

SABASKONG COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
A STUDY OF INDIAN CONTROL
OF INDIAN EDUCATION

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By

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the degree of

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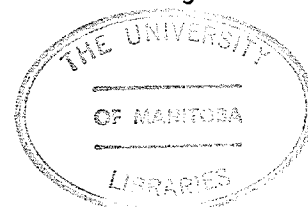
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A B S T R A C T

The purpose of this study was to trace the planning, development, and growth of Indian control of Indian education on the Sabaskong Ojibway Reserve located in the Treaty #3 area of Northwestern Ontario. The study depicts the initiatives and accomplishments by a small Ojibway tribe, a population of less than 300, in its quest to meet the educational needs of the people in Sabaskong. The report is a chronicle of developments and activities, in the implementation phase of Sabaskong's take-over of its education, from November 1974 to June 1980.

The description and analysis of the Sabaskong experience was pieced together from various forms; the examination of relevant records and documents, the interviewing of elders, parents, students, and the teaching staff, were among the major sources of the needed data. The study attempted to examine the expectations, opinions, and direction, through structured questionnaires and informal interviews, of the constituents.

After an examination of the data, a number of recommendations were generated. The intent, in making those recommendations, was twofold. Firstly, they were directed at Sabaskong, for further developments and solutions to problems; secondly, an optimum model was manifested to assist other Indian bands and communities in determining their future educational directions.



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CHAPTER I

I. Introduction

The Government of Canada, through the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, has outlined Education Goals for 1980-81 with top priority being given to Indian Control of Indian Education, in accordance with government policy accepting the National Indian Brotherhood 1972 Policy Statement. Specifically, the goals and activities of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs include "developing a model for transferring education programs to Indian Bands" and "developing a transfer model leading to self-reliance and confidence through local administration of education programs".¹

There can be no doubt that the government has taken a great leap forward in adopting as its own the policy of the National Indian Brotherhood, Indian Control of Indian Education.² The first experiments in local control have tried to follow the basic tenets of "community control" and "parental responsibility".³

Since 1972, Indian Bands across Canada have been in the various stages of controlling their education programs.⁴ In tune with this

¹ D.I.A.N.D. - Education Goals and Activities, 1980-81.

² Communique, Statement by Jean Chretien to the Standing Committee, May 24, 1973.

³ National Indian Brotherhood, Indian Control of Indian Education, (Policy Paper, 1973).

⁴ Department of Indian Affairs & Northern Development - Manitoba Region Status of Local Control of Education, (Unpublished report, January 1977).

philosophy of self-determination, the Sabaskong Ojibway Band in the Treaty #3 areas of northwestern Ontario withdrew its students from the Father Moss Separate School in Sioux Narrows. The parents were displeased with the distance that their children had to travel by bus each day and were especially dissatisfied with the curriculum. In November 1974, the Sabaskong Ojibway Band made the giant step of adopting, as its own, the policy of Indian Control of Indian Education.⁵ In the five ensuing years, the Ojibway Band discarded obsolete apparatus and equipment and expanded its school facilities. It has built an elementary school building, a day care centre, a gymnasium, and renovated existing facilities to create a high school. The Ojibway Band, through an education committee, had directed staff for day care through Grades 1 to 12; developed cultural classes involving the whole community, especially elders; and has chosen to follow the provincial courses of studies with major modifications for Ojibway cultural enrichment and experimental courses in culture, history and the Ojibway language. This spring will see the first Grade 12 graduates of O-Ne-Ga-Ming High school complete their term at Lakehead University and Confederation College in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

The Sabaskong Band, in five short years, has made impressive and conspicuous developments towards the realization of complete

⁵ Ibid.

community control of its education. The Sabaskong Ojibway Band has opened up a new era in the Treaty #3 area of northwestern Ontario, the beginning of Indian Control of Indian Education.

Now, five years later, since the take-over of Indian education from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Sabaskong Ojibway Band Council wishes to describe, review and analyze the processes it underwent; how the take-over developed and grew in the five-year span of 1974 to 1980; how the Band went about in gaining control; what role the Department played; and what obstacles hindered the progress of local autonomy. It is the hope of the Band Council that an optimum model will arise from the review. The model would assist in examining "gaps" or needs not met in the current program and help to set the process in motion to further improve the O-Ne-Ga-Ming Community School system.

The writer of this thesis, an Ojibway from the Sabaskong Ojibway Band, was the elected Chief when local control was well in the advanced stages in 1975. The Sabaskong Ojibway Band Council requested this Band member, the writer, to assist in the proposed examination of O-Ne-Ga-Ming Community School: A Study of Indian Control of Indian Education.

II. Statement of Purpose

The main purpose of the proposed investigation is to examine and to present an account of the planning, development, and growth of local control in Indian education on the Sabaskong Ojibway reserve in the Treaty #3 area of northwestern Ontario.

III. Sub-Problems

Sub-problem I.

To give a historical background of Indian education in the Sabaskong (O-Ne-Ga-Ming) reserves in the colonial era from 1873 to the 1900's.

Sub-problem II.

To describe how local autonomy was initiated and developed by the Sabaskong Ojibway Band.

Sub-problem III.

To analyze the control of the education system by the Sabaskong Ojibway Band reserve (O-Ne-Ga-Ming) from the beginning of the autonomy in 1974 to the present with the purpose of identifying strengths and weaknesses.

IV. Significance of the Study

This study has merit in that literature on Indian-controlled schools in Canada is almost non-existent. Very little attempt to document, to monitor, and to assess the impact of Indian autonomy has been made to date. This study will review how community autonomy at Sabaskong reserve, O-Ne-Ga-Ming, was started, how the idea spread in the community, and how it developed and grew. The analysis of the processes and developments will allow the writer to formulate recommendations for modifications and improvements. Most importantly for the reserve, the Council, school staff and community, this study will identify what changes need to be made and begin to set about improving the whole education on the reserve, along lines the community sees fit. As well, it is the hope that from this study, an optimum model will be developed. Such model would benefit O-Ne-Ga-Ming, the reserves in the Treaty #3 area of north-western Ontario, as well as other Indian Bands across Canada to assist them to expeditiously and effectively assume control of their education.

From the National Indian Brotherhood policy paper of 1973, "Indian Control of Indian Education", two principles are enunciated - local control and parental responsibility. These two basic principles point the way to the development of indicators which can be

used to assess the changes and successes of O-Ne-Ga-Ming Community Education model. Reports of schools in the United States, Rough Rock, Arizona, and Rocky Boy, Montana, also attest the fundamental importance of local autonomy and parental involvement and responsibility. Ideally, these two principles offer more ground for hope of their ultimate importance and usefulness.

The following questions will help form the basis of this study:

1. What are the necessary components and actions for implementing local control?
2. What visible changes in parental attitude result from involvement of the whole community in local control?
3. What has happened to student outlook under local control?
4. What are the views of the teachers involved in the locally controlled school system?

V. Limitations of the Study

The study is a survey of the origins, development and growth of Indian autonomy of Indian education and limited only to the Sabaskong Ojibway reserve, O-Ne-Ga-Ming. It is further limited in that the study does not attempt to go into any depth to assess the impact of local autonomy and the effectiveness of it on school programs. The

decision not to include the analysis and the appraisal of the effectiveness of local control was based on these considerations: (1) the study of the effectiveness of local and community-controlled school at Sabaskong should constitute a follow-up examination to this exercise. Such a study would involve intricate work in the development of performance indicators to measure successes and shortcomings. This paper does, in fact, touch on the above but on a limited scale; (2) this paper, further, stays clear of any political intonations that may result from generalizations and as well this study attempts to be meticulous so that it can be beneficial rather than be an impediment to the community efforts and progress.

VI. Definitions of Terms

The following terms will appear recurrently throughout the paper and the definitions for them are as follows:

Band. This word is usually accompanied and preceded by the word Indian or Ojibway. An Indian Band includes all Band membership registered with the Federal Government as being members of a particular Indian group.

Band Council. The elected government of an Indian reserve comprising a Chief and his Council members.

Indian. In this paper the term Indian refers to an individual

who has status as a Band member under the present Indian Act of Canada.

Local Autonomy. This expression, in the paper, is used frequently and interchangeably with "local control", "community control", and "self-determination". Local autonomy means only one thing: the schools that serve a particular community or a reserve should be controlled by it. In education, this movement, among Canada's Indians, has grown out of the failure of the Government of Canada to meet the needs of the children of the reserves.

VII. Location of the Study

The Sabaskong Ojibway Reserve, O-Ne-Ga-Ming, under consideration in this study, is the home of approximately 300 Ojibway Indians. Sabaskong is part of the original Assabaska Band, the other part of the Band being the Big Grassy Reserve near Morson, Ontario, in the Rainy River district. The reserve, On-Ne-Ga-Ming, is in the heart of the Lake of the Woods, and located on Highway #17, midway between Kenora, in the north, and Fort Frances, in the south. The Sabaskong Ojibway Band is one of the twenty-five Bands in the Treaty #3 area of northwestern Ontario. As previously mentioned, Sabaskong and Big Grassy Reserves constituted the original Assabaska Band, however, the two communities were geographically separated and far removed from each other. The two reserves of the Assabaska Band had but one Chief

and a Council to administer the Band affairs. As the population grew and demands became increasingly difficult to meet, the reserves voted to split in November 1963. By October 1964, the division was complete.

At the time of the signing of Treaty #3, the North West Angle Treaty, in 1873, the Ojibway Band members were lake dwellers so that most of them lived along the shore throughout Lake of the Woods. Even though the Ojibway were spread out and scattered throughout the big lake, they met often to discuss matters of mutual concern. They shared a common language, a common land and way of living in it, and a common culture and sense of identity. They were masters of their own land and lived successfully in a difficult environment. Over the years, the Ojibway moved to their present locations to be near schools, roads, retail stores, and electrical power.

At the onset, it was mentioned that the Sabaskong Band forms one of the twenty-five Bands in the Treaty #3 region. Politically, it is one of the participating Bands that comprise Grand Council Treaty #3. Grand Council Treaty #3 is an organization made up of an executive body and a general membership that is limited to Chiefs of the twenty-five Bands. The organization provides an opportunity for the Chiefs and other Ojibway leaders of Treaty #3 area to confer

with each other and present a united voice in seeking improvements for the people to whom they are responsible. Figures 1 and 2 are maps depicting the Treaty #3 area of northwestern Ontario and showing the locations of Sabaskong and Big Grassy Reserves.

VIII. Research Procedure

The procedure followed in this study is organized into three main research components: (1) historical survey, (2) participant observation; and (3) designed questionnaire and interview approach.

The report of the study will include the results of empirical studies of the school's three constituencies -- students, parents, and teachers. These studies, conducted through the use of questionnaires and interviews, will attempt to look at the attitudes, expectations, and aspirations of constituencies regarding the school, the whole education system at Sabaskong, and involvement under this new thrust of local autonomy. These measures will be administered in each case as soon as the relevant individual is identified and when the time is "ripe". This is so important for Indian people are so sick of studies and the schedule must be designed around the time when the respondents are "good and ready".

As well, a survey instrument with questions concerning ideas

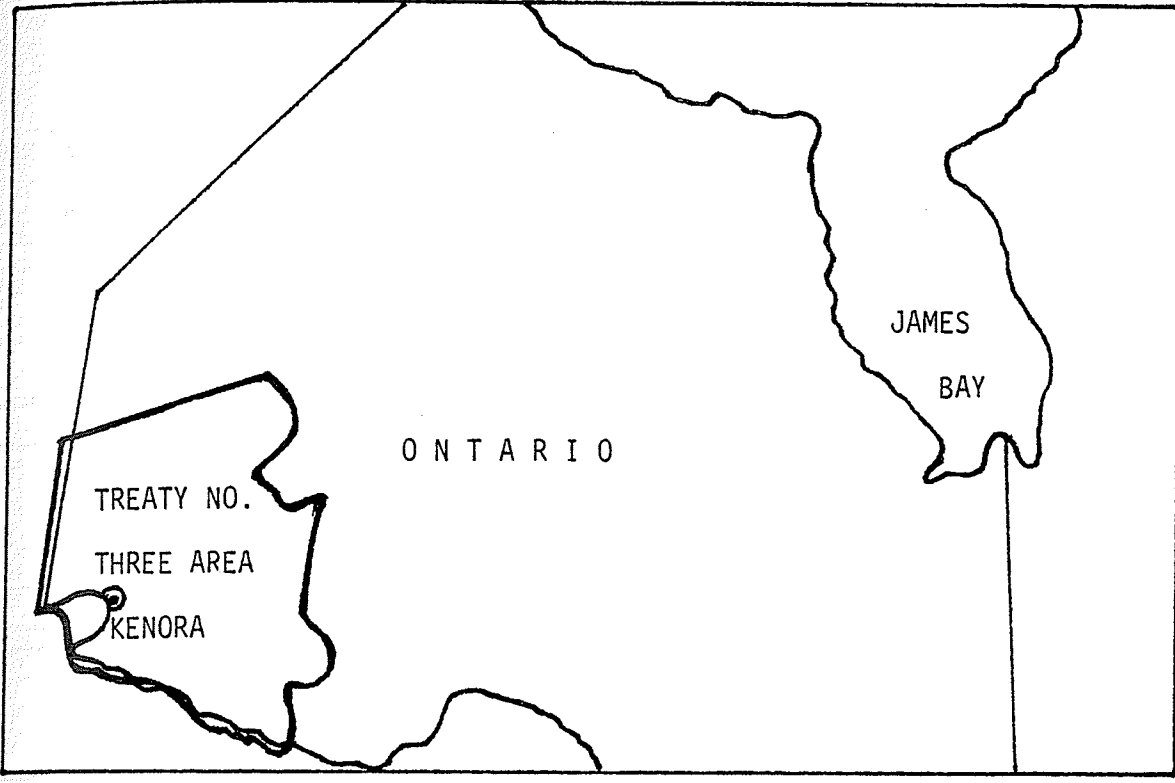


FIGURE 1

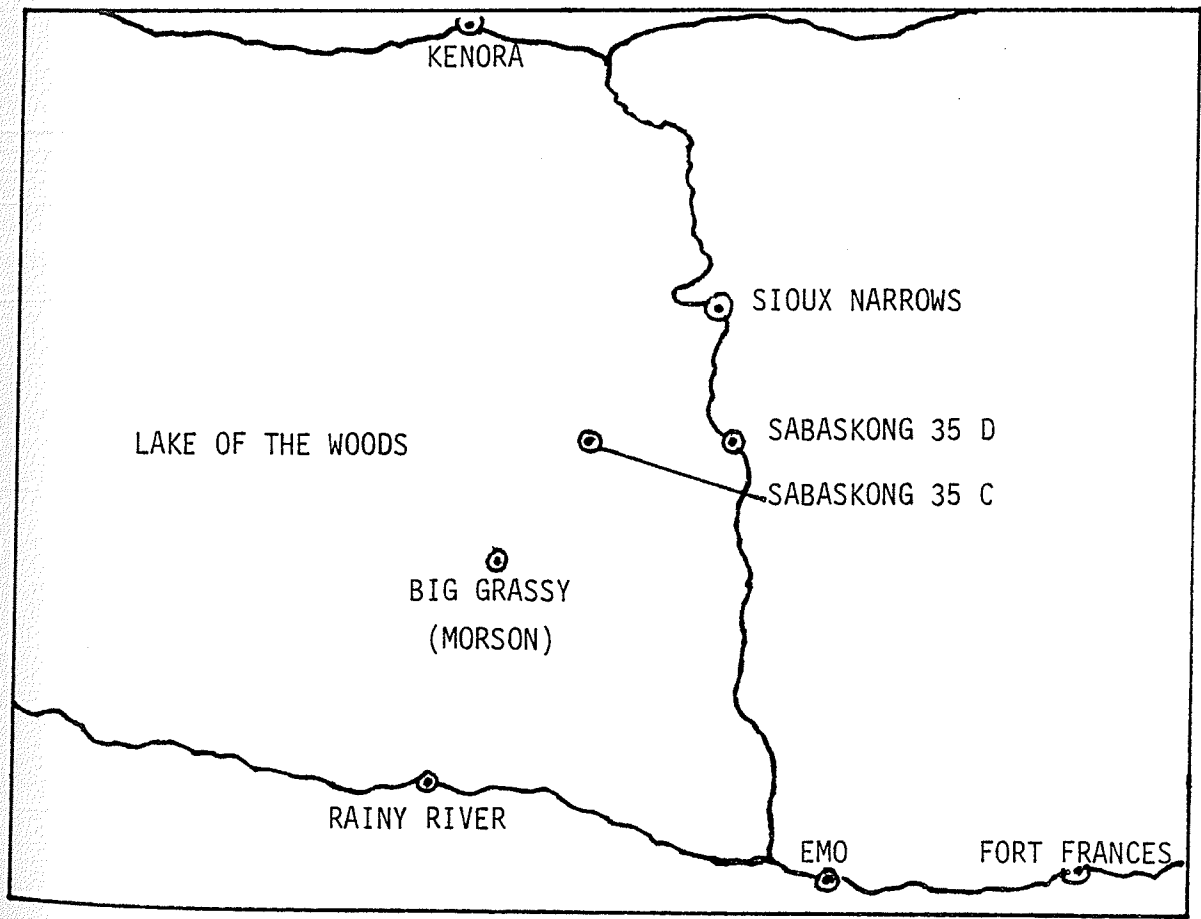


FIGURE 2

about involvement and decision-making was designed. This questionnaire attempted to assemble information on the elders' perceptions of community involvement and local control.

The exercise of data collecting, through casual and random interviewing, and through participant observation, was exciting and profitable. Information was collected and gathered during coffee breaks, fastball games, social events, meetings, and during home visits. Frequently, the use of the Ojibway tongue was an asset as the writer is fluent in both English and Ojibway. The use of the Indian language was advantageous particularly when interviewing the elderly residents of Sabaskong. The use of tape recorders and note taking proved to be another advantage for the use of instruments was not opposed by the respondents.

For historical data, the following sources were utilized;

1. Archival records in Ottawa
2. Records of the Department of Indian Affairs
3. Sabaskong School records, attendance registers, and other school files and documents relevant to this study
4. Correspondence and Budget presentations and letters (such as the appended correspondence, and so forth) filed and kept at the Sabaskong Ojibway Band office

5. Provincial House of the Oblates in Winnipeg
6. Theses, books, papers, newspaper clippings, and other pertinent periodicals
7. Interviews with elders and community members - staff included

IX. Organization of the Remainder of the Thesis

In keeping with its stated purpose, this study focused primarily on descriptive, development, exploratory, and participatory research, in which the primary participants in the study were members of Sabaskong Reserve. From the outset, it was known that as much data as possible must be collected at the reserve level. However, it was known as well that other relevant and meaningful information had to be gathered from outside sources. Therefore, in Chapter II, attention will be focused on the review of literature related to this study. Chapter III will provide a brief historical context for the Sabaskong O-Ne-Ga-Ming Band and give a historical perspective on Indian education in the O-Ne-Ga-Ming reserves. It is intended that through interviews with elders, parents, and senior officials of the Department of Indian Affairs, that proper historical background of the "old reserve" Sabaskong 35C and its community school will be provided. In this chapter, also, an effort will be made to narrate the outcome of research into the archival records in Ottawa, gleaning of data from the records of the Department of Indian

Affairs and Northern Development, and so forth.

Chapter IV will emphasize the beginning of local control by the Band Council, at Sabaskong Reserve, under the insistence of parents and elders. Hence, an account of the planning and implementation processes of local autonomy will be given in this phase of the study. Various events which took place during the initial few months, and indeed the first year, will be outlined in this chapter. In examining the implementation this part of the study will account of specific innovative aspects of the new Sabaskong school program and their implications for those concerned about implementing similar programs in their own reserve schools: (1) community involvement; (2) the loose and flexible structure; (3) the administrative and organizational structure; (4) the emphasis on parental, student, and teacher responsibility.

Chapters V and VI will deal with findings related to the period of transition from wardship of the federal government, to educational autonomy. Emphasis will be placed on the attempts, by the Ojibway of Sabaskong (O-Ne-Ga-Ming) Reserves, at local autonomy. Particular attention will be given to the developments at Sabaskong 35C, during the early 1900's, to the events that led to the move at Sabaskong 35D, the current location of O-Ne-Ga-Ming. From the

findings and the analysis that will follow, it is intended that a model for assuming control of education will be developed using the Sabaskong experience.

Chapter VII will provide an examination of Sabaskong Reserve and the O-Ne-Ga-Ming Community School, under local autonomy, in retrospect. A number of conclusions will be drawn and recommendations, therefore, will be made. This final chapter will also provide a summary of the study into the planning, development and growth of local autonomy of school and education system on a reserve setting. An indication will be made to do a follow-up research into the effectiveness of Indian Control of Indian Education.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

I. Tribal Government - Historical Context

"Indian government", "Self-government", "Local government", "Self-determination", "Community control", "Indian autonomy" - these cliches and buzzwords may vary depending what Indian tribe or Band and from what area in North America they live, but unifying them all is the underlying concept of the Indians' desire in having a voice in their own destiny. To this extent, in their Aboriginal Rights Position Paper of April 1980, in section "Indian Government Manifesto", the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs state:

"Our right of self determination is a right which we have not and will not surrender. The Canadian government will have to accept that Indian₁ people are a people who will not disappear."¹

Also, from the Treaty #3 area of northwestern Ontario, the Penase Tribal Council, in the founding of its Anishinabe Government makes the following statement of concept:

"Anishinabe Government is the establishment of the governing principles and institutions by which the Indian people decided to regulate their lives and affairs. It is an Indian₂ Government sovereign and existing of its own."²

Further, in The Saskatchewan Indian of August , 1973, in an article entitled "Survival Rests in Education", the Chiefs through the

¹ Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, Aboriginal Rights Position Paper, April ,1980, p.3.

² Penase Tribal Council, Anishinabe Government in Lake of the Woods, Treaty #3 of northwestern Ontario, pamphlet, 1979, p.2.

Federation of Saskatchewan Indians

"...make it categorically clear that it demands that the education of Indian children should be³ returned to the Indians themselves."

And they add further,

"Educational control begins with curriculum. Unless the people have the right to decide what their children are to be taught, they do not have control of their education."⁴

The National Indian Brotherhood paper entitled Indian Control of Indian Education makes a number of statements about control such as:

"Indian parents must have full responsibility and control of education. The federal government must adjust its policy and practices to make possible the full participation and partnership of Indian people in all decisions and activities connected⁵ with the education of Indian children."

And

"Band Councils should be given total or partial authority for education on reserve depending on local circumstances, and always with provisions for eventual complete autonomy, analogous to that of a provincial school board vis-a-vis⁶ a provincial Department of Education."

As mentioned in the previous paragraphs the Indian leaders have responded to the needs of the Indian people in many ways with varying

³ The Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, The Saskatchewan Indian, August 1973, p.33.

⁴ Ibid. p.34.

⁵ National Indian Brotherhood Policy Paper, Indian Control of Indian Education, 1972, p.27.

⁶ Ibid. p.27.

degrees. Yet the record is clear enough:

"Indian people cannot leave the protection of their status to the whims of succeeding governments. The Indian people must have control over their future and that control must become part of the fabric of the governing constitutional document of the country. Their heritage as Indians is too sacred to be left in the hands of political groups and courts"

The concept of Indian government is not entirely a radical idea and in reality is not new. Indian government, the theoretical umbrella under which Indian people want to control their destiny, finds its roots in the old Indian way of life. It is one of the oldest essential elements that the Indian tribes in this country enjoyed long before the arrival of the European immigrant in this land. This concept resurfaced in the late 1960's and became more evident in the early 1970's. It was actively pursued by the young and enlightened Indian activists of which some are Vine Deloria, Jr., in the United States, and Harold Cardinal, Howard Adams, and Fred Kelly to name just a few in Canada. The resurgence of self-determination is explained by Fred Kelly, a young, angry and articulate young leader from the Treaty #3 area of northwestern Ontario, whose article is taken from the Toronto Telegram of September 26, 1969. He writes:

⁷ Bowles, Richard P., et al, The Indian: Assimilation, Integration or Separation, Prentice Hall of Canada, Ltd., 1972,

"There is an Indian uprising in Canada. It manifests itself in the Native Movement. It is ideological, social, legal, and political. Within the movement is a spectrum of views. One constituent is a militancy spreading like a prairie grass fire. It is a re-enkindlement of a vision in which the destiny of the native people is in their hands. This revitalized quest for self-determination is to be pursued unswervingly and with whatever means necessary. This is Red Power."

In yet another example of what the young and emergent Indian wants, in his book entitled The New Indians, Stan Steiner quotes Vine Deloria, Jr. as saying:

"Red Power means we want power over our own lives. We do not wish to threaten anyone. We do not wish power over anyone. We are only half a million Indians. We simply want the power, the political and economic power⁹ to run our own lives in our own way."

This is the ideal.

As a preface to this review of literature, an attempt is made to provide the reader a background to the factors involved in this movement today. Indian Government resurgence reflects the Indians' struggle for their right to exist - for their right to self-destiny.

⁸ Bowles, Richard P., et al, The Indian: Assimilation, Integration or Separation, Prentice Hall of Canada, Ltd., 1972, an article entitled The Fresh Assertiveness: Red Power, by Fred Kelly.

⁹ Steiner, Stan, The New Indians, Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1968, p.269.

The problems have been identified, documented, and addressed by leaders, Indian and white both. In the ensuing pages, this writer, within the purview of this study, discusses the views of Canadian Indian leaders and authors regarding the experience and demonstrations of many problems, the needs and innovative approaches to redress the current inadequacies in meeting the needs of Indian

II. Social Activism

In his book, The Unjust Society, Harold Cardinal, in his forthright manner says his book came as a result of Pierre Trudeau's double message:

He promised "the creation of the Just Society" but "publically announced that the federal government was not prepared to guarantee aboriginal rights".¹⁰

While Cardinal's book deal in great depth analyzing the problems confronting the Indian people of Canada, he, subsequently, does pay special attention to Indian education. His examination adequately sums up the situation as it is viewed by other Indian leaders in Canada. In the first place, Cardinal points out that the main problem lies within the dominant society. In his chronicle of poverty, disease and misery, Cardinal attaches the blame to the

"white man's disinterest, his deliberate trampling of Indian rights and his repeated betrayal of our trust. Generations of Indians have grown up behind a buckskin curtain of indifference, and, all too often, plain bigotry".¹¹

¹⁰ Cardinal, Harold, The Unjust Society, M. G. Hurtig, Ltd., Edmonton, 1969, p.17.

¹¹ Ibid. p.1

Cardinal goes on with his searing criticism and condemnation of the federal government,

"instead of acknowledging its legal and moral responsibilities to the Indians of Canada and honouring the treaties...now proposed to wash its hands of Indians entirely, passing the buck to the provincial governments".¹²

He further 'damns' the Ottawa political leaders, the church and the middle-class groups such as the now-defunct Indian-Eskimo Association, for usurping funds that would normally be for the benefit of Indian people. The final target of denunciation and 'chewing out' by the 24-year-old activist Cardinal points to the Department of Indian Affairs as having

"fostered an image of Indians as a helpless people, an incompetent people, and an apathetic people, in order to increase their own importance and to stress the need for their own continued presence".¹³

Cardinal carries on with his tirade and onslaught against the Canadian government and particularly the Department of Indian Affairs and its empire of bureaucrats. The goal of Indian education, as was set out by the Government of Canada, he observes, through its Department of Indian Affairs, was assimilation. But first, the Indian people had to be civilized and in order to polish them up so that

the Indians should become Canadian as have all other Canadians, these "ungrateful little savages" had to be evangelized.¹⁴

¹² Ibid. p.1.

