



**IAHLA**  
Indigenous Adult  
& Higher Learning  
Association



# **Aboriginal-Controlled Post-Secondary Institutes in British Columbia: Issues, Costs and Benefits**

prepared by:



November 2010

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# Preface

## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed to this research project including the individuals who work at the Aboriginal-controlled institutes and public institutions featured in this report, as well as representatives from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Development.

A very special thank you to the IAHLA Advisory Committee members whose collective wisdom and dedication to Aboriginal-controlled adult and post-secondary education helped guide this undertaking:

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<sup>1</sup> The authors take full responsibility for any errors or omissions.



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# Executive Summary

**“What are the costs of running Aboriginal-controlled adult and post-secondary institutes in British Columbia and what are the benefits of doing so for First Nations and for society in general?”**

In February 2010, Juniper Consulting undertook a study at the request of the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) to: investigate overall funding issues that affect Aboriginal-controlled institutes; identify costs of operating Aboriginal-controlled institutes; and, highlight the benefits arising from Aboriginal-controlled institutes. The project also explored Aboriginal-controlled institutes’ importance to First Nations students and communities throughout the province of British Columbia (BC). Established in 2003, IAHLA represents a wide variety of Aboriginal-controlled adult and post-secondary educational institutes across BC to address and further the mutual interests of all Aboriginal-controlled learning centres in BC. The project was guided by an IAHLA Advisory Committee.

IAHLA institutes work in partnership to develop and share credentials, programs and courses—including undergraduate and post-graduate courses and programs in areas of special interest and expertise. A case study approach was used to add depth to the analysis by examining the specific activities, costs and benefits of three IAHLA institutes. The case studies selected for this project represent a variety of educational programming, institute sizes and geographic locations throughout BC: Chemainus Native College; Heiltsuk College; and, En’owkin Centre. Full accounts of each community’s case study are presented as appendices.

The project utilized a phased approach with multiple lines of evidence including a literature review, developing a logic model, interviews with key sources of information, and collecting and analyzing case study information.

The logic model supports the analysis and illustrates the linkages between the inputs, activities, outputs and intended outcomes of the case study institutes. By linking outputs to outcomes, the benefits of Aboriginal-controlled education can be more clearly identified. Excerpts from the three case study institutes illustrate different parts of the logic model.

To support the analysis of costs and benefits of Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education, the financial statements of the case study institutes were examined in detail. In addition, five publicly funded post-secondary institutions were used for comparative purposes with the three case study institutes profiled in this report: Nicola Valley Institute



of Technology (NVIT); College of the Rockies; Selkirk College; Northwest Community College; and, North Island College. Like the case study institutes, these five publicly funded institutions serve the more rural or remote areas of the province.

## Key Findings and Conclusions

### Overall funding issues

Unlike public post-secondary institutions which receive stable ongoing core funding from the provincial government, most Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education institutes are largely dependent on the entity's ability to secure grants. Grants are obtained primarily from the federal and, to a lesser degree, the provincial government. The three case studies illustrate how heavily IAHLA institutes rely on the federal granting process.

**The single greatest challenge facing Aboriginal-controlled institutes is the lack of stable core funding.** The grant application process is an annual undertaking and, therefore, cannot be relied on from year to year. Further, alternate sources of revenue, such as tuition and partnership arrangements, are not stable. Tuition revenue is dependent on the institute's ability to attract students to its programs. That, in turn, depends on the institute's ability to offer relevant and supportive programming.

This lack of stable core funding:

- limits the ability of institutes to plan effectively for the future as there are no guarantees the funds will be available year to year;
- prevents most Aboriginal-controlled institutes from offering (and sustaining) a full range of programs and courses;
- makes it challenging to develop curriculum and learning materials;
- limits institutes' ability to promote programs and recruit students;
- limits institutes' ability to procure and maintain adequate technology and library resources;
- limits potential to engage in and support comprehensive, community capacity building;
- can result in institutes having limited capacity to provide optimal student services (e.g. counselling and advising) to support retention and success of learners;
- can make it difficult to pay faculty and staff competitive salaries and benefits; and,
- can make recruiting and retaining qualified faculty and administrators a challenge.

Compounding the lack of core funding is the absence of capital funding. Granting sources specifically exclude the use of the program funds for capital projects, such as facilities and equipment (e.g., computers). Again, the three case studies illustrate the challenges that Aboriginal-controlled institutes face in providing even the most basic facilities and equipment for their students.

Lastly, the overall funding available falls short of meeting the needs of Aboriginal institutes. The volume and total dollar value of funding requests from Aboriginal-controlled institutes greatly exceeds the amount of funding available from either level of government.

## Identifying the costs of operating Aboriginal institutes

The cost of operating the three IAHLA case study institutes was found to be similar to other non-urban and remote publicly funded institutions offering similar programming. They face the same challenges, largely due to economies of scale. Therefore, fluctuations in enrolment can significantly impact an institute's ability to plan for the future and remain viable. In addition, certain costs such as salaries, travel, and other operating costs may be higher in remote locations.

IAHLA may be in a position to help its membership address issues related to economies of scale, to some degree, if the association secures funding to support initiatives that can benefit all members.

## Benefits arising from Aboriginal-controlled institutes

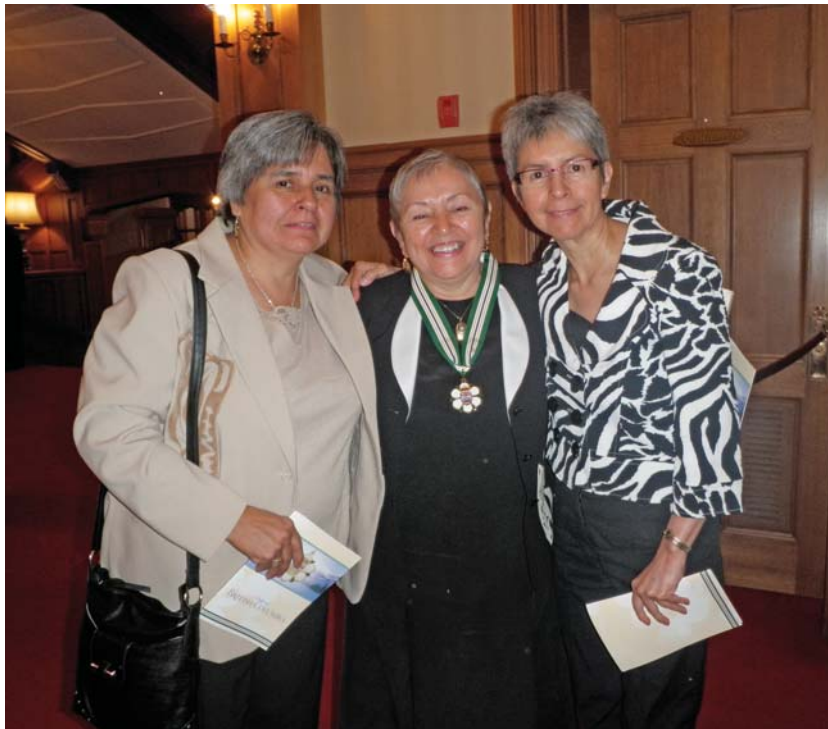
The literature review explored the longer-term benefits of Aboriginal-controlled education. Statistical data from other research and evaluations on this topic clearly identify the economic and social benefits of investing in Aboriginal-controlled education. Higher levels of education have been directly linked to greater participation in the labour force, lead to higher income levels, and improve economic prosperity. Higher levels of education are also linked to a healthier population, longer life expectancy, and more stable communities. Not closing the education gap for Aboriginal peoples will be costly for Canadian society, both in terms of increased social costs and the lost opportunity to participate in the economy.

## Building on a legacy

This report analyzed results from the IAHLA Data Collection Project, now in its fifth year, to demonstrate that Aboriginal-controlled institutes achieve high completion rates, offer qualified instruction, provide a high degree of personal support, and a culturally focused curriculum. Results show that this has helped build learners' self confidence and has assisted in revitalizing Aboriginal language and culture in communities. On the basis of the overarching IAHLA Data Collection Project results, in combination with the case studies, it is reasonable to conclude that Aboriginal-controlled institutes in BC are achieving successful outcomes in meeting learners' needs.



Government has made investments through the public post-secondary education system in an effort to close the gap between Aboriginal education outcomes and non-Aboriginal outcomes. Aboriginal-controlled institutes play an important role in the post-secondary education sector in BC due their ability to provide culturally appropriate and supportive, life long learning. They provide accredited courses and programs that offer adult students the opportunity to graduate in their own communities with recognized certificates, diplomas and degrees. As well, for those learners who choose to study outside their communities, these institutes effectively support transitions to other post-secondary institutions, and offer curriculum that ladder directly into public post-secondary programs. If they are more adequately resourced, Aboriginal-controlled institutes can build on their respective legacies and play an important role in closing the education gap in a timely fashion.



Pauline Waterfall, Order of BC 2010, and her sisters







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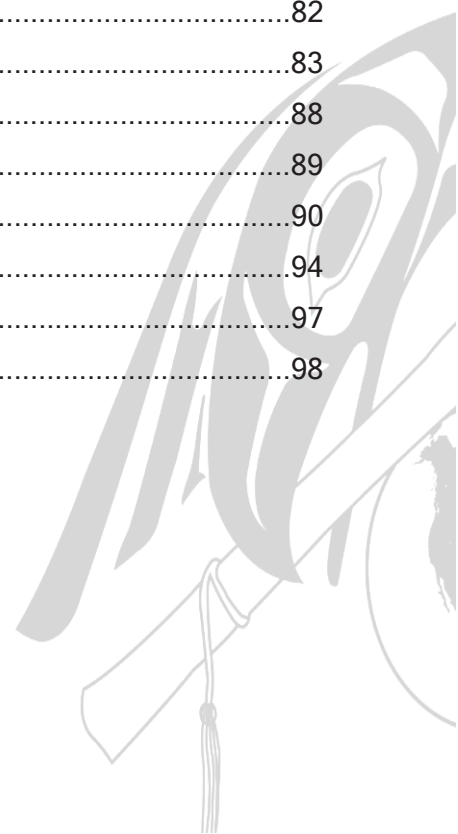
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# Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose and objectives

In February 2010, Juniper Consulting (“the consultants”) was engaged by the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) to undertake this project in response to a request for proposals to:

1. Investigate overall funding issues that affect Aboriginal-controlled institutes.
2. Identify costs of operating Aboriginal-controlled institutes.
3. Highlight the benefits arising from Aboriginal-controlled institutes.

Established in 2003, IAHLA represents a wide variety of Aboriginal-controlled adult and post-secondary educational institutes across British Columbia (BC). IAHLA aims to address and further the mutual interests of all Aboriginal-controlled learning centres in BC. The Association believes that, by working collaboratively, Aboriginal institutes<sup>2</sup> can develop accredited courses and programs that offer adult students the opportunity to complete credited transferable courses that ladder into public post-secondary programs. Also, they enable adult students to graduate in their own communities with recognized certificates, diplomas and degrees. Currently, IAHLA has 38 members from a range of communities as illustrated by the map in Appendix A.

The consultants undertook this project from early spring through the summer of 2010. It is IAHLA’s intent to use this research to demonstrate the value of Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education in BC.

## 1.2 Not a cost-benefit analysis “per se”

Although the words “costs” and “benefits” appear throughout this report, the project did not use standard cost-benefit analysis methodology and, therefore, should not be referred to as a cost-benefit analysis. A true cost-benefit analysis attempts to quantify, in monetary terms, a specific program or various policy alternatives, to support decision makers in maximizing the social and/or economic benefits of a program or policy decision.

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2 The terms Aboriginal institute, Aboriginal-controlled institute, and Indigenous-controlled institute are used interchangeably in this report to refer to not-for-profit adult and post-secondary centres that have an Aboriginal governance structure. This definition is adapted from: *Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education in British Columbia: A Place for Aboriginal Institutes. Policy Background Paper*, May 2008. First Nations Education Steering Committee.

Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education institutes are autonomous entities and management information varies considerably from one institute to another. Because detailed information on every Aboriginal-controlled institute was not available,<sup>3</sup> assigning a “value” to the costs and benefits of all Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education in BC and for IAHLA institutes, specifically, was not possible.

Instead, this report provides general information on the funding received, costs and benefits resulting from Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes, based on key informant interviews, statistical reports, government data, and a review of the literature. In addition, it utilizes a program logic model approach<sup>4</sup> to provide a detailed analysis of three different Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes selected as case studies. Elements of each case study are “deconstructed” to illustrate the institute’s underlying “logic” as well as its costs and benefits. Lastly, this report compares the funding and costs of these case studies to five publicly funded post-secondary institutions with somewhat similar characteristics.

*Elements of each case study are “deconstructed” to illustrate the institute’s underlying “logic” as well as its costs and benefits.*

## 1.3 How the report is structured

This report is divided into eight main sections, along with appendices:

- **Section one** introduces the project’s purpose and objectives.
- **Section two** presents the role of the Advisory Committee, discusses the approach, introduces the three case study institutes, and key assumptions and considerations.
- **Section three** includes an overview of select research into the need for, the challenges facing and the benefits of Aboriginal post-secondary education.
- **Section four** discusses Aboriginal-controlled education in BC, IAHLA as an organization, and what institutes offer.
- **Section five** uses a program logic model approach to examine Aboriginal-controlled adult and post-secondary institutes in BC. Excerpts from the three case study institutes are “deconstructed” to illustrate different elements of the model.

### Program Logic Model

*A logic model was developed for Aboriginal-controlled adult and post-secondary institutes in BC. The logic model graphically illustrates the linkages among the inputs, activities and outputs of institutes with intended outcomes (results). The logic model helped confirm the indicators and sources of data to pursue during the research project.*

3 Upon reviewing the information submitted by member institutes in response to a call for financial information, it was clear to the project team that generalizing the results would not be possible. The number of institutes that provided financial information was limited (approximately one-third of IAHLA members), and the diversity of the institutes themselves did not support the use of this information in a general context.

4 Program logic models graphically illustrate the linkages among the inputs, activities and outputs of programs with intended outcomes (results). Program logic models are often used in the program evaluation field and are described by Joseph Wholey et al. in the *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation (Second Edition)* as “a useful advance organizer for designing evaluation and performance measurement, focusing on the important elements of the program and identifying what evaluation questions should be asked and why and what measures of performance are key.” 2004, 7.



- **Section six** examines funding and costs of public institutions and Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education institutes in BC. Five publicly funded post-secondary institutions are presented for comparative purposes with the three case study institutes profiled in this report.
- **Section seven** examines the long-term benefits of community-based, Aboriginal education.
- **Section eight** revisits the three purpose statements from the project's request for proposals: what are the overall funding issues, costs and benefits of Aboriginal-controlled education?
- **The appendices** present a variety of supporting information, including a complete account of all three Aboriginal-controlled case study institutes.





## Methodology

### 2.1 Advisory Committee

This project was guided by an Advisory Committee<sup>5</sup> working in partnership with the consultants. Together, the project team identified the following research question:

*“What are the costs of running Aboriginal-controlled adult and post-secondary institutes in British Columbia and what are the benefits of doing so for First Nations and for society in general?”*

Advisory Committee members supported the project by suggesting key publications for inclusion in the scoping review of the literature phase, confirming the research methodology and approach, helping to select the case study institutes, assisting with developing the program logic model (“logic model”), and providing feedback on the final report.

### 2.2 Approach

The project utilized a phased approach with multiple lines of evidence including:

- ***A sample file review*** – an initial exploratory phase examined a sample of IAHLA institutes to determine ease of access to financial data and other performance and statistical information.
- ***A scoping review of the literature***<sup>6</sup> – to identify key research, recent studies, policies and program documentation on the topic of Indigenous-controlled education.
- ***A logic model*** – developed for Aboriginal-controlled adult and post-secondary institutes in BC. The logic model graphically illustrates the linkages among the inputs, activities and outputs of institutes with intended outcomes (results).
- ***Key informant interviews*** – to gain insights from IAHLA Board members, case study institute representatives, program staff and other researchers. A list of contributors is presented as Appendix B.
- ***Analysis of financial information*** – financial information was

5 The Advisory Committee was comprised of a sub-committee of the IAHLA Board of Directors and represents a range of small and large institutes from across the province.

6 Timelines and resources did not allow for a more comprehensive literature review.



collected from each case study institute for fiscal 2008/09, then analyzed and reviewed with institute staff to ensure its accuracy. In addition, financial information (2008/09) on five provincially funded public post-secondary institutions was analyzed for comparative purposes. Representatives from each public institution, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development and case study Aboriginal-controlled institutes were given the opportunity to comment on the analysis of the financial information.

- **Case study research** – additional details are presented below.

## 2.3 The case studies

A case study approach added depth to the analysis by examining the specific activities, costs and benefits of three IAHLA institutes that represent a variety of educational programming, institute sizes and geographic locations throughout BC.

**Exhibit 2.1—Aboriginal-Controlled Case Study Institutes (2008/09)**

Chemainus Native College	Heiltsuk College	En'owkin Centre
One campus—Ladysmith Vancouver island south coast region	One campus—Bella Bella Campbell Island central coast region	One campus—Penticton Okanagan southern interior region
28 students*	42 students	91 students
Offers University College Education Preparation Programs and Hul'qumi'num language courses.	Provides post-secondary programs and employment training initiatives; and adult secondary learning opportunities (basic literacy through grade 10 and Life Skills training).	An Indigenous cultural, educational, ecological and creative arts organization, offering university/college transfer diplomas and certificate programs.
* Student numbers are not necessarily consistent with the definition of full-time equivalent (FTE) used by the province. Student enrolment figures used in this table are from the case study institute enrolment records for the 2008/09 year.		

These case studies introduce the “human face” of Aboriginal-controlled institutes, First Nation adult learners,<sup>7</sup> and the communities in which they reside. Full accounts of each community’s case study are presented as:

**Appendix C. Chemainus Native College: "Protecting what is dear while reaching out to the extended hands of others."**

**Appendix D. Heiltsuk College: "Thank you, we'll do it ourselves."**

**Appendix E. En'owkin Centre: "Preserving for the sake of handing down."**

Excerpts from each institute’s “story” are introduced in the sections that follow, starting with the background, and used as real-life examples of how institutes are run, their operating costs, benefits and the funding issues with which they contend.

## 2.4 Key assumptions and considerations

- The majority of large, well established Aboriginal-controlled institutes in BC are members of IAHLA. However, the exact number of Aboriginal-controlled organizations offering higher learning opportunities is not known.
- Aboriginal-controlled institutes in BC are autonomous entities and financial management practices vary.
- The consultants did not have access to information for all IAHLA institutes and, therefore, research findings cannot be generalized to all IAHLA members or all Aboriginal-controlled institutes in BC.
- Although every effort was made to choose case study institutes that offer a range of programming, size and geographic location, the three selected are by no means considered to be “representative” of all Aboriginal-controlled institutes in BC.
- The research focused on academic post-secondary education and upgrading for Adult Dogwood graduation rather than job readiness training.
- The report often refers to the 2009/10 IAHLA Data Collection Project. Unless otherwise noted, the reported results are based on a sample of 21 of 30 eligible IAHLA institutes and 361 adult learners who attend those institutes and completed surveys as part of the 2009/10 project.

*These case studies introduce the “human face” of Aboriginal-controlled institutes, First Nation adult learners, and the communities in which they reside.*

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<sup>7</sup> In its publications, IAHLA often uses the term “learner” to represent adult students who attend their institutes. The terms “learner” and “student” are used interchangeably throughout this report.





## Background

### 3.1 Indigenous rights to education

BC's first Aboriginal-controlled educational institutes began to appear in the early 1970s as autonomous responses to local needs such as:

- high unemployment rates in Aboriginal communities requiring training and employment strategies;
- disruption and displacement of family structures;
- the need for personal and community healing;
- social and economic capacity building;
- displacement of communities; and,
- Aboriginal learners not achieving success in mainstream settings.<sup>8</sup>

Some of the institutes that began operations four decades ago in response to these local needs are still in existence today. This section outlines the legislation and declarations that enabled these institutes to open and continue to provide the foundation for Indigenous education in Canada, in BC and internationally.

