Report of the Provincial Education Planning Team
Process and what we heard

Framework for a Provincial Education Plan 2020-2030

Saskatchewan

Table of Contents

Purpose

In spring 2018, Deputy Premier and Minister of Education of Saskatchewan, Gordon S. Wyant, Q.C., directed the Ministry of Education to engage with education sector partners to co-construct a plan that would set the course for the future. The ministry led the co-construction of a new framework, together with education partners. The framework will form the basis for a provincial education plan and set a course for the sector toward 2030.

The following sector partners committed to work together to co-construct a framework for the provincial education plan:
• Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN);
• League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents of Saskatchewan (LEADS);
• Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S)/Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI);
• Ministry of Education;
• Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC);
• Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials (SASBO);
• Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA); and,
• Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (STF).

The STF, while one of the planning partners, undertook a separate process of engagement through the *Re-Imagine Education* project. The STF has submitted findings from its engagement process to the Ministry of Education, which will inform the further development of the provincial education plan.

It is essential that the framework for the provincial education plan respond to the needs and aspirations of all children in Saskatchewan. The FSIN, OTC and GDI have been important partners throughout the planning and development of the framework and the MN-S was a key partner at an Education Summit in fall 2018. The Ministry of Education recognizes First Nations jurisdiction for education on-reserve and, at the same time, is conscious of the need to ensure the provincial education plan responds to the needs and aspirations of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children attending provincial schools.

The work with the FSIN has been guided by a joint statement signed by the Minister of Education and the Vice Chief responsible for Education on August 26, 2015, stating that:

> *"The FSIN respects and recognizes that the Ministry of Education has jurisdictional responsibilities over the provincial school system. The Saskatchewan Ministry of Education respects and recognizes that First Nations through the Chief and Council exercise control/jurisdiction over their own schools on reserve land. Furthermore, the ministry respects the position of the Chiefs of Saskatchewan regarding the inherent and Treaty Right to education position of the Chief of Saskatchewan. Both sides recognize that any Treaty Right to education is a federal responsibility and so shall remain.*

The ministry also recognizes that when it comes to First Nation education that the provincial school system is not the sole expert in how to educate First Nation students. In the spirit of building a truly collaborative partnership and reciprocal relationship between the education systems in our province, the provincial education system will be looking to First Nation education organizations for their expert opinion when it comes to educating First Nation students and that by working together in a respectful partnership, we will improve the outcomes for all students in Saskatchewan."

The provincial education plan will guide the provincial education system. First Nation and Métis education organizations are welcome participants in the provincial education plan; however, there is no requirement that they implement the plan.

This document provides an overview of the work undertaken by the planning partners to engage education stakeholders, parents, families, students and other interested people and organizations in the development of a framework that will guide the development of a provincial education plan. It proposes a framework of goals, strategies, structures and processes that will further develop and implement the plan with a view to implement the plan in fall 2020.

Key Issues

The Need for a Shared Vision for Education

At the outset of this work, the partners acknowledged that there was a need to co-construct a plan that would provide a shared vision of the future beyond 2020. They committed to work together in a new relationship that ensured the engagement of provincial education organizations, boards of education, administrators, First Nations and Métis education organizations and others. They acknowledged the need to create a shared vision for the future of education in Saskatchewan to be developed by all with shared goals and outcomes for all students.

> *"The future of education is ours to co-author" – Shaping the Future of Education: A Shared Vision*, October 11-12, 2018

Reflecting the diversity of the province by ensuring the presence and voice of First Nations and Métis education organizations as part of the journey towards reconciliation

The planning process was enriched by the voices of First Nations and Métis educators, representing the FSIN, GDI and the OTC. The Provincial Education Summit set a tone for a provincial education that is co-constructed with First Nations and Métis people, with the following guiding quotations:

> *"We are here for a very important reason; it is for our grandchildren so that they may have a good future."* – Senator Allan Bird, Montreal Lake Cree Nation, November 27, 1997

"Education is the new buffalo." – Elder Mike Pinay

"We must cherish our inheritance. We must preserve our nationality for the youth of our future. The story should be written down to pass on." – Louis Riel

Saskatchewan's education system is guided by *Inspiring Success: First Nations and Métis PreK-12 Education Policy Framework*, which was developed by the education partners and released in 2018. *Inspiring Success* outlines historical, cultural, ecological, student first, moral and economic imperatives for a continued focus on First Nations and Métis education. It encompasses the importance of treaty education in Saskatchewan, as well as the importance of First Nations and Métis perspectives and ways of knowing, working in partnership and teaching and learning our shared history. *Inspiring Success* guides the development of the provincial education framework.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its calls to action in 2015. These calls to action must be considered as the education sector plans for the future. Saskatchewan is home to a large number of residential school survivors and their families and the legacy of residential schools has had a profound impact on outcomes for First Nations and Métis peoples. In the development of a new provincial education plan, the education sector must "recognize the truth about the past and honour the contributions of Métis and First Nations in building this province economically, socially, culturally and linguistically. This includes educating the next generation of citizens with factual information about history and inspiring them to create greater social harmony today and into the future"[1].

