Saskatchewan. By the year 2000, only 1% of the new labour force positions, in the province, will require less than grade 12.

Approximately 40% of Métis people of Saskatchewan have less than grade 9 schooling and more than seven out of ten have not graduated from high school.

According to the 1986 Census, the Métis people of Saskatchewan are among the poorest Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

The average annual income of Saskatchewan Aboriginal people, age 15 and over, is \$10,346. This is more than \$6,000 below the average income of the general population of Saskatchewan and more than \$2,000 less than the average annual income reported for Canada's Aboriginal people.

It is estimated that only 50% of Métis people over 15 are in the labour force. Many of the positions employing Metis people are low-paying, entry-level jobs, which require minimal skills, within the service sector and are seasonal or part-time in nature.

Construction trades are in decline in Saskatchewan and here too the province's Aboriginal population is disproportionately involved.

PART ONE

THE GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE, 1980 - 1992

From a Vision...

In the mid-1970s, the Métis of Saskatchewan had a vision - a vision that culturally relevant and accredited education would bring independence and self-reliance.

.....**To Reality**

Through hard work the vision became a reality with the inauguration of the Gabriel Dumont Institute in 1980. The Institute is recognized now as the education arm of the Métis Society of Saskatchewan.

From Recognition...

From a modest beginning some twelve years ago, the Institute has grown to national recognition. Yet through these years, it has continued to maintain a vital linkage and connection with the local community people it serves.

.....**To Leadership**

It is anticipated that the hundreds of students who pass through the Institute each year will use their education and cultural awareness to provide community leadership and nation building.

GOVERNANCE

The ownership of the Gabriel Dumont Institute lies with the Métis people of Saskatchewan. The Métis people are organized into approximately 120 Locals and twelve districts in the province.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Board of Governors of the Gabriel Dumont Institute formalizes Métis community control of the Institute's operations.

The Board is comprised of twenty-three members including representatives from the Provincial Métis Council (4); the twelve Saskatchewan Métis Society districts (12); the Metis Women of Saskatchewan (2); students of Institute programs (2); University of Regina (1); University of Saskatchewan (1); and the Provincial Government (1).

The Board of Governors:

- sets goals and directions
- determines policy;
- and brings the perspective of the Métis community to decisions pertaining to the Institute.

Executive Director

The Board of Governors is responsible for supervising the Executive Director of the Gabriel Dumont Institute.

The chief executive officer of the Institute is the Executive Director. The Executive Director has the responsibility for the administrative activities carried out in the name of the Institute. The Executive Director ensures that these activities reflect the policies and directions of the Board of Governors formalizing the direction set by the membership.

Operational Division

Currently the Gabriel Dumont Institute has the following operational divisions:

- University Programs;
- Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP);
- Curriculum (Métis Studies);
- Library Information Services;
- Finance and Administration;
- Research and Development Unit;
- and,
- Native Services Division.

In addition, the Institute has two subsidiaries. These are:

- the Gabriel Dumont Community Training Residence Inc. and;
- the Dumont Technical Institute Inc.

THE FIRST MANDATE

(1980 - 1987)

Cultural Programming

The initial mandate of the Gabriel Dumont Institute was to deliver cultural programming. Under this mandate, the Institute developed a range of cultural services, including a library with outreach capacity, a curriculum development unit, language resources, and a number of cultural courses for the enrichment of technical school and college-level training programs. The Institute's first program, SUNTEP, began in the early 1980s.

THE SECOND MANDATE

(1987 - 1992)

The New Education System

In 1986, the Métis people expressed their desire to expand the mandate of the Gabriel Dumont Institute to include creation of a "New Education System" to serve Métis communities. Under this mandate the Institute undertook initiatives in the areas of technical programming, university education, Adult Basic Education, Native Studies and resource materials appropriate for use at the K-12 level.

MEETING THE NEED

1980 - 1992

- **Programs**

From 1980 to 1992, the Gabriel Dumont Institute has brought culturally-relevant training and accredited education initiatives to Métis communities throughout Saskatchewan. The Institute has delivered accredited adult programs in a supportive environment at the preparatory, technical and university levels. Through these programs, Métis students have been given the opportunity to train and be certified in such fields as teaching, administration, law enforcement, social work, human justice, health care, resource technology and management, recreation technology and early childhood education.

- **Follow-Up & Evaluation**

- **Material Development**

- **Research and Development**

A follow-up survey of the Institute's 1988-89 graduates has shown that while 70% of respondents were unemployed before entering their G.D.I. program, 84% are now employed or pursuing further studies.

The Institute has had an impact on mainstream schooling in Saskatchewan through its design and development of Métis-specific curriculum support materials for the K-12 system, universities, and Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology (SIAST). Many of the materials developed at the Institute are available upon request.

- **Innovation**

Library and research developments in the area of Métis studies have also made a positive impact. At the same time, the Institute has created education and training innovations to meet the special needs of our people. These include high school completion programs, Grades 0-5 community literacy programming, a Community Training Residence for female offenders, the development of the Native Services Division of SIAST and the recent incorporation of the Dumont Technical Institute, which will soon be an academically federated college of SIAST.

- **Community Participation**

The goals of the Gabriel Dumont Institute are the goals of the Métis people: self-determination, independence and self-reliance. The Institute has continually challenged established institutions and governments to recognize and accommodate the inherent rights of the Métis. Where the vision of the Métis surpasses the constraints of the mandates and practices of mainstream institutions and programs, the Gabriel Dumont Institute has worked to facilitate the creation of Métis structures which express and promote its vision.