¹³ Ibid. p.9.

¹⁴ Ibid. p.28.

Thus in the early stages, the responsibility of Indian education was left to the church-run residential schools.

Indian children were taken away from their parents to a far-away school and the churches warned the children that they must not talk their God-given language for the penalty was severe. The child was alienated from their homes for two reasons. They were taken to a school for many months at a time and they could not speak their native tongue. The church's goals of conversion dovetailed perfectly with the government's goal for assimilation.

Cardinal further states that

"department wanted to civilize the Indians as fast as possible and the continued practice of Indian ceremonies delayed their progress; church officials eagerly christianizing Indians feared the competition of even a hint of the Indians past." 15

In 1950 the federal government took back the responsibility for the education of the Indians from the churches and gave it to the trust of the Department of Indian Affairs. In its wisdom and "expert experience"¹⁶ the Department was changing its policy of assimilation; it now was integration for the Canadian Indians. The Indian, now instead of being held captive in a residential school for ten months out of each year, now had to attend a white public

15 Ibid. p.135.

16 Ibid. p.31.

school. This manifestation, prescribed by "the Great White Father"¹⁷

"will almost ensure that his path will lead them to a fuller and richer life."¹⁸

Cardinal vehemently repudiates that assimilation has not worked and never will. In fact, he argues, integration as a one-way street, will never succeed. Indians have an identity and they must be allowed to participate in deciding the type of schooling their children ought to receive.

If there is to be a solution through democratic processes, Cardinal insists:

"These new institutions must be prepared to help Indians develop their senses of identity. The function of such institutions (education) will lie in the areas of social rebuilding, psychological renewal and cultural renaissance. Indian organizations must operate these schools, for only they qualify for the task of identifying teachers and administrators with the resources to meet the cultural needs of Indians."¹⁹

The charges by Cardinal against the Department of Indian Affairs, for its failure to live up to its role of trusteeship, and the wretched schemes of the church-operated residential schools are substantiated by another prominent Indian leader, George Manuel. In

¹⁷ This aphorism "The Great White Father" is commonly used by Cardinal in his book, The Unjust Society, in reference to the Department.

¹⁸ Ibid. p.136.

¹⁹ Ibid. p.167.

his book, The Fourth World: An Indian Reality, Manuel assails the corrupt and contemptible ways of the residential school. Manuel denounces the institution:

"Nothing else contributed so much to the destruction of the Indian people as a nation as the school system run by the churches and supported by the government. It was the perfect instrument for undermining both our values and our economic base. The residential school...was the perfect system for instilling a strong sense of inferiority."²⁰

Of his experience in school, Manuel says:

"Three things stand out in my mind from my years in school: hunger, speaking English, and being called a heathen because of my grandfather."²¹

Unlike his contemporary, Harold Cardinal, Manuel does not go into a diatribe toward the intricate network of the Canadian society government and the church. He appears not to be as bitter but neither is he relenting. In fact, he is frank, philosophical, and forward looking. Manuel looks to the fourth world as a vision of hope. However, he says,

"the fourth world is not...a final solution. It is not even a destination. It is the right to travel freely, not only on our road but in our own vehicles."²²

²⁰ Manuel, George and Michael Posluns, The Fourth World: An Indian Reality, Collier Macmillan Canada, Ltd. 1974, p.66.

²¹ Ibid. p.63.

²² Ibid. p.217.

Manuel believes that Indian people must develop their own independence. There can be no real change in unilateral dependence

"until Indian people are allowed to develop our own forms of responsible government."²³

Without the long march to the fourth world there can be no guarantees of Indian responsible government.

Indians "can negotiate from a position of strength."²⁴ The solution is to achieve Indian control of Indian education which will be a great deal easier, Manuel believes, than to achieve Indian control of Indian lands. Education for self-reliance, including economic independence, is the basic goal and Indians have to establish and administer their own schools,

"Education at any level is only possible when the economic potential of the community is being developed."²⁵

Cardinal and Manuel, both Indian leaders, begin with the critique of the Canadian government with which they engaged in countless debates over Indian rights and issues. They moved from there to an examination of the "Canadian rather than white"²⁶ elite and, finally, arrived at a condemnation of the church's role in attempting to evangelize those "ungrateful little savages"²⁷ and contributing

23 Ibid. p.217.

24 Ibid. p.221.

25 Ibid. p.204.

26 Ibid. p.5.

27 Cardinal, Harold, The Unjust Society, Edmonton, M.G. Hurtig Ltd. 1969, p.28.

"so much to the destruction of the Indian people as a nation." 28

In the 1960's, Brazil, a third world country, was going through a profound crisis. The dominant society was no longer able to hang on to all of their privileges, and the masses of the people were waking up to forms of political and social involvement which had been denied to them before. It is in the midst of this crisis Paulo Friere found himself beginning to work on problems of consciousness and ideology. Freire became involved in the struggle against oppression, poverty, and hunger at an early age. Third world, he says, has nothing to do with a geographic concept. It is basically a political struggle. A very visible example of third world Freire uses, is the racial strife that the blacks and other minority groups are engaged in North America particularly in the United States.

Oppression, experienced by the working class, the ethnic and the minority groups and their consciousness and means of overcoming their oppression, are the dominant principles of Freire's book, Pedagogy of the Oppressed.

Freire sees that the education system today is the enemy of the oppressed. Education is a political act. Education tends to become

28 Manuel, George and Michael Posluns, The Fourth World: An Indian Reality, Collier Macmillan Canada, Ltd., 1974, p.66.

an instrument for domination. It neutralizes the consciousness of the oppressed and forces on them ideologies which will not benefit them but will strengthen the power of the oppressor.

If the educator sees himself as absolute and the student as being inferior and ignorant, Freire contends that because of his vulnerability, the educator can easily deposit into the student who is empty.

"It is not surprising that the banking concept of education regards men as adaptable, manageable beings. The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of the world."²⁹

Freire's idée fixe is:

that every human being, no matter how "ignorant" or submerged in the "culture of silence" he may be, is capable of looking critically at this world in a dialogical encounter with others.³⁰

Therefore, he can analyze the role of "conscientização",³¹ that is learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and thus take action against the oppressive elements of reality.

As people enter into a new state of praxis, reflection-action, they reflect on the oppression of their situation and begin to get a new sense of dignity and hope.

²⁹ Freire, Paulo, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, The Seabury Press, New York, 1968. p.60.

³⁰ Ibid. Foreword by Richard Shaul, p.13.

³¹ Ibid. p.19.

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³⁰ Ibid. Foreword by Richard Shaull, p.13.

³¹ Ibid. p.19.

"In dialectical thought, world and action are intimately interdependent." 32

The oppressed no longer see themselves as objects but as people that can enter into dialogue and work for humanizing and self-affirmation. They can fight for freedom for freedom is not a gift but they can attain it through ontological vocation and praxis.

This liberation is like a childbirth, a painful one, however, a new man emerges dedicated to the humanization of all men. Freire writes:

"And those who recognize, or begin to recognize, themselves as oppressed must be among the developers of this pedagogy. No pedagogy which is truly liberating can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunate and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption." 33

On the question of violence, Freire contends:

"Never in history has violence been initiated by the oppressed...Violence is initiated by those who oppress, who exploit, who fail to recognize others are persons - not by those who are oppressed, exploited and unrecognized." 34

The affirmation Freire was referring earlier

"might appear to imply division, dichotomy, rupture of the revolutionary forces; but it is not, it is exactly the opposite - it is the beginning of their communion." 35

32 Ibid. p.38.

33 Ibid. p.39.

34 Ibid. p.41.

35 Ibid. p.123.

True reflection leads to action. Praxis is the raison d'etre of the oppressed. Oppressors can join in the work of liberation as they see themselves as oppressors and as they enter into communion with the oppressed and work with dialogue for praxis, action and reflection. Otherwise action is pure activism. A revolutionary leadership can work for the transformation of the world as they work in dialogue with the oppressed, not for.

People can enter this new life.

"The more the people unveil this challenging reality which is to be the object of their transforming action, the more critically they enter that reality."³⁶

There must be conflict in our society but it can be used for the formation of a new person for the beginning of a new era in Western history. Freire has made a contribution to this era.

In summary, it is evident that there have been many pressing problems and barriers to successful achievement in Indian education. There have been many efforts, trials and errors of many years, from the beginning to the present. To this day there has remarkably been little progress to deal effectively with the discord. From the comprehensive review of the writings by Cardinal, Manuel, and Freire, the barriers are manyfold. It is easy to conclude that the white

36
Ibid. p.38.

exploitative paternalism was an engineered manipulation and abuse. It is little wonder the resultant had produced negative self-concept and self-hatred among Indian children. As one Indian was quoted as saying: "There is no future being an Indian and perhaps there never was".³⁷ Despite the odds and the many impediments, Indian people want to participate in the designing of their destiny. Indian parents want the responsibility and control over the education system that their children acquire at the community level. Education, at the local level, should be one of full involvement of the people affected in the development and implementation of education programs and policies, with real responsibilities and adequate authority. The conditions described, particularly by Cardinal and Manuel, have been a reality for countless years, and until recently, no panacea has been in the offing. Within the last two decades Indian people have been proposing new solutions.

III. A Review of Relevant Studies

School Failure

There have been several reasons cited for the high rate of Indian student failure. Three of the important considerations presented for his difficulties are cultural differences, language barriers, and maladjustment, in an integrated social setting.

³⁷ Author unknown.

Immersed in the alien, dominant white culture which forces, for the most part, new and conflicting patterns of belief upon them, the Indian meets constant frustration. Changes in behaviour are inevitable. In this setting of face-to-face contact with white people, any behaviour is regarded as deviant.

Culture, as one of the major determinants of personality, is recognized by most behavioural scientists. Since behaviour deviation can be expected even in homogeneous cultures, where only one set of values is operating, a greater variety and number of deviations can be expected in situations where people are living under the stress of two sets of cultural values. In his book, Modern Indian Psychology, John Bryde writes that,

culture change may create conditions of anomie and conflicting orientation within a community to the point where personalities are affected in an adverse manner. ³⁸

In short, the white man's behaviour is demanded of the Indian, even though the latter does not share the values from which the former's behaviour would psychologically follow. It may, therefore, be reasonably theorized that this clashing of cultural values would have adverse effects on the personalities and educational performance of the Indian. Bryde further elaborates:

³⁸ Bryde, John F., Modern Indian Psychology Institute of Indian Studies, The University of South Dakota, Vermillion, S.D., 1971, p.5.

An Indian youngster can grow up in his Indian home and learn a set of rules to live by. These are his values which he has learned unconsciously. As he moves on through school and into the non-Indian world, he is taught a set of rules, some of which he perceives as conflicting with his.... He feels confused...he is fearful of going forward into the dominant group and yet he doesn't want to retreat back...if he does, he can't get the training to support his future...and he feels lost...³⁹

Similarly, different cultural values can cause maladjustment and underachievement in school. Miles Zintz, in Education Across Cultures, notes that lasting of two cultures causes friction and maladjustment and,

"as minority ethnic groups progress through the school grades, their achievement falls farther and farther behind".⁴⁰

It can be readily seen that an integrated educational system is not only failing the students scholastically but it is changing their personalities and making them a stranger in their own country. Indian children show a decline in achievement and lower intelligence quotients, but, as well, a drop in performance and, consequently, social maladjustment as they grow older. Miss A. M. Gleason, a school administrator in the Fort Frances (Ontario) Separate Roman Catholic School system from 1962 to 1965,

³⁹ Ibid. p.145.

⁴⁰ Zintz, Miles, Education Across Cultures, Kendall-Hunt Publishing Co., Dubuque, Iowa, p 137.

observed that the Indian children integrated into the schools developed more pronounced problems of social adjustment as they progressed through the grades. They also fell further behind the expected normal level of achievement.⁴¹

Although the Indian students have innately the same ability, they have different motivation. Since they are not competitive, but co-operative, their culture does not prepare them for traditional academic work. When they are integrated into a school based on another culture, they are bound to be low achievers. Their condition is not relieved any by teachers regarding the pupils as being of low intelligence and, thus, underachievers. In many instances, the children enter school with an adverse judgement already made about them; namely, they cannot learn and they are taught as if they cannot learn.

What then is the alternative?

Future Direction

The Indians are revolting, passively but firmly, against the federal and provincial structured school systems.

The fact of the matter is that the great majority of Indians find it no longer acceptable to acquiesce to paternalism or stoically endure privation.⁴²

⁴¹ Gleason, A. M., Relationship Between Deceleration in Academic Achievement of Indian Children Integrated in Separate Schools in Fort Frances, Ontario, and their Social Acceptance and Personality Structure, unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1970.

⁴² Heath, G. Louis, Red, Brown and Black Demands for Better Education, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1972, p.48.

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numbering

They are demanding the right to take over all of their educational programs. The Indian people know that the integrated schools, residential schools, and private schools have not been effective and they know these schools are not about to work. A continuation of them merely means the destruction of the Indian culture .

Consequently, the Indian people are protesting intensely. They are drawing up a blue print for an educational revolution, and studies undertaken,

"that could be cited to demonstrate further that Indian involvement in educational decision-making is growing".⁴³

Unless these demands are recognized and that they are given total and full control,

"...there is little prospect that Indian children will find the educational fare they are offered any more realistic, relevant or interesting than they do now." ⁴⁴

Self-determination as an education concept for Indian communities has resurfaced only recently. Since 1973, when the Minister of Indian Affairs, Jean Chretien, accepted and made, Indian control of Indian education, a departmental policy, Mt. Currie, James Smith, Fort Alexander, Sabaskong, to name some of the reserves in Canada,

⁴³ Ibid. p.43

⁴⁴ "Give it Back to the Indians: Education on Reservation and Off", Carnegie Quarterly, Vol. XVII, Spring, 1969, p.2.

have all been engaged in bringing about a new standard of quality and innovative approaches to Indian education. For the Mt. Currie School, its goal is to provide students with an education which will

enable them to have greater freedom of choice than they have had in the past. For some, this will mean staying on the reserve, for others it will mean moving elsewhere. The Board feels that providing a strong academic program is the best way to insure that students will be in a position to make choice.⁴⁵

The philosophy of the Sabaskong Community School

"is to develop a positive self-image of the student and to develop an awareness and pride in the Indian identity of the student".⁴⁶

There is no doubt that, by giving the Indian people, and particularly the parents, a participatory role in designing, developing and implementing educational self-determination, the removal of wanton shackles and other barriers have begun. This perspective is corroborated by Verna J. Kirkness in her thesis, Educational Achievement of Indians in Federal and Provincial Schools in Manitoba, wherein she concludes

greater graduation success was achieved where the high school program was offered on reserves whether operated by the federal or provincial governments.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Wyatt, June Deborah, Self Determination Through Education: A Canadian Indian Example, Phi Delta Kappan, p.407.

⁴⁶ Philosophy of the Sabaskong School and Goals of Local Control of Education.

⁴⁷ Kirkness, V.J., Educational Achievement of Indians in Federal and Provincial Schools in Manitoba, M.Ed. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1980.

BACKGROUND TO THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY OF O-NE-GA-MING RESERVES

For many years after Treaty #3 was signed in 1873, the people of Lake of the Woods area continued to live in their traditional nomadic ways, camping in different locations throughout the years according to the sustenance they were seeking. Spring would be the sugar-tapping areas of Big Island and the fishing areas throughout the Lake; summer would be the berry-picking areas on islands and mainland; fall, the ricing areas and duck-hunting marshes; winter, the trapping grounds. Families from grandparents to babies would be together, gathering in larger communities only in the summers when plentiful fishing allowed larger get-togethers.

Gradually, though, as the people became more involved in the wage labour of timber cutting, labouring on steamers and building the railways, more permanent residence became a fact. Settlements arose in the places that the leaders had chosen as their "reserves". The Assabaska Band in the central part of Lake of the Woods, on what is now known as Sabaskong Bay, had about ten of these reserves. The people lived in three main locations: Big Grassy River (35G) (Morson), Mink Portage (35J) and Sabaskong (35C). (Figure 1 is a map showing these locations).

The Ojibway concept of education has been best described in the famous speech of the Lac Seul Chief at Treaty negotiations. Lieutenant-Governor and Treaty Commissioner Alexander Morris records that the Chief spoke of:

"If you give what I ask, the time may come when I will ask you to lend me one of your daughters and one of your sons to live with us; and in return I will lend you one of my daughters and one of my sons for you to teach what is¹ good, and after they have learned, to teach us."

The federal government, in the official version of Treaty #3 printed in Ottawa, promised:

"And further, Her Majesty agrees to maintain schools for instruction in such reserves hereby made as to Her Government of Her Dominion of Canada may seem advisable whenever² the Indians of the reserves shall desire it."

As this clause does not appear in the elders' version of the Treaty #3, held by Chief and Elder Allan Paypom of Washagamis Bay, near Kenora, it is likely that the Ojibway and English views of education were never agreed upon at the treaty negotiations - but merely passed by each other in conversation, neither party having understood the other. It was the English version which ultimately became imposed.

¹ The Hon. Alexander Morris, P.C., The Treaties of Canada with the Indians (Toronto: Belfords, Clark & Co., Publishers, 1880) p.63

² Coles Canadiana Collection, Canada: Indian Treaties and Surrenders Vol. I, (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1891) p.305

The "plough and bible" approach to civilization led to the establishment of schools through missionaries and farming instructors, throughout the Treaty #3 area. On the Lake of the Woods, however, only one school was established by 1899 - the school at Sabaskong 35C, known to the federal government as the Assabaska School.

This school was built by Department of Indian Affairs funding, seemingly at the request of the Chiefs and headmen of the Lake of the Woods bands. From 1899-1907, missionaries from the Methodist and Presbyterian faiths operated this school, only to withdraw in frustration because

"the Indians were prejudiced against religion services and that the teacher (from the missionary society of the Methodist Church) was not likely to succeed with his classroom activities."³

The Baptists tried in 1908-1912 but they, too, gave up in disgust. The missionary teachers, Mr. and Mrs. Harber, had given up because

"they (Indians) were never long in one place and it seemed to be impossible to do anything along the line of evangelizing them."⁴

Indian Affairs inspectors in the first decade of the twentieth century reported that the school buildings were not in satisfactory

³ Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 10, Volume 6030, File 129-2-1 Microfilm 8148, Letter #280475, Toronto, the Methodist Church, to the Secretary, Department of Indian Affairs, Ottawa, August 30, 1905

⁴ P.A.C. Letter #417001, 31st July, 1912, Toronto, Baptist Home Mission Board of Ontario and Quebec to Mr. R. S. McKenzie, Indian Agent, Kenora, from Rev. W. E. Norton

condition and attendance was irregular, which placed the pupils

"far below the desired standard."⁵

The great difficulty in attracting qualified teachers into the wilderness and the lack of attendance at the schools led to the Department of Indian Affairs recommending as early as 1907 that boarding schools be utilized to keep the children in school.

"In my opinion, a lot of time and energy was wasted in trying to keep those (day) schools open and I favour the enlargement of the Boarding School work.."

- Inspector Semmens report, 1907⁶

It should be noted that the people of the Lake of the Woods seem to be quite properly following their version of education, which was to continue to teach their own children what was valuable to make a living and learn to be Anishnabe, and yet offer them the opportunity of gaining some knowledge of the non-Indian ways. The parents did this by dropping in on the school for a few days at a time and allowing their children to attend, then travelling on to their next destination where the children joined in the work and activities undertaken. The Department of Indian Affairs and missionaries would have fared better had they studied the Lac Seul Chief's speech.

⁵ Ibid. Letter "307395, March 28, 1907, Stonewall, Manitoba, Lake Winnipeg and Rat Portage Inspectorate, to Hon. D. Laird, Indian Commissioner, Winnipeg, from Mr. John Semmens, Inspector of Indian Agencies.

⁶ Ibid.

However, other events were to overtake these people. The Roman Catholic Church was quite busy since the early 1800's, proselytizing the Indian people of Lake of the Woods, for 200 years, seemingly to no avail. Father Aulneau, after whom the Aulneau peninsula where Sabaskong reserve 35C is located was named, served with LaVerendrye and his son at North West Angle in the late 18th century. The Oblate Fathers continued to be active in the area, and indeed, were present and likely influential at the Treaty signing. In 1896, they had established an industrial training school for Indians of Lake of the Woods, near the Rat Portage reserve, Kenora. Students who had attended the Catholic school (St. Anthony's) at Whitefish Bay were

"corralled and secured⁷ for the new Catholic school, St. Mary's."

The presence of the day school at Sabaskong made it possible for Assabaska parents to hold onto their children longer than most of the bands on Lake of the Woods. However, by 1923, the Indians had requested to tear down the school and use the lumber for housing; it was obvious the children were not in school attendance.

One elder at Sabaskong, Scoben or Jim Copenace, used to recall how he was the only student for many days at Sabaskong school 35C. Martha Tuesday, former Chief of Assabaska, reports that parents used to refuse to send their children because they objected to the

⁷ Term used by Elder Jim P. Kelly in a taped interview.

religious instruction. Mrs. Mary Kelly (Saga-ta-beek), of present-day Sabaskong, corroborates this statement and the documents.

Indeed, the archival documents state that the people of the 1890's were quite aware of the importance the federal government placed on this schooling type of education and even used it to forward their other interests. In 1899, the Indians refused to build a school in protest for lack of action by the government in stopping a timber trespass on their reserves by the Keewatin Lumber Company, from which the people earned no money.

By 1928, "the Indians at Sabaskong Bay" were requesting that a day school be established. Indian Affairs no longer agreed that it would be "advisable" (in the terms of the Treaty #3) and recommended the children be accommodated at the St. Mary's (Roman Catholic) and Cecilia Jeffrey (Presbyterian) Indian residential schools, at the outlying areas of Kenora. It seems, then, that this was the time that the children began to be forcibly removed from the reserve to gain "an education". In his memorandum of May 23, 1928, Mr. Russell Ferrier advises Mr. Paget that

"these Indians should be told that our experience with day schools in this locality is unsatisfactory"⁸

and the reasons given for the strong recommendation of sending

⁸ Ibid. Memorandum #129-2-1, May 23, 1928.



their children to the residential schools were as follows:

1. migratory habits of the Indians
2. impossible to evangelize them⁹
3. irregular attendance."

The shared experience of the present-day leaders of Indian communities across Canada who have attended residential schools is startling. From Nova Scotia to the Yukon, the stories are the same - of being forbidden to speak one's own native language, of being told time and again that your parents are heathens, of having presents and gifts of food from your parents confiscated to the staff dining tables, of having to work and farm more than learn, of having your head shaved or your ass bared if ever you ran away. The psychological scars of the people who survived the education of St. Mary's and Cecilia Jeffrey Schools are evident every day in the "street people" of Kenora, who prefer drunken stupor to facing a world hostile to their very existence.

Chief Peter Kelly of present-day Sabaskong recalls as a child being chased by a priest, dragged onto a school bus with other crying children, heading for Kenora, and subjected to hymns - no longer allowed to speak Ojibway. The devastation of being forcefully removed from your family is well documented in Chapter VI of this report when Sabaskong parents report on the "disgusting

⁹ Ibid.

and inhumane" treatment they received in residential schools, the intensity of which can only be summed up in the sadness of "I never did get to know my parents".

Yet, the parents of Sabaskong persisted as best they could in offering their children a formal education at home. In 1936, a highway was built between Kenora and Emo and Fort Frances. The Department of Indian Affairs began its policy of forced relocation of people living on the lake to the highway. If you didn't want to move, no housing, education or medical services would be available to you. Thus, a new settlement was born at the well-travelled reserve 35D, Otaso-Nigaming - Crow's Nest Portage - the present home of the Sabaskong - O-Ne-Ga-Ming community and schools.

During this 1940's period, another school began on the reserve, Sabaskong 35D, known as Harry Kelly's Hill. This school was run jointly by the Department of Indian Affairs and the Roman Catholic Church.

The present families at Sabaskong 35D reflect the varied history of formal education at Sabaskong. For the elders, Stewart Jack attended Cecilia Jeffrey School during its existence at Shoal Lake (1900-1928) and Tom Shebagegit attended Cecilia Jeffrey at

Kenora (1929-1976). The Madden family (Shawahn, Kotok, Machig and Waseh) grew up in the traditional way, without any formal education at all. The younger Shebagegits joined the other families of Kelly, Bob, Copenace and Indian in attending the St. Mary's Catholic residential school. For Band members over the age of 35, residential school was the most likely formal education experience. Those under 35 have had a combination of a few years of residential, perhaps partly day school (Grades 1-4-5) at Sabaskong, and some integrated schooling either at Father Moss in Sioux Narrows or at Kenora or Fort Frances High School. Most of the women who married into the Sabaskong Band from other Lake of the Woods bands followed a similar pattern.

In the 1950's, the school on the hill was eventually replaced by a two-story building with apartments for teacherages constructed by the Department of Indian Affairs. Fathers in the twenties age group point with pride to their days on the Sabaskong hockey team under their teacher's direction. This school was still being used by the Department of Indian Affairs for non-Catholic children to attend school on the reserve up until 1975, and the building is still being used, in a renovated state, by the O-Ne-Ga-Ming High School since 1977, and by the Sabaskong school system since 1975.

Integrated schooling became the departmental policy of the 1960's and joint school agreements were entered into with nearby non-Indian school boards. The Sabaskong Band joined with the Whitefish Bay, Northwest Angle #33 and #37 Bands in bussing their children to a supposedly-integrated school at Sioux Narrows, Ontario. For over thirty years, Sabaskong parents bussed their children on the 60-mile return trip to this Catholic school. In 1975, spurred by the recalcitrance of the Kenora District Separate School Board in dealing appropriately with any of their requests or complaints, the parents withdrew their children from the Father Moss School and demanded that a school again be established at Sabaskong.

It is clear that Sabaskong is one community which preferred to follow its own version of what education their own children required. When the Lake of the Woods Bands chose a central location for their children to learn some of the whiteman's ways, Sabaskong was chosen. When day schools became possible after the painful residential experience, parents chose to bring their children home. They tried the integrated schooling experience but found that the bussing interfered with their children's health and well-being and did nothing to integrate the societies of Indian and non-Indian when the student population was 98% Indian. This is a community of parents who care about education and about their children, who

have tried many options and who continually seek a valuable and worthy learning experience for their children.

CHAPTER IV

TRANSITION OF CONTROL - PARENTS TAKE-OVER

Most models in education tend to be too general or theoretical to enable any lay people studying the transition toward community control to actually apply it to their daily lives. It is the purpose of this paper to detail the reasons for parental and Band Council action toward local control, the actual steps taken and results. Only then can we begin to see a model which could be applied elsewhere.