Building on the Success of the ESSP

The Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP), launched in 2014, was effective in driving the priorities and outcomes of the education sector and the government's *Plan for Growth: Vision 2020 and Beyond.* It brought together school divisions and some First Nations and Métis education organizations to work towards common goals. The targets set for 2020 have served as motivation for the sector to focus efforts and work collaboratively.

Progress has been made in some key outcomes within the ESSP, with the greatest improvements found in graduation rates and reading. To expand opportunities to monitor ESSP outcome progress, provincial attendance data collection and reporting was initiated in 2014-15.

Saskatchewan's three-year graduation rate achieved a 20-year highpoint in 2017-18 having increased from 74.8 per cent for all students in 2012-13 to 77.4 per cent in 2017-18. The three-year graduation rate of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students increased from 37.4 per cent to 44.5 per cent over the same time period. In 2018-19 there was a decrease in both of these measures to 77.3 per cent overall and to 43.4 per cent for First Nation Métis and Inuit students.

The five-year graduation rate continued an upward trend in 2018-19 with 84.7 per cent of all students and 61 per cent of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students graduating within five years.

---

[1] Government of Saskatchewan 2017. *Inspiring Success: First Nations and Métis PreK-12 Education Policy Framework.*

The percentage of students in Grade 3 reading at or above grade level has increased from 70 per cent in 2013-14 to 75 per cent in 2018-19 for all students and to 55.5 per cent for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, an increase from 48.8 per cent in 2013-14.

Nonetheless, there is still a significant amount of work to do to improve results, particularly in improving results for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. A key area of focus is on engaging students in learning and attending school. When students are engaged in learning, they are more likely to attend school and if they attend regularly, they are more likely to graduate. In 2018-19, 85.6 per cent of all students and 66.3 per cent of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students attended at least 80 per cent of the time.

Achieving improved results starts in the early years. The ESSP early years outcome states that by June 30, 2020, children aged zero to six will be supported in their development to ensure that 90 per cent of students exiting Kindergarten are ready for learning in the primary grades. To date, results in this outcome remain static at approximately 79 per cent of students. Recognizing that according to Statistics Canada, the population of the province aged 0 to 5 years has increased by 11 per cent between 2011 (83,134) and 2017 (92,288), there will be growing demands for early learning supports.

Pressures Impacting Students and Schools

Improving results in education cannot be accomplished in isolation from the pressures experienced by students, families, communities and society. Mental health impacts learning and the social and emotional development of children. Data from a perceptual survey show that Saskatchewan students experience higher rates of anxiety and depression than the national norm. Students who experience poor mental and emotional health may be vulnerable to other at-risk behaviours such as substance abuse, suicide, self-harm and violence, which not only impact learning but also influence demand for other human services.

Some of Saskatchewan's young people are experiencing the impact of intergenerational violence and poverty. Saskatchewan has the highest youth crime rate among all provinces as well as the highest rate of victims of family violence in Canada. Racism, both individual and systemic, impacts students' sense of belonging both within schools and in society. Attitudes are changing but there are still too many people who do not understand the impact or reality of racism.

A 2018 study from Statistics Canada shows Saskatchewan leads the nation in teenagers who are not employed or in education or training. Using data from the National Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada found 8.5 per cent of teens aged 15 to 19 years old were not in school and did not have a job in 2016. At 8.5 per cent, this province's rate is the highest in the country. The national rate is 6.3 per cent.

Diversity in Schools Today

Saskatchewan's student enrolment is growing and with it, there is a growing diversity of students. Saskatchewan's schools serve immigrant students who require English as an Additional Language supports, children with diverse needs, children who require specialized services, a growing population of students who self-declare as First Nations, Métis or Inuit and students with diverse personal and gender identities.

Addressing the Challenges of Society Today and in the Future

Saskatchewan's education system aspires to graduate students who are well-educated, prepared to transition to post-secondary education or the world of work and be active citizens in their communities, the province and the world. Today's students will graduate into a world of rapidly developing technologies and changing systems; they will have multiple careers, some of which have not yet been considered; and, they will live in a society that cannot yet be imagined. Saskatchewan's education plan must consider how best to prepare students to meet challenges today and tomorrow. It must give them the tools to both maximize and harness technologies.

Overview of the Planning Approach

The planning partners sought to ensure that all needs, requirements and challenges were taken into account in the development of the framework for the provincial education plan. Early in their work, they identified the need to engage a broad base of Saskatchewan residents. They also identified an interest in ensuring their work was grounded in other reviews and documents that had shaped the education system. The development of the framework was informed by:
• a Provincial Education Summit – *Shaping the Future of Education: A Shared Vision* on October 11 and 12, 2018;
• an online survey for both students and non-students, conducted between April 8 and May 10, 2019;
• in-person engagement sessions undertaken throughout spring 2019 by several of the partner organizations; and,
• review of foundational documents.

Provincial Education Summit – *Shaping the Future of Education: A Shared Vision*

An Education Summit, *Shaping the Future of Education: A Shared Vision*, took place on October 11 and 12, 2018. Approximately 260 individuals from about 80 organizations attended. Participants included representatives from the Prekindergarten to Grade 12 system, post-secondary education systems, First Nations organizations, Métis organizations, community, business, immigrant settlement organizations, unions, industry and the provincial government. Eight future-state themes emerged from the discussions.

