POWER OF PLACE (PoP): INTEGRATING ST’ÁT’ÍMC KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS INTO LILLOOET AREA K-12 SCHOOL CURRICULA & PEDAGOGY

FINAL RESEARCH REPORT
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Executive summary

In December, 2006, the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) initiated a response to a Request for Proposals from the Canadian Council on Learning, which solicited research project ideas on the subject of Aboriginal learning. With support from key partners from Upper St’át’imc communities, the Upper St’át’imc Language, Culture and Education Society (USLCES), Gold Trail School District (GTSD), the Lillooet Tribal Council, and the St’át’imc Language Authority, a community-based participatory action research project proposal was developed, accepted and shortly thereafter the Power of Place (PoP) project was born.

This Executive Summary consists of three short sections that aim to outline the major features of the PoP project. First, the scope, aim and rationale for the PoP project are explained. The guiding research questions and a very brief description of the research method are presented next. The central conclusions and recommendations are explained in the final section. More detailed descriptions of the content featured in this Executive Summary can be read in one of the three PoP project products: PoP Final Research Report (2008), PoP Curriculum Enhancement Toolkit (2008), and PoP Conference Summary Report (2007).

Scope, aim and rationale

The scope of the PoP project was limited to questions related to Aboriginal learning in a selection of geographically related GTSD schools located in or near Lillooet, BC, on Upper St’át’imc territory. To work within the limited available resources, the PoP project engaged members of the Upper St’át’imc communities, especially Nxwisten (Bridge River), Sekw’el’wás (Cayoose Creek), Tsal’állh (Seton Lake), T’it’q’et (Lillooet), Ts’kw’áylaxw (Pavilion), Xaxlīp (Fountain), as well as stakeholders of four Lillooet and area schools, namely: Cayoosh Elementary, George Murray Elementary, Lillooet Secondary School and Sk’il’ Mountain Community School. These four schools were selected on the grounds that St’át’imc students are the majority population in all four schools and educational stakeholders of these four schools expressed support to explore new pathways for improving the learning achievements of St’át’imc students.

Like other Aboriginal learners across Canada, St’át’imc primary and secondary students in Lillooet area schools do not generally engage their Indigenous Knowledge and culture in school, and struggle to achieve graduation rates on par with their non-Aboriginal peers. To address this problem, an Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement was signed between the GTSD, St’át’imc, Nlakapamux and Secwépmc communities, off-reserve and Métis people and the Ministry of Education in late 2005. The Agreement, which identifies general objectives and goals for improving Aboriginal learning achievement, reflects a spirit of cooperation and commitment to constructive change that exists at political and institutional levels in the GTSD. The challenge, as the parties note in their

The PoP project is an attempt to bring some of the shared commitments of the Agreement to life. As such, the aim of the Power of Place project is to engage local educational stakeholders in a participatory process of identifying community-based strategies for including St’át’ímc knowledge and culture in Lillooet area school curriculum and pedagogy, and thereby contribute to the enhancement of learning environments for St’át’ímc students.

**Research questions and methodology**

There are five guiding research questions for the PoP project:

- **What are strategies for integrating Indigenous Knowledge into schools that have been demonstrated in other jurisdictions that could be used to facilitate the inclusion of appropriate aspects of St’át’ímc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities into the curriculum and pedagogy of Lillooet area schools?**

- **To what degree is St’át’ímc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities currently included in the curriculum and pedagogy of Lillooet area schools?**

- **What aspects of St’át’ímc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities ought to be included in the curriculum and pedagogy of Lillooet area schools?**

- **What are the existing strengths, challenges and opportunities in Lillooet area schools and the Upper St’át’ímc communities that relate to the project of making school curriculum and pedagogy inclusive of St’át’ímc Knowledge Systems?**

- **How can Lillooet area teachers and principals, St’át’ímc Elders and resource people work together to sustainably include St’át’ímc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities into school curriculum and pedagogy?**

The research method and ethics that relate to how these questions were answered were developed in partnership with a local PoP Steering Committee, who recommended the use of a combination of surveys and workshops to conduct the data collection work for the project. Following participatory research principles, PoP engaged a diverse range of educational stakeholders at various junctions in the project, including students, teachers and support workers, parents, St’át’ímc Elders and resource people, principals and school administrators. A detailed description of the methodology can be read in the report. Below, we outline the highlights of our findings.
Conclusions and recommendations

There are seven conclusions that can be drawn from the data collected through the PoP project, each of which is briefly described in bullet form below. Following the description of the conclusions, we present a series of related recommendations that seek to continue the work that was commenced through the PoP project.

- Minimal integration of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems occurs in Lillooet area school curriculum and pedagogy;

- Integration of Indigenous Knowledge into school curriculum and pedagogy in other jurisdictions demonstrates a positive impact on Indigenous learners’ achievement in school;

- St’át’imc Elders and resource people are willing to work with Lillooet area teachers to facilitate learning about aspects of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems;

- Educational stakeholders of Lillooet area schools (e.g., Elders, parents, teachers, principals, students) perceive multiple challenges inherent to the project of integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems in school curriculum and pedagogy, such as: rigid curriculum requirements in schools, especially at the secondary level in some subjects; funding and support for integration work; racism and other colonial legacies in the schools; lack of strong relationship between St’át’imc leaders and GTSD staff; lack of professional development for teachers regarding St’át’imc Knowledge Systems, etc.

- Educational stakeholders of Lillooet area schools perceive multiple strengths and assets inherent in Lillooet area schools and in Upper St’át’imc communities, such as: knowledge and teachings of Elders and resource people; commitment and imagination of teachers to create new ways of learning in the classroom; expressed commitment of GTSD to improving Aboriginal student experiences at school; students desire to learn from St’át’imc leaders; human and text resources of Lillooet-based St’át’imc agencies (e.g., Lillooet Tribal Council, USCLES, Ucwalmicw Centre), nearby significant St’át’imc places, etc.

- Educational stakeholders of Lillooet area schools express an understanding of current opportunities to change how schools work in Lillooet and area, and express support for several specific strategies for integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems in Lillooet area school curriculum and pedagogy, including: cultural immersion camps for teachers, development of diverse St’át’imc curriculum resources, St’át’imc Elders and Resource Person Academy, etc.
Building on the study’s central conclusions, we present the recommendation highlights below. The recommendations are defined two ways, first in terms of educational change goals, and second, in terms of specific initiatives that would move Lillooet area schools, and potentially other schools in the GTSD, toward the achievement of these goals. Complete descriptions and rationale for each goal and initiative are outlined in the report.

1. **Increase the degree to which Elders and resource people are involved in Lillooet area schools**
   a. Establish a *St’át’imc Elders and Resource People Academy* (SERPA)
   b. Provide support and training for the SERPA
   c. Establish and support the work of a *St’át’imc Educational Research Team* (SERT), which can work with the SERPA in researching and developing ideas of Elders and resource people

2. **Diversify the type of and increase the accessibility of St’át’imc learning resources**
   a. Develop curriculum modules that enhance student comprehension of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems (i.e., science modules, etc.)
   b. Develop an anthology of St’át’imc poetry and personal stories for inclusion in language arts, English and St’át’imcets classes
   c. Produce audio files of St’át’imc stories, as well as videos that depict different kinds of St’át’imc activities
   d. Facilitate class participation in annual St’át’imc Gathering in May
   e. Host annual Aboriginal Day Celebration at each of the four Lillooet area schools to raise awareness of the diverse knowledge systems of the St’át’imc

3. **Enhance teachers’ capacities to include St’át’imc Knowledge Systems in Lillooet area school curriculum and pedagogy**
   a. Develop a summer cultural immersion camp for teachers
   b. Develop short term cultural tours for teachers
   c. Develop an orientation session for teachers that familiarizes them with the existing St’át’imc learning resources that they are welcome to use
   d. Develop an intercultural training workshop for teachers

4. **Enhance coherency of GTSD policy and action for making education more culturally responsive**
   a. Develop a GTSD strategic plan for developing culturally responsive schools
   b. Develop district-wide guidelines for developing culturally responsive schools
Like other historical and ongoing projects that have aimed to integrate Indigenous Knowledge into school curriculum and pedagogy, PoP has consisted of a series of tasks that aimed to simultaneously ignite educational change in schools by making space for Elders and resource people, and, at the same time, lay the foundation of relations and resources for ongoing integration work. Given the longer term nature of educational change, it is difficult to know about the depth of the success of PoP. To what degree will the recommendations of PoP become integrated into district policy and school growth plans? To what degree will the curriculum enhancement toolkit be used and what kind of material difference will it make to teacher practice and student learning? Since it is too early to tell what kind of lasting impact PoP will have on Lillooet area schools, we can only hope that the very best is wrought from this project for the benefit of St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc students alike.
1. Introduction

In December, 2006, the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) initiated a response to a Request for Proposals from the Canadian Council on Learning: Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Centre, which solicited research project ideas on the subject of Aboriginal learning. With support from key partners from Upper St’át’imc communities, the Upper St’át’imc Language, Culture and Education Society (USLCES), Gold Trail School District (GTSD), and the Lillooet Tribal Council, a community-based participatory action research project proposal was developed, accepted and shortly after the Power of Place (PoP) project was born.

The final research report, the PoP curriculum enhancement toolkit, and the PoP conference summary report comprise the three documents that tell the story of what the PoP project is about, what it achieved and what kinds of developmental steps ought to be taken from here.

In this introductory section, we highlight some of the major characteristics of GTSD, especially the four schools that participated in this project. We also outline the scope, aim, and rationale of the PoP project, and define our guiding research questions. An overview of the organization of this report is the final section of the introduction.

1.1. Context

This section divides into three parts. First we discuss the characteristics of both the GTSD, as well as the four schools that participated in this project. Second, we outline several current educational change initiatives taking place in the GTSD that have relationship to the aim of the PoP project. Third, we review the current and historical scope of work undertaken by USLCES, which is a major knowledge and curriculum producing agency for Upper St’át’imc communities, and is a major supporter of the PoP project.

Characteristics of Gold Trail School District and schools participating in PoP

The GTSD encompasses three First Nations, Métis and nineteen Bands, with the total number of First Nation students making up fifty seven per cent of the student population in the school district. Located in the South Central region of British Columbia, the School District is geographically large and serves the learning needs of approximately 1,600 students. Below, we provide the 2007/2008 profiles of the four schools that participated in PoP, as well as current and ongoing initiatives in GTSD, all of which have been paraphrased from the GTSD web site.
George M. Murray Elementary School

George M. Murray Elementary is a Kindergarten to Grade Seven elementary school enrolling 160 students. Seventy-two per cent of the students are of Aboriginal ancestry. Most of the students come from the communities of Lillooet, T’it’q’et, Nuxisten, Xaxli’p, Ts’kw’áylaxw, and Sekw’el’wás. The school offers instruction in the culture and language of the Upper St’át’imc people from Kindergarten to Grade Seven.

Cayoosh Elementary School

Cayoosh Elementary School enrolls approximately 194 students from Kindergarten through to Grade Seven. About forty-five per cent of the student population is of Aboriginal ancestry. The school serves many low-income families and many single-parent families. The students come from the town of Lillooet, as well as seven reserves, and the rural areas of the region.

Sk’il’ Mountain Community School

Sk’il’ Mountain Community School enrolls approximately 100 students in Kindergarten to Grade Twelve and is operated under a partnership between Seton Lake Indian Band and GTSD. The school is located approximately 75 km west of Lillooet in the semi-isolated community of Shalalth. The school functions in partnership with the community, sharing a gymnasium and community center, a baseball diamond and soccer field, and a community-built youth center. The entire student population is of St’át’imc or other First Nation ancestry. More than half of the student population require extra support in English Language Development and/or are on Individual Education Plans.

Lillooet Secondary School

Lillooet Secondary School currently enrolls 342 students in Grades Eight through Twelve. Approximately sixty per cent of the student population is of St’át’imc First Nation ancestry. Approximately nineteen per cent of the student population is identified by the Ministry of Education as Special Needs. A further eight per cent of the student population do not meet Ministry of Education criteria for funding but require Individual Educational Plans in order to experience academic success.

GTSD educational change initiatives related to PoP

PoP was implemented in conjunction with or as a precursor to several current District initiatives that aim to improve Aboriginal learning achievement. In this section, we outline the current activities focused on Aboriginal learning throughout GTSD.

Within these policy frameworks, there are several initiatives that have been designed with the intent of improving Aboriginal student experiences with schools. At the time of writing this report, the following initiatives were either taking place in schools or in the developmental phases:

- First Peoples 12 English Course
- First Nations Studies 12 Course
- Monthly meetings of the First Peoples Education Council
- St’át’ic Language program within the Lillooet and Seton schools
- St’át’ic Support Worker program
- Aboriginal AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) mentorship program
- Distance learning with a focus on high school and Adult learners
- Development of District Science Camp incorporating Indigenous science that follows the seasons
- Development of an Elders in the Schools Program

In addition to the participating schools and the current initiatives of the GTSD, Lillooet is also home to a strong St’át’ic educational agency called USLCES. A review of the current context would not be complete without a discussion of the excellent work of USLCES.

**Upper St’át’ic Language, Culture and Education Society (USLCES)**

USLCES offers one of the best examples of an Indigenous institution in BC that aims to develop and protect Indigenous Knowledge. The work of USLCES allows the Power of Place project a very unique starting point in that a great deal of knowledge production and protocol work has already been undertaken in Upper St’át’ic territory. In 1991 USLCES was incorporated as a non-profit society governed by its own Constitution and Bylaws with a mandate to revitalize St’át’ic culture and language. The Society operates under the leadership of an eleven member Board of Directors consisting of appointed representatives from each of the six northern St’át’ic communities, and five elected members.

Since 1991 USLCES has received several curriculum development and research grants, and has researched and produced 20 language and cultural resource materials. In 1993, USLCES sponsored the first St’át’ic Language Teacher training initiative and the graduates from that initiative are currently teaching in the public school system in Lillooet.

USLCES was one of the first organizations in British Columbia to establish a Language Authority which is comprised of a fluent speaker from each of the northern St’át’ic communities. The St’át’ic Language Authority (SLA) has the ability to certify St’át’ic language teachers on behalf of the BC College of Teachers. In addition to the responsibility of accrediting St’át’ic teachers, SLA is charged with ensuring
curriculum and support materials are authentically St’át’imc and that text is enunciated and spelled correctly.

USLCES was also one of the first Aboriginal organizations in BC to have an Indigenous language accredited by the BC Ministry of Education as a second language for articulation purposes – commendable accomplishments and a testament to the USLCES board and to the St’át’imc Language Authority (SLA). The current Authority membership comprises of: Gertie Ned (Xaxli’p), Des Peters Sr. (Ts’kw’áylaxw), Clara Shields (Tsal’álh), Carl Alexander (Xwísten), Rose Whitley (T’ít’q’et) and Linda Redan (Sekw’el’wás). The PoP project has included the participation of several members of the SLA to ensure that the research results build on historical and current knowledge and curriculum development work related to the St’át’imc.

1.2. Scope, aim, rationale and research questions

I would like to see St’át’imc knowledge and culture in the curriculum and teaching in our schools to sensitize non-Aboriginal students to our culture and so our kids won’t feel so ashamed of who they are. Our St’át’imc kids think they’re not good enough; that their culture is not good enough; that our understanding of the world is not good enough. They want to be White because they think they would have a better chance of succeeding and that is so sad.

Elder Linda Redan’s words stand as stark testament to the fact that, despite all the work that has been done to make schools a more welcoming place for St’át’imc students, these institutions are still not St’át’imc places of learning. This is because, as Yuchi scholar Daniel Wildcat (2001) says, North Americans are still trying to address the problem of Indigenous education using curricula and pedagogy that are based on Western worldviews, values and knowledge. At the same time, he points out that “we have come to places in ... post-industrial societies where experiences are suggesting we might have valuable lessons to learn by exploring what once existed throughout this hemisphere: indigenous education systems.” (p.19) He asks non-Indigenous people to focus not on what is wrong with Indigenous learners, but to invite Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy into Western places of learning. Wildcat (2001) describes this turning of the analytical table as an invitation to “the beginning of a long-overdue honest dialogue.” (Wildcat, 2001, p.19) It is in response to this call to dialogue that PoP has been designed and implemented in Lillooet.

The aim of PoP is to engage local educational stakeholders in a participatory process of identifying community-based strategies for including St’át’imc knowledge and culture in Lillooet area school curriculum and pedagogy, and thereby contribute to the enhancement of learning environments for St’át’imc students.

The scope of PoP is limited to questions related to Aboriginal learning in a selection of geographically related GTSD schools located in or near Lillooet, BC, on Upper St’át’imc territory. To work within the limited available resources, the PoP project engaged members of the Upper St’át’imc communities, especially Nxwisten (Bridge River),
Sekw’el’wás (Cayoose Creek), Tsal’álh (Seton Lake), T’it’q’et (Lillooet), Ts’kw’áylaxw (Pavilion), Xaxli’p (Fountain), as well as stakeholders of four Lillooet and area schools, namely: Cayoosh Elementary, George Murray Elementary, Lillooet Secondary School and Sk’íl’ Mountain Community School. These four schools were selected on the grounds that St’át’imc students are the majority population in all four schools and educational stakeholders of these four schools expressed support to explore new pathways for improving the learning achievements of St’át’imc students.

The rationale for designing, implementing and evaluating the PoP project in relation to Lillooet area schools involves several reasons. First, like other Aboriginal learners across Canada, St’át’imc primary and secondary students struggle to achieve graduation rates on par with their non-Aboriginal peers. Second, St’át’imc students are the majority population in the four participating schools in this project, yet anecdotal evidence suggests that their language, culture, Indigenous Knowledge, and community leaders are represented in their schooling experience in only marginal ways, if at all. Third, educational stakeholders from St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc communities have expressed interest in engaging in the long-overdue honest dialogue that Wildcat mentions above. Fourth, an Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement was signed between the GTSD, St’át’imc, Nlakapamux and Secwépmec communities, off-reserve and Métis people and the Ministry of Education in late 2005. The Agreement, which identifies general objectives and goals for improving Aboriginal learning achievement, reflects a spirit of cooperation and commitment to constructive change that exists at political and institutional levels in the GTSD. The challenge, as the parties note in their First Annual Report, lies in how to bring those commitments to life. (Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement: First Annual Report, 2006) The PoP project is an attempt to bring some of the shared commitments of the Agreement to life.

To guide the PoP project, five guiding research questions were developed, each of which are stated below:

- What are strategies for integrating Indigenous Knowledge into schools that have been demonstrated in other jurisdictions that could be used to facilitate the inclusion of appropriate aspects of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities into the curriculum and pedagogy of Lillooet area schools?

- To what degree is St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities currently included in the curriculum and pedagogy of Lillooet area schools?

- What aspects of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities ought to be included in the curriculum and pedagogy of Lillooet area schools?

- What are the existing strengths, challenges and opportunities in Lillooet area schools and the Upper St’át’imc communities that relate to the project of making school curriculum and pedagogy inclusive of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems?
How can Lillooet area teachers and principals, St’át’ímc Elders and resource people work together to sustainably include St’át’ímc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities into school curriculum and pedagogy?

The above questions were developed in collaboration with the PoP project team and the PoP Steering Committee. The major driver behind these inquiries is a local desire to make Lillooet area schools more culturally responsive so as to improve Aboriginal student experiences in schools and work toward improving their academic and social learning achievement outcomes.

1.3. Organization of report

In addition to this introductory section, there are six parts to this report. In the following section, we provide a detailed description of our methodological approach to working with educational stakeholders in Lillooet and area to address our guiding research questions. Following the methodology section is a literature review, which discusses a diverse range of theoretical and practical themes that relate to the aim of the PoP project.

Our analysis of participant input is featured next, which is divided into three subsections, each of which focuses on one of the three major data collection activities. A conclusion and set of recommendations comes next, which is followed by a short discussion that traces some of the impacts and implications of the PoP project for research, policy and programming related to Aboriginal learning in GTSD and beyond. The appendices constitute the final section of this report.
2. Methodology

Community-based participatory action research (CBPAR) is a collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings. Generally, CBPAR in an educational context begins with a research topic of importance to a community, has the aim of combining knowledge with action, and seeks to facilitate educational change that improves learning achievements for all students. Although a useful method in and of itself, CBPAR is more culturally responsive to Indigenous peoples when informed by local Indigenous perspectives on education and Indigenous perspectives on research methodologies.

The PoP research methodology is an example of CBPAR which has been developed and refined by scholarly and local Indigenous perspectives on education and research and, as such, is a methodology that developed incrementally and reflexively in partnership with educational stakeholders in the St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc communities of Lillooet. Although a general working methodology had been developed as part of the original research proposal to the Canadian Council on Learning, the specific details of the method were not articulated at that time because the project team determined that the details of the method ought to be developed with local stakeholders. The final articulation of the PoP research method that is explained in this section is the result of a series of consensus decisions made by members of the Power of Place Steering Committee, which consisted of diverse educational stakeholders, including teachers, principals, St’át’imc Elders and resource people.

The PoP methodology recognizes the fact that rural communities are built on interpersonal relationships and educational changes are more successful if they engage in a process that builds on these relationships (Kushman & Barnhardt, 2001). “This means seeking out the strengths, assets, and local sense of place and culture that make a small community unique, and then designing a reform effort that fits into that context.” (Kushman & Barnhardt, 2001, p.14) Heeding this call, the PoP project, from design to final deliverable, involved building relationships among groups of people who, to varying degrees, started out with mixed histories and a degree of disinterest in working together.

The exercise of developing the research methodology with the PoP Steering Committee (SC) provided a valuable exercise in itself because it allowed participants to engage in challenging conversations about increasing integration of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems in the schools, and the interrelated project of expanding the parameters of what counts as organized learning in the context of school environments. The challenging nature of these conversations is expressed succinctly in the following comments of a SC member:
This project will take more than developing new curriculum and coming up with new ways of teaching. It will require attitudinal change – a paradigm shift. How well we do that will determine whether this project will be successful or not. I really don’t want to spend time going through the motions if everyone involved is not willing to do the hard work – the personal reflection, seeking out and addressing their own biases …dare I say the ‘r’[racism] word? Without a fundamental shift at that level then nothing will change in the classroom and we will, all of us, be engaging in one more futile exercise.

By choosing to engage local stakeholders in the process of developing the particular aspects of the methodology, the research team facilitated difficult dialogues that sought to initiate the foundational change that the SC member refers to in the above comment. Such difficult dialogues opened the requisite space to imagine a method that was grounded in sound theory and practice, and at the same time was congruent with the interests of educational stakeholders of the St’át’imc community and GTSD.

The final PoP research method consists of four phases of activities, each of which aimed to build constructive relations across cultural differences as participants worked together to develop local responses to our guiding research questions. The illustration on the following page outlines the four phases in the Power of Place research project, which we explain in detail in this section.
Figure 1: Illustration of PoP methodology

Phase one
a) Convene project team
b) Conduct curriculum and literature reviews
c) Establish Steering Committee (SC)
d) Determine phase two activities

Phase two
a) Host community-based conference
b) Host SC meetings to develop research method and ethics
c) Establish St’át’imc Educational Research Team (SERT)

Phase three
a) Develop and host Aboriginal Day Celebration activities
b) Host workshops with Elders, resource people, teachers and principals

Phase four
a) Write final report
b) Develop curriculum enhancement toolkit
c) Conduct project evaluation
d) Host final SC committee meeting
Created in partnership with the Power of Place Steering Committee, the methodology for this project emerged piece by piece over the course of five Steering Committee meetings. In general, the Steering Committee and the project team aimed to develop a method that was reflexive in relationship to opportunities and limitations inherent to the local context, considerate of diverse perspectives in the Steering Committee and, finally, in harmony with the shared interests of educational stakeholders in the St’át’imc community and school community.

The following sections explain the four phases of the final research methodology of the PoP project, each of which are described in terms of overarching objectives, specific activities and results. Each section reflects the different parts of the illustration of the research method that is presented above.

Wherever appropriate, short narratives have also been provided to explain some of the contextual factors that shaped the direction of each phase of research activity. Each narrative aims to highlight some of the driving forces behind the choices about methodology that were made during the course of this project. The source of information for these narratives was the meeting minutes of Steering Committee members.

2.1. Phase one: Convene project team, conduct curriculum and literature reviews, establish PoP Steering Committee and determine phase two activities

Objectives

The first phase of the project aimed to develop an informational base that could inform the multiple developmental choices inherent in the project. As such, phase one consisted of four objectives:

1. To develop a survey instrument that offers teachers a way to provide the project team with information about the degree to which St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities are included in school curriculum and pedagogy in Lillooet area schools;
2. To write a literature review on the thematic areas related to the PoP project proposal, including the themes of participatory educational research, Indigenous Knowledge (IK), educational change, and integrating IK into school curriculum and pedagogy;
3. To recruit and establish a culturally diverse Steering Committee (SC) comprised of educational stakeholders in St’át’imc communities and the school community to guide the development of the PoP project;
4. To engage the SC in three meetings to discuss the material in the literature review and curriculum review, and to set the objectives for the second phase of project work.
Activities

The first activity of the PoP project consisted of a series of face to face meetings among the project team (Scott Graham and Brenda Ireland), who set the parameters for the scope of the curriculum and literature review. The project team engaged critical questions about the type of information most pertinent to projects aiming to change educational systems by integrating Indigenous Knowledge into school curriculum and pedagogy.

The literature review yielded important information regarding questions about how to respectfully and effectively integrate Indigenous Knowledge (IK) and cultural activities into local curriculum and pedagogy in schools. Academic sources and government reports were researched for relevant literature, which were analyzed in terms of best practices and key considerations for processes of developing community-based research methodologies that aim to facilitate the inclusion of IK in school curriculum and pedagogy.

Three search strategies were used to retrieve literature for this review. Although not all literature from this search was used in the review, all relevant sources are featured in the bibliography of this report, which is featured in Appendix M. The three strategies are outlined below, as well as the results of the search.

Search strategy I

1. Search Keywords: Indigenous education, Indigenous Knowledge, Indigenous curriculum, Aboriginal education, Native education
2. Search Engine: ERIC

Search strategy II

1. Search Keywords: place-based education, community education, participatory educational change, participatory curriculum reform, educational change
2. Search Engine: ERIC

Search strategy III

1. Search Keywords: community based research, community driven research, community based participatory research, community based participatory action research, decolonizing methodologies
2. Search Engine: Social Sciences Abstracts
In addition to the three above search strategies, the authors utilized personal files, internet resources, and bibliographies in reports and articles to develop an adequate body of literature for the purposes of the review. The results of these three search strategies was a list of articles, reports and web sites that are sorted by year (descending) and author (ascending). A total of 102 sources were retained for the purpose of the PoP project.

The curriculum review, which was completed in May 2007, was conducted in tandem to the literature review, and served as method for eliciting information from teachers regarding the degree to which K-12 school curriculum at Lillooet and Sk’i’l Mountain schools included St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities. Each of the principals of the four Lillooet area schools (Cayoosh Elementary, George Murray Elementary, Lillooet Secondary School and Sk’il’ Mountain Community School) agreed to distribute a self-complete questionnaire (see: Appendix C ) asking teachers to identify the grade(s) they taught and indicate whether they were currently integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities into their curriculum. The questionnaire was designed to: (a) obtain a cursory understanding of the extent to which St’át’imc Knowledge Systems are currently integrated into the K-12 curriculum using mainstream pedagogy; and, (b) elicit teachers’ input on ways to increase the degree to which St’át’imc Knowledge Systems are included in school curriculum and pedagogy.

St’át’imcets teachers (e.g., school-based language teachers) were asked to not complete the survey as the intent of the survey was to identify St’át’imc knowledge and related materials currently integrated in non-language related courses. Thirty-nine questionnaires were distributed to teachers at staff meetings at the four schools, and twenty surveys were completed and returned, resulting in a response rate of fifty-one per cent.

Teachers who indicated that they were including St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities in their curriculum were asked to respond to two additional questions. First, they were asked to provide details of how they were including St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities in their curriculum. Second, educators were asked to identify what they would need to more thoroughly include St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into their class curriculum.