During the 1960's, the thrust toward local government began to be developed across Canada. Sabaskong Ojibway Band, too, exerted its will to govern its own affairs by voting to separate as a distinct Band from Assabaska. In 1964, the two Bands, Sabaskong and Big Grassy were formed, thus completing the process that began when two settlements of the one Band grew in locations seventy miles apart. In the late 60's, this trend toward localized control grew with the formation of timber cutting co-operatives under the umbrella of the Indian-White Amik Co-operation, but with local Band members owning and operating the Sabaskong Co-op. Also by 1970, two Band members - Bob Kelly and Fred Kelly, Jr. - attended the first Band Administration course offered by Confederation College and Indian Affairs. Local administration and management was becoming a

reality.

With the population boom that came in the 1970's, parents of young children who were also better educated than ever before looked for employment opportunities. More attuned to the outside society from their days of boarding at high schools in town, the young parents considered the trend toward day care centres to be an answer to one of their obstacles to employment: babysitting for the youngster. In August 1972, the Band Council passed a resolution requesting the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services for funding of a day care centre. This Band Council Resolution followed months of research and a survey of the community by Band member Stanley Indian which documented the number of youngsters between the ages of two years and five years who would benefit from such an educational experience. In its rationale, one of the arguments used by the Council in negotiating for these funds was that the day care centre would help bridge the known age-grade retardation of Indian students. It was further expected that a day care centre would act as a head-start or a cross-cultural transition program for the children and better prepare them for the academic studies ahead.

"the importance of day care today cannot be underestimated. Good day care can help a child develop physically, socially, mentally and emotionally. It can provide a valuable service to parents as well, playing a special role for single-parent families or families living in crowded areas where the family income does not permit extra services and opportunities for enrichment."

¹ Sabaskong Ojibway Band, A Proposal for the Establishment of a Day Care Nursery, August 5, 1974, Prepared by Stanley Indian.

With this preparation for the day care in mind, the actions taken by parents four months later in withdrawing their children from the Father Moss Separate School, 30 miles to the north, seem to be a natural follow through of the direction the Band was heading in making its own decisions, developing its own institutions on the reserve.

Another indication of Sabaskong's interest in education was its involvement in forming the Ojibway Tribal Education Inc. (O.T.E.I.) with three other reserves (Rat Portage, Eagle, Wabigoon) in 1974. O.T.E.I. was originally established as a central co-ordinating body to deal with education in general, each Band setting its own priorities. O.T.E.I. was later to play an important role in the education endeavours at Sabaskong.

In 1972, when Fred Kelly, Sr. was Chief, he spearheaded the establishment of a committee of four Chiefs, from the Bands sending children to the Father Moss Roman Catholic Separate School at Sioux Narrows. The committee was made up of Chief Fred Kelly, Sr., who was chairman, Chief Andy White of Whitefish Bay, Chief Ron Sandy of Northwest Angle #33, and Chief Sam Copenace of Northwest Angle #37. This committee, nicknamed SWAN (acronym for four Bands involved), sought to establish the best education alternatives for present

and future needs of children attending Father Moss School. They delved into the issue of whether the physical facilities of this school could meet the needs of the four growing communities and whether the Department of Indian Affairs or the Bands should purchase it. In discussions with the Department of Indian Affairs and the Roman Catholic Separate School Board of Kenora, the Chiefs learned of the finances, equipment and facilities, state of repair, etc., and most importantly, considered the future projections of their student populations and costs required to make this off-reserve facility work. This information filtered through Band meetings and informal networks of communications throughout the reserves.

It was also well known to the graduates of Father Moss School that its elementary school system did not adequately prepare them for public high schools. In March 1974, the committee received the report by consultants Dr. A. W. Blue and Dr. D. A. Scott (both of the University of Saskatchewan, Faculty of Education) which reviewed the options open to them:

- "(1) remain within the tuition agreement structure,
- (2) partial Indian control of education,
- (3) complete Indian control of education"

The Chiefs rejected option 1 and preferred to look at a compromise:

² Blue-Scott Research Associates, Consultants Report to Chiefs' Education Committee Regarding Father Moss School, 1974, p.24.

"a core school, Father Moss, with Kindergarten to Grade 3 offered at satellite schools situated at Sabaskong and Whitefish Bay. This would require an upgrading of present facilities and the construction of a new school plant at Whitefish Bay." ³

Department of Indian Affairs Education staff, Michael Rehaluk and G. Mullin, advised the Chiefs that the Department had definitely bought 115 seats from the Kenora District Separate School Board,

"so far as throwing Father Moss out altogether, the answer would be no." ⁴

Further, they made it clear:

"we had made a commitment that we would be prepared to negotiate the purchase of Father Moss either now or at a later date." ⁵

Events in the next five years would have these gentlemen eating their words.

In the fall of 1974, Sabaskong Education/Social Counsellor, Norman Copenace, Jr., went ahead with his duties of counselling students and acting as a liaison with the parents and school. As the days went by, Mr. Copenace, Jr. found that the teachers and the school administrators were turning a deaf ear to his attempts to get to the bottom of disputes between students or with teachers. Parents would ask him to rectify a situation their child was involved in and he was met with basic lack of co-operation. As time went on, weeks to months, every effort at making some headway in the

³ Ibid. p.25

⁴ Ibid. p.25

⁵ Ibid. p.25

alleged school problems and improving attendance, students' attitude toward schooling, and co-operation at school, Mr. Copenace, Jr. found did not work. Finally, he spoke with parents of the community about the school issue and decided corrective measures had to be taken at once. As the one person in the community who daily met these problems, Mr. Copenace, Jr. knew that all the parents were of one mind. He went door to door and urged them to take united action with whatever goal they would have in mind. He only pleaded that action be taken because the children were not being helped by the present situation.

One November morning in 1974, the school bus arrived at 7:30 to pick up his usual straggling load of sleepy-eyed children. One or two students trickled in but after a few days, a solid boycott was formed.

The Separate School Board contacted the Department of Indian Affairs at the District Offices, Kenora and Fort Frances. A meeting was hurriedly arranged with the Sabaskong Band Council and its constituents, with the Board and the Department officials. The Council and the interested parents were adamant that their children were simply not getting the quality education nor the respectful treatment they deserved. The Roman Catholic Director of Education

defended the system and staff from these charges but no headway was made at this meeting. The District Superintendent of Education from the Department of Indian Affairs soon learned that this was a matter which could not be resolved in a few hours of meetings. The parents were together in demanding a new alternative and made a commitment to the betterment of education for their children. One Band member summed up this concurrent parent commitment thus:

"the education of our children must be our responsibility. Education is like love, we cannot delegate others to exercise it on our behalf. In fact, education is more than love, because with⁶ it we hope to preserve beliefs and values."

During the next week, the Band Council met with parents and other interested Band members, and Mr. Copenace, Jr. The direction chosen was the adoption of the National Indian Brotherhood position on Indian control of Indian education and amplified in the following:

"parents must have the right to choose the kind of education which their children will receive. This is more than a stand. We will bring about those conditions which will make it possible for parents to understand alternatives, to feel free to voice their opinions,⁷ and to make choices which they can effect."

It was decided that the Band would establish a school on the reserve which, for the first time, would be controlled and administered by the Band itself. This decision was facilitated by the fact of the

⁶ A message from John Peter Kelly, Grand Chief, Grand Council Treaty #3, taken from "A Long Wait at the Dawn of a New Era", printed in the N.W.O. Ojibway Education Conference (July 26-29, 1977) program booklet.

⁷ Grand Council Treaty #3, Creating Alternatives and Opportunities in Education for Treaty #3 Communities, Position Paper on Education, 1974.

existence of the Department of Indian Affairs day school and teacher for non-Catholic children already operating for Grades 1 to 4 on the reserve.

The Council immediately decided that the Regional Office of the Department of Indian Affairs, under the Acting Director of Education, Michael Rehaluk, as well as the District Superintendent of Education, Glenn Treflin, be involved and were brought into these preliminary discussions. It was decided that the day school run by the Department of Indian Affairs for non-Catholic children (Kindergarden to Grade 3) be expanded immediately and O.T.E.I. staff, John P. Kelly and Eloise Soderfelt, filled in as teachers until the Christmas holidays, with the older children, Grades 4 to 8. As discussions progressed between the Band and the Department of Indian Affairs, Department officials became impressed by the determination of the Band Council and parents to make

"...a commitment to provide a better education in the basics for our children - yet with an emphasis on our culture, history and language."⁸

Recognizing that they could not change these people's minds, Indian Affairs moved on every request made by the Band. Indian Affairs allocated funds for one teacher to be hired by the Band for January to June 1975; funding was made available to the Band for major

⁸ Sabaskong Ojibway Band, Sabaskong Bay Proposal Presented to the Ministry of Culture and Recreation (Ontario), 1976-77, p.2

renovations to the old two-story day school building and to purchase necessary furniture, equipment and supplies. Fortunately, a house vacated by a Band member was available and the second teacher with a small child moved in. Oil heat, lack of running water and other amenities necessitated the teacher to live in one room of that house until spring. This was an early indication to the Band that, in order to hire and have them stay, the teachers needed to be flexible, willing to adapt and be open-minded.

The establishment of Sabaskong Community School under the control of the Sabaskong Ojibway Band was beginning to come to a reality in December of 1974. In its various presentations to the Department of Indian Affairs, the Council determined to have complete control of its total educational system.

It seems crucial to point out three aspects of the model which is sought in this study: determination, commitment to a decision by the community and the Council, and persistence in dealing with the government at all levels.

By April 1975, the Band Council and staff, with the assistance of O.T.E.I., had developed a comprehensive Proposal for a Cultural, Educational and Athletic Centre to serve the People of Sabaskong and Northwestern Ontario. This paper documented the needs for new

facilities on a large scale to encourage cultural development in recording of traditions, place for traditional activities such as pow-wows, moccasin games, elders meetings, crafts house, museum, Band offices, gymnasium and indoor arena. An ambitious program, it set out the long-term plan of the Band.

On April 14, 1975, the Band Council, led by Chief Stan Indian, once again met with Mr. Rehaluk, Director of Education, Department of Indian Affairs, Toronto, and advised him that Sabaskong would no longer tolerate a second class system of education. Stating that "education holds the solutions...is the escalator that moves people from lower-class poverty and misery to human dignity and comfort",⁹ Chief Indian outlined the basis for "Control of Education by the Sabaskong Band".

This paper explained the establishment of a Sabaskong Education Authority which would operate as an advisory board to the Band Council. Two members would be elected by community members at a general Band meeting; its chairman would be a member of the Band Council (elected every two years). The Band Council, the recognized "decision-making body in matters of local government", would be responsible for all aspects of the development and operation of a quality education program. A Council member would act as Education Co-ordinator and a

⁹ Letter to Mr. M. Rehaluk, Director of Education, Department of Indian Affairs, Toronto, from Chief Stanley Indian, April 14, 1975.

Chief Education Officer would be hired to carry out the day-to-day tasks of administration and to "develop Band members' expertise to administer their own education affairs". From the rigid pace of change to the new shift of emphasis to a slower and more developmental approach to change, had a serious effect on the core committee of parents.

The original core committee, which met throughout the first year and helped to formulate plans, gracefully bowed out. The members felt that the ideas and the general tone of the school plans stabilized. It was time to step aside and the parents were to devote more time and efforts to their own responsibilities.

The Sabaskong proposed budget stated that funding would be "in the form of a 100% grant from the Department of Indian Affairs and will be based on an annual submission from the Band".¹⁰ (See Appendix G). Accordingly, the first budget, in excess of \$100,000 for the operating year 1075-76 covered administration, instruction, adult education, as well as honoraria and stipend for Sabaskong Education Authority and School Committee members. Included in the budget was salaries for Chief Education Officer, Social/Education Counsellor, two teachers and two teacher-aides.

This 1975-76 first yearly budget also served notice to the Department that costs for "non-resident high school students will be borne directly by DIAND for the time being. The Sabaskong Band Council will periodically re-examine high school education to determine whether it should develop programs at this level as well".

¹⁰ Plans for the Future, Education Program, 1976-77.

It appeared that 'all was well' at this point in time and that complete control of education by the Sabaskong Band was finally come. But 'all was not well' as the approved funding fell way short of the targetted budget. There were no funds available for a Chief Education Officer, although by October 1975 funding was available for an Education Administrator and a Band member, Anthony Copenace, was hired to handle finances and day-to-day administration problems. School policy issues were hammered out among school authorities, social counsellor and teachers, with parents invited to participate at meetings.

Also, in the previous mentioned budget, funds aimed at paying minimal honoraria and stipend to Sabaskong Education Authority members were not approved, although this was an acceptable provincial school board compensation rate for members and an extremely reasonable rate. An indication on the budget was to compensate members for ten meetings a year at \$25.00 per participant but even though the Department of Indian Affairs did not allow this portion of the budget, Sabaskong Education Authority went ahead with its meetings and the arduous work ahead.

The budget cuts had crippling effects and may have had devastating results had it not been for the persistence and the determination

of Sabaskong Band Council to fulfill its mandate and commitment. Despite the seemingly set back, the Band Council reassured the parents and students that

"we are well on our way toward establishing the kind of education program for our students which was only a dream in November 1974."¹¹

After discussing this proposal and budget with the Director of Education for the Department of Indian Affairs, Chief Indian wrote to the Regional Director, H. B. Rodine on April 17, 1975, in more forceful terms. Chief Indian used the telling phrase "we intend" affirmatively and continually to indicate the seriousness of Sabaskong's planning for education:

"We intend to have complete control of our schools in Sabaskong. How this will be achieved by the Band is spelled out in the attached presentation." "... and we are satisfied that we will take the necessary and formal procedures."¹²

"We intend to have three qualified teachers, one being a principal...for approximately 60 (K-8) students. It is also our intention to hire a native teacher-aide." "We know that if our children are to benefit academically and individually, the hiring of three teachers, plus the teacher-aide is essential and must be made possible by your Department."¹³

"We intend to evaluate the performance of the teachers at Sabaskong now."¹⁴

¹¹ Ibid. p.5

¹² Sabaskong Ojibway Band, Letter, April 17, 1975, to H. B. Rodine, Regional Director for Ontario, Department of Indian Affairs, from Chief Stanley Indian. p.1

¹³ Ibid. p.1

¹⁴ Ibid. p.2

"We intend to play a major role in designing school programs that will be beneficial to our people and meet the satisfaction of the Ontario Ministry of Education. We have our local resource people ...to make this a reality." 15

Chief Indian stated that the Band recognized their proposal would go through several layers of hierarchy and bureaucracy before any reasonable commitment was made. But the Band Council continued to push. In these meetings, both the Regional Director General and the Director of Education committed the Department to building a new elementary school by 1978. (The school was officially opened December 15, 1978 and students began attending in January 1979).

On May 7, 1975, Chief Indian presented Sabaskong's proposal for a high school to be operated on the reserve, fashioned after the model of the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre. It was intended that one teacher-tutor would work with 15 to 20 students on correspondence courses from the Ontario Ministry of Education. In this way, students who refused to attend Fort Frances High School while boarding in town and adults who had dropped out of school could resume their highschool education.

"The program will also serve as an educational 'drop-in centre' for people who at one time left school and now wish to return." 16

The budget of approximately \$20,000 was refused by the Regional Office, Department of Indian Affairs, but the seed for future action

15 Ibid. p.2

16 Sabaskong Ojibway Band, A Proposal for a High School Program to be Operated on the Sabaskong Reserve, presented to Department of Indian Affairs, Toronto, May 7, 1975, p.1

had been planted.

On the same day, Sabaskong presented a proposal for \$ 15,000 for an action research project "to develop local curriculum materials for use by the people involved in the Sabaskong Band's educational program" ¹⁷ whereby 4 Band members would collect and assemble Indian curriculum materials for the Sabaskong school program. The Indian Affairs agreed to fund this project and also approved to subsidize a classroom consultant, Mrs. Louisa Shebagegit, to work with the teachers in bringing the Ojibway language and culture into the classroom. Mrs. Shebagegit taught children from grades 1 to 8 on beadwork, leatherwork, traditional/tribal dancing, making pow-wow costumes, facts on trapping, skinning and tanning hides, and many other aspects of the traditional life, as well as drilling students on Ojibway vocabulary.

In September 1975, the Band Council presented Our Case for a Teachers' Aide to assist children in gaining facility in English and assist Ojibway-speaking parents in understanding the local system, to "reduce the load of our overworked but dedicated people" ¹⁸ and assist teachers in remedial work as immense amounts of time are required of teachers in making their community school work, and to assist in the development of local curriculum materials. The

¹⁷ A Proposal for an Action Research Project for the Creation of Curriculum Materials, presented to the Department of Indian Affairs, May 7, 1975, p. 1.

¹⁸ Sabaskong Ojibway Band, a letter dated September 30, 1975, to the Department of Indian Affairs, re: Our Case for a Teachers' Aide.

Department of Indian Affairs agreed and continued to fund this teachers' aide program for the following three years until 1978 when the teachers' aide refused to attend a second phase of Department of Indian Affairs-sponsored training courses.

A review of the 1975-76 program was undertaken and presented to the Department of Indian Affairs in support of the 1976-77 proposed budget requesting for approximately \$160,000. The review outlined some of the actions taken and problems encountered in the first few months of "local control". Staffing was cited as the main problem of the school. The Band Council had requested O.T.E.I. to evaluate the teachers for the first six months of operation, but the principal, on salary to Indian Affairs, balked at this and refused to allow parents to attend all sessions on administrative matters with the education/social counsellor, education administrator and others connected with the school. This lack of co-operation with the spirit of community control led to the Band Council asking this principal to leave. The principal refused and repercussions from this action led to the other two staff leaving. A complete change-over of staff occurred for the fall of 1975. In October 1975, the Band Council hired their first Education Administrator. The Administrator was given the duties of handling financial and policy matters, previously handled by

the Band Administrator along with his other duties. The Band felt confident in reporting "the Sabaskong School Program of Local Control has overcome some serious obstacles to establish a solid administration carrying out a good education program with an enriched cultural curriculum. We have overcome staff deficiencies, community dissension and resignations to establish a workable school program...we are well on our way toward establishing the kind of education programs for our students which was only a dream in November 1974."

Sabaskong stated its wish to administer the non-resident high school program because of the difficulties students encountered in dealing with district offices.

"We are willing to take on this responsibility as outlined in DIAND circulars for the moment until our program plans for this age group expands into a specific program necessitating changes in this system." 19

Again, the Band Council was leaving room for future programs to be developed as part of the long-term educational goal.

The Band Council realized that they could be criticized for merely administering Department of Indian Affairs program. As one Band member puts it: if we are only paying our own teachers and running a regular school system on the reserve, then what's the point?. It is indicative of the kind of leadership at Sabaskong

19 A Proposal for a High School Program to be Operated on the Sabaskong Reserve, Presented to Department of Indian Affairs, May 7, 1975, p.2.

that this type of comment was taken as reason for a reaffirmation of the goals of the school, rather than merely giving up in frustration. The Band Council announced

"we are concentrating efforts for the 1976-77 year²⁰ on cultural development and people involvement."

In order to follow up on these reaffirmed goals, the Council set out to hire an Ojibway teacher and was fortunate in finding a talented graduate of the University of Brandon Indian Teacher Education Program, Dorothy Rundle. Ms. Rundle was to stay from 1976 through 1980, teaching Grades 1-2 for two years and Grades 3-5 for two years, inspiring students to be proud of their native heritage, to understand the values of Ojibway culture, to respect their community, their families and friends and themselves. Ms. Rundle's approach in using Ojibway syllabics to assist the children in learning English phonics and from there, learning to read, had the positive impact of every one of her students learning to read at an average or above-average ability and having high word-attack skills in higher grade levels.

The teachers' aide remained in the higher grade levels 6 to 8 to assist the non-Indian teacher in bringing Indian content into the classroom as well as assisting with remedial work. All the teachers actively sought out the advice and voluntary help of parents

²⁰ Plans for the Future, Education Program, 1976-77, p.6.

in planning hikes and field trips which would incorporate traditional activities of the season. The Grades 3 to 5 joined parents in roasting, dehusking and winnowing the wild rice harvested in the early fall-late summer. Teachers became active in community life, attending Band meetings, helping to plan community events such as the annual Christmas party, but playing a supportive background role, not 'taking over' as had been the case of many non-Indians on Indian reserves.

The involvement of the teachers in community life has been encouraged by Band members in a number of ways. Most importantly, as Council negotiated for funds for teacherages, it was decided that they would be built interspersed throughout the community instead of building a 'professional enclave' which would segregate the staff from the residents. Secondly, Band members invited teachers to their homes and dropped in for visits. The teachers responded with invitations and joint jaunts to town, joining curling teams.

It should be noted that this type of behaviour on the part of teachers is discouraged by the Department for all its employees; teaching staff are told to avoid Band meetings, not to interfere in Band business. At Sabaskong, teachers' opinions and assistance

may be solicited on any number of projects. There is no perceived obligation, either, to accept this advice.

During the winter of 1976-77, the difficulties Sabaskong secondary school students encountered in the Fort Frances Board system became aggravated by the Board's new attendance policy. Instead of encouraging attendance, the Board adopted a punitive policy so that any student missing so many consecutive classes was automatically suspended and must apply for readmittance. The Band Council invited Board members to Sabaskong to discuss this policy. Two Board members arrived and discussed a number of issues such as reasons for Indian teens refusing to take gym and physical education classes; attendance policy; and the need for Ojibway language and history classes. When parents and Councillors, attending this meeting, realized the adamance of the Board's stand, a better appreciation of the students' problems was gained.

Social Counsellor Ron Seymour continued his attempts to counsel students, boarding parents, teachers, and work with the high school administrators but day to day difficulties surmounted. Students were being expelled under this new policy and refusing to return to school. Seymour began asking around the community if there wasn't a better way. After all, Indian monies were going to the Fort

Frances Board and yet the students were not receiving an education. A Professional Development Day was organized at Sabaskong with all high school students being given the day off school to attend the meeting at the reserve hall. Every parent of every student also attended. The Fort Frances-Rainy River Board's Director of Education and members of the Board attended along with the Assistant Superintendent of Education for District Department of Indian Affairs. The assembly broke into four small discussion groups with a cross-section of students, parents, Band staff and Fort Frances representatives involved. Together the groups reviewed every possible feasible alternative: bussing 140 miles a day return trip to school while living at home (non-Indian students from nearby Nestor Falls make this trip - the longest school bus route in Ontario); boarding in town and abiding by new attendance policy; establishing a group home for students from Sabaskong and attending Fort Frances schools; establishing a residence for all Fort Frances reserves and developing a new Indian free school; establishing a high school at Sabaskong. The pros and cons of each choice were considered and a decision reached by the end of the day: a secondary school must be established by September 1977 at Sabaskong. The guests departed and that evening a general Band meeting was held. The Band Council listened to a brief from the students and the report of Education/Social Counsellor Seymour on what transpired that day.

Although there were questions about the direction that was spelled out during the day, the assembly agreed and the Band Council adopted by resolution that a high school would be added to the Sabaskong school system by fall.

Education Administrator and Band Manager Bob Kelly worked on a budget which Chief Peter Kelly presented to the Regional Office of the Department of Indian Affairs. The District Education staff considered the community too small for such a step, but in view of the problems they were encountering with the new Fort Frances Board policies and children from other reserves, they had no choice but to accept this alternative to dropping out. Funds were allocated, although, as usual, not to the extent required, and an advertisement placed in the Toronto, Thunder Bay and Winnipeg newspapers. Over 300 applications were received and over 100 were interviewed for the four teacher positions the Band considered necessary for the range of options the students requested. Education/Social Counsellor Ron Seymour had first surveyed all students for the grade level and subjects requested; a list was drawn up and became part of the advertisement so that prospective teachers would know what subjects would be offered for grade levels 9 to 11 the first year, 9 to 12 the second.

Four teachers were hired at the end of May to begin work in

September and were invited to a three-day orientation at Sabaskong in June. The object of the meeting was to ensure that the teachers were well aware of the location and size of the community, the small number of students, and the availability and lack of facilities. All four were fired up, excited and were made to feel at home by joining parents for tea in some homes, talking with the teens, joining Band staff and immediately taking part in a baseball game. The orientation consisted of a history of the Treaty #3 area, the basis of reserves, Department of Indian Affairs administration, the meaning of community control and the outlining of the only two directions they would be given: implement a secondary school program which would gain Province of Ontario accreditation as a private school, but include the Ojibway culture and people in all aspects. The teachers set to work ordering materials, talking to the students, designing a timetable, and thinking of ways to involve the community. These four teachers managed to offer courses to 33 students at 9 to 11 grade levels on level 4 to 5. Although one teacher resigned at Christmas, the staff and community were relieved and satisfied that this person who could not feel comfortable in an isolated, rural atmosphere left. A suitable candidate was found as replacement by the time January term commenced. Since the summer of 1975, when all elementary staff had to be replaced, this was the first instance of a teacher not working out. Such a record of

stability in teaching staff has yet to be achieved in the whole Treaty #3 area by the Department of Indian Affairs!

CHAPTER V
FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY

The interview schedule was designed to elicit comments and opinions from the people most affected by community control of the Sabaskong school system: the students (secondary), the parents, and the teachers.

It was assumed in the questionnaire/interview schedule that community control of education at Sabaskong had worked but that modifications and improvements needed to be made along the lines the community wanted. It was presumed that the Band Manager/Education Administrator had far too much work for one person, albeit that the Social Counsellor shared some of these tasks. According to the April 1972 study this researcher had undertaken with Dr. A. W. Blue and Dr. D. A. Scott for Grand Council Treaty #3, entitled Educational Expectations, a basic tenet to be followed was that "Indian identity is the most important factor affecting the success of the Indian child".¹ Thus, questions were asked of the parents how their own educational experience had affected their education, what changes they might make in the school, and of the students and teachers, how Indian Studies was involved in the curriculum. Finally, it was assumed that students learn responsibility at home; the interest and concern shown by parents

¹ Indian identity was defined as "knowledge and understanding of Indian history, culture and language", especially as passed on through the family. "Study on Educational Expectations", April 1972, for Grand Council Treaty #3, by John P. Kelly, in conjunction with Dr. W. A. Blue and Dr. D. A. Scott.

about their children's schooling directly affects the students' achievement.

I. Methodology

Each group involved a different approach. The high school students were addressed by this researcher in an assembly when the research project was explained and the questionnaire discussed question by question. Then the students answered the questionnaire on their own and handed them in, usually taking a minimum of 20 minutes to do this. Fourteen secondary students, ages 15 to 19 in Grades 9 to 12 answered these questions. Out of a student body of 33, there were several absentees on this day.

The parents were interviewed in depth and individually by this researcher. Seven parents who are known to be involved in the community and with their children were interviewed, ranging in age from mid-20s to mid-40s, with children in all parts of the school system at Sabaskong from day care to high school. Answers were probed by this researcher to ensure that their opinions were fully understood and recorded.

The researcher met each teacher individually to explain the research program and then asked them to fill out the questionnaire at their leisure. Nine of 11 teachers did so. They ranged in ex-

perience from one to four years. The eight non-Indian teachers gained all their experience with Indian people at Sabaskong, although one had had an introductory course in Indian studies.

An advisory committee of parents was formed by this researcher to include parents of known interest in the school: Mrs. Delores Kelly, mother of three, former Assistant Director of the Day Care Centre and wife of the Education Administrator; Mr. John Jim Kelly, father of two, commercial fisherman and Band Councillor for several years; Mr. Larry Indian, father of two, Special Constable on the reserve and former Band Councillor. Together they reviewed the questionnaires and approved them.