Planning partners determined that the Summit was only the first step in engagement and developed a strategy for broader engagements to take place. Their intention was to gather feedback from a broader base that included the general public.

Online Survey

In order to hear the voice of students, parents, teachers and stakeholders, two surveys were available from April 8 to May 10, 2019, on the saskatchewan.ca public engagement page and advertised through social media and news releases.

Participants were asked to answer the following questions:

Student	Non-Student
What are you learning at school that will help you after you graduate?	What do students need to be prepared for their future life and learning?
What helps you learn at school?	What gets in the way of students' learning and well-being?
What gets in the way of learning at school? What would you change?	What is working well in Saskatchewan's schools?
	What needs to change in Saskatchewan's schools?

Demographic information was collected to better understand the diversity of respondents. As well, participants were asked to rate the importance of, and provide feedback on, the eight themes from the Summit.

The online survey provided valuable input from students, parents and the public on the future of education in Saskatchewan. The feedback was extensive with 8,886 individuals responding, including 1,047 students. There were over 40,000 comments provided by these respondents. Of the students who responded, approximately 77 per cent were non-Indigenous, 12 per cent were Indigenous and 11 per cent preferred not to answer. A full overview of the survey participants is available on saskatchewan.ca.

In-person Engagements

Education sector partners conducted in-person engagements throughout the province. More than 300 engagements were conducted with more than 10,500 people. The purpose of these engagement sessions was to hear the voice of the public, education sector organizations and education sector stakeholders.

The STF engaged in a separate process, *Re-Imagine Education,* which included an online survey and in-person engagements. The recommendations from the STF will inform the provincial education plan.

Review of Foundational Documents

The following content, regarding the review of foundational documents was provided in the SSBA's report, *Connections: Saskatchewan's Boards of Education Vision Engagement Report, 2019* and is used with permission. Edits to the original content are contained in square brackets.

At the onset of the planning partners' work, a discussion occurred regarding foundational or direction-setting documents that have been written for Saskatchewan's Kindergarten to Grade 12 education system in recent decades. The intent in reviewing these documents was to determine key themes that emerge and remain over time for the sector in Saskatchewan. These sustaining themes would then be situated alongside the findings from the new engagement sessions as important pillars for the partners to remain mindful of while developing the vision and plan for 2020 and beyond.

Within the context of the four key questions being considered through the [engagement] process [provided in the description of the survey above] …, the Ministry of Education reviewed and completed summaries on 20 foundational documents, while the SSBA reviewed and completed analysis on nine additional documents (all foundational documents are listed in Appendix A). Building upon this, the SSBA conducted a further analysis of the content of all summaries and foundational documents to identify key themes that have remained notable over time, including:

• Engagement and Relationships
• Indigenous Education
• Partnerships and Collaboration
• High Quality Instruction
• Relevant Curriculum
• Transitions and Pathways

FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS -- THEMES	AEPAC 2005-2007	Building Communities of Hope	Building Partnerships	C21 (two documents)	Canada 2067	CCL	CMEC	Ed Governance Advisory Panel	Ed Governance Review Report	Education Equity Task Force	Finding the Balance	FNMEPAC	Howe Report	Inspiring Success	JTF	MN-S Submission to JTF	OECD	Provincial Panel on Student Achievement	Role of the School Task Force	SASBO Project Plan	School^{PLUS} Final Report	Strengthening Our Voice	Student First	Toward School^{PLUS} High Schools	Toward School^{PLUS} SCCs	TransformSK	TRC	Trends Shaping Education 2019 — OECD	TOTAL
Engagement and Relationships (parents, community, community schools, early learning programs, personal supports, communication, etc.)	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		25
Indigenous Education (reconciliation, equity, inclusion, language, culture, etc.)	*	*	*		*	*	*				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*	*	22
Partnerships and Collaboration (levels of government, post-secondary, First Nations and Métis, business, etc.)	*	*	*		*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*				21
High-Quality Instruction (professional development, teacher education, representative workforce, etc.)	*			*	*		*				*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*		*	*		*	*	*		*	18
Relevant Curriculum (core academics, character education, entrepreneurship, digital literacy, financial literacy, STEM, life skills, global citizenship, etc.)	*			*	*		*				*		*		*	*		*	*		*		*	*	*	*		*	16
Transitions and Pathways (between systems, career guidance, etc.)	*			*		*					*	*			*	*					*		*				*		10

Chart reproduced with permission of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association.

Common Findings from the Summit, Survey and Engagements

The broad engagement of students, educators, family members, community, business, industry and other interested stakeholders resulted in extensive input to the provincial education plan. While there was extensive input collected, it became clear that input to the development of the plan could be categorized into 11 key themes. Within each theme, respondents to the survey and participants in the

in-person engagements identified strengths, areas of challenge and opportunities. That said, sometimes the same issue might be characterized as a strength by some and a challenge by others.

The following provides a high level roll-up of all of the input received through the survey, in-person engagements and submissions to the process. The input has been condensed and sorted into 11 themes, outlining what is working, the challenges and the potential opportunities for each theme.

