

Agreement between the
Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations
 and
The Government of Saskatchewan
 to work together to establish a
Joint Task Force on Improving Education and Employment Outcomes in Saskatchewan

May 17, 2011

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Table Contents

Rationale	3
Purpose	3
Scope	4
Principles for Working Together:	5
Statement of Fact	6
Desired Outcomes	6
Governance	6
Appendices	6
Signatories	7
Appendix A: Governance Structure	8
Appendix B: FSIN and Saskatchewan Joint Task Force Terms of Reference	9
Appendix C: FSIN and Saskatchewan Joint Task Force Process and Criteria to Select Task Force Members	14
Appendix D: Process to Procure a Contractor to support the FSIN and Saskatchewan Joint Task Force	15



Rationale

The Government of Saskatchewan (Saskatchewan) recognizes that current gaps in education and employment outcomes for First Nations and Métis people in Saskatchewan are unacceptable. The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) has a specific interest in improving outcomes for First Nations people. Saskatchewan and the FSIN share a vision of a prosperous province where all people have access to a high quality of life on- and off- reserve. While there is evidence of some improvement in education and employment outcomes, this improvement is not proceeding at a satisfactory pace.

Purpose

FSIN and Saskatchewan agree to work together to establish a Joint Task Force that will undertake an engagement and review process. The Task Force will provide the FSIN and Saskatchewan and other potential partners with a report and recommendations that can inform long-term collaborative actions aimed at elimination of education and employment gaps.

The report and recommendations will identify:

- Evidence-based public policy, program and practical approaches that have the greatest potential for positive impact on education and employment outcomes ;
- Policies, programs and practices that are not having the desired impact and propose changes or elimination; and,
- Investments, costs and potential reallocation of spending.

The parties note that discussions are ongoing with Canada regarding a Memorandum of Understanding: Priority Issues related to Education and Employment Outcomes for Saskatchewan First Nations (MOU), and the results of this Joint Task Force may also be used to establish future shared priorities under the MOU.



Scope

The recommended approaches will be identified within and across the following cross-cutting themes:

- PreK-12 education;
- Post-secondary education and skills training;
- Labour market attachment;
- Governance and capacity development, (e.g. governance education, participation in governance of education institutions);
- Data protocols (development, collection, sharing and reporting);
- Culture and language; and,
- Equity of supports and services (e.g. comparable funding on- and off-reserve).



Principles for Working Together:

1. FSIN and Saskatchewan have a shared commitment to working together to eliminate the gap and improve education, and employment outcomes.
2. All parties are committed to accountability for governance, resources and results.
3. The parties recognize there are distinct federal funding authorities that affect education and employment programs and services provided to First Nations and Métis people.
4. Leaders and officials will engage in respectful dialogue and resolve conflict through discussion and other productive strategies.
5. The parties recognize that FSIN does not represent the interests of Métis people and their institutions.
6. The parties recognize that Saskatchewan's objective in undertaking the Task Force is to eliminate the education and employment gaps for First Nations and Métis people.
7. The parties recognize the importance of a distinction-based approach in development of recommendations by the Task Force for First Nations and Métis people.
8. Each party may wish to invite, should the circumstances warrant, representatives from organizations other than the principal organizations to participate, or have their views incorporated.
9. FSIN and Saskatchewan agree that where a party has more than one official or leader participating in a forum or table, that the party must internally reach consensus and will only offer one consolidated view or recommendation.
10. Each party will ratify decisions through its respective decision making processes.
11. Engagement in the process will extend beyond the parties (e.g. Métis Institutions, Tribal Councils, First Nation Band Councils (education portfolios), Office of the Treaty Commissioner, First Nation and Métis Provincial Education Advisory Committee).
12. Sufficient resources will be made available to accomplish the work of the Task Force.
13. The agreement to establish a Joint Task Force does not limit the capacity of the parties to move forward on initiatives in the interim.



Statement of Fact

Canada has endorsed the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People*.

Desired Outcomes

In undertaking the Joint Task Force, the parties have agreed that the following are the desired outcomes:

1. Improved early childhood outcomes and the transition to school;
2. Improved high school completion;
3. Improved completion rates for post-secondary education;
4. Improved labour market participation and attachment;
5. Improved quality of life and enhanced self-sufficiency; and
6. Stronger education systems with improved return on investment in PreK-12 and post-secondary education and training.

Governance

The Governance Structure for the parties working together is attached in Appendix A.