Constitutionally, education is an area of provincial jurisdiction for both Kindergarten to grade 12 (K-12) and post-secondary education. The exception is for the provision of education for First Nations children living on-reserve. The federal government has primary responsibility for education for First Nations people on-reserve under sections 114-122 of the *Indian Act*.

Although Section 114(2) of the *Indian Act* authorizes the minister to “establish, operate and maintain schools for Indian children,” it is less clear that this responsibility extends to post-secondary education, or to adults engaged in educational activities. Consequently, while the federal government must fund K-12 on-reserve education for all status Indian students, funding for post-secondary education for Indians is seen to be

*"Since 1972, when the federal government accepted the National Indian Brotherhood's education proposal entitled, "Indian Control of Indian Education," the socio-political climate for First Nations people in Canada has improved considerably, augmented in 1982 by the constitutional entrenchment of Aboriginal Rights and in 1997 by the decision in Delgamuukw v. British Columbia to recognize oral histories as legally admissible evidence. These measures have facilitated an increase in educational performance among First Nations students and contributed to a positive set of job and professional aspirations."*

Umeek E. Richard Atleo, *Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview*, UBC Press 2004, 128

<sup>8</sup> Office of Indigenous Affairs, *Transitions From Aboriginal-Controlled Post-Secondary Institutes To Public Post-Secondary Institutions*. University of Victoria, June 16, 2009, 30 <http://www.uvic.ca/ocbr/assets/pdfs/ATRP%20Final%20Report.pdf>. Adapted.



discretionary rather than constitutionally required.<sup>9</sup>

Aboriginal peoples' rights to an education are also contained in multiple references of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*<sup>10</sup> including:

*Article 14*

Indigenous people have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning; and,

*Article 21*

Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.

In its *Declaration of First Nations Jurisdiction Over Education*, the National Indian Brotherhood-Assembly of First Nations states:

Education for First Nations people is an inherent Aboriginal right and treaty right. The federal government has a legal obligation through various treaties with the First Nations to provide adequate resources and services for First Nations education ranging from pre-school to... post-secondary, adult, and vocational education levels. The federal government is obligated to provide resources for quality education programs, facilities, transportation, equipment, and materials for First Nations to meet the needs as determined by First Nations.<sup>11</sup>

While more than two decades have passed since that declaration was made, many key informant interviewees and observers of Aboriginal-controlled education believe the investment into Aboriginal-controlled education is inadequate.



- 
- 9 Calvin Helin and Dave Snow, *Free To Learn – Giving Aboriginal Youth Control Over Their Post-Secondary Education*. Macdonald Laurier Institute, True North in Canadian Public Policy, March, 2010,13; <http://www.macdonaldlaurier.ca/files/pdf/FreeToLearn.pdf>
- 10 First Nations Summit, February 2010, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, September 13, 2007.
- 11 National Indian Brotherhood-Assembly of First Nations, *Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of Our Future. A Summary of the Declaration of First Nations Jurisdiction Over Education*. December, 1988, 40; <http://www.afn.ca/calltoaction/Documents/DOFNJOE.pdf>

## 3.2 Why this research is timely

In recent years, there have been many research initiatives – internationally, nationally and provincially-focused – on the topic of First Nations education and funding and the advantages of a well educated Aboriginal population. While this research has shed a spotlight on the merits and challenges of Aboriginal education, to date few researchers have conducted a detailed examination of the costs of Aboriginal-controlled education in British Columbia.

One of the few studies on this topic was undertaken by the First Nations Education Steering Committee. *The Cost of Quality First Nations Education (2000)*, identifies the real costs of quality K-12 education for First Nations, then examines on-reserve First Nations schools' funding in relation to that which is available for educating First-Nations learners in the BC public school system.

IAHLA determined it was timely to undertake similar research at the post-secondary level. Further, it saw value in expanding the scope of the analysis to include the costs as well as the benefits of Aboriginal-controlled education to better demonstrate that Aboriginal post-secondary education is associated with several significant benefits—to individual learners, their communities and society in general including:

- increased labour force participation;
- higher employment rates and lower unemployment rates;
- increased earnings;
- better resilience during economic downturns;
- reduced dependence on government supports such as social assistance;
- reinforced self-esteem and self-image;
- enabling learners and graduates to stay in their communities; and,
- strengthened cultural identity and values.

Following is an overview of select research into the need for, the challenges and the benefits of Aboriginal post-secondary education.

### First Nations Jurisdiction Over Education in BC

*Jurisdiction over education is formal recognition, through signed Agreements, by the federal and provincial governments of a First Nation's right to make decisions about the education of its children. BC First Nations have been seeking recognition over education for decades.*

*On July 5, 2006, the First Nations Education Steering Committee, Canada, and BC signed a package of Agreements to recognize the jurisdiction of BC First Nations over K-12 education on-reserve. A phased approach to education jurisdiction negotiations will be used beginning with the K-12 system and then moving on to early childhood development and post-secondary programming.*

*First Nations are clear that without adequate funding the Agreements are defunct.*

*First Nations Education Steering Committee website (Adapted) <http://www.fnesc.ca/jurisdiction/index.php> (accessed June 3, 2010).*

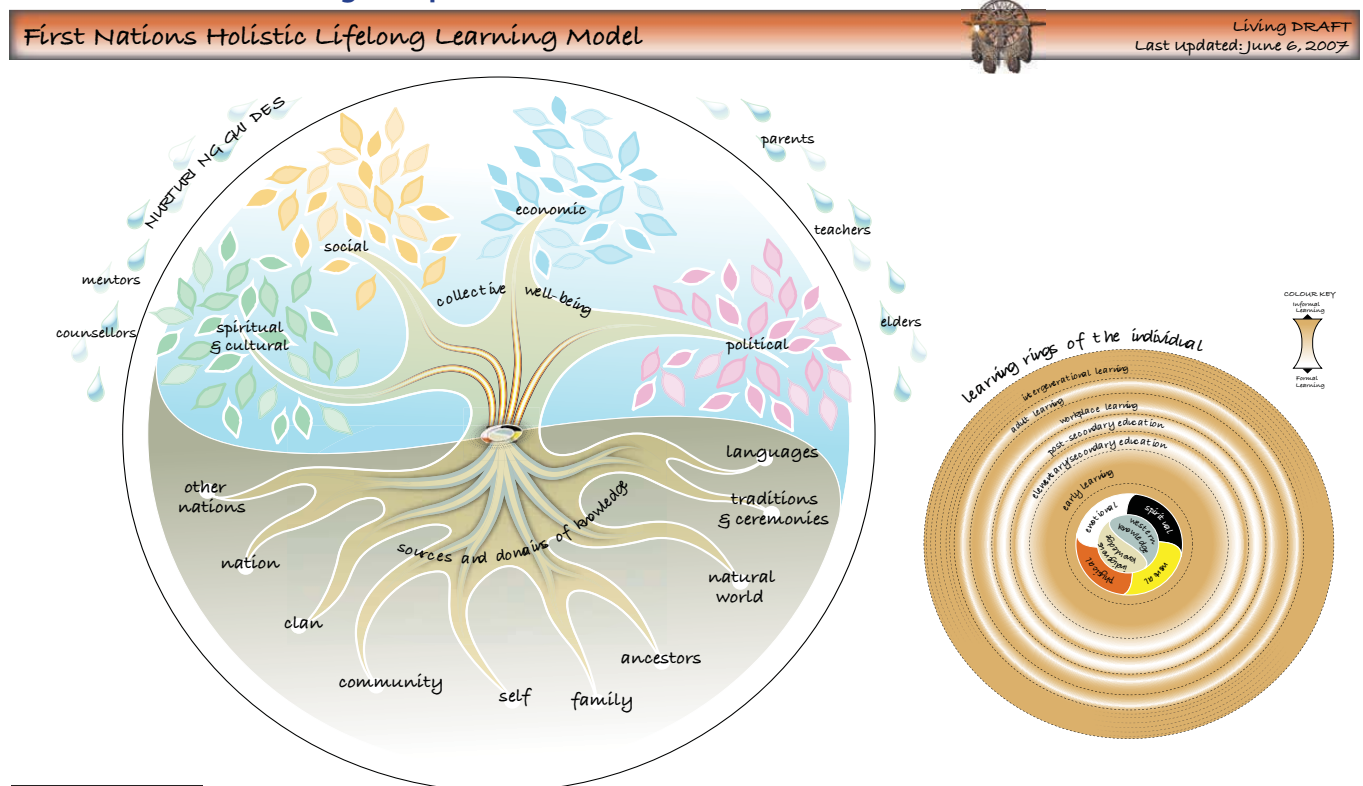
### 3.2.1 National and international research

An April 2009 Canadian Council on Learning study examining who is missing out on post-secondary education in Canada cites the “multiple and overlapping barriers faced by Aboriginal students.”<sup>12</sup> The summary report cites Australian research on key factors for keeping Aboriginal students engaged in education, including:

- community relevance;
- cultural sensitivity; and,
- community-based education and training (i.e., engagement outcomes increase when programs are “concretely linked to their home.”)

The Canadian Council on Learning has undertaken extensive research into Aboriginal education. Working with First Nation’s learning professionals, community practitioners, researchers and analysts, the Canadian Council on Learning has developed the *First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model*. The model illustrates the unique learning perspective of First Nations people and “the cyclical, regenerative nature of holistic lifelong learning and its relationship to community well-being.”

**Exhibit 3.1—First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model, Canadian Council on Learning (Adapted)<sup>13</sup>**



12 Canadian Council on Learning, *Lessons in Learning: Post-secondary education in Canada: Who is missing out?* April 1, 2009, 4; <http://www.ccl-cca.ca/>. Adapted.

13 Canadian Council on Learning, *Redefining How Success is Measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning, Report on Learning in Canada 2007* (Ottawa: 2007), 18; [http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/RedefiningSuccess/CCL\\_Learning\\_Model\\_FN.pdf](http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/RedefiningSuccess/CCL_Learning_Model_FN.pdf). Adapted.

In May 2009, The Centre for the Study of Living Standards produced *The Effect of Increasing Aboriginal Educational Attainment on the Labour Force, Output and the Fiscal Balance*. The report assesses how closing the education gap between Aboriginal peoples and the overall Canadian population can contribute significantly to meeting the economic and fiscal challenges of Canada's low productivity growth and slow labour force growth arising from the retirement of the baby boom generation.

More recently, in February 2010, The Centre for the Study of Living Standards published *Investing in Aboriginal Education in Canada: an Economic Perspective*. This research asserts that:

Improving the social and economic well-being of the Aboriginal population is not only a moral imperative; it is a sound investment that will pay substantial dividends in the coming decades. In particular, Canada's Aboriginal population could play a key role in mitigating the looming long-term labour shortage caused by Canada's aging population and low birth rate. ... [Closing the] education and labour market outcomes gaps by 2026 would lead to cumulative benefits of \$400.5 billion (2006 dollars) in additional output and \$115 billion in avoided government expenditures over the 2001-2026 period.<sup>14</sup>

In her opening statements regarding a 2004 audit on the Department Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's (INAC), Post-Secondary Student Support Program, the Auditor General of Canada determined that:

...based on census data, the time required to close the education gap that exists between First Nations people on reserves and the Canadian population has increased slightly from 27 to 28 years. The need to close this education gap remains urgent, given that the on-reserve population is young and growing. Otherwise, a significant portion of the people living on reserves will not have access to the benefits associated with a higher education.<sup>15</sup>

An April 2010 publication by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives examined data from Canada's last three censuses to measure the income gap between Aboriginal peoples and the rest of Canadians.<sup>16</sup> The study found the median income for Aboriginal people to be 30% lower than the median income for the rest of Canadians. If that trend continues,

*"Investing in First Nations is not only a benefit to First Nations communities; it's a long-term and sustainable stimulus plan for Canada's economy. Statistics Canada has predicted that Canada will face a labour shortage by 2017 as baby boomers retire and there are fewer workers to replace them. With more than half of First Nations people under the age of 23, our youth can fill this gap, but only if they are empowered with the skills and education to meet the need."*

Shawn Atleo, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations

Assembly of First Nations, *It's Our Time: A Call to Action on Education*, June 2010, 3; <http://www.afn.ca/calltoaction/default.html>

14 Jean-Francois Arsenault, Andrew Sharpe, *Investing in Aboriginal Education in Canada: an Economic Perspective*. Centre for the Study of Living Standards Research Report 2010-03, February 2010, Abstract i; [www.csls.ca/reports/csls2010-03.pdf](http://www.csls.ca/reports/csls2010-03.pdf)

15 Sheila Fraser, FCA, Auditor General of Canada. Opening Statement to the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, February 24, 2005.

16 Daniel Wilson and David Macdonald, *The Income Gap Between Aboriginal Peoples and the Rest of Canada*. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, April 2010, 3-4, 20-21; <http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/income-gap-between-aboriginal-peoples-and-rest-canada>

the authors predict it will take 63 years for the income gap to be eliminated.

As recently reported by Statistics Canada, Aboriginal people with a completed post-secondary education appear to be more resilient to economic downturns.<sup>17</sup> For example, in 2009, "...Aboriginal youths [ages 15-24] with post-secondary credentials showed a distinctly better employment picture than those with less formal education with higher employment rates and lower unemployment rates."

### 3.2.2 British Columbia research

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development's Student Transitions Project links data about students in the BC public post-secondary education system with information from their years in K-12. A March 2009 report found significant differences in the education outcomes and demographics of BC's Aboriginal students, when compared to non-Aboriginal students such as:<sup>18</sup>

- Compared to 88% of non-Aboriginal British Columbians, 69% of BC's Aboriginal population aged 25-64 had completed a high school credential or higher;
- Eight percent of Aboriginal graduates from 2001/02 to 2005/06 were university-eligible (had a GPA of 75% or higher in four academic grade 12 courses) compared to 31% of non-Aboriginal students;
- Seven percent of Aboriginal citizens (age 25 to 64) in BC hold university degrees, versus 25% of non-Aboriginal British Columbians in that age group; and,
- In the last five years, BC's Aboriginal population grew at triple the rate of the non-Aboriginal population (15.3% versus 4.8%).

Several BC First Nations organizations have undertaken research on Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education. In May 2008, the First Nations Education Steering Committee published *Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education in British Columbia: A Place for Aboriginal Institutes, A Policy Background Paper*. The paper examines possible ways to formally recognize Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes as a critical component of the post-secondary system of BC. It builds a case for the unique role of Aboriginal institutes, and emphasizes how they fulfill a critical niche and go beyond duplicating mainstream educational settings.

*In terms of graduates, the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations estimates "it will take 65,000 Aboriginal graduates to close the gap in post-secondary educational attainment." In the same article the National Chief states that "First Nations youth who complete high school are twice as likely to be employed, and those who get University degrees triple their earning potential."*

*Shawn Atleo, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Globe and Mail, February 19, 2010; <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/education-is-the-key-to-aboriginal-and-canadian-potential/article1475104/>.*

17 Statistics Canada: *Aboriginal People Living Off-reserve and the Labour Market: Estimates from the Labour Force Survey 2008-2009*, May 2010, 17-18. Catalogue number 71-588-XWE2010001, Statistics Canada [database online]. [accessed June 3 2010]. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=71-588-X2010001&lang=enghttp://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/standard/profiles/ListProducts.cfm?Temporal=2001&APATH=1&RL=3&FREE=0>.

18 Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development, *Student Transitions Project: Educational Achievement of Aboriginal Students in BC*, March 2009, 2; [http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student\\_transitions/](http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student_transitions/). Adapted.



In June 2009, the University of Victoria Office of Indigenous Affairs, in partnership with IAHLA, published the *Aboriginal Transition Research Project Report*. The research investigates the transition of Aboriginal students from Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education institutes to public post-secondary education institutions. The overarching goals of the project are to increase success of Aboriginal students and to identify which factors or variables contribute to successful transition.

In December 2005, Storytellers' Foundation & Gitxsan Wet'suwet'en Education Society prepared *Funding and Best Practices Research: BC First Nations Post-Secondary Institutes—Indian Studies Support Program Research Project*. The study examined the funding required to implement effective post-secondary education programming in institutes and makes several recommendations to improve the stability of First Nations-controlled post-secondary training institutes.







# Aboriginal–Controlled Post–Secondary Education in BC

Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes are multi-faceted entities. Each institute reflects a local, Indigenous response to community and individual education needs—no two institutes are alike.

This section describes Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education in BC. In order to demonstrate that quality education is being delivered within IAHLA institutes, the authors draw upon governance and performance information collected through the fifth annual IAHLA Data Collection Project. IAHLA is discussed, along with measures being taken by institutes to reinforce cultural underpinnings e.g., innovative program offerings. Finally, this section shares data on instructor qualifications and discusses the types of supports institutes offer learners.

## 4.1 IAHLA – the organization

Having started with 29 inaugural members in 2003, IAHLA currently represents 38 Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes and adult learning centres throughout BC.<sup>19</sup>

IAHLA was formed at the request of Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes and adult learning programs to address and further the mutual needs and interests of all Aboriginal-controlled learning centres in BC. In May 2003, IAHLA was registered as a non-profit Society under the *Societies Act*. IAHLA's mandate is to:<sup>20</sup>

- collect and disseminate relevant information to assist Indigenous adult and higher learning agencies in their provision of education services;
- undertake research that will benefit Indigenous adult and higher learning agencies throughout BC;

### The IAHLA Data Collection Project

*In 2005/06, IAHLA initiated the Data Collection Project to assist First Nations institutes to meet accountability and reporting requirements using a framework developed for First Nations adult and post-secondary institutes by First Nations institutes. The Project asks First Nations institutes offering adult and post-secondary education programming to complete a comprehensive data collection instrument.*

*The most recent Project was administered, analyzed and reported between October 2009 and March 2010. In total, 70% (21) of 30 eligible institutes returned surveys and 361 adult learners completed surveys.*

<sup>19</sup> The majority of Aboriginal-controlled institutes that exist in BC are members of IAHLA. In particular, almost all of the largest, most well-established, and longest-running institutes have joined the IAHLA collective. From time-to-time, non-member organizations and First Nations may offer some form of adult education programming, but that programming is often irregular and limited in scope. Therefore, the exact number of Aboriginal controlled organizations offering higher learning opportunities fluctuates over time.

<sup>20</sup> IAHLA Strategic Plan 2010/11.

- facilitate networking and information sharing activities, such as conferences, meetings, and workshops;
- support collective professional development and training opportunities; and,
- undertake other support activities at the direction of Indigenous adult and higher learning agencies; and to solicit funding as necessary to undertake the activities listed above.

IAHLA institutes offer Aboriginal adult learners development in academic, personal, leadership, cultural, wisdom and vocational skills. Members are geographically located in remote coastal and northern communities, throughout the province's interior, the boundary region and on Vancouver Island, as well as in urban centres such as metro Vancouver. A map illustrating the locations of IAHLA members is presented as Appendix A.

With the exception of three larger institutes enrolling more than 100 learners, most IAHLA institutes enroll fewer than 50 learners. In total, the 19 institutes reporting data on past year (2008/09) enrolments had 2,454 learners that year.<sup>21</sup> The majority (56%) of learners surveyed were female and 42% were age 30 or older. This is in keeping with findings from Katenies Research and Management Services and Chignecto Consulting Group Inc., which reports that “Indigenous institutes offer education and learning opportunities to students who would not necessarily attend mainstream institutions, including older students, women, single parents and students with families.”<sup>22</sup>

Most IAHLA institutes are directed by community-driven, Aboriginal-controlled governance structures. Over the years, IAHLA members have also developed extensive relationships with other Aboriginal organizations and with the broader post-secondary community. Institutes work in partnership to develop and share credentials, programs and courses—including undergraduate and post-graduate courses and programs in areas of special interest and expertise.

## 4.2 What Aboriginal-controlled institutes offer

Aboriginal-controlled institutes offer learners:

- a strong cultural foundation;
- multiple forms of programming in community;
- qualified instructors;
- support by establishing links with other service providers; and,
- support with transitions to public post-secondary institutions.