Both Mrs. Kelly and Mr. Indian had wished to assist in interviewing parents this summer but due to delay in receiving budget approval and a series of personal tragedies, this was not possible. Thus, all interviewing fell to this researcher. The interview schedules are appended.

II. The Students' Perspective

In this section the findings of the student survey are presented. These findings include the students' perceptions of

education, of themselves, and of the roles the parents, teachers, and other community adults should play in the school.

1. Educational Goals

If given an opportunity to transfer out of this school, would you do it? If yes, where would you like to go? Seven replied they would stay at Sabaskong, while four were not sure. Of the four who thought they would transfer, they thought Fort Frances, the United States, or Winnipeg would be the place, preferring a larger centre to "gain more experience", as one put it. Perhaps the most telling comment was added by one student at the end of the questionnaire: "If I had not come to this school, 10 to 1 I would have quit school. This school has changed my mind of ever quitting". This comment was again emphasized when students were asked: *Will you continue on in school once you have completed the school program here at the reserve?* Thirteen respondents of the 14 said yes. The one who said no indicated he/she would be reluctant to leave friends and family - "I would have no one to talk to".

2. Community Control and The Atmosphere

Compared to other schools, how is your school different?

All but one respondent reported favourable comments. The one felt that students were behind in work compared to city or town schools. Three reported that they received more attention from the teachers

and could get to know them, one reported that the students seem to enjoy being in a school "run by our own people", and two indicated that the atmosphere is such that "everybody knows each other" and one said there are "no fights".

In your opinion, do the teachers feel comfortable under community autonomy? If no, why not? Thirteen students replied in the affirmative while one didn't know.

Do you feel that your teachers are more sensitive now than before the community take-over of schools? If no, why not? If yes, explain. Nine students said yes, "we're treated like people", while one said no, two didn't know and two didn't answer.

Do you feel free to talk to your teacher? Ten students said definitely yes, while three said sometimes, "yes, except for personal problems", "sometimes", "only in class" and one said no.

How do your parents feel about the school on the reserve now? Ten students reported they liked it (including one who said "at first they didn't think so, but now they do") while two didn't know and two didn't answer.

3. Curriculum and Indian Studies

Is "Indian Studies" program used in the classrooms? Twelve students thought Indian Studies should be part of their course at least sometimes, while two thought it should not be part of the

curriculum, only if it would help them deal with the world outside. Nine reported Indian Studies was part of the curriculum today while one said "rarely" and four said no. When asked why Indian Studies should be part of the program, seven students said it was important to learn about the "old culture" and "pass it on" to their children or that it was "important to keep our culture". One student added that "younger people need to keep ahold of our culture". One said "only if it would help us in the future, for example, in careers". While two gave no answer, two others said Indian Studies should include topics such as the Indian Act, Indian rights and Indian law "not just about pow-wows" because the students felt that they didn't know enough about it.

What is the one thing you like about the school now? Six students for the most part appreciated being able to stay at home with their families and not having to ride a bus to school, while four enjoyed the fact that "everyone knows each other", that people "are working and accomplishing things together". One liked the new programs offered, while another said he/she liked the school being operated "by our own people, not by outsiders".

Do you feel that you have the freedom that you wish to have in this school? Thirteen students said yes, while one said "yes, sometimes too much". With regard to discipline, ten students thought it was fine while three thought more was needed and one didn't answer.

What is the one thing you dislike about the school now? Three students said all was fine while two wanted more students from other places to join their school. Two felt they were behind in work compared to other schools, five wanted more facilities such as technical shops. One cited the problem of lack of attendance and another, the lack of discipline.

If you had the opportunity to change the school in any way, what would you change? The students wanted more Indian teachers and Indian Studies, more equipment and facilities. It should be noted only eight students made recommendations while six did not. Two wanted the parents to be more involved, two wanted a new high school building, and two recommended more regular attendance, perhaps by making changes to the timetable. One wanted more attempts to get the students, parents and teachers "to work together" while another made the practical suggestion of having "meetings at the beginning, middle and end of the school year to see if anything needs to be changed".

III. The Parents' Perspective

The questionnaire began with a number of items which attempted to find out the nature and extent of the parents' involvement in the reserve schools their children were attending. The answers

to these questions are summarized in Tables 1 to 5 at the end of this section.

1. Parents' Involvement

Are you satisfied with the present situation regarding the take-over of the schools? The parents themselves felt satisfied or quite satisfied with the school system. Their recommendations for improving the system included "more parental involvement", "school committee or education authority to help the administrator", "training courses for people to form a school committee", and "better supervision of facilities". All seven reported they attended school meetings whenever they were held but most expressed the wish that Band meetings discussed education more often and that a school board of some sort be established.

How often do you visit the classrooms during the school year? Two parents said "quite often, like once a week", five said two to four times a year when special events were planned or their child asked them or just to see what was happening, while one said "never, as long as my children are doing OK".

In your opinion, does the school encourage an "open door" policy for the parents? If no, why not? The parents thought that the teachers had an "open-door" policy, although one didn't know and one didn't answer.

What is the attitude, in your opinion, of the parents toward the school? Of the parents in the community, those interviewed thought that 70 to 80% generally had a favourable attitude toward the school, although they said some didn't care.

2. Innovative Curriculum and Program

The parents thought that Indian Studies should be a major part of the curriculum and native teachers hired whenever possible. One father stated that "community people should pinch-hit whenever teachers are away" in taking the class out on the trapline or some other cultural experience, teaching traditional skills, instead of calling in someone from the outside who would only babysit.

What is the one thing you like about the school that your children attend now? Parents reported that they liked the fact their children didn't have to travel by bus to school and could stay at home. One said he/she appreciated the fact the school "is here at the reserve and I can see if things are satisfactory or do something about it". This would relate to the student's comment that parents appreciated the O-Ne-Ga-Ming school: "They feel secure because they know you're in school, but if you're in town, they wouldn't know if you're skipping school or not". Two parents appreciated the teachers being "more sensitive and community-oriented" and that they "seem to be a bit more understanding and

loving for our kids. This is a far cry from the teachers when I went to school". One liked the teachers staying in the community while another liked the field trips and sports activities, "rather than just academics". In sum, they generally agreed with the parent who said "My children are content...and like the native language course" (elementary school).

3. Parental Involvement Concerning School Matters

What do you think are the most crucial problems affecting the children attending the school here at the reserve? The parents saw the crucial problems at Sabaskong as being primarily the same for all of Canada: the lack of native teachers, native curriculum and good facilities. They also agreed that all parents should be more involved in their children's education and show more concern.

For Sabaskong schools, two parents thought parents should be more involved in setting curfews, two felt that parents should ensure that their children get enough sleep, proper food and discipline, and two felt parents should encourage their children to attend school. But they also reported that some parents didn't understand the school system and didn't know how to get involved. Vandalism was a problem cited by one father but he thought this could be overcome by more concern shown by parents and more supervision by staff. Parents objected to some of the teachers deciding

on when holidays should be and taking a long weekend perhaps too often. Two parents thought the teachers must be worried about job security and wished the teachers would report on the meetings they attend, even inviting parents to join them at these professional meetings. Other comments indicated that these parents had an awareness of the inner workings of the school: "there is very little discipline and even if there is the parents may just jump to conclusions and side with the kids sometimes...there should be protection for the teachers" and "there are some kids who get promoted because of age and not because of achievement and when they get to go to another school they just can't cope with the work - to me this has serious implications for the rest of the kids". Two parents were concerned that the lack of attendance of some children was holding back the progress of others.

Are you satisfied with the present situation regarding the community take-over of the schools? If no, what changes might you want to see made? The parents thought the basic improvements which needed to be made was to establish a school board or committee which would hold regular education meetings, "set policies and enforce them" and "more parent-teacher meetings". Parents who are not involved should be shown how and why. There needed to be courses on nutrition, health and sex education, for example, for

all ages so that the school would be a real community school. One parent wanted the "curriculum to be on a par with the town's". One parent recommended courses and "professional help" regarding community control: "We are trying to do our own thing here, which is good, but we need help (such as in-service training for parents to be board members and "everyone in Sabaskong should know the goals and objectives of the school"). All parents echoed the one who said: "The reserve school must keep going - they must do everything to keep it operating".

4. Attitude Toward School

When asked about the attitude of their children towards school, parents generally reported that 90% of the students had a positive attitude "although some take advantage of local control", presumably referring to absenteeism. Parents described their children as "content", "responsive" to the school set-up.

5. The Future

In commenting on the future, parents said the Band should plan for years ahead for facilities, curriculum, teachers for the school. Parents need to show more responsibility, concern and involvement in the school and again recommended parent-teacher meetings and other committees, perhaps on a clan-family basis, "to motivate the whole

community to get involved". One parent recommended more organized sports and helping children with their goals as early as possible. Generally, though, parents were in consensus that: "We've gone a long ways since we've taken over from the government, but we also have a long way to go".

IV. The Staff Perspective

The data collected for this section came from the sources: taped interviews of teachers done in June 1979 and the respondents' written answers to the questionnaire exactly a year later (June 1980).

1. Community Control and the Climate

Do you encourage an "open-door" policy to parents of your students? The teachers all stated that they had an 'open-door' policy and welcomed parents into their classrooms, from day care to Grade 12, but they reported that very few parents did this and not very often.

Do you feel that the parents ought to become more involved in the school affairs? All teachers said definitely yes.

Do you feel that the parents have become increasingly interested in the education of their children? Two teachers said there was no evidence of this, while seven said yes, although some attributed this to their becoming more familiar with the people and getting to know parents better. As one teacher said: "although parents

don't visit the school much, they do talk to the teachers at social events...the parents are learning more about their children in terms of their children's abilities and potential future, now that the entire school program is here at Sabaskong...the people of Sabaskong have a sense that they control their school program...". Another said: "they (parents) know me better personally and have fewer reservations about discussing the educational needs of their children". The day care supervisor found that "parents are interested, even the fathers...take note of what is happening at day care, something I don't find to be true off reserve...". One teacher said that the parents of those children who "aren't encouraged to get up on time and attend regularly...don't seem to know what their children are being taught or how they're taught".

2. The School and Ojibway Culture

What problems does the teacher face in the school under the local control? The teachers cited their problems as being balanced with the excellent community relations they enjoy. One said he/she encountered "not many problems, in fact, (local autonomy) makes teaching in a small community like Sabaskong a lot easier". Others reported that "local control has meant only advantages...getting to know our administrators on a personal as well as a professional basis...the working relationship is excellent, interaction is im-

mediate...". Despite the fact most found "no major problems.. it's really nice to know the parents so well and be able to talk to them so often", some teachers longed for more direction and some feedback, positive or negative. One was saddened that "the teacher is seen as an expert and left to his own devices". Another wished for a set policy on what should be taught and wished more direction on curriculum. It seems that this is directly related to the two directives given to all teachers at Sabaskong: follow the Ontario curriculum guides for accreditation but include Ojibway culture and language in all aspects of the curriculum.

Is "Indian Studies" program offered in your school? Do you yourself offer this program in your classroom? The teachers reported that they did or tried to but felt that they had insufficient background to do this well. One teacher reported that in biology "if we are studying tress, for example, we learn the Ojibway as well as the English names for them...and the ways in which they were used in the old days...". The day care supervisor reported that "native staff contribute language and cultural ideas", with the "aim of the program for the children to get to know themselves and their relationship to the land". However, despite these efforts to incorporate Indian themes, language, attitudes, without "good Indian teachers", the non-Indian teachers felt at a loss. The day care with three native staff and the elementary school with one Indian language/

culture teacher felt better able to adapt. (Indeed for the 1979/80 school year, the Grades 1 to 2, 3 to 5 classes both had native teachers). However, the high school lacked any such professional native assistance. They did have one elder, who visited the classes on occasion and despite ill health, the elder, Stewart Jack, led the students and teachers on a hike to the old reserve, explaining history and culture along the way.

Do you feel that the present educational system at Sabaskong benefits the children? Eight teachers said yes, while one said it depends on the home situation, which for a few was not good. The reasons for this beneficial effect centred on the fact that the Sabaskong school system allows the teachers to give more individualized attention which creates a greater sense of self-worth in the child. One reported "we can deal with problems sooner". They agreed with the teacher who said: "Sabaskong children need their own educational system. It protects a self-worth that could easily be destroyed elsewhere. This way the children aren't lost in the shuffle of a larger centre."

3. The Child and His Image

The teachers reported their biggest problem being a lack of self-worth on the part of some students, a sense of purposelessness. One elementary school teacher reported "some children seem

to lack a value of themselves and of others. Therefore frustration and aggression arise frequently. They find it hard to cope with disapproval or disappointment". Another teacher thought the children were "caught between two worlds...and the world is changing with new things to learn...it may be difficult for the students to see how they fit into this larger, rapidly changing society".

Basically, the secondary school teachers thought a "lack of future goals, in terms of education and a career" would be a major problem.

A corollary of this problem was observed by one teacher to be "a lack of acceptance of students who do succeed". Other comments included the need for a curfew, the need for counselling in lower grades, and a recommendation that "Indian children should be taught at home".

4. Parental Involvement

If given the opportunity, what would you like to change (improve)? Three teachers wanted greater parental involvement, while two urged more good native teachers. One wanted more students from other reserves so that the secondary school would have student of 40-50 instead of 33. Another wanted to improve the students' self-image through more Indian role models in varied careers. One asked for more workshops on the cultural aspect of the program and more direction from the community: "Do the people of Sabaskong want their children to learn how to fit into the larger Canadian

society? Do they want their children to learn the Ojibway language and the old ways, too?" Two wanted contracts to ensure some job security and keep teachers on the job until the end of the school year. The teachers attempted to develop a "more relevant curriculum" but wished to have help and more materials and 'hands-on' equipment. Two wanted the native language to be a special course for all grade levels, while one wanted better facilities in order to offer more technical courses.

The tables, at the end of the section, convey the teachers' interview and views regarding the present set-up (Tables 6-11)

V. Analysis

This section is separated from the description of results because some analysis of these responses from students, parents and teachers seems to be required.

When students were asked if they would continue school, as stated above, 13 of the 14 said yes. Regarding their future plans, three wanted to be teachers, two nurses, four go on to unknown careers through college or university, one an electrician, one a Band Administrator, and three to "work on the reserve", probably continuing seasonal work as their parents. These responses seem to

indicate that the teachers have a positive suggestion in recommending more Indian role models for their students, "people from the reserve and other reserves...to tell our students how to lead a successful life". Ironically, the students do not think that they are as "purposeless" as some of the teachers report. They all have (except one) post-secondary aspirations and some have professional careers in mind (all of which have direct role models in the Indian communities nearby).

The parents did not, either, report a lack of sense of direction of their children. Rather they saw this community-controlled school as being a "far cry" better than the residential school systems they survived. When asked why they discontinued schooling, parents gave reasons like "I had been away from my parents too long and felt it was time for me to stay home with my folks" or "at the time we were encouraged to go to Grade 8 and then we stopped to stay home and help our parents", or "the Oblates wouldn't let me go any further".

Without exception, the parents found school to be a horrifying experience, citing the "severe discipline - we were hit on the head for speaking our own language", "being away from home too long a time", "too much religion", "too many restrictions", and "not having the freedom of hunting and fishing" as the main problem. The exp-

erience of one father gives one an idea of how important community control of the school is to him: "Boarding in a residential school ...I did not get to see my parents like the other kids. I never did get to know my parents". About the only likeable thing reported about these parents' own school experience was the sports!

As to the effect this schooling had on the parents' Indian identity, those interviewed were eloquent in their remarks. "At school we were discouraged to use our language...and we grew up not being fluent in our Indian tongue. I now regret it". "I was confused while in school but now I'm proud to be Indian". "I was made to feel being an Indian was worthless and that I should try to be 'white'". "It was as if we should be ashamed of our language". "You were made to feel inferior as an Indian...they tried to change our Indian ways". "I had a negative attitude toward my own identity and to a degree lost my language". When asked what were the sources of these feelings, the parents replied: "We were forbidden to speak our language", "Oblates and nuns stripped us of our dignity and pride until we were made to feel like little savages", "We were stripped of our privileges if we 'got out of line'...if we ran away we were imprisoned, locked in a cell and fed only water and bread. In short we weren't supposed to get homesick and long for our parents. It was so disgusting and inhumane". "The nuns were not aware of 'our' ways. They didn't attempt to appreciate our values".

When these remarks of the parents' schooling are compared with

those of the students who reported being "treated like people" by their teachers, one can readily see the change community control has brought about. However, there is incongruance in what the students report about their future plans and what the teachers see in them. How can this be explained? The parents report no worries about their children's future (although it should be noted that they were not directly queried on this) and seem generally satisfied with the school system. The students also seem generally content although they wished for more Indian teachers, students, Indian curriculum and facilities.

It seems apparent that they wish to have their Indian identity strengthened in every way. The students themselves could answer that one question of the teacher who wondered whether students should be prepared for the outside world or to lead a traditional way of life. Perhaps their response can be best explained that these are not two irreconcilable choices. The students wish to have a strong Indian identity, be knowledgeable and competent in their language, culture and traditions but be prepared to make a living in the so-called 'outside' world.

The parents can only report relief that their children do not have to suffer the educational system they survived. They wish their children to learn in a loving, sensitive atmosphere, the tools of 'wider society' as well as an appreciation of their own identity.

In these questionnaires, the students and parents seem sure of what they want in their school system and where they are heading, while the teachers obviously desire more direction. Perhaps this is a commentary on the two culture that these people come from. To the parents and students, the direction is clear for the teachers to follow. For the teachers who have grown in a rule-oriented society, the direction is unclear and perhaps scary.

Perhaps the teachers' insight into the lack of self-confidence of the students is the result of a carry-over of these feelings of the parents from residential school experience...feelings that the parents might not even realize still exist? As one parent revealed: "Parents, like myself, after the experience I had, have always been bitter toward the Church and the school. So I have no use for education". The key to how this gap between the staff and the students and parents is bridged is best expressed by the respondents themselves. Perhaps sensing the bitter experience of the parents in the residential school system and the difficult experiences of the students in larger integrated systems off the reserve, a teacher said that the Sabaskong school system was essential "to protect a self-worth that could easily be destroyed elsewhere". Whether conscious or not, this perceptive remark immediately strikes a chord with why a parent said "the reserve school must keep operating - they must do everything to keep it operating".

Table 1 The Parents' Perspective

Parents and Their School Background

Why did you not continue your schooling?

- was not keen. I had been away from my parents too long and felt it was time for me to say home with my folks.
- Mom and Dad had a big family, therefore I had to help cut pulp, babysit, etc.
- completed Grade 8 but didn't have to average to go on.
- no place to go nearby - couldn't go past Kenora.
- Kenora was not suitable according to the Oblates - parents felt that I shouldn't go away farther than Kenora.
- couldn't wait to get out and I left at 15.
- difficulty in subjects, i.e. English.
- at that time there was very little to go to school for; we were encouraged to do as much as we could up to Grade 8 and then we stopped to stay home to help our parents. I do not regret it.

What was the one thing you disliked most about your school?

- to go away to a boarding school, religious training was OK, but the way it was handled at boarding school was too much.
- boarding in a residential school - there was too much religion and I did not get to see my parents like other kids. I never did get to know my parents.
- was discouraged from using own language (severe discipline - get hit on the head for using language).
- being away from home at too long of a time; too much religion.
- St. Mary's - couldn't go home as I pleased, too regimented and restricted, too much religion taught.
- being away from home and not having the freedom of hunting and fishing and so on.
- elementary - French; high school - commuting and boarding in town.
- at the reserve I was born and raised there was absolutely nothing to do to earn a living so money and food was scarce. This affected us at school.

Table 2 The Parents' Perspective

Indian Identity and Image

How did your experience at school make you feel about your Indian identity?

- at the school I went we were neither discouraged nor encouraged to use our language but many of us chose to speak English so that many of us grew up not being fluent in our Indian language. I now regret it.
- confused while in school. Now I am proud to be an Indian.
- was made to feel that being an Indian was worthless and that I should try to be "white".
- at school we were discouraged to speak our native tongue; it is as if we should be ashamed of our language.
- made you feel inferior about being an Indian - tried to change our Indian ways.
- ashamed of being an Indian.
- I had negative attitude toward my own identity and to a degree lost my language.

What do you think were the sources of this feeling?

- Oblates and nuns stripped us of our dignity and pride until we were made to feel like little savages.
- I was the only Indian student because of the white population in classroom.
- our language was discouraged. We were stripped of our privileges if we "got out of line". If we ran away we were imprisoned (locked in a cell and fed only water and bread). In short, we weren't supposed to get homesick and long for our parents. It was so disgusting and so inhumane.
- forbidden to speak our language.
- the nuns were not aware of "our" ways. They didn't even attempt to appreciate our values.

Table 3 The Parents' Perspective

Problems and Issues

What do you think are the most crucial problems affecting the education of Indian people?

- I feel that the parents are not involved. They should make an effort but some don't even care. They don't "push" their kids.
- parents like myself, after the experience I had, have always been bitter towards the church and school. So I have no use for education.
- lack of native teachers and facilities on reserves.
- parents are not involved, parents don't care.
- I think Indian kids at this school have more incentive here. The kids are shy at integrated schools - they feel they should just give up rather than try. The reserve school must keep going - they must do everything to keep it operating.
- the attitude of peers and teachers discourage Indian students (parents don't show responsibility consequently students feel the same).
- we don't take responsibility for our children. I mean we should show more concern, interest and responsibility. I try but my friends don't seem to care about theirs.
- I think we don't encourage our children enough. I try but I know others couldn't care whether their kids get educated or not.

What do you think are the most crucial problems affecting the children attending the school here at the reserve?

- there is no curfew, therefore the kids stay out late at night. Parents are not involved and there is a need for them to get involved.
- kids don't have proper diet, health care, and very little discipline.
- the attitude of peers and teachers discourage Indian students (parents don't show responsibility, consequently students don't feel the same).
- there is virtually very little parent/teacher meetings. Teachers are asking about parents not being involved. Parents are not involved - very few - 25% get involved.
- the reserve is looked at as a private world. Exchange programs should be encouraged. Teachers don't report back on conferences, meetings. Parents should accompany teachers. There is no school committees here at the reserve.
- lack of native teachers, also, the curriculum.

- there is vandalism and there will always be some because parents don't seem to care. As for education on the reserve - what for?.
- I feel that the parents are not involved. They should make an effort but some don't even care. They don't "push" their kids. The parents ought to try to encourage their children. They don't know much about the school system, consequently they are not involved. They do not know how to get involved.

How would you correct the problems?

- get a school committee started up again. Have regular education meetings.
- it will be awhile before parents understand and get involved.
- the curriculum should be in par with other school boards such as the town of Kenora.
- parents who don't seem to care ought to be brought to school committees, general Band meetings. Parents don't discipline but rather they take up for their kids when disciplined by teachers.
- there needs to be more parent/teacher association meetings.
- courses on nutrition, health care, alcoholism, sex education/ family life training seminars are needed.
- we need professional help. We are trying to do our own thing here, which is good, but we need help.
- there is a need for an education authority - school board - or a school committee. We need a "body" to set policies and enforce them.

Table 4 The Parents' Perspective

Community Control

What are some of the things your children like about their school?

- teachers are friendly and are helpful. Students do not have to ride a bus to go to school.
- they like the teachers and the course content.
- they like their teachers and school. My two oldest look forward to the graduation exercises.
- the kids find teachers trying to be involved in the community life. Individual attention - teachers are interested in the welfare of the students.
- at her age (8) she likes everything about the school. She gets along with everybody.
- recreation program and art.

*Do you have anything to say about the operation of the school?
How is this done?*

- I think the education administrator should get help by a school board/committee.
- there needs to be a school committee - a committee that can deal with the problems I mentioned.
- I wrote an anonymous letter once reminding them of supervision - that there is very little supervision - also, we do take care of our facilities.
- parents ought to be encouraged to get involved in school committees.
- parents must become involved.
- seminars/training courses for the development of school/education committees.

What is the attitude, in your opinion, of the parents toward the school?

- parents, generally speaking, are favourable toward the reserve school and teachers.
- parents should encourage a "policy" for teacher protection (security and fringe benefits).
- about 70% have good attitude, the rest don't give a damn.
- parents do care about their kids' education but they are reluctant to get involved and in many cases they don't know how.
- OK, but they, too, are frustrated of not being able to help out.
- the biggest drawback is that the parents don't seem to care nor are they interested.

- I think 80% of them have good attitude.
- overall, the attitude should be better.

What is the attitude, in your opinion, of the teachers toward the school under the present set-up?

- I think the teachers here are quite happy teaching here.
- excellent attitude.
- good - this is shown by their involvement at the community level.
- positive attitude. Teachers do care for the children that they have but they can only do so much with what parental involvement that there is.
- teachers all seem to have good attitudes towards their work.
- teachers are not secure - they don't know where to turn to. Teachers have too much "say".
- I think the teachers are quite happy with the set-up here, otherwise there would have been more and more teachers leaving.
- the attitude of the teachers is good but lack communication.

On the whole, how well do you think the parents understand what the school is trying to do?

- there is a definite need for parents to get to know more about the schools.
- most of them do.
- they have an idea but as I said it would be good if there was an education committee for the parents to work through.
- some parents understand and it is the ones that have gone to school themselves, the ones that value education.
- 70% of the parents try to understand and show concern.
- I don't think the parents understand enough.
- It is difficult for me to say, at Band meetings, education is rarely on the topics for discussion.
- I think most parents are aware but don't take full responsibility.

Are you satisfied with the present situation regarding the community take-over of the schools?

- not completely.
- I am.
- very satisfied.
- not entirely. There is a need for the whole reserve to get involved. The people in charge need the backing of the reserve.
- satisfied, but I hope that in the next few years things will improve.

- quite satisfied except we should make an effort to look after our buildings, equipment, facilities. If an outsider were to visit our schools in the state that they're in they would be disappointed - and this would reflect on us all.

If no, what changes might you want to see made?

- school board or committee to take responsibility of the school affairs.
- more effort to look after the school.
- there is a need for workshops and in-service training for parents. The whole reserve needs to find out the goals and objectives of our school system.
- I don't know.
- education committees should be more active and involve parents.

Table 5 The Parents' PerspectiveGeneral

Is there any additional information about the school which you would like to share? Do you foresee any problems?

- I think we should work towards the future and plan for years to come, i.e. facilities, teaching staff, curriculum, etc.
- no.
- parents need to show more responsibility, concern and involvement. There is a lot of junk food sold in the community store - parents should discourage the buying of these foods.
- There ought to be a few committees, depending on the factions these committees should get together on school problems (discipline, etc.). Some kids are not cared for, therefore it shows at school.
- we need to motivate the whole community to get involved. We have gone a long ways since we have taken over from the government, but we also have a long ways to go.
- right now if I had a chance to do it I would take photos of the deplorable conditions of our buildings. Show what carelessness and vandalism will do if parents do not attempt to control. Try to secure funding to hire nightwatchmen to look after our schools. Vandalism starts at home - if parents don't care, why should kids care?.
- sports - organized hockey. Educate the kids about the future. Help them with their goals as early as possible. Field trips are OK, but they shouldn't push too many more.
- when teachers are absent, parents should be asked to pinch it. Men should take kids out to trapline. Monthly P-T meetings are important.

