



First Nations With Schools Collective (FNWSC)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Presented By:

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Note on today's community engagement session

- We (Brent and/or Ashley) have been asked by members of the community to assist in facilitating today's community engagement sessions.
- Our involvement in today's engagement session is not to conduct research but for quality improvement purposes only.

Agenda

1. Why is this engagement being done?
2. Part One: Brief presentation on the First Nations with Schools Collective (FNWSC)
3. Part Two: Community input (questions)

Why is this engagement being done?

- The purpose of this Community Engagement is to share information on the development of the FNWSC with community members and to gain input from those First Nations who have communicated interest in being involved with the Collective.
- The input we gather from these community engagements will be shared at a Strategic Planning Session on March 30th, 2017 in Rama with Educational Leaders from participating communities, and incorporated into the Terms of Reference and Participation Agreement for the Collective.

Part One

ABOUT THE FIRST NATIONS WITH SCHOOLS COLLECTIVE (FNWSC)

What is the FNWSC?

- Collective of First Nations with Schools in Ontario
- Share strengths but maintain and define community control and jurisdiction over education
- Use United Nations Development Programme capacity development model
- Partner with UWO for quality improvement, university programming and research support

What is FNWSC Not?

- For those Nations served by the Union of Ontario Indians, the FNWSC is not part of the Anishinabek Education System (AES)
- Not a school board or school authority

Who has expressed interest and supported the FNWSC?

Community	Membership Status
Bkejwanong Territory (Walpole Island)	Participating
Chippewas of the Thames First Nation	Committed Strong Support and Participation
M'Chigeeng First Nation	Committed Strong Support and Participation
Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation	Participating
Oneida Nation of the Thames	Participating
Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation	Committed Strong Support and Participation
Six Nations of the Grand River	Participating
Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve	Participating

Institutions	Membership Status
Faculty of Education, Western University	Committed Strong Support and Participation

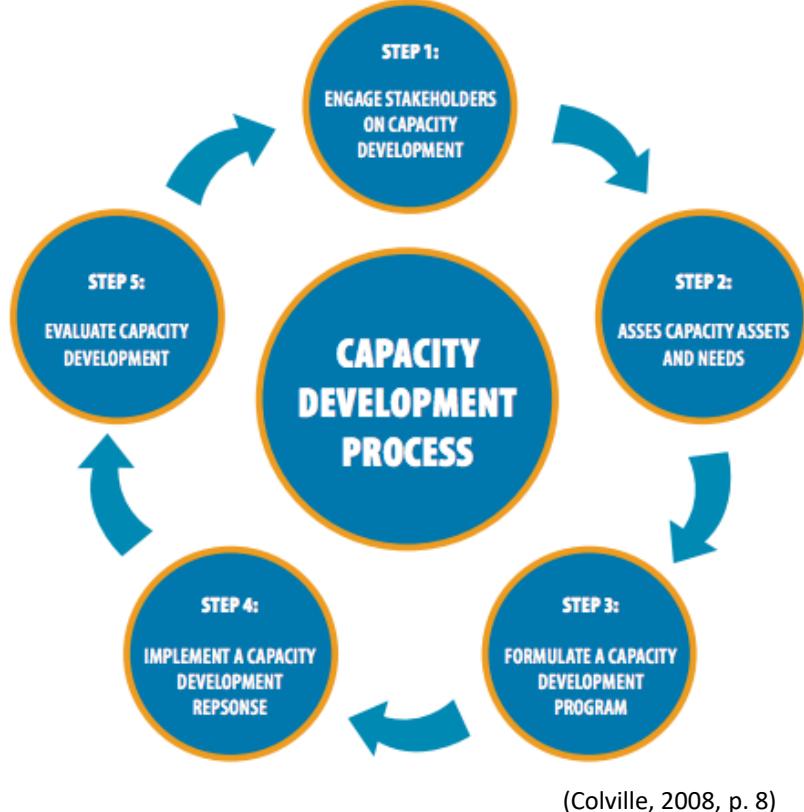
What is FNWSC's Mandate?