*“The beauty of [an IAHLA institute] is that it is for Aboriginal students by Aboriginal mentors. It was inclusive and we felt welcome. We were guided in a good way for two years and that gave me the strength I needed to excel at the University of British Columbia.”*

*Richard Van Camp, Ph.D., faculty member, University of British Columbia and En'owkin Centre graduate. IAHLA Promotional Brochure published April 2010*



21 Tindall Consulting in association with Juniper Consulting, *IAHLA Data Collection Project 2009/10, Final Report*, March 31, 2010, 4.8. Increased enrollment was reported for the 17 responding institutes that reported current year enrolments in both years (2009/10 and 2008/09).

22 Katenies Research and Management Services and Chignecto Consulting Group Inc., *Review of the Indian Studies Support Program Component of the PSE Program, Final Report Presented to the Joint AFN-INAC PSE Working Group*, March 31, 2006, 44.

This section describes the nature and extent of these offerings and provides examples and statistical information, where available, based on recent research.

## 4.2.1 A strong cultural foundation

Aboriginal-controlled institutes promote Indigenous cultural learning by:

- placing a high level of importance on promoting aspects of culture, in addition to academic goals;
- delivering language courses;
- being involved in language revitalization projects; and,
- embedding traditional values and celebrations into their programming.<sup>23</sup>

Promoting aspects of culture was centrally or very important to 100% of the institutes who responded [to this question] on the 2009/10 IAHLA Data Collection Project.<sup>24</sup> The extent of language programming offered by institutes demonstrates this. For example, in 2009/10, 81% of responding IAHLA institutes offered First Nations' language courses<sup>25</sup> and 86% were involved with language revitalization projects.<sup>26</sup>

*"Aboriginal-controlled institutes [strengthen] cultural teachings, which allow students to learn and have great pride in their identity... some participants stated they were separated from their culture through adoption, foster care or residential schools, and the Aboriginal-controlled institutes played a vital role in reconnecting them with their own cultural practices and self-identity."*

*Office of Indigenous Affairs,  
University of Victoria, 41.*

All three case study institutes have language revitalization projects. Often, these language initiatives are locally controlled. For example, En'owkin Centre's language program is stewarded by the Okanagan Language Authority.<sup>27</sup> In 2009/10, a total of 359 people in all seven Okanagan Bands were learning the N'Syilxcen language—mostly children and youth ages five to fourteen.<sup>28</sup>

En'owkin Centre's language program is dependent on community involvement and local delivery. This coming year, En'owkin Centre will introduce videoconferencing to enable remote delivery of language programming, expanding community access to learning.

Traditional teaching and values are present in IAHLA institutes' programming. In particular, Elder support and spiritual guidance are often embedded in the learning experience to an extent not found in mainstream institutions. A commitment to First Nations culture is also evident in the level of support for cultural leave. Some Aboriginal-controlled institutes have policies and practices that provide time off to attend burials, feasts, potlatches and other cultural activities.

23 Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 36.

24 Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 36.

25 Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 36.

26 Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 38.

27 The Okanagan Language Authority provides advice on language priorities, curriculum, language teacher credentials, and helps to create new (modern) phrases and to recover rarely used words.

28 Okanagan Language Authority, *Language Needs Assessment*, Okanagan Nation, 2009/10. Not published.



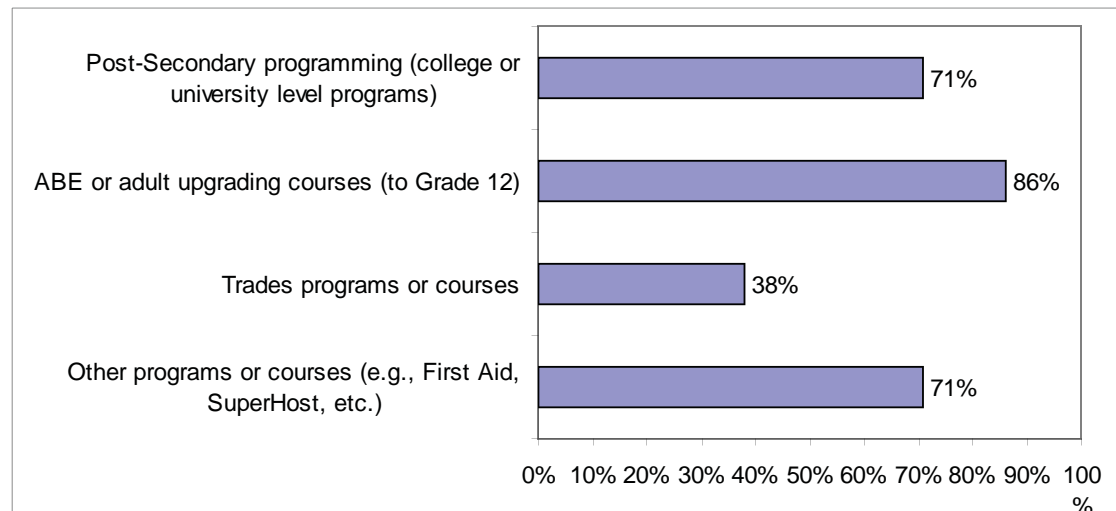
*"Elders explained the learning spirit's presence throughout all stages of an individual's life. The learning spirit was described as existing in relation to one's lived experiences, responses to teachings, traditional values, use of original language and the need of individuals not only to survive, but to honour one's survival through the unchanged ceremonies passed from generation to generation."*

*Canadian Council on Learning, Nourishing the Learning Spirit: Elders' Dialogue, September 2008, Executive Summary; <http://www.ccl-cca.ca/ccl/AboutCCL/KnowledgeCentres/AboriginalLearning/OurWork/EldersDialogue.html>*

## 4.2.2 Multiple forms of programming

As reported in the *IAHLA Data Collection Project 2009/10 Final Report*, in 2009/10, IAHLA institutes offered four types of programming: post-secondary; ABE or adult upgrading courses; trades; and, other programs or courses.

**Exhibit 4.1—Programming Offered by IAHLA Institutes in 2009/10<sup>29</sup>**



Further, 67% of institutes reported offering post-secondary programs “always” or “often” in the past five years; and, 62% reported that they had programs that laddered directly into degree programs. In 2008/09, 19 institutes reported information for 2,530 learners; 76% of those

<sup>29</sup> Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 6.

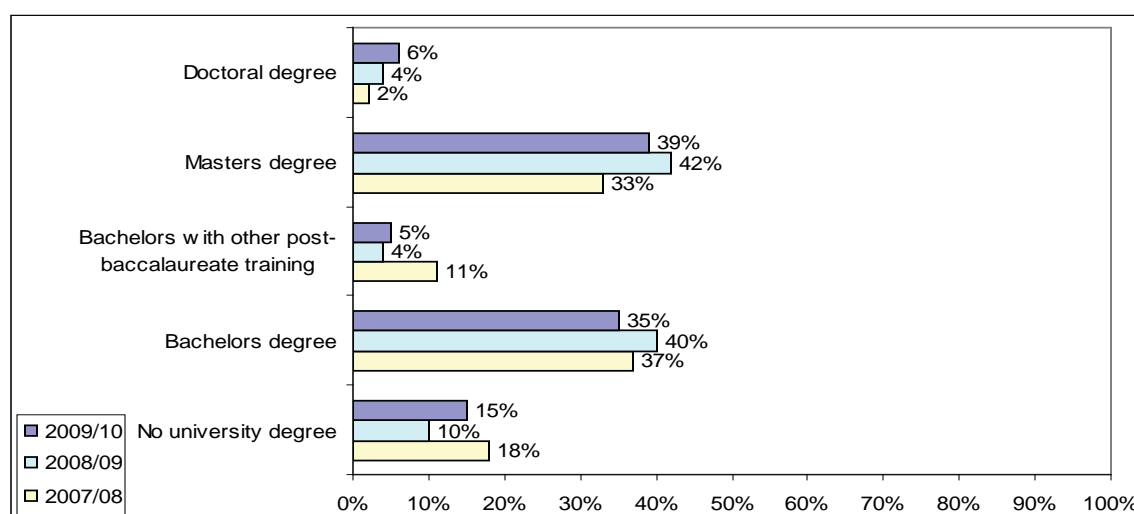
learners were enrolled in articulated/transferable courses or programs.<sup>30</sup> And, in 2009/10, IAHLA institutes reported an overall 2008/09 course completion rate of 78%.<sup>31</sup>

Many IAHLA institutes have established formalized relationships with other education providers.<sup>32</sup> These relationships can help supplement the range and variety of courses offered in community and facilitate cost sharing, quality assurance, and articulation/transferability. Also, they aim to support transitions between Aboriginal-controlled and public post-secondary institutions. The most common relationships are affiliation agreements, followed by service agreements and brokering arrangements. In addition, some institutes have negotiated partnerships and MOUs. In 2009/10, 16 institutes reported 32 such formal relationships, and were satisfied with 69% of these relationships.<sup>33</sup>

### 4.2.3 Qualified instructors

IAHLA instructors are well qualified and highly educated. Eighty-five percent of the instructors at 19 responding institutes had a Bachelors degree or higher level of education. This included 45% of the instructors who had a Masters or Doctoral degree.<sup>34</sup>

**Exhibit 4.2—Instructors’ Highest Level of Education<sup>35</sup>**



To ensure quality and accountability, 67% of responding IAHLA institutes had undergone an external program evaluation in the past five years. This included, but was not limited to, those required by INAC for Nominal Roll.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>30</sup> IAHLA Data Collection Project 2009/10 Report Highlights presented at IAHLA AGM, April 30, 2010.

<sup>31</sup> Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 44.

<sup>32</sup> IAHLA Data Collection Project 2009/10 reported that 16 institutes had at least one type of formalized relationship with other education providers. Five institutes did not respond to this question.

<sup>33</sup> Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 33.

<sup>34</sup> Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 11.

<sup>35</sup> Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 11.

<sup>36</sup> Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 12.



As of October 2009, IAHLA institutes employed 177 instructors. Nineteen institutes reported part/full time status for 130 of these instructors: 75% were working part-time and 25% worked full-time.<sup>37</sup>

#### 4.2.4 Learner support by establishing links with other service providers

Aboriginal-controlled institute staff provide a continuum of care and nurturing support to learners – from Life Skills and basic education upgrading through to post-secondary and beyond. Staff maintain contact as a means to support each individual learner. At the same time, staff establish links with other service providers (within and outside the community) in order to support learners.

**Exhibit 4.3—Service Providers Linking with IAHLA Institutes<sup>38</sup>**

Service Providers	2009/10
	N = 21
Traditional/spiritual advisors & Elders	95%
Health services	95%
Public colleges/universities	90%
Social development services	90%
Child and family services	81%
Employment services	76%
First Nations schools	71%
Other First Nations institutes	71%
Public school district or schools	62%
AHRDA* or On-Reserve Training Society	62%
Off-Reserve agencies	62%
Tribal Council	62%
Economic Development Corporation	48%
Other	24%
* An AHRDA is an Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement. AHRDAs are a strategy of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.	

*"Indigenous institutes fill the gap between what is being provided by mainstream post-secondary programming and what is required by a significant number of Indigenous learners. [Indigenous Institutes of Higher Learning] address inequities by working with students, families, and communities to target and support students who have historically had low educational achievement levels but who have the potential to succeed in an appropriate post-secondary school environment."*

*Katenies Research and Management Services and Chignecto Consulting Group Inc., 43.*

<sup>37</sup> Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 10.

<sup>38</sup> Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 27.

This learner-focused, inter-agency support can be observed at the Chemainus Native College where classrooms and administrative space are physically situated within the Chemainus Health Centre. Proximity to health care providers has been advantageous for accessing student support services such as counselling.

### 4.2.5 Learner support with transitions

Aboriginal-controlled institutes fulfill a key function in the post-secondary sector. According to the BC Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development, “Aboriginal private institutions serve an important role for many Aboriginal students who do not make an immediate transition into BC’s public post-secondary system by offering the opportunity to acquire particular educational upgrading, programming and support services.”<sup>39</sup> Further, according to Katenies Research and Management Services and Chignecto Consulting Group Inc., they can offer an “educationally sound, emotionally safe, and culturally relevant learning environment for... [learners whom] have previously not enjoyed success in the mainstream educational system.”<sup>40</sup>



The Aboriginal Transition Research Project described the role of Aboriginal-controlled institutes as “...serving as a stepping stone to further education. It is the moving away from the conventional linear education journey, to one that is grounded in Aboriginal epistemology and ontology, which has proven to be most successful for Aboriginal learners.”<sup>41</sup> Further, the Aboriginal Transition Research Project found that Aboriginal-controlled institutes provided students with extra time to address relocation issues or focus on their studies. Aboriginal students preferred to attend Aboriginal-controlled institutes due to:

- smaller class sizes;
- enhanced student-teacher ratio; and
- individualized student pacing per program completion.<sup>42</sup>

Finally, Aboriginal-controlled institutes support learners by providing opportunities for them to enroll in accredited courses that ladder directly into public post-secondary institutions. This can help facilitate the transition between places of higher learning.

**Stepping Stone:**

*“Something used as a way to progress to something or somewhere else.”*

*wiktionary.org*

39 Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development, *Aboriginal Report – Charting Our Path, Public post-secondary system*, October 2008, 3; [http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/.../Aboriginal\\_Indicator\\_Report-Oct2008.pdf](http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/.../Aboriginal_Indicator_Report-Oct2008.pdf)

40 Katenies Research and Management Services and Chignecto Consulting Group Inc., 45.

41 Office of Indigenous Affairs, University of Victoria, vii.

42 Office of Indigenous Affairs, University of Victoria, 39.



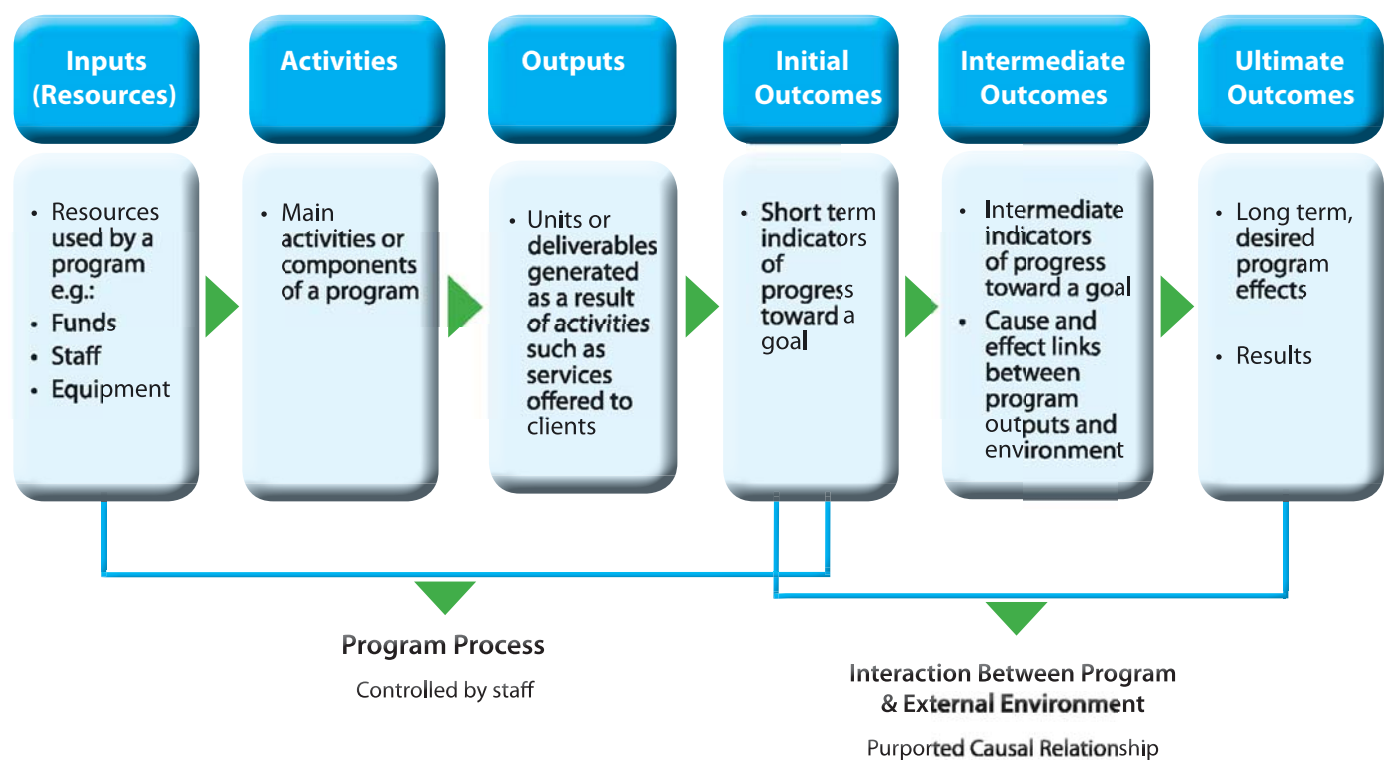


## Logic Model Approach

### Using a Logic Model to Examine Aboriginal-Controlled Adult and Post-Secondary Institutes in BC

Logic models illustrate the relationship between the resources (inputs) applied to a program, the activities and outputs as a result of spending those resources (the costs), and the outcomes (benefits), both short and long-term, from those outputs and activities.

**Exhibit 5.1—Generic Logic Model**



Working with the project’s Advisory Committee, the consultants developed a logic model for Aboriginal-controlled adult and post-secondary institutes in BC, presented as Exhibit 5.2. By linking outputs to outcomes, the benefits of Aboriginal-controlled education can be more clearly identified.

Exhibit 5.2—Logic Model for Aboriginal-Controlled Adult and Post-Secondary Institutes in BC



Excerpts from the three case study institutes are presented in this section and used to illustrate different parts of the logic model for Aboriginal-Controlled Adult and Post-Secondary Institutes in BC:<sup>43</sup>

1. Chemainus Native College's Inputs
2. Heiltsuk College's Outputs
3. En'owkin Centre's Initial Outcomes

Elements of each case study are “deconstructed” to illustrate the logic underlying each institute. In-depth case study reports for each institute are profiled in appendices C, D and E.



## 5.1 Case Study: Chemainus Native College (Excerpt)

Chemainus Native College is located on the Stz'uminus First Nation territory, central Vancouver Island, in traditional Hul'qumi'num territories. Chemainus Native College's learners have access to:<sup>44</sup>

- Elder mentorship;
- community involvement;
- traditional ceremonies;
- student peer support;
- traditional teaching entwined in culture;
- celebration and feast;
- transportation to and from College; and,
- small class sizes.

Chemainus Native College opened its doors 25 years ago. Initially providing only adult upgrading courses, for the past 10 years Chemainus Native College has also offered post-secondary education—including programs that ladder directly into degree programs.

### 5.1.1 “Deconstructing” Chemainus Native College's Inputs

In developing logic models, “*inputs*” are used to describe the resources—such as staff time, equipment and the physical structures—used by a program. Exhibit 5.3 “deconstructs” the logic model for Aboriginal-Controlled Adult and Post-Secondary Institutes in BC (introduced above) to examine the inputs that went into operating Chemainus Native College for the periods noted. It expands upon the inputs that might go into Aboriginal-controlled institutes in general, outlined in the left-hand column.

<sup>43</sup> The logic model for Aboriginal-Controlled Adult and Post-Secondary Institutes in BC reflects discussions with Advisory Committee members in support of this project and, as such, has not been approved by IAHLA's broader membership. The logic model is expected to change over time to reflect the shifting priorities, aspirations and activities of Aboriginal-controlled institutes.

<sup>44</sup> As described in the Reciprocal Partnership Pilot Project prepared by Vancouver Island University and Chemainus Native College with facilitation from Toro Marketing Inc., April 2010.