Table 6 The Teachers' PerspectiveStaff and Training

What training have you had in preparation for teaching Indian children?

- nil except for course in teaching children with special needs.
- graduated from Lakehead University in the spring of 1978 under a program entitled "Native Teachers Education Program". This program was/is designed especially for native people to become teachers. I also had six month training under a similar program at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon.
- one undergraduate course: North American Native People in Transition (Anthropology).
- teacher's college "cross cultural education" plus various assignments in other courses related to Indian education.
- B. Ed. (University of Toronto) - none specifically related to native students.
- just "on the job" training at Sabaskong.
- individual research for a small paper submitted for a course at teacher's college, seminar training sessions while working at Sabaskong.
- no training directly related to Indian education. A degree of self education.
- no formal training.

Table 7 The Teachers' Perspective

Curriculum

Is "Indian Studies" program offered in your school? Do you yourself offer this program in your classroom?

- there is no single course or program called "Indian Studies" here. There is a strong emphasis on native issues within the courses which I teach. There is a teacher who teaches Ojibway culture but his work is primarily in the elementary school.
- we do have a "Native Studies" program that we call "Ojibway Culture". I'm the instructor/teacher. There are things we didn't do which I would've included in the program, e.g. field trips to traplines and other reserves, inviting reserve people to class, but when you invite someone to come and talk or give a demonstration, they expect to get paid (although I believe they should get paid) and you sometimes find there is no money or there's money somewhere but cannot find it. I believe when you set a program, a budget should be given so that you know what things can be made available. Also, there wasn't that much instruction after the winter months, as I was involved with Band business - this is where resource people would come in.
- this past year, there was an Ojibway language and culture teacher who worked with the elementary school children. In 1977-78 there was an "Ojibway Legacy" course taught in the high school for a Grade 9 Ministry of Education credit.
- yes, one of the teachers was teaching syllabics and Indian culture to each class.
- a native studies course was offered during my first year teaching at this school, by a native teacher, but it has not been offered since then. Native culture is incorporated into the courses that I teach wherever possible.
- a formal Indian Studies program is not offered in our school, however, an informal program is offered in my classroom. For example, if we are studying trees, we learn the Ojibway as well as the English names for them. The ways in which the various trees were used in the old days would also be discussed. This informal method of studying native culture is used throughout the courses I teach.
- no formal Indian Studies program, however, Indian Studies are incorporated into the regular program where possible.
- Indian studies is offered, not taught by myself.
- Indian studies incorporated into aim of day care, native staff

contribute language and cultural ideas. Aim of program is for children to get to know themselves and their relationship to the land. Outdoor activity, nature study, life skills study very important.

If no, why not?

- native teachers teach this, more qualified.
- we do not have a formal Indian Studies program because there is no Ojibway speaking person on staff. If we did have a teacher who was fluent in Ojibway, a course could be done.
- more work could be done to adapt the Ministry of Education curriculum to the needs of the students, and finding the resource people to help the teachers implement these changes.
- the Native Studies course has not been offered during the last two years, as none of the teachers presently employed are knowledgeable enough in this subject area.
- I guess I haven't felt competent enough to teach such a program because of my lack of background and knowledge.

Table 8 The Teachers' Perspective

The Parents

How often do you have parents visiting your classroom? (Not counting the parent-teacher conferences)

- when I was here I had only two parents visit the class.
- infrequent visits.
- once a month. Parents should be encouraged to come in more often. We must try and break down the idea that "teachers know best". Often teachers do not know best, especially when they are in a completely different environment.
- not quite enough. Possibly one per month.
- very little - perhaps two or three times a year.
- from my observations, visits by parents to the school are infrequent.
- several times a year, often to demonstrate skills and knowledge that they have, or take students away from the classroom, fishing, hunting, etc.
- in the Ojibway Culture class, I would say 5-10% but no more.
- parents often visit at least once a week, they stay for awhile after dropping children off at day care. We also have special days when we invite parents in to share the day, i.e. celebration of holidays.

Do you feel that the parents ought to become more involved in the school affairs?

- yes, definitely.
- parents have the right to know what their child is learning and doing in the educational system.
- definitely, parents should be involved with school affairs as they have been told that this is their school and if the children saw their parents become more involved, they'd know that parents cared about their children's education.
- yes, I feel the parents could take a more active interest in the school affairs. Their active interest and support would be especially helpful for new teachers. The new teachers I have seen here seem to lack a sense of how they're doing and if they had more feedback from parents, they would get a better idea of how they are doing.
- yes, I do, as everyone would benefit from more parental input into the school program.
- yes, I do. The community should realize that they have full control over the education of their children, and therefore should be very involved in school affairs to make sure that their children are benefitting from the school program.

- yes, parents should be involved in planning the school year -holidays - planning course of study related to native education.
- yes, parents should be more involved.

Do you feel that the parents have become increasingly interested in the education of their children? (Take into consideration from Day 1 of your arrival to the present time)

- no evidence of increased involvement.
- yes, I believe they have a sense that it is their school and they want to know what is happening and want a say in it.
- yes, they have become more interested, however, this also might be because I am beginning to know them better.
- I think that the majority of parents have always been interested, and may be showing increasing interest because they know me better personally, and have fewer reservations about discussing the educational needs of their children.
- parental interest in our school seems to have remained fairly constant over the past three years.
- yes, I feel that the parents are learning more about their children in terms of their children's abilities and potential future, now that the entire school program is here at Sabaskong. Although the parents don't visit the schools much, they do talk to the teachers at social events. I feel the people of Sabaskong have a sense that they control their school program. They made the decisive moves (withdrawal of their children from Father Moss and Fort High) when they were necessary.
- in my opinion, I don't believe so, maybe just a select few.
- parents are interested, even the fathers are interested and take note of what is going on at day care, something which I didn't find to be true in off reserve day care.
- from the individual point of view, I don't really think they have - from the fact that the children aren't encouraged to get up on time and attend regularly. Also the parents don't seem to know just what their children are being taught or how they're being taught.

Table 9 The Teachers' Perspective

The Children

What do you see as the main problem confronting your students?

- lack of interest in a lot of the subject matter being taught.
- children seem to lack a value of themselves and of others. Therefore frustration and aggression arises frequently. They have the attitude that "might is right". This way they find it hard to cope with disapproval or disappointment.
- as far as Indian culture goes, this type of learning should be taught at home. Another problem I see is not enough counselling in the lower grades. There should be a curfew during school nights for the younger children because the children come in class too sleepy to do anything. Well rested children work well, learn far better than tired ones.
- the main problem confronting the students at Sabaskong, I feel, is that, like many native people today, they are in a sense caught between two worlds. The school structure itself is a creation of the larger Canadian (European) society. The traditional method of learning among Ojibway people, as I understand it, was for the young to watch and listen to their elders. In this way, they learned the life skills they needed to support themselves in a traditional life. But the world is changing around them. There are new things to learn, and these things must be learned in a different format. But, it may be difficult for the students to see how they fit into this larger, rapidly changing society.
- lack of future goals, in terms of education and a career, would I think, be the major problem that confronts the students.
- the main problem confronting many of our students in relation to education is that of not having a definite goal or objective to shoot for. I feel too that some of our students may have goals, but they don't really believe that they are attainable. This could possibly result from a lack of self-confidence or the lack of role models to emulate.
- there is no "one main problem". There are a variety of problems confronting different students. However, I feel our students could benefit from role models from this reserve.
- apart from the skill level in a particular category, which can be corrected, the primary problem is a lack of acceptance by some of the students that to succeed in the school system as it exists now (a credit-granting secondary school), a full time effort is needed. This may sound like an old teacher complaint but I feel it is true.
- main problem: a lack of purpose ("Where am I going and why?" "What's the point of this education?")

How can that problem be corrected?

- teachers must tailor education to meet the abilities/talents/interests of the children; parents must impress upon kids the importance of education, not only in words but also in action (school is more important than babysitting, rummage sales, and late night TV); parents/teachers/kids should sort out what they want to accomplish: to be (1) English education to ready kids for white world (Canada)? (2) Ojibway education to make kids more appreciative of their culture? (3) if "both" above, how is "white" education (academic stuff) taught without introducing or promoting values opposed to traditional values? Also are we readying kids for adult life in Sabaskong? If so, doing what? Living as their parents? Their great grandparents? Their peers in Nestor Falls?
- it can be improved, I feel, if the students are given encouragement from the home setting. If achievement or success in school is promoted as a worthwhile goal the students would respond.
- people from the reserve and other reserves can tell our students, how to lead a successful life.
- this problem could be helped by increasing the person's self confidence and building the person's self-image into a more positive one. This is easy to say, but difficult to do in the short term. One thing that would help our students' self-images would be an increase in the native studies content of our curriculum. This would help to make them more proud of themselves and give them an understanding of their history and an awareness of where and who they are.
- to have a curriculum in the school program that is specifically geared to the students here.
- place a curfew on younger children because if one or more can stay out then certainly others will want to stay out longer, too. We, the parents, have to watch our actions around children because they learn by watching and observing and also listening and if they keep getting the wrong pictures of life, it won't be their fault.
- correction of this problem takes time, a lot of patience, a lot of caring. Children need secure, flexible structure in which to experiment with ways of socialization and the learning of give and take. They need to learn that they will be respected and accepted as they are and pass the knowledge on to their friends. They must learn that aggression does not solve every problem and usually creates more problems than it solves.
- more relevant material and hands-on teaching instead of books.

Table 10 The Teachers' Perspective

Community Issues

Do you feel that the present educational system at Sabaskong benefits the children?

- yes, very much so.
- Sabaskong children need their own educational system. It protects a self-worth that could easily be destroyed elsewhere. This way the children aren't lost in the shuffle of larger centre. If a problem arises it is noticed and dealt with sooner.
- yes, for some and no for others. No is probably due to home environment and also yes is probably to home environment.
- yes, I feel the school program at Sabaskong benefits the children. The increased attention they receive from the teachers here, which they would likely not get in a school in town, provides a greater sense of self-confidence and worth.
- yes, I feel that the children do benefit, and as the system grows and evolves the children will benefit more.
- yes, it does benefit the children.
- yes, it benefits them. Whether it can benefit them even more is a good question.
- yes, the present system benefits the children.

If given the opportunity, what would you like to change?

- should be greater parental involvement; greater Band control as opposed to simple administration; hiring of at least three teacher aides for elementary school or better teacher/pupil ratio. At present, far too many kids per teacher; the kids are losing out.
- inclusion of more good native teachers.
- more modern education, more native education. Provide exposure to as many different and varied situations as possible. This refers to urban and rural situations.
- the attitude that some students have that some things are too hard and can't be done, even before they are tried; the poor self-image that some students have; the idea that many things (i.e. careers) are outside their grasp.
- I think that if the student population of the high school was increased to 40-50, the high school could be run more effectively. At present, some of the classes are very small, which leads to little student interaction and discussion. Also the exposure to students from other reserves would be beneficial.
- I would like to see a written policy for the school program. Do the people at Sabaskong want their children to learn how

- to fit into the larger Canadian society? Do they want their children to learn the Ojibway language and the traditional ways, too?
- we certainly need more parental support, more direction for teachers because under local autonomy, no one comes and says "you're doing this wrong or that is wrong", because teachers are human and capable of making mistakes. The Band should offer contracts or agreements so that we do not have teachers taking off before school year ends. Since I live here, I'll probably live here for the rest of my life, but I would certainly like to teach here for a good number of years.
 - I would like to see more workshops or more aides available to non-native teachers. This would make the cultural aspect of programming easier.
 - more involvement during school time between the community (parents, high school, day care) and the elementary school.

In what ways could the present educational system be made more beneficial at Sabaskong?

- try to maintain a more secure, steady teaching staff for all the children, less change in teachers, a more constant personnel.
- if more of the parents showed an active interest in the school and communicated their support to their children, making sure they get to school and on time. And, if members of the community formed a school board and actively discussed and set policy.
- Ojibway language course for the high school; more technical and industrial arts courses and facilities; more students from other areas so that ideas, values, etc. can be exchanged; student exchanges with students living in urban areas; adapting the curriculum more to the needs of the students; parents come to the classrooms more often to offer knowledge in their areas of expertise.
- in the high school we must try and have a teacher fluent in Ojibway, a teacher who is very aware of Ojibway culture and can teach it.
- greater co-ordination among teachers and schools must be organized by somebody working in the capacity of principal, not an authoritative individual, but rather somebody who can get teachers to work together, solving mutual problems. The high school already has a great deal of cohesion within itself because the teachers are forced to work together to overcome common areas of concern. At the moment there is no such apparent need in the elementary school, so teacher go their separate ways.

Table 11 The Teachers' Perspective

The Teacher and Local Control

What problems does the teacher face in the school under the local autonomy setting?

- the teacher is too often seen as an "expert" on education and left to his own devices; there is insufficient feedback, either positive or negative. The only negative feedback that I have seen was last year's dismissal of a teacher at the end of the year. This teacher's shortcomings should have been pointed out to him earlier, allowing him to either change his ways or leave.
- my relations with the community have always been excellent. Working under local autonomy has brought us more closely into the life of the reserve. We work directly for the people with whom we live. School activities are largely community based. A problem that is found by teachers who work on a reserve run school and like it, is a lack of job security. Minor changes in local elections could place an individual teacher's job immediately in jeopardy. As of now there is no adequate process to ensure a fair judgment as to an individual's worth to the community.
- not too many, in fact, it makes teaching in a small community like Sabaskong a lot easier.
- local control for me has meant only advantages rather than presenting problems. Because we have gotten to know our administrators on a personal as well as a professional basis, I feel that the working relationship is excellent, interaction is immediate, rather than having to cope with red tape, and our administrators are always readily available to provide guidance and assistance.
- the lack of set policy on what should be taught and the lack of job security in terms of continuity. The teachers must assume they are doing OK if they don't hear otherwise.
- lack of a contract, not always knowing what position you can have on certain issues, a certain lack of communication between day care and the other schools.
- no major problems. It's really nice to know the parents so well and be able to talk to them often.

If given the opportunity would you like to stay longer to teach here at Sabaskong? If so, how much longer?

- yes, as long as I'm doing a good job.
- I would like to stay longer to teach at Sabaskong. If possible I would like to stay at least another three years.

- Yes, if we're needed we would like to stay.
- at present, I am very satisfied with my position at Sabaskong, so I will hopefully be able to continue to teach at this school in the years ahead.
- Yes, I would like to stay longer. I would like to stay as long as I'm still effective at teaching.
- Sure, as long as the community feels I am doing a useful job.
- yes.
- two years has been a rewarding experience in spite of all negative comments, I have enjoyed my time here. I have learned a great deal about patience, people's feelings, and have met some wonderful people with whom I'll maintain contact. But two years, I feel, was enough. I feel a little tired and a little stale. Fresh ideas are needed in my classroom.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

I. Model for Indian Control of Indian Education

In December 1972, the National Indian Brotherhood presented a brief outlining its position on education to the Minister of Indian Affairs.

"It was the first time that the Indian people of Canada, through their own organization, had presented to the government a single document stating their position on a matter vital to our daily lives. Our basic position is that any Indian community that wishes to do so should have the opportunity to control its own education."¹

By February 1973, Hon. Jean Chretien announced the adoption of this policy as the Department's own. From then on, the watchwords "Indian Control of Indian Education" and the twin goals of community control and parental responsibility led the way for the development of, what today is, approximately 100 locally controlled schools.²

Although Band Councils have found the Department of Indian Affairs to be heeding this policy more in words than in action, the work of the National Indian Brotherhood in pressing for the adoption of such a policy has been successful. What has been lacking, though, is exactly how to make these words "community control" and "parental responsibility" become a reality. There has not yet been developed a working model or perhaps a pattern which Indian people could look

¹ Manuel, George and Michael Poslums, The Fourth World: An Indian Reality, Toronto, Collier Macmillan, 1974. p.248,249.

² DIAND, Indian Conditions: A Survey, Ottawa Ministry of Supply & Services, 1980, p. 50 "From about 1970, emphasis has been on developing schools in Indian communities, ideally operated by Indian Bands... there are now over 100 Band schools."

to, to find ways of "making it happen" in their communities. This review of the Sabaskong Ojibway Community School system points to one such way.

In considering the development of a theoretical model for the establishment of a school system, it is obvious that one has to look beyond educational theory and delve into the meaning of "community control"...and community development.

When one considers the situation of Indian reserves in Canada, the immediate realization is underdevelopment. In community development theory, the solution lies within the people themselves, within the community - organize and make it happen. This has been perhaps best explained by the American radical organizer, Saul Alinsky, and one of his Canadian proteges, Don Keating.

"Change comes from power, and power comes from organization. In order to act, people must get together." ³

The parents of Sabaskong formed a community of traditions, traditions that stemmed from the Ojibway Nation culture - and ones that pertained to their family and clans alone. That tradition strongly felt by the people of the Assabaska-Big Island area of the Lake of the Woods is one of strength, of standing up for one's rights.

³ Alinsky, Saul, Rules for Radicals, Vintage Books, New York, 1972. p.113.

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³ Alinsky, Saul, Rules for Radicals, Vintage Books, New York, 1972. p.113.

In the historical review of the Sabaskong school, the archival documents attest to the way the Chiefs and Headmen of Lake of the Woods and the parents refused to allow their children to attend the 35C school until and unless religion was not part of the curriculum. They respected and gave priority to the traditional skills of the seasonal way of life that they had to teach their children for survival - fishing, trapping, berry picking, rice harvesting...yet these parents respected the non-Indian culture enough to believe that their children could benefit from some formal schooling and would bring them to school from time to time. If, however, they had a point to be made - such as protesting the lack of action by the Department of Indian Affairs against timber companies trespassing on reserve land - then they would immediately attack the one institution they knew was valued by non-Indian society - the school - and in this case, refused to build the school until some action was taken.

It is this same ability to act together, the recognition that "change comes from power and power comes from organization" that the present-day people of Sabaskong drew strength from in removing their children from elementary school in 1974 and from secondary school in 1977 to create better alternatives. The situation has changed somewhat some 80 years later in that the traditional way of life is more difficult to follow but some community members continue to

be the commercial fishermen, the trappers and rice harvesters. Thus, the traditions continue - and evolve - for example, as 'guiding' becomes a 'traditional' pursuit to be included with commercial fishing.

The other consideration and source of strength is the families, the closeness of the extended family, and the clan system of protection. Again, although this has evolved with time, the inter-relatedness of the people provides a vital source of strength, particularly in times of emergencies. Traditionally, the Ojibway people made their livelihood by following the seasons, and camping as Mother Earth would allow. In winter, families broke into smaller groups in order to provide enough food for each other. They only gathered in large communities at times of the year when food was plentiful, such as spring spawning/fishing time, berry picking, and rice harvesting. The lean years of winter hunting and trapping led to some isolation. It was at these times of large get-togethers that the people would join in thanksgiving - four times a year in celebration of the seasons, and being together. A notable event at these times were the community councils. Then family heads would bring to the community problems that they needed help with, an older woman who was widowed, children orphaned, a case of mental illness... and the people of the community would decide how to help. The approach might be for a relative to adopt the older woman; another, the

children; another, to consult a medicine man and hold a shaking tent with the whole community present. These councils also were evidence of "the power of organization" and one within the experience of the present-day parents at Sabaskong.

II. Sabaskong and Leadership

Although their responses to this reasearcher's questionnaire point to their troubled and tortured existence in residential school, many Sabaskong parents knew and learned from their parents the traditional values and behaviour which would help them live their daily lives, raise their own children, and be strong in time of crises. Indeed, the present-day social problems in Indian communities across Canada (high alcohol abuse, high number of criminal offenders, and broken families) point to how well the residential school systems interfered with normal family life of our people and prevented this socialization process of learning to love and to live being passed between generations. We must recognize that for the people of Sabaskong, this tradition remained remarkably intact.

A case in point is one family. The parents, Norman and Alice Kinew, were people of Lake of the Woods - Assabaska and Big Island - the stubborn, determined individualists who brought up their children in this tradition. At an early age, the parents instilled pride in

their children as individuals and as Ojibways - which could never be taken away and which gave them strength to carry on, despite all obstacles. As the four brothers lost their father early in life, much credit is due their mother for teaching the boys the lessons of a lifetime which started when the Sioux and Ojibway still fought along the war road of southern Lake of the Woods and ended when she had seen many of her boys' accomplishments. To name a few - the re-establishment of Grand Council Treaty #3 (the Chiefs' organization of 25 reserves in the northwestern area of Ontario), the Ojibway Hockey School, the Ojibway Tribal Education, Inc., one becoming the first Indian Regional Director-General in Ontario, another a teacher and educator, another a politician of remarkable intellect, fortitude and skill, and so forth.

All the families at Sabaskong show this ability to produce leaders. It is this leadership and the abilities of these leaders in their own ways, co-operating and supporting each other, that allowed the school system at Sabaskong to be established.

III. The Rules of Power Tactics

"The method of people getting together, identifying a problem, deciding on a solution, bringing the people responsible for the problem to a meeting and directly negotiating the enforcement of the decision is an exercise of basic democracy."⁴

⁴ Keating, D., The Power to Make it Happen, Green Tree Publishing Co. Ltd., Toronto, 1975. p.32.

"The organizer's job is to agitate, introduce ideas, get people pregnant with hope and a desire for change..."⁵

" 'Is this where you really want to be? Do you want to do something about it?' These are the questions a community development worker gets people to think about."⁶

As was pointed out in the description of local control and the take-over of the school system, these are the questions asked and the role played by the Education/Social Counsellors: Norman Copenace, Jr., in the 1974 instance of the elementary school, and Ron Seymour in the 1977 case of the secondary school. In both situations, the people responded: "We're not going to take it anymore. We can do better ourselves."

This type of leadership could be described as community-oriented or internal. Another type of leadership was also required - political and externally-oriented. This was provided by Chief Stanley Indian, Ojibway Tribal Education Inc. advisor John P. Kelly, Grand Chief Peter Kelly and former Chief and advisor, Fred Kelly.

As Keating's quote indicates, the first step is to get people together and identify the problem. In 1974, Copenace filled this role and the parents decided to act. Deciding on a solution required

⁵ Alinsky, Saul, Rules for Radicals, Vintage Books, New York, 1972, p. 103.

⁶ Manuel, George and Michael Poslums, The Fourth World: An Indian Reality, Toronto, Collier Macmillan, 1974, p.127.

the joint efforts of the leadership and the parents - the question is: Did they just want changes in the Father Moss Separate School? What about the on-reserve school that was already in the works for Grades Kindergarten to 4? Did they want it as a community-controlled and operated school from Grades 1 to 8? Through the series of meetings on reserve with Department of Indian Affairs officials and representatives of the Roman Catholic School Board, the parents and leaders agreed: only a community-controlled school could resolve the basic problems they and their children were facing.

This procedure is entirely keeping within the "rules of power tactics" set down by Saul Alinsky in his book, Rules for Radicals:

1. Power is not only what you have but what the enemy thinks you have.
2. Never go outside the experience of your people.
3. Whenever possible go outside the experience of your enemy.
4. Make the enemy live up to their own book or rules.⁷

The leaders decided to bring "the people directly responsible for the problem" to a meeting, or, in the 1974 instance, a series of meetings. In 1977, the whole community joined with departmental and Fort Frances School Board officials for a one-day marathon of considering all alternatives and deciding what route to choose.

As Keating points out,

⁷ Alinsky, Saul, Rules for Radicals, Vintage Books, New York, 1972.

"when a community group invites officials to a meeting on its own turf, members can set the agenda and arrange the furniture in the room and retain control from the beginning."⁸

Thus it was with Sabaskong. The 1974 meetings were held in the basement of the school on reserve; the 1977 meetings in the community hall. The chairpeople were leaders and members of the Sabaskong community. They were in control of all proceedings. This was certainly "outside the experience" of the enemy, defined as the Department of Indian Affairs and the school boards. Yet dealing with an issue such as education was well within the experience of the community members. All of the people were directly or indirectly affected by how their children felt about school. They all shared hopes, dreams and cares for the children and their futures. There was no issue at that moment more important than the welfare of the children.

The Sabaskong community, and the Kellys in particular, are often criticized for creating confrontations where there are none. But this is a basic recognition and understanding of an effective community development and power tactics.

"Confrontation is creative and essential ...whenever there is a 'them' and an 'us'; whenever there is a real basis for anger on the part of one group against another."⁹

⁸ Keating, D., The Power to Make it Happen, Green Tree Publishing Co. Ltd., Toronto, 1975, p.22.

⁹ Ibid. p.221.

This was certainly the case both in 1974 and 1977.

What is important to remember is that the process of taking over the school and adoption of community control became the impetus needed for this community to move into assuming responsibility for all decisions affecting our lives. This process was germinating with the beginning of Band administration under Bobby Kelly in 1971 but under rules defined by the Department of Indian Affairs, through training organized by the Department, through budgets and funds allocated by the Department. This was to change to a certain degree in fact, but to a monumental degree in attitude and morale, with the takeover of the school. As Keating illustrates:

"The underlying assumption in every mass-based community organization is that the basic problem is...powerlessness and all other problems are merely symptoms." ¹⁰

The process by which this happened was to reach back to the roots of Sabaskong families, and to find the strength. The community "formed and made a decision which most had never done before," ¹¹ acted together (previously, they had acted alone, if at all), met with the person causing the problem (before, they might have tried individually to persuade someone else to do their meeting for them) [just as the Department of Indian Affairs always acted as a buffer between Band Councils and school boards, promoting and perpetuating the integration into provincial schools program], then acted by

¹⁰ Ibid. p.219.

¹¹ Author's Note; Residential school has deprived them of this opportunity of growth and development.

right (before, some had acted rather with cap in hand) and negotiated a solution (before, they had usually lost)".¹²

It is important to note that the people of Sabaskong "acted by right", refused to accept any intermediary, and refused to accept any thing less than what they wanted. When the parents and students reviewed all options with the school and Departmental officials in the spring of 1977 and found that the board would not bend on the main issues, that the problems of distance, family separation, lack of caring, would continue, the community decided that the only course of action was to set up an alternative...a community based secondary school.

The Department of Indian Affairs has a policy of requiring one year's lead time to break any joint school agreements or to prepare for the takeover of any educational programs. In the case of Sabaskong, the children were withdrawn from school in November 1974, an interim schooling was delivered by a Department of Indian Affairs teacher and Ojibway Tribal Education Inc. staff for the month of December, and a new community-controlled system established with one Department of Indian Affairs teacher and two on contract to the Band by January 1975. In the case of the secondary school, the parents and students decided in March 1977 that a high school education must be available on

¹² Keating, D., The Power to Make it Happen, Green Tree Publishing Co. Ltd., Toronto, 1975. p.222.

reserve by September 1977 - and it was. The community would not accept a "no" from the Department of Indian Affairs. It is interesting to note that when

"when politicians and bureaucrats are presented with decisions to be implemented rather than requests for help, they, too, resent having to live with decisions they had no part in making"¹³

- a 'fact of life' they were only too willing to have Sabaskong people accept forever. However, it was the joint leadership in the community which made the difference.

The internal leaders asked the questions; communicated the similar positive responses to each community member; spread the word, and galvanized the people. The external leaders knew the tactics to use with the government and school officials and knew exactly where the people wanted to go. Yet, both leaders could assist by operating in the other context. For example, the Chiefs and the Kellys would discuss the issue with the people while the social counsellors were able to speak directly and forcefully to the outside politicians and bureaucrats. It was a winning combination in 1974. By 1977, when it appeared that the odds were formidable, this same winning determination once again prevailed.

