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# Policy Series 100

## FOUNDATIONS AND BELIEFS

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## Policy 101: Education Authority Legal Status

In September 1981, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation assumed control of education in Nelson House.

In May 1982, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation's legal status was changed at the time they became incorporated.

## Policy 102: Educational Philosophy

The Nisichawayasihk Education Authority Board believes education must provide for the academic, social, emotional, spiritual, physical development and wellbeing of all students under the Authority's responsibility. The Board believes every student can learn and has the right to an education that not only recognizes the unique talents and strengths of each student but also provides for a safe, caring and challenging educational environment.

The Board accepts responsibility for providing a quality education, as representatives of the community, and acknowledges that students, staff, parents, Elders, and the community all have a vital role to play in the total educational endeavour. The respect, dignity, and trust shown by one another in all situations form the foundation for a solid relationship. Parents and Elders have always been the first teachers and that philosophy must always remain a priority.

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## Policy 103: Goals of Education

The Board believes in the importance of establishing goals for Education that provide direction and expectations for school staff and students and for the community. Educational goals must reflect the wishes and the knowledge of the community's parents and Elders and express an appreciation for our culture, traditions, and history. Nelson House's goals for education recognize our children's needs for self-reliance, self-governance, and participation in an ever-changing world.

### Statement of Goals

To help and encourage every student:

1. To acquire the greatest possible understanding of himself/herself and to have an appreciation of his/her worth as a member of the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation
2. To acquire the necessary attitudes, skills and knowledge required for successful living in the community and in society in general
3. To acquire a positive attitude toward school and the learning process
4. To acquire healthy habits and an understanding of the conditions and beliefs necessary for maintaining physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual well being
5. To understand the opportunities available to him/her for preparing himself/herself for a productive life and to enable him/her to take full advantage of those opportunities
6. To prepare for a world of rapid change and unforeseeable demands and challenges
7. To develop a love, knowledge, appreciation and respect for the First Nation's human family
8. To acquire proficient oral and written communication skills in Cree and English
9. To continue the relationship and understanding of our environment and the need to protect it and to live in peace and harmony within it
10. To develop a strong sense of identity as a Cree person.

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## Policy 104: Control Of Indian Education

The Board believes that while it is important to promote Indian Control of Indian Education and to work with other Bands in Manitoba to promote local control, its main purpose must be the betterment of education for Nelson House students.

In September of 1981, the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation assumed control over education at Nelson House by agreement with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. This step was in conjunction with the position taken by the National Indian Brotherhood in 1972 and the Manitoba Chiefs of Education in 1971 in a document, titled ***Wahbung – Our Tomorrows***.

*"To be effective, education must be nurtured in relevancy, commitment, motivation and identifiable purpose. This process must be part of the community activity and community progress.*

*We, the Indian people of Manitoba believe in education:*

- *As a preparation for total living and in this context it extends far beyond the boundaries of what is conventionally considered schooling;*
- *As a prime means of improving our economic and social conditions;*
- *As a means of providing that which should be the right of every citizen: namely the choice of where to live and to work. The essential provision of these required skills that will allow this privilege of choice;*
- *As a means by which we can be enabled to participate fully in our own social, economic, political, and educational advancement;*
- *As a comprehensive program which must be designed to meet the needs of the total community by including offerings to people of all ages." P. 116*

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## Policy 105: Community Involvement In Decision Making

The Board believes the school belongs to the people of the Nelson House community. The people elect the Board Members to represent them and to determine local education plans and policies and to establish publicly endorsed goals and objectives for education. The Education Authority functions as a community agency in the best interests of students.

The Board recognizes and accepts the people as the ultimate governors of education in Nelson House with the Board directly accountable to the people through the election process. However, the Board believes accountability is a shared responsibility involving students, parents, teachers, Elders, the Director of Education, support staff and the Board itself.

### Guidelines

The Board asserts the following beliefs and expectations regarding the shared responsibility for education at Nelson House:

1. Students should be trained at home and by the school in order to learn to hold themselves accountable for their own lives, actions, and decisions as maturing members of a democratic society.
2. Teachers should hold students accountable for achieving (within the limits of each student's abilities) the objectives of each learning experience.
2. The Director should hold teachers and other employees accountable for working with diligent effort, intelligence, and imagination in achieving the objectives directly related to their stated job responsibilities.
4. The Board should appoint the most capable person available to hold the position of Director of Education and should hold him/her accountable for providing creative professional leadership and counsel in all aspects of the Education Authority's program.

5. The Board should also hold itself accountable for carrying out its mandate to plan, to make policy, and to lead in the identification of goals and objectives and the resources necessary for their achievement. Micromanagement should not be encouraged. Board Members, individually, are not encouraged to make any decisions regarding the operation of the Education Authority.
6. The Community Public should hold itself accountable for maintaining a vigorous interest in, concern for, and constructive criticism of the school.



## Policy 106: Staff Involvement In Decision Making

The Board believes Education Authority staff play a vital role in accomplishing Goals and Objectives for Education in Nelson House. The Board believes staff involvement in the decision-making process is valuable and solicits their involvement through identified and accepted channels.

### Guidelines

The Director of Education, whenever feasible:

1. Shall include employees in planning rules, regulations and arrangements for operating the school system
2. Shall develop channels of communication with all employee groups for: transferring ideas for improvement, voicing concerns and feelings regarding school operations and associated support services
3. Shall weigh with care any counsel employees provide and shall inform the Board of this counsel in presenting reports of administrative action and recommendations for Board action.

## Policy 107: Relationship With Chief And Council

The Board recognizes the Chief and Council of the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation and the Mayor and Council of the Nelson House Community as the senior governing authorities for all on-reserve and Community Policies and by-laws.

### Guidelines

1. The Board recognizes education is a delegated responsibility from Chief and Council.
2. The Board believes a positive working relationship must be developed and maintained with the Chief/Mayor and Councils for better educational development for both its communities.
3. The Board recognizes it needs the support and cooperation of Chief and Council to attain its educational goals and objectives.

## **Policy 108: Relationship With the Province, Federal Government, and Other Educational and Support Organizations (e.g. MFNERC)**

The Board recognizes the importance of developing and maintaining effective relationships with both the Province of Manitoba and the Government of Canada.

### **Guidelines**

#### **A. Department of Education and Province of Manitoba**

The Board's intent is to maximize the use of educational services available in the Province of Manitoba in pursuit of its educational goals and objectives by:

1. Keeping informed through circulars, bulletins, and publications regarding education provided in Manitoba
2. Keeping informed about changes in services and personnel available through the Department of Education
3. Keeping informed about curriculum changes and program development carried out by the Department of Education
4. Accessing free consultation support provided by the Department of Education.

#### **B. Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and Government of Canada**

The Board's intent is to ensure the Government of Canada, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, continues to recognize its responsibility for education to the Indian people of Nelson House by:

1. Keeping informed of the policies of the Department of Indian Affairs on education as they pertain to Indian people and providing appropriate response to proposed policies and regulations
2. Maximizing educational services available through the Department of Indian Affairs to meet its goals and objectives
3. Ensuring adequate funding is made available to ensure the educational goals and objectives of the Board are met.

## Policy 109: Recognition of Accomplishments

The Board believes that in a changing world it is important to recognize outstanding accomplishments by individual students.

### Guidelines

The Director of Education, in consultation with Principals and other administrators, shall present annually a "recognition of accomplishments" proposal to the Board for consideration.

The "recognition of accomplishments" recommendation shall detail: reasons for the recommendation, a proposed plan for presentation and costs for the recognition.