1. Skills and Knowledge for Future Learning, Life and Participation in Society

Within the theme of Skills and Knowledge for Future Learning, Life and Participation in Society, the following have been identified by participants in the engagement processes as working:
- the principle that what is good for Indigenous students is good for all students;
- a broad understanding of literacy; the importance of reading, writing and mathematical literacy, as well as financial literacy, technological literacy and physical literacy;
- support for global citizenship skills through curriculum;
- curriculum renewal, including the addition of financial literacy and renewing the science curriculum; and,
- students who responded to the online survey identified that what they have learned in general/basic math, English/grammar, general/basic science and communication/social skills will help them after they graduate.

The challenges identified by participants in the engagement processes for Skills and Knowledge for Future Learning, Life and Participation in Society include:
- foundational questions about education need to be answered: What is the purpose of education? What are our goals of education? How should we define graduation and success in school? What is the school's role in teaching the values of society and civic knowledge, skills and attitudes?;
- the need to manage changing trends as identified by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development: globalization, increasing human mobility, citizenship and democracy, security, living longer and better, and modern cultures;
- differences in educational philosophy – Eurocentric and Indigenous – can present roadblocks;
- low levels of performance in literacy and numeracy;
- too many course choices at the expense of a quality program of studies for all; and,
- the time lag between recognition of need and curriculum implementation.

The potential opportunities identified by participants in the engagement processes for Skills and Knowledge for Future Learning, Life and Participation in Society include:
- new possibilities that come with technology, such as interactive and student-centered learning;
- elective programming for high school students;
- the importance of collaboration with potential employers to provide students with valuable and useful understanding of necessary work skills and other workplace-related knowledge;
- graduates who know how to learn and are prepared for the next step in their life journey, with the skills required to carry out their post-graduation plan;
- inclusion of the following subjects**:**
  - communications, critical thinking, decision-making, emotional intelligence, self-regulation, collaboration, coping skills for depression and anxiety;

- o financial literacy, knowledge of budgeting, taxation and banking;
- o real life skills (such as cooking, home maintenance, cleaning and sewing);
- o character education (includes resilience, adaptability, empathy, taking responsibility, citizenship, respect, compassion, diversity, social justice, leadership, faith, etc.);
- o ethical citizenship, social responsibility, care for the environment;
- o essential reading, writing and arithmetic knowledge starting at elementary school in order to ensure their future ability to learn and acquire new knowledge later in their education;
- o technological literacy;
- o STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) courses;
- o expanded Practical and Applied Arts;
- o learning connected to the land and community;
- o languages;
- Indigenous ways of knowing, treaties, Indigenous culture, history and language, environmental and land-based learning; and,
- Students who leave school with a clear sense of their gifts and strengths and their place in the world, as well as a sense of direction.

2. Pathways to Graduation

Within the theme of Pathways to Graduation, the following have been identified by participants in the engagement processes as working:
- collaborative efforts like the Education Sector Strategic Plan;
- educational choices available to students; and,
- development of curriculum such as outcome-based curriculum, development of local courses, land-based education, Treaty education and work-experience programs.

The challenges identified by participants in the engagement processes for the theme Pathways to Graduation, include:
- a credit system seemingly too focused on post-secondary education as opposed to employability and alternative pathways;
- a curriculum development process that needs to be more inclusive of Indigenous and Francophone organizations;
- a need for greater innovation and flexibility to allow teachers to meet the needs of their students;
- a need to understand why students leave school early, particularly at Grade 10;
- the lower graduation rate for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students; and,
- the need to focus on critical transitions from home to preschool to kindergarten/elementary school, from elementary/middle school to high school and finally to work and post-secondary options.

The potential opportunities identified by participants in the engagement processes for the theme Pathways to Graduation, include:
- more relevant and flexible programs to give students a variety of pathways to complete school and prepare students for post-secondary education, training and/or employment after graduation;
- more opportunities for work experience, mentorship and career counselling services;
- opportunities for students to learn what their strengths are and build on them;
- reconsideration of the concept of success, allowing more time to complete high school, and tailor education to a student's needs and future;
- partnerships with business and industry;

- a review of credits required for graduation;
- a review of the school structure and delivery model to better meet the needs of students;
- a thorough rethinking of the rules around the credits required for graduation that considers rigour and different pathways, rather than on the number of credits/hours;
- career counselling services; and,
- re-imagination of graduation to re-evaluate the outcomes we require, examine our essential understandings, look at core skills and make graduation about quality, not just about numbers.

The most common responses of non-students to the online survey were that curriculum needs to change or improve and a variety of subjects and electives are needed.

The most common responses of both students and non-students were that students should have the option to choose what they are interested in and that more options applicable to jobs/trades are needed.

3. Instruction

Within the theme of Instruction, the following have been identified by participants in the engagement processes as working:
- *Following Their Voices* is an effective practice that demonstrates the importance of student-teacher relationship for engagement;
- assessment tools and the focus on meaningful evaluation are supporting positive outcomes;
- positive assessment is happening in the classroom beyond formal processes, including positive feedback from teachers and administrators such as recognizing achievements and accomplishments; and,
- quality teacher(s)/staff are helping students learn.