Appendices

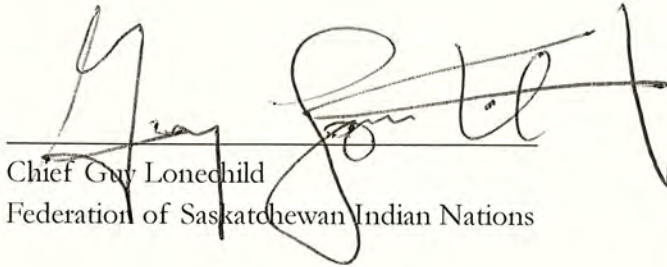
The following appendices are considered to be part of this Agreement

- Appendix A: FSIN and Saskatchewan Governance Structure
- Appendix B: FSIN and Saskatchewan Joint Task Force Terms of Reference
- Appendix C: FSIN and Saskatchewan Joint Task Force Process and Criteria to Select Task Force Members
- Appendix D: Process to Procure a Contractor to support the FSIN Saskatchewan Joint Task Force



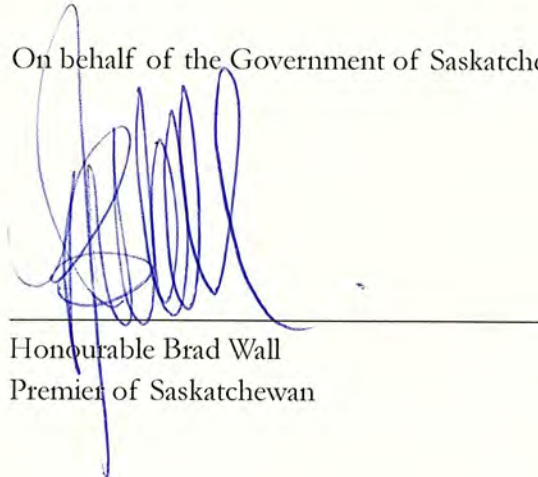
Signed this 17th day of May, 2011 in Regina, Saskatchewan

On behalf of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations:



Chief Guy Lonedchild
Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations

On behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan:



Honourable Brad Wall
Premier of Saskatchewan



Signed this 17th day of May, 2011 in Regina, Saskatchewan

Donna Harper

Witness

Ken Ameloff

Witness

[Signature]

Witness

[Signature]