The curriculum review generated base line data regarding the grade levels and subject areas where St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities were part of the global teaching plan. This review was considered important by the project team for two reasons: (a) the review identifies areas of the school curriculum where teachers are already including St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities, as well as the gaps where such integration is not happening; (b) the review also sets an important foundation of information against which future initiatives to integrate St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities in school curriculum can be assessed. This baseline measure allows for comparative analysis over time, which will help the GTSD understand the degree to which they are succeeding in their effort to make Lillooet school curriculum more inclusive.
The establishment of the SC took place during the completion of the reviews. The SC consisted of diverse educational stakeholders who participated in three face to face meetings in the first phase of the project. The first meeting provided the SC an opportunity to discuss the scope and overarching aims of the PoP project, as well as to discuss and set their roles and responsibilities as an SC. The second and third meetings involved facilitated dialogue regarding the curriculum and literature review, as well as a series of discussions to determine the objectives of phase two of the project.

Results

Phase one yielded several results, including: (a) curriculum review report that identified central issues inherent to curriculum integration projects in general, and analysis of the results of the teachers’ responses to the self-complete questionnaire; (b) literature review report; (c) list of SC members and meeting minutes that articulate the SC’s questions, concerns and hopes for the project, as well as summary notes on the discussions about the content of the literature and curriculum review, and the SC’s decisions about the objectives and activities for phase two of the project.

2.2. Phase two: Host community-based conference, develop research method and ethics, establish St’át’imc Educational Research Team (SERT) and determine activities for phase three

Objectives

Phase two of the project aimed to achieve three objectives:

1. To provide an educational opportunity for a diverse range of educational stakeholders to learn about and provide input on the theme of integrating IK into school curriculum and pedagogy by hosting a community-based conference in Lillooet;
2. To engage the SC in a process of developing a detailed methodology for research and curriculum enhancement activities that builds on the outcome of the community-based conference;
3. To establish a St’át’imc Educational Research Team (SERT) to implement the methodology that was developed in partnership with the SC.

Activities

Host Power of Place conference

The Power of Place Conference occurred in February, 2007, and was both a learning opportunity and an exercise in intercultural dialogue and community-based decision making. With regard to the learning component of the conference, Angayuqaq Oscar
Kawagley (former Director, Alaska Native Knowledge Network) and Ray Barnhardt (Professor, University of Alaska Fairbanks) served as key-note speakers at the conference, providing their insights about place-based education, as well as their experience with integrating IK and pedagogy into the school system. The world renowned work of Kawagley and Barnhardt provided an ideal backdrop for a series of intercultural dialogues about the complexity and dynamics of place-based education and how Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy can enrich learning for all students in Lillooet area schools.

The intent of the conference was to provide parents, students, teachers, community leaders and other educational stakeholders with a venue to learn about and discuss place-based education and the benefits of integrating Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy into local school curriculum. The overarching aims of the conference, as identified by the Power of Place SC, were as follows:

- To share information on place-based education and how St’át’imc culture and knowledge can be integrated into schools to enhance school based learning experiences for all students;
- To identify resources as well as aspects of St’át’imc culture and knowledge that can be integrated into the school curriculum and ways of teaching;
- To identify aspects of St’át’imc culture and knowledge that can be learned outside the schools but be included as part of the formal education process;
- To facilitate healthier and more sustainable dialogue between St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc communities in Lillooet;
- To provide participants with information about St’át’imc world views that guide approaches to education and learning, and how they compare and contrast to Western approaches;
- To facilitate relationship building between people who share the same passions and provide opportunities for them to continue to work together after the conference.

The conference was hosted at the Lillooet Secondary School, and took place over two days, attracting over 150 people. Students, parents, Elders from St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc communities, teachers, principals, media, and interested community members attended the conference, providing a dynamic and diverse environment for imagining sustainable educational change in Lillooet area schools.

In an effort to develop local capacity for future gatherings of this sort, and to ensure equitable participation at the conference, a small group of eight local educational leaders from St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc communities participated in a half-day workshop prior to the conference to learn how to facilitate community-based dialogue and deliberation. After completing their training, these facilitators were well prepared to lead small group discussions at the conference to ensure participants were afforded the opportunity to identify topics and participate in areas of particular interest to them. The conference allowed for participants to engage in small group discussions by allowing a series of
break-out sessions in classrooms throughout the school that were focused on predetermined questions. For the conference agenda, see Appendix D.

The series of workshops involved St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc people who are interested in questions about how to enhance learning experiences for students in Lillooet area K-12 schools. Four workshop groups were formed at the conference for the purpose of participating in three inquiry-based discussions. The four workshop groups were:

- Kindergarten to grade seven teachers and administrators
- Grades eight to twelve teachers and administrators
- Parents, Elders and community members
- Students in grades eight to twelve

Each workshop group was asked questions about the strengths and challenges inherent to the Lillooet school systems, as well as questions about how schooling in Lillooet and area can be improved for students. The following three questions were used to guide three rounds of discussions among each group.

- What assets or strengths in the school system contribute to positive learning experiences for St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc students?
- What issues or challenges in the school system inhibit positive learning experiences for St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc students?
- What actionable ideas can enhance school-based learning experiences for St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc students?

Once participants reviewed their group’s work on questions of strengths and challenges, they generated a list of actionable ideas. Next, they were invited to engage in a priority setting exercise, which resulted in a limited number of priority action ideas. The priority setting exercise was referred to as ‘dotmocracy’, which involves each participant getting three dots and placing their dots next to the idea(s) they found to be most important in the list. Participants were asked to not put any more than two dots on one actionable idea.

After each group had selected their priority areas, a representative of each group presented their most important actionable ideas to the whole conference body. After each group had presented their most important actionable ideas, everyone was given three more dots and was invited to engage in a second dotmocracy exercise.

The result of the second dotmocracy exercise was the identification of four major actionable ideas, which were selected according to their weighting relative to other actionable ideas. Each actionable idea formed the basis of new group structures of mixed conference participants, who discussed the given priority idea. All participant input was developed into a proceedings report, which included analysis of overarching hope for educational change in Lillooet area schools, with a specific focus on practical strategies.
for integrating St’át’imc knowledge systems and cultural activities into school curriculum (SPARC BC, 2007). The report served as the informational basis for the SC to use in their subsequent meetings, in which they engaged in deliberations about specific research methods for phase three of the PoP project.

The PoP conference also included an evening of celebration at the Jullianne Hall, where conference participants were invited to get to know one another and enjoy a range of performances, including cowboy poetry, St’át’imc song, story and dance, and a diverse assortment of delicious St’át’imc food.

*Develop a participatory research methodology and related ethics*

Following the conference, the fourth and fifth SC meetings were held in Lillooet. These two meetings included exercises to reach consensus on the specific characteristics of a research method for the third phase of the project. Meeting minutes were produced for each of these meetings, which informed the development of a draft document that articulated the overarching objectives of phase three and the specific activities (e.g., data collection techniques, participating groups, results of research, timeline, ethics).

The research methodology and ethics statement developed by the SC was then reviewed in a meeting between the lead researcher of the project and representatives of USLCES. The research ethics statement sought to ensure that the research activities harmonized with St’át’imc protocols for research involving its people and conformed to the highest ethical standards for community-based research. The research ethics statement was deemed to be an appropriate set of ethical guidelines for PoP research and was verbally agreed to by representatives of USLCES. The research ethics statement can be found in Appendix A.

*Establish St’át’imc Educational Research Team (SERT)*

Once the scope of the research method and related ethics had been agreed to by the relevant stakeholders, the project team advertised and hired two new project team members to make up what became known as the *St’át’imc Educational Research Team* (SERT). SERT was primarily responsible for implementing the research methodology, and played lead roles in coordinating the workshops with the Elders, resource people and GTSD teachers and principals.

The SERT’s specialized knowledge of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities, and solid understanding of how District schools work was integral to the success of the third phase of the project. Nora Greenway and Laura John, two educational leaders from the St’át’imc community formed SERT and played a pivotal role in refining and implementing the plan for phase three, developing meaningful opportunities for Elders and resource people of the St’át’imc community to engage in education-focused dialogue with each other and with the representatives of the school community.
Results

The results of this phase of the project included employment agreements with both members of SERT, an implementation plan for the educational research involving members of the St’át’imc community, as well as a statement of ethics for conducting research with members of the St’át’imc community and use of the results of the research involving the St’át’imc community.

2.3. Phase three: Develop and host Aboriginal Day celebration activities, and workshops with St’át’imc Elders, resource people and school staff

Objectives

Phase three of the project aimed to achieve the following three objectives:

1. To develop and deliver a series of St’át’imc cultural activities in celebration of Aboriginal Day in two schools in Lillooet, as well as elicit input from teachers about connections between St’át’imc cultural activities and school curriculum;
2. To plan and deliver two workshops involving St’át’imc Elders and one workshop involving St’át’imc resource people, the aim of which is to elicit their input on how they would like to be involved in school-based education and what aspects of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities are appropriate for inclusion in school curriculum;
3. To plan and deliver a workshop involving St’át’imc Elders and resource people, as well as teachers and principals from Lillooet area schools to identify links between school curriculum and those aspects of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities selected by Elders and resource people.

Activities

*Engage students and teachers in St’át’imc cultural activities for Aboriginal Day Celebration in Lillooet area schools*

The task of linking the PoP project to Aboriginal Day Celebrations in Lillooet area schools sought to increase the capacity and interest of students and teachers to include St’át’imc cultural practices in the fabric of school life. SERT engaged in secondary research at the Lillooet Tribal Council and USCLES to identify existing materials related to St’át’imc cultural activities. SERT also identified Elders and resource people who have experience sharing their knowledge with students and teachers in schools, inviting them to participate in the celebration activities.
SERT planned and hosted two sessions of St’át’imc cultural activities in honor of Aboriginal Day at George Murray Elementary Schools and Cayoosh Elementary School. The purpose of these preliminary sessions in the schools was threefold. First, the task of planning and implementing the event maintained an action-orientation for the project and enabled SERT to start to identify Elders and resource people willing to contribute to school activities, as well as to develop an inventory of St’át’imc resources.

Second, the act of focusing the participating schools’ celebration of Aboriginal Day on St’át’imc cultural practices provided teachers and students alike with a lived-experience with certain aspects of the St’át’imc way of life, thereby opening a space at the schools for St’át’imc cultural practices. The inclusion of St’át’imc cultural practices in the context of an Aboriginal Day celebration aimed to build on the momentum of the Power of Place conference by setting in motion the practice of including St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural practices in the schools.

Third, the Aboriginal Day activities provided SERT with a chance to interact with the school body by providing information about the PoP project, as well as asking informal questions about student and teacher’s ideas for including more St’át’imc knowledge and culture in school curriculum.

**Develop and deliver workshops with Elders and resource people**

After the Aboriginal Day celebration events, three workshops involving St’át’imc Elders and resource people were developed and delivered, which included two workshops with Elders and one workshop with resource people.

The workshops involving Elders were developed to facilitate the achievement of three goals: (a) to provide Elders with a forum to share their views about being involved in school activity, and at the same time to provide them with an opportunity to learn about the PoP project and its general aims; (b) to assist Elders with the development of their teaching skills and to improve their comfort level working in a school-related environment; and, (c) to invite Elders to start identifying parts of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems that they would like to contribute to school curriculum and pedagogy. These goals were developed out of recognition of the fact that since the PoP project relates to schools, and given that many of the Elders to be involved in this project may have attended residential schools, there exists the risk of painful memories emerging through the participation of Elders in this project and the subsequent opportunities to be involved in schools. As such, the SC emphasized that the workshops should be co-facilitated by an Elder from the community and that the format should integrate a mixture of peer-to-peer dialogue, reflection and information about the project and related activities. Nora Greenway, as part of SERT, fulfilled this request of the SC. The agenda for these workshops is featured in Appendix E.
During the recruitment phase of the workshops, every effort was made to have a balance of male and female Elders, as well as younger and older Elders. Also, SERT sought to make the workshops inclusive of Elders who are experienced working in schools, as well as Elders who could be mentored to become more involved in school related activities. Over twenty Elders were invited to the workshops via telephone and through face to face invitations. In total, eight Elders participated in two workshops (3 and 5 respectively) on October 1 and October 7, 2008, at the Lillooet Tribal Council in the board room. Although the results of the workshops were very useful, the turn out was not as high as expected. The low turn out of elder participants can be attributed to the fact that the St’át’imc community had recently experienced several deaths and therefore not all invited Elders chose to participate in the workshops.

The design of the workshops aimed to be sensitive to different types of abilities of participating Elders and sought to cultivate a shared space that facilitated emotionally safe interactions between participants. Both workshops commenced with an opening prayer, which was followed by introductions and a brief overview of the PoP project. A short presentation by SERT followed, which explained the purpose of the workshop and its relationship to the workshop with the resource people and the upcoming joint meeting between Elders, resource people teachers, and principals. SERT also spent some time explaining how St’át’imc knowledge can improve school-based experiences of St’át’imc students and empower them to achieve success in school. In an effort to clarify the purpose of the workshops, SERT also provided some examples of how St’át’imc knowledge and pedagogy can be incorporated using both traditional and contemporary realities of St’át’imc peoples. This information included a wide range of traditional and contemporary examples, including cedar root basket presentations in the schools, recently developed St’át’imc astrology curriculum, Aboriginal current events, as well as presentations on the Lillooet Declaration.

Following these introductory activities, the workshop focus turned to exercises that invited Elders to share their views on what aspects of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems (traditional and contemporary) ought to be included in the schools. First, Elders were asked to spend a few minutes thinking about what they think students should know about. Each Elder shared their ideas with the group. Each of the major knowledge areas were recorded on a flip chart and the Elders identified specific topics or activities that fell within each knowledge area. Once the list had been finalized, the SERT facilitated group discussions related to questions about how the topics and activities could be included in school-based learning.

The final activity in the workshops involved basic instruction in developing presentations for students. SERT explained a series of tips for preparing school-based presentations, and then engaged Elders in a conversation about the degree to which they agreed with these tips, or had other pointers that they would like to share with the group. The workshops concluded with an informal evaluation, inviting Elders to share what they liked about the workshop and what could have been improved. These conversations were not recorded in order to evoke a relaxed environment for the Elders to comfortably debrief and share their ideas without feeling like each word needed to be recorded.
In conjunction to the workshops with the Elders, SERT hosted one workshop on October 2, 2008, at the Lillooet Tribal Council board room with St’át’imc resource people. Six resource people attended the workshop. The focus of the workshop involving resource people aimed to engage members of the St’át’imc community with specialized knowledge who either have been or would like to be involved in the school-based education of students. Similar to the Elders’ workshops, the St’át’imc resource people were also invited to identify aspects of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems (traditional and contemporary), as well as cultural practices that they would like to share with students.

The workshop commenced with an opening prayer, which was followed by an overview of the PoP project, and brief introductions. After introductions concluded, SERT provided an overview of the kinds of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural practices that have been included in school-based learning in the past. This overview mirrored the overview for the Elders workshops, which was followed by a brainstorming exercise to identify St’át’imc knowledge areas that the resource people felt were appropriate for inclusion in school-based learning. This exercise began by inviting the group to think for a couple of minutes about what should be included in school programs. Each person was then asked to share one of their ideas, which was recorded onto a flip chart, then the next person was asked for one idea, which was recorded on the flip chart, and so on and so forth, until everyone exhausted their respective set of ideas.

Next, the resource people were invited to address the following question: What sites do you think are critical for the students to visit and know about? The participants were asked to consider sites within the Upper St’át’imc territory that might serve as outdoor classrooms for presenting St’át’imc knowledge and pedagogy. The group identified a number of sites that they thought were most appropriate and discussed the importance of following the individual bands’ protocols when taking students on field trips to the various territories.

Finally, each participant was asked to select two of the topics identified in the brainstorm that they would be interested in presenting to either primary or secondary students. The participants were asked to take this home and think about how they might want to present their topic and where they would want to present this. They were also asked to consider the subject and grade level they wished to present to as well. SERT explained that the resource people will be able to present the result of their homework at the joint workshops with Elders, resource people, teachers and resource people. In following the guidance of the Steering Committee, both Elders and resource people were asked to complete a criminal record check at the workshop so they could be involved in school-based activities in the immediate future. These checks were made available at the end of the workshops, the cost of which was covered by the School District. Elders were paid an honorarium for their participation while resource people were thanked for their contributions to the project.
Develop and deliver workshop with Elders, resource people, teachers and principals

In the fourth and final community-based workshop, the scope of the participant list was enlarged to include teachers and principals in Lillooet area schools, as well as support workers from Ashcroft and Lytton schools, in addition to Elders and resource people. The joint workshop was held at the Ucwalmicw Centre, on November 7, 2008. The format and content of the workshop was informed by the results of the three workshops with Elders and resource people and included a diverse set of opportunities for all participants to engage the results of the three previous workshops and interact with one another for the purpose of developing relationships for ongoing work.

SERT clustered the St’át’imc topics from previous workshops into the following four categories: Creation stories (e.g., spiritual teachings, frog/salmon legends, rights of passage, Christianity); Traditional territories (e.g., landmarks, fishing rocks, family sites); Sciences (e.g., ecosystems, seasons, habitat, astrology, pollution); Governance (e.g., St’át’imc family/community traditional systems, impact of colonization, Department of Indian Affairs, Indian Act, residential schools, reserve systems, treaties). This information was also typed, photocopied and distributed to all the participants for reference throughout the day.

The workshop began with a prayer, after which everyone, in circle seating, introduced themselves, some in Ucwalmicets, telling who they were, where they were from and their responsibilities/interests in the PoP project. A total of thirty-two people participated in this final workshop, eight Elders and resource people, three facilitators and twenty-one School District staff, which included principals, teachers, Aboriginal support staff and language/cultural teachers, as well as a few guests from outside the Lillooet area who were interested in learning about the project. Following the introductions, four short presentations were offered to provide some context to the workshop and explain the significance of the historic gathering. A brief summary of each presentation is provided below.

Doreen Whitney, Ucwalmicw Centre Manager, welcomed the group and explained the significance and purpose of the Ucwalmicw Centre. She explained the building and talked about the ten stained glass windows of the Centre that were designed by and represented each of the ten families that make up the T’it’q̓et community. Doreen noted that she was happy to host such an important meeting that aimed to build positive relations between the School District and the Upper St’át’imc communities. She also indicated that the Ucwalmicw Centre would be pleased to host future education-related meetings and that the Ucwalmicw Centre welcomed teachers to bring their students to the centre for St’át’imc presentations.

Shelley Oppenheim-Lacerte, GTSD Principal of Aboriginal Education, spoke about the Power of Place method of educational change and the importance of including Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy into the District’s education system. She also spoke to the importance of the role of Elders in the school(s) and the District’s
responsibility in facilitating their inclusion. Shelley spoke of her experience working in schools and the void in the curriculum with regard to Aboriginal content and representation and how the PoP project will fill this void by initiating a paradigm shift in the scope and focus of local education, placing St’át’imc Elders and resource people at the centre of this shift, empowering their voice to provide ongoing direction. Shelly spoke about the commitment of the District and school leadership in supporting the recommendations of the PoP project.

Next, SERT spoke to the accomplishments of the PoP project within the District since its inception. The PoP conference was discussed in some detail, as well as the activities that extended from the conference. SERT emphasized the importance of thinking of this meeting as a beginning to the ongoing project of including St’át’imc Elders and resource people in the schools, and the related work of developing the requisite programs and curriculum to make their involvement sustainable.

SERT then facilitated a gallery walk with the entire group through the different stations that were posted on the walls, each station depicted a St’át’imc knowledge area and related topics. SERT led this walk and presented the knowledge areas, topics and activities that were identified by the Elders and resource people. School staff was invited to ask questions about specific knowledge areas and related topics at each station, while Elders and resource people were given the opportunity to provide responses.

This activity aimed to encourage the School District staff to engage in dialogue with the Elders and resource people, inviting them to appreciate what the St’át’imc Elders and resource people have identified as important forms of knowledge and cultural activities that should be included in the formal education system. It also provided an opportunity for the District staff to start thinking about the relationships between the knowledge areas and cultural activities identified by Elders and resource people and their teaching areas, specifically the learning objectives of different modules that they teach. The gallery walk also provided Elders and resource people an opportunity to review how their input was represented by SERT. Elders and resource people alike took this opportunity to clarify any confusion or misrepresentations of the knowledge and cultural activities that they had shared at the previous workshops.

Following the gallery walk, participants were asked to select a station that harmonized with their skills and interests. This allowed for the formation of heterogeneous groupings, each of which had a group facilitator and a note taker. The group was guided through a more focused discussion about the relationship between the knowledge area in question and learning objectives of subject areas taught by the teachers in the group. These small group discussions were centered around two basic questions, one for Elders and resource people, and one for school staff. The questions were addressed in the following order:

1. For Elders and resource people: Are your areas of expertise most suitable for primary or secondary schooling, or both?
2. For school staff: What St’át’imc knowledge areas and cultural activities have relationship to the subject area that you teach?

After each participant in each group had a chance to address their respective question, the facilitators from each group reported out to the larger group, explaining the major points of the group’s discussion. Notes from the discussions were recorded, and summarized by the SERT, which are featured in the analysis section of this report, as well as in the PoP curriculum enhancement toolkit (2008).

The workshop at the Ucwalmicw Centre concluded with a short presentation by Shelley Oppenheim-Lacerte, who explained the next steps for educational stakeholders in the continuance of Power of Place in the Gold Trail School District. She spoke about the different roles that the different stakeholders can play in building on the momentum of this meeting. Following Shelley’s presentation, participants were asked to contribute their ideas about future directions for the PoP project. These ideas were recorded and have been integrated into the conclusion and recommendation section of this report.

Following the overview of next steps of the PoP project, participants were taken to the T’it’q’et S7istken, which provides another example of a significant place of the T’it’qet. While at the site of the S7istken, Elders Ceda Scotchman and Willard Charlie (Koochie) gave a brief overview of the S7istken, referring to the information board. Some people had been to the S7istken in the past but most had not. All of the participants were informed that Chief Bill Machell has offered to lead group tours for students. After the site visit, everyone returned to the Ucwalmicw Centre for lunch where Ceda Scotchman said a prayer, after which the group ate, mingled and learned more about one another.

Results

The results of these workshops yielded a list of Elders and resource people, their contact information, as well as the type of specialized knowledge that they would like to contribute to school-based curriculum and pedagogy. Also, the knowledge areas and cultural activities identified by the Elders and resource people have been related to specific subject areas in schools to assist teachers in their effort to include Elders and resource people in the school. A list of supplementary St’át’imc Knowledge Systems was also developed out of this phase of the research. Additionally, the GTSD supported each participant to complete a criminal record check, providing them with the requisite clearance to be involved in school-based activities.
2.4. Phase four: Write final report, develop curriculum enhancement toolkit and conduct project evaluation

The final phase of PoP was subordinated to four objectives, each of which are explained below:

Objectives

1. To develop a final research report that represents the PoP project, including an analysis of data collected throughout the PoP project, as well as conclusions and recommendations regarding the inclusion of St’át’ímc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities in Lillooet area schools;
2. To develop a PoP curriculum enhancement toolkit for school staff, which can serve to assist school staff in their ongoing effort to work with St’át’ímc Elders and resource people;
3. To conduct a final evaluation of the project by having the PoP Steering Committee complete a questionnaire, the results of which are included in the final report;
4. To present the final report and toolkit to the Steering Committee.

Activities

The final research report and toolkit were completed concurrently, with the SERT working on the toolkit in partnership with the District Principal of Aboriginal Education and a few volunteer teachers, while the rest of the PoP research team engaged in the development of the final report.

The final evaluation consisted of a two page questionnaire that was circulated via email to members of the Steering Committee. The results were analyzed and are featured in Appendix I.

The final Steering Committee meeting had not taken place by the time this final report was complete; however, a meeting is scheduled for the first part of 2009 to ensure that the momentum of the release of the report is not lost. The purpose of this meeting is to provide the Steering Committee with an opportunity to engage in discussion about the final results and identify next steps. Additionally, in order to disseminate the research results, the project team will share the final products with Nlakapamux and Secwépmec communities, which are also part of Gold Trail School District. This meeting is also planned for the first part of 2009.

Results

The results of the final phase of the PoP project were a research report and curriculum enhancement toolkit.
2.5. General limitations and/or challenges inherent in the PoP research methodology

The PoP project assumes that enhancing Aboriginal student learning environments with Indigenous Knowledge and culture positively impacts Aboriginal students’ capacities to improve the degree to which they succeed in school. As such, the project is not focused on making the case for integrating Indigenous Knowledge and culture into schools, but takes such a claim for granted, and limits the scope of the research to questions that explore practical strategies for including St’át’imc Elders and resource people in Lillooet area schools. With such a focus, we have attempted to shape PoP into a community-based participatory action research project with Indigenous characteristics.

As we mentioned above, the PoP research method was developed incrementally. A general research method was developed for the original proposal. This general methodology was refined over time by the PoP Steering Committee, who added research objectives to the general method as the project developed. The PoP method was also developed dialectically, which is to say that when new data was collected by the project team and presented to the Steering Committee, the Steering Committee discussed the findings and interpreted the findings into a general shape for the next steps in the research, which were then operationalized by the PoP project team. The challenge inherent to an incremental and dialectical approach to designing a research methodology is that one risks periods of extended ambiguity and confusion regarding the direction of the research. However, such ambiguity can also serve as a type of conceptual flexibility for imagining new research pathways.

The limitations of the PoP research methodology are standard limits to the projects two primary data collection techniques (i.e., survey and workshops). Generally speaking, self-complete surveys such as ours are limited because they seek to elicit top-of-mind responses without the prompts of a researcher. As such, respondents may not provide all of the information that they would if they were being directly asked questions. Our teacher survey is specifically limited because it focuses on collecting baseline information about the degree to which St’át’imc knowledge and culture is included in school curriculum and pedagogy from the perspectives of teachers. The survey did not engage other educational stakeholders and was not designed to elicit more nuanced information, such as teachers’ perceptions of Indigenous Knowledge integration work. The simple purpose and design of the survey instrument was intentional because we sought to create an easily replicable research method that can help school staff and St’át’imc community members learn over time about the impacts of their effort to make Lillooet area schools inclusive of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems.
With regard to the community-based workshops, we attempted to ensure that the shared space was safe and accommodating to diverse intelligences and types of learning styles. However, when working with groups, some voices can take more space and time than others, which limits the degree to which all participants can share their views. Unlike interviews, which allow for in depth conversation, workshops can sometimes limit the depth of input by any one participant. Nevertheless, the workshops did yield rich data as it relates to our overarching research questions – principally due to the generosity of participants.
3. Literature review

This literature review was primarily developed as a response to our first overarching research question, namely: What are strategies for integrating Indigenous Knowledge into schools that have been demonstrated in other jurisdictions that could be used to facilitate the inclusion of appropriate aspects of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities into the curriculum and pedagogy of Lillooet area schools?

In an effort to generate a multi-sided response to this question, this literature review focused on academic articles and research reports completed, for the most part, within the last decade by Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers and scholars, both Canadian and American. Both theoretical and pragmatic research has been considered in this review, as well as literature that considers educational change initiatives that aim to make school-based learning more inclusive of Indigenous Knowledge systems and pedagogy for the purpose of improving learning achievement outcomes of Indigenous students.

The project team researched, reviewed and selected a set of journal articles and reports that were most relevant to the overarching goals of the Power of Place project. The general criteria that was used in the selection of literature was whether the given report or article addressed either an ideology or methodology related to integrating Indigenous Knowledge in schools. Several different sources were consulted for such reports and articles, including federal and provincial government websites, academic educational centers, as well as educational databases such as ERIC. The complete literature review strategy is defined in the methodology section.

Our literature review is divided into eleven sections, each of which attempts to trace the major contours of one of the many inter-related themes that intersect questions about Aboriginal learning and the project of making schools culturally responsive to Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy.

The first section is titled *Reconciling differing worldviews*, which offers a general comparison of Indigenous and Western worldviews. Differences between worldviews are considered and the relationships between these world views and social goals, intellectual motivation, and human action are examined.

