

DRAFT (FOR DISCUSSION ONLY)

**TOWARDS SELF-GOVERNMENT
A MANDATE FOR THE NINETIES**

for

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

January, 1992

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

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

I N T R O D U C T I O N

THE NEED FOR A NEW MANDATE

The Métis people of Saskatchewan must be ready to take hold of the twenty-first century and the very real opportunity to move towards Métis self-government. The next few years will be critical ones for defining the ways that Métis institutions will relate to the federal and provincial governments. Services to the Métis people must be prioritized and a plan must be made on the most beneficial ways to deliver these services.

As the only Métis-controlled post-secondary educational 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 Gabriel Dumont Institute will be instrumental in developing the support system of community, professional and technical education for the Métis Nation.

EDUCATION IS THE KEY

The key to the future of the Métis people is education. Poverty is partly due to our under education and inability to participate in the skilled labour force and economic development of our communities.

Statistics show that for Métis people more schooling means better jobs and better jobs translate into more income, healthier lifestyles, independence and increased self-esteem. Jobs today require more schooling than jobs did 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, independent Métis citizens.

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

PUTTING THE CHALLENGE IN PERSPECTIVE

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

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

The non-Aboriginal population of Saskatchewan is aging and young working-age people are leaving the province. In contrast, the Métis population is very young 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.

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

Approximately 40% of the Métis people of 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, was \$10,346. This was 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 Aboriginal people are low-paying, entry-level jobs 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...

...To Reality

From Recognition...

...To Leadership

In the mid 1970's the Métis of Saskatchewan had a vision – a vision where we would take control of our own education and work toward our cultural survival as a proud and distinct people.

Through hard work and negotiations we made this vision a reality and hence the inception of the Gabriel Dumont Institute in 1980. The Institute now is recognized as the educational arm of the Métis Society of Saskatchewan.

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 people it serves.

The request for each program delivered through the Institute continues to be initiated at the community level. Ultimately, we hope that the hundreds of students who pass through the Institute each year will use their education and cultural awareness to provide community leadership.

Governance

The ownership of the Gabriel Dumont Institute lies with the Métis Society of Saskatchewan and its membership.

The membership has the final authority in all matters of Institute policy and programming. This authority is exercised through the Annual General Assembly.

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-four members including representatives from: the provincial Métis Society executive (4); the twelve Saskatchewan Métis Society areas (12); the Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's Council (2); students of Institute programs (2); University of Regina (1); University of Saskatchewan (1); the Provincial government (1); and, the Federal Government (1).

Executive Director

The Board of Governors:

- determines policy;
- approves new programs;
- oversees the administration of the Institute as a whole;
- brings the perspective of the Métis community to decisions pertaining to the Institute.

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

As the chief administrative officer of the Institute the Executive Director has the responsibility for the day to day activities carried out in the name of the Institute. The Executive Director ensures that these activities reflect the policies and directions set by membership and formalized by the Board of Governors.

Operational Divisions

Currently the Gabriel Dumont Institute has the following operational divisions:

- University Programs;
- SUNTEP;
- Curriculum (Métis Studies) and Library;
- Finance and Administration
- Research and Development.
- 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 the mandate, the Institute developed a range of Native cultural services, including a library with outreach capacity, a curriculum development unit, a Native language resource, and a number of cultural courses for the enrichment of technical school and college-level training programs.

**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 their communities.

**MEETING THE NEED,
1980 - 1992**

****Programs****

****Information Flow****

****Material Development****

From 1980 to 1992, the Gabriel Dumont Institute has brought culturally-relevant training and education initiatives to Métis communities all across 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 in such fields as teaching, administration, law enforcement, human justice, health care, resource technology and management, recreation and early childhood education.

A recent Follow-Up survey of 1988-89 G.D.I. graduates has shown that while 70% of respondents were unemployed before entering their G.D.I. program, fully 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 Science and Technology (SIAST). Library and research developments in the area of Métis

****Research****

studies have also made a positive impact. At the same time, the Institute has created educational and training innovations to meet the identified unmet needs of Métis 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, a federated college of SIAST.

****Innovation****

The goals of the Gabriel Dumont Institute are the goals of our people: self-determination, independence and self-reliance. The Institute has continually challenged the established institutions to recognize and accommodate the legitimate aspirations of the Métis. Where the vision of the Métis people surpasses the constraints of existing Institutions, the Gabriel Dumont Institute has worked to facilitate the creation of Métis institutions and programs which express and promote our vision.