Witness

Witness

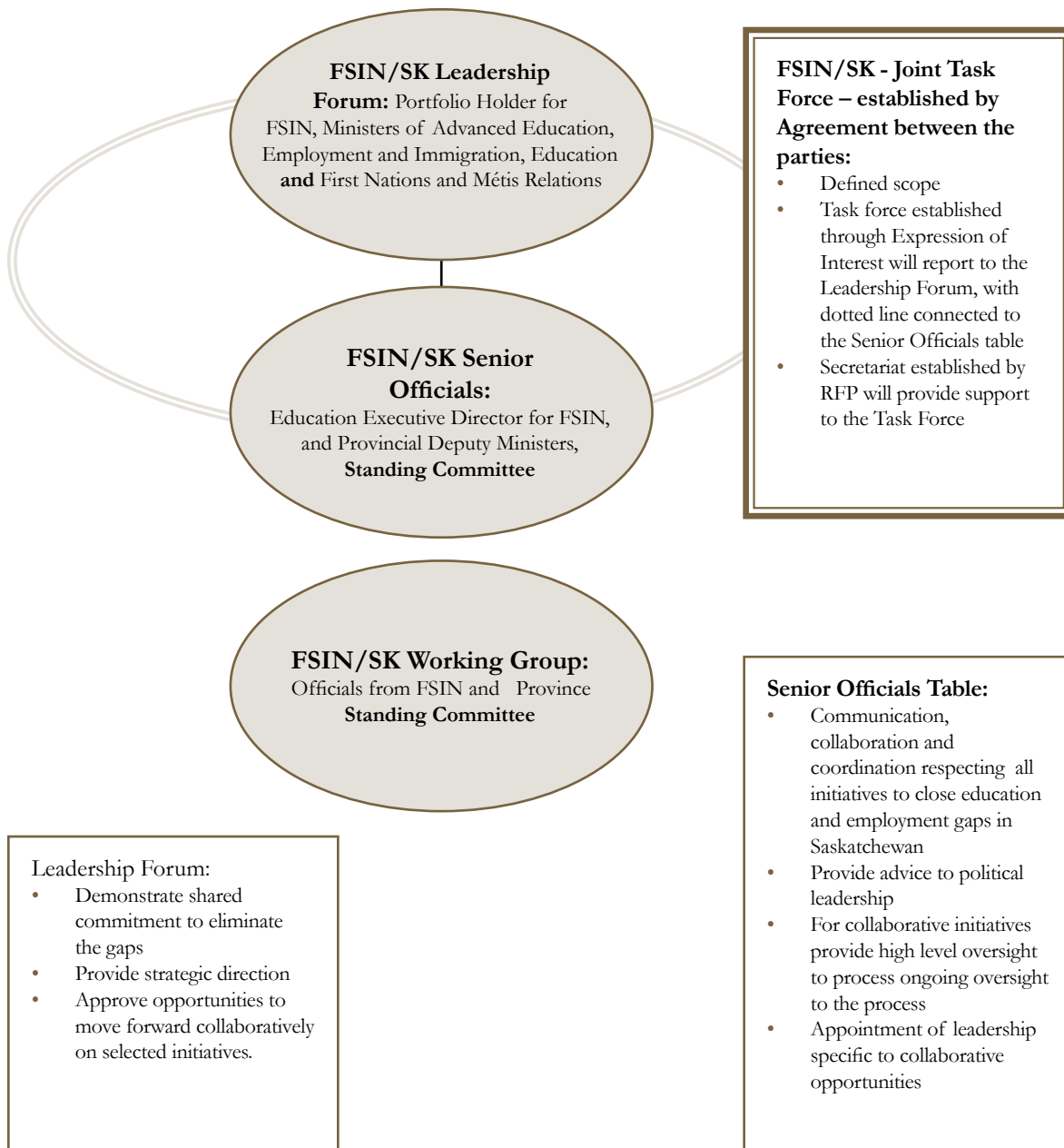
Harley Woyen

Witness

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Appendix A: Governance Structure



Appendix B: FSIN and Saskatchewan Joint Task Force Terms of Reference

Rationale

The Government of Saskatchewan (Saskatchewan) recognizes that current gaps in education and employment outcomes for First Nations and Métis people in Saskatchewan are unacceptable. The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) has a specific interest in improving outcomes for First Nations people. Saskatchewan and the FSIN share a vision of a prosperous province where all people have access to a high quality of life on- and off- reserve. While there is evidence of some improvement in education and employment outcomes, this improvement is not proceeding at a satisfactory pace.

Purpose

The Task Force will provide the FSIN and Saskatchewan and other potential partners with a report and recommendations that identify evidence-based public policy, program and practical approaches that have the greatest potential for positive impact on education and employment outcomes. In addition, the Task Force will identify policies, programs and practices that are not having the desired impact and propose changes or elimination. In identifying approaches for implementation or elimination, costs and potential reallocation of spending will be considered.

Scope

Abundant data is available from the Province, First Nations, tribal councils, the FSIN, Métis institutions and the federal government to demonstrate the existence of education and employment gaps between First Nations and Métis people and non-Aboriginal people. The work of the Task Force will begin from the assumption that these gaps exist. While the emphasis of this project is on recommending solutions, it is understood that in order to effectively propose and analyse solutions, there is a need to understand barriers and challenges. To this end, the Task Force will be informed by research and consultation to identify issues, as well as solutions.

The Task Force will review approaches that have been effective for Indigenous and marginalized populations in Saskatchewan, Canada and other jurisdictions. As well, it will include input and advice from individuals, institutions and academics. When proposing approaches, the Task Force will be innovative while considering how best to implement solutions within Saskatchewan's treaty, political, geographic, jurisdictional and historic context. Consideration will be given to distinct federal funding authorities that affect education and employment programs and services provided to First Nations and Métis people.



Appendix B continued:

The recommended approaches will be identified within and across the following cross-cutting themes:

- PreK-12 education;
- Post-secondary education and skills training;
- Labour market attachment;
- Governance and capacity development, (e.g. governance education, participation in governance of education institutions);
- Data protocols (development, collection, sharing and reporting);
- Culture and language; and
- Equity of supports and services (e.g. comparable funding on- and off-reserve).

Identified approaches will have potential for province-wide implementation, on- and off-reserve but may be recommended to begin on a smaller scale or as demonstration sites to ensure their effectiveness in the Saskatchewan context. In selecting potential locations for demonstration sites, the probability of success (based on partners' readiness and willingness) should be a primary consideration. In addition to province-wide initiatives, the potential for targeted initiatives within specific geographic areas (e.g. northern Saskatchewan) should also be considered.