IV. The Power to Make it Happen

The "Power to Make it Happen" brings on the afterglow of victory.

¹³ Ibid. p. 219

The schools became established and soon the people of Sabaskong learned that

"the resolution of a particular problem will bring on another problem."¹⁴

It soon became obvious that community control of schools would bring a whole new set of headaches - supplies to be ordered, teachers to be hired, policies to be set, attendance of children to be encouraged.

As Keating sees it,

"it is pointless to win without building¹⁵ and impossible to build with winning."

Sabaskong won many victories through the years. Indeed, it is amazing to reflect on the April 1975 document outlining the long-term dreams of an educational-cultural-athletic complex and realize how many of these goals have already been achieved in five years:

- a complete education system from day care to Grade 12, under community control and administration, as well as administration of a post-secondary program;
- a new elementary school and gymnasium;
- five teacherages interspersed throughout the community;
- new interests and facilities established through the high school such as the radio station, photography and a darkroom for developing;
- development of Ojibway Legacy credit course for Grade 9 approved by the Ontario Ministry of Education Development of teaching approach using Ojibway syllabics to teach English phonics and reading, pioneered by Dorothy Rundle and Ron Kelly;

¹⁴ Alinsky, Saul, Rules for Radicals, Vintage Books, New York, 1972, p. 106.

¹⁵ Keating, D., The Power to Make it Happen, Green Tree Publishing Co. Ltd., Toronto, 1975. p.219.

- development of Ojibway cultural programs and language course for elementary students.

What is recognized is that "winning brings results" - Sabaskong has the concrete buildings and happy students as evidence. What winning also brings is the ability to build the power to decide. They have made it happen - now they have to make it work. As one parent said: "We have to do everything possible to keep this school operating".

However, for all these accomplishments, problems are also inevitable - and are referred to in the survey results of this research.

Attempts over the years to establish an on-going school committee or education authority to make decisions on education have not met with continuing success. The effect has been that most decisions fall to the Education Administrator, Bobby Kelly, or to the Band Council. Some matters are handled by the Education/Social Counsellor, Darlene Bob, who consults with the Administrator and/or Band Council as she views the gravity of the situation.

As the survey results indicate, parents, students and teachers see the need for more active involvement by parents in particular. What is readily apparent from these same survey results is that

community people have answers to their questions, solutions to their problems as they identify them. There is no necessity for a fancy, grandiose scheme of community control. What must be remembered is to keep the goal in mind.

Parents who responded thought that the goals of the school should be defined and explained for everyone in the community to know. Although this was done by the Band Council, Band staff and some interested parents in 1975, the need is obvious today for this to be a community task. The goals as defined in 1974 were development of a positive self-image and native identity, the strengthening of Ojibway cultural traditions, and the increased competency in intellectual/educational tasks. The only instructions to teachers were to teach a curriculum which would meet provincial standards but which would include Ojibway culture and language in all aspects. The time has arrived for these goals to be re-thought out, and made the community's own where everyone - parents, teachers and students - understand, agree and act to promote the achievement of these goals.

One way in which this was done for the first few years of the Sabaskong community control was to have professional development day workshops with the whole community invited. Most of these workshops involved teachers and parents in considering Ojibway culture

and how this content could be incorporated into the curriculum. One workshop dealt with reading in particular and how children could be assisted in their development. In this session, Dr. Art Blue was invaluable in pointing out to parents the importance of their children knowing at least one language well rather than two badly because the speech patterns carry over. For example, a person who speaks Ojibway well can learn to speak English well. A person who speaks broken Ojibway also speaks broken English. These insights were then brought back - not only to the school and classroom - but also to the home, where most learning takes place. It was through these workshops that the fact of "deschooled society" which the world outside Sabaskong longs for became a reality...a place where

"it will become impossible to separate learning from life, and student and teacher from friends learning together." 16

The time is ripe for a revival of these workshops at times convenient to parents and teachers. As had been the case in the beginning, work crews of Band members should be encouraged to attend without the loss of a day's wages.

Parents felt strongly, in the survey, that a school committee needs to operate to set policies, make decisions, to assist the Band Administrator and Social Counsellor. The suggestions ranged from "the people in charge need the backing of the whole reserve" to "we need a 'body' to set policies and enforce them, to deal with

¹⁶ Gatner, Greer and Riessman, After Deschooling, What?, New York: Harper and Row, 1973.

problems, to help the Administrator". However, committees to date have not worked. Why?

One reason is that the Band Council is the only legally recognized body on the reserve. Committees of all types have been formed - housing, recreation, economic development - and some operate for awhile, but soon give way to the informal, established ways of operating, although they are not always the best for the whole community. For example, the recreation committee does not operate and so most activities organized are done by the men's hockey team or the women's baseball team - but, unfortunately, there is very little leadership and/or organization for children's sports and recreation programs. It is very occasional and one-shot efforts to date. The economic development committee met frequently but turned its planning over to another elected and legally constituted body, the Sabaskong Bay Development Corporation, elected by Band members. However, even this corporation has released its decision-making authority by default ineffect to the Band Council. This leaves the Band Council with the decision-making power in all aspects of the community's lives with no bodies considering these issues in-depth, except for Band Staff. The response of Band Council in recent years has been to hold community suppers followed by general meetings where business is brought to the people and their advice actively solicited. But even these meetings

happen quarterly at most and usually twice yearly. The Band Council meets usually monthly but irregularly, leaving a vacuum which the education administration must fill in meeting deadlines for decisions regarding education matters. How can this problem be solved?

One parent in the survey offered a remarkable recommendation. Remarkable because it both leans back to the roots and also has been successfully used by our community in land claim strategy preparation meetings. His recommendation is strongly reflected in the next few paragraphs.

Usually Indian reserve communities are depicted and analyzed as being factionalized, with families pitted against families. At Sabaskong, families are seen as the source of strength and the reason for the very existence of the community. After all, in reviewing the history, the families who now live at the community situated at Otaso-Negaming 35D chose to come together to live there. These people could have moved to Morson in the 1930's, now a separate Band called Big Grassy. Or they could have decided to remain on the lake. But they chose to live together and this decision to always be united and stick together is very noticeable in the history of Sabaskong community. Indeed, they are a one-family, sharing, strongly-knit community. The recommendation which may have the best chance of being

effective was for families to get together on problems. Then these heads of families would bring their problems to their respective family councils where the concerns and issues would be reviewed and answers found. This approach was successfully spearheaded by Chief Peter Kelly in 1975 in consulting the community members regarding an on-going land claim and what the people wished for compensation. The heads of families were contacted by the Chief, the facts of the claim reviewed, and options for settlement secured. Each family head - Copenace, Kelly, Indian, Bob, Shebagegit - then held a family meeting and the results were reported back at a general Band meeting. This approach harkens back to the traditional seasonal councils of the Ojibway Nation and yet modern in its application today.

With regard to educational issues, the Band Council could again approach recognized family heads and ask them to consult their families about discussing educational issues, or particular pending problems (Indian curriculum, discipline, attendance, curfews, recreation, reading...) A spokesperson for each family would be nominated to a council and the Education Administrator and Education/Social Counsellor would then have a representative community sounding board to which to refer problems, issues, ideas and plans. These would be thoroughly discussed at open meetings that would be pub-

licized in advance. The Band Council would be welcome or indeed may already be members. Then decisions would be referred to the Band Council, if an official resolution required, or acted on by staff if community consensus is all that is required. This approach is one that evolves from the community itself and as such has the ability to work. It can become known as the Sabaskong Model (for operating a community school).

As stated, the people recognize that the problems of operating a school are different than those encountered in establishing it. The model for "the power to make it happen" is to depend on the traditional roots, seek out leadership which can both "keep everyone's mind moving toward a goal"¹⁷ and can use 'creative confrontation' with outside forces to achieve the goal. Aim high but only take on manageable tasks. Follow the twin goals of organizing - win and build from victories.

A model for successfully operating a school under community control has always depended on the will and commitment of the people and the abilities of the leadership. Fortunately in Sabaskong, they have both. In following Paulo Freire's philosophy of "praxis", that "true reflection leads to action", it is recognized that the people

¹⁷ Manuel, George and Micheal Poslums, The Fourth World: An Indian Reality, Toronto, Collier Macmillan, 1974, p.127.

must create from the 'roots' the mechanisms, processes, and the methods, to ensure these schools keep happening and operating. Again, in both the first stage of making it happen and the second stage of making it work, the goals are the same: a happy, quality education and a secure future for the children.

Through the past five years, the truth of George Manuel's experience that

"the fastest way to bring about change among an oppressed people is to put the decision-making authority, and the economic responsibility resources to go with it, into their own hands. Only then will there be a line clearly drawn between the evil of external control and our own normal human errors" 18

has indeed come to a reality.

The wisdom of community development theory as it applied to education is acknowledged in the following:

"If people are given the opportunity to make decisions about the direction their lives take, they increase their dignity and self-respect; if they experience a series of victories, they enhance their self-image; and if they build and use the power inherent in every community, they develop antidotes for apathy.."¹⁹

The Sabaskong community has proven already that community control can and does work. and it can continue to work. It is a responsibility

¹⁸ Ibid. p.246.

¹⁹ Keating, D., The Power to Make it Happen, Green Tree Publishing Co. Ltd., Toronto, 1975, p.81.

of the leaders to show it. For this, as one said, we are obliged to the Sabaskong parent who is so embittered toward the church and school "that I have no use for education", yet who is only too willing to participate in a survey and talk with the teachers and to the student who says until attending Sabaskong school "quitting was the only thing in mind"...now he has a different outlook, "this school has changed my mind of ever quitting". To grow from the anger and pain of the past to prepare a better future for the people and their children, that is the reason community control of education will always work at Sabaskong.

CHAPTER VII
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I. Summary

The main purpose of the case study was to trace the planning, development, and growth of local control on the Sabaskong reserve in the Treaty #3 area of northwestern Ontario. Correspondingly with the primary goal, a historical background of Indian education in the Sabaskong reserves in the colonial era, from 1873 to 1973, was traced; a description of Sabaskong's initiatives and accomplishments toward local control was developed; and finally the identification of strengths and weaknesses was obtained.

Ultimately, there was a need for the weeding out of weaknesses and the desire to cultivate a number of new methods, techniques, and services employed by Sabaskong in its pursuit of an opportunity for self-determination. There was an ulterior motive and that was to develop an optimum model to be used by other Indian bands that wish to assume control of their education on the reserves.

The information, contained in this report, was pieced together from the following sources:

1. A designed questionnaire instrument, approved and sanctioned by a steering committee of Sabaskong parents, were given to the teaching staff, to fill out discreetly at its own leisure. The

day care centre co-ordinator and another staff member were also requested to complete the same questionnaire. These self-administered questionnaires were completed and returned almost immediately. The students, assembled in a classroom, were thoroughly instructed and immediately set out to respond to the questions on the survey. The information from the parents was accumulated during the months of July and early August. Unfortunately, there were tragic circumstances in the whole area of Treaty #3, and, in particular, in the Sabaskong and Big Grassy reserves. Only a few questionnaires were completed.

2. Another procedure utilized was participant observation. This exercise was of casual and random-sampling nature carried out during the course of friendly and home visits, coffee breaks, fishing expeditions, and so forth. During the informal interviews, four original members of the old Sabaskong (O-Ne-Ga-Ming) reserves disclosed the much needed data to complement the historic facts secured from the archives in Ottawa.

3. Lastly, an examination of archival documents, literature and related studies, was carried out.

To establish a context for this study a series of questions were listed at the outset and are dealt with in this section.

Question 1: What are the necessary components and actions for implementing local control?

Tracing the development and implementation of Sabaskong (O-Ne-Ga-Ming) Community Schools, lends itself that there is no question that the basic tenets and actions are best summarized in the following:

"...simply take charge of our schools. This is no longer a debatable issue. We shall decide on the objectives of education. We shall choose the curriculum and the methods of teaching. We shall design the educational system. The reason is very simple - we are going to use education to regain control of our lives".¹

The parents of Sabaskong formed a community of traditions. That one tradition is strength, of standing up for one's rights and convictions. The archival documents, and the elders of Sabaskong attest to the way the parents refused to allow their children to attend the church school at Sabaskong 35C unless religion was not part of the school studies. Eighty years later, in 1974, the parents collectively withdrew their children from the Roman Catholic Separate School, Father Moss School, to create better alternatives.

The type of leadership depicted by Stanley Indian, Anthony Copenace, Norman Copenace, Jr. and Ron Seymour, in their respective roles to motivate the parents to respond; "We're not going to take

¹ Kelly, J.P., Working Notes on the Future of Indian Education, presented to National Indian Brotherhood, entitled Where Do We Go From Here, Feb. 1980.

it anymore. We can better ourselves" clearly illustrates determination and tenacity.

In retrospect, then, the basic components and actions for developing and implementing local control, as exemplified by the people of Sabaskong, are:

1. The desire and passion to play a participatory role in the children's education;
2. The determination and leadership to create another and better system;
3. The longing and aspiration to instill pride and self-worth among children;
4. And having formulated a plan of action, to immediately act and to persistently carry out the mandate.

Question 2: What visible changes in parental attitude result from involvement of the whole community in local autonomy?

The visible changes in parental attitude are epitomized by the parents themselves during the interviews. Some of the comments amassed are that about 80% of the parents have favourable attitudes toward the reserve school and teachers. This was characterized when the parents would not accept a "no" for an answer and went ahead to establish a high school on the reserve in 1976. As one

parent pointed out to the researcher, parents, before the take-over, would visit the school only to "raise hell with the teacher". Another positive indicator is that the teachers exchange visits with the children's parents frequently. The whole community, parents-students-teachers, attend social activities at least twice a year, one of these functions being the annual Christmas party where one of the parents plays the role of the Santa Claus. These are some of the obvious changes in parental attitude since the days of the old school.

Question 3: What has happened to student outlook under local control?

The study indicates that the students want to continue on to higher learning institutions once the completion of high school has been achieved. Some students specifically have indicated that they would like to train as teachers, electricians, Band Administrators, nurses, and day care supervisors, assumingly, of course, that some would like to come back and work on the reserve.

The commentary made by one of the students is re-emphasized here: "If I had not come to this school, 10 to 1, I would have quit school. This school has changed my mind of ever quitting". This represents the thirteen out of fourteen that have indicated that they wish to further their educational plans after graduating from O-Ne-Ga-Ming High School.

Question 4: What are the views of the teachers involved in the locally controlled system?

The seven teachers and the day care centre supervisor interviewed have all expressed favourable views about the Sabaskong community school system. In fact, when asked if the opportunity was there would he/she like to stay longer, the replies varied from "yes" to "sure, as long as the community feels I am doing a useful job".

The specific needs of the schools as expressed by the teaching staff were the entrenching of Indian Studies or Ojibway cultural content in the curriculum, greater parental involvement and interest and more direction in terms of school curriculum from the Band Council and parents.

With the exception of the one respondent, all have had two or more years of teaching experience at Sabaskong. Therefore, the low staff turn-over have to indicate that the school atmosphere and community esprit is warm and high and the two are exquisitely enmeshed.

II. Conclusions

After an examination of the data a number of conclusions were reached. These conclusions and recommendations were delineated from the findings, in this case study, and as well from the writer's many years of working and associating with the Sabaskong community. The intent, in offering the recommendations, is twofold. Firstly, the recommendations are focused directly for the benefit of Sabaskong in order that concerted efforts, for further developments and appropriate corrective measures, be set in motion along the lines the community suggests. Secondly, the general recommendations are directed to the general audience, in specific, the Indian bands that will ultimately be permitted full control of their education activity.

Before the recommendations are presented, the writer wishes to draw attention to the verbatim comments contained in Tables 1 to 11. These insights need to be used as a basis for future developments and counter-measures for problems. As well, it is imperative that the views and feelings as articulated by Cardinal, Manuel, Kirkness, and other notable leaders, be carefully considered and weighed objectively; they all carry a significant message.

III. Recommendations for Sabaskong

Recommendation #1

Adequate funding be provided for:

- a) the re-establishment of education/school committees;

- b) the revitalization of cross-cultural workshops;
- c) the organization of workshops and seminars on problem-solving dealing with the clarification of educational goals and philosophy, to nourish, and to further develop the concepts of Indian control;
- d) the organization of professional development days where the whole community is involved;
- e) the involvement of school committee members in the screening and the hiring process of the teaching staff;
- f) the renewing of community projects of bringing elders, parents, and the community leaders to assist in the teaching of Ojibway and local history.

Recommendation # 2

Adequate funding and provisions be secured to meet the needs of the parents and adults by:

- a) involving parents to "pinch hit" for teachers who are off duty;
- b) helping in the development and improvement of curricula to stimulate broadscale changes to provide more realistic education programs for youth and adults at the "grass roots";
- c) assisting in the organization of professional development days, in the teaching of the Ojibway language, and in the development of an effective "Native Studies" program;
- d) providing direction in the establishment of a center for curriculum development specifically dealing with the Ojibway culture and language;
- e) examining curriculum materials and localizing the material to make it more relevant and useful.

Recommendation #3

Provisions be appropriated to meet the needs of the teaching staff by:

- a) being evaluated at least once a year. This evaluation process would involve a tri-partite system engaging the individual being assessed, an outsider and preferably a superintendent of education, and a committee member or a parent;
- b) being given the opportunity to appeal a decision through a developed mechanism mutually satisfactory to the parties concerned;
- c) being provided an assessment and then appropriate accreditation recorded with the local system, the Ontario Ministry of Education, and where ever deemed fitting;
- d) being accorded with the equivalent fringe benefits and retirement plan as secured with the public schools.

Recommendation #4

Provisions be appropriated to improve local control and involvement by:

- a) clearly defining the role and responsibility of the Education Administrator, Education-Social counsellor, principal, teaching staff, and the maintenance staff;
- b) encouraging parents to regularly visit the school during school hours;
- c) making available the school facilities to the community for adult education, up-grading, and other educational functions;

- d) organizing regular school committee and parent-teacher meetings, and as well to include in the general Band meetings topics dealing with school issues;
- e) parent-teacher orientation workshops prior to school time in the fall.

Recommendation #5

Adequate funds be allocated to Sabaskong and made available in block funding under one Vote Control Code, to facilitate community decision-making and re-allocation of these monies, within the budget, as the community authorities deem necessary.

The recent contribution arrangements proposed and adopted by Department of Indian Affairs are a direct result of the Department purporting to support the self-government concept but in reality making the Bands "an extension of the bureaucracy" under the contribution agreements.

True self-determination includes more than a capacity to administer funds. Manuel, in his book, The Fourth World, says,

...a budget is really a statement of goals, priorities, and direction. For a developing community a budget is the program for development on which the community has agreed.²

² Manuel, George and Michael Posluns, The Fourth World: An Indian Reality, Collier Macmillan Canada, Ltd. 1974, p. 248

Recommendation #6

Adequate funding and provisions be appropriated in order that the successful implementation of many of the recommendations of parents, students, and teachers, contained in this report depend upon adequate funding and community control of education funds. Certainly the successful continuation of the Sabaskong Community School system depends upon adequate and continuation of financial support.

Recommendation #7

The limitations of this study require that a follow-up study be conducted to substantiate this report and as well to carefully analyze and evaluate the Sabaskong Community School program.

III. General Recommendations

From this case study several recommendations can be generated which can be readily applied to develop local control. The recommendations can be used specifically for intervention and change in native communities by Indian leaders who wish to take over their schools. Intervention and change are deliberate, step by step processes. Saul Alinsky, Paulo Freire, and Ivan Illich did not operate on ad hoc basis nor in a vacuum. Neither did the people at Sabaskong (O-Ne-Ga-Ming) Reserve.

The study of Native Education in Northwestern Ontario by Fritz

Schotte, 1977, argues the lack of effort to accommodate changes towards local control. Schotte says,

"Improvements of educational opportunity as well as increased local involvement...has not materialized. The philosophy stands as a guideline but no effective steps have been taken to bring about implementation. Educational administration and school programs are monopolized by non-native bureaucrats at the exclusion of native participation and community development."¹

The dissonance Schotte describes can be dichotomized as follows and applies readily to Indian education:

- a. the government bureaucrats claim that local communities show little or no interest in running education and hence the lack of Indian control and input
- b. the evidence substantiates that administrators will actively discourage local control efforts and they make no attempt to encourage and accommodate change towards grass roots participation

How then can the Indian people achieve a breakthrough? The common denominators can be clearly identified and applied; (1) the Independent Variable is IMPOSED EDUCATION, (2) the Intervening Variable is INTERVENTION and CHANGE, and (3) the Dependent Variable is LOCALLY CONTROLLED EDUCATION.

There is a series of stages for change which are essential to accomplish this development process successfully and these are:

¹ Schotte, Fritz, Native Education in Northwestern Ontario: The Ontario Northern Corps and Formal Schooling in Isolated Ojibway Communities, Department of Sociology of Education, University of Toronto, 1977, p. 148.

- A. Planning
- B. Adoption
- C. Implementation
- D. Routinization

If these steps are taken in this sequence the end goal will be achieved. Leaders and experts have to plan with the community. The local people similarly have to be involved throughout the implementation and routinization processes. If any of these stages are inadequately or poorly developed crisis phases will disrupt the change processes. This theoretical model proved itself beyond the shadow of a doubt in this case study. Others may learn from it.

Indian people have to take control. This means that Indian leaders and spokesmen have to assure broad and grass roots community participation. They have to apply an action-oriented change agents. If they have the appropriate philosophical base then the support structures can be put into place. These work processes simultaneously allow change to be formalized and legitimized. Outlining the change stages cautiously will accelerate the change processes. It is a prevention strategy to guard against unwanted interruptions. The findings of this case study and the successes of intervention in Sabaskong will serve as a model to other communities on the road to nirvana - Indian Control of Indian Education.

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A P P E N D I C E S

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARENTS

(Oral instructions - given by the writer): The following questions concern your feelings about the school that your children (child) attend now. I will keep your views and opinions in strict confidence. Your name will not appear on any of the sheets with answers. Please feel free to answer as you wish.

1. *I would like to ask questions about you and your family.*
 - A. *What is your age?*
 - B. *Where were you born?*
 - C. *What schools did you attend? How many years?*
 - D. *How many children do you have attending school? Where?*
 - E. *Why did you not continue your schooling?*
 - F. *What was the one thing you liked most about your school?*
 - G. *What was the one thing you disliked most about your school?*
 - H. *How did your experience at school make you feel about your Indian identity?*
 - I. *What do you think were the sources of this feeling?*
2. *What do you think are the most crucial problems affecting the education of Indian people?*
3. *What do you think are the most crucial problems affecting the children attending the school here at the reserve?*
4. *How would you correct the problem?*
5. *Are you in any way connected with the school affairs?
If so, how?*
6. *Are you presently participating in any of the committees related to the school? If so, which committees? If no, why not?*
7. *What is the one thing you like most about the school that your children attend now?*
8. *What is the one thing you dislike most about this school?*

9. *What are some of the things your children like about their school? (2)*
10. *What are some of the things they dislike? (2)*
11. *Do you have anything to say about the operation of the school? How is this done?*
12. *Do you attend meetings connected with your children's education? If no, why not?*
13. *How often do you visit the classrooms during the school year? If never, why?*
14. *In your opinion, does the school encourage an "open door" policy for the parents? If no, why do you think not?*
15. *What is the attitude, in your opinion, of the parents toward the school?*
16. *What is the attitude, in your opinion, of the teachers toward the school under the present set-up?*
17. *What do you think is the attitude of the children toward the school under the present set-up?*
18. *On the whole, how well do you think the parents understand what the school is trying to do?*
19. *Are you satisfied with the present situation regarding the community take-over of the schools?*
20. *If no, what changes might you want to see made?*
21. *Is there any additional information about the school which you would like to share? Do you foresee any problems?*

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR STUDENTS (June 24-25, 1980)

(Oral instructions - given by the writer): This is a survey. I am collecting opinions regarding different aspects of this community school. The results of the study will help us understand more about the way you relate and feel about it. People have different views about these questions. I would like to know your own feelings. Please do not write your name on the questionnaire. I will keep these papers in strict confidence.

1. *Questions about the individual.*
 - A. *How old are you?*
 - B. *At what grade level are you working?*
 - C. *Will you continue on in school once you have completed the school program here at the reserve?*
 - D. *If no, why not?*
 - E. *What are your future plans once you leave school?*
2. *When did you hear for the first time that your school was under the control of the community?*
3. *How did you find out about it?*
4. *What is the one thing you like about the school now?*
5. *What is the one thing you dislike about the school now?*
6. *If given an opportunity to transfer out of this school, would you do it?*
7. *If yes, where would you like to go?*
8. *Is "Indian Studies" program used in the classrooms?*
9. *Do you think that program ought to be used in the school?*
10. *If yes, why?*
11. *Generally, do you feel that the parents, students, and teachers work together supporting this community control aspect?*
12. *What is one thing you would personally see changed about it?*

13. *If you had the opportunity to change the school in any way, what would you change?*
14. *In your opinion, do the teachers feel comfortable under community autonomy? If no, why not?*
15. *How do you feel about the rules and regulations in the school?*
16. *Do you feel free to talk to your teachers?*
17. *How do your parents feel about the school on the reserve now?*
18. *Compared to other schools, how is your school different?*
19. *Do you feel that you have the freedom that you wish to have in this school?*
20. *Do you feel that your teachers are more sensitive now than before the community take-over of schools? If no, why not? If yes, explain.*
21. *Is there any additional information about the school which you would like to share?*

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

(Oral instructions - given by writer): This survey focuses on your perceptions of ways and means the school system can be improved. You have an important role as educators, to assist in helping the "take-over" to be a success. I will come around in the next few days to collect these questionnaires. Please do not identify yourself on these papers. I will keep your views in strict confidence. Thank you.

1. How many years experience have you had teaching?
2. What experience have you had with Indian people?
3. How many years experience have you had teaching Indian children?
4. What training have you had in preparation for teaching Indian children?
5. Are you Indian or Metis yourself?
6. How many years experience have you had teaching here?
7. Is "Indian Studies" program offered in your school? Do you yourself offer this program in your classroom?
8. If no, why not?
9. Do you encourage an "open door" policy to parents of your students?
10. How often do you have parents visiting your classroom? (Not counting the parent-teacher conferences)
11. Do you feel that the parents ought to become more involved in the school affairs?
12. Do you feel that the parents have become increasingly interested in the education of their children? (Take into consideration from Day 1 of your arrival to the present time)
13. What do you see as the main problem confronting your students?
14. How can that main problem be corrected?
15. Do you feel that the present educational system at Sabaskong benefits the children?

