

RCAP PRESENTATION

Introduction:

Tansi.

Thanks to the Chairperson, and other presenters.

In my presentation today, I will be discussing the mandate and history of the Gabriel Dumont Institute, GDI training principles, our comprehensive Metis education strategy, Metis self-government initiatives, Metis Community education programs, Metis university training, and our Metis K-12 Education Initiatives. I also want to share with you some of our good ideas for program development and delivery.

I will also outline the reasons for our successes and some of our future major educational and employment initiatives. Finally, I will share some of the problems we are experiencing in the delivery of education programs to Metis people.

Mandate and History of GDI.

The Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, Inc. was incorporated in 1980 to serve the education needs of Saskatchewan Metis and Non-Status Indian communities. Its mission, as stated in *A mandate for the nineties*, is "to promote the renewal and development of Metis culture through appropriate research activities, materials development, collection and distribution of those materials and the design development, and delivery of specific educational and cultural programs and services".

The mandate of GDI is to be the educational arm of the Metis political organization in the Province of Saskatchewan, the Metis Society of Saskatchewan, Inc., and to strive toward a self-sufficient and self-governed Metis nation with a full range of Metis-controlled education institutions and resources.

GDI Training Principles:

There are three training principles found in every program established and delivered by the Gabriel Dumont Institute:

1) The first is that every course must be accredited and recognized by a major post-secondary institution.

2) The second is that all these courses must be of the highest quality obtainable in Saskatchewan.

3) The third is that all educational programs must be directed toward our long term goal of self-government.

1. Metis Education Strategy

Metis people, on the whole, are poorly served by the current provincial educational system and are ill equipped to compete and succeed in today's workforce. The goal of GDI, is to help Metis people to achieve an equitable education by teaching the tools to self-sufficiency.

In order to become self-sufficient, we must create educational institutions which address our specific needs from kindergarten through post secondary education and training. Specifically, we are talking about establishing a Federated Metis College through the University of Saskatchewan, a K-12 system of education for Metis people and a federated Metis Technical Institute. The three institutions will deliver community based and on-campus training and education programs for Metis people in Saskatchewan. In addition we are restructuring our institute to include a comprehensive marketing strategy to promote our culture worldwide.

Metis Self Government Initiatives

GDI takes the lead in educating Metis people for self-government and nation building through the maintenance of languages spoken by Metis people, developing curricula special to Metis education, and acquisition of knowledge specific to the Metis people.

The Metis Society of Saskatchewan and the Gabriel Dumont Institute are developing, in consultation with the Metis community, a Metis Education Act which will govern all our educational activities in the future.

Last week, the Government of Saskatchewan and the Metis Society of Saskatchewan signed a bi-lateral Process Agreement. The terms of reference of this Agreement include the development of strategies which will clarify federal jurisdictions for Metis people, and address policy and sector program issues.

In early July, the Gabriel Dumont Institute will assist the community of Pinehouse, Saskatchewan develop strategic plans in education, training, employment, and self-government.

2. Metis Community Education Programs

Training programs are geared to suit the needs of a particular area. Each course is usually accredited through one of the post-secondary institutions in the province. Each accredited program includes a preparatory training phase which prepares the Metis students for university or technical training.

3. Dumont Technical Institute

DTI has a mandate to design and deliver new vocational and technical programs to Metis people. Adult basic education programs at the community level will also be delivered by DTI, thus eliminating the need for upgrading courses as a component of each training course. This is expected to be a joint Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology/DTI venture, with funding to come from the provincial government.

4. Metis University Training

The goal is to federate with the University of Saskatchewan to create a Metis College, similar to the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College. However, funding is not yet in place.

5. K-12 System

A comprehensive K-12 system of education specific to the Metis culture governed by a Metis Education Act is our goal. Its mandate will be to rectify the present poor socio-economic and educational position of Metis people throughout the province. This must include strategic partnerships with rural and urban school boards, and the development of a Metis School Board.

Provisions must be made to include curriculum changes that will promote the positive aspects of Metis culture.

Metis Education K-12 Task Force:

The goal is to consult with the Metis community to determine the support for a Metis education system and also to evaluate the current provincial system.

6. Success of Existing Programs

The average rate of success for GDI accredited programs, including the SUNTEP program, is 75%-85%.

Reasons for Success

- a) accreditation and certification
- b) quality
- c) community based
- d) preparatory phase
- e) practicum phase
- f) self-government
- g) student support system on GDI run programs
- h) Metis studies

7. Major Initiatives

- a) cross-cultural training
 - b) Metis literacy and youth education strategy
 - c) Metis heritage survey
 - d) self-government specialists
 - e) employment equity research and plans
 - f) human justice and CTR
 - g) Metis housing administration
 - h) marketing strategy to promote Metis culture
- Using CD Rom technology and INTERNET

10. Impediments and Barriers to Education

- a) institutional racism and discrimination
- b) lack of effective employment equity policies
- c) access to education
- d) current on-campus Metis student support systems
- e) lack of Metis funding system
- f) government core funding: problems at both the provincial
and federal levels
- g) current employment situation for Metis people
- h) employee retention of Metis people
- i) health issues in relation to socio-economic status
- j) administration: unnecessary controls at the
federal and provincial levels

Conclusion

We in the Gabriel Dumont Institute are very proud of our record. We need support of the Royal Commission to create a better Metis education system that will help our young people stay in school. We can no longer depend on mainstream institutions to educate our children. We believe that through Metis Nation-building, we will find ways to become more self-sufficient and less dependent on welfare programs.