The challenges identified by participants in the engagement processes for the theme of Instruction, include:
- differing assessment practices among school divisions and inequitable assessment, including departmental exams;
- the focus on international assessments and public perception of assessment;
- insufficient time and resources for professional development and growth;
- increasingly diverse student needs, without adequate training and resources for teachers;
- teachers' fluency in using new technologies to engage and support student learning;
- lack of personalized and project-based learning opportunities;
- inconsistent knowledge among students and staff of First Nations and Métis peoples' cultures, histories and worldviews;
- an education workforce that is not representative of the population in schools;
- differences in capacity among urban, rural and northern schools;
- concern that high achieving students in classrooms are not getting the teaching attention that they require because there are so many other kids with high needs;
- concerns about class sizes;
- noisy/loud/talking people in classrooms;
- quality of teacher(s)/staff; and,
- lack of help, such as Educational Assistant support for students.

The potential opportunities identified by participants in the engagement processes for the theme of Instruction, include:
- developing partnerships among students and teachers with experts beyond the school, supported by digital technology;
- reducing learning outcomes to allow for more instructional time and depth of understanding;
- providing opportunities for learning outside of the classroom;
- ensuring one yearly hands-on learning experience with partners outside of school;
- providing opportunities to mentor with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) practitioners;
- switching to a more flexible learning environment to support more individualized learning;
- assessing students' abilities based on their interests;
- making student success reporting more meaningful and consistent for students, parents and families;
- enhancing teacher capacity in areas such as math literacy, Indigenous history and ways of knowing, and cross-cultural learning;
- extending elementary teaching methods to secondary school;
- creating a digital resource bank with First Nations, Métis and Inuit resources and learning projects; and,
- making Indigenous history, culture and languages foundational learning for all students because what is good for Indigenous students is viewed as being good for all students.

4. Safe and Welcoming Learning Environments

Within the theme of Safe and Welcoming Learning Environments, the following have been identified by participants in the engagement processes as working:
- anti-bullying strategies;
- culturally responsive schools: *Following Their Voices,* locally-developed courses that respond to students' cultural diversity;
- collaboration with settlement agencies to create inclusive environments and increase the likelihood that a new student will feel welcome at school;
- teachers who are well-equipped to create inclusive environments at school;
- trust and respect as an important element of engagement;
- a culture of interconnected and interdependent learners;
- the positive impact of matching a student's age with appropriate grade level;
- speech therapy programs;
- extra help from educational assistants and counsellors; and,
- inclusion, diversity and acceptance.

The challenges identified by participants in the engagement processes for Safe and Welcoming Learning Environments include:
- bullying and peer pressure;
- fear of risk and liability that can impact availability of student learning opportunities (e.g., swimming lessons; playground activities);
- lack of data on what is being done to promote a sense of belonging, student attendance and engagement, higher achievement, and commitment to action;
- lack of support for inclusion;

- lack of capital resources; many school facilities are aging and do not meet current demands, (e.g., washrooms);
- the ability to find the right person with the right set of skills to fill a staffing position;
- class sizes and class diversity result in students not obtaining enough support and attention;
- disruptive behaviour in classrooms; and,
- lack of safe and welcoming environments in some schools.

The potential opportunities identified by participants in the engagement processes for Safe and Welcoming Learning Environments include:
- defining inclusion, using a definition that goes beyond social inclusion;
- founding education decisions on the universally recognized rights of children;
- personalizing learning environments to honour student voice and help children to develop a sense of their own strengths and mastery of their own life choices;
- creating safe environments, including busing/travel to and from school and use of technology;
- ensuring schools that are accessible, classrooms that are comfortable, quiet and equipped with all needed resources and adaptations, and teachers who receive specialized training for adaptation and assessment;
- supporting students with a network of interactive, mutually supportive relationships;
- providing school buildings with a variety of spaces for students to work;
- reducing class sizes to encourage a sense of belonging and connection;
- providing public forums, with active listening to assist the process of creating healthy school environments;
- ensuring community education philosophy and practices in every school;
- increasing resources for students with special needs and/or disabilities, including teacher support and assistants;
- honouring and celebrating diversity, so that all children experience a sense of belonging, identity and pride, noting that honouring diversity includes providing supports for gender and sexually diverse students;
- providing educational choice for students that includes respect for, and preservation of, language, culture and identity;
- opening our minds and hearts to understand the things that are a barrier to students;
- providing facilities that reflect an atmosphere of openness and inclusion;
- restructuring classrooms to allow contact with each student;
- encouraging all staff to contribute to an open and welcoming environment;
- using strengths-based approaches;
- providing interministry or interagency supports, e.g., a School^{PLUS} model; and,
- ensuring respectful discourse and respect for diversity and the rights of others.

5. Mental Health and Well-being

Within the theme of Mental Health and Well-being, the following were identified by participants in the engagement processes as working:
- strengths-based approaches;
- development of resilience, coping skills and emotional regulation;
- support for children to have a strong start in life;
- involvement of Elders and others, such as Indigenous grandparents, in the school;
- strong community and a sense of belonging;

- balanced approaches to technology and increased opportunities for physical activity during the school day; and,
- positive relationships for students with their peers, teachers and communities.