Indigenous Knowledge is defined and the themes of Indigenous pedagogy and epistemology are examined in the section titled *Indigenous Knowledge, pedagogy and learning*. Indigenous perspectives on ways of knowing and learning and the first principle and standard of Indigenous approaches to education are delineated.

*Educational context for Indigenous learners* is the third section, which surveys research that discusses the legacy of assimilative policies and practices and how they are manifested in the classroom. The related themes of enculturation and assimilation are examined in this section as well.
The fourth section, *Indigenous learners in the classroom*, analyzes the theme of internalized oppression, paying close attention to the contributing factors of token representations of Indigenous Knowledge and culture in existing curricula, and related problems such as sanitized representations of history, the competitive nature of the existing education system, racism and the impact of colonization on both the self-esteem and success of Indigenous students.

Theories that currently inform the structure and function of place-based education are examined in the section called *Critical pedagogy and place-based education*. Characteristics and themes for education situated in place, as well as benefits for students and the characteristics associated with creation of successful and sustained school-community partnerships are discussed in some detail.

In the following section, entitled *Challenges of integrating Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy into existing curriculum*, we examine some of the common barriers associated with curricula and pedagogical change. Challenges identified include: the mismatch between community needs and modern educational theory and pedagogy, government mandated testing and accountability standards, expectations Indigenous people have of the education system, challenges of engaging Indigenous families and communities, impact of residential schools and the related losses of language and cultural knowledge of Indigenous populations, as well as the reluctance of non-Indigenous educators to teach Indigenous curriculum, and finally the task of dealing with race and racism in schools.

*Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy in the school system: Two case studies* is a section that surveys a couple of promising initiatives that aim to make schools more inclusive of Indigenous Knowledge. The first initiative is called Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science and Technology, which was coordinated by the University of Saskatchewan and offered in School District 113 in Northern Saskatchewan. The second initiative is called the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative, which was a partnership between the Alaska Native Knowledge Network and the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

*Moving from the head to the heart: Towards equity in the classroom* examines the theme of power imbalance in the classroom, including a review of the moral commitment, attitudes and bias that are often inherent to school environments, and the need to engage in difficult community-based dialogues on the intersections between schools, race and racism.

*Standards for culturally responsive schools* is the next section in the review, which offers seven common characteristics for best practices in culturally responsive instruction. Additionally, three components for the development of bicultural competencies and culturally relevant pedagogies are examined. Criteria for the standards of effective pedagogy identified by the Centre for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence are outlined in this section. Aboriginal educator E. Hampton’s twelve standards of culturally responsive education are featured in this section as well.
The second last section is called Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy in the British Columbia primary and secondary public school system, which offers a brief description of the current legislative and policy climate in BC. This section discusses Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal content K-10 initiative, which was first implemented in BC schools in 1998. Also, in this section, we develop a review of the Forests for the Future project in Tsimshian territory in 2003, which established standards for community based participatory research as well as protocols for engaging community leaders and Elders in curriculum development. The BC First Nations Studies textbook is also discussed as it relates to St’át’imc territory and culture.

In the last section, a sampling of schools and their programs to integrate Indigenous Knowledge into school curriculum and pedagogy are discussed. A sampling of three schools that have managed to successfully integrate Indigenous Knowledge and culture into school curriculum and pedagogy are briefly reviewed.

3.1. Reconciling differing worldviews

The arguments of different Indigenous peoples based on spiritual relationships to the universe, to the landscape and to stones, rocks, insects and other things, seen and unseen, have been difficult arguments for Western systems of knowledge to deal with or accept. These arguments give a partial indication of the different worldviews and alternative ways of knowing, and of being, which still endure within the Indigenous world. …The values, attitudes, concepts and language embedded in beliefs about spirituality represent, in many cases, the clearest contrast and mark of difference between Indigenous peoples and the West. (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, p.74)

The differences between Western and Indigenous world views are multiple and various, and very well documented. O. Kawagley and R. Barnhardt (1993), two prominent leaders of intercultural work in school environments, are correct in asserting that reconciling Western institutional practices and structures and Indigenous cultural forms presents a “formidable challenge.”(p.3) Using the comparative framework of Knudtson and Suzuki (1992), Kawagley and Barnhardt (1999), have articulated a useful comparative analysis of Indigenous and Western worldviews. The table on the following page summarizes the general differences between these two worldviews.
Figure 2: General comparison of Indigenous and Western worldviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indigenous worldviews</th>
<th>Western worldviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>− Spirituality is embedded in all elements of the cosmos</td>
<td>− Spiritual is centred in a single Supreme Being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Humans have responsibility for maintaining a harmonious relationship with the natural world</td>
<td>− Humans exercise dominion over nature to use it for personal and economic gain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Need for reciprocity between human and natural worlds – resources are viewed as gifts</td>
<td>− Natural resources are available for unilateral human exploitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Nature is honoured routinely through daily spiritual practice</td>
<td>− Spiritual practices are intermittent and set apart from daily life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Wisdom and ethics are derived from direct experience with the natural world</td>
<td>− Human reason transcends the natural world and can produce insights independently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Universe is made up of dynamic, ever-changing natural forces</td>
<td>− Universe is made up of an array of static physical objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Universe is viewed as a holistic, integrative system with a unifying life force</td>
<td>− Universe is compartmentalized in dualistic forms and reduced to progressively smaller conceptual parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Time is circular with natural cycles that sustain all life</td>
<td>− Time is a linear chronology of “human progress”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Nature will always possess unfathomable mysteries</td>
<td>− Nature is completely decipherable to the rational human mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Human thought, feelings and words are inextricably bound to all other aspects of the universe</td>
<td>− Human thought, feeling and words are formed apart from the surrounding world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Human role is to participate in the orderly designs of nature</td>
<td>− Human role is to dissect, analyze and manipulate nature for own ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Respect for Elders is based on their compassion and reconciliation of outer and inner-directed knowledge</td>
<td>− Respect for others is based on material achievement and chronological old age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Sense of empathy and kinship with other forms of life</td>
<td>− Sense of separateness from and superiority over other forms of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− View proper human relationship with nature as a continuous two-way transactional dialogue</td>
<td>− View relationship of humans to nature as a one-way, hierarchical imperative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similar to Kawagley and Barnhardt discussion, G. Aikenhead (2001), in summarizing literature comparing and contrasting Aboriginal and scientific knowledge, also notes that they differ in several ways, including in terms of social goals defined by survival versus the luxury of acquiring knowledge for knowledge sake, as well as for controlling nature and other people. Intellectually, Indigenous Knowledge co-exists as a mystery with nature that is celebrated while scientific knowledge seeks to eliminate mystery by explaining it away. They vary in their association with human action: intimate and
subjective interrelation versus formal and objective decontextualizing. Other differences include the Indigenous holistic perspective exemplified by a gentle, cooperative, instinctive and spiritual wisdom versus Western science’s reductionism that is forceful, manipulative, mechanistic, and analytical. They even differ in their concepts of time – circular for Indigenous, rectilinear for scientists (Aikenhead, 2001).

From the Indigenous perspective, the Western drive to understand and control the universe by fragmentation, categorization, and measurement is the antithesis of Indigenous epistemology which requires a self-actualization and holistic learning process – a turning inward that provides insights about the relationship with the cosmos and of existence itself. “Their fundamental insight was that all existence was connected and that the whole enmeshed the being in its inclusiveness.”(Ermine, 1995, p.103) Ermine (1995), cautions that the western education dogma of fragmentation will do permanent harm to both Aboriginal children and epistemology.

Both of the Indigenous and Western knowledge systems tend to be viewed with suspicion by members of the opposite group (Aikenhead, 2000). However, until the recent emergence of Indigenous academic scholars, Indigenous peoples have been ill-prepared to challenge the constructs of western science which defined Indigenous worldviews and ways of knowing as being “undeveloped” (Allen, 1995, p.6), and as “inadequate and inferior.” (Ignas, 2004, p.54) Eurocentric assertions and strategies have propagated a belief that Indigenous peoples, cultures and knowledge systems are either frozen in time or uncivilized. “While some peoples have civilizations, philosophies, romance languages, or societies, other peoples have cultures, dialects, worldviews and tribal knowledge. Peoples with ‘civilizations’ are regarded as inherently superior to peoples with cultures.”(Battiste, 2002, p.16)
3.2. Indigenous Knowledge, pedagogy and learning

Aboriginal epistemology is found in theories, philosophies, histories, ceremonies, and stories as ways of knowing. Aboriginal pedagogy is found in talking or sharing circles and dialogues, participant observations, experiential learning, modeling, mediation, prayer, ceremonies, or story telling as ways of knowing and learning. The distinctive features of Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy are learning by observation and doing, learning through authentic experiences and individualized instruction, and learning through enjoyment. Indigenous pedagogy accepts students’ cognitive search for learning processes they can internalize, and Aboriginal teachers allow for a lag period of watching before doing. Indigenous Knowledge is both empirical (that is, based on experience) and normative (that is based on social values). It embraces both the circumstances in a way that is unfamiliar to Eurocentric knowledge systems, which distinguish clearly between the two. As a system, it constantly adapts to the dynamic interplay of changing empirical knowledge as well as changing social values. (Battiste, 2002, p.19)

Despite the fact that Indigenous Knowledge has been and continues to be defined from diverse perspectives around the world, M. Battiste and J. Henderson (2002), argue that attempts to define Indigenous Knowledge are problematic. They suggest that to ask questions about what is Indigenous Knowledge is to pose questions about comparative knowledge for which no legitimate method exists to answer it (p.35-36). They explain that the problem with trying to understand Indigenous Knowledge from a Eurocentric perspective is threefold. First, Indigenous Knowledge does not fit into the Eurocentric concept of culture. Indigenous people view every way of life from two but complementary perspectives: first as a manifestation of human knowledge, heritage, and consciousness, and second as a mode of ecological order. Second, Indigenous Knowledge is not the same across all Indigenous peoples - it is a diverse knowledge that is spread throughout different peoples in many layers. Third, Indigenous Knowledge is so much a part of the clan, band, community or individual that it defies codification, as it cannot be separated from the bearer (Battiste & Henderson, 2002).

Having acknowledged the problems associated with categorizing Indigenous Knowledge within Eurocentric constructs of culture, it is instructive to outline one of the more popular definitions, which was crafted by the United Nations’ Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), specifically the Management of Social Transformations (MOST) program. UNESCO/MOST defines Indigenous Knowledge, also known as Traditional Ecological Knowledge, local knowledge, or place-based knowledge in the following terms:

1. Indigenous Knowledge is the local knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. It is the basis for local-level decision-making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural resource management, and a host of other activities in rural communities.
2. Indigenous Knowledge is the information base for a society, which facilitates communication and decision-making. Indigenous information systems are dynamic, and are continually influenced by internal creativity and experimentation as well as by contact with external systems.

3. Indigenous Knowledge is the knowledge that people in a given community has developed over time, and continues to develop. It is based on experience, often tested over centuries and is adapted to local culture and environment. It is dynamic and changing (UNESCO/MOST, 2002, p. 12-13).

From an Indigenous perspective, ways of knowing and learning are derived from Creation, therefore, knowledge is sacred; inherent in and connected to all of nature, its creatures, and humans (Battiste, 2002). The spiritual belief system common to Indigenous peoples can be summarized by the Yupiaq of Alaska who hold “the principle that all creation was spirit: alive, conscious, and very dynamic. … Man was not superior to other beings but was an equal to some, inferior to others; he was thus bound by the laws of the Universe to maintaining a harmonious relationship with all spirits if he was to survive.”(Kawagley and Barnhardt, 1999, p.10)

In the Indigenous worldview, learning is viewed as a life-long responsibility in that knowledge teaches people how to be responsible for their lives, their relationships and helps them model competent and respectful behaviour (Battiste, 2002). Self-knowledge of one’s individual gifts, capabilities, strengths and weaknesses, interests and limitations are equally important to Indigenous teachings. Indigenous teaching presumes every child is unique in their individual learning capabilities and styles as well as knowledge bases. In Indigenous epistemology, knowledge is not a commodity that some have while others do not; it cannot be possessed or controlled by educational institutions or academics as it is a living process meant to be absorbed and understood (Battiste, 2002).

The first principle of Aboriginal learning is a preference for experiential knowledge. Indigenous pedagogy values a person’s ability to learn independently by observing, listening, and participating with a minimum of intervention or instruction. This pattern of direct learning by seeing and doing, without asking questions, makes Aboriginal children diverse learners. (Battiste, 2002, p.15)

While Battiste (2002), identifies the first principle of Aboriginal learning as a preference for experiential knowledge, Hampton (1995) observes that the first standard of education is “spirituality” (p.19). Hampton (1995), notes that at the centre of Aboriginal learning is respect for the spiritual relationships that exist between all things. This echoes Battiste’s (2002) assertion that knowledge is sacred, acquired from Creation and connected to all of nature.

R. Ross (2006), in summarizing Indigenous approaches to education, explains that children were taught in a variety of ways and at every instant through stories, ceremonies, and the clan system. This education “did not focus on teaching each person exactly what to say, think, or do - a product-based teaching. Instead, Indigenous education taught that life was a ‘matter of responsibility’ born by all people at all times and children were
taught the personal qualities they would need to be able to carry those responsibilities.”(Ross, 2006, p.86)

As such, Western and Indigenous education can be seen as contradictory. Western education tends to be compartmentalized and operationalized in a decontextualized framework. By contrast, Indigenous people traditionally acquired knowledge through experience with their environment in which details were understood as part of the whole and where laws were constantly tested based on the context of everyday survival. In the traditional Native sense, competency has an unequivocal relationship to survival or extinction. “You either have it, or you don’t, and survival is the ultimate measure.” (Angayuqaq & Barnhardt, 1999, p.2)

Such insights raise several questions: How can Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy be integrated into an education system that by nature is the antithesis of traditional knowledge and pedagogy? How can Indigenous coming-to-knowing become part of an education system driven to meet provincially-mandated curriculum and testing standards? How will the needs of non-Indigenous students be realized in a place-based education model that incorporates Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy?

3.3. Educational context for Indigenous learners

[During the systematic colonization of the eighteen and nineteenth centuries], Indigenous peoples were classified alongside the flora and fauna; hierarchical typologies of humanity and systems of representation were fuelled by new discoveries; and cultural maps were charted and territories claimed and contested by the major European powers. Hence some Indigenous peoples were ranked above others in terms of such things as the belief that they were ‘nearly human’, ‘almost human’ or ‘sub-human’. This often depended on whether it was thought that the peoples concerned possessed a ‘soul’ and could therefore be ‘offered’ salvation and whether or not they were educable and could be offered schooling. (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, p. 59-60)

This schooling became a central part of a rigorous assimilation scheme in Canada that involved numerous oppressive measures including: residential schools; reserve and Indian Agent systems; enfranchisement and the undermining of traditional governance, social, judicial, economic and family structures; appropriation of lands and resources; laws that restricted movement and the right to political assembly; and, a gamut of other assimilation policies and strategies. Academic works by Canadian historians, O.P. Dickason (2005) and A. Ray (1996), among others, have comprehensively delineated the history of Canada’s First Peoples, and the impact of colonization on Canada’s First Peoples.

For the past 500 years, Indigenous peoples have been told they have nothing to offer except their lands and resources, that who they are as people, their belief systems, their values, their language, their worldviews and how they educate their children and how they understand and relate to their environment and the larger world lack scientific merit and are therefore worthless. In the estimation of one Indigenous educator, the aim of education has been cultural domination that has supported the appropriation of land and
resources (MacIvor, 1995). MacIvor concludes that what is needed now is a radically different approach to education.

The legacy of colonial education strategies and assimilative attitudes has been devastating for Indigenous peoples who now have the highest school drop out and unemployment rates, the highest suicide rates, highest incarceration rates, highest instances of drug and alcohol abuse, highest instances of child and spousal abuse and highest infant mortality rates (Battiste, 2002).

The assumption that only Europeans were capable of progress supports the myth that Indigenous peoples contributed nothing to the humanities, arts, sciences and technology. This attitude creates an environment in which Indigenous peoples are viewed as being backward and as passive recipients of European knowledge. Indigenous Knowledge became invisible and was neither studied nor stored by Eurocentric education systems (Battiste, 2002). The exception to this approach would be anthropological initiatives which were designed to capture the remnants of dying races and cultures. The Canadian government and churches’ relentless and destructive assimilation policies, the marginalization of Indigenous ways of knowing in the education system, and the loss of culture and language are examples of a concerted effort to erase Indigenous Knowledge with the “result that it is now in danger of becoming extinct.” (Battiste, 2002, p.4-5)

Every Indigenous child and youth that walks into the Canadian school system endures the legacy of assimilation messages and policies. As such, Indigenous learners must negotiate an education system that is inherently biased. In the existing education system “one set of beliefs is held up as ‘right’ or ‘normal’, the values of other cultural groups are treated as less valid, and children from those groups can be perceived as being culturally deficient.” (Klump & McNeir, 2005, p.4)

Educators tend to adhere to values and beliefs associated with their particular discipline. For example: science teachers adhere to the principle that defines science as being “objective, purely rationale and empirical, universal, impersonal, socially sterile, and unencumbered by the vulgarity of human bias, dogma, judgments, or cultural values.”(Aikenhead, 2001, p.1) Teaching from this perspective enculturates all students, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, into the Western value system. This enculturation is more acute for Aboriginal learners whose different worldviews, identities and, in some communities, first language, create an even wider gap between themselves and school science. Aikenhead (2001), points out the disastrous consequences associated with assimilation and colonization. In his assessment of cross-cultural science teaching, he cautions educators that further attempts to assimilate Aboriginal students into Western science education models perpetuates the colonization process and raises issues about unequal power and privilege in the classroom.

The problems identified with regard to science curriculum and pedagogy is replicated in other areas of study as well. For example, educators involved in a six-month study designed to assess teachers’ perceptions of integrating Aboriginal culture into the secondary social studies curriculum were unanimous in agreeing that Indigenous children
were being assimilated through exclusion of cultural knowledge altogether or by inclusion of token add-ons of Indigenous perspectives and culture (Kanu, 2005). “On average, each teacher had integrated Aboriginal perspectives into the social studies curriculum only six times over the entire academic year.” (Kanu, 2005, p.56) Although the teachers acknowledged the curricula deficiency, they continued to contribute to the colonization process by allowing the Eurocentric curricula to remain central to their teaching. Indigenous perspectives were added to the curriculum only when it was convenient rather than a concerted effort to change Eurocentric curriculum and pedagogy.

3.4. Indigenous learners in the classroom

For most Indigenous students in Eurocentric education, realizing their invisibility is like looking into a still lake and not seeing their reflections. They become alien in their own eyes, unable to recognize themselves in the reflections and shadows of the world. In the same way that Eurocentric thought stripped their grandparents and parents of their wealth and dignity, this realization strips modern Indigenous students of their heritage and identity. It gives them an awareness of their annihilation. (Battiste & Henderson, 2000, p.88)

In this awareness of annihilation, students struggle to find the identity and self-esteem critical for academic and life long success. False colonial and racist assumptions that classify Indigenous people as inferior create self-doubt for Indigenous learners who “discount their inherent capacities and gifts.” (Battiste, 2002, p.27) Battiste (2002) notes that the Humanities curriculum is infused with colonial interpretations of the past and remarks that settler history is sanitized to present a positive light unclouded by dispirited facts of the colonial history that has resulted in a culture of poverty and oppression for Aboriginal peoples (Battiste, 2004).


The lack of Aboriginal cultural knowledge and perspectives in curriculum and pedagogy has been identified as being a significant factor in school failure by the Manitoba Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat (Kanu, 2005). Agbo (2004), in summarizing recent theories of Indigenous peoples’ education notes that “unless educators begin to support the interests and values of Indigenous groups and validate Indigenous Knowledge forms and experiences, the education of Indigenous groups [will] continue to be mediocre in quality.” (2004, p.4)

Developing culturally-sensitive curriculum is one way of strengthening cultural identity and self-esteem in a way that helps students feel their courses are a part of their lives and provide them access to Western concepts without requiring them to change their cultural identity (Aikenhead, 2002). Although the link between student achievement and culturally responsive practices in education are neither definitive nor thorough, Klump and McNeir (2005), conclude students “want principals, teachers and counsellors to
acknowledge and honour their cultural backgrounds and believe in their ability to succeed.” (2005, p. 64) Although some educators have yet to fully articulate what role cultural congruency has in academic success, it seems to be a significant factor that requires further study (Apthorp et al., 2003).

Other researchers who have studied this question are more certain about the link between cultural congruency and academic success. In summarizing the extensive research on socio-cultural theories of cognition, Kanu (2005) points out that: “children’s conceptual frameworks (i.e., their learning and thinking processes, etc.) are deeply embedded in their own cultures and that difficulties in classroom learning and interactions arise when there is a mismatch between a child’s culture and the culture of the teacher and the classroom, setting up the child for failure if the school or teacher is not sensitive to the special needs of that child.” (2005, p.51) The link between cultural congruency and student achievement has motivated socio-cultural theorists in education to argue for the inclusion of the learner’s culture in the teaching-learning process.

Inclusion, however, has been construed to mean the occasional addition of a non-dominant cultural activity or lesson rather than the infusion throughout the curriculum that Kanu (2005) and other scholars are calling for. At the 2006 Council of Chief State School Officers, Sillin and Leija (2006) echoed Kanu’s point by noting that most schools that do teach Indigenous history and accomplishments do so in a superficial way or as part of a Pan-Indian curriculum. Barnhardt (2005) argues that this limited inclusion of cultural components means that only token consideration is given to those “integral parts of a larger complex adaptive cultural system that continues to imbue peoples’ lives with purpose and meaning outside the classroom setting.” (p.5)

Battiste (2004), draws a similar conclusion about the integration of Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy into the Canadian education system which “remains stagnant at providing cultural knowledge, a diet of ‘bannock, beads and feathers’ that [does] little to educate or empower First Nations children, much less educate the general public of the laws that regulate relations with First Peoples of Canada.”(2004, p.11)

Battiste and McLean (2005) refer to this limited and superficial pedagogy as the add and stir model of education. They argue this approach has accomplished little to empower Aboriginal students and reconcile their place in Canadian society. Neither has it provided the foundation for the awareness needed to comprehend, let alone overcome, the root issues of their oppression. Battiste and McLean (2005) conclude that Indigenous content in most schools is delivered with the intent of providing knowledge that would benefit Aboriginal students but not the knowledge that would benefit all students – a knowledge that has been questioned or reconsidered.

Nor does this ahistorical approach change the negative views non-Indigenous students have of Indigenous students or educate them about the history they share with Indigenous peoples. Ultimately, the existing education model does little to promote greater understanding and respect between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. If classrooms are to become meaningful places of learning for all children, then they need
to become places where history matters – everyone’s history. This can only be achieved through a deep integration of Indigenous pedagogy and knowledge into the curriculum. The two Aboriginal participants in Kanu’s research summarizes this issue: “this history – ‘this return to the past to go forward’ – must be brought to deliberations about integrating Aboriginal perspectives.” (Kanu, 2005, p.60)

In addition to having the unpleasant aspects of history glossed over and not seeing themselves reflected in curriculum in a significant way, Indigenous learners must also contend with cultural norms that may be alienating and disconcerting. The classroom competition inherent in the Western education pedagogy has a negative impact on Indigenous learners (Allen, 1995). In summarizing the research of Cleary and Peacock (1998), Reyhner (2001), concludes that “Indian students struggle to find balance and harmony in schools that do not incorporate Indian cultural values.” (2001, p.12)

The preference of Indigenous learners for their own cultural standards was demonstrated by a group of students graduating from the inaugural British Columbia Institute of Technology First Nations Access to Trades program in 1996. When given the choice, students rejected the Institute’s custom of acknowledging students for academic achievement in favour of a ceremony that honoured all students in the class. In the students’ estimation, each had made their own unique contribution to the group. The student with the highest academic achievement believed his accomplishment was directly related to the generosity of his classmates who provided him with fish and moose meat when he had little food. Another student, who barely attained a passing grade, was deemed essential to the group’s success because of his humour and ability to encourage and support everyone in the class. Another was able to provide small short-term loans when cash ran short; and another, who had the gift of untangling mathematics, provided tutoring. The students believed they had succeeded because they had worked together – the standard for success set by the education system had little meaning. Their success could be defined from the Indigenous perspective as having the ability to “walk in two worlds with one spirit.” (Kushman & Barnhardt, 2001, p.13)

Walking in two worlds with one spirit is an idea that was articulated in a different way by participants in a survey commissioned to identify measures of Alaska Native student success beyond those established by the education system (e.g., attendance, standardized test scores, graduation and drop out rates). Respondents conveyed different ideas about the meaning of success:

They talked about individual success, about succeeding in bridging ‘two’ worlds, and success in a community context. Most consistently, however, participants’ definitions of success centred on what it means to be a good human being. For these participants, a successful Alaska Native student is one who can set and achieve goals because he knows his own worth and value, understands his responsibility to his community, and is prepared to pursue whatever life path he chooses. Respondents explained that a student who is confident and secure in who he is will be able to succeed in any life challenge. (Villega & Prieto, 2005, p.1)
One of the most profound challenges for Indigenous learners and for initiatives seeking to improve the education system is the issue of race and racism. When asked to identify challenges to integrating Indigenous culture into curricula: “overwhelmingly the teachers [in the Kanu research project] identified racist, stereotypical images of Aboriginal people held by some of their non-Aboriginal colleagues and students as a most difficult challenge.” (Kanu, 2005, p.60)

Although racism has a negative impact on students and is a major factor in the internalization of low self-worth, attempts to break the silence around the oppressive historical context of contemporary Indigenous issues and experiences are loaded with negative consequences for both teachers and Indigenous students. “The resistance of white students who do not know this history counteract with guilt, anger, denial or racist justification for continued colonial privilege.” (Battiste, 2004, p.8)

Since Canada’s reputation worldwide is one of tolerance – a society that embraces multiculturalism - any mention of the word racism tends to generate a defensive response that effectively ends meaningful discourse. “Most Canadians believe that colonization and racism are issues of the past when, in fact, they have become the biggest challenges within the system of education today.” (Battiste & McLean, 2005, p.2)

Without any meaningful dialogue about racism and the impact of colonization in the classroom, educators will continue to fail to consider these factors in evaluating Indigenous success rates and the failure to succeed is readily identified as being a child, family or community deficit. “When racism is not acknowledged as contributing to low self-esteem, then the effect is to assume a failure on the part of Aboriginal students to develop a healthy sense of self.” (St. Denis & Hampton, 2002, p.27) In delineating the impact of racism on Indigenous students, V. St. Denis and E. Hampton conclude that the culture of denial that characterizes racism as a problem of the ‘past and/or other places’ makes dealing with the issue and its consequences more difficult. “The denial and silencing of racism against Aboriginal and Indian people is itself a racist practice.” (St. Denis & Hampton, 2002, p.30)

The Canadian Council on Learning 2007 report State of Learning in Canada: No Time for Complacency notes that racism and discrimination promotes a mistrust of the education system and hampers student success. In a Discussion Paper prepared for the Strategic Policy, Planning and Analysis Directorate, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (1999), M.D. Stout and G.D. Kipling explain that racism and institutionalized discrimination deeply affects Indigenous students. As a result, they experience significant difficulties both at home and at school (Stout & Kipling, 1999).

Other educators conclude that the colonial legacy in education produces students who are ambivalent or even hostile toward education and teachers (Amber, 1997). Schools that fail to incorporate Aboriginal perspectives in their programs, curriculum and professional development activities will continue to produce higher school failure and drop out rates and dissatisfaction among Aboriginal learners and communities (Wotherspoon & Schissel, 1998).
M. Fullen (2007), in his book *The New Meaning of Educational Change* quotes the research of J. Rudduck, R. Chaplain and G. Wallace (1996) which asked students to identify the consequences of disengagement from the learning process as perceived by the students themselves. Disengaged students noted they had lower self-esteem and self-concepts than engaged students and had characteristics that tended to make it difficult to achieve academically. Additionally, disengaged students were more likely to give up and become fed up with school. They struggled in the classroom and found homework difficult; disliked subjects that required a great deal of writing and had increased anxiety about their abilities as exams approached. In their relationship with peers, disengaged students were more likely to be involved with bullying, feel pressured by friends if they succeed, and were viewed by their peers as being a hindrance and an annoyance in the classroom. In relationships with teachers, they believe teachers were unfair and express negative behaviours both verbally and non-verbally toward them. Disengaged students consider teachers responsible for their failure at school but would like to have teachers they can trust and talk things through with. When asked to consider the future, they demonstrated high levels of anxiety about their future in the working world and, in spite of the negative messages from the school, wanted to continue learning and succeed in their examinations (Fullen, 2007).