PART TWO

THE NEW MANDATE

TOWARDS SELF-GOVERNMENT

To this time the Gabriel Dumont Institute has been working towards a new education system for Métis people. It now must work within a new reality - -
a self-governed Métis nation.

CULTURAL MANDATE

- **Languages**

To develop the cultural foundation of the Métis Nation, Gabriel Dumont Institute will enhance, develop, collect, support and disseminate language materials and programs pertaining to the languages spoken by the Métis, particularly Cree, Dene and Michif. The Institute will collect, develop, design, test and evaluate materials related to the Métis people for curriculum development. It will enhance and expand the library holdings, archival resources, genealogical research, and historical and archaeological information of the Métis people.

- **Curriculum**

- **Métis Studies**

- **Library/Archive/Métis DataBase**

Essential to the goals of self-determination are the support and continued expansion of a Métis-specific resource base. A priority of the Gabriel Dumont Institute will be the acquisition and accessibility of all written knowledge of the Métis. The Institute's Resource Centre must remain accessible to the community. Modern technology is available to put the material now in our vast collection of archival documents into computerized data banks to make this collection even more accessible.

EDUCATION MANDATE

Dumont Technical Institute

- Establishment of a comprehensive Métis Education System governed by a Métis Education Act, regulations, policies and procedures developed by Métis governments at the local and provincial levels.
- The Dumont Technical Institute (DTI) academically federated with the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology (SIAST) will develop and deliver, in collaboration with the Métis communities and other Métis self-governed structures, those courses which are deemed essential for the goals of Métis self-government and the development of strong and independent individuals and communities;

Dumont Technical Institute, con't..

- DTI will develop strategies and services which support Métis people to access and successfully complete SIAST programs and other programs developed under the terms and conditions of the DTI federation agreement;
- DTI will undertake the assessment of post-secondary technical needs and experiences of Métis people and their communities. DTI will identify the appropriate resources, programs and services to address identified needs and priorities.

The Dumont Technical Institute will also:

- deliver preparatory and technical training programs;
- deliver Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs; and
- enter into agreements and partnerships with appropriate institutions, agencies and employers to ensure employment and adequate training and placement of Métis people.

**SELF DETERMINATION
AT THE
UNIVERSITY LEVEL**

- The Gabriel Dumont Institute will commission an assessment of the position of the universities in Saskatchewan in regards to Métis self-determination. Governance and administrative control by Métis people of university programs and decisions affecting those programs must be examined. The existing commitment of the two provincial universities to SUNTEP, employment equity, federation proposals and support for Métis students must be evaluated. If the evaluation reveals lack of support by the universities as to the goal of Métis self-determination, alternative accreditation mechanisms and institutional options will be considered.
- Aboriginal language development and teacher preparation must become a priority at the university level.
- Negotiations towards a university education strategy for Métis people will continue.
- Development must proceed for SUNTEP models of training in all professions.

Regional Métis Colleges

- Gabriel Dumont Institute and the Métis government need to create an adult education component that serves the regional needs of the people. One northern and one southern regional Métis-controlled College would meet the diverse needs of Métis adults in literacy training, cultural and language development, employment training, professional access, and Métis studies.

K-12 System

- Local Métis School Boards must be organized where numbers warrant.
- Métis-controlled schools must be developed in Métis communities.
- Strategic partnerships between Métis governments and School Boards in urban and rural divisions must exist regardless of whether the school is provincial, Métis, Federal or band-controlled.
- Métis-controlled demonstration schools must be developed as practicum centres for teacher trainees and as research centres for evolving Métis-specific teaching materials and pedagogy.

EDUCATING FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT

Community Education

The Gabriel Dumont Institute will take the lead role in educating for self-government and nation-building.

Community education will continue to be emphasized by the Gabriel Dumont Institute. It is apparent that there is a desperate need in Métis communities for materials and literacy classes in the Aboriginal languages. Forums are needed to convey information to that segment of the population who will not be formally involved in any of the education structures within our new education network.

Community Education will involve information on:

- Planning for Self-Government
 - Metis Rights, Land Claims and Constitutional and Aboriginal Rights

- Implementation of Self-Government
 - discussions on what Metis Self-Government will look like in our communities

Community Education, continued.....

- developing models of Self-Government

Part of the community education mandate is to engage the community in research activities that will build the foundation for self-government.

Community research on the local environment, economy, historical enterprises, and educational levels, will provide a knowledge base for future decision-making. Decisions for Gabriel Dumont Institute programming will evolve from the community-based information sources.

IMPORTANCE OF THE MANDATE

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS: OVERCOMING OBSTACLES AND SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES

The Métis Nation is at a turning point. The opportunity is here to re-establish the self-government exercised by our forefathers. We must prepare. We must work together to create a Nation of caring, competent and creative people.

We are people with a love of freedom, 'joie de vivre' and a tradition of fighting for what is right. Our commitment to principles is a strength of our people.

We must build our Nation grounded in these strengths from the past but founded on the skills, knowledge and abilities that will be needed in the twenty-first century. We understand the need for balance between the past and the present.

The Gabriel Dumont Institute is our instrument for exercising self-government and educating for self-government. We must be committed to the vision of an education system for the Métis people and controlled by the Metis people. We must strive to instill our values and our expectations so that we may take charge of our own lives and communities. We are the descendants of great leaders: Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont.

"The right to self-government is an inalienable right of all people. We ask no one for permission. It is a gift from our creator. What we seek is cooperation from all to exercise this right in our territory."