The challenges identified by participants in the engagement processes for the theme of Mental Health and Well-being include:
- stigma and lack of awareness around mental illness, because it hinders prevention efforts and can result in a reluctance by students and families to disclose their struggles and to get help;
- danger of staff burn-out because mental health workers have heavy loads and there is a need to pay heed to staff wellness in general;
- urgency to address mental health concerns;
- concern that families and parenting approaches can be a factor in students' challenges;
- concern that teachers must deal with complex needs in their classrooms for which they may be unprepared;
- undiagnosed mental health issues or hidden learning disabilities of students;
- drug addictions, stress, anxiety, pressure, depression;
- poverty, hunger and unmet basic needs;
- intergenerational impacts of violence, poverty and trauma;
- inadequate access to personal and in-school supports; and,
- technology and social media as potential contributors to students' anxiety and depression.

The potential opportunities identified by participants in the engagement processes for the theme of Mental Health and Well-being include:
- providing mental health literacy programs to assist staff, students and parents to understand that it is okay to seek help;
- encouraging culturally-responsive, holistic mental health supports that are shaped by different world views;
- focusing on prevention, as well as early identification and intervention, perhaps through a comprehensive school health framework;
- teaching adults (especially teachers who are close observers of children) and students to recognize personal signs of mental health concerns;
- reworking the health curriculum with age-appropriate outcomes on mental health at all grade levels;
- increasing quick, equitable, local access to mental health services;
- adopting culturally responsive mental health supports;
- supporting youth leadership, peer support strategies and personal advocacy;
- increasing family engagement – building trusting relationships, creating a safe place to speak openly; and,
- increasing availability of alternative career pathways to provide more individualized learning approaches, which might in turn positively impact students' mental health, well-being and self-awareness.

Parents/caregivers need to be involved in mental-wellness plans -- Online Survey

6. Honouring Diversity

Within the theme of Honouring Diversity, the following have been identified by participants in the engagement processes as working:
- respect for, and preservation of, Indigenous language, culture and identity;
- support for diversity through inclusive and safe school environments;
- programs for previously-incarcerated students;
- school sports, which rely on teacher volunteerism; and,
- English as an Additional Language supports.

The challenges identified by participants in the engagement processes for the theme of Honouring Diversity include:
- low graduation rates for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students;
- many students dropping out of school, particularly in Grade 10;
- the increasing number of diverse needs at school;
- limited school choice for Indigenous families/communities;
- lack of resources and programs to allow for flexibility within the school environment;
- lack of support for newcomers, students with disabilities, families and students;
- lack of resources to assist with cultural and language barriers, and student integration; and,
- no appropriate definition of success for students with disabilities, resulting in graduation being the only measure of success.

The potential opportunities identified by participants in the engagement processes for the theme of Honouring Diversity include:
- committing to actions to address reconciliation in the development of the new education vision and provincial plan;
- broadening the understanding of what educational success means, and individualizing the definition of success for each student;
- setting the same goals and targets for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students;
- undertaking regular assessment of progress to determine whether objectives for Indigenous students are being met;
- increasing the number of First Nations and Métis staff and enhancing First Nations and Métis content would benefit all students;
- honouring and celebrating diversity, understanding that "diversity" means more than Indigenous knowledge and providing supports to gender and sexually diverse students;
- ensuring that all school personnel need to be respectful and inclusive;
- investing in resources and programs; and,
- fostering intercultural awareness among students to develop global citizenry skills.

7. Technology

Within the theme of Technology, the following have been identified by participants in the engagement processes as working:
- distance education providing diverse class opportunities across the province;
- improved access to online courses through expansion of telecommunications infrastructure;
- appropriate technological applications to support mental health; and,
- effective use of data and technology.

The challenges identified by participants in the engagement processes for the theme of Technology include:

- the gap in telecommunications infrastructure and connectivity in underserved areas;
- the use of cell phones, smart phones and devices, which can impact students' attention and engagement;
- technology as a vehicle for bullying and other inappropriate interaction; and,
- uses of technology that contribute to stress and anxiety.

The potential opportunities identified by participants in the engagement processes for the theme of Technology include:

- accelerating the efforts of provincial and federal governments to expand dependable, accessible and affordable telecommunications infrastructure;
- expanding access to online courses;
- using data to improve instruction and relationships; and,
- creating a task force that includes parents and students to review evidence-based recommendations, leading practices for technology opportunities and appropriate use of technology.

A common response from non-students who responded to the online survey was that cellphones/smartphones/devices get in the way of learning.

8. Connection Between People and Relationships Between Systems

Within the theme of Connection Between People and Relationships Between Systems, the following have been identified by participants in the engagement processes as working:

- the implementation of community schools at various locations in the province;
- models for interagency work, such as the Prince Albert HUB/COR model;
- increased communication between the Ministry of Education and stakeholder organizations;
- interagency partnerships with libraries, immigration, private sector, the community and other ministries;
- partnerships with First Nations, and collaboration between provincial and federal government; and,
- transitions towards a strengths-based approach.