The FNWSC mandate is to work together as a collective of First Nations communities to achieve common education goals:

- controlling education of our citizens in our communities;
- achieving funding parity plus for our community schools with provincial schools;
- promoting student-centred and strength-based, wholistic lifelong learning based in First Nations cultures, languages and knowledge systems;
- closing education gaps between FN students and their peers in the provincial system, and supporting FN students in exceeding provincial averages; and
- becoming a model for excellence in First Nations education and for education generally.

The FNWSC will share resources to address shared educational needs in partnership with Western University and with the support of federal and provincial governments, as well as other allies. At the same time, each FN will maintain their individual community autonomy and control over education.

What is the UNDP Capacity Development Model?



“UNDP defines capacity development as ‘the process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time’.” (Colvilee, 2008, p. 4)

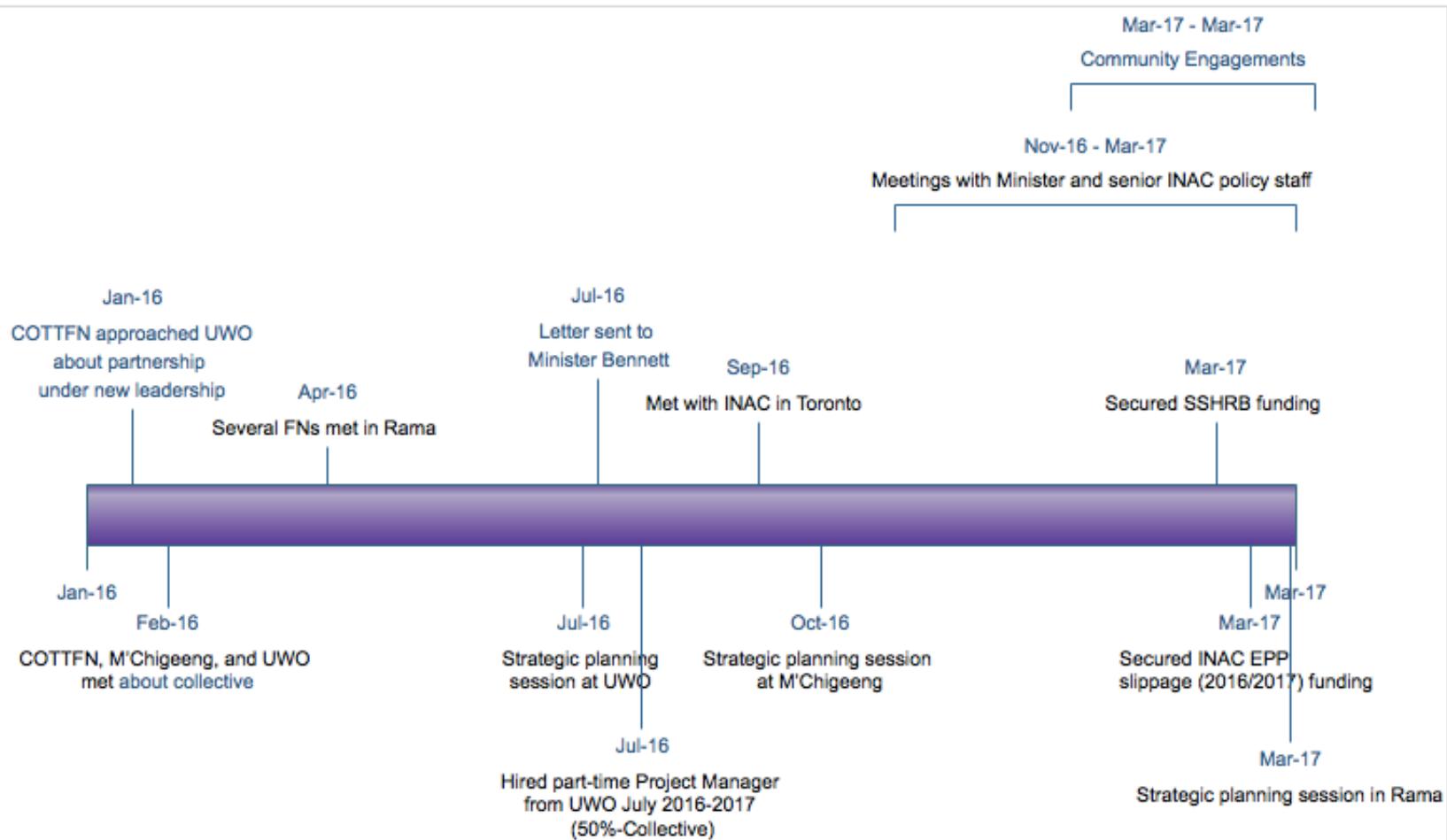
What is the role of Western's Faculty of Education?

