

Ontario's Cross-Provincial Seven Youth Inquest Related Initiatives

| Ministry | Progress from 2024-2025, including Investments | Funded Years (if applicable) |
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| Ministry of Education (EDU) | <p><u>Support Student Transitions On- and Off-Reserve</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On September 1, 2019, the Reciprocal Education Approach (REA) came into force. Under REA, boards and First Nations are no longer required to negotiate formal agreements for the base fee for students who wish to attend a provincially funded school or First Nation-operated school. EDU continues to provide support to school boards and First Nation partners to support the implementation of the REA, including clarifying processes and requirements. (Recommendations #3, #23, #62, #124) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o In 2024-25, EDU continues to support student transitions in through the REA, inclusive of the updated 2024-25 REA Instructions and ongoing work with First Nation Partners and School Board representatives at the REA Working Group to explore improvements to the REA framework to further enhance student transitions between First Nation Schools and Schools of a School Board. • In 2024-25, the ministry is providing funding, for a total of \$5.5 M, to support 38 coaches in 30 school boards to support Indigenous students' success as well as professional development opportunities for Indigenous Graduation Coaches, including Lakehead District School Board (\$282,770) and Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board (\$141,385), which both serve the Thunder Bay region. The Coaches support First Nations students as they transition from federally funded/First Nation-operated schools to provincially funded secondary schools as well as into post-secondary education, training or labour market opportunities. (Recommendation #43) <p><u>Inquest and Student Transition Safety Funding to Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN) and NAN Organizations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDU provides \$4 million per year from 2023-24 to 2025-26 to support the implementation of education-related Inquest recommendations and student transitions and safety (Recommendations #5, 6, #17, #23, #43, #44, #49, #78, #79, #87, #129) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o \$800,000 per year from 2023-24 to 2025-26 to Inquest partners to support the implementation of education-related Inquest recommendations, including funding towards, but not limited to, memorial scholarships, hiring and retention of staff such as Safety Managers, Curriculum Development Officers, Education After-Care Navigators, and Children and | Funding is being provided to support to multiple initiatives with varying timelines. |

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| | <p>Youth Coordinators, community resources, and the development of virtual learning courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o \$3.2 million per year from 2023-24 to 2025-26 to support student transitions and safety, including, but not limited to, access to partner-led mental health supports, student safety activities, student safety call lines, Transition Coordinators, Teacher Coaches to mentor and provide professional development, Education System Navigators, Resource Officers, land-based learning opportunities, and the purchase of essential items to improve the overall well-being of students. • Note: <i>Funding agreements have been established with each Inquest Partner – Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Northern Nishnawbe Education Council, Keewatinook Okimakanak Board of Education, and Matawa First Nations Management, as well as NAN-affiliated organizations Windigo First Nations, Independent First Nations Alliance, Shibogama First Nations Council, Wabun Tribal Council, and Mushkegowuk Tribal Council – to help address Inquest recommendations and support students. Each agreement supports multiple recommendations that were directed to EDU under the Inquest. Activities and recommendations supported by the current agreements are established in direct consultation with the First Nation Partners based on their needs assessments.</i> <p><u>Infrastructure Investments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In August 2021, Ontario announced funding through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) for three broadband projects that will bring connectivity to First Nations students in 55 First Nations communities, including Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN). These projects, originally set to expire in December 2025, have been extended until March 2026. (Recommendation #23) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Funding has been used to purchase, deliver and install connectivity kits to student learning hubs and student homes in 55 First Nations communities to connect to low-earth orbit satellites and provide secure internet access to online education sites and cyber-security protections. Secure internet access will also support improved access to online mental health resources. o In 2024-25, EDU has provided \$201,900 to NAN to support the ongoing implementation of ICIP, including the procurement, delivery and installation of Starlink internet connectivity kits to student learning hubs and homes in 42 NAN communities. | |
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Recruitment and Retention Strategies to Encourage Long-Term Employment at First Nation Schools Off-Reserve