What recent scholarship is confirming is the commonly understood fact that Eurocentric pedagogy and curricula generally disengages Indigenous learners in the classroom; however, the typical and troubling approach to defining problems associated with Indigenous learners often times remains in terms of low achievement, high attrition, poor retention, and weak persistence of the students themselves. This places the onus for change on the individual student and ignores the structural and systemic problems within the education system itself. In contrast, V. Kirkness and R. Barnhardt (2001), argue that what is needed for Indigenous student success is an education system that “respects them for who they are, that is relevant to their view of the world, that offers reciprocity in their relationships with others, and that helps them exercise responsibility over their lives.” (2001, p.1) Battiste (2005), agrees that it is time to “place education into culture not just culture into education.”(2005, p. 9)

The challenges are many, but there is a clear consensus among educators and researchers about what could be done to better address the needs of Indigenous learners. Existing reports and studies underscore the importance of addressing racism and of developing curriculum and pedagogy that provides an education to Aboriginal children that prepares them to participate fully in both their communities and in Canadian society (Indian & Northern Affairs Canada,1996).

The dichotomy that currently exists between Indigenous and western knowledge systems and worldviews reinforces compulsory mis-education based on perpetuating national myths and stereotypes that silence Indigenous learners (Antone, 2000). Moreover, teacher training is rooted in Western philosophy and pedagogy and curriculum is developed using western concepts. This is further reflected in provincially mandated learning outcomes and test standards. These factors coupled with increased class sizes,
overworked teachers, reduced special needs support and overall funding cutbacks contribute to the on-going marginalization of Indigenous approaches to education from the classroom. In an environment of competing priorities, Indigenous approaches to education are not identified as being a first priority.

3.5. Critical pedagogy and place-based education

Developing a critical pedagogy of place means challenging each other to read the texts of our own lives and to ask constantly what needs to be transformed and what needs to be conserved. In short, it means making a place for the cultural, political, economic and ecological dynamics of places whenever we talk about the purpose and practice of learning. (Gruenewald, 2003, p.10-11)

In calling for a convergence of critical pedagogy and place-based education into a critical pedagogy of place, D. Gruenewald (2003) proposes a much needed framework for decolonizing educational theory, policy, research and practice. Drawing on P. Freire’s work on critical pedagogy that recognizes human beings and learners exist in a cultural context, Gruenewald suggests that place-based education “involves learning to live well socially and ecologically in places that have been disrupted and injured” while critical pedagogy offers an agenda of learning cultural decolonization or “learning to recognize disruption and injury and to address their causes.” (2003, p.9)

Place-based education, by its nature, requires teachers and learners to spend time out of the classroom building relationships with familiar, everyday places. “The kinds of educative experiences students and teachers pursue depends on the distinctive characteristics of the places they inhabit, as well as on what learning objectives and strategies they employ.” (2003, p.8) This general outline of place-based education raises one of the research challenges related to the concept of place-based education, which is a lack of a common agreement about the meaning of the term place-based education (Gruenewald, 2003). In examining place-based education as it relates to government mandated standards-based reform, a teacher survey conducted by Jennings et al. (2005) found educators used more than thirty-five terms to describe curriculum that was grounded in a specific location. Additionally, teachers had a myriad of activities under whatever label they choose to use that were not consistent across subject areas and classes. In general, teachers tended to use service learning, community-based learning, environmental learning, place-based education, as well as curriculum of place and experiential education to describe what they were doing. In calling for continued study, the researchers noted teachers “did not clearly define or define in uniform ways their ideas about place-based curriculum.” (Jennings et al., 2005, p.55)

W. Wanich, in her comparative analysis of education reform in the United States and Thailand, describes place-based education as being part pedagogy and part curriculum that can vary according to context. The author identifies six characteristics of place-based education.
1. The local environment is used as a basis for curriculum development with the emphasis on students being taught about the local ecology and then drawing comparisons with other places to expand their knowledge.

2. Focuses on students becoming ‘creators’ rather than ‘consumers’ of knowledge.

3. Students’ needs and concerns are the main focus of curriculum development and students have significant opportunities to express their learning requirements and interests.

4. Teachers no longer are the centre of the learning process rather they take on the role as ‘experienced guides, co-learners, and brokers of community resources and learning possibilities’

5. There is collaboration between community and school that involves students being active in community activities and community members being active in school instruction and affairs.

6. Indigenous knowledge is integrated into all subjects (Wanich, 2006).

Elaborating on the discussion of the characteristics of place-based education, Wanich (2006), uses five thematic patterns proposed by Smith (2002) to describe the general kinds of studies that ought to be included as part of place-based education initiatives. Smith believes that the existing generic curriculum modes are inappropriate for place-based education which is “by its nature specific to particular locals.” (2002, p.587) The thematic patterns Smith proposes are designed to guide teachers and community members seeking to connect what their children are learning to their own lives, communities and regions (Smith, 2002). The five general areas of study are outlined below.

1. Cultural Studies aim to provide opportunities for students to learn about the history and culture of their community and then present their work and share their experiences with community members.

2. Nature Studies aim to investigate local natural phenomena as the foundation for further investigation of more distant or abstract knowledge and phenomena. Curriculum, framed by the local environment, is integrated across subjects from science and math to language arts.

3. Real World Problem Solving provides students with opportunities to investigate local issues and identify local problems from which they are required to choose one as a class focus which they research, identify potential solutions and play an active role in solving the problem. Real World Problem Solving is similar to culture and nature studies insofar as students are encouraged to move out of the classroom and into the community to engage in learning activities.

4. Internships and Entrepreneurial Opportunities encourages students to seek out and create their own economic opportunities in their communities instead of leaving to find employment elsewhere.
5. *Induction into Community Process* aims to create learning models that train students to be active participants in the community by becoming involved in ‘real-world’ challenges and issues. (Smith, 2002)

Training students to become active participants in their communities involves a multidisciplinary, experiential and intergenerational learning approach (Smith, 2007). Because of its relevancy, this pedagogy engages students and promotes understanding while contributing to the well being of the student and the community (Gruenewald, 2003). The report by Jennings et al. (2005) examined place-based education in the existing standards based environment and identified three reasons for using place-based curriculum. First, it teaches social responsibility, second, it teaches appreciation for community; and third, it offers opportunities to “teach a wide range of subject matter using a motivating and hands-on instructional strategy.”(Jennings, et al., 2005, p.51)

Place-based educational practices have received widespread national recognition and support as they foster civic responsibility while also enriching the education experiences of all students – rural and urban, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2004). The value of place-based education is that it reinforces the students’ connections to others and the community in which they live; therefore; “curriculum not only uses place as a context for learning but has the support and sustainability of place as a goal.” (Jennings, et al., 2005, p.51)

The beneficial nature of authentic context in teaching is critical for rural learners (Long, et al., 2004). In examining the value of place-based education in rural areas, especially as it relates to mathematics, the Jennings et al. (2005) report establishes that place-based pedagogy framed by the local environment – the authentic context - can help students and teachers address conflicts that are inherent in small communities. “Not every lesson needs to be place-based, but augmenting any high quality text with local interest can enhance mathematical learning while building strong connections between students and their community and between the school and the community.” (Long, et al., 2003, p.7)

Developing successful, sustained partnership between school and community is essential to place-based education (Wanich, 2006). Several characteristics of such partnerships were identified during the development and implementation of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative established in 1994. First, rural communities are built on interpersonal relationships and educational changes will be more successful if they engage in an inside-out approach which builds on these relationships. “This means seeking out the strengths, assets, and local sense of place and culture that make a small community unique, and then designing a reform effort that fits into that context.”(Kushman & Barnhardt, 2001, p.14) A key component in this process is working constantly at building good relationships among groups of people who often start out with a degree of mistrust, misgivings and misconceptions.
Second, preconceived notions of the divide between home and school must be addressed recognizing that it takes more than talking about the need and importance of parent and community involvement. This will require both parents and teachers to learn new roles and for teachers to examine and expand upon what they perceive the parent’s role should be. This is particularly relevant in providing space and safety for people who have been told their knowledge and culture has no place in the school.

Third, educators must shift from a top-down leadership style to shared leadership so that the community will make the commitment and take the ownership that is required for the project’s success (Kushman & Barnhardt, 2001).

The final characteristic of successful, sustainable school – community partnerships is a shared understanding about how to strike an appropriate balance between community expectation for the purpose of their school(s) and government standards for academic achievement. This is a particularly difficult aspect of a partnership to develop since we currently inhabit an educational environment fixated on raising students to meet high academic standards. Such a focus encourages many parents and school staff to think of the function of schools in reductionist terms, mainly as a mechanism for academic development and labour market attachment.

Despite the aforementioned difficulty inherent to the adoption of place-based approaches to educational reform, a growing body of literature is demonstrating the value of place-based approaches. For instance, teachers interviewed for the Jennings et al. (2005) research regarding the congruency between standards-based reform and place-based education indicated that place-based approaches help students learn about and appreciate their own communities. This, in turn, enhances responsible citizenship. Although teachers believed place-based education had greater social than academic value, when asked about the degree to which place-based education has important academic value for students, 83.5 per cent of the 225 educators surveyed indicated they either agreed or strongly agreed (Jennings, et al., 2005).

By better understanding how learners develop an understanding of the world and their place in it, researchers can better appreciate the numerous benefits that students, educators and communities derive from locally developed curriculum. “These advantages apply not only to Indigenous students, for whom the curriculum is designed, but also to and all students, science educators and members of the larger community alike.”(Ignac, 2004, p.50)

Kawagley and Barnhardt (1999), in quoting L. Nader (1996), concur with Ignac’s assertion that everyone – Indigenous and non-Indigenous – benefit from the utilization of local knowledge and people in the education process. “The surrounding environment can provide a rich laboratory for students to learn about the many interconnected forces that impact their lives and make a contribution to the well-being of their community, utilizing tools from both the Indigenous and Western knowledge systems.”(Kawagley & Barnhardt, 1999, p.17)
3.6. Challenges of integrating Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy into existing curriculum

The voices of the teachers suggest that the process [of integrating Aboriginal cultural knowledge and perspectives] is fraught with enormous challenges, but that these are not insurmountable if all stakeholders concerned … play their parts to facilitate the integration process. (Kanu, 2005, p.66)

As was noted previously, place-based education is a recent development with origins in “the mismatch between the intentions of modernist ‘education science’ and the perceived needs of rural communities – with these needs seen as an issue of the very sustainability of such communities.”(Wanich, 2006, p.20) Wanich concludes that proponents of place-based education have a difficult time promoting their ideas over the entrenched pedagogy of educational science with its strong grounding in the history of education.

Some educators and researchers conclude government mandated accountability standards thwart the development and implementation of place-based education. Under the existing system that emphasizes standards and testing, Gruenewald (2003), concludes teachers are ill-prepared to design place-based curriculum and that, for the most part, teachers accept “the mandates of a standardized ‘placeless’ curriculum and settle for the abstractions and simulations of classroom learning … that limits, devalues, and distorts local geographical experience.”(2003, p.8) In Greunewald’s estimation, the goal of developing relevant place-based curriculum that would challenge current policy and practices “is usually not part of a teacher’s job description nor do teacher education programs prepare teachers to teach this way.”(2003, p.8)

Gruenewald condemns government mandated standards and testing which promotes a classroom pedagogy of teaching to the test. In his estimation, this approach denies both students and teachers opportunities to experience education that has a direct bearing on the well-being of the social and ecological reality of the places where people actually live. However, other researchers argue that place-based education and achievement standards are not incompatible as the standards can be used to provide a framework within which curriculum and pedagogy can be developed (Jennings, et al., 2005).

Another challenge for place-based education in rural communities specifically is limited economic opportunities (Wanich, 2006). This assertion challenges one of the five aims of place-based education proposed by Smith (2002). In Smith’s opinion, internships and entrepreneurial opportunities would encourage students to find and create their own economic prospects within their communities. Wanich points out that based on labour market theory it would be doubtful that every rural student would find employment in their own community. She cautions that place-based education can provide an inadequate education and narrow a student’s outlook – a deficit that can be rectified by providing a bicultural education for rural students “localists who nonetheless possess cosmopolitan capabilities.”(Wanich, 2006, p.32)
This bicultural education concept captures the expectation that First Nations people have for the education system. Native communities expect the education system to preserve and revitalize language and culture while, at the same time, facilitating skill and competency development in English and Western culture that will prepare young people for success in today’s economy (Dennert & Towner, 2003). The need to develop an education system that will train bicultural Indigenous learners will challenge schools, communities and teachers and will require “a new look at the culture of the school, teaching strategies, and ways of interacting with Native students and communities.” (Dennert & Towner, 2003, p.33)

Developing a strategy to engage First Nations learners and communities can be another challenge to integrating Indigenous knowledge into place-based curriculum and pedagogy (Schmidt, 2005). In her report on culturally responsive instruction, Schmidt cites five challenges to developing the community connections necessary for implementing culturally responsive instruction. First, the school population has become increasingly culturally and ethnically diverse while the teaching population continues to be predominantly Euro-American. Second, most teachers have not had sustained relationships with people from different ethnic, cultural, or socio-economic backgrounds. Third, curriculum and pedagogy reflect Euro-American or white culture and ignore backgrounds and experiences of students or families from lower socio-economic levels and different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Fourth, teacher education programs do not adequately prepare educators for culturally-relevant pedagogy – a term that directly relates to making strong home, school and community connections. Fifth, when cultural differences are ignored in classrooms student fears and alienation increase. Consequently, this disconnect has become a national problem whose influence has been linked to poor literacy development and extremely high drop out rates.” (Schmidt, 2005, p.4)

Engaging community requires dedicated effort especially in communities where people have been disenfranchised because of race, culture and poverty, or have misgivings about the educational system because of their own or their parents’ experiences in residential school. The development of personal relationships between teachers and community leaders and Elders is a key component in the success of educational reform success (Kushman & Barnhardt, 2001). Approaching education differently requires “new behaviours, roles and ways of thinking on the part of both school personnel and community members; [m]any educators and parents, however, are stuck in traditional roles and are not sure how to change even if they wanted to.” (Kushman & Barnhardt, 2001, p.8)

Another challenge is the impact of the residential school system and the legacy that includes loss of cultural and language proficiency. As communities struggle to reclaim their own cultural identity, practices and beliefs, outsider cultural norms are often at play in this reclamation process, which can sometimes threaten a cultural revitalization initiative that is Indigenous to a specific place.
This confusion about cultural authenticity and the tendency toward a pan-Indian culture is sustained by an education system that has dismissed and discredited Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy. In her review of research related to Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy, Battiste concludes that teachers – Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal – are equally unprepared to build Indigenous content into their classrooms. Non-Aboriginal teachers can be especially challenged, as they are uncertain about protocol and how to engage Elders and leaders in curriculum development (Battiste, 2003).

There are many reasons why non-Aboriginal teachers do not include traditional ecological knowledge into their curriculum, especially in the science curriculum (Edōsdil (J.C. Thompson), 2004). “One reason is that they feel that they shouldn’t since they are not Aboriginal. In addition, many do not know how to get started or how to go about bringing Indigenous Knowledge into science. Another reason is that many science teachers do not feel that traditional ecological knowledge is science.” (Edōsdil (J.C. Thompson), 2004, p.3)

Similarly, teachers – both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal - who participated in Kanu’s research indicated a reluctance to integrate Aboriginal culture into the curriculum because they felt they were not qualified to do so – however, for different reasons. The Aboriginal teacher who participated in Kanu’s study felt that she had neither the experience nor the authority to teach cultural material appropriately while the non-Aboriginal teachers felt they did not have a right to teach the material because they were not Aboriginal (Kanu, 2005).

Integration of Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy into schools depends a great deal on the support of administrators at both the school and district levels (Barnhardt 1998; and, Kanu, 2005). Quite often administrators fail to see themselves as managing change because of the demands of maintaining the existing system. The administrator’s task is to reduce extraneous or complicating variables to avoid disruption of the system. Changes that do not interfere with the established administration or procedures can be readily integrated. This tendency toward maintenance of the status quo perpetuates Western cultural traditions at the expense of Indigenous learners. Developing and implementing a culturally responsive approach to education calls for administrators to introduce new variables to meet both learner and community needs. Success of a new “approach to administration requires, however, an ability to anticipate the consequences of change, for the educational well-being of the students as well as the social and cultural well-being of the community. It also requires the ability to recognize and remove institutional obstacles to change when change is necessary, to resist change when it is unproductive, and the ability to distinguish between the two.” (Barnhardt, 2005, p.15)

The fundamental challenge for projects that aim to integrate Indigenous Knowledge is the question of race and racism, which “are notable for generating discomfort and resistance.” (Visano & Jakubowski, 2002, p.22) In this regard, Visano and Jakubowski (2002) identify the first task for an educator is to unlearn what they have learned about First Nations people, history and issues. It follows that in addition to exploring the
inadequacies and inaccuracies of a Eurocentric interpretation of history, we must also provide students with an alternative perspective – in particular the perspective of those on the receiving end of colonization. In other words, the challenge is to reduce the distance between the Native and non-Native cultures by welcoming into our learning the ideas of those who think and see with de-colonized minds and hearts (Visano & Jakubowski, 2002).

3.7. Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy in the school system: Two case examples

At the heart of this culture of learning is the need for two sets of knowledge: one traditional, based on history and experience, ritual and memory, language and expression, identity and community; one shared with the dominant knowledge systems of North American society, a different view of history, a different shape of society, different priorities of knowledge and skills, and different values related to work, technology, progress and life.

An Aboriginal culture of learning seeks to acknowledge and validate both kinds of knowledge. It needs to be based on truth-telling about history and treaties and residential schools and ways of life and trauma. In this culture, the school is one source of learning, one way of learning, and the community offers other sources and other ways. Each must respect and relate to the other. (Henchey, 2005, p. 22)

One initiative that has taken a leadership role at the post-secondary level in Canada is the Integrative Science and Health (IISH) program at Cape Breton University. The IISH program is devoted to pursuing a Two-Eyed Seeing approach by bringing “together Indigenous and Western scientific knowledge and ways of knowing to create Living Knowledge for the 21st Century (emphasis in original).”15 Albert Marshall – a Mi’kmaq Elder – explains two-eyed seeing as “learning to see from one eye with the strengths of (the best in) Indigenous Knowledge and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths (the best in) Western knowledge and ways of knowing, and to using both eyes together, for the benefit of all (parentheses in original).” (Bartlett, et al., 2007) Two-eyed seeing respectfully brings together the different knowledge and ways of knowing to motivate learners – Indigenous and non-Indigenous – to use all their gifts to leave the world a better place and not compromise the future for children through their own inaction.

There are also Districts and schools currently integrating Indigenous Knowledge in the classrooms. One such District is School District # 52 which serves the Prince Rupert area in Tsimshian territory and has a student population of over fifty per cent First Nations. Cross-cultural units have been developed for all elementary levels and are supported by thirty six resources – books, posters and teacher resource guides. The District has mandated these cross-cultural units be taught. A text for secondary schools, entitled Persistence and Change was in development at the time of writing this report. In addition, a multimedia website tells and shows the richness of Tsimshian culture using text, pictures, sound and animation.
The District’s First Nations Education Services (FNES) provides teaching of the Tsimshian language and encourages parent involvement through scheduled workshops focused on a particular theme, such as literacy and self-esteem. In addition, FNES maintains an extensive library to support learning about First Nations people and issues, and coordinates a program that schedules First Nations role models to visit classrooms to discuss issues from traditional culture to employment. FNES also coordinates the Family Support Workers and Counselling services as well as a cultural identity enhancement program for Grades 5 and 6 at Seal Cove Elementary.16

In addition to the strategies and lessons that can be learned from School District 52 and the Two-Eyed Seeing Initiative, two other projects which have integrated Indigenous Knowledge into place-based education have been chosen for closer examination. The reason for a more in depth study of the following two case studies is because the Two-Eyed Seeing program is designed for adult learners (while the PoP is focused on primary and secondary schools) and, although Tsimshian curriculum development initiatives have been informed by the Forests for the Future Project17 there is insufficient literature to warrant a comprehensive review of their work to date – especially the impacts of such work.

The two projects chosen for closer examination were previously mentioned and offer strong examples of how to integrate Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy through place based approaches. The first case study that is presented below is centered on an examination of the Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science and Technology Units, which was coordinated by G. Aikenhead at the College of Education, University of Saskatchewan. The second case study is the Alaska Rural System Initiative, which is a partnership between the Alaska Native Knowledge Network and University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Rekindling traditions: Cross-cultural science and technology

In the late 1990s, the Île-à-la-Crosse and the Northern Lights School Division of Saskatchewan Education, in partnership with the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan, under the direction of G. Aikenhead, took a leadership role in developing culturally relevant science curriculum and pedagogy for schools with Cree, Métis and Dene students in Northern Saskatchewan. The project culminated in six science units and the creation of a Teacher Guide to Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science and Technology Units in June 2000.18 Following guidelines set by Saskatchewan Education that stipulated First Nations and Métis content be taught to all students, one of the Rekindling Traditions project goals was to illustrate a modest way of assisting teachers put the policy to practice in the classroom.

The Aboriginal knowledge found in each of our units creates a context for instruction that most Aboriginal students relate to. It is also a context into which Western science instruction logically fits. In other words, Western science content is taught in the context of the local community’s Aboriginal knowledge of nature, a context that creates an Aboriginal framework for the unit. (Aikenhead, 2000, p.6)
This project followed the latest research and recommendations on developing culturally relevant curriculum by engaging community and Elders in the development process. The Aboriginal way of knowing as defined by the communities formed the foundation of each unit that included the proper protocol to access community knowledge and wisdom. The units were designed to teach Aboriginal students to value and respect their heritage.

In calling upon teachers to assist Aboriginal students traverse the cultural border between Western science and Aboriginal ways of knowing, Aikenhead refers to M. Ogawa (1995) who identified the four sciences Aboriginal students must negotiate:

First, students reflect on their own understanding of the physical and biological world. Second, students learn some of the Aboriginal common sense held by their communities. This creates a direct connection between school content and the student’s local environment. Third, students may encounter ways of knowing of another culture, including other First Nations peoples. Fourth, students are introduced to the language, norms, values, beliefs, knowledge, technology, expectations, and conventional actions of Western science – the culture of Western science. (Aikenhead, 2000, p.11)

In Aikenhead’s (2000) estimation, the culture-brokering science teacher is one who facilitates an Aboriginal student’s negotiation of these four sciences. The educator understands that Western science is a sub-culture itself and makes border crossings between this culture and the Aboriginal way of knowing explicit. The teacher does this by acknowledging that Aboriginal students’ worldviews have a purpose and are connected to the students’ everyday culture. “A culture broker identifies the culture in which a student’s personal ideas find meaning, and then introduces another cultural point of view, for instance the culture of Western science, in the context of Aboriginal knowledge (emphasis in original).” (Aikenhead, 2000, p.12)

In examining the role of spirituality in the Aboriginal belief system and as a relationship between all things, the culture-brokering teacher simply acknowledges spirituality and its role in Aboriginal knowledge and points out its absence in Western science. In integrating Aboriginal knowledge, Aikenhead notes that “it is not the case that the community’s spirituality is integrated into Western science…but it is the case that the community’s spirituality is given voice in the context of Aboriginal knowledge in order to ensure authenticity of that knowledge. Although studied for the purpose of understanding, students are not expected to believe or adopt the content (emphasize in original).”(2000, p. 17-18)

Aikenhead (2000) recommends that when conflict arises, it be dealt with openly and with respect. He also suggests that educators address Western science’s social, political, military, colonial, and economic roles in history. “By acknowledging Western science’s historical roles in the colonization of Aboriginal peoples, a teacher can address Aboriginal students’ conflicting feelings toward the culture of Western science, thus making a student feel more at ease with learning (appropriately) that subculture’s content without accepting its values and ideologies. Appropriating Western science to serve one’s own needs is a key aspect of coming to knowing, and therefore, it is a goal for cross-cultural (bi-cultural) teaching.”(2000, p.13)
The Rekindling Traditions Project devised nine principles for incorporating Aboriginal knowledge into the curriculum, which are summarized below:

1. Aboriginal knowledge needs to be taught within an Aboriginal context, and should be interpreted through Aboriginal and scientific lenses;

2. The diversity within and between First Nations communities and Métis groups should be explicitly acknowledged;

3. The integration of Aboriginal knowledge should be completed through a partnership process, and ownership of material should belong to the community;

4. The process of including Indigenous Knowledge should be committed to the belief that culture is not ‘static’ and that today’s traditional knowledge may differ from that of pre-contact times, and as such, communities should decide what counts as tradition and authentic, not an outsider;

5. The process of learning should be defined as a ‘coming to knowing’, and the process of thinking of Aboriginal knowledge as something to be accumulated and possessed should be avoided;

6. Aboriginal knowledge should be conceived as is interconnected with many areas and fields of thought so as to remind students that Aboriginal knowledge fits into a ‘holistic’ point of view;

7. Think of the work and the vision as being multi-generational;

8. Incorporate and use the Aboriginal language in the curriculum text;

9. Be aware of language structure and how verb tense can give the impression that practices and knowledge have been replaced by Western science and views. (Aikenhead, 2000, p. 16-17)

Aikenhead (2000) cautions educators not to distort local knowledge by making it conform to the Western worldviews that are inherent in school culture. “Inadvertent assimilation will take place in a science classroom if the local knowledge is taken out of its cultural context.”(2000, p.17) Although Aikenhead provides a cursory overview of each of the six units developed in the project, only one will be summarized to demonstrate the process of cultural-brokering or bi-cultural teaching.

In the Snowshoes unit, the student’s connection to nature begins with an afternoon spent snowshoeing. Students hear about how the community is rich in knowledge about snowshoes and are told about the value of the internet and printed materials as sources of information. They are reminded of the protocol required to approach people who hold knowledge about snowshoes and then they are taught how to conduct interviews. The students develop the interview questions as a group and are advised that all the information collected will be synthesized and shared in class.
Once well situated in the Aboriginal knowledge, the students then cross the border into Western science by learning about why snowshoes stay on the top of the snow. Teachers can modify lessons to address confusion between difference and proportion when comparing quantities while introducing the concept of pressure. The students then engage in hands-on activities, problem solving and calculations by using a variety of snowshoes and different daily situations in nature. Students are then asked to design an experiment to test the ability of different types of snowshoes to handle different snow conditions. In this case, the Western science question ‘how do you know?’ comes alive for students. The data collection moves students back to nature but this time as a Western scientist determining what type of snowshoe is best for what type of snow. By participating in this exercise, the concepts of controlled and manipulated variables now have concrete significance for students. All students learn, Aboriginal or not, and the Aboriginal students “feel at ease playing the role of scientist because they are not required to dismiss their Aboriginal knowledge in the process.”(2000, p.26)

In establishing a culturally sensitive assessment system, the Rekindling Traditions project established fairness as the first principle. Fairness in student assessment is about giving different students an equal chance at expressing what they understand and can do, rather than about treating all students identically by assessing them in the same way. Aikenhead (2000) realizes that for teachers to accomplish this, they need to develop an assortment of assessment tools and give students some choice over which tool is best suited for their learning and communication style. Giving students choices is a way of sharing the responsibility for assessment which leads “directly to students assuming more responsibility for their own learning.”(2000, p.28)

The second principle for developing culturally sensitive assessments is to treat the cultural diversity of students as a strength. Aikenhead (2000) suggests teachers find ways for students to express skills and knowledge learned in the community and for students to be rewarded by the assessment system for doing so. Rekindling Traditions accomplished this by setting the unit within the framework of the community’s knowledge.

The final principle in developing culturally-relevant assessments is the commitment to discover the gifts and talents that each child possesses. In doing so, a much fairer system of assessment is devised. In culturally-relevant assessment, students ‘self-identities’ will be enhanced by the acknowledgment they received from using their particular gifts and talents. Aikenhead (2000) concludes the Teacher’s Guide by making suggestions for culturally relevant assessment tools.