## Exhibit 5.3—Chemainus Native College's Inputs

### Institutes in General INPUTS

#### Partner Agencies

- IAHLA (Association)
- Public colleges & universities
- Other First Nations institutes & organizations, e.g., First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNEC), First Nations Schools Association (FNSA)
- INAC
- Province of BC

#### Human/Physical Resources

- Educators and Administrators
- Classrooms
- Meeting Rooms & Offices

#### Community

- Band Chief & Council
- Education Societies
- Elders
- Families
- Other services e.g., health & social development

#### Financial Resources

- Community
- INAC/ Fed Depts
- Province of BC
- Tuition
- Industry/business

### Chemainus Native College's INPUTS for periods as noted

#### Chemainus Native College Partner Agencies

- IAHLA (Association) –CNC is an active member of the association with rep. on the BOD
- Vancouver Island University (VIU) - CNC has affiliation an agreement and articulation agreement with VIU and Stz'uminus First Nation has a Learner's Partnership Agreement with VIU
- Chemainus Native College Stakeholder Advisory Committee (CNC SAC) – provides support and advice to CNC
- Coast Salish Employment and Training Society provides 35 day care spaces, strategic planning and relationship building strategy and CNC has signed an MOU with CSETS to collaborate on education and training initiatives
- FNEC, FNSA – support CNC through advocacy and research
- 12 First Nations communities represented by Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, the Naut'sa mawt Tribal Council, Cowichan Tribes, Hul'qumi'num Stakeholders
- INAC – provides the majority of funding for CNC through ISSP
- Province of BC – funding through New Relationships Trust

#### Chemainus Native College Human/Physical Resources

- Learners-UCEP: 13 (2006/07), 10 (2007/08) 19 (2008/09), 10 (2009/10)
- Learners -Hul'qumi'num Language: 22 (2006/07), 15 (2007/08) 7 (2008/09), 12 (2009/10)
- 6 Educators and/or Administrators: two-thirds of instructors have a Masters degree; the rest have a Bachelors Degree
- Chemainus Native College's offices, class rooms and meeting rooms are physically located in the local Health Centre. It is temporary, in-kind accommodation
- Reception services are provided by Chemainus Health Centre at no cost to CNC

#### Chemainus Native College Community Inputs

- The Stur'ate Lelum Secondary School (8 to 12) and Chemainus Native College (DSTC and UCEP programs) together provide education services to the Chemainus First Nation (CFN). Groups involved in the programming/learning include Elders, Students, and the CFN Chief and Council
- CNC works closely with the Health Centre re: referrals and support for health issues affecting their students
- Stz'uminus First Nation are presently working together to develop an integrated education and training program tailored to the community and neighbouring communities

#### Chemainus Native College Financial Resources

- Community
- The College uses space owned by the CFN. There is no formal lease agreement. Fair market value of the space is estimated at \$30,000
- The College receives administrative support from the CFN staff. The value of the administrative support is estimated at \$20,000
- the College is allowed to use the computers that are owned by the CFN (School) Approximately 15 computers are in use at any time, with an overall market value of \$2000 per unit
- INAC - Provided funding in 2008/09 for ISSP (\$198K)
- BC Hydro 2007/08 and 2008/09 –provided \$25K each year to support their UCEP offerings
- Provincial Government - New Relationship Trust one-time grant for technical equipment (boards, TV, computer) 2008/09 (\$12K) and DSTC funding (\$66K)
- Tuition for DSTC and UCEP courses are set at the same rate as VIU (2008/09 \$108K)

## 5.2 Case Study: Heiltsuk College (Excerpt)

Heiltsuk College<sup>45</sup> is located in Bella Bella—also known as Waglisla—on Campbell Island, on BC’s central coast. A resource-based community, Bella Bella is accessible only by ferry and air transportation.

Bella Bella’s approximately 1500 residents primarily live on-reserve. Heiltsuk College/Waglisla Adult Learning Centre is a department of the Heiltsuk Tribal Council. Heiltsuk College provides post-secondary programs and employment training initiatives. In 1991, Heiltsuk College’s enrollment reportedly increased by 600% when Adult Nominal Roll funds were secured, providing a source of ongoing and stable funding for the first time in the College’s history. The large infusion of funds that year enabled the College to diversify its program offerings and hire full-time, qualified teachers versus contracted tutors. Enrollment averages 40 full-time students per year.<sup>46</sup> In 2009/10, Heiltsuk College had partnerships<sup>47</sup> with at least eight public post-secondary institutions.

### 5.2.1 “Deconstructing” Heiltsuk College’s Outputs

*“Activities”* are those elements of the logic model that illustrate the main activities or components of a program. *“Outputs”* are the deliverables generated as a result of the activities such as services offered to clients. Outputs are often expressed as a quantitative measure of effort. Activities and outputs are usually grouped together and can be viewed as mirror images e.g., the activity of “negotiating two affiliation agreements” may result in an output of “two affiliation agreements.”

Exhibit 5.4 “deconstructs” the logic model for Aboriginal-Controlled Adult and Post-Secondary Institutes in BC (introduced above) to examine Heiltsuk College’s outputs for the periods as noted.



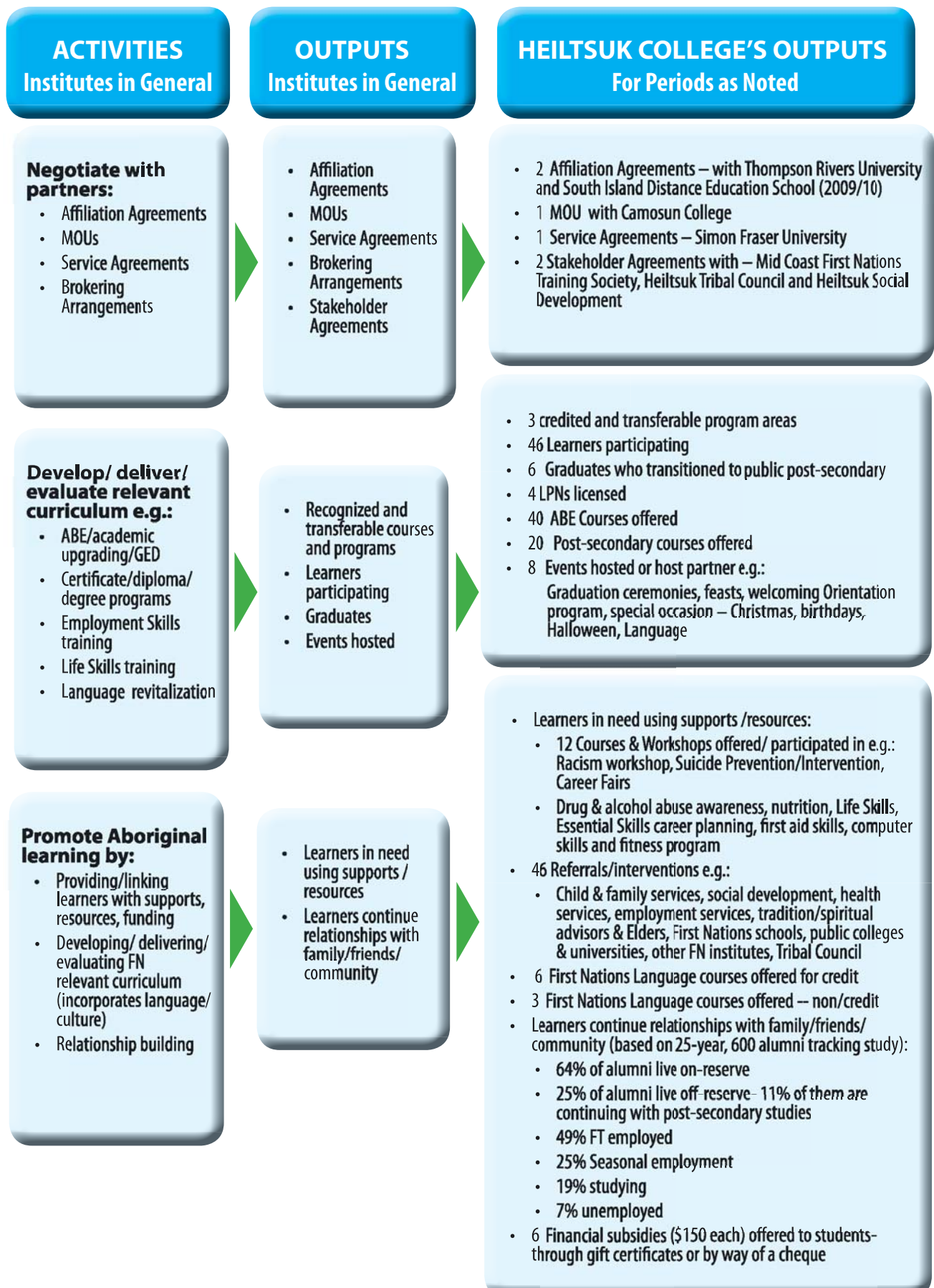
45 Heiltsuk College/Waglisla Adult Learning Centre is Heiltsuk College’s full legal name. For the purposes of this report, it is referred to as “Heiltsuk College.”

46 Pauline Waterfall, in an interview with the consultants, April 29, 2010.

47 Many of these courses were “brokered”, which means that Heiltsuk College purchased the curriculum, the instructors were vetted by the public post-secondary institution, and then the certificate or diploma was issued under the name of the public post-secondary institution.



Exhibit 5.4—Heiltsuk College's Outputs





## 5.3 Case Study: En'owkin Centre (Excerpt)

Located on the Penticton Indian Reserve, En'owkin Centre is an “Indigenous cultural, educational, ecological, and creative arts organization.”<sup>48</sup> It was established in 1981 by the seven Bands that form the Okanagan Nation Alliance situated in the southern interior of BC.<sup>49</sup> En'owkin Centre offers seven programs of study and has affiliations and partnerships with four public post-secondary institutions and one educational authority.

### 5.3.1 “Deconstructing” En'owkin Centre's Initial Outcomes

To examine the proposed outcomes or benefits of Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education, the third case study focuses on En'owkin Centre. With program logic models, “initial outcomes” can be viewed as the short term indicators of progress toward a goal. Some describe these as the direct benefits generated by a program's inputs, activities and outputs.

For illustrative purposes, the logic model is “deconstructed” to demonstrate En'owkin Centre's initial outcomes. The model differs from the previous two case studies' in that directional arrows are used to present the data. For Chemainus Native College and Heiltsuk College's models, bullets are used to quantify a specific number of inputs to-and outputs generated by-those respective institutes for a fairly limited timeframe e.g., one fiscal year.

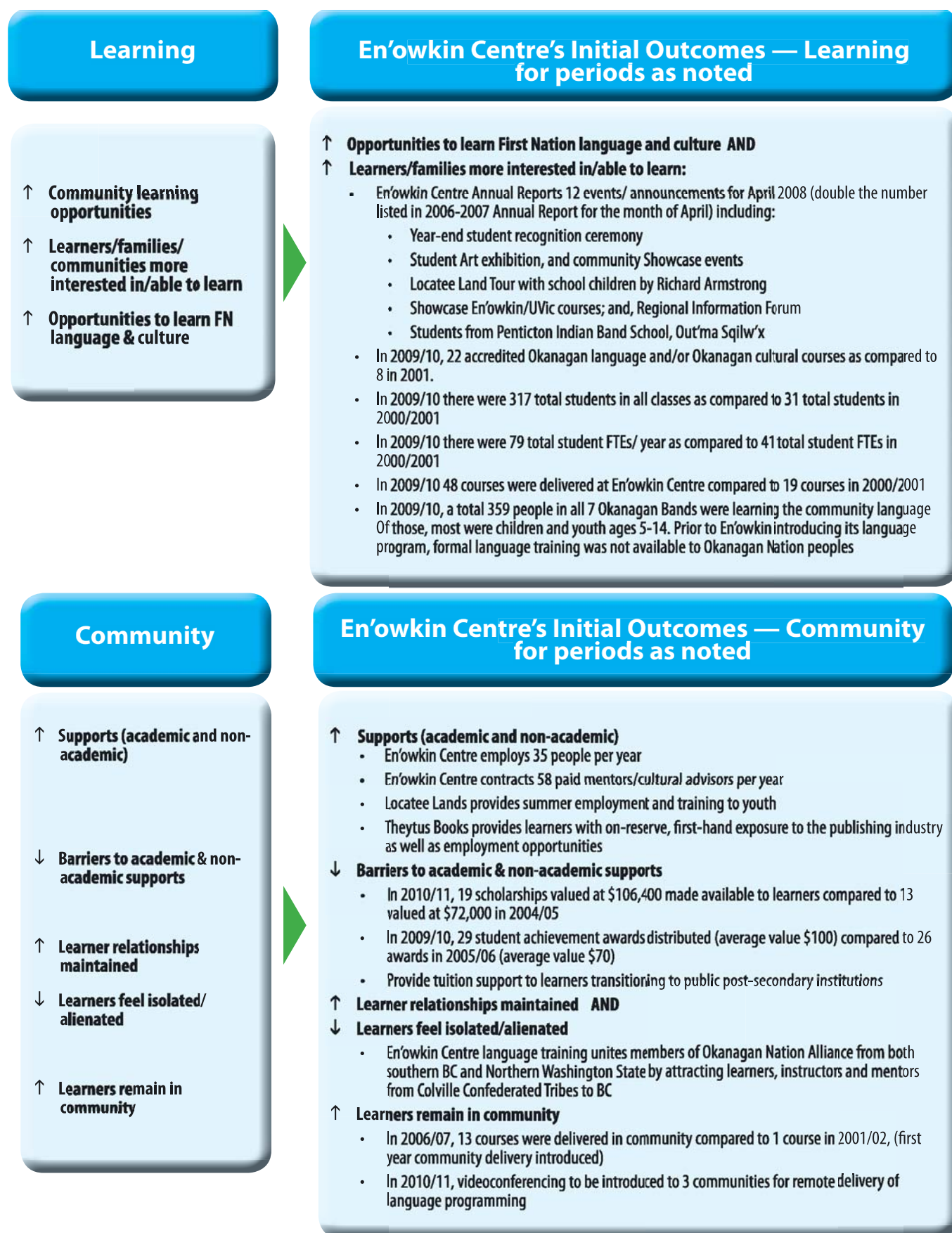
However, outcomes are generally realized over a longer time period. Further, although they may be inferred, outcomes cannot be attributed unequivocally to specific activities and outputs. Instead, data from a longer time frame e.g., a five year span, can provide trend information (illustrated by the directional arrows) to help identify whether En'owkin Centre is making progress, as intended, in fulfilling the initial outcomes presented in the overarching logic model for Aboriginal-controlled institutes in BC.



<sup>48</sup> 2010/2011 En'owkin Centre Academic Calendar, 3.

<sup>49</sup> The Okanagan Nation Territory is spread across the southern interior of BC as well as northern Washington (USA). The Okanagan Nation is comprised of seven Canadian member Bands with a combined enrollment of approximately 4,897 members. The American Colville Confederated Tribes have about 8700 members [www.okanaganfirstpeoples.ca/syilx.cfm](http://www.okanaganfirstpeoples.ca/syilx.cfm), accessed June 3, 2010.

## Exhibit 5.5—En'owkin Centre's Initial Outcomes







## Funding and Costs

### Examining Funding and Costs of Public Institutions and Aboriginal-Controlled Post-Secondary Education Institutes in BC

This section explains how post-secondary education is funded in BC. Five publicly funded post-secondary institutions are presented for comparative purposes with the three case study institutes profiled in this report. This analysis highlights the key funding issues that affect Aboriginal-controlled institutes. As well, costs associated with post-secondary education are identified to highlight similarities and differences between publicly funded and Aboriginal-controlled entities.

British Columbia is home to 25 publicly funded post-secondary institutions: 11 universities, 11 colleges, and three institutes. Only one of these publicly funded institutions (Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT)) has an Aboriginal-controlled board, which is appointed by the provincial government.<sup>50</sup> NVIT is a member of IAHLA.<sup>51</sup> As previously noted, 38 Aboriginal-controlled colleges and institutes in the province are IAHLA members.

To gain an understanding of funding for post-secondary education and the typical costs of operating a post-secondary institute, five publicly funded post-secondary institutions were selected to compare with the three Aboriginal-controlled case study institutes profiled in this report. These five publicly funded institutions serve the more rural or remote areas of the province and are similar to the case studies in that they:

- are not located in large urban centres;
- tend to be situated in industry-dependent communities;
- have small student bodies;<sup>52</sup> and,
- include Aboriginal programming.

*NVIT has a provincial mandate to serve as BC's Aboriginal public post-secondary institution. To help reach its target audience, many of whom may reside in remote communities, NVIT invests in strategic use of web technology—its website is both interactive and attractive. This technological approach is commonly used by public post-secondary institutions in BC.*

<sup>50</sup> As outlined in its Government Letter of Expectations, NVIT serves the province as “British Columbia’s Aboriginal public post-secondary institution.”

<sup>51</sup> NVIT fulfills the criteria of IAHLA’s Bylaws by its’ not-for-profit status and by having a First Nations governance structure.

<sup>52</sup> Student enrollment and actual FTE figures provided by Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development for 2008/09 reporting year.

## Exhibit 6.1—Comparative BC Public Post-Secondary Institutions<sup>53</sup>

<b>Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT):</b>
○ Provincial institute with 2 campuses – Merritt and Vancouver
○ 1,412 students/384 full-time equivalents (80% Aboriginal)
○ Offering a comprehensive range of courses and programs relevant to all Aboriginal communities in BC, including the broad areas of adult basic education, vocational/trades/apprenticeship, career/technical, academic/university transfer, collaborative degrees, community education, and continuing studies
<b>College of the Rockies (COTR):</b>
○ Regional community college serving Kootenay Rocky Mountains area of southeastern BC – 2 main campuses in Cranbrook and regional campuses in Creston, Fernie, Golden, Invermere and Kimberley
○ 12,857 students/2,273 full-time equivalents (3% Aboriginal)
○ Offering a full range of programs in University Studies, Adult Basic Education, Child Youth and Family, Health, Business Administration, Office Administration, Information Technology, Tourism and Recreation, Fire Services and Trades
<b>Selkirk College:</b>
○ Regional community college serving West Kootenay and Boundary regions in BC – 8 campuses and learning centres at Castlegar, Kaslo, Nakusp, Nelson (3 sites), Trail, Grand Forks
○ 13,721 students/2,535 full-time equivalents (3.2% Aboriginal)
○ Offering a wide array of academic, career, vocational and technical programs part-time, full-time or online
<b>Northwest Community College (NWCC):</b>
○ Regional community college serving 6 campuses/ 4 learning centres – Terrace, Smithers, Hazelton, Houston, Kaay Linagaay Kitimat, Massett, Nass Valley, Prince Rupert, Queen Charlotte
○ 7,609 students/1,934 full-time equivalents (44% Aboriginal). NWCC serves 28 of the 197 First Nations Bands in BC, as well as the northwest region of the Metis Nation
○ Offering a variety of academic, career and trades programming. The Continuing Education and Industry Training department of the College provides applied learning opportunities in areas ranging from industry training to general interest and customized programming
<b>North Island College (NIC):</b>
○ Regional community college serving central and northern Vancouver Island and the BC mainland coast from Desolation Sound to Klemtu – 4 campuses at Comox Valley, Campbell River, Port Alberni and Port Hardy, and 4 learning centres at Ucluelet, Gold River, Bella Coola and Cortes Island
○ 11,599 students/2,335 full-time equivalents (11.6% Aboriginal)
○ North Island College offers over 900 individual courses and 70 credit programs, including Certificates, Diplomas (two-year), Associate Degrees (two-year), Applied Bachelor Degrees (four-year), and Post Bachelor Diplomas (one-year)

53 Information presented in this exhibit was extracted from the websites of each individual college or institute. The basis on which “percent Aboriginal” figures are stated by each institute is not provided.



## 6.1 How post-secondary education is funded

While this study focuses on Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education, it is important to set out the broader picture of funding for both public and Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education in the province to fully understand and appreciate the implications for Aboriginal education.

Post-secondary education in BC is funded primarily by the provincial government, and to a much lesser extent the federal government, for two distinct purposes:

- **funding for students** to partially cover their individual costs in acquiring an education, specifically the costs of tuition and living expenses while they are attending school; and,
- **funding for institutions** for the provision of educational services.