- In 2024-25, EDU is providing \$3.25M in funding to support Indigenous languages revitalization programs through Responsive Education Programs and Funding to External Partners with the objective of growing the number of Indigenous languages programs and speakers in Ontario. (Recommendation 63)
- In 2024-25, EDU continues to support professional learning for Indigenous staff in the early years and child care sector both on-reserve and in urban Indigenous settings. The ministry provides funding to two organizations Ontario Aboriginal Head Start Association (OAHSA) and FIREFLY) to develop and deliver culturally responsive Indigenous professional learning supports both in First Nation communities, and in rural and urban Indigenous settings. (Recommendation 63)
- In 2024-25, EDU continues to support Indigenous staff in child care and early years settings by providing financial support to upgrade their skills and obtain their ECE diploma through the Early Childhood Educators Qualifications Upgrade Program (ECE QUP). This includes a Francophone and First Nation, Métis and Inuit program component which prioritizes applicants living and/or working in these communities and also provides grants for leadership development and advancement to support the retention of qualified staff. (Recommendation 63)
- In 2024-25, EDU is providing \$210,000 to support the First Nations School Support Program; This program will second a principal through Keewatin Patricia District School Board to support the capacity and development of educators and administrators in partnering First Nations operated schools, helping First Nations schools to support the success and well-being of First Nations students as they transition from remote and fly in communities into provincially-funded schools. **(Recommendation #63 & #123)**

Collaboration Between NAN First Nation Schools and Provincially Funded Schools

- EDU continues to offer ministry-led professional development opportunities, resources and other programming to First Nation schools and staff. EDU has worked on information sharing with regard to these opportunities through the development of communication protocols. **(Recommendation #122)**
- The ministry has continued to provide funding to support collaboration between First Nations schools, provincially funded schools, and identifies opportunities to share information, and expertise to support capacity building in NAN First Nations schools in 2024-25, including funding for the following initiatives:

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o \$529,720 provided to NAN through the Education Partnership Program (EPP) to support EPP programming. Programming funded through the EPP includes the Best Practice Forum, an opportunity for First Nation and district school board educators, staff and students to share and discuss best practices for teaching First Nation students, with a focus on cross-cultural training and student transitions and First Nations Resources Sharing, a resource-sharing gathering with educators in provincially-funded schools to support the incorporation of First Nations culture, art and current issues in elementary and secondary classrooms. (Recommendations #43, #49, #123, #125) o \$800,000 to fund the Rapid Response Northern Schools Team (RRNST) - This program operates out of Keewatin Patricia District School Board, who provide a team of pre-screened, highly trained and experienced staff to mobilize and deploy in First Nations communities in response to requests made by communities during times of urgent need. In addition to providing crisis and wellness support to requesting First Nations communities to ensure schools remain open and staff are supported to continue delivering programs, the RRNST supports capacity building through providing educational support services, facilitating improved access to education and enhanced distance learning models, and offering professional development opportunities in key areas, including mental health and cultural competency. (Recommendation #123 & #125) o EDU continues to provide funding to support a dedicated Indigenous Education Lead in each school board through the Indigenous Education Lead Component of the Indigenous Education Supports Allocation (total of \$148.3M for 2024-25), which is part of the Core Education Funding. This position has been in place since 2016 and is intended to support the development and implementation of targeted initiatives focused on enhancing the success and well-being of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, foster stronger relationships between First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and school boards through collaboration with senior board administration and Indigenous Education Councils, and support relationship-building and information sharing between First Nations schools and provincially funded schools. (Recommendation #123) o EDU continues to expect all school boards to have Indigenous Education Councils (IEC) in place that are reflective of the diverse Indigenous student | |
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| | <p>population and local First Nations, Métis and Inuit community members, including First Nations parents/elders/leadership. The IECs guide school boards and schools in building stronger relationships with communities, sharing information, identifying promising practices and enhancing collaborative work to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement and well-being, including supporting the transition of First Nation students between school systems. (Recommendation #123)</p> <p><u>Curriculum Integration/Funding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDU has released several recent changes to curriculum that continue to support enhanced Indigenous-focused mandatory learning. • Building on changes to elementary Social Studies that were completed in 2023, which responded to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action #62 and #63 to make age-appropriate curriculum on the residential school system, treaties, and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit historical and contemporary contributions to Canada (Recommendations #128 and #140), in 2024-25 the following mandatory learning was introduced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ new mandatory learning related to Indigenous cultures, histories, perspectives and contributions: elementary Language and Science and Technology curriculum; de-streamed Grade 9 English, Science and Geography courses; the new Grades 9 and 10 Technology and the Skilled Trades courses; the new Grades 9 and 10 Business Studies courses; the revised Grade 10 Civics and Citizenship course; and the revised Computer Studies course. (Recommendation #128, #140). • In August 2024, the ministry added Algonquin as a language of instruction within Ontario's Indigenous languages curriculum (Grades 1-8, Native Languages, 2001; Grades 9 and 10: Native Languages, 1999; and Grades 11 and 12, Native Languages, 2000). The addition of Algonquin as a language of instruction in the curriculum will allow for programming that reflects the distinct language and culture of Algonquin. • The ministry is committed to supporting educators with curriculum implementation supports, including classroom ready resources and professional learning opportunities for educators. The ministry has engaged with Indigenous partners to support the implementation of curriculum such as the Grade 10 Civics course, Grade 10 Computer Studies, Elementary Science and Technology Curriculum, the Grade 9 Science course, Grade 9 English/Francais curriculum. The ministry will continue to engage with Indigenous partners as new curriculum are issued (Recommendation #128, #140) | |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding is available to school boards through the Core Education Funding to support Indigenous Education, specifically: Indigenous Education funding within the Classroom Staffing Fund and Learning Resources Fund is limited to expenses that support the academic success and well-being of Indigenous students, as well as build the knowledge of all students on Indigenous histories, cultures, perspectives, and contributions. (Recommendation # 126) <p><u>Expand Opportunities to Explore Postsecondary Pathways Through Participation in Dual Credit Programs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2024-25 school year, there are 362 students in First Nations secondary schools approved to participate in 18 Dual Credit programs with Cambrian College, Canadore College, Confederation College and Sault College, including 27 from Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School and 10 from the Matawa Education and Care Centre. (Recommendations #129) | |
| Ministry of Health (MOH) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry of Health (MOH) is providing \$900,000 in annualized funding (\$300,000 to each SYI Education partner) to Keewaytinook Okimakanak Board of Education (KOB), Matawa Education and Care Centre (MECC) and Northern Nishnawbe Education Council (NNEC) to deliver mental health supports to First Nations students. (Recommendation #41) | 2024-2025 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning in 2024-25, MOH is providing an additional \$7.2M to NAN, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$3.6M annually to NAN for enhancements to Crisis Response through the Indigenous Healing & Wellness Strategy (IHWS); and \$3.6M annually for IHWS Indigenous Healthy Babies Healthy Children. (Recommendation #41) | 2024-2025 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$60 million over three years to maintain mental health and addictions services, including clinical supports, community mental health and well-being initiatives, and opioid programming. Funding supports mental health and addictions services, including clinical supports, community mental health and well-being initiatives, and opioid programming. (Recommendations #36, #37). | 2024-2027 |
| Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$41.5 million for the Indigenous Supportive Housing Program (ISHP) in 2024-25. Funding supports housing assistance and support services to Indigenous people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness. (Recommendations #78, #79 ongoing funding) | TPA signed with Indigenous Program Administrators, with no set expiry date |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MMAH is providing \$8.7M to Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services to build 58 units for Youth Transitional Housing, including support services, in Thunder Bay through the Indigenous Supportive Housing Program (ISHP). (Recommendation #78 in Progress -to be completed December 2025) | 2019-2025 |
| Ministry of the Solicitor General (SOLGEN) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately \$1.68 million annually from 2024-25 to 2026-27 is allocated to First Nations police services through the First Nations Mobile Crisis Response Team Grant program. Funding is dedicated to building capacity and allows First Nations police services to hire mental health and addiction workers. (Connected to Recommendations #41, #36, #37). On August 1, 2024, following discussion with Nishnawbe Aski Nation, the Office of the Chief Coroner implemented a Northern Coroner Team with a goal to have coroners attend in communities in the remote North, where scene attendance has been absent in the past. The primary focus has been on the most remote, fly in First Nations communities (and Moosonee). The team of 15 coroners from across the province are available for one week time periods to respond to deaths that require investigation. The attendance rate has been over 80% with positive feedback from families, communities and police services (Recommendation 131). The shortage of physicians in Ontario has significantly impacted the successful recruitment of coroners particularly in the northwest region of Ontario. Since October 2023, coroner schedules are required in all regions of the province. This ensures the availability of a coroner to respond to deaths reported for investigation. In some regions, there are not a suitable number of coroners to ensure local availability necessitating some death investigations being completed without scene attendance (Recommendation 132). | 2024-2027 |
| Ministry of Sport (SPORT) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since 2009, Ontario's After School Program (ASP) has provided annual funding to the Multicultural Association of Northwestern Ontario (MANWO) to support programming at Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School (DFCHS). The ASP at DFCHS serves First Nations youth in grades 9-12 (ages 13-18). (Recommendation #101 - Completed) Beginning in 2023-24, ASP funding to MANWO increased from \$110,000 to \$143,000 annually. | 2009-2025 |
| Ministry of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In collaboration with MPBSDP, MCCSS and MOH, IAFNER has provided funding support for several key initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$1 million in funding to Chiefs of Ontario (COO) for the establishment of the First Nations Data Table (FNDDT). Launched in November 2024, the FNDDT consists of Chiefs and senior representatives from seven ministries. It serves as a forum to collaborate | 2024-2025 |