To determine the overall success of the project, the First Nations and Métis Education Consultant for Northern Lights School District #113 was contacted as part of this review and was asked to comment on the implementation of the Rekindling Traditions project (T. Park, personal communication, May 8, 2007). Although the project contact person had not been part of the original implementation, having taken their current position four years after the projects inception, and although not absolutely certain, he believed the curriculum was not currently being widely used by teachers even though the curriculum is readily available from the School District website.
The Consultant suggested three possible reasons for this under-utilization. First, the School District had not been engaged in the project so the policy framework required to implement the program was not established. Second, the in-service training required to support implementation did not occur in a comprehensive and sustained way. Third, it is not absolutely clear that the learning outcomes meet current provincial standards.

**Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative (AKRSI)**

The Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative (AKRSI) was created in 1994 to document the traditional Indigenous Knowledge of the Alaska Native people and develop curriculum and pedagogical practices that would appropriately integrate it into the education system. The AKRSI was established to address frustrations with an education system that continued to demonstrate a dismal performance record by most indicators as well as the lack of meaningful presentation of cultural elements in schools. The AKRSI sought to develop and implement reforms that connect education and Indigenous Knowledge systems in a complementary way (Barnhardt, 2005).

The creation of guidelines was one of the most significant accomplishments of the AKRSI. These guidelines were developed by Native educators and Elders to provide explicit direction on “how students, teachers, curriculum, schools and communities could integrate the local culture and environment into the formal education process so that students would be able to achieve cultural well-being as a result of their schooling experience.” (Barnhardt, 2005, p.7) There are seven guideline resources in total, namely: Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools (1998); Guidelines for Culturally Responsive School Boards (2002); Guidelines for Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers for Alaska’s Schools (1999); Guidelines for Nurturing Culturally-Healthy Youth (2001); Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge (2000); Guidelines for Cross-Cultural Orientation Programs (2003); Guidelines for Strengthening Language (2001).

The role of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative has been to guide locally generated activities that bring together two different ways of coming to knowing – the formal western education system and Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy (Barnhardt, 2005). Efforts were made to identify teaching and learning process from traditional forms of education and to develop pedagogies that incorporate these components into the curriculum (Barnhardt, 2005). A curriculum framework was developed based upon 12 broad themes and Native teachers worked with Academies of Elders to develop the curriculum. Specific science and math curriculum resources were developed in collaboration with rural teachers. All resources supplement the existing curriculum and provide teachers with ideas on how to connect science and math concepts to the local environment. Local cultural documentation projects provide students with opportunities to interview Elders and research documents related to the Indigenous Knowledge of their place and then develop a multi-media cultural atlas (Barnhardt, 2005). The Alaska Native Knowledge Network continues to serve as a centralized repository of all curriculum resources, which are all available on its website.
Barnhardt (2005) reminds educators that: “The first axiom of any teacher, especially in a cross-cultural setting, is to adapt your teaching to the context of the students, school and community in which you are working. In other words, build your teaching approach in response to the conditions in front of you, and don’t assume that what worked in one situation will work the same in another.” (p.6) Acknowledging that it is not possible to fully attend to the particular cultural need of every student on a daily basis, Barnhardt (2005) maintains that classrooms can be inviting places for all students from a wide range of cultural backgrounds if “a rich mix of cultural backgrounds’ is incorporated into the curriculum in . . . ways that help students learn to understand and appreciate the similarities and differences among themselves and their classmates.” (p.8)

[The educator’s] task is to help the students connect to the world around them in ways that prepare them for the responsibilities and opportunities they will face as adults. That means they need to know as much as possible about their own immediate world as well as the larger world in which they are situated, and the inter-relationships between the two. To achieve such a goal requires attention to the local culture in a holistic and integrative manner across the curriculum, rather than an add-on component for a few hours a week after attending to the ‘real’ curriculum. The baseline for curriculum should be the local cultural community, with everything else being built upon and grounded in that reality. (Barnhardt, 2005, p.6)

To assist educators in teaching in a cultural environment, the University of Alaska has, since 1989, offered a cross-cultural orientation course that takes teachers to a remote village site that serves as a cultural camp. Here educators work with Elders to learn about the Athabascan world and the role of education from their perspective (Kawagley & Barnhardt, 1999). The result is that teachers, even those who are initially skeptical, come away with a new way of viewing the world and they understand that the pattern in which they are so often stuck can be changed. In the process, educators learn there are ways to develop linkages that connect different worldviews. Since the tendency is to look at how to get Indigenous people to understand the western view of the world, a new approach is needed – a two-way street which does not require Native people to abandon what they have already learned from their cultural teachings. By participating in the cultural camps, educators are actively engaged in developing the curriculum and pedagogy required to shift education away from the emphasis on education about the culture to education in the culture (Kawagley & Barnhardt, 1999).

The researchers who completed the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory report on culturally-responsive practices for students choose one of the AKRSI schools to include in their evaluation, namely the Russian Mission School (RMS) (Klump & McNeir, 2005). In developing the curriculum, the educators at the school borrowed from the Yup’ik teaching framework which involves hands-on, inquiry-based instruction that engages learners in tasks that use the village resources and are relevant to both the student and the community. The evaluators note that the strength of the curriculum is that it directly links the environment and seasons, creating hands-on activities that integrate cultural competencies with academic content (Klump & McNeir, 2005).
3.8. Moving from the head to the heart: Towards equity in the classroom

In the process of developing culturally responsive science curriculum and pedagogy, Aikenhead (2002) draws on the social cognitive research of M. O’Loughlin (1992) to discuss the need to address social power and privilege in the classroom and their influence on existing models of teaching and learning. This power imbalance is the foundation of a cultural perspective that perpetuates social class and racial inequities in the classroom (Aikenhead, 2002). To address these inequities, educators will first need to engage in self-examination of their own attitudes and belief systems.

Visano and Jakubowski (2002), outline how self-censorship is used to keep educators from engaging in discourses about difficult topics and controversial issues. The self-reflective and contemplative teacher should be able to identify and recognize the role of privilege in her or his work and life and thereby be able to work at breaking down barriers. As part of this teachers must come to terms with their own positions, recognizing their privileges, their power, and the resulting limitations in understanding the experiences of the marginalized, let alone the experiences of most students.”(2002, p.108)

In calling for a critical pedagogy of place, Gruenewald (2003), asks educators to identify and change ways of thinking that injure and exploit other people and places. In his estimation, this entails “unlearning much of what dominant culture and schooling teaches, and learning more socially just and ecologically sustainable ways of being in the world.”(2003, p.9) Similarly, Barnhardt (1998) calls on educators to engage in “an ongoing journey of personal exploration and cross-cultural sensitization that each of us as educators must undertake if we are to relate to people from other cultural backgrounds in a respectful and constructive manner. When we learn to relate to each other and teach in a culturally considerate way, we benefit not only those with whom we work, but we benefit ourselves as well.”(p.1)

Fullen (2007) suggests that the first principle of deep reform is a change in beliefs and understanding among school staff. He notes that “people change their attitudes when they experience new things, which in turn touch their emotions.”(p.30) To facilitate such change means involving teachers in educational change processes. In explaining the value of having teachers participate in developing the goals and organization of their work, Fullen emphasizes the importance of developing shared moral commitment among teachers in the development and implementation of their curriculum and pedagogy.

But unless [teachers] were bound together by a moral commitment to growth, empathy, and shared responsibility, [they] were as likely to replicate the prevailing school culture as to change it. Unless they applied their collaboration to education, caring, socially just, and participatory activities they continued to closely guard their classroom autonomy, be suspicious of teaming to divide and balkanize their faculty, and distrust collaboration with those outside the school. (Fullen, 2007, p.30)
Fullen (2007) points out that finding moral commitment and intellectual meaning in education reform is not just a process of making teachers feel better but is fundamentally connected to whether teachers are likely to find the considerable energy required to change the status quo.

Developing shared moral commitment, identifying power imbalances, engaging in examinations of shared assumptions, finding sources of inspiration to be a change agent are all tasks for teachers to consider if they are to cultivate equity in the classroom. In Battiste’s (2006) evaluation of the state of Aboriginal education in Canada, she raises a useful question to guide such exploratory activities: How can the knowledge and current scholarship of racism, antiracism, critical multiculturalism, and postcolonial education be shared to inform new directions for schools and school district? (Battiste, 2006).

For the most part, non-Aboriginal people feel uncomfortable talking about race and racism. Yet, acknowledging the role and history of racism and the inequities in Canadian society and the way these affect relationships between communities is critical to cross-cultural work (Seidl, 2007). Race and racism continues to play a major role in the distribution of opportunities both in general and in the classroom as race is a critical component of one’s identity. Seidl, in speaking from the perspective of an African-American, maintains: “To deny that this is true is like denying an elephant is sitting in the middle of the living room yet, White people are often socialized to do just that. White people often become uneasy when race enters the conversation.”(Seidl, 2007, p.175)

Others would argue that, with few exceptions, everyone has been socialized to avoid discussion on race or racism – it may be a more comfortable discourse within one’s own identity group, but it is a difficult exercise across cultures. However, if educators are to facilitate the creation of a learning environment that is open to the integration of Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy, then teachers must learn to handle matters of race, in particular, discussing race and racism within racially mixed groups where they may be perceived as biased or angry by non-Indigenous students or parents. Learning to stay within the uncomfortable space of talking about race and racism is critical to intercultural work. Such difficult conversations are the pathways for teachers, students, parents and administrators alike to move from the head to the heart, and towards equity in the classroom.

3.9. Standards for culturally responsive schools

In their assessment of culturally responsive best practices in six schools from different regions in the U.S., Klump and McNeir (2005), identified seven common characteristics of schools that are culturally responsive. The seven characteristics are summarized below.
1. A climate of caring, respect and the valuing of students’ cultures are fostered in the school and classroom. Schools who utilize this approach have higher attendance and performance and lower suspension rates.

2. Bridges are built between academic learning and students’ prior understanding, knowledge, native language and values. Culture and language are deemed ‘as assets in learning and as a vehicle for learning’. Texts are chosen so children can make connections with their lived experiences, and families are included in activities so family knowledge can be related to classroom activities.

3. Educators learn from and about their students’ culture, language, and learning styles to make instruction more meaningful and relevant to their students’ lives. Culturally congruent science instruction shows that when culture and language knowledge is used, student achievement increases. Schools can work with communities to provide professional development for teachers and education leaders so they may learn about their students’ culture. An example of this is the Minto Camp developed as part of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative that provides a cultural emersion course for teachers.

4. Local knowledge, language, and culture are fully integrated into curriculum, not simply added on to it. Curricula are developed that reinforces and values students’ cultural knowledge instead of ignoring or negating it. A culturally responsive curriculum should fully integrate cultural knowledge not ‘adding it on’ in unconnected units or ‘culture days’.

5. Staff members hold students to high standards and have high expectations for all students. High standards and expectations are fundamental to being culturally responsive. Studies Klump and McNeir reviewed indicated that when “low-performing students were given the opportunity to be in higher level classes with small-group collaborative work and using higher order thinking skills, they excelled in those classes.” (Klump & McNeir, 2005, p.10)

6. Effective class practices are challenging, cooperative, and hands-on, with less emphasis on rote memorization and lecture formats. Additionally, teachers can promote a ‘community of learning’ by encouraging students to share new knowledge with their peers and work on interdisciplinary projects that build on their strengths.

7. School staff builds trust and partnerships with families, especially with families marginalized by schools in the past. The most successful schools are those who reach out to families and communities so they may be fully involved in the decision-making that affects their children and their education. This can be accomplished by “actively inviting families to the school, visiting families in their communities, soliciting their input and taking their concerns seriously, and treating families with respect.” (Klump & McNeir, 2005, p.10)

Other researchers have also contributed to this discourse by articulating the central components that frame the development of bicultural competencies and culturally relevant pedagogies. Seidl identifies three components:

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First, the development of culturally relevant pedagogies is dependent on the individual beginning to become biculturally competent. … Second, teachers must become students in a particular context – they must learn about the range of cultural experiences and norms within a specific community and begin to situate education within an understanding of the goals and expectations of the community. … Culture within this understanding is not something one reads about but something that can be witnessed, lived and learned. … Finally, prospective teachers need to personalize cultural and political knowledge within a pedagogical framework – they do not have a single ‘style’ or pedagogy but have developed, over time, personal styles that take into account children’s cultural, political, and emotional worlds. (Seidl, 2007, p.170)

Based upon decades of research across cultural and socio-economic contexts, the Centre for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence, (CREDE) of the University of California Berkley, has also played a lead role in the development of the educational discourse on culturally responsive schools by developing five standards for effective pedagogy. CREDE focuses “on improving the education of students whose ability to reach their potential is challenged by language or cultural barriers, race, geographical location or poverty.” CREDE’s five standards for effective pedagogy represent recommendations on which the literature is in agreement, across all cultural, racial, and linguistic groups in the United States, all age levels, and all subject matters. The five standards are as follows: (a) teachers and students working together; (b) developing language and literacy skills across the curriculum; (c) connecting lessons to students’ lives; (d) engaging students in challenging lessons; and, (e) emphasizing dialogue over lectures.

Similar to CREDE’s standards, Hampton articulates twelve standards of education for Aboriginal students, which serve as ideals towards which educational reform involving Indigenous peoples should be directed. Here is Aikenhead’s (2000) summary of Hampton’s twelve standards:

1. **Spirituality:** At the centre of spirituality is respect for spiritual relationships that exist between all things.

2. **Service to community:** The individual does not form an identity in opposition to the group but recognizes the group as relatives (included in his or her own identity). The second standard is service. Education is to serve the people. Its purpose is not individual advancement or status.

3. **Respect for diversity:** The respect for diversity embodied in the third standard requires self-knowledge and self-respect without which respect for others is impossible.

4. **Culture:** Indian cultures have ways of thought, learning, teaching, and communicating that are different than but of equal value to those of White cultures. These thought-ways stand at the beginning of Indian time and are the foundations of our children’s lives. Their full flavour is in what it means to be one of the people.
5. Contemporary tradition: Indian education maintains continuity with tradition. Our traditions define and preserve us. It is important to understand that this continuity is neither a rejection of the artifacts of other cultures nor an attempt to ‘turn back the clock.’ It is the continuity of a living culture that is important to First Nations education, not the preservation of a frozen museum specimen.

6. Personal respect: The individual Indian’s sense of personal power and autonomy is a strength that lies behind the apparent weakness of disunity. Indian education demands relationships of personal respect.

7. Sense of history: Indian education has a sense of history and does not avoid the hard facts of the conquest of America.

8. Relentlessness in championing students: Indian education is relentless in its battle for Indian children. We take pride in our warriors and our teachers are warriors for the life of our children.

9. Vitality: Indian education recognizes and nourishes the powerful pattern of life that lies hidden within personal and tribal suffering and oppression. Suffering begets strength. We have not vanished.

10. Conflict between cultures: Indian education recognizes the conflict, tensions, and struggles between itself and White education.

11. Sense of place: Indian education recognizes the importance of an Indian sense of place, land, and territory.

12. Transformation: The graduates of our schools must not only be able to survive in a White dominated society, they must contribute to the change of that society. Indian education recognizes the need for transformation in the relation between Indian and White as well as in the individual and society. (Aikenhead quoting Hampton, 2000, p.18)

In light of the foregoing discussion of standards for culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy involving Indigenous students, it is useful to inquire into some particular initiatives in British Columbia that have attempted to include Indigenous Knowledge in school curriculum and pedagogy. In the next section, we discuss a sampling of BC specific educational change and curriculum development projects.

### 3.10. Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy in the British Columbia primary and secondary public school system

In this section, we present a discussion of a sampling of initiatives in BC that aim to integrate Indigenous Knowledge into school curriculum and pedagogy. By no means is the following discussion exhaustive, but rather a cursory glance to what has and is taking place at the provincial and school district levels in BC with regard to integrating Indigenous Knowledge. Additionally, we identify a few issues with regard to some aspects of such initiatives as they relate to St’át’imc communities.
The BC Ministry of Education has taken some important strides in recent years with regard to Aboriginal education, including the establishment of the Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch, which is responsible for developing policies, procedures and initiatives related to the education of Aboriginal students in British Columbia. *The First Nations Education Act (Bill 46-2007)*, which received Royal Assent in the BC Legislature on November 29, 2007, is a provincial legislative framework that compliments the Federal government legislation, Bill C34, *First Nations Jurisdiction over Education in British Columbia Act*. Both pieces of legislation are the culmination of years of negotiations involving Canada, the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), and British Columbia. Under this legislative framework, First Nations are now able to create their own legislation governing First Nations education in their schools on their lands.

Within this legislative climate, the BC government is engaged in several initiatives designed to improve learning environments for Aboriginal students. An example of a specific initiative that aimed to assist schools in their respective effort to include Indigenous Knowledge and culture is called *Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10*. *Shared Learnings* is an initiative of the BC Government’s Ministry of Education, which involved developing resources “designed to provide teachers with guidance in integrating Aboriginal content into all subject areas at an introductory level.” The overarching aim of this resource package was to assist educators in creating greater sensitivity to and respect for the richness and diversity of Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia.

The Orlowski and Menzies (2004) critique of the *Shared Learnings* project notes that most of the Prescribed Learning Outcomes (PLOs) that are articulated in this project continue “to treat Indigenous peoples as one monolithic and reified group and as part of the distant past rather than as contributors to the Canadian nation-building project.”(Orlowski & Menzies, 2004, p.67-68) Orlowski and Menzies also point out that the noble savage image depicted in some of the PLOs gives way to the Native as victim image with the second being as damaging to the self-esteem of Aboriginal students as the first. “Moreover, the suggested instructional strategies indicate a historically incorrect perspective in which the existence of Canada has been accomplished by groups of hard working Europeans whose task it was to forge a nation – the subsequent expropriation of First Nations lands is, in this perspective, relegated to the domain of an unfortunate by-product of the march of history.”(2004, p.67-68)

Other projects designed to integrate Indigenous Knowledge into BC public school systems include the Tsimshian *Forests for the Future* (2003) project, which consists of a diverse range of materials (i.e., content and teaching strategies, etc.) that are in ongoing use in School District 52. In her paper describing this project, Ignas (2004) explains how local knowledge and an understanding of how that knowledge is constructed was linked with elements of Western science in new curriculum packages. “The lesson plans, designed to address the prescribed learning outcomes for British Columbia’s provincial high school curriculum, were prepared on the basis of interviews gathered by university and community based researchers working in the Tsimshian territory of British
Columbia.” (Ignas, 2004, p.50) One of the components of the *Forests for the Future* project is a case study in the *BC First Nations Studies* textbook, which is discussed below.

The third example of a project that aims to reform curriculum and pedagogy in schools to be more inclusive of Indigenous Knowledge is called the *BC First Nations Studies Course*, which was first developed in 1994 but did not receive designation as a course testable for graduation credit under provincial standards until 2004. This course is offered at the Lillooet high school, and the majority of students enrolled in this course are St’át’imc. Although the textbook is distinctive in its representation of historical and contemporary issues for Aboriginal peoples, there are shortcomings as they relate to St’át’imc territory and culture (Orlowski & Menzies, 2004). For instance, the reference to the St’át’imc First Salmon ceremony is a misrepresentation. Although individual families may have engaged in a ceremony specific to their family, it appears the First Salmon Ceremony as depicted in the text is inaccurate. During the development of the St’át’imc Cultural Tourism Guidelines, the Elders from the six northern St’át’imc communities indicated that the St’át’imc did not traditionally engage in a community First Salmon ceremony and explained it has been introduced from communities on the coast. Unlike ceremonies Indigenous to the St’át’imc, the Elders did not object to this First Salmon ceremony being shared with tourists since it was not authentically St’át’imc and they believed the tourists would probably enjoy it. In spite of the Elders’ viewpoint, the West coast-based First Salmon Ceremony is gradually taking hold in St’át’imc territory.

There are other shortcomings in the *BC First Nations Studies* textbook that may not be obvious to a non-St’át’imc reader. A picture of *ts’wan* (wind dried salmon) is included in the textbook. The picture, however, is upside down so the dried salmon appears to be standing upright without visible support. Another inaccuracy is the spear-fishing photo – the picture actually depicts the practice of dip netting using a set net indicated by the rope used to anchor the net. These inaccuracies may be viewed as minor; however, for those people whose culture is being depicted, the lack of attention to detail and authenticity is viewed as being representative of the general haphazard approach to including Indigenous Knowledge in school curriculum. Hopefully, these inaccuracies will be rectified in the next *BC First Nations Studies* curriculum review.

The BC Ministry of Education is currently offering a literature course for Grade 12 called First Peoples 12 English Course, which will be an option to the existing English 12 course. Indigenous authors, poets and storytellers will be highlighted and the course will meet the curriculum and testing standards for English set by the Ministry. At the time of conducting this review, the course was being piloted in twelve schools across the province, including the Stein Valley Nlakápmux School in Lytton.

The Ministry has also initiated the *Aboriginal Knowledge and Science Education Research Project* designed to revise the provincial science curriculum and bring traditional Aboriginal knowledge into BC’s classrooms. Guided by Drs. Lorna Williams and Gloria Snively (two University of Victoria researchers), and assisted by ten
Aboriginal graduate students and four non-Aboriginal students, the Aboriginal Knowledge and Science Education Research Project engages “First Nations Elders, community leaders and educators to identify science content elements of [A]boriginal knowledge and determine the most culturally appropriate and effective ways of teaching and learning science.” (Gilles, 2007) The graduate students are using case studies, field studies, surveys, informed interviews and ethnography (such as elder circles, songs and traditional stories) to investigate a wide range of topics from how Elders convey traditional knowledge and wisdom, and how story telling is used to teach science, and how to use digital video as a learning and teaching tool.

While the lessons and resources that have been identified above are useful insofar as they offer some examples of different attempts to integrate Indigenous Knowledge into school curriculum, a review of literature relevant to the Power of Place project would not be complete without a brief review of some examples of schools and related programs that have succeeded to integrate Indigenous Knowledge into curriculum and pedagogy. In this final section of the review, we summarize the major characteristics of three schools in different parts of North America that have integrated Indigenous Knowledge into their curriculum and pedagogy.

3.11. A sampling of schools and their programs to integrate Indigenous Knowledge into curriculum and pedagogy

Below, we present short summaries of school programs that have managed to integrate Indigenous Knowledge into their curriculum and pedagogy. The four selected schools are: Schools governed by the Cree School Board: Quebec; Rock Point Community School in Arizona; Halau Ku Mana in Hawaii.

School governed by the Cree School Board: Quebec

In the late 1990’s, the Cree School Board and the Cree Regional Authority on the East Coast of James Bay, Quebec, developed the Cree Medium Program. The Cree Medium promotes excellence in written and spoken Cree, as well as to preserve and enhance Cree culture and the values of the Cree social perspective of community. Simply put, the objective of the program is to integrate local Cree Knowledge and language into the formal education curriculum. Chisasibi (James Bay Eeyou) School and Waskaganish (Wiinibekuu) school were the first to adopt the Cree Medium Program, and centre their curriculum on Cree knowledge and culture.

The Cree Medium Program ensures the maintenance and enhancement of Cree language and helps students develop strong Cree literary skills in primary and secondary grade levels. In the Cree Medium Program, Cree is the main language of instruction in primary grades. In intermediate and secondary grade levels, half the school week involves instruction in Cree and half in mainstream languages (French and English), expect Social Studies, Language Arts, and Cree culture, which continue to be taught in Cree. Since the integration of Cree knowledge and culture have been integrated in the Chisasib and
Waskaganish schools, Cree students have been positively impacted. More Cree students than ever before are enrolled in post-secondary education.29

**Rock Point Community School: Arizona**

Rock Point Community School is located in the middle of the Navajo Nation in Northeast Arizona. It was first established in 1960 but the integration of local knowledge and language only began in 1972, with a vision to provide high quality Navajo education through local community control. Initially, the school board contracted with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the United States Department of the Interior to integrate the values and perspectives of the Navajo Nation into school curriculum and pedagogy.

Guiding the integration work are four mutually reinforcing educational principles and methods: (a) Incorporation of the cultural and linguistic background of the student into the school and its curriculum; (b) Participation of the community in school activities; (c) Use of integrationist teaching methods of local knowledge and local language that emphasizes an active role for students; (d) Recognition of the linguistic and cultural differences of students in testing and seek student strengths to support learning.

At Rock Point, parental involvement is a high priority. Parental activities include quarterly parent-teacher conferences, a yearly general public meeting held in November, an eight-member elected parent advisory committee that observes the school several times a year, school sponsored cultural events, and community dinners and gatherings to unite community social context and the schools educational staff, aiming to build diverse relationships within the school community.

The Bilingual Program at Rock Point facilitates instruction in two languages. Some teachers teach in English and some in Navajo. Concepts introduced in Navajo are reviewed in English and vice versa. In primary grade levels, two-thirds of the instruction is in Navajo for Kindergarten students. The rest of the primary grades receive half their instruction in English and half in Navajo. In the intermediate grades up to thirty per cent of the instruction is in Navajo and the rest in English. In the secondary grade levels, students have a half year of Navajo studies plus a quarter of their time spent on Navajo writing each year. Senior students graduating must present graduation speeches in Navajo and/or English.

At Rock Point, student achievement levels have outperformed Navajo students in neighbouring public schools. English parts of the written test; however, were more or less the same. In mathematics, Rock Point students outperformed students in neighbouring public schools. Additionally, the number of students attending higher level education programs continues to increase over time at Rock Point.30
Halau Ku Mana: Hawaii

Halau Ku Mana, is a charter school established in 2001, which teaches traditional Hawaiian values by integrating them into Hawaiian state curriculum. The main objective of the school is to provide quality education that is: academically rigorous, culturally and spiritually grounded, as well as community based. Halau Ku Mana’s vision is to provide adequate support to individuals and community through education empowerment, fostering life-long learners by building a connection between students and their community, environment, and global relations.

Halau Ku Mana is a school that is guided by three principles: (a) Ho’okumu: establish a foundation of Hawaiian, strength, wisdom, land and ancestral connections; (b) Ho’okel: the direction and connections, keeping a strong foundation and living with respect and building on intellectual knowledge; (c) Ho’omana: sustenance and empowerment.

Indigenous Hawaiian knowledge is integrated in subject areas, and community members are utilized as valuable resources to maximize educational programs. Community members work closely with school staff to connect their Indigenous Hawaiian knowledge to the school subject areas, including: Math, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, Language, Technology, Art, Career, Health, Life Skills and Music.

An example of a school project where students worked with Indigenous community members is the project to produce a music CD. Students and community members collectively work and learn together to compose, record, and produce songs that are featured on what is called the Mana Maoli CD. Halau Kun Mana also includes instruction of Indigenous Knowledge by designing science projects that require students to grow plants and foods in the same way as their ancestors.

At Halau Ku Mana, students are also taught Olelo Hawaii, the local Indigenous language. The Hawaiian language that was almost extinct is now growing and flourishing throughout the community. At Halau Ku Mana, students learn the songs of their ancestral heritage and the history of their people and current issues. Teachers and parent assessments show clear improvements in areas of respect, teamwork, identity, self pride, community knowledge and academic achievement.
4. Analysis of research results

How powerful it would be if our education system could reach deeply into the cultures of our diverse society, honor their knowledge systems, and respect and integrate their ways of knowing in a manner that strengthens our communities, connects our children to their place in the universe, and helps them to meet and exceed rigorous standards all at the same time. (Emekauwa, 2004, p.9)

Since an education system is organized by people, the prospect of an accessible, responsive, inclusive, respectful, rigorous, community-centric education system can only be achieved if diverse education stakeholders engage in dialogue about education change and develop relationships through which such change can transpire. All PoP research activities involving people aimed to focus equal attention on data collection about educational change from diverse perspectives, and processes of developing relationships between educational stakeholders so that any knowledge that PoP produces can be used in a collaborative and sustainable manner.

This section of the report provides an analysis of the information that was provided by participants of PoP. Given the multi-phased research methodology of PoP, there were several different kinds of opportunities for participants to provide input, as well as a diverse range of types of information that research participants provided.