Institutional funding is the focus of this report, however, a brief explanation of student funding is provided, as there is a link between student funding and institutional funding.

### 6.1.1 Funding for students

Students (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) can access student loan programs through federal and provincial financial assistance programs.<sup>54</sup>

In addition, the federal government provides funding to Registered Indians (on- and off-reserve) under two programs:

- the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP), and,
- the University and College Entrance Preparation Program (UCEP).

These programs support learners while they are attending post-secondary school or upgrading their academics in preparation for post-secondary education. Funding is intended to cover tuition, books and supplies, travel, living allowances, and provide support services such as tutoring and counselling.

Funding under PSSSP and UCEP programs flows from INAC to First Nations and is managed by an individual First Nation or Tribal Council. Students apply to the First Nation for student funding. Funds are not allowed to be used for managing any programs offered by on-reserve post-secondary institutes (e.g., administration, capital costs, office expenses, utilities). However, these institutes must charge tuition for provision of courses to students; therefore, these programs are dependent to a degree on tuition funding available to students.

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54 Canada Student Loans Program and StudentAid BC.



## 6.1.2 Funding for institutions

### ***Funding for public post-secondary institutions***

Most public post-secondary institutions in the province receive the majority of their funding from the provincial government, with the remainder of funding coming from tuition fees, the federal government, research grants and other miscellaneous sources such as international student fees, contracts, donations and sales of goods. Private colleges (which include all Aboriginal-controlled entities that do not receive core provincial funding) rely exclusively on their ability to generate funding through tuition, donations, grants and other miscellaneous sources.

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development provides annual core operating funds to public post-secondary education institutions. The total amount of funding an institution receives each year is determined primarily by what it received in the previous year's "base". In addition to the base, institutions may receive an incremental amount that is determined by the number and type of new priority seats that they have agreed to deliver. Funding increases can also include adjustments for new general student spaces, and some limited adjustments for other base funding issues. When viewed on an FTE basis, funding is calculated on a combination of historical funding levels and negotiated amounts. General growth seats are funded at an average of \$7,200 per space and range from \$6,700 to \$7,800.

In addition to annual operating funding, the Ministry provides capital funding according to each public institution's Ministry approved capital plan, and special funding through other special grant programs. One such example of special funding was the Aboriginal Special Projects Fund (ASPF), which began in 2001, and was then merged into the province's \$65-million Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Strategy and Action Plan in 2007. The ASPF program provided limited, short-term financial support to assist BC's public post-secondary institutions to develop and deliver culturally-sensitive and quality educational programming and support services for Aboriginal learners.<sup>55</sup>

The \$65M Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Strategy and Action Plan committed \$15 million for 2007/08 to 2009/10 for building Aboriginal Gathering Places on public campuses and \$15M for 2008/09 to 2010/11 for Aboriginal Service Plans (a three-year pilot intended to improve access, participation, and success rates for Aboriginal students).

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development directly funds one public Aboriginal institution under the *College and Institute Act* (NVIT). It also indirectly provides base funding to one independent Aboriginal institution (Native Education College) through an affiliation agreement between the institute and Vancouver Community College (a public institution). And, the Ministry provides funding directly and through the University of Northern British Columbia to one treaty institution, Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a, enacted by the Nisga'a Lisims Government.

55 Between 2001 and 2009, the province provided about \$18 million for 309 Aboriginal special projects. This funding was only available to public post-secondary institutions, although they were encouraged to partner with First Nation organizations. The fund no longer exists.

## Comparative publicly funded institutions

While provincial funding accounts for the majority of funding for public post-secondary institutions, other sources also contribute to the operational and capital needs of these institutions. For the five comparative public institutions, provincial base operating funding accounted for 66% to 79% of their total funding in 2008/09. Tuition was the smallest portion of total revenue (5% to 14%). “Other” sources of revenue accounted for 10% to 23% of total revenue.<sup>56</sup> The majority of capital funding was from the province, with specific donations, trust funds/foundations and interest earned on those funds providing the remainder.

The following exhibit provides information on the overall percentages of (all) funding arising from the major sources of revenue:

**Exhibit 6.2—Major Sources of Funding—Five Comparative Publicly Funded Institutions**

Source: F/S 2008/09	NVIT	COTR	SELKIRK	NWCC	NIC
Federal Grants	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%
Provincial Grants	79%	66%	73%	70%	77%
Tuition	5%	11%	14%	7%	13%
Other	16%	23%	13%	16%	10%

See Appendix F for financial summary information for all comparative publicly funded institutions.

Capital funding accounted for six to nine percent of the total funding from the provincial government. Minor amounts for capital expansion can sometimes come from trust funds. When capital funding was excluded, the percentages for funding from various sources for operational purposes did not vary to any significant degree.

Only NWCC received federal grants in 2008/09. When taken together with provincial funding, the total percentage of overall funding from government sources for NWCC was 77%, comparable with (provincial) government funding percentages for other institutions with the exception of COTR. COTR had the smallest overall percentage of funding from the provincial government. This was attributable to greater funding from other sources, which included international student fees, instructional delivery, curriculum development, and contract services with government agencies (e.g., employment assistance and targeted wage subsidy services).

Viewed from the perspective of funding per actual FTE (full-time student equivalent):

<sup>56</sup> Other sources included contract services (about half of “other” income for most institutions), income from ancillary operations, federal government grants (NWCC only), and investment income (where institutions had a trust or associated foundation).

### Exhibit 6.3—Revenue Sources 2008/09 per FTE (Actual)

Source: F/S 2008/09	NVIT	COTR	SELKIRK	NWCC	NIC
FTEs	384	2,273	2,535	1,934	2,335
Federal Grants per FTE	-	-	-	\$1,118	-
Provincial Grants per FTE*	\$19,871	\$7,820	\$10,949	\$10,317	\$10,814
Average Tuition per FTE	\$1,479	\$1,509	\$2,352	\$1,189	\$1,995
Revenue per FTE **	\$26,704	\$12,895	\$15,585	\$15,308	\$14,275
Capital Funding per FTE	\$1,730	\$1,261	\$1,273	\$1,656	\$1,080
* Provincial grants per FTE exclude capital and special purpose funds (as identified in financial statements). Capital funding and special purpose funding varies significantly and special purpose funds are not for ongoing operational purposes.					
** Revenue may include operating, ancillary, trust and special purpose funds, but excludes capital funding. Capital funding is noted separately. Not all institutes have all of these sources of funds.					

NVIT had the smallest number of FTEs (about one-fifth the size of the next largest public institution), and therefore much higher per FTE ratios than the other four institutions, which are of similar size (around 2,000 FTEs). COTR received the lowest provincial government funding per FTE ratio (consistent with its lower overall provincial funding percentage).<sup>57</sup>

The size of the institution has a bearing on the ability of the entity to fund its operational requirements. More importantly, higher student enrolment allows the institution to spread the costs over a greater number of students. This will be discussed more fully in the examination of costs associated with these institutions.

### ***Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes***

Generally speaking, funding for most<sup>58</sup> Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes in BC comes from grants and contributions from the federal government and, to a lesser degree, the provincial government through the New Relationship Trust (see below). Other sources of funding for IAHLA institutes include contract services (workshops, facility rentals, etc.), tuition fees, and other miscellaneous sources (e.g., investment interest and First Nation funding).

The following provides a brief explanation of the more common grant sources, and the conditions or limitations associated with those sources:

57 International students are not counted as FTEs but generate tuition and related costs, which will in turn affect various per FTE ratios. The effect of the number of international students was not pursued for analytical purposes as it was deemed likely to be not material.

58 As noted earlier, the exception is NVIT which gets provincial core funding.

- **INAC Nominal Roll:**<sup>59</sup> for on-reserve institutes offering adult basic education/upgrading to students who have not already graduated from secondary school. Students must have learning plans showing that they are pursuing a Dogwood Diploma.

This program does not fund students who have already graduated, even though they may not meet the entrance requirements for post-secondary education. To meet those students' needs, the institute must acquire funding through ISSP to provide University and College Entrance Preparation (UCEP) programs (see below).

- **INAC Indian Studies Support Program (ISSP):** supports the development and delivery of college and university level courses for First Nation and Inuit students, and research and development on First Nation and Inuit education. In BC, the annual ISSP funding is distributed directly to Aboriginal-controlled institutes and First Nation communities based on proposals.

ISSP funding may be used to provide UCEP programs which must provide students with the academic level required for entrance into regular university or college programs within a ten-month period. Generally, a program will include grade 11/12 level courses offered in partnership with a public post-secondary institution (through an affiliation or brokering agreement).<sup>60</sup>

ISSP funding is strictly controlled and can only be used for instruction and support directly related to the program. For example, these funds cannot be used for facilities or equipment, student tuition, daycare or travel. Even within approved funding expenditures, there are limitations on amounts that can be allocated to specific items.

- **INAC New Paths Grants:** includes funding distributed to First Nations communities to support activities related to the themes of capacity building (governance and infrastructure), improving school effectiveness, school to work transition, and the New Relationship Trust (see below).

Funding for this program is distributed directly to communities using a formula (base funding plus a per capita amount), therefore funding is not related to a proposed project. However, institutes must prepare a work plan for approval by the First Nations Education Steering Committee, along with any changes to the plan. The overall funding available for 2010/11 for this

*Currently, 47% of Aboriginal students in BC graduate within six years of entering high school, but this percentage does not factor in the number of students who leave high school with a 'school leaving certificate', which schools do not have to report to the Ministry of Education. Often these students, and their families, believe they have graduated, but in fact the students will find college and university beyond their reach without upgrading.*

*First Nations Education Steering Committee, Policy Background Paper: Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education in British Columbia: A Place For Aboriginal Institutes May 2008, 15; <http://www.fnesc.ca/publications/index.php>.*

<sup>59</sup> The Nominal Roll (NR) system is an information database that allows regions, districts and schools to do an annual census (student count) of First Nations students living in First Nations communities. The compliance criteria that determine whether students are eligible include age, grade, status, residency, program of study and student attendance. <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/mr/is/pc-eng.asp>, accessed May 19/10.

<sup>60</sup> Courses delivered in partnership with a school district are not eligible under the UCEP program.

program is about \$2M.<sup>61</sup>

- **INAC Special Education Program:** provides funding for First Nations students to access culturally sensitive special education programs and services. As with the New Paths Grant program, funding is formula based and must be applied for by submitting a work plan.
- **New Relationship Trust:**<sup>62</sup> the First Nations Education Steering Committee administers two of its grant programs (\$495,000 in 2009/2010):
  - New Paths for Education – supports the purchase of books and other learning materials, tutoring support, science fairs, and related activities in math, science and reading initiatives for K-12.
  - Developmental Standard Term Certificate (DSTC) program - a developmental certificate for teacher education issued by the BC College of Teachers, designed to increase the number of qualified Aboriginal language and culture teachers to help preserve and revitalize endangered Indigenous languages.

According to the IAHLA Data Collection Project (2009/10),<sup>63</sup> Adult Nominal Roll funding was a major funding source for 48% of responding institutes, while ISSP funding was a major funding source for 29% of the institutes.

*"Students who have been streamed into non-academic programs in secondary school often find that their skills, course completions or grade point standing do not satisfy the rising requirements of post-secondary institutions... Responding to this situation, Aboriginal students and communities increasingly are calling for programs under a variety of labels – university and college entrance programs, access programs, transition programs, or bridging programs..."*

*First Nations Education Steering Committee, 15.*

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61 According to the First Nations Education Steering Committee Policy Background Paper (May 2008) this funding is tied to the Nominal Roll program; grants do not generally exceed \$10,000 (15).

62 The New Relationship Trust is a not-for-profit Crown corporation created in the spring of 2006 in response to the New Relationship Agreement signed by the First Nations Summit, the BC Assembly of First Nations, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and the Province of BC. The New Relationship Trust was created with an original sum of \$100 million, donated by the provincial government.

63 Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 14.

**Exhibit 6.4—Major Funding Sources (Over 50% of Total Funding)  
of IAHLA Institutes**

Funding Sources	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08
	N = 21	N = 23 *	N = 23
Adult Nominal Roll	48%	39%	44%
Indian Studies Support Program	29%	17%	9%
Provincial funding	19%	9%	4%
FNSA – New Paths Grants	14%	9%	4%
Band funds	10%	9%	9%
Other federal funding	10%	9%	4%
Tuition	5%	9%	4%
Other	0%	9%	9%

\*Two institutes did not report on their funding in 2008/09 as part of the 2009/2010 IAHLA Data Collection Project.

Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education institutes are not eligible for core funding from the federal or provincial governments. The only exceptions are the First Nations University of Canada, which is guaranteed core operational funding from ISSP;<sup>64</sup> and, as previously noted, NVIT is the only Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education institute in BC that receives core provincial funding.

Funding for Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes is largely dependent on the ability of the individual institute to acquire funding through grants from the federal and provincial governments, or to develop creative partnerships and programs.

Funding from grant programs does not include capital funding; therefore institutes must provide facilities and equipment through other means. Tuition revenue is dependent on the institute's ability to attract students to their programs. In turn, that depends on the institute's capacity to offer relevant and supportive programming.

The three First Nation case studies illustrate the different funding scenarios faced by Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education institutes in BC, as compared to publicly funded institutions. Variability between case study institutes and their dependence on various funding sources are a reflection of the institutes themselves, the communities they serve and the courses and programs they offer.

64 Education Policy and Planning, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Post-Secondary Education Program: *A preliminary review of First Nation and Inuit participation in post-secondary education based on findings from available research literature, Program and Census data*; December 2008; CIDM: 1474919.



The uniqueness of each case study institute is reflected in their respective revenue sources:

#### Exhibit 6.5—Funding Sources 2008/09 – IAHLA Case Study Institutes<sup>65</sup>

Source: F/S 2008/09	Heiltsuk College	Chemainus Native College	En'owkin Centre
Federal Grants	94%	48%	27%
Provincial Grants	0%	19%	16%
Tuition	0%	26%	8%
Other	6%	6%	49%

In 2008/09, while Heiltsuk College was almost totally dependent on federal funding, Chemainus Native College received 19% of its funding from provincial grants through the New Relationship Trust. In addition, Chemainus Native College acquired funding from BC Hydro over a two year period to provide UCEP courses in specific areas of study, in recognition of the increasing importance of Aboriginal youth in the regional labour market.

En'owkin Centre is different yet again from either Heiltsuk College or Chemainus Native College, in that only 27% of its 2008/09 funding was from the federal government. Almost half of its funding came from other sources of revenue, including curriculum development fees, partnerships with other organizations (such as FORREX<sup>66</sup>) and profit from Theytus Books which, in effect, subsidizes the educational mandate of En'owkin Centre.

#### Theytus Books

*Founded in 1980, Theytus Books is one of Canada's oldest Aboriginal-owned and operated publishing houses. Theytus is a Salishan word that means "preserving for the sake of handing down."*

*Theytus Books is wholly owned by the Okanagan Indian Educational Resources Society and is an incorporated, taxable Canadian corporation. Since it is physically situated under the same roof, it offers En'owkin Centre learners first-hand exposure to the publishing industry along with employment opportunities.*

<sup>65</sup> Please note that throughout this report percentage totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

<sup>66</sup> En'owkin Centre receives funding from Forum for Research and Extension in Natural Resources (FORREX), a British Columbia, Canada-based charitable non-share corporation, founded in 1998 to help people develop science and knowledge-based solutions to complex natural resource challenges. (<http://www.enowkincentre.ca/forrex.html> accessed June 14, 2010)

From the perspective of funding on a per student basis:<sup>67</sup>

#### Exhibit 6.6—Funding Ratios per Student 2008/09 – IAHLA Case Study Institutes

Source: F/S 2008/09	Heiltsuk College	Chemainus Native College	En'owkin Centre
Students	42	28	91
Federal Grants per student	\$15,950	\$7,064	\$4,879
Provincial Grants per student	\$0	\$2,799	\$2,841
Average Tuition per student	\$0	\$3,870	\$1,427
Other Funding Sources per student	\$892	\$893	\$8,671
Capital Funding per student	\$0	\$0	\$0

The figures reported above are based on a single year of operation (2008/09). These institutes may not necessarily represent a “typical” IAHLA institute, or a typical year of operation. For First Nations institutes in particular, as compared to provincially funded institutions which receive relatively stable core funding, funding sources and amounts can fluctuate widely. The number of students can also fluctuate considerably. For example, in 2007/08, Heiltsuk College had 62 students, as compared to 42 in 2008/09. For a fuller understanding of each Aboriginal-controlled case study institute, refer to appendices C, D and E.

*"In 2009/10, 24% of the institutes indicated they had experienced a decrease in funding since last year. Fourteen percent had experienced an increase and 48% had experienced no change in their funding relative to last year."*

*Tindall Consulting and  
Juniper Consulting, 14.*

<sup>67</sup> Student numbers are not necessarily consistent with the definition of FTE used by the province. Student enrolment figures used in this exhibit are from the case study institute enrolment records for the 2008/09 year.

## 6.2 Issues raised by the funding analysis

Three key issues raised by the funding analysis impact Aboriginal-controlled institutes:

- a lack of stable core funding;
- a lack of capital funding; and,
- overall inadequate funding.

Each issue is discussed in detail below.

### 6.2.1 Lack of stable core funding

Based on the financial analysis, the single greatest challenge facing the case study institutes, and IAHLA institutes in general, is the lack of stable core funding. This can impede the ability of these institutes to offer a broad range of programs and services to their communities. This conclusion is consistent with other research findings, including a recent report by the Office of Indigenous Affairs, University of Victoria<sup>68</sup> which clearly outlines the impact:

This lack of funding prevents most Aboriginal-controlled institutes from offering a full range of programs and courses, and therefore, may only offer the first part of a program or not be able to sustain a program. The funding challenge also seriously limits institutes' ability to develop curriculum and learning materials, to promote programs and recruit students, and to have adequate technology and library resources.

Also, without core funding, Aboriginal-controlled institutes have less than optimal student services (e.g. counselling, advising, etc.) to support retention and success of learners.

A lack of core funding also means it is difficult pay faculty and staff competitive salaries and benefits. The issue around year-to-year funding uncertainties, combined with a shortage of professional development opportunities and full-time jobs, means that the institutes have more difficulty in recruiting and retaining faculty and administrators.

*"In 2009/10, institutes identified facility costs, staff, computer lab/ technical equipment and curriculum development resources as their most frequent high priority needs for success and funding."*

*Tindall Consulting and  
Juniper Consulting, 15.*

### 6.2.2 Lack of capital funding

Related to the issue of lack of core funding is the lack of capital funding. All granting sources specifically exclude the use of the program funds for capital projects, such as facilities and equipment (e.g., computers). A recent First Nations Education Steering Committee report<sup>69</sup> states that 74% of IAHLA institutes responding to a survey reported that they were "never" or "not often" able to fund the facilities or

68 Office of Indigenous Affairs, University of Victoria, 35.

69 First Nations Education Steering Committee, *Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education in British Columbia: A Place for Aboriginal Institutes*. May 2008, 14. <http://www.fnesc.ca/publications/index.php#newsletters>

other capital projects that they need to create a healthy learning environment.

The case studies exemplify this point. Heiltsuk College offers courses in three facilities: a Church basement, a portable, and a trailer. Fifteen years ago, the College paid \$50,000 to renovate the space in the Church with the understanding that the monthly lease would remain at \$500 for as long as the premise is required for educational purposes. Unfortunately, the basement is prone to flooding, and at times instructors and administrators have to resort to mops and buckets to stay in operation.

Chemainus Native College's classrooms and administrative space are physically situated in the Chemainus Health Centre, on a temporary basis. The space is offered to the College at no cost (estimated value is \$30,000 annually) and the College's continued occupancy is dependent on the ongoing goodwill of the Health Centre.

### 6.2.3 Overall inadequate funding

The three case studies would suggest that the amount of operational funding received by Aboriginal-controlled institutes on a per student basis is in line with public post-secondary institution funding on a per FTE basis. However, the overall funding available to Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes falls short of meeting the needs of Aboriginal students and institutes in BC. The number and total dollar value of funding requests from all Aboriginal-controlled institutes consistently exceeds the amount of funding available.