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| Reconciliation (IAFNER) | <p>on data sovereignty, develop enterprise-wide data governance standards, and address the collection, storage, access, analysis, and reporting of First Nations data. Its purpose is to align and advance data and reporting matters between partners and the government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o \$500K in funding to the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) to support prioritized research initiatives and the development of Métis-specific data governance principles. o Nearly \$800K in funding to the Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) for the development of a strategy to improve data collection and outcomes measurement specific to Urban Indigenous peoples. This initiative includes the establishment of an Urban Indigenous data working group and the creation of recommendations for an Urban Indigenous Data Governance Framework. o An additional \$425K in funding to ONWA for the development of a performance measurement framework to assess the province's progress on the Pathways to Safety strategy. o To support transparent, consistent data sharing aligned with reconciliation efforts, and to provide guidance to other ministries, IAFNER has procured and integrated custom datasets from Statistics Canada's 2021 Census, into interactive dashboards available to internal Ontario staff through the IAFNER Information Centre (IIC). These dashboards are intended to guide policy development and improvement. Through ongoing engagement with Indigenous partners, IAFNER understands the limitations and sensitivities associated with relying solely on census data for public reporting. Partners have raised concerns with Census data including, methodological, data integrity issues and limited community engagement in data collection. In response, IAFNER is re-evaluating its public reporting approach and taking steps to ensure it reflects Indigenous perspectives and supports meaningful accountability. <p>(Recommendation #138)</p> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As an additional step in fulfilling recommendation 139, which calls for enhanced public service training in intercultural competency, human rights and Indigenous knowledge, IAFNER has invested approximately 70K to provide nearly 200 OPS staff with licenses to the First Nations Information Governance Centre's OCAP® training. This training supports the responsible stewardship of Indigenous data, while enhancing ministries' ability to design programs and services that are more respectful, relevant, and responsive to the needs and rights of | |