Centre for Excellence in Indigenous Education

1. Community engagement/Quality Improvement support
2. Research (e.g. disciplined inquiry or systematic investigation(s) into educational research topics of relevance to the FNWSC)
3. Programs (e.g., leadership and decolonizing training)
4. Interim project management support from August 2017-August 2018. Possible renewal for 2018-2019 (e.g. coordination of meetings).

How has the FNWSC Developed?

January 2016 to present



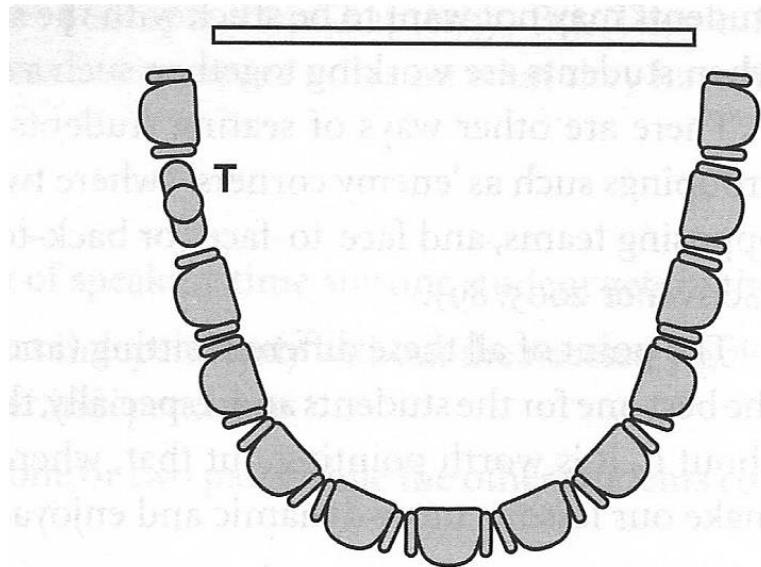
Part Two

COMMUNITY INPUT-QUESTIONS

Focus Groups

Instructions:

1. Quick round of introductions.
2. We have 11 questions with about 15 minutes for each. A brief context is provided before asking questions.
3. Note takers (or digital recorder) will record responses.
4. There is no formal procedure for focus groups so people can take turns responding as in a regular conversation. People can also raise their hand to let the facilitator know that they would like to be placed in queue.
5. The facilitator may interject to offer an opportunity to those who have not spoken.
6. The facilitator will interject at the end of each 15 minute question/response period to move the group to the next question.



U-Shaped layout

Identity & Education Questions

Who we are and our experiences are central to how we learn and what knowledge we value. Therefore, a starting point for uncovering the purpose of education involves answering some foundational questions.

- 1. “What does it mean to be Anishinaabe/Haudenosaunee?”**
- 2. “What is Anishinaabe/Haudenosaunee Education?”**
- 3. “Who is responsible for our children’s education? Adult education? Elder education?”**
- 4. “What can we do right now to provide Anishinaabe/Haudenosaunee education?”**
- 5. “How can communities be involved in Anishinaabe/Haudenosaunee education?”**

Perspectives on educational attainment

First Nations have long been fighting for control over education. While the value of conventional schooling is generally supported among First Nations peoples, it is important that we know if individual community members share those beliefs and why.