**Exhibit 6.7—Indian Studies Support Program Requests Compared to Amount Allocated—2007/08 to 2010/11<sup>70</sup>**

Fiscal Year	Total funds requested	Total ISSP Funds Allocated
2007/08	\$4,552,528	\$2,057,900
2008/09	\$3,868,029	\$2,092,700
2009/10	\$3,618,357	\$2,092,700
2010/11	\$5,272,335	\$2,092,700

70 ISSP Final Report Summary 2007/2008 (3), <http://www.fnesc.ca/issp/> accessed June 30/10. 2008/09 to 2010/11 ISSP Allocation data received from Karen Bailey-Romanko.

According to a preliminary review of First Nation and Inuit participation in post-secondary education prepared by INAC (December, 2008):<sup>71</sup>

Funding for the ISSP cannot exceed 12% of the total allocation for the PSE Program funding. The ISSP functions as an optional component of the PSE budget. Because of this, the ISSP allocation can, and has been, characterized as a choice between funding students and funding programs for students. As a result, most regions allocate less than the 12% to maximize the number of students who can be funded from the total PSE envelope. Average expenditures over the past few years have generally not exceeded 6% of total PSE expenditures across regions.

A more recent federal internal audit of the program (January 2009) confirmed that ISSP funding is not adequately addressing the expected program result of increased availability of post-secondary education programs.<sup>72</sup>

*"In 2009/10, 62% of responding institutes offered learners transportation assistance. Fifty-seven percent provided free breakfast/lunch/dinner programs or events."*

*Tindall Consulting and  
Juniper Consulting, 17.*

## 6.3 Examining the costs

The purpose of examining the costs of publicly funded post-secondary institutions and the case study institutes was two-fold:

- to identify and examine the typical costs associated with providing post-secondary education; and
- to identify the similarities and differences, if any, between publicly funded post-secondary institutes and Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes.

### 6.3.1 Publicly funded post-secondary education institutions

High level 2008/09 financial data was provided by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development for all publicly funded provincial institutions and for the five comparative institutions.<sup>73</sup> Additionally, financial statements for the five publicly funded institutes were examined and costs re-categorized where necessary to minimize “apples and oranges” comparisons to the greatest extent possible, and to allow comparisons to the three case studies included in this report.

In 2008/09, expenditures for all 25 publicly funded post-secondary institutions in BC totaled approximately \$4.5 billion. Salaries and operating expenses accounted for the largest portion (81%) of the total expenditures. Amortization of capital accounted for 8%, and the remaining 11% was attributable to grants/scholarships and miscellaneous items.

Comparisons between provincial averages and specific institutions are difficult because

<sup>71</sup> Education Policy and Planning, INAC, 31.

<sup>72</sup> Audit and Assurance Services Branch, *INAC Audit of the Post-Secondary Education Program; Project #07/20*, January 23, 2009, Executive Summary; <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/arp/aev/pubs/au/psep/psep-eng.asp>

<sup>73</sup> Expenditure categories are as reported by the Ministry and includes all funds (operating, ancillary, special purpose and trust funds where applicable).

some institutions have ancillary and special purpose funds. These funds provide an added source of revenue and incur related expenditures. However, these funds are relatively minor in comparison to the operating fund, and comparisons between smaller colleges and the provincial average can still be useful in that they may reveal cost pressures or differences unique to smaller colleges.

The five comparative institutions differed from the provincial average in several ways:

- Grants and scholarships accounted for 0% to 1% of total expenditures, as compared to the provincial average of 5%. This is likely due to the fact that smaller colleges often do not have trusts or foundations that fund student grants and scholarships.
- One institution (NVIT) had lower than average salary costs; the remaining four institutions were 2% to 8% higher than the provincial average. NVIT relies more heavily on contract instruction, resulting in lower salary costs and higher operational costs (see next bullet).
- One institution (NIC) had lower than average operating costs; the remaining institutions were 2% to 14% higher than the provincial average. The range of differences in operating costs may be partially a function of how certain costs are captured in the financial statements or by government's reporting requirements. When "operating" and "other" costs are combined, most comparative institutions are either below or within 2% of the provincial average. NVIT's higher operational costs are likely a result of their use of contract instruction.<sup>74</sup>
- NVIT's higher expenditures per FTE ratio is likely due to economies of scale—NVIT had 384 full-time student equivalents in 2008/09, as compared to the other four comparative institutions which ranged from 1,934 to 2,535 FTEs.
- Amortization and "other" was at or below the provincial average for all institutions.
- Total tangible capital assets of each comparative institution are much lower than the provincial average of \$240M (\$6 billion divided by 25 institutions). This is likely attributable to the institution's size and number of programs offered, which may be less capital intensive than programs offered at larger universities.



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<sup>74</sup> This anomaly is eliminated when costs are re-categorized. See Exhibit 6.9.



**Exhibit 6.8—Comparative Public Post-Secondary Institutions Summary of Expenditures<sup>75</sup>**

Source: F/S 2008/09	PROVINCE		NVIT		COTR		SELKIRK		NWCC		NIC	
Expenditures:	\$000	%	\$000	%	\$000	%	\$000	%	\$000	%	\$000	%
Grants & Scholarships	203,733	5	121	1	316	1	528	1	-	0	2	0
Salaries	2,770,641	62	6,144	56	20,737	64	28,968	66	21,680	68	25,551	70
Operating Costs	865,920	19	3,584	33	7,806	24	9,451	21	8,365	26	6,362	17
Amortization	375,138	8	644	6	2,019	6	3,403	8	1,670	5	3,025	8
Other	244,538	5	423	4	1,550	5	1,661	4	-	0	1,646	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,459,970</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>10,916</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>32,428</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>44,011</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>31,715</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>36,586</b>	<b>100</b>
FTEs (Actual)	195,317		384		2,273		2,535		1,934		2,335	
Expenditures per FTE	22.83		28.43		14.27		17.36		16.4		15.67	
Total Tangible Capital Assets (As at Mar 31/09)	5,975,023		14,488		31,263		22,402		20,735		24,129	

Source: Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development, June 2010

As a means to better examine relative costs between comparative institutes, in exhibit 6.9, only operating funds were included in the analysis.<sup>76</sup> In addition, all personnel costs (salary and contract) were grouped together, and operating and administrative costs were consolidated. Student support through grants and scholarships was captured if the cost was included in the financial statements as part of the operating fund. However, when institutions have foundations or trust funds that pay for some or all of the student grants or scholarships, these expenditures were not reflected.

<sup>75</sup> Financial information was received from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development. Percentage and expenditure per actual FTE information was added to the chart by the consultants to expand on the information presented.

<sup>76</sup> Provincial comparative figures were not available.

### Exhibit 6.9—Public Post-Secondary Institutions' Costs (Operating Funds Only)

Source: F/S 2008/09	NVIT	COTR	SELKIRK	NWCC	NIC
FTEs (Actual)	384	2,273	2,535	1,934	2,335
Personnel Costs	77%	78%	77%	81%	79%
Operating Costs	23%	20%	23%	18%	21%
Other Costs	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%
Expenditures per FTE	\$22,199	\$10,543	\$14,187	\$14,747	\$13,733

When compared on this basis, relative costs between institutes are very similar. Personnel costs continue to consume the largest portion of the costs of operation (77% to 81%); operating costs account for the remainder, with the exception of two institutions with 1% and 2% attributable to “other” costs.

Expenditures per FTE are highest for NVIT due to economies of scale. NVIT is substantially smaller than the other four comparative institutions. With small institutions, fluctuations in enrollment have a significant impact on expenditure/FTE ratios, as operating costs will likely not change to any degree due to higher enrollment. NVIT's student enrollment in 2009/10 was 478, a 24% increase over 2008/09 (384 FTEs). Assuming operating costs did not change, the expenditure per FTE ratio for 2008/09 would drop by 22% to \$17,834.

Of the remaining four comparative institutions with enrollment figures of comparable size, expenditures per FTE are fairly similar, with the exception of COTR, which is considerably less. The reasons for this were not identified, and are likely due to multiple factors. The number of campuses and their locations, the number and complexity of the programs offered, and class size can all impact the expenditure per FTE ratios.

### 6.3.2 IAHLA Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes

As noted in the analysis of the funding sources for the three case studies used in this report, each institute is very unique, and each institute accounts for and reports financial information on a different basis. This makes comparisons between the case study institutes and publicly funded institutions difficult. Some differences include:

- Chemainus Native College's financial information is amalgamated with Stu'ate Lelum Secondary School. Costs (and revenues) for programs associated with the College are accounted for in separate departments and, therefore, only the Language and UCEP department accounts were used in the analysis of revenues and expenditures for Chemainus Native College programs.
- Unlike the other two institutes, En'owkin Centre does not use fund accounting—all expenditures are considered operating expenditures.
- Both Heiltsuk College and Chemainus Native College have costs which are not

reflective of actual costs. For example, Heiltsuk College pays rent for its facilities; however, the rent is well below market value due to a long term agreement with the owner. Chemainus Native College receives space and administrative support from the Band, and an agreed upon amount is transferred to a separate department in recognition of this.

- Personnel costs for each institute reflect the cost of recruiting qualified professional teaching staff in their particular locale. For example, Heiltsuk College's salary grid parallels that of School District 49 and the community school.
- Capital is not funded by granting authorities therefore it is not clear how capital needs are met by En'owkin Centre. Heiltsuk College contributed to a restricted sinking fund for future capital expansion; Chemainus Native College transferred an amount for future capital expansion through a department transfer.
- En'owkin Centre offers a very diverse range of programs to students and the community, and has a business entity (Theytus Books) which is consolidated with the financial statements. It also accesses environmental and heritage funds, which subsidize the Centre's educational mandate.

#### Exhibit 6.10—Case Study IAHLA Institutes-Operating Funds (Less Capital Contributions)<sup>77</sup>

Source: F/S 2008/09	Heiltsuk College	Chemainus Native College	En'owkin Centre
Students*	42	28	91
Personnel Costs	78%	75%	67%
Operating and Administration Costs	23%	25%	34%
Other Costs	0%	0%	0%
Expenditures per FTE	\$14,754	\$10,466	\$16,272
* Student numbers are not necessarily consistent with the definition of FTE used by the province. Student enrolment figures used in this exhibit are from the case study institute enrolment records for the 2008/09 year.			

<sup>77</sup> Contributions to capital expansion have been eliminated for comparative purposes.

As was the case with NVIT, economies of scale are reflected in the expenditures per FTE ratio for IAHLA institutes. At 28 students, Chemainus Native College had higher than average enrollment in 2008/09. On average, the College enrolls about 20 students each year. Assuming costs would not vary to any degree, the expenditure to FTE ratio would rise to \$14,653. This is consistent with the expenditure to FTE ratio for Heiltsuk College, and with the more remote comparative public institutions (Selkirk, NWCC and NIC).

In the case of En'owkin Centre, the reason for the higher expenditure to FTE ratio is due to the fact that it is also a cultural centre. Programs offered include traditional environmental management services to local environmental groups and conservancies. Also, En'owkin Centre has a strong arts program, which may be more expensive to operate than language or college preparation programs. The geographic distance between communities served by En'owkin Centre also contributes to higher costs.

Personnel and operating cost percentages for Heiltsuk College and Chemainus Native College were consistent with the percentages for public institutions. En'owkin Centre varied from the other case study institutes, and from the public institutions, in that their personnel costs were lower and operating costs higher. This is likely due to their business model, which contracts out a number of programs to NVIT for delivery.

In summary, this analysis suggests that IAHLA case study institutes' costs are similar to other somewhat remote publicly funded institutions offering similar programming.

*In summary, this analysis suggests that IAHLA case study institutes' costs are similar to other somewhat remote publicly funded institutions offering similar programming.*

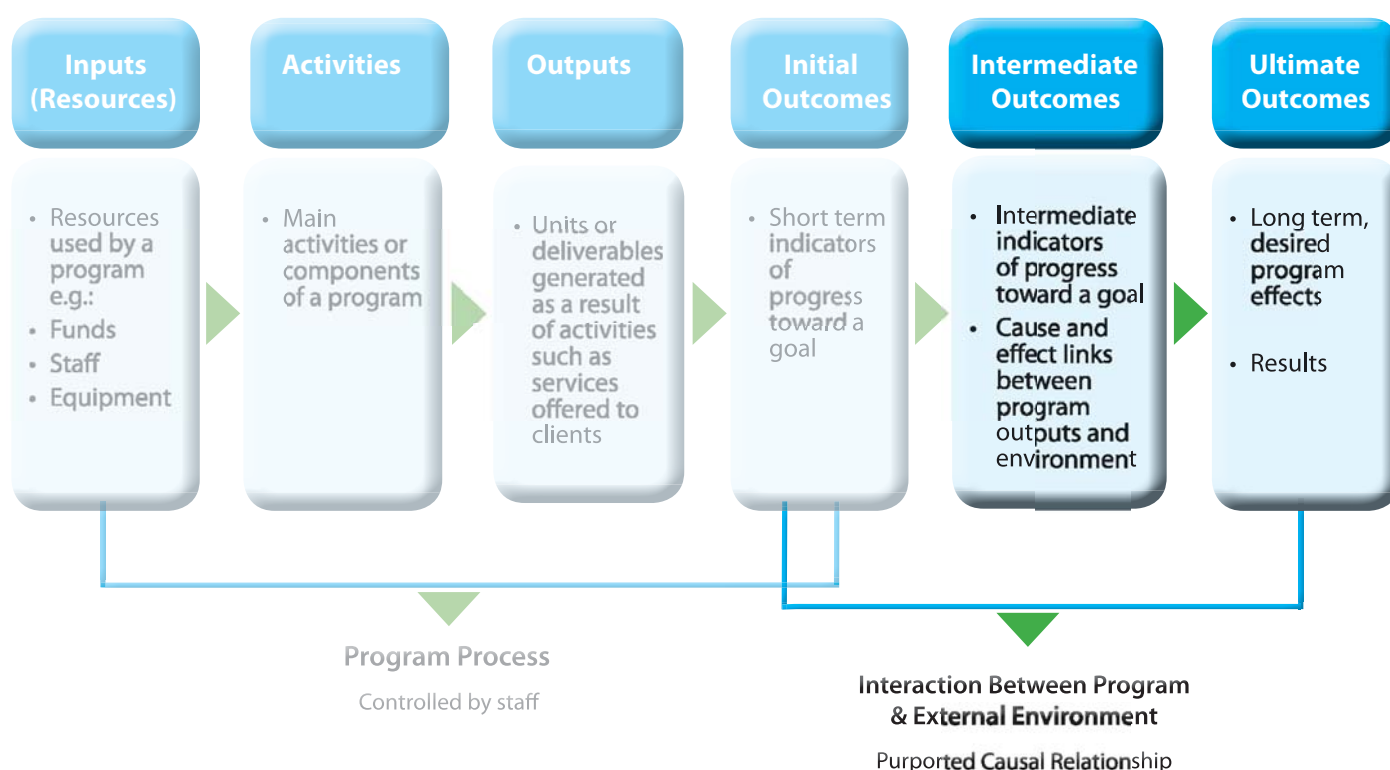


## Examining Long-term Benefits

Section five used a logic model approach to illustrate the relationship between Aboriginal-controlled institutes' inputs, activities, outputs, and initial outcomes. These linkages were demonstrated using three case studies: Chemainus Native College, Heiltsuk College and En'owkin Centre.

This section examines the long-term benefits of Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes by moving further along the logic model continuum with a focus on intermediate and ultimate outcomes.<sup>78</sup>

**Exhibit 7.1—A Focus on Intermediate and Ultimate Outcomes (Benefits)**



<sup>78</sup> In this discussion intermediate and ultimate outcomes are collectively referred to as long-term outcomes or benefits.

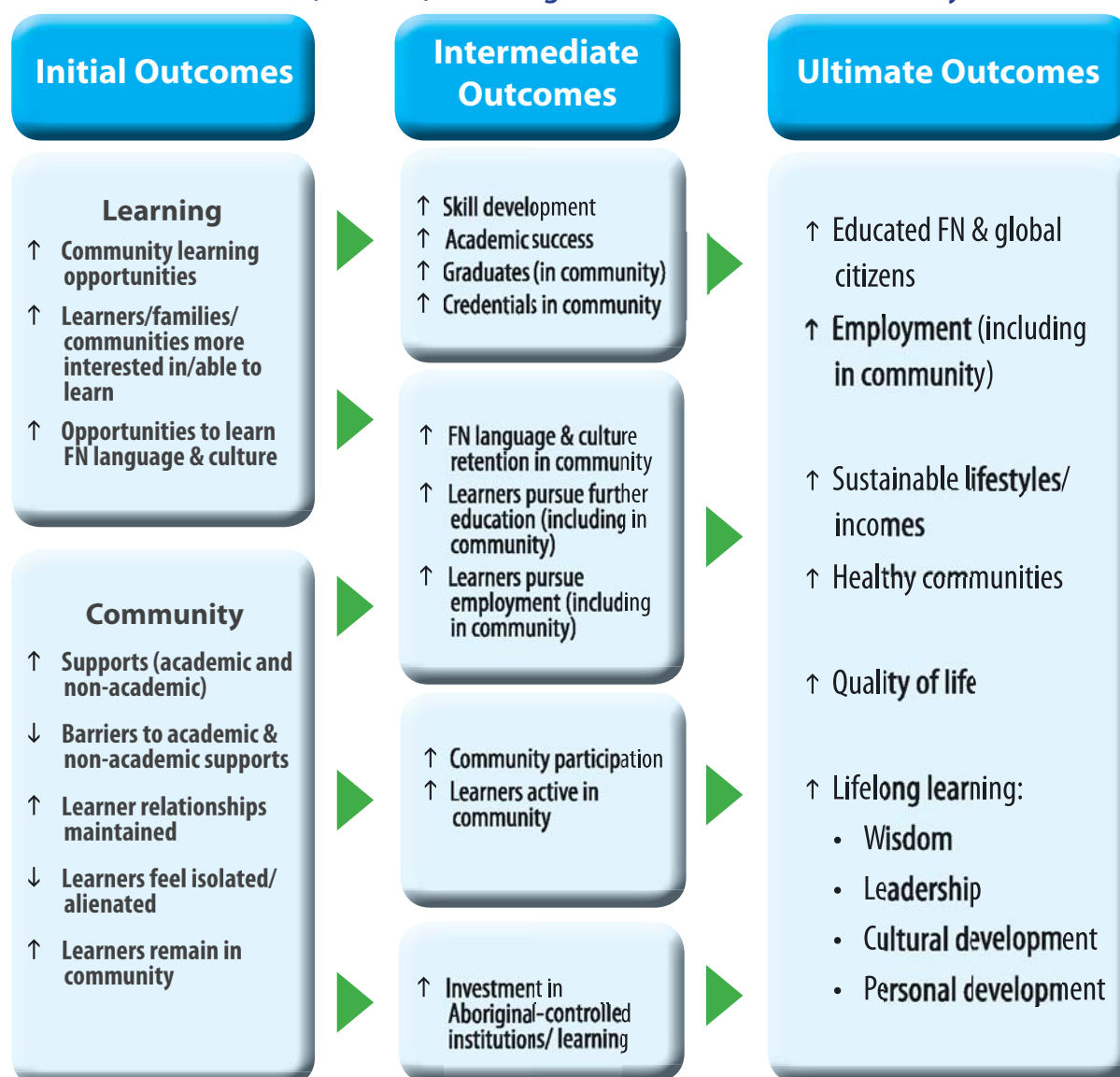


Compared to initial outcomes, intermediate and ultimate outcomes are more challenging to demonstrate because they often occur over a period of years, and data is often hard to obtain. In other words, the indicators of success are often missing, particularly in small organizations, and especially over a longer timeframe. Therefore, greater reliance is placed on academic research to show the impact of certain activities over a long time period.