In undertaking the Joint Task Force, the parties have agreed that the following are the desired outcomes:

- Improved early childhood outcomes and the transition to school;
- improved high school completion;
- improved completion rates for post-secondary education;
- improved labour market participation and attachment;
- Improved quality of life for and enhanced self-sufficiency; and
- Stronger education systems with improved return on investment in PreK-12 and post-secondary education and training; and
- The parties recognize the importance of a distinction-based approach in development of recommendations by the Task Force for First Nations and Métis people.



Appendix B continued:

Membership

Membership will include three members, one of whom would be the Chair. Members will be selected through an expression of interest process that will be broadly communicated.

Membership will be as diverse as practicable. Selection criteria include the following:

1. Demonstrated leadership experience in the private or public sector;
2. Knowledge of the issues associated with the gaps in education and employment for First Nations and Métis people;
3. Ability to be client-focused, objective, solutions-oriented and pragmatic;
4. Ability to elicit input through a broad and inclusive consultation process; and,
5. Ability to manage dynamic, contentious and sensitive issues and situations.

Objectives

1. To recommend and prioritize evidence-based public policy, program and practical approaches in relation to the themes articulated in the project scope. These approaches will positively impact education and employment outcomes and have the potential for province-wide application.
2. To identify current issues, barriers and/or ineffective approaches and recommend changes or elimination.
3. To identify investments, potential costs and savings associated with the recommended approaches identified in objective one and the changes recommended in objective 2.
4. To arrange for literature reviews, analysis and advice that will inform the development of the recommendations.
5. Engagement in the process will extend beyond the parties (e.g. Métis Institutions, Tribal Councils, First Nation Band Councils (education portfolios), Office of the Treaty Commissioner, First Nation and Métis Provincial Education Advisory Committee).



Appendix B continued:

Timeframe

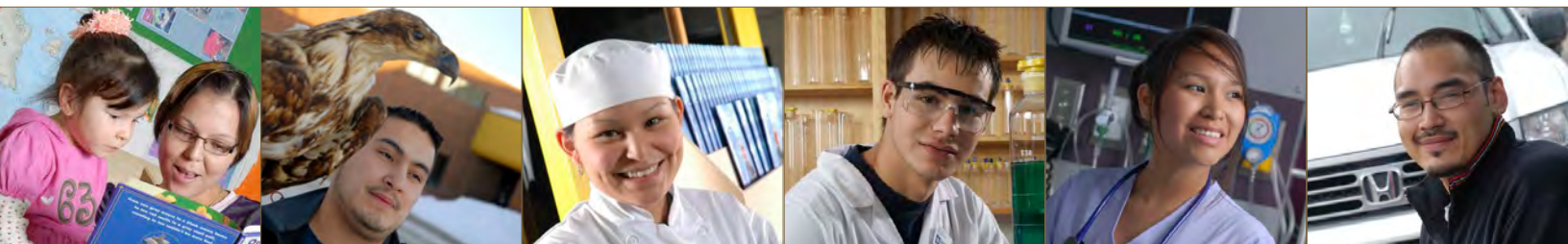
This work of the Task Force will be accomplished from September 2011 to August 2012.

Milestones include the following:

- Announcement of the Task Force (including Expression of Interest and RFP) – Spring 2011;
- RFP and Expression of Interest review and selection – Summer 2011
- Public Appointment of Task Force – Summer 2011;
- Contract established with Secretariat – Summer 2011;
- Approve Engagement Process – Fall 2011;
- Launch of the Engagement Process – Fall 2011; and
- Final Report – August 2012.

Assumptions

1. The Government of Saskatchewan (Saskatchewan) recognizes that current gaps in education and employment outcomes for First Nations and Métis people in Saskatchewan are unacceptable.
2. The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) has a specific interest in improving outcomes for First Nations people.
3. Saskatchewan and the FSIN share a vision of a prosperous province where all people have access to a high quality of life on- and off- reserve.
4. The FSIN and Saskatchewan respect treaty and historical rights and obligations.
5. Proposed solutions and recommendations put forward by the Task Force will be practical and citizen-focused, setting aside jurisdictional barriers and may include tri-lateral approaches.
6. Proposed approaches will be considered within the context of Saskatchewan's treaty, political, economic, cultural, demographic, jurisdictional and geographic realities while focusing on the best possible outcomes for the children, youth and adults affected.
7. The impact of proposed approaches may benefit populations in addition to First Nations and Métis people.
8. Public engagement processes will include beneficiaries of programs (e.g., youth, parents, etc.) as well as institutions and organizations.
9. Proposed approaches will build on successful initiatives, where possible.
10. The FSIN and Saskatchewan are committed to accountability for governance, resources and results.
11. The FSIN and Saskatchewan and other partners will assist the project by providing information on programs and policies, as well as costs, as appropriate.
12. The Task Force will maintain regular communication with the Senior Officials Table and will provide monthly reports.