The challenges identified by participants in the engagement processes for the theme of Connection, include:

- silos between ministries and agencies;
- geographic marginalization and jurisdictional chaos, which sometimes results in no one taking responsibility for the needs of Indigenous students;
- access to mental health professionals;
- absence of an integrated approach/provincial plan, which creates difficult transitions for students/families and fragmentation of services;
- insufficient information for school community councils (SCCs) to serve as a bridge between the school and the community;
- lack of access to funding, support services, teacher qualifications and elective subject offerings in rural, remote and isolated schools compared to urban settings; and,
- lack of trust and relationship with school/teachers.

The potential opportunities identified by participants in the engagement processes for the theme of Connection, include:
- increasing interagency approaches, systems, structures and supports;
- increasing cooperation with agencies that provide supports to children with intensive needs;
- prioritizing engagement with the goal of involving the community, students, parents and First Nations;
- providing transition support for students who are experiencing critical transitions;
- ensuring equitable education funding between jurisdictions;
- increasing the number of Indigenous leaders in school divisions and education organizations/structures;
- collaborating to improve mental health for youth, families and teachers;
- adopting a Community School philosophy in all public schools;
- ensuring schools are teaching and learning centres for the entire community;
- engaging parents and reducing barriers that prevent parent and family involvement;
- establishing mentorships between teachers and community members;
- providing space for Knowledge Keepers and an Elders' Council in schools;
- ensuring SCCs focus on parent and family engagement rather than academic improvement planning; and,
- re-establishing a First Nations and Métis Education Unit at the Ministry of Education.

9. Early Learning

Within the theme of Early Learning, the following were identified by participants in the engagement processes as working:
- early learning and literacy development as the foundation for future learning and success;
- effective early learning that is fostered in a culturally responsive, play-based environment;
- high quality programs founded on sound evidence of what works; and,
- parental involvement and relationships with First Nations and Métis organizations to foster effective early years initiatives and early learning interventions.

The challenges identified for the theme Early Learning include:
- the need for parent engagement in early learning;
- general lack of understanding within the public and families about the importance of early learning in influencing children's future learning and development;
- a need for information sharing across ministries and agencies and relationships with families;
- unmet demand for early childhood education and training and staffing;
- the need for high quality child care;
- the impact of poverty, lack of affordable housing, mental illness, addictions and family break down;
- growth in the number of English as an Additional Language learners, racism and deficit thinking; and,
- concerns about developmental readiness of children entering Kindergarten.

The potential opportunities identified by participants in the engagement processes for the theme of Early Learning include:
- increasing early intervention;
- sharing responsibility among ministries, families and communities;
- developing a comprehensive early childhood strategy;

- providing universal or increased access to early childhood programs and full-day Kindergarten;
- expanding effective early years programs to provide a continuum of care and learning;
- focusing on oral language development, literacy fundamentals and public library support for early literacy; and,
- providing culturally appropriate early childhood education programs.

Most common responses of non-students to the online survey were that access to Prekindergarten is needed.

10. Education Sector Leadership and Governance

Within the theme of Education Sector Leadership and Governance, the following have been identified by participants in the engagement processes as working:
- support for local decision making; and,
- public education as a cornerstone of a democratic society and must be defended.

The challenges identified by participants in the engagement processes for Education Sector Leadership and Governance include:
- the current school system philosophy puts greater emphasis on financial gain than on participation in society;
- *The Education Act, 1995,* requires updating;
- the education system has neither a clear legislative framework nor clear expectations;
- the Education Sector Strategic Plan has resulted in a common direction but it has not aligned work in common and efficient ways;
- all education partners and stakeholders are not included in the Provincial Leadership Team;
- real change that has a lasting impact takes years;
- the province does not have a common vision that goes beyond the basics;
- the hierarchical nature of the current education system presents challenges to the co-construction of education plans;
- school leaders need to be equipped to lead change; and,
- competition between public and separate school systems must be eliminated – the public system should have primacy and be funded as the most inclusive and available option.

The potential opportunities identified by participants in the engagement processes for Education Sector Leadership and Governance include:
- ensuring long-term collaboration among all partners and stakeholders to see the changes through;
- all schools, school divisions and education partners learning from each other's successes and challenges;
- increasing shared governance and decision making between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities;
- creating an authentic alliance with Indigenous peoples – committing to shared goals and committing the resources to support them;
- building relationships with Elders, Indigenous language speakers and Knowledge Keepers;
- drawing on the strengths of existing Indigenous educational institutions in planning, designing, developing and implementing policy and programs;
- learning from those individuals who were not successful in the Kindergarten to Grade 12 system;

- ensuring there is a governance structure and process in place for accountability and oversight of the plan beyond 2020 that respects and includes local and provincial authority for education; and,
- conducting an external expert review and analysis of the outcomes of the Education Sector Strategic Plan that concludes in 2020 to invite ideas, validation, verification and global direction for the plan being developed for beyond 2020.

11. Resources

Within the theme of Resources, the following have been identified by participants in the engagement processes as working:
- supports for English as an Additional Language students.

The challenges identified for the theme Resources include:
- a need for professional development for teachers, more support staff in the classrooms and support of an inclusion model to meet the growing diverse needs of students;
- cost variation between urban, rural and the north;
- too much focus on the cost of education and not enough focus on the investment in students and a common future;
- a need for resources to be predictable and sustainable to support strategic planning and alignment of plans to resources; and,
- political agendas and election cycles.