****Community Participation****

PART TWO

THE NEW MANDATE

TOWARDS SELF-GOVERNMENT

Now is a most critical time for the Métis people. This the first time in over one hundred years that self-government has been within our grasp. Our vision of self-government for the Métis Nation must be developed in the next few years so that new legislation and powers are used to create the kind of society that the Métis people have dreamed of.

To this time the Gabriel Dumont Institute has been working towards a new educational system for Métis people. Now the Gabriel Dumont Institute must work towards a new reality for the Métis people--a self-governed Métis Nation.

As the only Métis-controlled educational institution in the country, the Gabriel Dumont Institute is a model to the Métis Nation.

CULTURAL MANDATE

Languages

Curriculum

Métis Studies

Library/Archive/Métis DataBase

EXERCISING SELF-GOVERNMENT

To develop the cultural foundation of the Métis Nation, Gabriel Dumont Institute will enhance, develop, collect, support and disseminate language materials and programs especially pertaining to Cree.

The Institute will collect, develop, design, test and evaluate materials related to the Métis people for curriculum development. The Gabriel Dumont Institute will enhance and expand the library holdings, archival resources, genealogical research and historical and archaeological information of the Métis people.

Essential to the goals of self-determination are the support and continued expansion of a Métis-specific resource base. The Gabriel Dumont Institute must put as a priority the acquisition and accessibility of all written knowledge of the Métis. The Institute's Resource Centre must remain accessible to the community and must become the heart of the self-government negotiations by providing the evidence for claims from within the collection. Modern technology is available to put the material now in our vast collection of documents onto computers. The money must be found to make it happen.

EDUCATIONAL MANDATE

Dumont Technical Institute

- Establishment of a comprehensive Métis Education System governed by An Education Act, regulations, policies and procedures developed by Métis governments at the local and provincial levels.

- The Dumont Technical Institute (D.T.I.) federated with the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology will design, 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;

- D.T.I. will develop strategies and services which support Métis and Non-Status Indians to access and successfully complete SIAST programs and other programs developed under the terms and conditions of the federation agreement;

- D.T.I. will undertake the assessment of post-secondary technical-vocational needs and experiences of Métis and Non-Status Indians and, identify the appropriate resources, programs and services to address these needs.

The Dumont Technical Institute will also:

- Deliver preparatory and technical-vocational training programs;
- Deliver Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs;
- Enter into agreements with Regional Colleges to permit D.T.I. the delivery of preparatory technical-vocational, and academic upgrading programs.
- Enter into agreements with Employment Equity employers to ensure employment of Métis graduates in jobs that are on the cutting edge of technology.

**SELF DETERMINATION
AT THE
UNIVERSITY LEVEL**

- The Gabriel Dumont Institute must 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 programs and decisions related to Métis programs must be examined. The 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 must 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 must be continued with collaboration between G.D.I. and the negotiators for self-government;

- Development must proceed for SUNTEP models in training in all the professions.

REGIONAL MÉTIS COLLEGE

K-12 System

- Gabriel Dumont Institute and the Métis government need to create an Adult Education component that serves the regional needs of the Métis 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.
- Local Métis School Boards must be organized where numbers warrant;
- Regional/Rural 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.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

EDUCATING FOR SELF- GOVERNMENT

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

Community Education must become a new emphasis of the Gabriel Dumont Institute. It has become 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 educational structures within our new educational network.

Community Education would involve information on:

- Community government;
- The organization of meetings;
- Land Claims and procedures;
- Métis rights;
- Aboriginal Rights Theories;
- Constitutional Proposals; and
- Discussions on what Métis self-government should be like for that community.

Part of the community education mandate would be to engage the communities in research activities that would build the foundation for community self-government.

Community research on the local environment, economy, historical enterprises, educational levels, etc., would provide a knowledge base for future decision-making. Decisions for Gabriel Dumont Institute programming could also 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 seize self-government. We must be ready. We must work together to create a Nation of caring, competent, creative people. We are people with a love of freedom, joie de vivre, and a tradition of fighting for our principles. These are our strengths as a 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.

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 educational system for the Métis people. We must push forward with community education to prepare our community members for

governing. We must strive to instill the values of education in our children so that they may take charge as Louis Riel and the Provisional government did in their time. They seized the opportunity to govern and the Métis Nation was born. We are the descendants of those leaders. We must participate in the rebirth of the Métis Nation. We must seize the opportunity.