Appendix B continued:

Support to the Task Force

The Task Force will be supported by a Secretariat, which will be contracted through a Request for Proposals process. The Secretariat will be directed in its responsibilities by the Task Force and will perform the following responsibilities:

- undertake research and analysis;
- develop and manage the engagement process;
- record and compile input received through the engagement process; and,
- develop report(s).

Assessment Criteria

Contractors will be selected through an assessment of proposals against the following criteria:

1. The proposed budget is reasonable to accomplish the work of the project within the established timeframe;
2. The proponent can demonstrate proven ability to complete the project within the timeframe, by providing evidence of related work, references and access to human resources to accomplish the work;
3. The proponent demonstrates successful experience in working with and engaging First Nations and Métis people and institutions ;
4. The proponent demonstrates knowledge of Saskatchewan's K-12 on- and off- reserve education systems, post-secondary education and training systems, treaty and historical context, geographic, jurisdictional and demographic challenges, as well as provincial and federal government, First Nation and Métis decision making processes.
5. The proponent demonstrates experience in project management and coordination.

(Joint proposals involving more than one entity will be considered.)

Deliverables

1. A project plan that sets out the work to be accomplished with associated timelines for approval by the Senior Officials Table.
2. A consultation plan that provides an overview of the consultation methodology, target audiences and timelines for approval by the Senior Officials table.
3. A preliminary report to the Senior Officials table once the engagement process is complete for review and comment by the Senior Officials Table.
4. A report to the Leadership Forum summarizing the findings and recommendations of the Task Force.



Appendix C: FSIN and Saskatchewan Joint Task Force Process and Criteria to Select Task Force Members

Goal

To achieve a well-respected Task Force of three members, one of whom would be the Chair. The Task Force members will ideally bring a diversity of perspectives including: PreK-12 education, post-secondary education and training, labour market attachment in relation to First Nations, Métis and other institutions.

Criteria

1. Demonstrated leadership experience in the private or public sector;
2. Knowledge of the issues associated with the gaps in education and employment for First Nations and Métis people;
3. Ability to be client-focused, objective, solutions-oriented and pragmatic;
4. Ability to elicit input through a broad and inclusive consultation process; and,
5. Ability to manage dynamic, contentious and sensitive issues and situations.

Process

1. Invitation for expression of interest will be broadly communicated.
2. Those interested will submit:
 - Letter outlining their interest and background related to the Task Force;
 - Resume or Curriculum Vitae; and
 - References.
3. Senior Officials will review, assess and recommend finalists to the Leadership Forum, who will select a chair and two other members.



Appendix D: Process to Procure a Contractor to support the FSIN and Saskatchewan Joint Task Force

Goal

To contract well-qualified, experienced secretariat, coordination and research support to the Task Force at arms-length from the FSIN and Saskatchewan.

Reporting Relationship and Responsibilities

The Secretariat will be directed in its responsibilities by the Task Force and will perform the following responsibilities:

- undertake research and analysis;
- develop and manage the engagement process;
- record and compile input received through the engagement process; and
- develop report(s).

Selection Process

The contractors will be selected through a Request for Proposals process in keeping with Government of Saskatchewan procurement policies and guidelines.

Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. The proposed budget is reasonable to accomplish the work of the project within the established timeframe.
2. The proponent can demonstrate proven ability to complete the project within the timeframe, by providing evidence of related work, references and access to human resources to accomplish the work.
3. The proponent demonstrates successful experience in working with and engaging First Nations and Métis people and institutions .
4. The proponent demonstrates knowledge of Saskatchewan's K-12 on- and off- reserve education systems, post-secondary education and training systems, treaty and historical context, geographic, jurisdictional and demographic challenges, as well as provincial and federal government, First Nation and Métis decision making processes.
5. The proponent demonstrates experience in project management and coordination.

(Joint proposals will be considered.)