16. *If given the opportunity, what would you like to change?*
17. *In what ways could the present educational system be made more beneficial at Sabaskong?*
18. *What problems does the teacher face in the school under the local control?*
19. *Is the teacher getting the "direction" that he/she needs under the present conditions? (local autonomy)*
20. *If given the opportunity, what would you like to change in the present setting?*
21. *If given the opportunity, would you like to stay longer to teach here at Sabaskong? If so, how much longer?*

APPENDIX D

CHRONOLOGICAL EVENTS LEADING UP TO LOCAL CONTROL

- 1890's to 1960's Sabaskong (Assabaska) children age 6 to 16 attend school at three residential schools:
- St. Mary's (Roman Catholic) in Kenora
 - Cecilia Jeffrey (Presbyterian) at Shoal Lake, later Kenora
 - St. Mary's (Roman Catholic) at Fort Frances
- 1900's Oblate Fathers set up St. Anthony's School at Assabaska settlement 35C on Sabaskong Bay to educate children from Grades 1 to 4
- 1912-1923 Children now attend school or drift into residential schools; 35C school dismantled
- 1930's Sabaskong relocated to present site of O-Ne-Ga-Ming along route of Highway #1
- 1950 Day school established at Sabaskong 35D for children Grades 1 to 4. First site was in old building next to Harry Kelly's
- 1955 Day school building built at Sabaskong 35D. (Grades 1 to 4). Indian children baptized as Catholic transported to Father Moss School in Sioux Narrows (first experience at integrated education - Grade 1 to 8 - kindergarden later)
- 1973 First Social Counsellor appointed - Norman Copenace, Jr.
- 1973 Sabaskong participates with Chiefs of Northwest Angle #33, Northwest Angle #37 and Whitefish Bay to form the SWAN committee to discuss future of Father Moss School and possible transfer to Indian people
- November 1974 Sabaskong parents withdraw children from Father Moss School - no longer wishing the children to be subjected to 60-mile a day bus ride, what parents consider to be inadequate education and preparation for outside world, and protesting lack of native involvement

- December 1974 Establishment of Sabaskong elementary school under control of Sabaskong Band Council. Parents and interested Band members elected to advisory education committee. With assistance of Ojibway Tribal Education Incorporated, Sabaskong Council and Band Administrator, Bob Kelly, seek to hire new teachers. Meetings with Department of Indian Affairs and Kenora Separate School Board officials lead to acceptance of new Indian-controlled system; books, supplies, and desks transferred from Father Moss to Sabaskong
- January 1975 Sabaskong elementary school with two teachers hired by the Band and one under contract to the Department of Indian Affairs teach kindergarden to Grade 8
- 1975-1976 Sabaskong school continues operation under new staffing
- October 6, 1975 Cultural-educational workshop
- 1976-1977 Sabaskong school continues kindergarden to Grade 8, with Sabaskong Day Care Centre opening in October 1976
- January 1977 Sabaskong high school students - as with students from past years - object to high school attendance policies, living away from home, boarding home situations, state preference to remain on reserve
- March 1977 Meeting during spring break with high school students, Band Council, Band staff and parents, interested Band members, to discuss problems in high school
- April 1977 Sabaskong administration handles one Department of Indian Affairs education program
- April 1977 Professional Development Day at Sabaskong - all high school students attend with parents, Band members, staff and representatives of West Fort and Fort Frances high schools and Department of Indian Affairs.
 - decision reached to establish high school at Sabaskong by September 1977
 - general Band meeting that evening - Sabaskong Band Council given mandate to establish high

school at Sabaskong this fall
- negotiations with the Department of Indian
Affairs begin

May 1977

Advertise for high school teachers - over 300
replies

June 1977

Four teachers hired to teach 11 subjects for
Grades 9 to 11, with Grade 12 being offered in the
year 1978-79 - teachers attend orientation session
organized by Sabaskong Band members - Education
Administrator met with Ministry of Education to
discuss co-operative relationship and recognition
of credit course in Ojibway culture

August 1977

Three elementary and four secondary teachers
begin contract

September 1977

O-Ne-Ga-Ming Kino Ma Teo Gamik begins - preschool
to secondary school with continuing education and
credit courses for adults.

APPENDIX EPhilosophy of the Sabaskong School and Goals of Local Control of Education

Sabaskong residents believe that education is of immense importance to the future of our young and our community. By taking the steps to re-establish the elementary school on the reserve but under local direction, Sabaskong has demonstrated its faith in education as a vehicle to enable and encourage growth through learning for individuals and the community as a whole.

The philosophy of the Sabaskong School is to promote the growth of the individual through learning about self, the community, and the world. Our educational program is designed to foster growth in all aspects of the individual - intellectual, physical, spiritual, cultural and emotional.

Goals:1. To develop a positive self-image of the student.

This achievement is fundamental to any learning taking place. Before the student can learn to question and to resolve these questions, he or she must first believe in the ability of oneself and the value of oneself.

2. To develop an awareness and pride in the native identity of the student.

Hand in hand with a positive self-image is the need for an Indian child to know what it means to be an Anish-nawby, an Ojibway, a North American Indian, and to be proud of the accomplishments of our people and our contributions to society. Through all means available such as local resource people, native curriculum and teachers, the student will develop this awareness. And through being treated with respect and the expectation of carrying on great traditions, the student will learn pride.

3. To strengthen cultural traditions of Sabaskong Anish-nawbay.

The school would become the centre of activities. As the elders teach our young about the Ojibway way of life, and the children begin to integrate this wisdom with their knowledge of the world, our culture will develop and continue.

We recognize that the lethargy and despair which characterized the reserves of the 1950's and 1960's was the result of the oppression of our people by the outside influences of the government and the church. Through knowledge of our roots and by regaining the wisdom of the ages, our people will draw strength for generations to come. We also recognize that Anish-nawbay in 1976 would have trouble adjusting to 1726 Indian culture. We are the same people - but our culture has adapted to changing times and conditions - as our people have.

4. To develop an individual's ability and competency in educational tasks.

Sabaskong parents are very much concerned that the children be equipped to live and make a living in the world within and without the reserve. Competency in the core curriculum of reading, writing and problem-solving is considered essential.

5. To promote a sense of the joy of learning.

Indian people have never isolated learning as a separate part of one's life to be instructed five days a week. We have always believed that learning is an integral part of life and continues as long as one is aware and observant. Hunting ducks with one's grandfather, reading the weather, standing and talking with friends around an imaginary council fire - these are all activities of learning - and worthwhile.

6. To involve community residents in a co-operative effort of learning from each other to determine for ourselves the decisions which affect our community.

We view the Sabaskong school as a pivotal point in the history of

the development of our reserve as a self-reliant community. As more and more of our Band members share their knowledge, take part in the activities, and assist in making decisions about the school, so too do they participate in making local control a reality. The school, in many ways, will be serving as the training ground in developing leadership and decision-making skills essential to determining our own future as a community.

7. To encourage other native communities to develop educational programs to promote a positive self-image and native identity through the country.

The approaches employed, curriculum developed, and results attained will be documented for other Indian communities to learn from and utilize in creating other programs to further our goals of self-worth and native pride.

Sabaskong Djiway Band

P.O. BOX 160, NESTOR FALLS, ONTARIO
TELEPHONE: (807) 484-5245

SABASKONG BAND COUNCIL

PRESENTATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

APRIL 14, 1975.

We, the Sabaskong Band Council, rather slowly but surely, have reached the conclusion that the present educational system for our people is a stark failure. We have known about this failure now for years, but generally speaking, we have done very little about it. Recommendations for change that were made to the government were rebuffed so badly that, at times, we appeared to have given up.

We just cannot and must not give up the dream. We had better get a true educational system and get it in a hurry, before it is too late. Our people, especially our restless young, will no longer tolerate much longer the human waste and destruction the present establishment produces. Our citizens will no longer tolerate second-class citizenship, impoverished living, inferior education, unemployment, unemployability, and general alienation. We can no longer tolerate educational failure. It has become too costly in money, social injustice, and unrest. This situation is intolerable.

We are by history and usually very reasonable. No group in our society has been more patient and tolerant than the Indian people. We have not only believed in the ultimate triumph of freedom and democracy, we have tried to convince our people that regardless of the problems and sufferings

we face, education holds the solutions. Especially, we have held that education is the escalator that moves people from lower-class poverty and misery to human dignity and comfort. For us, education is imperative, because it is the only way we can make good on the promise we have held for a century, namely, that through education Mankind can become the master of its own destiny.

APPENDIX G

THE SABASKONG BAND COUNCIL

Re: Control of Education by the Sabaskong Band

With respect to the local control of education by the members of the Sabaskong Band, it has been decided tentatively that:

1. The Sabaskong Band Council will act as the band's education authority.

Two basic options were considered. One was the formation of a school committee; the other was to have the Band Council operate as the educational authority. The latter seemed more in keeping with the concept that the elected Council is the Band's decision making body in matters of local self-government.

2. The Sabaskong Band Council will establish an Educational Advisory Committee to advise the Council on matters referred to it by the Council.

This committee will have representatives from parent, teacher and student groups in the community. Its chairman will be a member of the Band Council. It will meet at least once a month and other times at the request of the members or of the Council. Its role will be advisory only, and its advice will be communicated to the Council through the chairman.

3. The Sabaskong Band Council will establish a "private" school for the band's approximately 60 K-8 students and for adult education. The term

"private" is a legal word which is used to distinguish this school from the provincially supported schools of the province. The Sabaskong School, when created, will not be eligible to obtain financial support from the

Province of Ontario and, hence, by definition, will be a private school.

4. The Sabaskong Band Council will request the Indian Community Secretariat to investigate, on the Band's behalf, the possibilities for obtaining the status of a special school board. The Ontario Ministry of Education has indicated that it will look with favor upon requests to create special school boards for Indian bands. This would make it possible for the Ontario Ministry of Education to provide direct support to Indian education.

5. Financing of the Sabaskong School will be in the form of a 100 per cent grant from the Indian Affairs Branch and will be based on an annual submission from the Band to the IAB.

6. The powers and responsibilities of the Band Council with respect to education will include, but will not necessarily be limited to, the following matters:

- a) provide programs of instruction for students from pre-kindergarten through grade eight and for adult education.
- b) appoint by resolution officials, administrators, teachers, aides, janitorial and other personal.
- c) establish and administer a system for the medical inspection of pupils.
- d) provide apparatus, materials, and supplies for instruction and other educational purposes including school sports and games, cultural enrichment, and so on.
- e) establish a system of reporting at all levels so as to be aware

of progress in achieving purposes.

- f) prepare an annual budget.
- g) negotiate with the Department of Indian Affairs and other agencies to obtain grants for educational purposes.
- h) be accountable for the proper use of the Band's educational funds.
- i) develop appropriate personnel policies, including the determination of employee benefits.
- j) provide opportunities for the professional development of employees.

7. The Sabasking Band Council may name one of its members to act as the Council's Education Coordinator. The governance and administration of an Indian community involves a complex variety of functions and activities. The Council, for reasons of specialization and an efficient division of labor, may organize itself into a number of portfolios with each member being given major responsibilities for different functions and activities.

8. The Band Council will appoint a Chief Education Officer to advise the Council on policy matters and to administer aspects of the educational program assigned to him by the Council. The Sabaskong Band Council is committed to the principle that the Band should develop its own educational programs and operate its own school. At the same time, the Council recognizes that the Band does not now have all of the expertise required to plan, develop and administer an educational program. Consequently, the Council has decided to hire a Chief Education Officer with a dual purpose - to assist the Council in the administration of its educational program and to help the members of the Council and other employees of the Band to

develop the expertise to administer their own educational affairs. In order to fulfill these dual purposes the Chief Education Officer will be a person of proven administrative ability and also capable of transmitting his skills to others. The term of this appointment would be approximately twelve months, from July 1, 1975 to June 30, 1976.

9. The Sabaskong Band Council will seek a grant of \$107,050.00 from the Department of Indian Affairs for the operation of its school and Adult Education Programs in 1975-76. It is understood that these funds will be paid to the Band in quarterly installments commencing July 1, 1975. A detailed budget with comments regarding programs, etc., is attached.

SARASKONG EDUCATION AUTHORITY

PROPOSED BUDGET, 1975 - 1976 and 1976 - 77

(Fiscal Year July 1 - June 30)

EXPENDITURE ITEM	ESTIMATE 1975-76	ESTIMATE 1976-77	COMMENT
<u>Administration</u>			
1. Chief Executive Officer	\$ 15,000	\$ Nil	
2. Stenographic Services	1,500	1,750	
3. Travel - Chief Executive	1,500	900	
Officer and Council Members			
4. Honoraria for 3 Councilors	750	750	An accepted practice in public school systems
for 10 meetings at \$25.00 per meeting			
5. Office Supplies, Phones, etc.	1,500	1,750	
6. Office space, heat, etc.	Nil	Nil	Donated by Hand
7. Auditors	500	500	
<u>Instruction</u>			
1. Principal's Allowance	Nil	\$ 2,000	In 1976-77 a principal will be appointed to some of the duties of the Chief Education Officer. \$13,000 is the average salary of Ontario teachers
2. Teachers Salaries (2)	\$ 26,000	28,000	
3. Teacher Aides (2)	10,000	11,000	
4. Social Counsellor	9,000	10,000	
5. Staff Benefits at 6% of above	2,700	3,060	
Sub totals	\$ 20,750	\$ 5,650	

<p>6. Social Counsellor's Expenses 7. Honorarium for Sports Director 8. Books and supplies at \$50 per student 9. Library at \$20 per student 10. Sports Equipment at \$20 per student 11. Local resources re Languages, etc. 12. Outdoor Education 13. Travel Exchange 14. Consultative Services</p>	<p>\$ 1,000 2,000 3,000 1,200 1,200 1,500 1,500 2,000 2,000 2,000 1,200</p>	<p>\$ 62,800</p>	<p>Sub totals \$ 69,660</p>
<p>1. Honoraria for teachers 2. Materials and supplies</p>	<p>4,500 5,000 1,000</p>	<p>5,500</p>	<p>Sub totals</p>
<p>Adult Education</p>		<p>Non Resident High School Students</p>	<p>Very conservative estimates</p>
<p>These costs will be borne directly by DIAND for the time being. The Sabaskong Band Council will periodically re-examine high school education to determine whether it should develop programs at this level as well.</p>			

Facilities and Maintenance

- 1. Janitorial Services
- 2. Heat, Light, Insurance, etc.
- 3. Supplies
- 4. Repairs, Renovations, etc.

	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,500
	4,000	4,500
	2,000	2,500
	6,000	8,000
Sub totals	\$ 18,000	\$ 21,500
Grand totals	\$ 107,050	\$ 102,910

Sabaskong Gibway Band

P.O. BOX 160, NESTOR FALLS, ONTARIO
TELEPHONE: (807) 484-5245

April 17, 1975

Mr. H.B. Rodine
Regional Director for Ontario
Department of Indian Affairs &
Northern Development
55 St. Clair Avenue East
TORONTO, Ontario M4T 2P8

Dear Mr. Rodine:

Re: Control of Education by the Sabaskong Band

Let me outline for you the general intent of the discussions which we, the Band Council, wish to have with you today. My remarks here are not intended to deprecate the results of our recent meeting with Mr. M. Rehaluk, your Regional Superintendent of Education, and hopefully, will not endanger our chances of future fruitful negotiations.

1. We intend to have complete control of our schools in Sabaskong. How this will be achieved by the Band is spelled out in the attached presentation. When this is possible is up to both parties, namely, your Department and our Band. The mechanisms for such accomplishment was stated to us by Mr. Rehaluk and we are satisfied that we take the necessary and formal procedures.
2. We intend to have 3 qualified teachers, one being a principal, employed by the Band Council, for approximately 60 (k-8) students. It is also our intention to hire a native teacher-aide. It was emphatically asserted to us, by Mr. Rehaluk, that this may be possible but no commitment could be made at this time. We know that if our children are to benefit academically and individually, the hiring of 3 teachers, plus the teacher-aide is essential and must be made possible by your Department.

.../2

Mr. H.B. Rodine

- 2 -

April 17, 1975

3. We intend to evaluate the performance of the teachers presently at Sabaskong now. This is essential for next year's plans. We were told that this could be done with the newly hired teachers but, in no way, shape or form, will the Federally employed teacher be assessed by us. We have, at our disposal, a local professional educator and we are satisfied that he can evaluate for our Band. There has been very little supervision, let alone evaluation, done by the Fort Frances District Superintendent up until now, because of his heavy work load. We appreciate his commitments, but from here on we intend to handle this function.
4. We intend to play a major role in designing school programs that will be beneficial to our people and meet the satisfaction of the Ontario Ministry of Education. We have our local resource people and, through Ojibway Tribal Education Inc., professional resources to make this a reality. What we do not have, in our possession, is adequate funding to keep pace with the needs. For instance, to develop the teaching of oral and written Ojibway language, local history, instructional materials, teaching kits and aids, and so forth, requires substantial amounts of financial resources. A commitment of \$1,800.00 was made by Mr. Rehaluk for the development of the above and we know that this is insufficient.

The general terms have not yet been agreed upon. Nevertheless, we are trying to pull together different alternatives for consideration by your Department as well as by ourselves. The attached document represents our needs but I suppose it has to go through several layers of hierarchy and bureaucracy before any reasonable commitment is made.

I hope that this outlines sufficiently well your understanding of the discussions that went on before today and understand fully our intentions. Let me conclude by saying that we are very optimistic as a result of our meetings with you and we are hopeful that you will do your utmost to ensure we obtain just more than the minimum facilities and minimum opportunities.

Working with you has been a pleasure.

Yours very truly,

Chief Stanley Indian
Sabaskong Ojibway Band

OJIBWAY CULTURE
P R O G R E S S R E P O R T

IN MY CLASSES THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES WERE DONE:

1. OJIBWAY LANGUAGE
2. POW-WOW DANCING AND HOOP LESSONS
3. BEADING; HEADBANDS; BELTS; AND NECKLACES
4. MINIATURE MUKLUKS AND LEATHER MITTS - GLOVES
5. MAKING DANCE HOOPS
6. SKINNING, STRETCHING, AND LACING BEAVER PELTS
7. CARVING PIPESTONE; CARVING; PADDLE MAKING; TOMAHAWKS
8. POW-WOW CUSTUMES AND OUTFITS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS
9. LEARNED HOW TO BUILD WIGWAMS AND SMOKE HOUSES (TANNING HIDES)
10. ART BEADWORK ON HIDES
11. MAKING SNOWSHOES AND LACES
12. MAKING JINGLE DRESSES FOR LADY POW-WOW CUSTUMES

IN THE FUTURE OTHER PROJECTS THAT WE WILL BE DOING INCLUDE:

1. MAKING TRADITIONAL SHIRTS WITH FRINGES
2. MAKING OF DANCING SHAWLS
3. MAKING OF MOCCASINS
4. MAKE DANCE DRESSES
5. MORE WORK ON HIDE AND LEATHER
6. MORE CARVING (TOTEM POLES)
7. TEACH AND LEARN OJIBWAY LEGENDS
8. TEACH AND LEARN TRIBAL CHANTS AND SONGS
9. TEACH AND LEARN DRUMMING AND DANCING

FOR NO.S 8 AND 9 MR. WILLIE BIG GEORGE WILL BE COMING TO TEACH

Mrs. Louise Shebagegit

TEACHER

APPENDIX J

RE: Cultural-Educational Workshop
 Sabaskong Reserve
 October 6, 1975

This is the first of a series of workshops that will be held at Sabaskong. This meeting is the result of the need to involve parents, teachers, and students towards the development of bi-cultural and bilingual programs in the schools.

Approximately 30 people attended including teachers of the Sabaskong Community School. Among the distinguished guests and speakers to accompany Mary Lou (Fox) Radulovich, Ojibway Cultural Foundation, West Bay, Ontario, were:

Ernestine Buswa, Sagamok School (Principal), Spanish River Reserve, Massey, Ontario
 Isla Dafoe, Indian Community Secretariat, Toronto, Ontario
 Keith Lickers, Ministry of Education, Totonto, Ontario
 Smith Atlmoyoo, Cultural College, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
 Cecil King, Indian Teacher Education Program, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Mary Lou's presentation included as follows:

Philosophies

Goals - to make the children bi-cultural and bilingual
 Identity - need firm foundation in who they are, etc.
 need positive reinforcement of culture, history
 and language

Programs

Language - Ojibway immersion for four-year olds. The children do not speak the language themselves but hear their parents at home.

High School - Art Club set up to meet and keep materials
 Use children's illustration to use their language
 and cultural books

Public School - Indian Week; immersion in all types of activities

Workshops - leatherwork - to find out people's needs
 developed slides on the process of leatherwork, beadwork,
 etc.

Local people - used as resource people for children's education
helpers on matters/activities concerning reserve
people

Special school for drop-outs - the students choose what they wish
to learn

Resource Materials

Slide presentation - need growing sense of belonging to Indian
culture
non-Indians also need to learn about the
native ways
sights on slide of important places on
Manitoulin Island to the Indian people

Units on smoking fish, sweetgrass, buildings in the community.

Collecting old pictures to tell history of the reserve and its
people

"What is an Indian" - Paul Ortega (Apache)
- held together by culture
- fought against overwhelming odds
- Peace Treaty
- proud
- how important it is to gain an education
in contemporary world

APPENDIX K

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE SABASKONG CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The Curriculum Development Project became a reality at the end of October 1975 when five fieldworkers were hired on a part-time basis to collect the history of the reserve and begin to compile it in usable forms for the school.

The terms of reference for this project were devised by the Band Council in consultation with Ojibway Tribal Education Inc. The Band Council selected the field workers to represent all parts of our population - elders, women, youth. With the assistance of O.T.E.I. and AEDIS Education Advisors, professors Bruce Sealey and Tony Riffle, the Band Council, Education Administrator and the curriculum group set to work. Main areas of activity were decided upon and considered for their usefulness in the schools:

- locating and collecting artifacts from old Indian settlements of Sabaskong members
- photographing the old settlements and important sites such as the grave houses, pow-wow circle, house remains,
- collecting old photographs from Band members presently residing on the reserve
- locating and collecting crafts still made at Sabaskong
- collecting legends and stories, maps, and family lineages.

Each staff member was appointed the main responsibility for each area. Sabaskong field worker for O.T.E.I., Douglas Kelly, co-ordinated the activities of the group; Tony Copenace, Education Administrator, oversaw the financing and general administration of the program.

The fairly good weather of November 1975 allowed the group to proceed right away to visit two of the old reserves on Sabaskong Bay, Lake of the Woods, at Burrow Bay and Stevens Bay, to search for artifacts and remnants of the settlement. Among the articles collected were: arrowheads, pipestone pipes, pottery pieces, medicine bundle, hide scraper, old pots, saws, and a model T! A preliminary consultation with the Lake of the Woods Museum on the possible age of the pottery found indicates that some may be examples of the Laurel period of 600 to 800 years ago; some may predate this by some 1,000 years to the Laurentian period. Photographs were also taken of these sites so that maps may be made later of the settlement pattern of the old reserves, last inhabited 40 to 100 years ago.

AGHEE MUG

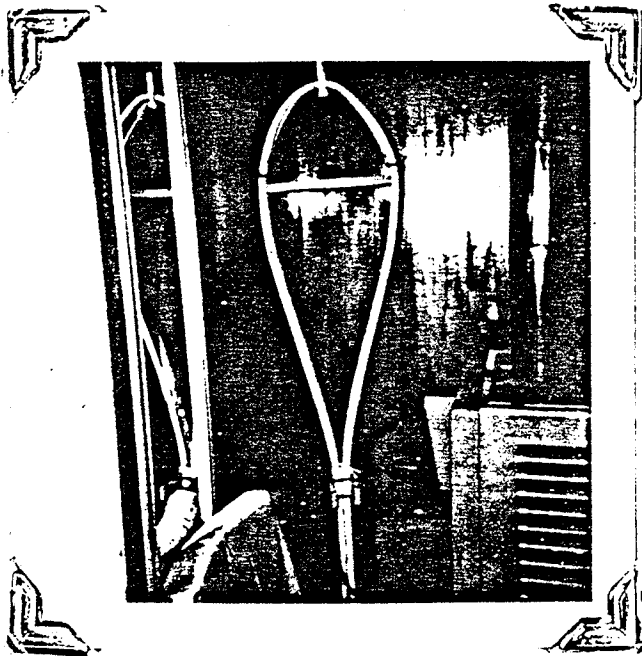
(Snowshoes)

For the Anish-nah-beg, a-ghee-mug or snowshoes were essential to winter survival and hunting.

The wooden frame was generally made of ash; the netting was produced from deer, moose or caribou hide.

Gerald Copenace in Progress of Making Snowshoes

First got ash tree, cut it straight. Boiled water in a pail and place the centre of the poles across the pail. Wet a towel and place it on the centre of the poles. Step on the centre and bend it.



Placed cross-pieces in the centre and in the middle of the bented poles. Tied them at the ends and dried them for a few days, till they're dry. That way they don't come apart.

Took cross-pieces off and left them tied at the ends.



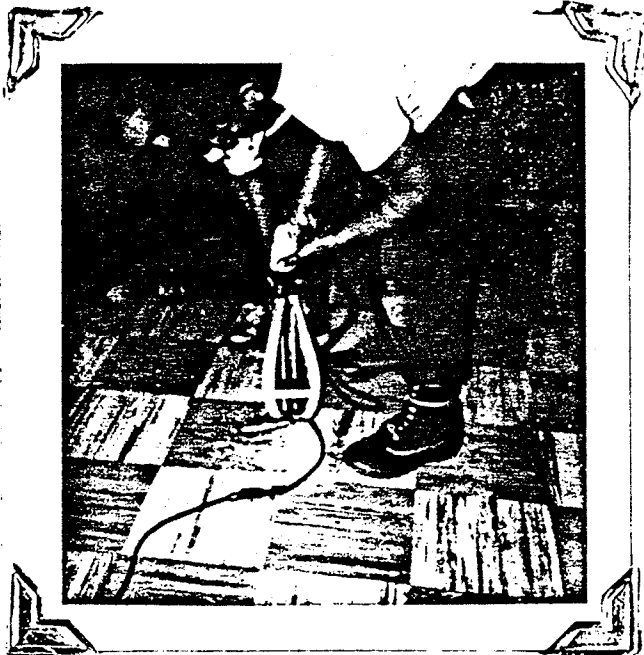


Carving out little squares
on the inside of snowshoe
structure.

Now, making cross-bars
to fit in the squares.



Drilled holes on the outsides
of the structure for mesh
weaving.



The snowshoe structures are still tied together. Gerald shown, drilling holes.

Cutting the hide in long strips to go on snowshoes.



Maggie Copenace shown weaving the bottom after finishing the top.



Finishing the weaving
required at bottom.

Gerald in the final stage
of finishing snowshoes.
He is now weaving the
middle part of the snow-
shoes.



Gerald with finished
snowshoes.

NATIVE STUDIES: THE OJIBWAY LEGACYObjectives:

To assist native people in the study and discovery of the inner meanings of the Ojibway history and culture

To carry out an interdisciplinary study of the Ojibway legacy (geography, history, environment, sociology, ..)

To foster the awareness on the part of native young people of the importance and significance of Ojibway culture.

Course Outline:

The course has been designed to be culturally consistent so that the students will learn and seek meanings as they would be found according to the traditional ways which our elders - and younger - still follow. For this reason, we have paid strict adherence to the seasons as the Ojibway people live them. Our course outline is based upon the revelations of nature through the months of the year.