The ultimate outcomes contained in the logic model for Aboriginal-controlled adult and post-secondary institutes in BC are:

- an educated population;
- greater employment rates, in the community and elsewhere;
- sustainable lifestyles and stable incomes;
- healthy communities;
- quality of life; and,
- lifelong learning.

**Exhibit 7.2—Outcomes (Benefits) of Aboriginal-Controlled Post-Secondary Institutes**



For discussion purposes, these ultimate outcomes have been grouped into two themes:

1. **Economic outcomes** – greater levels of education leading to higher employment rates; stable incomes leading to sustainable lifestyles.
2. **Social outcomes** – greater levels of education leading to healthy communities, improved quality of life and lifelong learning.

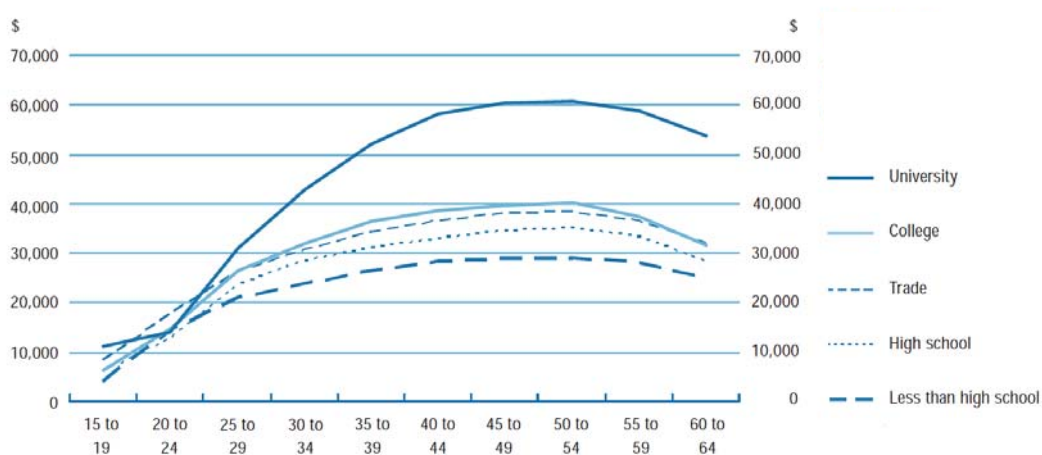
The economic and social outcomes of Aboriginal-controlled education are analyzed below, along with actual examples from Chemainus Native College, Heiltsuk College and En'owkin Centre.

## 7.1 Economic outcomes

The link between the level of education attained by an individual and their economic prosperity has been well established in research. A person who completes high school will likely earn more during their life time than someone who does not. Similarly, an individual who completes a college or university program is anticipated to earn more than a person with a high school diploma.

The following graph illustrates average employment income by age group and education in Canada. While income does not differ significantly between education levels up to about age 24 years, at that stage the income gap begins to widen over the long term, especially for university level graduates.

**Exhibit 7.3—Average Employment Income by Age Group and Education Level, All Workers, Canada 2000**



Source: Statistics Canada. Education Indicators in Canada: Report of the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program, 2005.

Currently, Aboriginal peoples in BC are not attaining a higher education to the extent of non-Aboriginals:

- in 2006/07, the provincial public high school Dogwood completion rate for Aboriginal students was 49%, compared with 83% for non-Aboriginal students;
- in 2004/05, nine percent of Aboriginal K-12 graduates were eligible for university admission, compared with 32% of non-Aboriginal K-12 graduates; and,
- in 2007, seven percent of Aboriginal British Columbians held a university degree, compared with 23% of non-Aboriginal British Columbians.<sup>79</sup>

In 2006, the median income for Aboriginal peoples was 30% lower than the median income for the rest of Canada.<sup>80</sup> Among Aboriginal peoples' average wage rates, earning levels grow with each increase in level of education. For example, "[i]n 2007, an Aboriginal person who has not completed high school earned only an average of 48% of the salary of an Aboriginal person with a university degree."<sup>81</sup>

A recent study by the Centre for the Study of Living Standards (May 2009) linked part of the reason for the employment gap to lower education levels:

An important portion of the employment rate gap can be attributed to lower educational attainment among the Aboriginal population than among the non-Aboriginal population. Aboriginal Canadians are ... much less likely than non-Aboriginal people to either earn a high school diploma or a post secondary certificate. In 2006, 23 per cent of non-Aboriginal Canadians over the age of 14 had not yet completed high school. Among Aboriginal people, the high school non-completion rate was 44 percent.<sup>82</sup>

The impact of a university education was also noted in the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' publication *The Income Gap Between Aboriginal Peoples and the Rest of Canada*.<sup>83</sup> That study revealed that employment rate/income gaps between Aboriginal peoples who obtain university degrees and their non-Aboriginal counterparts closed significantly. Further, in the case of women, income levels surpassed those of non-Aboriginal women:

The income gap between Aboriginal peoples and the rest of Canadians who have earned a Bachelor's degree diminished from \$3,382 in 1996 to just \$648 by 2006. Aboriginal women who have obtained at least a Bachelor's degree actually have higher median incomes than non-Aboriginal Canadian women with equivalent education.

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79 Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development, *Aboriginal Report - Charting Our Path: Public post-secondary system*; October 2008, 6. Adapted.

80 Daniel Wilson and David Macdonald, 3.

81 Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development, *Aboriginal Report - Charting Our Path: Public post-secondary system*; October 2008, 6.

82 Andrew Sharpe, Jean-François Arsenault, Simon Lapointe And Fraser Cowan, *The Effect Of Increasing Aboriginal Educational Attainment On The Labour Force, Output And The Fiscal Balance*, Centre for the Study of Living Standards Research Report 2009-3, May 2009, vii-viii. [www.afn.ca/calltoaction/Documents/EOAE.pdf](http://www.afn.ca/calltoaction/Documents/EOAE.pdf).

83 Daniel Wilson and David Macdonald, 4.

However, the report also points to a continuing gap between Aboriginal peoples who do not earn a university degree, despite improvements in educational levels.

The opportunity cost of not improving or closing the education and income gaps was reported in the *1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*.<sup>84</sup> That study estimated the annual cost of the status quo at \$7.5 billion. The report also cautioned that if no effort was made to reduce the economic disparities, that cost would likely increase to \$11 billion annually by 2016.

Improving Aboriginal educational and labour market outcomes can help improve Aboriginal social well-being. The May 2009 Centre for the Study of Living Standards Centre report estimated the impact of improved educational attainment levels on the labour market in Canada and the resulting output up to 2026. The study quantified the potential impact of eliminating educational and social gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people on government spending and revenue over the same period.<sup>85</sup> The report estimated the potential impact of improved educational levels of Aboriginal Canadians reaching the non-Aboriginal 2001 educational levels by 2026 as:

- a cumulative output gain of \$401 billion;
- cumulative increased tax revenues of \$39 billion; and,
- cumulative savings of \$77 billion in the form of government expenditures.

Perhaps the most direct evidence of the link between Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary education and improved levels of education and employment can be found in the 2009/10 IAHLA Data Collection Project. Responding learners rated how their education experience at IAHLA institutes has assisted with job-readiness and in developing marketable skills:

- 48% of learners believed they had been helped to prepare for getting a job;
- 60% reported they had gained skills in solving problems;
- 47% reported they had gained computer skills; and,
- 62% reported they had learned research skills.<sup>86</sup>

Demonstrating the direct economic impact of the IAHLA institutes profiled in the case studies is challenging due to a lack of research such as program evaluations examining this topic. However, data from Statistics Canada and BC Stats' *Aboriginal Community Data Initiative*<sup>87</sup> provides statistical evidence to support the overall conclusions reached

*"First Nations youth who complete high school are twice as likely to be employed, and those who get university degrees triple their earning potential. Increasing their graduation rates to match those of other Canadians would inject an additional \$71-billion into Canada's economy over the next 10 years. This would help eliminate the employment gap, adding another \$160-billion to the economy over a 10-year period."*

*Shawn Atleo, Chief, Assembly of First Nations. From Sunday's Globe and Mail published Friday, Feb. 19, 2010 9:01PM EST*

84 INAC, *1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*; Government of Canada; <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ap/rrc-eng.asp>

85 Andrew Sharpe, Jean-François Arsenault, Simon Lapointe and Fraser Cowan, v.

86 Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 47.

87 The *Aboriginal Community Data Initiative* is a Statistics Canada project supported by a number of contributing organizations including Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Health Canada and, in BC, the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, BC Stats and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development

in the research. Findings reported in the *Aboriginal Community Data Initiative*, as they relate to two of the three case study communities, are discussed in the sections that follow.<sup>88</sup>

### 7.1.1 Chemainus Native College

Chemainus First Nation is making progress towards closing the education gap and the income gap.

#### ***Educational attainment***

The 2006 census data reveals that while educational attainment levels among the Chemainus First Nation were lower than their on-reserve Aboriginal counterparts in BC, that gap appears to be closing. For example, the percentage of the Chemainus First Nation population aged 25 to 64 with post-secondary qualifications doubled from 13% in 1996 to 26% in 2006.<sup>89</sup> Nevertheless, as revealed in the 2009 Statistics Canada report (based on 2006 data)<sup>90</sup>:

- 57% of Aboriginal people on Chemainus First Nation lands aged 25 to 64 had not completed a high school certificate or equivalent or any post-secondary education, compared to 43% of the Aboriginal population aged 25 to 64 on-reserve in BC.<sup>91</sup>
- 26% of the Aboriginal population on Chemainus First Nation lands aged 25 to 64 had completed some form of post-secondary education, compared to 37% of the Aboriginal population aged 25 to 64 on-reserve in BC.<sup>92</sup>
- For the total population in BC aged 25 to 64, the percentage with post-secondary qualifications increased from 52% to 62% from 1996 to 2006.<sup>93</sup>



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<http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/lss/abor/profile/abprof.asp>

88 Statistics Canada's Aboriginal Community Data Initiative information was available for individual First Nations. Because En'owkin Centre is governed by seven Okanagan Bands, the data would need to be synthesized for all seven Bands to generate global statistics referred to with Chemainus Native College and Heiltsuk College. This analysis was not available.

89 Statistics Canada, *2006 Aboriginal Community Data Initiative: Chemainus First Nation*, December 2009. Retrieved June 15, 2010 from BC Stats website: <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/lss/abor/profile/abprof.asp>

90 Statistics Canada data based on a Chemainus First Nation population of 785.

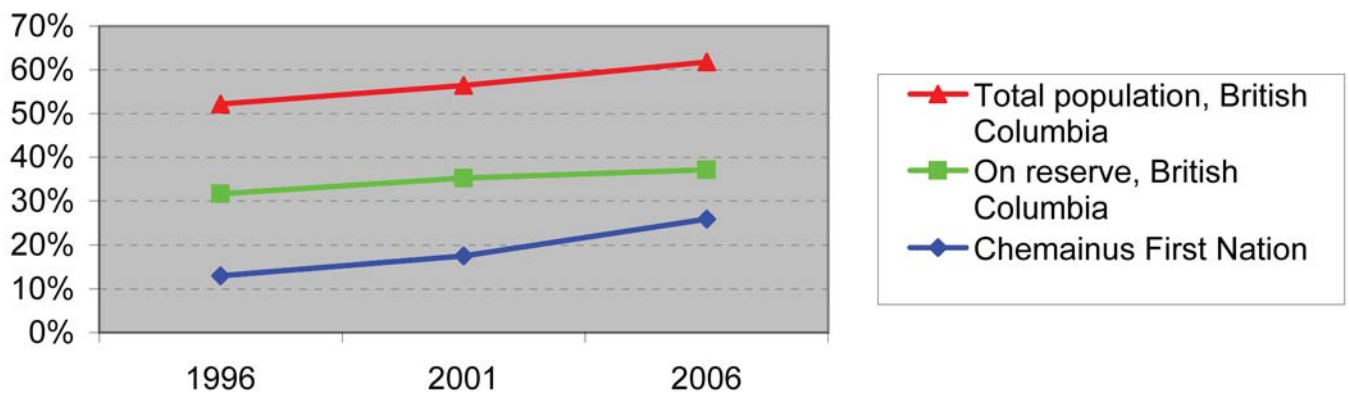
91 Statistics Canada, 2009.

92 Statistics Canada, 2009.

93 Statistics Canada, 2009.



**Exhibit 7.4—Percent of Population Aged 25 to 64 With Post-Secondary Qualifications, Aboriginal Population on Chemainus First Nation Lands and Comparison Areas, 1996, 2001, 2006**



### ***Earnings and labour force participation***

Median earnings of Chemainus First Nation residents were highest for those with a university education. In addition, the earnings for the Chemainus First Nation population 15 years and older with a university education were higher than the median earnings for Aboriginals on-reserve in BC.<sup>94</sup>

In 2005, for the Aboriginal population on Chemainus First Nation lands aged 15 and over with earnings:

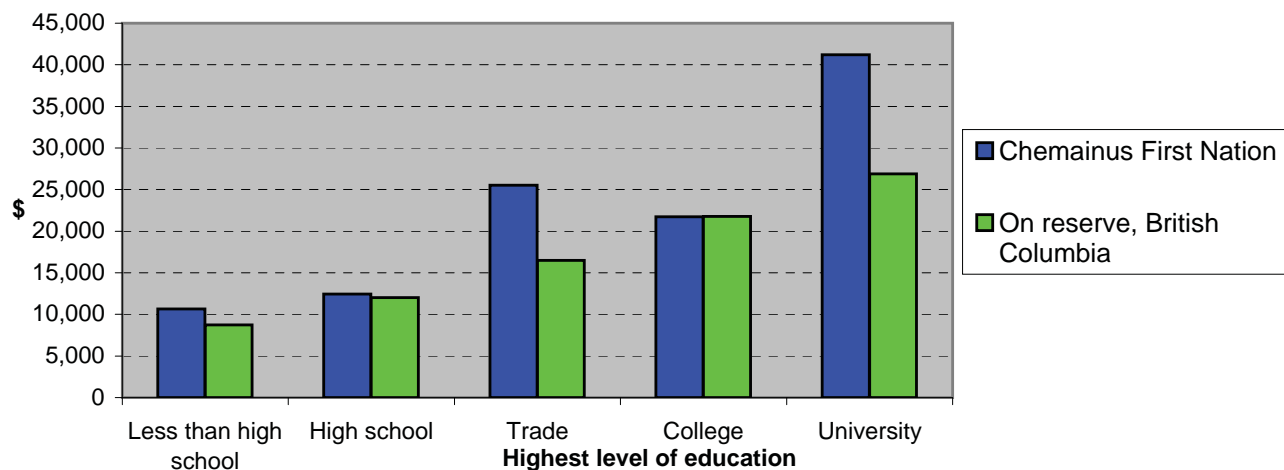
- median earnings grew from \$6,704 in 1995 to \$15,096 in 2005 (a 56% increase), compared to \$12,185 to \$13,267 (an 8% increase) for the Aboriginal population on-reserve in BC; and,
- participation in the labour force was 52.3% (a 6.6% increase from 1996) compared to 57.1% for the Aboriginal population aged 15 and over on-reserve in British Columbia (a 1.7% decrease for the same period).<sup>95</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Statistics Canada, 2009.

<sup>95</sup> Statistics Canada, 2009.



**Exhibit 7.5—Median Earnings of Aboriginal Population Aged 15 and Over With Earnings, by Highest Level of Education, Chemainus First Nation Lands and Comparison Area, 2005**



## 7.1.2 Heiltsuk College

### *Educational attainment*

Coming from a legacy where successive generations of students were sent away to residential school, there is an historic mistrust of education that is borne out by low high school participation rates—when Heiltsuk College began operations in 1976, Bella Bella had a reported 98% drop out rate. Although more students are now staying in school, data from the 2006 census reveals that educational attainment levels of residents of the Heiltsuk Nation lands were lower than their Aboriginal counterparts elsewhere in BC and substantially lower than the general BC population. Referring once again to the *2006 Aboriginal Community Data Initiative*.<sup>96</sup>

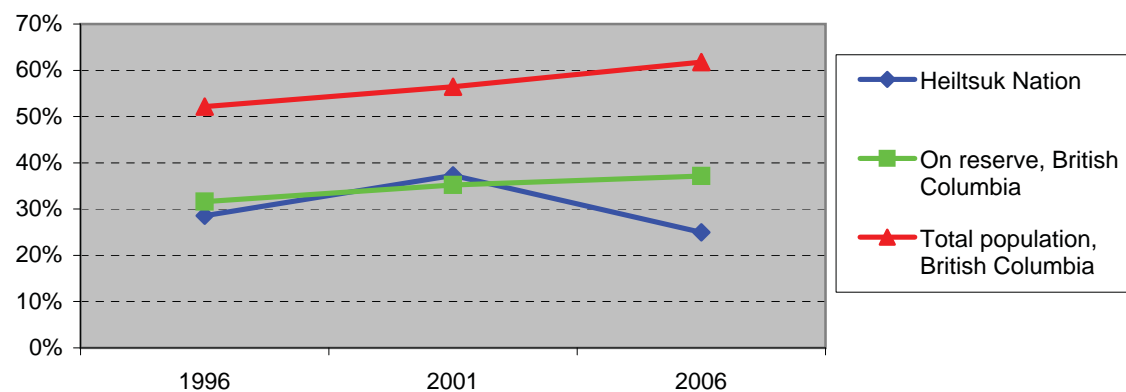
- 53% of Aboriginal people on Heiltsuk Nation lands aged 25 to 64 had not completed a high school certificate (or equivalent) or any post-secondary education, compared to 43% of the Aboriginal population aged 25 to 64 on-reserve in BC.<sup>97</sup>
- 25% of the Aboriginal population on Heiltsuk Nation lands aged 25 to 64 had completed some form of post-secondary education, compared to 37% of the Aboriginal population aged 25 to 64 on-reserve in BC.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Statistics Canada data based on a Heiltsuk Nation population of 1,010.

<sup>97</sup> Statistics Canada, *2006 Aboriginal Community Data Initiative: Heiltsuk Nation*, December 2009. Retrieved June 15, 2010 from BC Stats website: <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/lss/abor/profile/abprof.asp>

<sup>98</sup> Statistics Canada, 2009.

**Exhibit 7.6—Percent of Population Aged 25 to 64 With Post-Secondary Qualifications, Aboriginal Population on Heiltsuk Nation Lands and Comparison Areas, 1996, 2001, 2006**



Heiltsuk College representatives attribute the variability of results in exhibit 7.6 to be an effect of the variable funding. They believe that, had the institute secured more stable, predictable funding, it could have better supported required educational services and opportunities. In turn, this could have contributed to more consistent and positive outcomes.

### ***Earnings and labour force participation***

For many Bella Bella residents, earnings are largely based on fishing and logging. In the past decade, both these resource-based industries have experienced an economic downturn.