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| | Indigenous communities. This investment also contributes to building cultural competency across the OPS, while strengthening accountability and trust with Indigenous partners. (Recommendation #139) | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to recommendation 17, which emphasized the need for clear, accessible pathways to provincial programs and services, IAFNER launched the Indigenous Programs and Services Finder (IPSF). This digital platform, hosted on Ontario.ca, helps Indigenous individuals, communities, and organizations more easily navigate government supports. By offering comprehensive, up-to-date information on services related to safety, security, justice, and culturally safe health and well-being, the IPSF supports Indigenous youth and their families in accessing the resources they need to thrive. It also empowers Indigenous communities to better respond to and address the root causes of violence affecting Indigenous youth, women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals, contributing to community healing and long-term resilience. (Recommendation #17) | 2023-2025 |
| Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development (MLITSD) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Budget 2022, \$4 million in funding over fiscal years 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 was approved to support Indigenous apprentices explore careers in skilled trades. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2022-23 \$1 million to Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development's (MLITSD) Skills Development Fund. In 2023-24 and 2024-25 \$1 million each fiscal year to support Indigenous Institutes through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU). In 2023-24 and 2024-25 \$500,000 each fiscal to MLITSD's Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP). OYAP provides the opportunity for students to explore a skilled trade and begin an apprenticeship while completing high school. In 2023-24 this supported nine schools, including MECC, to provide OYAP to Indigenous students and in 2024-25 it supported eight schools in delivering OYAP. | 2022-2025 |
| Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism (MCM) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2024/25 the Anti-Racism Directorate invested \$500,000 as part of the Indigenous Relationship Building initiative. This funding supported Indigenous research, community led engagements, and culturally informed Indigenous led projects to address anti-Indigenous racism. (Recommendation #127) Between 2021-2024, this initiative achieved the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> supported over 200 Indigenous community led engagements and awareness training sessions with 1969 participants. supported capacity building to increase access for remote First Nations to participate in engagements, surveys, and events. | 2021/22 - 2024/25 |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ increased outreach for anti-racism initiatives including ARAH, RAISE and AHSP to Indigenous communities. ○ received over 100 recommendations specific to addressing anti-Indigenous racism. ○ supported 2 province wide public awareness campaigns about systemic racism | |
| Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM) (formerly Infrastructure) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The province has committed nearly \$4 billion to bring reliable high-speed internet access to every community across the province, including First Nation communities, in alignment with recommendation 29. • In 2024 and early 2025, the Ministry undertook a series of engagements with underserved First Nations to better understand their connectivity needs and to discuss potential short and long-term solutions to address the lack of service or underservice on their reserves. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Ministry engaged 20 communities for a total of 29 engagements in 2024 and early 2025. • As of June 2025, approximately 132,000 homes and businesses have been connected to high-speed internet. • Ontario has also finalized agreements worth approximately \$2.8 billion for 277 projects to enable high-speed internet access and improved cellular connectivity across the province. Projects include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whitesand First Nation: Co-funded with the federal government, this project will build a new fibre line from Whitesand First Nation and Gull Bay First Nation to Thunder Bay. The project will provide high-speed internet access to 575 homes and businesses. • Matawa Rapid Lynx: This two-phased project will construct hundreds of kilometres of fibre-optic telecommunications cable to link remote Matawa First Nations. Project backhaul will also enable connectivity for future Ring of Fire developments. The updated target completion date is March 2026. • SWIFT 2.0 Saugeen First Nation sub-project: SWIFT is providing specific and tailored supports to the First Nation for them to lead this sub-project, which will benefit 1,375 premises. • Chapleau Cree First Nation: This yet-to-be announced project will bring wired high-speed internet access to 63 homes and businesses. | |