The best way in which we could describe the course is to picture a circle - a sacred concept in Indian thinking - a neverending link between the past and the future, signifying the life of our people, the continuation of the Ojibway through the ages and through a lifetime, oneness with all living things. The circle contains all the elements of our course and shows the natural progression from each section to the next. (see exhibit 1)

Using differing teaching methods, the instructor and resource people will involve the students in discussion, research, investigation, readings, and documentation and analysis of the following topics:

1. local history
2. Treaty #3 - Treaties & Aboriginal rights
3. Politics and organizations
4. The Indian Act - development, present day, future revisions
5. Ojibway Legends - the story of our people
6. Native law and social control mechanisms
7. Ojibway sociology - relationships past and present within communities
8. Cross-cultural relations - native and non-native; tribalism; Pan-Indian movement
9. Ojibway Medicine & Religion
10. Ojibway Culture - comparison with other native tribes

Each one of these topics will be considered during a four week time period. During each of these months, however, there will be time for the introduction of items basic to our culture: crafts, skills, art and music. As the months and seasons unfold, some skills will be introduced as required. For instance, in September, rice harvesting and curing will be studied in detail as this is the month when these skills are practiced. Similarly, trapping, fishing, hunting, tann:

will all be studied during the time in which they are practiced by reserve residents. In this way, we will be able to draw on the knowledge and talent of the people of our community and have the students actually participate in the development of their own skills and knowledge.

Likewise, with crafts, beadwork may be introduced at any time but weaving of birchbark and ash must be done when the trees are appropriate for stripping. Using the natural materials of the bush for art would mean that certain berries, tree barks and sap, animals must be gathered in preparation for this work.

This requires some flexibility in the course so that while each month has a designated topic, the important crafts, skills, art and music will be an integral part of the course throughout the whole year.

A detailed course outline is attached in Exhibit 2.

Teaching Approach and Methodology:

The instructor will be a native person qualified to teach under the Ontario Ministry of Education standards. It is basic to the Ojibway way of passing on knowledge that this person act as a facilitator so that the students will make their own investigations and draw their own conclusions. Thus, there will be many class discussions, lectures and demonstrations by elders and other resource people from the community, fieldtrips throughout the reserve and Lake of the Woods, and independent research into archives and libraries containing native history, geography of the area, etc.

As well, students will be expected to review a number of books which have relevance to the course such as Mis-Quona-Queb, Great Leader of the Ojibway, Grassy Narrows, The Historical Development of the Indian Act, Custer Died for Your Sins, The Rebirth of Canada's Indians and other texts either written by or about native people. Books such as The Ojibway Woman, The Sacred Scrolls of the Southern Ojibway and others will be discussed with the elders to discover what has been lost in translation and cross-cultural interpretation. However, the growing library of Indian history and literature will form an important part of the course.

Our main emphasis will be upon learning from our elders while they are with us. We will ask the older people of our community to accompany the class on fieldtrips throughout the reserves to explain historical events, cultural meanings, and the land use of the area. We will listen to legends, join people on the trapline, watch and learn how birchbark turns from part of the tree to a beautifully carved basket. We will ask for the elders help in tracing the families lines, names, development of Indian government - and many other issues which are crucial to learning the deeper meaning of the Ojibway legacy.

In this respect, cassette tapes, videotapes, and film will be used by the students to a very great extent to record what the elders tell us and to document what we learn. Students will be required to develop an audio-visual exhibit for the edification of other reserve members. The beginnings of a Sabaskong Museum will be one result of the work of the students.

Films and filmstrips will be used by students to learn about the Ojibway and other tribes through National Film Board, Indian Cultural Centres across Canada and the United States. As well, students will be required to cooperate on the development of a film or filmstrip to reflect what they have learned within the course.

Evaluation by the instructor of the students will be based upon student participation in discussions, lecture notes, research reports, book reviews, participation in fieldtrips and craft/skill lessons, and preparation of audio-visual materials.

One class of 45 minutes duration per school day or 4 hours of classes per week will be the time assigned to this native studies course within the whole curriculum of the high school.

Resources:

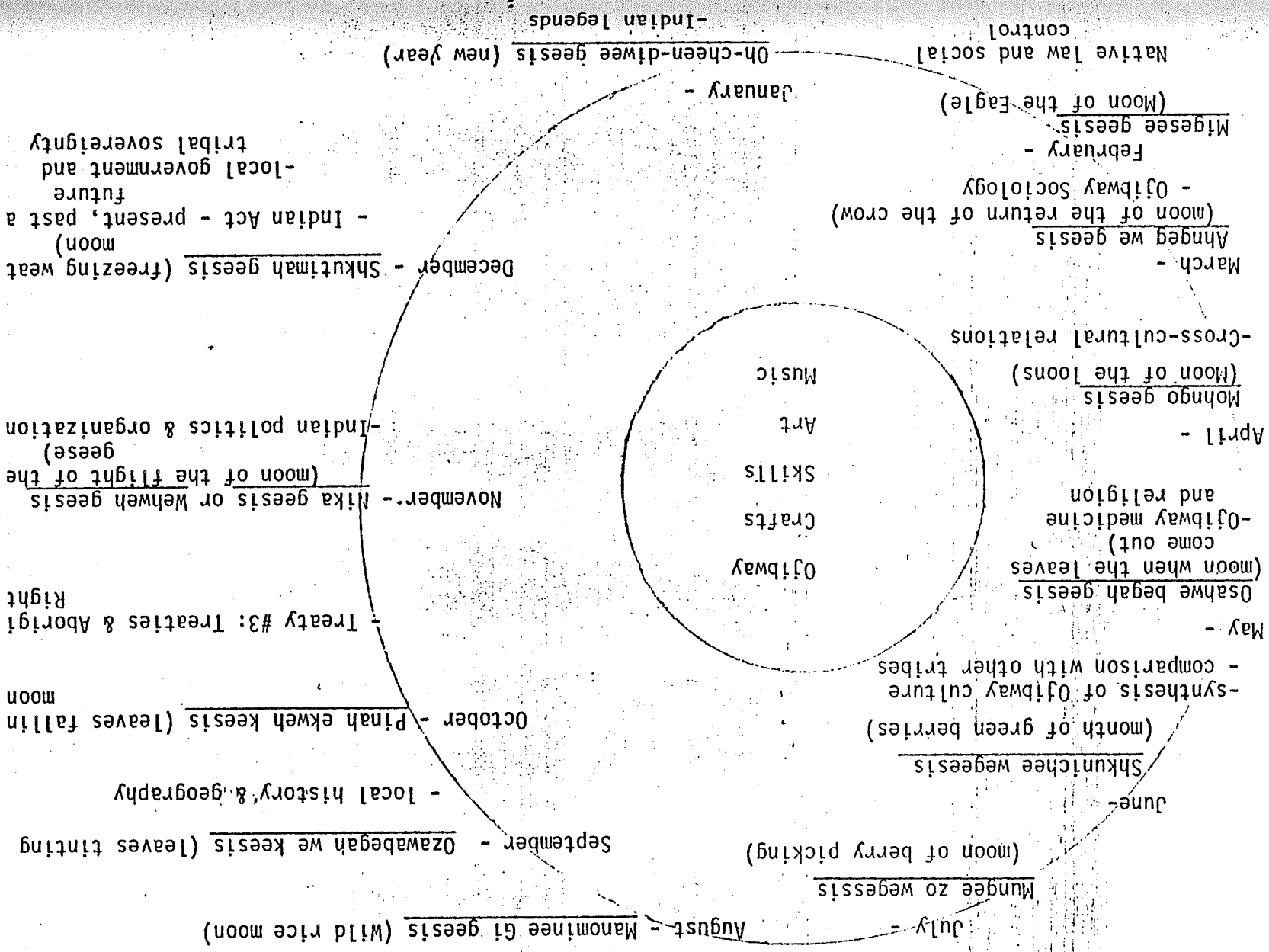
Sabaskong is an ideal community in which to undertake such a course for the first time. Many of our elders, notably Stewart Jack, Shawahn and Gerald Copenace, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Indian and others, are intensely interested in passing on their knowledge to younger people. Most of our young people speak Ojibway and are able to converse with the elders in their own language and to interpret for the ones who cannot.

In a curriculum development project two years ago, several band members collected old and present day photographs which could be used and documented by the high school students to increase their understanding of the way our people used to live and compare it with today. As well, we have several excellent maps outlining the original surveys of the reserves, the Treaty #3 area with explorers' routes, traditional land use, and present day surveys and land use. We have available through the Grand Council Treaty #3, historical information regarding the Treaty, and from the National Indian Brotherhood, information regarding previous, present, and proposed future Indian Acts. Films and filmstrips are readily available from several sources as are books which will be available from regional as well as our proposed new library.

The natural environment and the reserve are resources which we can use at all times of the year and which we will be studying in several different ways.

Basically, it will be the people who make our course - the students, the elders, the instructor, the reserve residents, and outside resource people.

Exhibit 1: Schematic Diagram of Native Studies: The Ojibway Legacy Course



1. Ozawa begah we geesis (moon of the leaves tinting) September
-Local History and geography of Sabaskong Bay and Lake of the Woods, Treaty #3 and Northwestern Ontario
-through our eyes - elders, fieldtrips
-through their eyes - maps, textbooks, explorers' records, etc.

2. Pinah ekweh keesis (moon of the leaves falling) October
-Treaty #3: Treaties & Aboriginal Rights
-an examination of the Treaty from our elders and government points of view
-meaning of contract relationship, promises made under the treaty and their meaning today
-an overview of the meaning of treaties and aboriginal rights from the 1763 Proclamation to the 1975 James Bay agreement and the 1977 Berger Report

3. Nika geesis (moon of the flight of the wild geese) November
-Indian politics and organizations
-an examination of the development of present day native organizations and their relationships with government to those of the past
ie. from chiefs councils throughout Lake of the Woods pre-dating the Treaty 1873 to 1970s Joint National Indian Brotherhood - Federal Cabinet meetings

4. Shkutimah geesis (freezing weather moon) December
-The Indian Act
-investigation of the historical development of the Indian Act
-review of 1950 Indian Act still in use today and its effects on reserves and Indian people
-review of proposals for revisions to the present Act and preparation of submission to National Indian Brotherhood

5. Oh-cheen-diwee-geesis (New Year) January
-Indian legends
-review of legends as told by our elders to examine what we can learn about how Ojibway people think and view the world, where our people came from, moral codes,..
-comparison with other tribes' legends as recorded in books and tapes
-emphasis on Ojibway legends

6. Migesee geesis (moon of the eagle)

February

-Native Law and social control

- the students would concern themselves with the past first to learn from the elders and the legends how Ojibway people would live together ; what types of behaviour were approved of, tolerated and prohibited; how people were kept in line,..
- the study would proceed to how Ojibway control mechanisms were disrupted by missionaries, settlers, government and what has resulted today
- further investigation as to how traditional mechanisms could be adapted to modern day life (eg. tribal courts)

7. Ahndeg we geesis (moon of the return of the crow)

March

-Ojibway Sociology

- investigation of relationships within Ojibway society - families, totems (clan system), extended families religion, government, economics, politics,...

8. Mohngo geesis (moon of the return of the loon)

April

-Cross-Cultural Relations

- an examination of Indian-white relationships and inter-tribal relationships with a view toward the Movement of Aboriginal Peoples

9. Osahwe-begah geesis (moon when the leaves come out)

May

- Ojibway medicine and religion

- Learning about the Midewin religion of the Ojibway with its meaning yesterday and today - herbal cures, the shaking tent, seat lodge, and other ceremonies as well as the birchbark scrolls will be considered

10. Shkunichee we gessis (moon of the green berries)

June

- synthesis of Ojibway culture - review of course and summary
- comparison with other tribes to some extent in recognizing similarities and differences attached to geography and history unique to each tribe

APPENDIX N

PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF CANADA

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CALL NUMBER

COTE

RG 10, Volume 6030

DATE

OCT 17 1979

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uniquement. Le récipiendaire sera tenu responsable
de toute infraction au droit de propriété de ce
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192035

256 Lehigh Ave. Philadelphia

Oct 27-1899.

Hon. C. D. Tilton

Minister of the Interior -

Hon & dear Sir.

I have seen Mr Laird's Report
of the Grant of \$600. towards the
new school house on the Lehigh River
and I think it will be forthcoming shortly.

The Contract price was \$800. of which I
am expecting the \$200 from the Missionary
Board. When the contract was made we
made our estimate on the ground that that
timber could be cut on the reserve from which
we could make all the lower joists - and rafters.

The Indians had also signified their willingness
to do the laboring work - such as getting stones
dipping cellar &c. - But when the contractor
had taken down his cargo of materials and
reached the reserve a distance of about 120
miles he found that the Indians would not
allow a stick of timber to be cut, neither would
they work even at large wages on any part
of the building. Carpenters at \$2.50 a day had to
be employed to do laborer's work - and an extra
expense was incurred in getting the additional
joists - and rafters from Red Bank. And the
contractor puts in a claim for \$150 extra.

... in our mind that the
 ... to ... - (But the point is
 who should pay the money - This necessitates
 a consideration as to the cause of the
 change in the attitude of the Indians -

These Indians are Chippewas (of the
 Ojibwa nation) and the same people who
 were recently at war with the United States
 on the Northern limits of Minnesota -

They are intermarrying frequently with
 our Canadian tribes - and they are a pretty
 determined lot of men - It appears that
 there is a deep feeling of discontent among
 them concerning the cutting of timber off
 some of their reserve, by the Keewatin Lumber
 Company pursuant to Privileges granted
 the said company by the Can. Government
 many years ago - They say they have never
 had any returns for this timber, and the
 thing has never been explained to them -

Mr. McDougall will write you about this
 I think.

Then when the teacher
 was very popular among them, just before
 last Christmas they wanted him to get them
 liquor, which he refused and they were angry
 and kept the children from school. They asked
 for his removal, but the Department sent a
 Commission and after enquiry saw no fault

I am your most obedient
 and advise you -
 I shall be pleased to make reply
 in anything further that you would like
 right, you will be the first thing - of course
 putting the case before you that I am
 answer - of an answer that my
 that the Department should pay the
 cannot this reference - it seems to me
 interest and in their private life
 As the Indians are the most miserable
 any knowledge for there are the people
 help as they had agreed to do - I hope
 let it was supposed that the Indians would
 on the old building. When the contract was
 their report which was ready in London
 was said as you are aware about the fact
 and decided not to have a report - nothing
 made - after which all the tribes had arrived
 building. But matter until after the treaty was
 general house and you think of the fact for the
 the Indian had asked for the
 we are continued in the kitchen - read

118209-1

201431

27 JUL 26 1900
111 26 111

Department of Indian Affairs,
Ottawa, 23rd, July, 1900.

~~11111~~

The Secretary,

[Handwritten signature]

Inspector Leveque in his annual report to the 30th June last makes the following remarks in regard to the Assabaska Band, Rat Portage Agency:—

Education.— There is a school in operation on this reserve. The same misunderstanding existing last year between the teacher and the band regarding religious instruction has repeated itself, and in consequence the school-house has been closed the last two quarters. A new school-house has been finished and completed during the year, and it is hoped that a better understanding will prevail in the future.

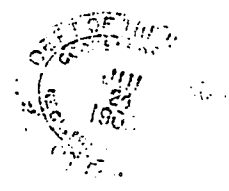
The ^{words} ~~sentences~~ underlined have been struck out of the report.

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Am. P. 118208

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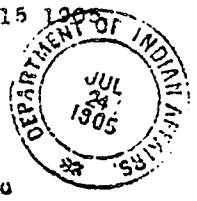
Sabaskoshing,

Treaty Payments, July 15 1905

To the

Honorable Minister of the Interior,

Ottawa, Ontario



Honorable Sir:-

We the undersigned Indians of the Sabiskong Reserve are very sorry that there is talk of making a change in the teacher on the Reserve. You promised in the Treaty to regard our wishes and we humbly pray that you will let our present teacher stay as we all love him. We have had two teachers before and they did not do us any good. If you send us another now one we will not send our children to school. Our present teacher has helped us and done us good. We do not want another teacher but want the one we have now and we humbly pray that you will listen to the appeal of your

Humble Servants:-



Signed	Head Chief,	His X Mark	Powassin
	Chief	His X Mark	Red Sky
	Councillor	His X Mark	Jack Minwapiness
	Councillor	His X Mark	Sam. Nehabness
	Councillor	His X Mark	Kahpsquakash
	Councillor	His X Mark	Nepenequanash
	Councillor	His X Mark	Kizpahkagute
	Councillor	His X Mark	Assinepiness
	Councillor	His X Mark	Angus Mc. Donald
	Councillor	His X Mark	Tom. Ayakukwanape

278608

Councillor	His X Mark	Robert Ayakokwunape
Councillor	His X Mark	Charlie Babumbie
Councillor	His X Mark	Pemapekosa
Councillor	His X Mark	George Shebaboness
Chief	His X Mark	Archie Eneneese
Chief	His X Mark	Munwabunwasau
Chief	His X Mark	Naitamequas
	His X Mark	Tibiskopiness
	His X Mark	kapakahpow
	His X Mark	Peter Wasawqnaness
	His X Mark	Asinahpaewene
	His X Mark	Soneabeness
	His X Mark	Nebabeness (Senior)
	His X Mark	Aleck Bird

Interpretation wad made by Michel Morriseau and the signatures witnesses by J.W. Forham & W.A. Wilson

Department of Indian Affairs.

OTTAWA, 1st August, 1905.

The Deputy Superintendent General:-

A petition has been received from the Chiefs and Councillors of the Sabiskong reserve for the retention of their present teacher. There is nothing on file to show that it is the intention to remove Mr Dargue, the present teacher, but as Rev. Dr Sutherland has placed him there, it might be well to communicate the wishes of the Indians to that gentleman.



OTTAWA, 3rd August, 1905.

Rev. Sir,

The Chiefs and Councillors of the Sabiskong reserve have written the Department asking that their present teacher, Mr Dargue, be retained. As he was sent to the school by your direction, the Department would like to know whether it is your intention to remove him, and if so for what reason. The Indians claim that this teacher has done great good amongst them.

Handwritten initials:
L. K.
M. B.

Your obedient servant,

~~NO COPY~~

Secretary

Rev. A. Sutherland D.D.

General Secretary,

Methodist Mission Rooms,

Toronto.

~~EX C.~~

OTTAWA, 3rd August, 1905

Chiefs,-

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your joint letter of the 15th ulto. asking that Mr Dargue may be retained as teacher of the Indian school on the Sabiskong reserve; and in reply I beg to say that enquiry is being made in this matter, and you will be further advised.

*Tom L
M.B.*

Your obedient servant,

W. L. MOLES

Secretary

Head Chief Powassin,
and other Indians
Sabiskong Indian reserve
via Keenora, Ont:

GENERAL SECRETARY
TORONTO.

116
The Methodist Church.

MISSIONARY DEPARTMENT,

280475

47
10/5

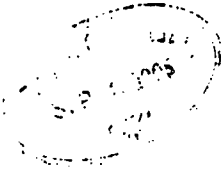
Dictated - Dr. S.

Toronto, August 30th, 05. ~~189~~
E.L.

Schools
Sir,-

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant, #180209, respecting the teacher at Sabiskong Reserve.

Last autumn I had a conversation with the Rev. T. Ferrier, the Chairman of the District within which Sabiskong is located. At that time we considered it advisable to withdraw altogether from Sabiskong, chiefly on two grounds: First, that the prejudice of the Indians prevents the holding of religious services of any kind, and secondly, that Mr. Dargue was not likely to succeed even as a teacher; we concluded, therefore, that it would be better before coming to any decision that Mr. Ferrier should if possible visit the Reserve, and ascertain the condition of affairs from personal investigation. I think he has not yet been able to do so, but I have written him for information and as soon as it comes to hand will communicate with the Department.



Your obedient servant,

A

The Secretary,

Department of Indian Affairs,

Ottawa, Ont.

General Secretary,

EXTRACT.
ORIGINAL ON
164027-29



[Handwritten signature]

LAKE WINNIPEG AND RAT PORTAGE INSPECTORATE
Stonewall, Man. March 28th 1907.

Sir:-

I beg to report having made an inspection of the Kenora Agency now in charge of Mr. R.S. McKenzie and to offer the following information in connection therewith:-

x x x

Day Schools

I found that the Schools were not in a very satisfactory condition and that both interest in them and attendance of pupils were far below the desired standard.

x x x x

At Assabaska it is learned that Mr. John R. Turnbull has been appointed but at the date of my visit that gentlemen had not been in the locality of the School remains as it has been for years closed and idle.

x x x



In my opinion a lot of money and energy was wasted in trying to keep these Schools open and I favour the enlargement of the Boarding School work but have no definite suggest to offer without further study of the question.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient servant

The Hon D. Laird,
Indian Commissioner,
Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Sgd. John Semmens,
Inspector of Indian Agencies

118209-1

INDIAN OFFICE. KENORA. ONT:-



No.120:-

June. 27th.

Handwritten signature and number 426785

H.X.D.

Sir:-

I beg to enclose quarterly returns of the Assabaska, Day School, which I found here on my return, I may say that some time ago Mr. Harber wrote me that it was there intention to resigne, some time during the summer, but did not send in any regular form of Resignation, For which I had been waiting so as to send it on to you,

I now find that during my Absence on the payments, they have closed the school, and left, I may add that for some time back, they have been very much discouraged, finding they were unable to make a sucess of the work, and would have given up long before this, only that I persuaded them to remain on for a time longer, which they did, but found they could not do any good, so I suppose they got so discouraged that they at last gave up in dispare, I have not had any word grom Board as to whether another teacher will be appointed or not,

I have the honour to be

Sir

Your obedient servant:-

Indian Agent.

The Secretary:-

Dept of Indian Affairs:-

Ottawa.-



Ottawa, July 2, 1912.

Sir,-

120

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo advising the Department of the resignation of Mrs. Harber as teacher of the Assabaska Day School.

As there are sufficient children on this reserve and as the attendance in the past has been of such a nature as to warrant the school being kept open, I have to ask you to be good enough to take this matter up with the Church authorities with a view to securing the services of a competent, qualified teacher.

*From
C.M.M.
M.D.*

Your obedient servant,

Assistant Deputy and Secretary.

R. S. McKenzie, Esq.,
Indian Agent,
Kenora, Ont.

SIXTY THOUSAND DOLLARS WANTED FOR HOME MISSIONS THIS YEAR.

Baptist Home Mission Board of Ontario and Quebec
417001

STARR, Chairman,
24 Toronto Street, Toronto.

Rev. W. E. NORFON, D.D., Superintendent
625 Confederation Life Bldg. Toronto

Rev. C. J. CAMERON, B.A., Asst. Superintendent
625 Confederation Life Bldg., Toronto

J. FOX, Treasurer,
P. O. Box 251, Toronto.

Toronto 31st. July, 1912.

Mr. R. S. McKenzie,
Dear Sir,

I suppose I ought to make an apology for not having notified you of the fact that Mr. and Mrs. Harber had given up the work at Smbaskong. Our Board found the work unsatisfactory in many respects, one of the principal things being the migratory habits of the Indians. They were never long in one place, and it seemed to be impossible to do anything along the line of evangelizing them. Mr. Harber resigned his position as missionary, and of course Mrs. Harber left with him. It is not at all probable that our Board will take up the work again, so that you may consider yourself entirely free to employ another teacher irrespective of anything we may think of doing in the future. Thanking you for all your assistance in our work on the Lake of the Woods, I am

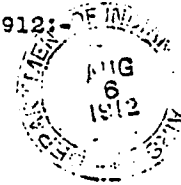
Yours sincerely,

115209-1

INDIAN OFFICE. KENORA. ONT:-

No.120:-

August 2nd. 1912:-



Handwritten notes:
S.E.H.
want to see
the
1152091

Sir:-

Referring to your letter of even number dated July 27th. 1912:-
Re the Assabaska Day School. and the wish of the Dept to keep this school open. I done what I thought best and comunicated with the Baptist Church Authorities at Toronto?

And now beg to enclose, Rev. W. E. Nortons reply to my letter- which gives the reason for the resignation of Mr. Harber and his wife, as Missionery and Teacher.

I may add that Mrs Harber was a good and conciencious woman and last time I seen her she told me that she was discouraged, as she could not get a regular attendance, and while the average of attendance appeared fair, yet it was not as it should be as most of the pupils only attended a few days-during the quarter. and many were not menebers of the Assabaska Band? and told me that she felt she would not be doing right, to hold the school, while she knew it was of no use,

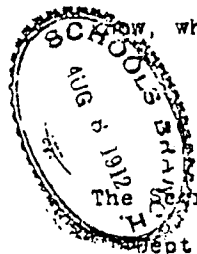
I may add that this has been the case with this school, right a long. and I do not think it will be possible to get a regular and satisfactory attendance there for years to come,

I will however try and see the Rev. Mr. Dodds of the Cecilia. Jeffrey Boarding School. and find out if the Presbyterian Board will take the matter up. and place a teacher there. or not, and let you know, what he says on the subject.

I have the honour to be.

Sir:-

Your obedient servant.-



The Secretary. -

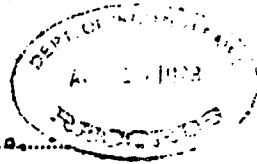
Dept of Indian Affairs:-

Ottawa.-

Indian Agent:-

129-2-5

INDIAN AGENT'S OFFICE



Kenora, Ontario.

13th August, 1923.

IN YOUR REPLY REFER TO
No. 132-10.
TO REFER TO THIS LETTER

58777

Sir.—

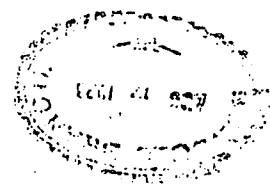
The Indians of Assawaska Band wish to know if they can tear down the old School House on the Reserve, as it is falling into decay and is of no further use.

The lumber that is of any use could be utilized by the Indians in repairing their houses.

Your obedient servant.

Indian Agent.

Assistant Deputy and Secretary
Department of Indian Affairs,
Ottawa. Ont.



129-2-1

[Handwritten signature]

May 23, 1928.

Memorandum.

MR. PAGET.

With reference to your memorandum concerning the request of the Indians at Sabaskong Bay, in the Kenora agency, that a day school be established, I may say that from 1899 to 1905, the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, assisted by a grant from this Department, conducted a day school at this point. The General Secretary, when announcing their withdrawal from Sabaskong, stated that the Indians were prejudiced against religious services and that the teacher was not likely to succeed with his classroom activities.

In 1907, Inspector Semons reported that was a waste of money trying to keep this school open. Mr. Commissioner Laird writes in 1908 that both Methodists and Presbyterians had declined his invitation to place a teacher there and that the Baptist Church had accepted the responsibility for the activity. School was kept open for 4 years under the auspices of this last mentioned church, and at the end of that time (1912) they, too, threw up their hands. The reasons given for this action were as follows:

1. Migratory habits of the Indians,
2. Impossible to evangelize them,
3. Irregular attendance.

Since 1912 there has been no school activity at Sabaskong, and, until the attached petition was received, no requests had been made in the matter.

I believe these Indians should be told that our experience with day schools in this locality is unsatisfactory, because of the irregular attendance and the difficulties of securing qualified teachers who will enter and then stay with the work. There is accommodation for their children at the Kenora (Roman Catholic) and Cecilia Jeffrey (Presbyterian) Indian Residential Schools.

I note that complaint No. 10 states there are three trained nurses at the Kenora Residential School. Only one of the Sisters is detailed for this duty and her work is entirely in the school.