In 2005, for the Aboriginal population on Heiltsuk Nation lands aged 15 and over:

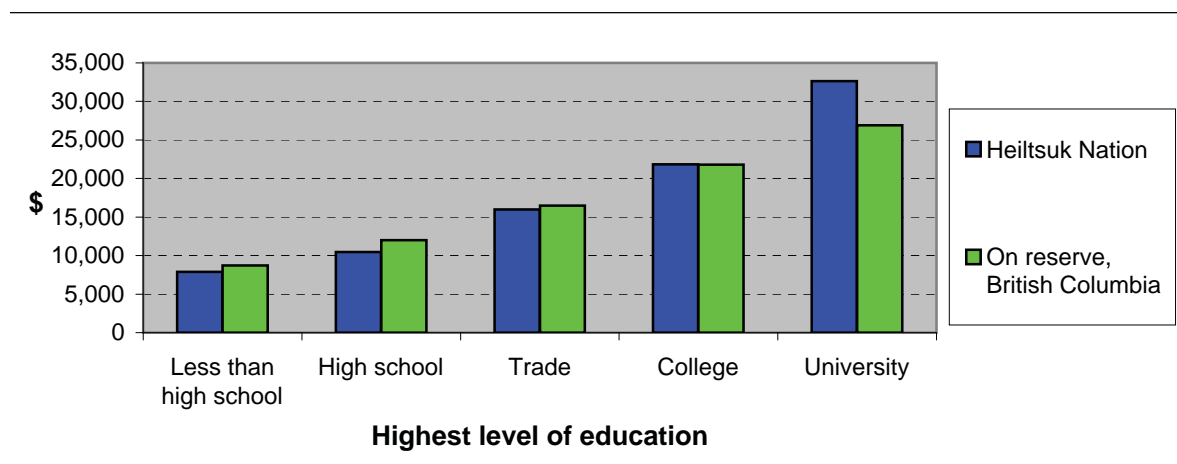
- median earnings were \$10,784 compared to \$13,267 for the Aboriginal population aged 15 and over with earnings on-reserve in British Columbia; and,
- participation in the labour force was 46.5% compared to 57.1% for the Aboriginal population aged 15 and over on-reserve in British Columbia.<sup>99</sup>

However, in 2005, median earnings among Heiltsuk Nation members were highest for those with a university education as compared to those with high school, trade or college education (consistent with the pattern observed for other Aboriginal populations on-reserve in BC). In addition, the earnings for the Heiltsuk Nation population 15 years and older with a university education were higher than the median for Aboriginals on-reserve in BC. Interestingly, approximately 75%<sup>100</sup> of Bella Bella's local workforce—other than professionals—are Heiltsuk College graduates.

<sup>99</sup> Statistics Canada, 2009.

<sup>100</sup> Pauline Waterfall, in an interview with the consultants, April 29, 2010.

**Exhibit 7.7 Median Earnings of Aboriginal Population Aged 15 and Over With Earnings, by Highest Level of Education, Heiltsuk Nation Lands and Comparison Area, 2005**



### 7.1.3 En'owkin Centre

En'owkin Centre, through its partnerships, is a source of economic stimulus for the community. For example, Theytus Books publishes an average eight to ten books each year—about 125 in its thirty-year tenure. It also distributes the works of Aboriginal authors for other publishing companies. In addition, En'owkin Centre attracts learners from beyond the Penticton Indian Band Reserve, where it is situated. In 2009/10, one-half (48%) of 23 En'owkin Centre learners reported that their residence when not studying was “elsewhere in BC.”<sup>101</sup>

En'owkin Centre employs approximately 35 people each year, and contracts an additional 58 paid professional mentors and Elders on-site. As mentioned in Katenies Research and Management Services and Chignecto Consulting Group Inc., “[b]y increasing Indigenous employability, Indigenous institutes also increase Indigenous buying power, thereby fuelling both the Indigenous and Canadian economies.”<sup>102</sup>

*“It is estimated that the cumulative benefit for the consolidated Canadian government of increased Aboriginal education and social well-being is up to \$115 billion over the 2006–26 period.”*

*Andrew Sharpe, Jean-Francois Arsenault, Simon Lapointe and Fraser Cowan, vii.*

<sup>101</sup> Tindall Consulting in association with Juniper Consulting. *IAHLA Data Collection Project, En'owkin Centre Student Responses, 2009/10.*

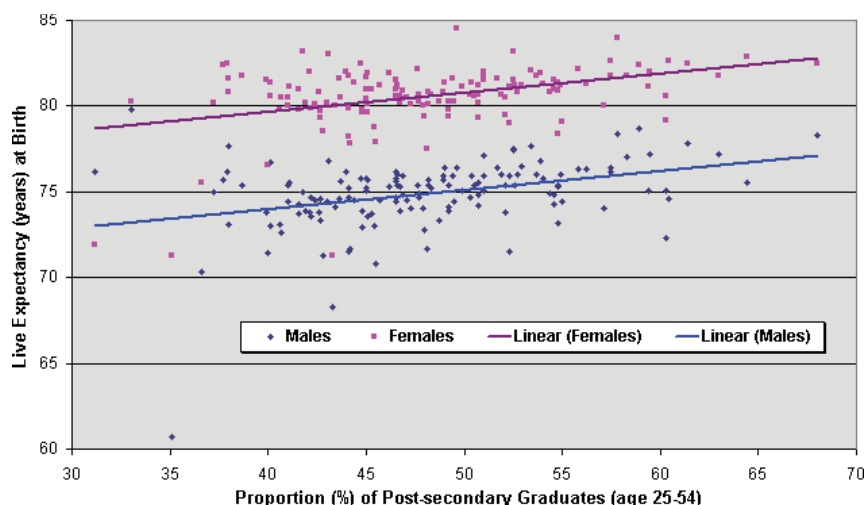
<sup>102</sup> Katenies Research and Management Services and Chignecto Consulting Group Inc., 47.

## 7.2 Social outcomes

### *Healthy communities and quality of life*

Other researchers have demonstrated that, generally, the higher the level of education, the healthier the population. This is illustrated in Natural Resources Canada's *Atlas of Canada* which reports that "along with income, education is one of the principal, modifiable non-medical determinants of health."

**Exhibit 7.8—Life Expectancy and Educational Attainment by Health Regions<sup>103</sup>**



Source: Statistics Canada/Canadian Institute for Health Information Health Regions Indicators, 1996

Other Canadian Institute for Health Information data links education with health and life expectancy and underscores that Aboriginal people in Canada have a shorter life expectancy:

The average life expectancy in Canada ...is 80 years ...Areas with a higher life expectancy generally have higher incomes, higher levels of education, and higher levels of employment ...Studies have shown that Aboriginal people in Canada have life expectancies that are five or more years less than those of the total Canadian population.<sup>104</sup>

Within BC, efforts have been undertaken to quantify the benefits of education, and its effects on communities. In 2007, CCbenefits Inc. completed an economic and social investments analysis of 13 colleges and institutes throughout BC. The study revealed that these places of higher learning play a vital role in the economic development of communities and the province. The study concluded that:

*This [Canadian Council on Learning's First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning] model depicts a circular portrayal of a living tree to illustrate the cyclical process of learning through an individual's lifespan. The tree links the sources of knowledge and cultural continuity with successful individual learning and community well-being.*

*Canadian Council on Learning  
(Adapted)*

<sup>103</sup> *The Atlas of Canada – Life Expectancy and Educational Attainment by Health Region*. [http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/site/english/maps/health/nonmedicaldeterminantsofhealth/education/education\\_figure9.gif/image\\_view](http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/site/english/maps/health/nonmedicaldeterminantsofhealth/education/education_figure9.gif/image_view)

<sup>104</sup> Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) as cited in The Conference Board of Canada, September 2009. [http://www.conferenceboard.ca/hcp/details/health/life-expectancy.aspx#\\_ftn2#\\_ftn2](http://www.conferenceboard.ca/hcp/details/health/life-expectancy.aspx#_ftn2#_ftn2).

- students benefit from improved lifestyles and increased earnings;
- taxpayers benefit from an enlarged economy and lower social costs; and,
- the community as a whole benefits from increased job and investment opportunities, higher business revenues, and an eased tax burden.

In a CCbenefits Inc. report prepared specifically for the College of the Rockies, the societal benefits of higher education are quantified as follows:

- avoided costs of \$7 per credit hour equivalent per year for persons with higher education due to the fact that they are less likely to smoke or abuse alcohol, draw social assistance or unemployment benefits, or commit crimes; and,
- lower crime rates with each year of higher education, resulting in annual savings for taxpayers of \$8,000 (combined savings from reduced arrest, prosecution, jail, and reform costs).<sup>105</sup>

While the CCbenefits Inc. study looked at publicly funded colleges and institutes in non-urban settings, it is likely that similar benefits would be realized in communities with Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes.

Education is also linked to healthy communities. As cited in the First Nations Education Steering Committee's 2008 *Policy Background Paper*, Aboriginal-controlled institutes have the following strengths and success factors that contribute to a healthy community:<sup>106</sup>

- local control;
- ability to respond to unique student needs;
- high standards, accreditation and transferability;
- support for students;
- employment opportunities;
- quality instructors;
- local delivery and community involvement; and,
- cultural promotion.

*"BC colleges and institutes are engines of economic growth for the province, returning 14 % on taxpayers' investments in the colleges... every dollar of taxpayer money invested in BC colleges returns \$3.80 to the provincial and local governments..."*

*BC College Presidents, Study Shows BC Colleges & Institutes are Engines of Economic Growth. September 19, 2007.*

In 2009/10, more than one-half of the responding IAHLA institutes offered short courses or workshops on emotional health, drug or alcohol abuse awareness and nutrition.<sup>107</sup> Learners who choose to attend Aboriginal-controlled institutes appear to be thriving from the nature and extent of these personalized support services. For example, in 2009/10, 361 responding learners rated their personal development since beginning at their Aboriginal-controlled institute:

- 81% agreed they felt better about themselves;
- 78% were more confident since beginning at their institute;

105 CCbenefits Inc., *Economic Contribution of College of the Rockies: Analysis of Investment Effectiveness and Economic Growth*, August 2007, 2. Adapted.

106 First Nations Education Steering Committee, 29. Adapted.

107 Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 20.

- 76% had set goals for their education;
- 76% had set goals for their personal lives; and
- 65% had set goals for their family life.<sup>108</sup>

## ***Lifelong learning***

Learners who choose to attend Aboriginal-controlled institutes appear to be embracing the culturally-focused curriculum. For example, 38% of learners had set goals for understanding and speaking their traditional language; and, many responding learners had set goals for understanding their culture (57%).<sup>109</sup> Some attribute this cultural interest to the holistic, lifelong learning support offered by Aboriginal-controlled institutes.

In 2009/10, most responding learners attending Aboriginal-controlled institutes planned to continue to study the next academic year (in 2010/11) – most often at the same institute (49%),<sup>110</sup> but also at provincial public colleges, First Nations institutes or universities. A reported 87% of learners felt that their program of study was adequately preparing them to pursue their goal for the next academic year.<sup>111</sup>

### **7.2.1 Chemainus Native College**

Chemainus Native College is guided by a Stakeholder Advisory Committee comprised of a variety of First Nations representatives, educators and education administrators. The Advisory Committee's initial focus is language revitalization, which can boost community belonging and well-being.

According to a Chemainus Native College representative, one of the social benefits of having the College in the community is “collective community empowerment.”<sup>112</sup> Learners have come to realize it is possible to maintain one's identity as a First Nations person while pursuing an education. Also, learners have observed that their culture is being reinforced through the curriculum with the increasing Indigeneity of the courses e.g., Chemainus Native College's Fishing Technician offering honours traditional practices. However, building *individual capacity* (the learner getting an education) may result in the learner not remaining on or returning to the reserve to invest what they have learned into building *community capacity*.

Chemainus Native College has built external relationships to bring both economic and social benefits to the community. For example, the College is a member of the Coast Salish Employment & Training Society (CSETS).<sup>113</sup> CSETS' range of services assist First Nation people on southern Vancouver Island including child care – CSETS offers 35 child care

108 Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 28.

109 Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 28.

110 Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 28.

111 Tindall Consulting and Juniper Consulting, 29.

112 Joe Elliott, in an interview with the consultants, April 29, 2010.

113 Coast Salish Employment and Training Society website: <http://csets.com/>, accessed June 15, 2010.



seats to Chemainus First Nation. Also, Chemainus Native College is working with CSETS on a relationship development strategy to help clarify its approach to student recruitment and enrollment.

## 7.2.2 Heiltsuk College

Heiltsuk College's programs seek to foster:

- self-identity;
- Heiltsuk history;
- learning opportunities; and
- life-long learning.

Heiltsuk College's presence in the community has reportedly garnered many social benefits to Bella Bella residents. An estimated 80% of the community's adult learners began their education journeys with "challenges" that their Heiltsuk College experiences have helped them overcome. According to a Heiltsuk representative, "once students feel safe and esteemed, they 'explode' and the academics fall into place."<sup>114</sup>

Heiltsuk College takes pride in its commitment to supporting the whole learner through their learning journey, even when the student no longer resides in the community. When a Heiltsuk alumnus attending university could not afford to purchase text books, he resorted to borrowing the books whenever they became available – sometimes going without entirely. When Heiltsuk College administrators became aware of this, they provided him with a scholarship that helped him to purchase needed supplies. Another learner could not afford either off-reserve travel or the cost of prescription lenses. The College facilitated a trip to Vancouver for the learner to visit an eye doctor and acquire eyeglasses.

In the past, Heiltsuk College has offered Resident Care Attendant programs which provide training for employees who work at the local hospital, an important employer for the community. In addition to providing access to jobs, the training offers the social benefit of enhancing the small, remote community's capacity to care for its own.

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114 Pauline Waterfall, in an interview with the consultants, April 29, 2010.

### 7.2.3 En'owkin Centre

En'owkin's record of attracting and retaining learners honours the practice of lifelong learning. Accredited college or university courses offered at the En'owkin Centre may be taken more than once if the focus changes. For example, the institute's Special Topics course can focus on language learning for children, land and resource management or family systems of care. This allows for new (ongoing) learning for those who have already earned credits without the associated tuition costs.

A number of En'owkin Centre learners continue their studies for more than one year.<sup>115</sup> Many En'owkin Centre learners who choose to study off-reserve or pursue higher level degrees have successfully transitioned to public post-secondary institutions. Within the past decade, at least five learners who have attended En'owkin Centre have went on to complete Doctoral degrees. Today, some of these individuals are educators within the public post-secondary system while also maintaining faculty positions at En'owkin Centre.



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115 Tindall Consulting in association with Juniper Consulting. *IAHLA Data Collection Project, En'owkin Centre Student Responses*, 2009/10.



## Conclusion

The purpose of this project was to:

1. Investigate overall funding issues that affect Aboriginal-controlled institutes.
2. Identify costs of operating Aboriginal-controlled institutes.
3. Highlight the benefits arising from Aboriginal-controlled institutes.

This section discusses these three purpose statements and concludes with comments on the legacy created by Aboriginal-controlled institutes in BC.

### 8.1 Overall funding issues

The single greatest challenge facing Aboriginal-controlled institutes is the lack of stable core funding. This lack of core funding:

- limits the ability of institutes to plan effectively for the future—there are no guarantees the funds will be available year to year;
- prevents most Aboriginal-controlled institutes from offering (and sustaining) a full range of programs and courses;
- makes it challenging to develop curriculum and learning materials;
- limits institutes' ability to promote programs and recruit students;
- limits institutes' ability to procure and maintain adequate technology and library resources;
- limits potential to engage in and support comprehensive, community capacity building;
- can result in institutes having limited capacity to provide optimal student services (e.g. counselling and advising) to support retention and success of learners;
- can make it difficult to pay faculty and staff competitive salaries and benefits; and,
- can make recruiting and retaining qualified faculty and administrators a challenge.

Compounding the lack of core funding is the absence of capital funding. Granting sources specifically exclude the use of the program funds for capital projects, such as facilities, student housing and equipment (e.g., computers).

*The single greatest challenge facing Aboriginal-controlled institutes is the lack of stable core funding.*

The overall funding available falls short of meeting the needs of Aboriginal institutes. Funding requests from Aboriginal-controlled institutes greatly exceed the amount of funding available.

For most Aboriginal-controlled institutes, funding is largely dependent on the entity's ability to secure grants from the federal and provincial governments. Aside from the fact that the annual granting process does not provide stable funding, relying on annual grants has other drawbacks:

- grant-seeking is highly competitive;
- available funding supply is relatively small given the number of institutes applying;
- considerable staff time can be consumed by applying for, reporting on and accounting for "piecemeal" funding;
- funding sources and amounts can fluctuate widely; and,
- because funding from grant programs does not include capital funding, institutes must provide facilities and equipment through other means.

*Aboriginal-controlled institutes have proven to be resilient and adaptable to change.*

Further, alternate sources of revenue, such as tuition and partnership arrangements, are not stable. Tuition revenue is dependent on the institute's ability to attract students to their programs. That, in turn, depends on the institute's ability to offer relevant and supportive programming.

Creative partnerships have provided excellent opportunities for Aboriginal-controlled institutes and have strengthened their relationships within (and external to) their communities. Regardless, these partnerships are dependent on an institute's particular circumstances, and cannot be considered a stable source of funding over the long term.

Many Aboriginal-controlled institutes have proven to be resilient and adaptable to change. Some have survived close to 40 years in spite of challenges such as shifts in policy, mistrust of formal education structures, operating in sub-standard physical spaces, and technological and practical barriers of operating in remote locations. Access to stable core funding and capital funding would better equip these institutes to meet the needs of learners and their communities and would enable them to continue to build upon their legacies.

## 8.2 The costs of Aboriginal-controlled institutes

The costs of operating the three IAHLA case study institutes are similar to other non-urban and remote publicly funded institutions offering similar programming. They face the same challenges, largely due to economies of scale. Fluctuations in enrollment can significantly impact an institute's ability to plan for the future and remain viable. In addition, certain costs such as salaries, travel, and other operating costs may be higher in remote locations.

IAHLA may be in a position to help its membership address issues related to economies of scale, to some degree, if the association secures funding to support initiatives that can

benefit all members. For example, few IAHLA members have fully interactive websites that support curriculum delivery. In fact, some institutes do not yet have websites. If IAHLA were adequately resourced, it could offer centralized support with providing web access to each institute along with administrative and technical help with web-based initiatives. Another example might involve IAHLA receiving resources to support member institutes that wish to pursue affiliation agreements with other post-secondary institutes or institutions, as these types of agreements can be costly. Support might be provided on an application basis, with accompanying accountability requirements.

### 8.3 The benefits arising from Aboriginal-controlled institutes

The benefits of higher education to learners, their communities and society in general are well-documented. Higher levels of education have been directly linked to greater participation in the labour force, lead to higher income levels, and improve economic prosperity. Higher levels of education are also linked to a healthier population, longer life expectancy, and more stable communities. Not closing the education gap for Aboriginal peoples will be costly for Canadian society, both in terms of increased social costs and the lost opportunity to participate in the economy.

Through their collective efforts, Aboriginal-controlled institutes in BC play a key role in “bridging the education gap.” They provide a stepping stone for those adults who might not otherwise have completed their high school diploma, pursued post-secondary education, or considered leaving their communities for education purposes. Aboriginal-controlled institutes offer a necessary support at critical stages in the education of the Aboriginal person by providing a safe and supportive environment that is close to home, and culturally sensitive programming to help sustain the community.

### 8.4 Building on a legacy

This study used a logic model to examine Aboriginal-controlled education in BC. It examined the inputs, activities, outputs and initial outcomes of three Aboriginal-controlled institutes to provide real-life examples of the efforts undertaken by First Nations to educate and nurture their communities. It drew from the literature to explore the longer-term benefits of Aboriginal-controlled education. Statistical data from other research and evaluations on this topic clearly identify the economic and social benefits of investing in Aboriginal-controlled education.

In addition, this report analyzed results from the IAHLA Data Collection Project, now in its fifth year, to demonstrate that Aboriginal-controlled institutes achieve high completion rates, offer qualified instruction, provide a high degree of personal support and a culturally focused curriculum. Results show that this has helped build learners’ self confidence and has assisted in revitalizing Aboriginal language and culture in communities. On the basis of the overarching IAHLA



*Aboriginal-controlled institutes offer a necessary support at critical stages in the education of the Aboriginal person ...*



Data Collection Project results, in combination with the case studies, it is reasonable to conclude that Aboriginal-controlled institutes in BC are achieving successful outcomes in meeting learners' needs.

Government has made investments through the public post-secondary education system in an effort to close the gap between Aboriginal education outcomes and non-Aboriginal outcomes. Aboriginal-controlled institutes play an important role in the post-secondary education sector in BC due their ability to provide culturally appropriate and supportive, life long learning. They provide accredited courses and programs that offer adult students the opportunity to graduate in their own communities with recognized certificates, diplomas and degrees. As well, for those learners who choose to study outside their communities, these institutes effectively support transitions from community to other post-secondary institutions, and offer curriculum that ladder directly into public post-secondary programs. If they are more adequately resourced, Aboriginal-controlled institutes can build on their respective legacies and play an important role in closing the education gap in a timely fashion.



NVIT Graduating Class 2006