This section divides into three parts and considers new data generated through the PoP curriculum review survey and workshops for educational change (both conference workshops and subsequent workshops with Elders, resource people and school staff). The first section includes our analysis of the curriculum review survey results. Second, our analysis of the results of the PoP community conference workshops is presented. Finally, we provide our analysis of results from the workshop series involving Elders, resource people, and school staff.

4.1. Results of curriculum review

The curriculum review results provide an answer to our guiding research questions about the degree to which St’át’imc Knowledge Systems are currently included in curriculum and pedagogy in Lillooet area schools. As such, teachers at the four following schools completed the survey: Cayoose Elementary, George Murray Elementary, Lillooet Secondary School and Sk’il Mountain Community School. Each of the principals of the four Lillooet area schools agreed to distribute a self-complete questionnaire to all teaching staff (excluding St’át’imcets Language Teachers). St’át’imc Language Teachers have been excluded since the survey aimed to determine the degree to which St’át’imc Knowledge Systems were included in mainstream courses, not in specialized course offerings.
A total of thirty-nine surveys were distributed to teachers. Twenty surveys were returned, resulting in a response rate of fifty-one per cent. Our analysis of the survey results is divided into four parts.

First, we analyze teachers’ responses to questions about the degree to which they are currently integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities into their teaching practice. The second part of our analysis consists of a summary of responses to the question about the specific aspects of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems that are currently being included in school based curriculum and pedagogy, and what kinds of methods are used to achieve such integration. Third, we summarize participant responses to the question about what teachers feel they need to either enhance the degree to which they already include St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into school-based learning, or if no such integration takes place, what could assist teachers to begin including St’át’imc knowledge in their curriculum and pedagogy. Finally, we highlight the priority recommendations of teachers for how to integrate St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into school curriculum and pedagogy.

4.1.1. Degree to which St’át’imc Knowledge Systems are included in school curriculum and pedagogy

When asked about the degree to which they included St’át’imc Knowledge Systems in their curriculum and pedagogy, a total of nine teachers indicated they were integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into their teaching practice, or forty-five per cent of total respondents. The inclusion of St’át’imc knowledge in school teaching is most prevalent in primary grade levels and is concentrated in Social Studies, Language Arts, Reading, Art, and to a minimal degree in Science. There is very little inclusion of St’át’imc knowledge in Grades 8-12, with no inclusion in major subject areas such as Science, Math, English, Social Studies, Music, or Art. Figure 3 on the next page outlines the subjects, grade levels, and number of instances when teachers are including St’át’imc knowledge in their teaching plan.
Figure 3: Number of instances teachers identified St’át’imc Knowledge Systems as part of their teaching plan across ten subjects and all grade levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Areas</th>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Grades 1-7</th>
<th>Grades 8-12</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Economics</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.2. Aspects of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems that are currently included in school curriculum and pedagogy

The table on the next page outlines the different aspects of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems that are currently integrated into different subject areas. Examples of the type of St’át’imc knowledge and/or cultural activity that are included in specific subject areas are identified, as are the general method of including the given type of St’át’imc knowledge and/or cultural activity.
Figure 4: Aspects of St’át’ímc Knowledge Systems included in school curriculum and pedagogy across ten subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Method for including St’át’ímc</th>
<th>Type of resource</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Incorporating counting into learning (i.e., how to count the days of a calendar) Using St’át’ímc terms for numbers to learn counting in kindergarten</td>
<td>St’át’ímc numbers St’át’ímc teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Using Aboriginal literature to study English writing, drawing on local St’át’ímc writing wherever possible</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Studying articles in the St’át’ímc Runner newspaper and having students write articles for the newspaper</td>
<td>St’át’ímc Runner newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>Reading an assortment of St’át’ímc legends or stories and having students write, word process and illustrate their own legend or story</td>
<td>Library, internet (USCLES site and <a href="http://www.cyes.sd74.bc.ca/grade5.html">http://www.cyes.sd74.bc.ca/grade5.html</a>) Student created content, Elders and resource texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCE</td>
<td>Studying and preparing St’át’ímc food to understand nutrition Using local recipe book to understand how to prepare food</td>
<td>Local St’át’ímc resource person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Reading stories and legends in small groups Describing the legends and stories and engaging in comparisons between different legends and stories from other cultures where applicable and appropriate</td>
<td>Books depicting modern day life for Aboriginal children living in communities close to Lillooet, e.g., Pemberton Books containing content by Aboriginal peoples when available and suitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Using text-based materials from library to understand food, clothing, shelter, transportation related St’át’ímc people</td>
<td>Local newspaper, ‘Our Communities’ text; group discussions, Information booklets, books Elders and resource texts <a href="http://www.cyes.sd74.bc.ca">http://www.cyes.sd74.bc.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Involving St’át’ímc resource person to demonstrate traditional art forms (i.e., basket weaving, etc.) Integrating Aboriginal Day celebrations into art activities</td>
<td>St’át’ímc resource person Native Art resource materials (non-St’át’ímc), personal resources, music, special performances arranged for Aboriginal Day, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Using new media on the internet about Aboriginal peoples’ worldview and use of plants and animals</td>
<td>Original content Elders and resource texts <a href="http://www.cyes.sd74.bc.ca">http://www.cyes.sd74.bc.ca</a> grade5/html</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.3. Teachers suggestions for how to increase the degree to which St’át’imc Knowledge Systems are included in school curriculum and pedagogy

As part of the curriculum review survey, teachers were asked the following question: What would you need to begin including St’át’imc knowledge into your class curriculum? Teachers responses have been categorized according to four overarching suggestions for making learning experiences for students more inclusive of St’át’imc Elders, resource people and the knowledge that they hold and the culture that they sustain. The four overarching suggestions are:

1. Develop St’át’imc curriculum resources
2. Provide opportunities for teachers to learn from and with St’át’imc Elders and resource people
3. Develop place-based learning experiences for students related to St’át’imc Knowledge Systems
4. Involve St’át’imc Elders and resource people in leading school-based learning experiences

1. Develop St’át’imc curriculum resources

Most teachers who completed the survey indicated that they supported the integration of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into school curriculum, suggesting that such integration will require the development of St’át’imc curriculum resources that can be easily accessed by teachers who are interested in including such material in their teaching practice. Several teachers also noted the importance of developing such resources in a manner that aligned with curriculum guidelines of the Ministry of Education. Teachers suggested that the following four kinds of curriculum resources should be developed:

- Visual resources: Photos, videos of local heroes and local people engaged in traditional activities, skits and plays that can be performed in schools
- Audio resources: Recordings of poems, reader’s theatre;
- Text-based resources: Materials for science and math, English/St’át’imc story books focused on stories & legends, vocabulary cards with images for core subjects, locally developed curriculum for high school level with answer keys;
- General resources: List of St’át’imc Elders and resource people, including their areas of expertise and contact information, also, a list of local St’át’imc resources/materials and how to obtain such resources;

2. Provide opportunities for teachers to learn from and with St’át’imc Elders and resource people

Several teachers noted that the inclusion of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems would be best accomplished in partnership St’át’imc Elders and resource people. Additionally, teachers noted that they are interested in participating in professional development activities that enhances their understanding of the St’át’imc, and their knowledge and culture, and subsequently improves their abilities to be more inclusive of St’át’imc knowledge and
cultural activities in their teaching practice. Teachers identified three specific kinds of learning and/or support that would enhance their ability to include St’át’imc knowledge and cultural activities in their teaching practice:

- Formal professional development workshops for teachers to learn about St’át’imc peoples’ world view, language and way of being;
- Informal opportunities to meet with Elders and resource people to ask questions and learn about the St’át’imc;
- Ongoing support from St’át’imc Elders and resource people in the practice of respectfully including St’át’imc knowledge and cultural activities in the classroom.

3. Develop place-based and relationship-focused learning experiences for students related to St’át’imc Knowledge Systems

In addition to naming several kinds of professional developments for their own practice, as well as a series of different types of curriculum resources, teachers also emphasized the need to stretch the classroom to include out-of-school visits to significant sites of the St’át’imc. Several teachers noted that the inclusion of St’át’imc knowledge and cultural activities is tied to the act of taking students to places in and around Lillooet that embody St’át’imc knowledge systems.

One teacher noted that it is important to focus on activities which students can incorporate into their everyday lives. This teacher emphasized the importance of planning for seamless inclusion of St’át’imc knowledge into the school experience, and not treating the St’át’imc or their knowledge as a separate subject area that is divorced from standard instruction.

Several teachers noted that there are many St’át’imc facilities that would serve as excellent places for students to learn more about the St’át’imc, both traditional and contemporary activities of the St’át’imc. Some site visits that were mentioned, including: government buildings, traditional cultural sites such as a pit house, as well as the banks of the Fraser River during fishing season.

Several teachers also recognized the importance of involving Elders and resource people during these visits, which would afford students the opportunity to meet with Elders and resource people and learn from them directly out of the classroom.

4. Involve St’át’imc Elders and resource people in leading school-based learning experiences

Several teachers suggested that the school environment needs to be hospitable to Elders and resource people so that they are comfortable being involved in coming to schools and sharing their teachings with the students. To this end, teachers indicated strong interest in involving Elders and resource people in their teaching practice. One teacher suggested the idea of having students visit Elders and resource people as part of class projects,
interviewing them about a particular topic and co-presenting with them to their class, sharing information in partnership with the given Elder or resource person.

Several teachers strongly stated the need to have Stát’ímc Elders and resource people serve as the primary instructors in Stát’ímc Knowledge Systems since they are able to bring the knowledge to life and communicate the teachings in ways that some teachers are not able to given the fact that they are not Stát’ímc.

In an effort to summarize where teachers placed emphasis on the four aforementioned developmental directions, we have produced the table below, which analyzes the number of times respondents mentioned each of the four overarching suggestions for what they need in order to integrate Stát’ímc Knowledge Systems into their teaching practice. Although teachers were most interested in the development of Stát’ímc curriculum resources, they were similarly interested in learning about how to use such resources and were interested in doing so in collaboration with Stát’ímc Elders and resource people.

**Figure 5: Teachers’ priority selections for how to integrate Stát’ímc Knowledge Systems into school curriculum and pedagogy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental directions</th>
<th>Number of mentions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop Stát’ímc curriculum resources</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide opportunities for teachers to learn from and with Stát’ímc Elders and resource people</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop place-based learning experiences for students related to Stát’ímc Knowledge Systems</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involve Stát’ímc Elders and resource people in leading school-based learning experiences</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2. Results of conference workshops

In this section, we analyze workshop participant responses to questions about the factors that influence positive learning experiences in Lillooet area schools. As was mentioned in the methodology section, the questions for the workshops at the Power of Place conference were framed to elicit general information about the strengths and challenges inherent to the Lillooet school systems, as well as participants’ ideas for how schooling in Lillooet and area can be improved for students, with special consideration given to question about integrating St’át’ímc Knowledge Systems into schools.

Since not all conference workshop participants were strictly concerned with questions of integrating Indigenous Knowledge into schools, conference workshop participant responses touch on several other aspects of Lillooet school systems that are not directly related to the task of integrating Indigenous Knowledge. As such, some of the data in this section (i.e., issue of overcrowded classrooms, etc.) does not have a direct bearing on our stated research questions, and therefore does not factor into our conclusions and recommendations in section 5. Nonetheless, all participant input has been considered in the foregoing analysis in an effort to respect each person’s contribution to the conference.

This section divides into six subsections. First, we present an analysis of the overall hope for educational change that was expressed by conference workshop participants. This first section is a meta-analysis of the multiple and various strands of discussion related to questions about strengths, challenges and actionable ideas for improving the education system in Lillooet area schools. The following four sections present the perspectives of each of the four workshop groups, namely: Kindergarten to Grade 7 Teachers and Administrators; Grade Eight to Grade Twelve Teachers Administrators; Parents and Elders; and, Students. The sixth and final section is an analysis of the workshop participants’ priorities for educational change initiatives.

4.2.1. Workshop participants’ overall hope for educational change in Lillooet area schools

With regard to general hope for educational change, all four groups of conference participants expressed recognition of the value of education in their shared community and, with some changes, a climate of learning that more closely matches their ideals is possible. Overall, conference participants expressed their hopes for change along four major related strands, each of which are presented immediately below and explained in the following subsections.

- Promote the value of education throughout the community
- Align the school curriculum with lived experiences of students
Facilitate the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge and ways of teaching and learning in schools

Shift the foundation of education in Lillooet to reflect the values of both Indigenous and settler society

**Promote the value of education throughout the community**

Although participants did not specifically define what education means to them and their community, but even with such a wide-open term of reference they did express views that education is very important for the community. The understanding of community appears to be quite inclusive. Participants communicated education’s value in terms of how it should improve the life of all in the community. Education was understood as a cooperative venture that benefits “us” and connects “us” with “our heritage.” Such a framework reflects a desire for flexible continuity between past and present, older and younger generations, and school and real life. The following statements reflect the general views of participants with regard to the value of education.

1. There is a desire to be able to sustain the value of education within the community.

2. It is recognized that the community will benefit if students have a good experience with education and schooling. If the school nurtures a desire to learn and promotes self-esteem in students, then the whole community benefits.

3. Education occurs best in a cooperative model between student, parent, and teacher, with support from a culturally responsive administration.

4. Participants hope that value for education will help translate educational participation into high educational achievement. There is a desire to promote a high level of success in schooling and for students to pursue educational opportunities after high school.

**Align the school curriculum with lived experiences of students**

Many participants expressed that the curriculum in the school is, in many ways, out-of-touch with life in the community and hence seems foreign and irrelevant. There is hope that the school curriculum can be changed so that it more closely aligns with, and honours, the kinds of learning that are valuable for life in the community of Lillooet.

Participants’ remarks reveal two kinds of tensions with regard to relationships between the school curriculum and lived experiences of students. First, there is some conflict between the activities of what is considered, on the one hand, to be good teaching and learning, and, on the other, to be what the government requires of teachers and students in the school. Second, there is a clash between the formal curricular content and the real
lives of students. Participants hope that reform to education in their community will address these problems. The following statements reflect the overall sentiments expressed at the conference.

1. There needs to be a balance between teaching to satisfy curriculum requirements and teaching in order to meet the needs of students as individuals and the community at large.

2. Individual Educational Plans should involve less administrative energy and focus much more on in-class action toward a student-centered adaptation of the curriculum.

3. Schooling would be more relevant if the lives of St’át’imc students were reflected and integrated into the curriculum.

4. It is hoped that education will be a meaningful integration of what is learned in the family, the local culture, and the school. Such integration should give learners a steady grounding for their future.

5. Integration should involve breaking the learning barrier between life inside school and life outside school. Learning should occur seamlessly across all aspects of life, and the school should be an important place where this learning is reinforced and affirmed. Some places where integration can begin to occur are:
   - Art classes with community showing
   - Pack trips out in the bush, understanding of weather, seasons, plants animals, migrations, water availability. Rotating special focuses so part of student population is always elsewhere so academic work can be completed with more teacher attention and with effective results for student
   - More focus on life skills and not learning that is too abstracted from real life
   - A focus on relationships and communication

Facilitate the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge and ways of teaching and learning in schools

To meet the goal of providing curriculum that is in touch with life in Lillooet, more Indigenous resources are required. The purpose of providing these resources would be to give local content a critical mass in the school. Integration of Indigenous with non-Indigenous curriculum would be made easier if an Indigenous curriculum, and package of resource materials, were assembled and made available to the school. Without appropriate resource support, integration is a nice, abstract idea but practically is difficult, if not impossible to implement. These resources need to be assembled in a meaningful, strong, and timely fashion so that they can be easily adopted. It is hoped that they will go a long way toward bridging the current divide between in-school and out-of-school experiences.
An important resource in the school is, of course, its human resources. With respect to this topic, participants speak of a hope that more St’át’imc people will become teachers in the school and so reflect the community in that institution. Furthermore, it is hoped that more regionally-sensitive training could become available to all teachers in the school—no matter what their background.

In short, participants generally agreed that the school should improve how it integrates St’át’imc knowledge, language and culture into the core of the curriculum and its values. Many participants noted that Indigenous content should be more than just an add-on to the current system.

**Shift the foundation of education in Lillooet to reflect the values of both Indigenous and Settler society**

However, it was identified that Indigenous content is not enough, because at its core the institution of education is too Euro-centric in its values and operations. A foundational shift in the institution must accompany any new content, or else Indigenous learning could just become an extra piece added to the dominant institution.

Participants express the view that a reform in the school would be incomplete without a reform in its administrative approach and structure. The school should be seen as a place where the common good of all is realized through the meeting of various interests, and not a place where an outside ideal of social goodness is imposed upon the community. The following comments reflect participant’s views about changing the nature of the education system in Lillooet.

1. The mandate for schooling should be developed locally and shared. It should not be imposed from the outside.
2. Students should begin to take ownership and control over their own education and the governance of their education.
3. It is hoped that the community can work together to develop its own mandate for education. A feeling was also expressed that this mandate will have to seriously confront entrenched Westernized practices.
4. It is hoped that the school can be a meeting place for distinctive cultures, knowledge, and backgrounds, and that all will be honoured in the process of formal learning.
4.2.2. Perspectives of kindergarten to grade seven teachers and administrators regarding factors that impact student learning experiences

In this section, we report on the responses of grade K-7 Teachers and Administrators with regard to the questions about the assets/strengths and challenges of the K-7 school system.

Assets and strengths in the K-grade seven school system

In general, Kindergarten to Grade 7 Teachers report three main strengths and/or assets in the school system as it currently stands: school programs; positive attitudes of school staff; support for the school by the community. Each of these strengths is explained below.

School programs

Overall, participants in this small group reported that the school’s programming is strong, that strong relationships exist within the school, and that there is a good social atmosphere and rapport with students as a result. According to participants in this small group, the school’s programs are strong because:

- There is a focus on basic skills, including: early learning, reading, and mathematics;
- The St’át’imc language programs are well developed; First Nations Studies and Trades are offered;
- Programs are in place to assess and develop plans to meet the needs of all learners;
- Intramural activities engage students and encourage them to stay in school;
- The school support staff includes First Nations counselors;
- Relationships between teachers are strong.

Positive attitudes of school staff

Many participants noted that there is a positive attitudinal climate among school staff. One participant noted that: “this is due to the fact that many of the administration and teachers put forward an effort to support students and the community.” This effort was characterized by one participant as “respectful, genuine, caring, compassionate, and open to new knowledge and change.” According to many small group participants, these attitudes facilitate improved communications between the school and families, and the school and community at large.

Many participants in this small group also noted that the administration and teachers recognize and encourage students’ strengths and positive choices. As one conference participant noted: “They [the teachers] are open to communication with parents, and will come into our community to speak with us.” Another participant noted that: “The
principal cares about students, listens, and is open to new ideas. These are excellent qualities.”

Support for the school by the community

This group also recognized that the strength of the school is due to the fact that other adults in the community—including parents, Elders, and other community members—are doing a good job to support their children. Support often includes advocacy and encouraging others to see issues in the community that affect children, but also includes the formative work of encouraging young leaders, offering counselling, and planning cultural events. Participants also report that the community shares with teachers their appreciation that something in the school needs to change. According to participants in this small group, members of the community are able to support the school because:

- The size of the community affords cohesion between parents and teachers;
- The community allows diversity to be its strength. Although there is a diversity of experiences, perspectives, worldviews, these coalesce into a common appreciation that learning should be nurturing and meaningful for all students;
- Community members, parents, and Elders advocate for the children and their specific needs;
- There is a realization that everyone depends on each other.

Many participants also noted that a substantial part of the good, caring, and authentic relationships between the community and the school is due to the fact that individual teachers, educators and administrators deeply care about children, their well-being and their future.

Issues and challenges in the kindergarten to grade seven school system

When asked about the issues and/or challenges inherent to the current K-7 school system, participants identified two major barriers to achieving any positive changes in the school. The first issue is that the formal curriculum is, in large measure, divorced from students’ real lives and immediate needs. The second issue is that there are administrative realities within the school that make changes difficult. Participant comments with regard to these two issues are explained below.

Formal curriculum is not immediately relevant to students’ needs

Several participants in the K-7 Teachers and Administrators group offered commentary with regard to the issue of the formal curriculum not being immediately relevant to students’ needs. The following statements summarize participant comments:

1. Teachers feel conflicted between teaching according to the curriculum content and expectations versus teaching according to what they perceive and know that the students need.
2. When the curriculum requirements and students’ needs do not match, it can be very difficult to try to accommodate both. Often the curriculum appears irrelevant, closed, and boring.

3. Learners and learning styles are very diverse. It is a challenge to meet all of these even when the curriculum matches student needs, and even more challenging when the curriculum asks something else.

4. The curriculum is an unwelcome diversion from family and cultural activity. It also does not reflect the cultural activities that are tied to the seasons.

5. The curriculum and school experience does not reflect St’át’imc life and heritage, and there are too few St’át’imc role models in the school system.

**Programming constraints maintain stand-still in school**

In addition to the above comments, participants in the K-7 Teachers and Administrators group also provided commentary in relation to the issue of programming constraints in the schools. Some examples of participant comments include:

1. The outdated Western factory model in the school is a barrier to reform. It is unclear how it can be changed and how more creative ways of teaching and learning can take place.

2. Administrative barriers prevent Elders and resource persons from directly participating in the school system.

3. Funding is in short supply. This fact includes:
   - Cut backs in support
   - Class size issues
   - Cut backs in funding for field trips

4. The school schedule does not easily allow for a healthy and relaxed lunch.

**4.2.3. Perspectives of grade eight to twelve teachers and administrators regarding factors that impact student learning experiences**

In this section, we report on the responses of the small group of grades 8-12 Teachers and Administrators with regard to the questions about the assets/strengths and issues/challenges of the grade 8-12 school system in Lillooet.
Assets and strengths in the grade eight and twelve school system

Grades eight to twelve teachers and administrators report several general strengths in the school system: programs and staff; strong morale among teachers; individual students’ needs are met; curriculum is flexible and can accommodate diversity, difference, and learning needs; and, community is generally supportive of the school. In this section, we provide a summary of participant comments that relate to these general assertions.

Programs and staff

Several participants pointed out that programs in the school are strong. Many participants in this group also acknowledged a requirement for First Nations participation at the core of programming, which is recognized to be good for the schools and students. In particular, the peer helping program and presence of First Nations support workers enables the school to serve the needs of the students and the larger community. Participants also noted that the small size of the local secondary school is an asset because it provides immediate feedback as to the success or failure of programming.

Strong morale among teachers and administrators

Many grades eight to twelve teachers and administrators report that a high morale among staff is a definite strength in the school and contributes to both an enhanced working environment and the feelings of goodwill between school and community. In particular, there are many people who are willing to extend themselves beyond their required duties for the good of the school and those it serves. Staff and others in the school contribute extra time for curricular assistance and extra-curricular projects.

Individual students’ needs are met

Many participants in this group reported that the school is doing a good job to provide adequate support to meet the needs of individual learners. According to many participants in this group, the school offers flexibility in its academic programs so that students can find alternate ways to graduation. This group expressed pride with regard to the fact that students are not treated as a homogenous group and that time is taken to attend to individual needs.

Curricular flexibility

Several participants in this group also noted that, as part of meeting individual needs, the school is quite flexible with its curriculum. It offers courses designed specifically for First Nations content, and has managed to maintain a balance between academic and vocational offerings, even in the face of financial constraints.
Community supports school

Similar to the K-7 Teachers and Administrators group, the grade 7-12 group also expressed that the community of Lillooet is a strong supporter of the school and its programs and overall objectives. As one participant noted, “the school is succeeding because the community supports it.” This group also noted that community support is due to the fact that some teachers visit communities on formal and informal occasions.

Additionally, participants in this group remarked that the school is learning how to increase its effectiveness by increasing parent comfort with the school and engaging their participation in the school. Some participants in this group also stated that the school ought to be commended for its openness to involving Elders, artisans, and other representatives of the local community into the school.

Issues and challenges in the grade eight to twelve school system

Grade eight to twelve teachers and administrators reported that there are also some barriers to positive change within the school. Three major kinds of barriers were identified: politics and finance; geography; and, the community’s internal struggles.

Political and financial barriers

Many participants report that interventions with their work by those who are disconnected from their practice can be frustrating. As one participant noted: “it is frustrating when support is spoken about but not delivered, especially from those who speak about making change but who do not remain in the school and with the students to accomplish what was spoken about.” Some participants reported that professional frustration occurs when educational jargon and buzz words like distributive leadership and lateral leadership are used to promote change, but then nothing changes in practice. Participants who made these comments suggested that teachers need to be a part of the curriculum development process and that curricular change needs to be a cooperative effort. Participants in this group also cite that there are problems with the School Board signing letters of intent when it cannot meet commitments in those letters.

Moreover, some participants noted that it is a challenge to get trades teachers because the hiring arrangements in these areas do not allow for permanent/continuing contracts. Additionally, many participants noted the significance of the financial barriers in the school system. Participants noted several financial challenges, including:

- Difficulties in local economy also put strains on school
- Inadequate funding for educational technology
- Inadequate funding for sport team travel
- Inadequate process to have personal expenses reimbursed
Geographical barriers

In addition to the political and financial challenges inherent in trying to generate positive educational change in schools, participants also noted that the geography of the region has implications for the learning experience for grade 8-12 students. Participants noted the following challenges related to local geography:

- Some children ride the bus for 90 minutes
- District office is 4-5 hours from Lillooet area schools
- Field trips are complicated due to the geographic challenges
- Sports attendance is difficult for students living far away from the school
- Roads and winter driving make travel for parents and students very difficult

Community struggles with internal issues

According to participants in this group, more culturally-responsive counseling is required that links home with the school. In general, participants noted that many St’át’imc community members resent approaches to counseling that label parents as bad when some of these parents are themselves residential school survivors, and were robbed of the opportunity to learn parenting from their own parents.

Moreover, some participants in this group noted that the common belief that St’át’imc community members can and should get over the residential school experience and abandon it to the past is a very troubling and incorrect belief to hold. Participants in this group recognized that the residential school experience is an important part of St’át’imc history and that the community at large needs to understand this history so that it knows the reasons for some of the current challenges.

Participants in this group also expressed concern regarding the high turnover among St’át’imc language teachers at the school. The group agreed that efforts need to be made to develop some permanence in these positions so that curriculum development and related educational changes can occur.

4.2.4. Perspectives of parents and Elders regarding factors that impact student learning experiences

In this section, we report on the responses of parents and Elders with regard to the questions about the assets/strengths and issues/challenges of the overall school system in Lillooet.
Assets and strengths in the overall education system in Lillooet

Parent and Elder participants reported that there are three general strengths within the school system, which can be usefully defined in the following terms: school as community; school as a resource for personal improvement; and the school’s capacity to integrate some Indigenous Knowledge and ways of teaching. In this section, we provide a summary of the conversation among Elders and parents with regard to the strengths of the overall school system.

School as community

According to this group, the people (i.e., staff and students, etc.) in the school make for a good community atmosphere. Overall, parents and Elders indicated that there are good relationships and two-way communication between partners. Moreover, this group expressed that the community is supportive of the school and good work is often acknowledged. Participants in this group characterize the school’s communal atmosphere as being fair, kind, and responsible to its students, teachers and parents.

School as a resource for personal improvement

Many parents and Elders expressed that school is perceived to be succeeding because it provides for the improvement of persons within the community. Many parents and Elders reported that children are attaining personal goals and they also perceive that children are doing better than they did when they were in school. Overall, the school is seen to be contributing to lifelong learning, caring, and social cohesion in the community.

Some integration of Indigenous Knowledge and ways of teaching occurs

Some participants in this group reported that there are the beginnings of integration of Indigenous Knowledge and ways of teaching into the curriculum. Culture and place are reflected occasionally in the curriculum, and students are exposed to the specific content and methods that support the importance of place and learning in and about the place around them.

Parents and Elders also see that the school is providing opportunities for students to learn from experience, including filed trips and exposure to other cultures in activities outside the school. Within the school they are also learning about their own cultural perspective, and the teaching staff is perceived to be generally supportive of this aim.