Examples of conventional schooling include:

- early years/day care,
- elementary grades K-8,
- high school – grades 9-12,
- and/or post-secondary offerings

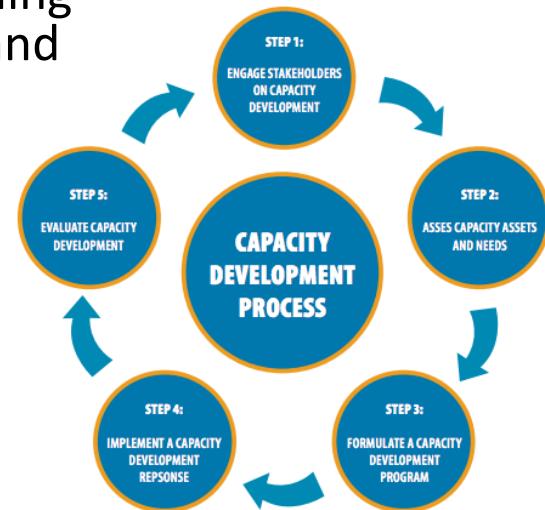
6. Is conventional schooling important to you? If so, why or why not?

Education Approaches & Models

The UNDP model is one way to approach decision-making about education through a cycle of engagement, assessment and capacity development. However, there are many other models communities use for decision-making in education.

For example, collaborative-inquiry models bring educators together “to improve their understanding of what learning is (or could be), generate evidence of what’s working (and what’s not), make decisions about next steps and take action to introduce improvements and innovations” (Ontario Ministry of Education, Collaborative Inquiry in Ontario, n.d., p. 1)

7. Does your community use any inquiry-based decision-making approaches to improve educational outcomes?



(Colville, 2008, p. 8)

Education Partnerships and Involvement

The FNWSC would involve a partnership among several First Nations communities with schools in Ontario. Since the Collective is focussed on working together toward the benefit of its members while maintaining community control over education, we need to know peoples perspectives on partnerships, ownership and involvement in education.

- 8. What would be important to ensuring a strong and positive partnership among participating First Nations?**
- 9. How would you see your community being involved in the partnership?**
- 10. How would you see yourself being involved?**

UWO's Centre for Excellence in Indigenous Education

The Collective has been in discussions with Western's Faculty of Education about developing a Centre for Excellence in Indigenous Education to support the collective's work. The Centre can assist in culturally-responsive and decolonizing educational programming and research.

11. What are your community's top program and research priorities that this Centre could support?

Requesting feedback on draft documents

Drafts of two documents have been prepared by members of the FNWSC working group.

- A draft copy of a Participation agreement
- A draft copy of a Terms of Reference

If people would like to submit direct feedback on either of these documents, please send to Ashley Sisco via email at: asisco@uwo.ca.

In order to be included in the strategic planning session at the end of the month, feedback must be submitted no later than noon on March 29th 2017.

Additional Questions?

Any additional questions or comments?

Getting you involved!

- Community-based education approaches only work if individual community members get involved. That's people like you!
- We need your support and sweat equity to help make this grassroots initiative a success.
- Anyone who is interested in being involved and kept informed on where we are going next, please add your name to the contact list making its way around.
- You will notice two sections on the far right of the signup sheet. One column refers to being added to a contact list and the other refers to being contacted about participation in research projects about this educational work. Please be sure to circle yes or no for both. There is not obligation to say yes. We are moving on several projects and prefer to be as inclusive as possible.

Thank you!

Thank you for your participation!

Please feel free to contact Ashley Sisco if you have questions about this engagement, the First Nations with Schools Collective, or if you would like to be added to our contact list.

Dr. Ashley Sisco

asisco@uwo.ca

References

Colville, J. (2008). *Capacity Assessment: practice note.*
Retrieved from www.capacity.undp.org



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Extra resource about AES

AES does not meet needs of participating communities

Shared needs and interests among First Nations with schools in Ontario in:

- Funding parity plus for schools
- Community control over education (not school board model)
- Sustainable model that develops community strengths
- Research capacity for evidence base and monitoring
- Wholistic, lifelong learning approach with foundation in language and culture