The potential opportunities identified by participants in the engagement processes for the theme of Resources include:
- exploring potential resource solutions to support an equitable and sustainable education system;
- expanding supports and services for children and youth in schools through interagency cooperation;
- providing more resources for affordable childcare, access to child care centres and English as an Additional Language programming; and,
- supporting the mental health of teachers so that they can help support students' well-being and the school system as a whole.

Appendix A: Foundational Documents (in alphabetical order)

2015-2020 Project Plan – SASBO First Nation and Métis Engagement. Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials (SASBO). 2018.

Bridging the Aboriginal Education Gap in Saskatchewan: Eric Howe for Gabriel Dumont Institute. 2011.

Building Communities of Hope: Effective Practices for Meeting the Diverse Learning Needs of Children and Youth – Community Schools Policy and Conceptual Framework. Saskatchewan Learning. 2004.

Building Partnerships: First Nations and Métis Peoples and the Provincial Education System – Policy Framework for Saskatchewan's Prekindergarten to Grade 12 Education System. Saskatchewan Learning. 2003.

Canada 2067 Learning Roadmap. Let's Talk Science. 2017.

Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). Information taken from: Global Competencies; CMEC Indigenous Education Plan 2016-2019; and CMEC Strategic Plan 2017-2021.

Educational Governance Advisory Panel Review: Kindergarten to Grade 12. March 2017.

Educational Governance Review Report – Kindergarten to Grade 12. Perrins. 2016.

Finding the Balance. Boughen. 2003.

First Nations and Métis Education Provincial Advisory Committee: Final Report to the Minister of Education. June 2013.

Inspiring Success: First Nations and Métis Education Policy Framework. Saskatchewan Ministry of Education. 2018.

Provincial Panel on Student Achievement: Final Report. Saskatchewan Ministry of Education. February 2010.

Redefining How Success is Measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning: Canadian Council on Learning. 2017.

The State of Aboriginal Learning in Canada: A Holistic Approach to Measuring Success. Canadian Council on Learning. 2009.

Restructured Saskatchewan School Division Boundaries – Report of the Education Equity Task Force to the Minister of Learning. Herron, Batters, & Klassen. 2004.

SchoolPLUS: A Vision for Children and Youth: Task Force and Public Dialogue on the Role of the School

Final Report. February 2001.

Securing Saskatchewan's Future: Ensuring the Well-Being and Educational Success of Saskatchewan's Children and Youth. Provincial Response – Role of the School Task Force Final Report. Government of Saskatchewan. 2002.

Shifting Minds 3.0: Redefining the Learning Landscape in Canada. C21 Canada. 2015.

Shifting Minds: A 21st Century Vision of Public Education for Canada. C21 Canada. 2012.

Strengthening Our Voice: A Guide for Engaging First Nations and Métis Peoples in Public Schools. Saskatchewan School Boards Association and Gabriel Dumont Institute.

Student First Engagement Discussion Guide: Ministry of Education. September 2014.

Submission to the Joint Task Force on Improving First Nations and Métis Education and Employment Outcomes. Métis Nation-Saskatchewan. February 2013.

The Future of Education and Skills: Education 2030: The Future We Want. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2018.

The Learning Community in Aboriginal Education: Priorities Report, 2005-2007. Aboriginal Education Provincial Advisory Committee. March 2005.

The Upstream Economy: A Generational Dialogue for Transformative Change. Saskatchewan Construction Association; Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce; Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan; Saskatchewan Mining Association; Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters. 2017.

Toward School[PLUS]: Empowering High Schools as Communities of Learning and Support. Saskatchewan Learning. 2005.

Toward School[PLUS]: Policy Directions for School Community Councils – Provincial Response to the Local Accountability and Partnerships Panel, Final Report. Saskatchewan Learning. 2005.

Trends Shaping Education 2019. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2019.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action. 2015.

Voice, Vision and Leadership: A Place for All. The Joint Task Force on Improving Education and Employment Outcomes for First Nations and Métis People Final Report. March 2013.

Appendix B: Reference List

References

Connections: Saskatchewan's Board of Education Vision Engagement Report. Saskatchewan School Boards Association. 2019. https://saskschoolboards.ca/wp-content/uploads/Vision-Engagement-Report.pdf.

Future of Education Events Ministry of Education Employee Feedback. Ministry of Education. 2019.

Provincial Education Plan In-Person Engagement Sessions May-June 2019 Analysis Summary. Ministry of Education. 2019.

Provincial Education Plan Online Survey Overview. Ministry of Education. 2019. www.saskatchewan.ca/government/public-consultations/past-consultations/provincial-education-plan.

Shaping the Future of Education: A Shared Vision 2018 Education Summit Summary. Ministry of Education. 2019.

Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation – Re-Imagine Education. 2019. www.reimagineeducation.ca.

Submissions

The following organizations provided organizational submissions to the Ministry of Education.
1. Agriculture Producers of Saskatchewan
2. Campion College
3. Canadian Credit Union Association
4. League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents
5. Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials
6. Saskatchewan School Boards Association – Separate
7. Saskatchewan School Boards Association – Public
8. Saskatchewan School Boards Association – Connections: Saskatchewan's Board of Education Vision Engagement Report
9. St. Thomas More College