Parents and Elders also see that some learning is being connected to lived experience of students. It is showing students how the whole world and the whole of their experience fit together, including examples in the natural world and at home. This learning is also teaching the students to be teachers of others. Parents and Elders find this fact to be encouraging.
Issues and challenges in the overall education system in Lillooet

Parents and Elders find that there are several major challenges to positive change in the school system. For the most part, parents and Elders noted that the challenges are mainly systemic. Parents and Elders identified several types of systemic barriers in the school system that impeded positive educational change, specifically racism, westernized bias of the school system, and the rigidity of evaluations and over-crowded classrooms. Participant views on these barriers are explained below.

Racism

Parents and Elders identified racism and the bullying associated with racist attitudes as a problem. Many participants in this group noted that many teachers lack cross-cultural training (i.e., training to develop intercultural work competencies, etc.) to deal with racism properly. In addition, some parents and Elders noted that “some teachers think that First Nations students are lesser than others.” Racial difficulties severely erode the classroom and school atmosphere. Several participants noted that racist events and racism in general gives space for the roots of First Nations students’ fear of the schooling institution to grow.

Parents and Elders also noted that the problem of racism is attributable to the fact St’át’imc culture, knowledge, ways of learning and teaching are often marginalized and labeled as Individual Educational Plans. This is to say that many participants in this group indicated that St’át’imc culture, knowledge, ways of learning and teaching are not acknowledged and legitimated in the mainstream curriculum to the degree that they should be.

Western European bias in school curriculum and teaching

According to many parents and Elders, the school system is largely unresponsive to St’át’imc educational methods, history, language, culture, rights to self-determination, community, land, and values. Parents and Elders also noted that school does not provide adequate preparation for the real world and life skills that a St’át’imc curriculum would represent. As one participant noted: “European culture and history lack relevance in this community.”

Moreover, many parents and Elders noted that the lack of cross-cultural training opportunities for teachers is problematic. Some parents and Elders stated that more effort should be made to provide some kind of training for teachers so they can better understand St’át’imc ways of knowing and relating to others.

Some parents and Elders also noted that there is not enough St’át’imc field trips in elementary and high school. Also, some participants stated that there are not enough Elders coming as guest speakers to the schools.
Parents and Elders also noted that a major systemic issue is the lack of fluent St’át’imc speakers to teach language. Moreover, many participants noted that the lack of involvement by St’át’imc leaders and lack of St’át’imc persons in administrative positions was an issue in the school system.

*Evaluation of learning performance and overloaded classrooms*

Many parents and Elders noted that current grading practices label students in ways that can be harmful. One participant noted, “failure is said to be unacceptable but it continues because the school does not meet students’ needs.” Participants in this group also noted that the way that students are evaluated can also be harmful because students are pushed through when they are not ready to move ahead.

However, participants in this group were also sympathetic with teachers, noting that many teachers are already overloaded by class size and the mixed needs of their students.

4.2.5. Perspectives of students in grades eight to twelve regarding factors that impact student learning experiences

In this section, we report on the responses of the group of students with regard to the questions about the assets/strengths and issues/challenges of the 8-12 school system in Lillooet. It is important to note that student participants were strictly from the high school and that the perspectives of students from the K-7 school system are not reflected in this report.

*Assets and strengths in the grade eight to twelve school system*

The data collected from student reports reveal that two of the school’s major strengths lay in its programs and in the individual and communal dispositions within the school. Student responses to the question about the strengths of their school suggest that they strongly appreciate activities and services that are planned for and offered to them.

They also suggest that the school is a place where they feel welcome and where they enjoy attending for the social benefits it provides. Participants in the student group noted that any reform to the school should be sensitive to the fact that, as one participant noted, “students exist and cannot be forgotten;” student needs should be the guiding consideration, and that any changes should improve the social climate in the school. In the sections below, we will discuss student perspectives on the assets and strengths in their school.
Students reported that they receive benefit from and strongly appreciate programs designed to serve their physiological, psychological, and social needs. Among these programs are:

- Mentor type programming and positive school enhancement programs
- Healthy foods program
- Counsellors
- Accident awareness program (reality therapy)

Students also notice and appreciate services offered to improve their academic success. These programs include:

- Tutors and homework clubs
- Increased course options
- Language courses and support—French and St’át’imc in particular
- Distance learning

Students also appreciate social and co-curricular activities that give them a sense of belonging to and ownership of the school:

- Intramurals—Sports teams – soccer, rugby, volleyball, basketball
- Conferences for kids
- School trips
- Student council
- School leadership class
- Chillaxin Youth Centre

In addition to these strengths, students also notices that the school is a generally kind and friendly place. They appreciate opportunities for social moments like the lunch hour, and likewise appreciate that there is an interest in how they feel about their educational experiences. According to students, the good and motivated teachers on the staff also fuel this positive aspect of the school.

Students also reported that there are challenges within the school, some of which are aspects of the same themes that were reported above as strengths. Besides some comment on the school’s physical and institutional infrastructure, students report that there are some negative dispositions and some difficulties that they perceive with the school’s programming and staff. These difficulties stand in the way of: (1) education reform in general, and, in particular, (2) convincing students that any reform is in fact
taking place in the school. An overview of student perspectives on issues and challenges is presented below.

**Infrastructure**

With regard to the infrastructure of the school, students mention that the condition of the school reflects poorly upon it and them. Student participants suggested that there is damage to the building in some place, and likewise some of its contents (e.g., gymnasium equipment, classroom desks, etc.) are also damaged. Many students noted that the lack of wheelchair accessibility is a problem. Overall, most students suggested that the school is in need of repair and renovation.

Many of the students also highlighted that the school is understaffed. As one student noted: “there are not enough teachers for the school, not enough teachers of St’át’imc origin, and there is not enough supervision in the hallways.”

**Dispositions**

Students’ responses to the question about issues and challenges in the school system suggest that there are three areas in which personal and social dispositions stand in the way of an optimal school experience for students. In general, certain discrete behaviors are demoralizing, students are demoralized by the fact that they feel powerless in the school because of its rules and governance structure, and that the curriculum and teaching methods are irrelevant to them. These points are addressed below.

- **Behaviors:** Many students identified a lack of respect for persons and the school environment is a problem to some students. Bullying and littering are two kinds of activity that demoralize students.

- **Rules and Governance:** In general, students feel that they are not afforded the respect to determine their own future and to be educated according to their own interests. As a group, most students did not feel that their voices are included or significant at decision-making times. They feel that the school and community governance structures exclude them. This suggests that a lack of self-determination for students is demoralizing. They also resent the attitude among some persons in the school environment that First Nations persons get unfair preferential treatment.

- **Pedagogy:** Overall, students feel that their classes are not fun. They feel disaffected and disconnected, and as a result their morale is low and there is little incentive to pay attention to teachers and school work. If classes were more meaningful and fun they feel that they might enjoy school more.
Programming and staffing

The group of students at the Power of Place Conference reported that there is a lack of Aboriginal activities, too few course selections, and that the curriculum is poor with respect to Aboriginal history. They also wish that their choices of intramural activities were wider and reflected their interests to a greater degree. Finally, they wish that teachers would be more willing to make classes fun, be flexible with due dates, and give more of their own time outside class.

4.2.6. Workshop participants’ priority actions for educational change

As part of the conference, each small group had selected a limited number of priority areas for educational change. A representative of each group presented their most important actionable ideas to the whole conference body. After each group had presented their most important actionable ideas, everyone was given three dots and was invited to engage in a dotmocracy exercise (see methodology for explanation of exercise) to select the ideas that the whole group deemed most important.

The result of the large group dotmocracy exercise was the identification of four actionable ideas, which were selected according to their weighting relative to other actionable ideas. The following four actionable ideas were selected by conference participants and formed the basis of a final round of dialogue among participants who formed new groups around one of the four ideas. The four actionable ideas up for discussion in the final round of dialogue were:

- Establish a Power of Place working group
- Develop opportunities for bringing together parents and Elders, and teachers and Elders
- Develop direct intercultural experiences for learners in the education system
- Establish meetings between students and school decision-makers

In the paragraphs below, we provide an outline of the results of the final small group dialogues at the Power of Place Conference.

Establish a Power of Place working group

The small group that aimed to address this actionable idea explored the process for developing an ongoing working group that would focus on building relations between St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc with regard to education and learning in Lillooet.

Participants in this group determined that one of the first tasks of the Power of Place Working Group would be to first develop guidelines for building relationships between members of the school board, teachers, administrators, members of the St’át’imc community, etc. It was thought that the guidelines should include a way to evaluate whether the relations between St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc are healthy. Participants noted
that the working group should consider the examples of guidelines for culturally responsive schools that were developed by the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

In addition to creating guidelines, the working group could also develop ways of recruiting people who were missing from the conference but should be part of the ongoing relationship building, and to lay a foundation for building healthy relationships.

The working group also identified several things that need to be done as part of building a working group.

1. Begin meeting as a working group and setting objectives and the mandate of the working group.
2. Build a picture of where things are at (which groups in the community are doing what)
3. Create an education revolution committee
   - Working group seen as interim to a long-term organization that would work to revolutionize education in the Lillooet area.
   - The function of this organization would be:
     o Mobilization of the community
     o Implementation of projects
     o Evaluation
     o Advocacy

Other elements that the small group at the conference identified as responsibilities of a working group include:
   - Communication and Dialogue
   - Identifying themes
   - The big picture plan and overlap of areas
   - Documentation and people

The small group at the conference also discussed who should be a part of a working group. They identified the following groups as a starting point:
   - Members of the steering committee for the Power of Place project
   - Those who are part of the Bridge River Parent Committee
   - Principals
   - Parent Advisory Committees (PAC’s)
   - Other Stakeholders
Develop opportunities for bringing together parents and Elders, and teachers and Elders

The small group that formed around this actionable idea discussed ways to create opportunities for Elders and parents, and Elders and teachers to get together more often. This small group identified several considerations for putting into action this idea.

As one participant noted: “If you want to incorporate St’át’imc culture, you need to have more money to do that. (i.e., more money for travel, etc.).” Participants also expressed the need to adopt a broader definition of what constitutes a ‘field trip’ and who can participate. As one participant noted: “The kids need to see ‘real life’ experience outside Lillooet, since some children at elementary haven’t been outside the Lillooet boundaries.”

This small group also identified a number of things that could be done around the St’át’imc Gathering taking place on May 11, 2008.

- Having Chiefs consult with School District to suggest honouring the St’át’imc Holiday, in time for May 11, 2008
- Individuals to invite schools to St’át’imc Gathering.
- Individuals suggest to Board Members that the School District honour the St’át’imc Gathering by attending it.

Finally, they discussed some other actions that could be done to create opportunities for Elders, teachers and parents to get together.

- Take students, teachers, and ourselves to an Elders Luncheon. (Friendship Centre & High School).
- Create a seasonal list that takes into account existing curriculum, and actual customs, events, activities.
- Create cultural field camps for teachers.

Develop direct intercultural experiences for learners in the education system

The small group that organized around this idea met to discuss, and begin creating an action plan for, how different learners in GTSD could be part of direct intercultural experiences that were identified throughout the conference.

Many different possibilities were identified as options for direct intercultural experiences including:

- Exposing teachers to cultural activities
- Having St’át’imc people/students invite people to events (person to person)
- Summer Cultural Camp for teachers
- Negotiating with GTSD for incentive support or time off in lieu in order to help teachers attend cultural camps and other events
- Having SD74 work with Ucwalmicw Centre and USLCES
- Having USLCES organize cultural tours for teachers
• Providing for a FNEC / SEA advocate at the district level for teacher and administrator participation in cultural events (one e.g., St’át’imc gathering held in March and April)

• Using Power of Place project to move some of these ideas forward

• Having non-St’át’imc attend powwows and be visible at events

• Schools sponsoring short courses

• Develop new methods for St’át’imc language acquisition and teaching

The small group also identified the importance of building upon, and creating, intentional, informal relationships. One suggestion was for both cultures to invite people, person to person, to attend the following:

• Dinners

• Celebrations

• Traditional activities

• Community dinners – with no agenda

Participants in this small group indicated that invitations should go both ways, with parents/teachers inviting elders to events and to the school, teachers inviting elders to their homes for a meal, and including teachers in school elders’ lunches. Another item identified by the action group was to involve seniors groups from the Lilooet community. Participants in this group also identified the importance of involving teachers and administrators in education change processes. Several Elders were identified who could possibly participate in projects that provide direct intercultural experiences for learners in the school system.

Other participants discussed the importance of setting guidelines for direct intercultural experiences. One suggestion was to use the cultural tourism guidelines developed by USCLES as a foundation.

It was also suggested that Elders meet together to set protocols around the use of traditions. This would involve identifying relevant elders who could be involved, making available an elders resource list to schools, and having elders work with a support person.

Establish meetings between students and school decision-makers

This small group focused on discussing the role and participation of students in decision-making, and in various school events and initiatives.

Participants in this group identified that meetings between students and decision makers should be established whenever possible changes may occur in the school that affect the student population (i.e., rules, changes to intramurals, etc.)
Specific issues that meetings between students and decision makers should address include:
- Cleaning up garbage
- The condition of the trail: icy, smoking on trail, garbage on trail
- Wearing shoes at dances – the need for slippers / indoor shoes
- Wheelchair accessibility – get woods students to design / build accessibility
- Enhancing the AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination) program. It was felt there was a lack of respect, and that a welcoming atmosphere needed to be created;
- More sports teams;
- Conferences for kids, including during school hours so more kids can attend
- A Lunch Program, with student involvement and foods-class involvement
- A school leadership class that would be available to Grade 8 to 12
- Having Spirit Week more often

Participants in this group also advocated for more teachers to teach St’át’imc language/history.

4.3. Results of workshops with St’át’imc Elders, resource people and school staff

This part of our analysis addresses our research question about the particular aspects of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems that ought to be included in curriculum and pedagogy of Lillooet area schools. Although the results that are featured in this section do go some way to developing an answer to this question, it is important to note that this question is a living question that ought to continue to guide ongoing dialogue between St’át’imc Elders, resource people and school staff.

The results of the workshops are two lists. These lists were produced in two general stages. The columns in Figure 6 that feature St’át’imc Elders and resource people, including their particular areas of expertise, as well as the supplementary knowledge areas identified in Figure 7, were both developed in a series of workshops with Elders and resource people that were centred on questions about the aspects of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems that are appropriate to include in school-based learning experiences for students.

The far right hand columns in Figure 6 that present information on the general grade levels and subject areas that are most suitable for the given aspect of St’át’imc knowledge were developed through a dialogue process between teachers, principals, Elders and resource people. These lists stand as an historic accomplishment of educational stakeholders of Lillooet area schools in that they represent a collaborative effort to make Lillooet area schools more culturally responsive to St’át’imc territory and related knowledge systems.
The people whose names appear in Figure 6 expressed verbal consent to have their information used in the final products of the Power of Place project. Contact information for each person is held by the GTSD Principal of Aboriginal Education. The codes for subject areas are located at the end of Figure 6. It is important to note that the following lists are by no means exhaustive and are intended to serve as a starting point for the ongoing work of including Elders and resource people in school-based education.

**Figure 6: Living list of St’át’imc Elders and resource people willing to share their knowledge with K-12 students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>St’át’imc Community</th>
<th>Area of Expertise</th>
<th>Suitable Grades and Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aggie Patrick</td>
<td>Tsal’áh</td>
<td>Pine needle basketry; Salmon preparation (foods); Pictographs; Beading</td>
<td>K-12 SS/LA/SC/Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert Joseph</td>
<td>Nxwisten</td>
<td>Oral traditional knowledge; First hunt ceremony (i.e., offering); Hunting stories; Traditional territory; Life story</td>
<td>Grades 3-12 LA/SS/SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angela Frank</td>
<td>Xaxli’p</td>
<td>Cedar root basketry (i.e., cups, baskets, trays, roses, etc.); Cedar tree (i.e., habitat area); Harvesting of roots</td>
<td>Grades 10-12 SS/Sc/Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur Adolph</td>
<td>Xaxli’p</td>
<td>Salmon harvesting; Traditional Knowledge; Government system; Ecosystem; St’át’imc Land Use Plan; Deer habitat &amp; fawning Areas; St’át’imc values &amp; principles; Oral story telling</td>
<td>Grades 8-12 LA/SS/Sc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candice Jack</td>
<td>Nxwisten</td>
<td>Pine needle basketry, cedar root basketry, birch bark basketry making tools with bones, and stone, Tule mats; Bracelets, etc.</td>
<td>K-12 SS/Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceda Scotchman</td>
<td>T’it’q’et</td>
<td>Fishing rocks (i.e., place); Passage of rites training (i.e., spirituality)</td>
<td>Grades 3-12 LA/SS/SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desmond Peters Sr.</td>
<td>Ts’kw’álayaxw</td>
<td>Making arrow heads; Carvings with yellow alder and red cedar; Flint napping; Bows; Ethno botany; Tule mats; Games Dug-out canoes</td>
<td>K-12 SS/SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doreen Copeland</td>
<td>T’it’q’et</td>
<td>Basketry (i.e., cedar root)</td>
<td>K- Grades 3 SS/SC/Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>First Nations</td>
<td>St’át’imc knowledge areas and related topics</td>
<td>Grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerald Dick</td>
<td>Nkwisten</td>
<td>St’át’imc traditional songs (i.e., hand drum); Oral traditional stories</td>
<td>Grades 3-7 LA/SS/Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harriet McDonald</td>
<td>Ts’kw’áylaxw</td>
<td>Oral story-telling (i.e., life story); Passage of rites</td>
<td>Grades 3-12 LA/SS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura John</td>
<td>Nkwisten</td>
<td>St’át’imc history; Spirituality (i.e., training, fasts, sweats, medicine wheel, etc.); Oral traditional story telling; St’át’imc songs &amp; dances; Powwow songs &amp; dances; Regalia dress wear; Pit cooks; St’át’imc language acquisition</td>
<td>Grades K-12 LA/SS/SC/ Art/Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luther Brigman</td>
<td>T'ít'q'et</td>
<td>First Nations art; Sketches (i.e., coloring, shading, animals, portraits, etc.)</td>
<td>Grades 8-12 Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie Antoine</td>
<td>Secwépmec</td>
<td>Buckskin sewing; Moccasins and gloves</td>
<td>Grades 8-12 SS/Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nora Greenway</td>
<td>T'ít'q'et</td>
<td>Human rights; Equality; Aboriginal voice; Anti-racism education</td>
<td>Grades K-12 SS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willard Charlie (Koochie)</td>
<td>T'ít'q'et</td>
<td>Carving with soap stone, wood, and stone; Explanations of images; Creation of art and the resources used; Knowledge of bone games</td>
<td>Grades 3-12 SS/Art</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The code for subject areas is as follows: LA=Language Arts; SS=Social Studies; SC=Science.

Figure 7 is a list that intends to summarize St’át’imc knowledge areas and related sub-topics that Upper St’át’imc Elders and resource people agree are appropriate for inclusion in school curriculum and pedagogy. Each knowledge area and related topics were identified for the purpose of facilitating the ongoing inclusion of Elders and resource people in schools and any related curriculum development. The information in Figure 7 is categorized according to nine knowledge areas, each of which includes several sub-topics. It is important to note that the information presented below is not exhaustive and can be added to over time by Elders and resource people.
Figure 7: Living list of St’át’ímc Knowledge Systems that can be included in school curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge areas</th>
<th>Sub-topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salmon</td>
<td>Salmon species in St’át’ímc territory; Cycle; Seasons; St’át’ímc boundaries/territories; Fishing rocks; Traditional rocks; Family sites; Fishing racks; Governance; Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) policy; Licensing; St’át’ímc policy; Food; Preserving (i.e., canning, salting, drying, etc.); Ceremonies; First salmon ceremony; Salmon stories (i.e., legends); Environment; Overfishing; Impact of pollution on the salmon; Damage to rivers in the territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation stories</td>
<td>Coyote; Old Man; Tsuntia; How the Animals got their names; Place names/locations/land marks (i.e., stone face, pregnant woman, Coyote rock, Pesqatqwa7, the Whale in Anderson Lake, the Big Flood, Sisters, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional territories</td>
<td>Boundaries/maps of St’át’ímc territory; Maps (i.e., crown lands and traditional lands); Land marks; Fishing rocks; Hunting/trapping grounds; Harvesting sites; Family sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual teachings</td>
<td>Different beliefs re: religion (i.e., Ca7a Kukkpi7 – great spirit); Impact of Christianity; Values/beliefs (i.e., respect for all, sharing, etc.); Way of life “Nt’akmenlhkalha”; Rights of passage (i.e., puberty, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St’át’ímc families</td>
<td>Genealogy; Roles and responsibilities; Training (i.e., rites of passage – “Nkwazantsut”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat</td>
<td>Food gathering; Ecosystems; Ethno botany; Animal and plant environments; Environmental issues (i.e., threats of extinction, pollution, expanding living space, etc.); Legal issues (i.e., illegal activity, animal protection, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water and environment</td>
<td>Food gathering; Fraser River; Fisheries; Fresh water; Wild vs. farmed fish; DFO relationships; Erosion; Dams (i.e., Hydro’s impact on land)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Astrogoly; Plant species; Fish farming; Seasons (i.e., importance to St’át’ímc tradition and survival); Ecosystems (i.e., food chain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Traditional St’át’ímc tribal chief system (i.e., night watchman); Indian and Northern Affairs Canada; St’át’ímc language; Government fiduciary responsibility; Land use; Education (i.e., residential, public, band operated schools); Corporate relationships within St’át’ímc nation; Hiways, forestry, hydro; Voting rights (i.e., band, local, provincial, federal); Indian Act (i.e., prohibition, the reserve system, residential schools, banning of spiritual and cultural practices, band membership, etc.); Equality rights</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Conclusions and recommendations

In this section, we draw some conclusions about the place where this project ends. However, it is important to emphasize that the end of this project is only a beginning to other phases of what is an ongoing educational change initiative to make Lillooet area schools more inclusive of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and the people who carry such knowledge and are willing to share it with students.

In short, this concluding discussion summarizes the collective existing strengths, challenges and opportunities in Lillooet area schools and the Northern St’át’imc communities that relate to the project of making school curriculum and pedagogy inclusive of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems. Building on this understanding of what is possible and desirable from the perspectives of project participants, we advance a series of recommendations for sustainably integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into Lillooet area schools’ curriculum and pedagogy.

As such, we have divided this section into four parts:

1. Overall strengths of Lillooet area schools and St’át’imc communities for integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into school curriculum and pedagogy;
2. Overall challenges for integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into Lillooet area schools’ curriculum and pedagogy;
3. Opportunities for integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into Lillooet area schools’ curriculum and pedagogy;
4. Recommendations for sustainably integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into Lillooet area schools’ curriculum and pedagogy

By organizing our concluding discussion along these thematic lines, we set out the contours of the collective understanding of educational stakeholders in Lillooet and area with regard to integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into schools and build a series of actionable recommendations that seek to propel new sets of activities into motion.

5.1. Overall strengths of Lillooet area schools and Upper St’át’imc communities for integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into school curriculum and pedagogy

Perhaps one of the greatest strengths of educational stakeholders in Lillooet area schools (e.g., teachers, teacher assistants, principals, students) and the St’át’imc communities (e.g., Elders, resource people and parents) is a shared view of community that is quite inclusive, as well as a shared value in education insofar as it should improve the life of all
in the community. Overall, education is understood as a cooperative venture that should benefit everyone in the community and connect each person with both their distinct and shared heritage. Such a framework reflects a desire for flexible continuity between past and present, older and younger generations, and school and real life. In addition to the strength contained in this shared understanding of the value of education, there are several distinct strengths that both general groups of educational stakeholders bring to the process of developing schools into culturally responsive centers for learning excellence.

For instance, there are several strong St’át’imc institutions and working groups in Lillooet who include educational activities as part of their mandate, including the St’át’imc Language Authority, Upper St’át’imc Language, Culture and Education Society (USLCES), Lillooet Tribal Council, and the Ucwalmicw Centre. These organizational assets consist of a remarkably rich pool of resource material and programs related to St’át’imc Knowledge Systems, and have demonstrated an interest and capacity to engage in partnerships with the GTSD, both through the development of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement and the completion of the PoP project.

Moreover, these organizations are supported and shaped by several Elders and resource people who have expressed and demonstrated their support for the ongoing initiative of making schools in Lillooet more inclusive of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities. The creation of the living list of St’át’imc Elders and resource people who are willing to work collaboratively with teachers and share their knowledge with students is an excellent representation of Elders and resource people’s commitment to supporting student achievement in school. Furthermore, several Elders and resource people have expressed an interest in leading students on tours of important traditional and contemporary sites of the St’át’imc, and as such are willing to play a leadership role in the educational change process.

At the Power of Place conference workshops, St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc parents and Elders expressed a positive attitude toward the idea of increasing the degree to which St’át’imc Knowledge Systems are integrated into Lillooet school curriculum and pedagogy. This support was buttressed by the comments of St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc students, who also expressed a desire to learn about St’át’imc ways of life. The strengths of these existing attitudinal assets in the St’át’imc community, and the support of non-St’át’imc participants, suggests that substantial good will exists within and between communities for continuing the project of making Lillooet and area schools more responsive to St’át’imc knowledge and culture.

Teachers want to work with Elders and resource people and are keen to develop ways of making their teaching more inclusive of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems. Teachers are perceived by the larger community as imaginative, dedicated and capable of meeting this challenge in a way that meets the standards of the Ministry of Education. Such a vote of confidence by the larger community is based on an expressed recognition that there is already some integration of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems taking place in the schools, which indicates that many teachers are already moving their teaching practice in culturally responsive directions.
From a policy perspective, GTSD is providing important leadership by co-creating the Achievement Contract goals and the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement goals. These policy frameworks provide the conceptual space in which a diverse range of initiatives have been and are being developed that harmonize with the overarching goal of improving student learning achievement through the process of making schools more culturally responsive and reflexive with life experience. Some of the specific initiatives that aim to meet the aforementioned goals are:

- First Peoples’ 12 English course;
- First Nations Studies 12 course;
- St’át’imc Language program within the Lillooet and Seton schools;
- St’át’imc Support Worker program;
- Aboriginal AVID mentorship program;
- Distance learning with a focus on high school and Adult learners education offerings and staff support;
- Development of Elders in the schools program;
- Development of School District Science Camp, which will incorporate Indigenous science that follows the seasons;
- Activities of the First Peoples Education Council

In light of the above review of strengths inherent to Lillooet area schools and the Upper St’át’imc community, it is clear that the foundational pieces for sustainable culturally responsive educational change have been developed and are setting in motion a series of important programs. When considered together, the collective goodwill to work together to improve learning achievement of students, the diverse range of organizational assets, resource materials, committed educational stakeholders, policy frameworks and related initiatives can be conceived as the right combination of forces for increasing the degree to which St’át’imc Knowledge Systems are included in schools. Harnessing these forces in a sustainable and inclusive way will, nevertheless, present some challenges.

5.2. Overall challenges of integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into Lillooet area schools’ curriculum and pedagogy

Co-existing with the set of strengths that were noted above are a series of persistent challenges that are, unfortunately, part of many schools systems in Canada. Many of the challenges that we note are the legacies of colonialism that continue to live within our public institutions and, to varying degrees, our inter-cultural relations with each other. Specifically, the challenge of racism was named in this project and provides an impetus for changing the form and function of Lillooet area schools so the students, school staff and community stakeholders can more effectively participate in the project of undoing the legacies of colonialism in Canada. Other challenges that we note in this section are strictly pragmatic, and relate to budget limitations, availability of curriculum resource and the regulatory system for public education in British Columbia.
One of the central concerns of many project participants is that the school system is largely unresponsive to St’át’imc educational methods, history, language, culture, rights to self-determination, community, land, and values. Participants suggested that the omission of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems is partly attributable to a lack of cross-cultural training opportunities for teachers. The lack of such training was repeatedly identified as a barrier to the project of integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into schools.

Participants also noted that a major systemic issue is the lack of fluent St’át’imc speakers to teach St’át’imcets in schools. Moreover, many participants noted that the lack of involvement by St’át’imc leaders in schools, as well as the lack of St’át’imc persons in administrative positions, was an issue in the school system. This suggests that the absence of St’át’imc educational personnel (i.e., teachers and administrators, etc.), as well as a similar absence of St’át’imc leaders (i.e., Elders and resource people, etc.) within the system, presents a barrier to both initiating and sustaining programs that include St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities in schools.

Racism and the bullying associated with racist attitudes were also identified as a systemic challenge facing the project of integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems in school curriculum and pedagogy. Parents and Elders noted that the problem of racism is attributable to the fact that St’át’imc culture, knowledge, ways of learning and teaching are often marginalized and labeled as Individual Educational Plans, which means that non-St’át’imc students will likely not be given the opportunity to develop an understanding of St’át’imc ways of life, and may therefore develop unhealthy attitudes towards cultural differences that they do not understand. It is interesting to note that none of the teachers or student groups at the conference named racism or the related problem of bullying, suggesting that such problems may be not be adequately addressed in schools and are instead materializing in the homes of students when talking with their parents and/or care givers.

Although most teachers did not emphasize the problem of racism or bullying, they did note that they are generally interested in changing their teaching practice to include St’át’imc Knowledge Systems; however, teachers noted several issues inherent to such change efforts. One of the challenges noted by teachers was the limited amount of time and resources available for field trips. Additionally, teachers noted restrictions of some of the prescribed learning outcomes for grades and subjects, indicating that some courses are so tightly directed by guidelines from the Ministry of Education that local modifications may jeopardize the prescribed timeline and testing regime. Moreover, teachers identified the lack of professional development opportunities available to them for building relationships with St’át’imc Elders and resource people and learn about the appropriate resources related to St’át’imc Knowledge Systems. In this same vein, teachers noted repeatedly that they were not aware of what kinds of St’át’imc curriculum resources were available to them, and, moreover, they were not aware of the Elders and resource people who they could work with.

Additionally, teachers noted two kinds of tensions with regard to relationships between the school curriculum and lived experiences of students. First, there is some conflict...
between the activities of what is considered, on the one hand, to be good teaching and learning, and, on the other, to be what the government requires of teachers and students in the school. Second, there is a clash between the formal curricular content and the real lives of students. In short, these two tensions are usefully summed as a challenge to balance teaching to satisfy curriculum requirements and teaching in order to meet the needs of students as individuals and the community at large.

Students are interested in playing a larger role in shaping their education, including how they come to learn more about St’át’imc Knowledge Systems. However, students suggested that they are not usually adequately involved in changes affecting their school experience, indicating that their exclusion from such change processes is an issue. Interested, but disengaged students, is therefore another challenge for the ongoing project of including St’át’imc Knowledge Systems in schools.

5.3. Opportunities for integrating St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into Lillooet area schools’ curriculum and pedagogy

In this section, we describe some of the overarching opportunities for educational change in Lillooet area schools. The opportunities that we define are statements that attempt to integrate considerations of the strengths and hopes of educational stakeholders (e.g., St’át’imc Elders, resource people, parents, students, teachers, principals), as well as existing district policies, curriculum resources and the suite of challenges facing any effort to make schools more inclusive of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems. The following opportunities seek to encourage educational reform that understands Indigenous content as more than just an add-on to the current educational system, but is instead an essential part of the fabric.

Below we discuss four general opportunities, which provide the broad conceptual parameters for the development of the recommendations for action in section 6.

1. Opportunity 1: There are several strong Northern St’át’imc organizations and working groups, including the St’át’imc Language Authority, Upper St’át’imc Language, Culture and Education Society (USLCES), Lillooet Tribal Council, and the Ucwalmicw Centre. Each has a diverse range of text-based, multi-media and/or oral resources related to the Upper St’át’imc, which St’át’imc educational leaders have expressed a willingness to share with teachers and students wherever appropriate. Parents and Elders have noted that St’át’imc Knowledge Systems are marginalized in the current school curriculum and pedagogy. Teachers and students have expressed an interest in learning about and with the Upper St’át’imc. As such, there is an opportunity for Upper St’át’imc leaders, teachers and students to explore ways of incorporating available resources in school curriculum and pedagogy, and imagine new curriculum developments.

2. Opportunity 2: Teachers expressed an interest in having more professional development opportunities to learn about and with the St’át’imc. The literature review outlined successful models for increasing the understanding of teachers
with regard to Indigenous Knowledge. St’át’imc Elders and resource people are committed to working and learning with teachers. As such, there is an opportunity to create professional development initiatives for/with teachers that improve their relationship to and understanding of the St’át’imc.

3. Opportunity 3: Teachers expressed an interest in making school curriculum and pedagogy more congruent with the lived experience of St’át’imc students by including Elders and resource people in their school curriculum. St’át’imc Elders and resource people are willing to be involved in school based learning and teaching. Students have expressed an interest in learning more about the environment in which they live, and specifically about the way of life of the St’át’imc. A list of St’át’imc Elders and resource people who are interested in being involved in school based teaching and learning has been compiled for use by teachers. As such, there is an opportunity for teachers to work with St’át’imc Elders and resource people in teaching and learning with students, both in schools and beyond school walls.

4. Opportunity 4: Lillooet area school stakeholders have expressed an interest in being involved in decision making processes regarding questions about how to make Lillooet area schools culturally responsive. The GTSD has developed an Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement and Achievement Contract in consultation with leaders of the Upper St’át’imc community and other stakeholders, creating a hospitable policy climate for including people in the process of making schools more culturally responsive. Given that building relationships takes place by spending time together in respectful dialogue, then an opportunity exists for the establishment of a regular meeting schedule that continues to foster good will among teachers, Elders and resource people and discover pathways of collective action to improve student learning achievements. The GTSD has an opportunity to sustainably work with stakeholders in a shared practice of creating plans and programs that make Lillooet area schools culturally responsive, and, at the same time, make students successful in school.
5.4. Recommendations: Pathways to culturally responsive Lillooet area schools

As was noted in the literature review of this report, the notion of culturally responsive education systems includes a diverse range of characteristics, including teachers, curriculum and pedagogy, administration, educational policy frameworks, etc. Throughout the course of this project, we have heard from different educational stakeholders about the types of educational changes that they would like to see take place in their school system. However, for schools to become culturally responsive, it takes more than just hope and good ideas. It takes a collective determination by all stakeholders to move schools away from being places that are deemed euro-centric and often disconnected from the lived experience of students, to a place of cultural vibrancy and learning excellence. Fortunately, such determination has been expressed among educational stakeholders in Lillooet area schools.

This type of resolve would sound very good to the late Sioux scholar Deloria Jr. who emphasized the importance of place for Indigenous learning and pedagogy (Deloria & Wildcat, 2001). In order for schools to become places where Indigenous learners excel, schools must develop the capacities to respond to the cultural context in which Indigenous students live. This section seeks to honor the insight of Deloria Jr. by proposing a series of recommendations that aim to make schools places that are culturally responsive. Below we propose a set of goals and activities that, if achieved, will take Lillooet area schools, and potentially other schools in the GTSD, to a place of being more culturally responsive.

In outlining the following series of goals and related activities, we will address our fifth and final guiding research question of this project, namely: How can GTSD teachers and principals, St’át’imc Elders and resource people work together to sustainably include St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities into school curriculum and pedagogy? Our response to this question is built on the opportunities identified in the previous section, and informed by our review of best practices in other jurisdictions.

Our recommendations are expressed in terms of goals and strategic initiatives for achieving the stated goals. As such our recommendations are action oriented and seek to advance, in a strategic way, the project of making schooling experiences for students more culturally responsive. While most of the recommendations are directed at Lillooet and area schools, we have developed one recommendation for the entirety of GTSD.

Wherever appropriate, the specific initiatives that are outlined below should seek to include the following diverse group of educational stakeholders: St’át’imc Elders and educational leaders, Parent Advisory Committees, students, teachers, principals, First Peoples Education Council, School Planning Councils, representatives of school governing bodies, and St’át’imc organizations and governing bodies.
Each strategic goal aims to build on the strengths of educational stakeholders, address the indwelling challenges of educational change in Lillooet area schools, as well as capitalize on the aforementioned opportunities - all the while keeping a view to making Lillooet area schools culturally responsive centres for learning excellence. The four overarching goals for educational change are:

1. Increase the degree to which Elders and Resource People are involved in Lillooet area schools

2. Diversify the type of and increase the accessibility of St’àt’ímc learning resources

3. Enhance teachers’ capacities to include St’àt’ímc Knowledge Systems in school curriculum and pedagogy

4. Enhance effectiveness of existing curriculum integration efforts by creating a GTSD strategic plan and guidelines for making education more culturally responsive

In the subsections below, each of these goals are discussed and supported by a series of actionable ideas for reaching each stated goal.

5.4.1. Increase the degree to which Elders and resource people are involved in Lillooet area schools

The central part of successful and respectful integration of Indigenous Knowledge into school curriculum and pedagogy is the wisdom of local Elders and resource people. Without the guidance of Elders and resource people, a curriculum integration project can become a dangerous undertaking that can contribute to the colonial legacy of taking Indigenous resources and using them inappropriately in schools. In an educational world that tends to misrepresent Indigenous Knowledge, GTSD staff and St’àt’ímc educational leaders are in a unique position to ensure that efforts to include St’àt’ímc Knowledge Systems in schools is done correctly.

The School District is already heading in the right direction by developing the Elders in Schools Program. However, it is important to ensure that Elders who will be working in schools are supported by their peers and offered training that will strengthen their ability to connect students with their areas of expertise. Additionally, Elders and resource people should be supported by a working group who can work with them to turn their ideas into action. As such, the following three related recommendations seek to ensure that Elders and resource people are supported to undertake their work in Lillooet area schools.
1. **Establish and support a Stát’imc Elders and Resource Person Academy (SERPA)**

   a) Through the Power of Place project, a list of Elders and resource people was developed that represents a strong group of people who are willing to offer their time to enhance the learning experience of students. We recommend that this group of Elders and resource people form a working group that meets regularly to discuss their interests, experiences and identifies any training needs that emerge.

   b) The School District should support the meeting of the SERPA and help it define how often it meets, where and for how long.

   c) The specific purpose of the SERPA should be developed through dialogue between the SERPA, the District Principal of Aboriginal Education and teachers who are interested in making their classroom more inclusive of Elders and resource people. Some possible purposes for the SERPA include: to provide ongoing guidance to the Elders in the Classrooms Program; to serve as a contact point for teachers who are interested in involving Elders and resource people in the classroom; to encourage each other and provide peer-support; to work together to mentor younger Elders and resource people who are also interested in being involved in the schools, etc.

   d) In the future, when more resource people and Elders are added to the present team, there will be opportunities to expand each of the lists developed through the Power of Place project, thereby increasing the repertoire of choices for all the Elders and resource people. The school staff in turn will have a greater field of Stát’imc curriculum activities to complement the present offerings.

2. **Provide training for the SERPA**

   a) Ideally, the SERPA becomes a learning community in and of itself and begins to identify the types of training that it would like to experience in order to enhance the ability of its members to work effectively in the schools. As such, the School District should work collaboratively with the SERPA, USLCES and the Ucwalmicw Centre to seek funding and offer training on an as need basis.
3. **Continue to support the work of St’át’imc Educational Research Team (SERT)**

   a) Throughout the Power of Place project, SERT played an instrumental role in convening meetings with Elders, resource people and school staff. Additionally, they developed exceptional resource materials that have been consolidated in the PoP final research report and the PoP curriculum enhancement toolkit. As such, SERT is an invaluable organized force in this educational change initiative.

   b) SERT should continue to act as the local research and development group that can act on the insights of the SERPA, creating the resources and training opportunities that are identified by Elders and resource people. SERT can also serve as a liaison between school staff, USLCES, St’át’imc Language Authority, Lillooet Tribal Council, the Ucwalmicw Centre and the SERPA.

   c) The size and function of SERT should be flexible and change on an as need basis.

5.4.2. **Diversify the type of and increase the accessibility of St’át’imc learning resources**

Educational stakeholders at the GTSD and within Upper St’át’imc communities are well positioned to play cooperative leadership roles in sustaining and enhancing the working relationships that were initiated through the Power of Place project. One of the ways to build on the trust established through this project is to engage in ongoing dialogue and deliberation with regard to the type of St’át’imc curriculum resources that should be developed and how such resources should be used by School District staff.

It is important to note that curriculum development initiatives tend to be a practice of bounding knowledge for the purpose of quick and effective transmission to students in classroom settings. Such an approach to education is often antithetical to Indigenous learning and pedagogy and tends to obfuscate Indigenous ways of knowing. Given the living, oral and non-reductionist nature of Indigenous Knowledge, it is important that the development of modules related to St’át’imc Knowledge Systems be carefully developed to ensure respectful and appropriate representation to students. As such, curriculum development initiatives involving St’át’imc ways of life should be driven by St’át’imc educational leaders, discussed by the First Peoples Education Council and vetted by the St’át’imc Language Authority.
The following five initiatives touch on different types of learning resources that should be created. Many of the specific initiatives are mutually reinforcing of each other and support existing or ongoing developments within the District. It is also important to note that the list of recommendations below is, by no means, exhaustive. Instead, the following statements seek to provide a series starting points.

1. **Develop curriculum modules that enhance student comprehension of Stʼátʼimc Knowledge Systems**

   a) Stʼátʼimc Knowledge Systems are dynamic and embedded in both traditional and contemporary ways of life. The development of curriculum modules related to Stʼátʼimc Knowledge Systems should reflect this fact and seek to engage students in meaningful and continuous learning with and about the Stʼátʼimc.

   b) Curriculum modules should seek to bridge school life with real life, and include an emphasis on learning from Stʼátʼimc Elders and resource people, spending time on the land, and engaging with different elements of the surrounding environment, including both natural and built environments.

   c) Since the specific focus of curriculum modules should be determined by Stʼátʼimc educational leaders, the following topic areas are only examples of possible module developments that would fill curriculum gaps identified through the curriculum review survey: Stʼátʼimc Governance and Territory; Stʼátʼimc Resource Management; Stʼátʼimc Worldview and Science (this could compliment the science camp that is currently under development); Stʼátʼimc History; Stʼátʼimc Art and Cultural Activities; Stʼátʼimc Law; etc. For a more complete list, see Figure 7 in this report.

   d) The literature review and the PoP curriculum enhancement toolkit are two resources that should be consulted in the development of curriculum modules. The literature review in this report offers several examples of Indigenous module development from other jurisdictions.
2. Develop an anthology of St’át’ímc poetry and personal stories for inclusion in language arts, English and St’át’ímcets classes

a) To facilitate this initiative, a series of writing workshops should be designed and delivered for people who would like to contribute to this anthology. A working group of St’át’ímcets and English teachers should be formed to design and implement these workshops.

b) The workshops should provide a supportive environment to help interested parties develop their work to a point where they are comfortable submitting it into an anthology.

c) The workshops should be a mixture of students, parents, teachers, Elders and resource people. Writing partners could be established to ensure that people who needed help putting their ideas on paper were given the appropriate assistance. All parties could contribute to the anthology and attendance by the students could form part of their class requirements.

d) The anthology ought to include writing in both St’át’ímcets and English.

3. Produce audio files of St’át’ímc stories, as well as videos that depict different kinds of St’át’ímc activities

a) Lillooet area schools have sophisticated audio-visual equipment and are well positioned to work with St’át’ímc educational leaders to use such equipment to meet the goal of developing additional St’át’ímc resources for use in schools.

b) There are several ways of structuring such an initiative. For instance, such an undertaking could be part of course work, which could include having students develop a project whereby they met with Elders and/or resource people over a period of time, interviewing them about a particular subject. Such visits could take place at the Friendship Centre during lunch or at other sites. This would develop relationships cross-culturally and intergenerationally, and result in an audio and video representation of an aspect of the St’át’ímc way of life.

c) To facilitate this initiative and to ensure that it respects Band protocols and the overall cultural estate of the St’át’ímc, a working group should be formed to develop the scope and work plan. Ideally the working group is comprised of St’át’ímc educational leaders, teachers and students.
4. Facilitate class participation in annual St’át’ímc Gathering in May

   a) The annual St’át’ímc Gathering is a rich learning site for students, as well as an opportunity for teachers and School District staff to demonstrate their commitment to developing relationships with members of the St’át’ímc community. By facilitating school participation in the gathering, school staff and students break the mold of requiring learning experiences to come to the classroom.

   b) To ensure a successful experience, teachers should contact the gathering organizers to inquire into how they can be involved and what kinds of preparations they should make.

5. Host annual Aboriginal Day celebration at each of the four Lillooet area schools to raise awareness of the diverse knowledge systems of the St’át’ímc

   a) Establish and support an Aboriginal Day celebration Planning Committee comprised of students, teachers, Aboriginal support workers, St’át’ímc language teachers, the Principal of Aboriginal Education, Elders and resource people.

   b) This Planning Committee would be responsible for the overall design, delivery and evaluation of the Aboriginal Day events. Special consideration should be given to questions about the appropriate representation of St’át’ímc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities, and consideration should be given to St’át’ímc protocols.

   c) Members of this committee should develop a work plan that includes a communication plan to teachers and clearly defined roles and responsibilities of each committee member, including how often they will meet and where.

   d) Planning for the Aboriginal Day Celebrations should commence at least four to five months in advance of the event.

   e) The PoP curriculum enhancement toolkit can be used as a resource for planning Aboriginal Day celebrations, and serve as a guide for linking the celebrations with subject and grade appropriate learning outcomes and achievement indicators.

   f) Note: To guard against the oversimplification of St’át’ímc Knowledge Systems and cultural activities at the Aboriginal Day celebration events, it is important for the planning committee to think of creative ways for teachers to fit the Aboriginal Day celebration into a larger learning
experience for students with regard to St’át’imc ways of life. In so doing, the Committee can address the potential problem of having the Celebration Day turn St’át’imc ways of life into token and disconnected learning experience for students, and thereby avoid the perpetuation and reinforcement of Aboriginal stereotypes.

5.4.3. Enhance teachers’ capacities to include St’át’imc Knowledge Systems in Lillooet area schools’ curriculum and pedagogy

One of the single greatest assets in Lillooet area schools is the interest and passion of teachers to learn about and with the St’át’imc, and to find creative and respectful ways of including St’át’imc Elders and resource people in their teaching practice. On several occasions during the Power of Place project, teachers noted several types of particular professional development opportunities that they would like to see made available to them that would develop their capacity to integrate St’át’imc Knowledge Systems into their teaching plan.

Below we feature four specific types of professional development opportunities that were either identified by teachers from Lillooet area schools or were identified as a best practice in another jurisdiction. Some types of professional development that are noted are more intensive than others; however, they are all intended to be mutually reinforcing.

1. Develop a summer cultural immersion camp for teachers

a) The summer cultural immersion camp for teachers is an idea that has demonstrated value in other school jurisdictions in Canada and the US. Given Lillooet’s proximity to significant St’át’imc sites and the wealth of Elders and resource people in Lillooet, combined with the interest of teachers to learn with the St’át’imc, the development of a cultural camp is within reach.

b) The cultural immersion camp should extend over a couple of days and should be developed in partnership with GTSD staff, SERPA, SERT, USLCES, the LTC and the Ucwalmicw Centre. One of these groups will need to take a lead in the development of the camp.

c) Note: It is recognized that teachers have limited amount of professional development time available to them on an annual basis and, as such, the administration of GTSD will need to be creative in its thinking with regard to how it can develop professional development arrangements that make it simple for teachers to participate in cultural immersion camps.
2. Develop short term cultural tours for teachers

   a) Since not all teachers will be able to participate in cultural immersion camps, it is important to make other learning experiences available. There are several Elders and resource people who have expressed interest leading tours to significant St’át’imc cultural sites.

   b) The plan for these tours should be designed to fit into regularly scheduled professional development slots and provide teachers a sense of how the given experience can be translated into their teaching practice when they return to the classroom. The May St’át’imc Gathering could serve as one possible venue for a short term cultural tour for teachers, which could count as professional development.

   c) The cultural tour should be developed through a collaborative effort between the School District staff, SERPA, SERT, USLCES, the LTC and the Ucwalmicw Centre. One of these groups will need to take a lead in the development of the cultural tour.

3. Develop an orientation session for teachers that familiarizes them with the existing St’át’imc learning resources that they are welcome to use

   a) A remarkably rich pool of materials have been developed with regard to St’át’imc Knowledge Systems. Many teachers have expressed that they are not aware of what resources are available to them and which Elders and/or resource person should be contacted to be involved in school-based teaching. The development of an orientation session that aims to help teachers work collaboratively with Elders and resource people, and indicates to them what resources are available would go a long way to making classes more inclusive of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems.

   b) The orientation session should address questions about the protocols of different bands, and provide examples of respectful approaches to working with the St’át’imc.

   c) The orientation session should be developed through a collaborative effort between School District staff, SERPA, SERT, USLCES, the LTC and the Ucwalmicw Centre. One of these groups will need to take a lead in the development of this session.

   d) Ideally, the orientation session should be designed to fit into a scheduled professional development slot for teachers and should involve some informal time for relationship development between Elders, resource people and teachers.
The orientation session can be held in different location over time so as to facilitate relationship development with different groups of the St’át’imc community.

4. Develop an intercultural training workshop for teachers

   a) The intercultural training workshop should be designed to engage teachers in a safe learning environment that allows for question asking about areas of intercultural work that may not be addressed in the orientation sessions, the cultural camp or tour.
   b) The workshop should offer an important backgrounder to questions about colonialism, decolonization, Aboriginal title and rights, Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy, etc.
   c) The workshop should provide teachers with a critical lens to look at historical and contemporary relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, as well as evoke a sense of hope for enhancing relations within the educational context of GTSD.

5.4.4. Enhance coherency of Gold Trail School District (GTSD) policy and action for making education more culturally responsive

The suite of education goals and strategies articulated in the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (2005) and the Achievement Contract serve an important function in the ongoing effort to improve the learning performance of Aboriginal students in GTSD. These policy frameworks have proven to be very accommodating of the PoP project – one could even argue that they have been instrumental to the cause.

However, the PoP project only engaged one First Nation in the GTSD and involved educational stakeholders from only four schools. If other Aboriginal groups and communities in GTSD should also engage in a project similar to PoP, then it is instructive to engage questions about how to conceptualize a District-wide version of PoP. What kind of strategic framework ought to be developed? Who ought to be involved in the development of such a District-wide framework? What relationship should such a framework have to existing policy frameworks and programming?

These important questions are best addressed through a process to create what we call the GTSD strategic plan for culturally responsive schools, which aims to bring greater definition and comprehensiveness to how the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement and related policy instruments can be used to turn GTSD schools into culturally responsive schools.

Such a plan should enhance and add greater cohesiveness to the multiple and various local educational change initiatives that are already aiming to make schools more culturally responsive in the GTSD. In light of the success of the Alaska model, especially the strategic approach that was taken in jurisdictions across Alaska, GTSD
would be well served to adopt a similar strategic approach by creating a long term plan that will ameliorate Aboriginal student learning environments and improve Aboriginal student learning achievement outcomes.

In order to ensure that the development and implementation of the plan is undertaken in a manner that respects all stakeholders, it is imperative that a clear set of guidelines for cultural responsiveness for different facets of a school system are developed. The Alaska model included several different sets of guidelines, which were directed at teachers, school boards, councils, parents, curriculum developers, etc. In the absence of such guidelines, how can the District rest assured that their efforts to facilitate positive change will not disrespect and/or misrepresent the very people (e.g., Elders and Indigenous resource people) that they need to work with to improve Aboriginal student learning achievement. Fortunately, the literature review above features a discussion of such guidelines and their importance to the success of sustainable educational change toward culturally responsive schools.

Below, we outline two recommendations based on the above discussion. The first recommendation explains some of the major characteristics of the GTSD strategic plan for culturally responsive schools. The second recommendation traces the contours of the types of guidelines that need to be made to ensure that the implementation of strategies are in and of themselves an example of culturally responsive learning and action.
1. **Develop a district-wide strategic plan for culturally responsive schools**

   a) The overarching goal for this strategic plan would be to facilitate a participatory educational change initiative that supports the inclusion of St’át’imc, Nlakápamux and Secwépmc knowledge systems and people in school curriculum and pedagogy, embedding local First Nations world views in the school’s culture, and more deeply integrating pathways of Indigenous Knowledge and learning into district policies.

   b) To this end, the strategic plan should include a district-wide vision statement that explains what culturally responsive schools look like in action, as well as clearly defined rationale for making schools culturally responsive. The strategic plan should also explain how schools can work independently and together to engage in making their school more culturally responsive, as well as clarify what kinds of resources are available for their efforts.

   c) The process of designing the plan, including the development of methods of implementation and evaluation measures for the strategic plan ought to include Aboriginal education leaders to ensure that Aboriginal perspectives are represented in this strategic planning process. Perhaps the First Peoples Advisory Council can play a lead role in this regard.

   d) An annual gathering should take place to engage in discussion regarding the plan and progress to date. To simplify this process the Power of Place conference method and related resource should be consulted in the development of this aspect of the plan.

   e) As part of the strategic plan, a system of measuring and monitoring should be established to assess the degree to which educational change is happening. Similar to the Power of Place project in Lillooet area schools, a curriculum review survey can be conducted, which provides baseline data against which future survey data can be compared. Depending on the goals and initiatives of the district-wide plan, new measures and/or different monitoring instruments may be required.
f) The activities set out in the strategic plan should be considered as line items in the annual budget of the School District to ensure that there are resources available for schools to cover costs for honorariums for Elders and resource people, field trips, development and delivery of cultural immersion camps for teachers, curriculum development, etc.

g) Individual schools should be supported in the act of translating the overarching directions of the culturally responsive schools strategic plan into their individual school growth plans.

h) Note: The GTSD strategic plan for culturally responsive schools is not intended to replace existing local efforts to include Indigenous Knowledge in their schools. Instead, it should facilitate a process that brings greater clarity of vision to the task of making schools throughout the District more culturally responsive, as well as galvanize educational change agents into a new level of momentum and collaboration.

2. Develop district guidelines for developing culturally responsive schools

a) The Alaska example provides an excellent set of guidelines for different agents in the school system, including guidelines for school boards, teachers, curriculum development etc. These examples can inform the design of guidelines for the GTSD.

b) Fortunately, guidelines for cultural tourism have already been developed by USLCES. These existing guidelines can serve as a starting point for developing a more comprehensive package of guidelines for educational change with Indigenous characteristics.
6. Discussion: Considering the implications of the Power of Place project (PoP) for Aboriginal learning

In this final section, we address some of the key considerations that emerge in the wake of the PoP project. First, we discuss some of the findings and general measures of success of the PoP project, and identify some of the implications of the PoP project for research, policy and programming related to Aboriginal learning in GTSD. In the second section, we discuss the broader implications of the PoP project for theory, research and policy in relation to Aboriginal learning in other jurisdictions.

6.1. PoP project impacts and implications for research and policy on integrating Indigenous Knowledge into schools, and Aboriginal learning in GTSD

As we noted in the introduction, the aim of the Power of Place project is to engage local educational stakeholders in a participatory process of identifying community-based strategies for including St’át’imc knowledge and culture in Lillooet area school curriculum and pedagogy, and thereby contribute to the enhancement of learning environments for St’át’imc students. In this section, we discuss three general measures of success of the PoP project, and examine the impacts and implications of the PoP project results for research and policy related to Aboriginal learning in Lillooet area schools, and schools throughout the GTSD.

The first general measure of success of the PoP project can be defined in terms of the degree to which the project established and/or enhanced relationships between Elders, resource people, teachers and other school staff. Although we recognize that the development of relationships is not necessarily a research finding, it is essential to creating community-based research results and related educational change and, as such, counts as a measure of the success of the PoP project. This measure is also important because it connects to the sentiment often expressed at the PoP community-based workshops, which is that if Lillooet area schools are to develop into places that are culturally responsive to St’át’imc knowledge and culture, then the schools need to be inclusive of St’át’imc Elders and resource people, which means that teachers need to know Elders and resource people, and vice versa. Moreover, since Elders and resource people are the knowledge holders for the St’át’imc, their inclusion in the schools is the most important act of integrating St’át’imc knowledge and culture into school curriculum and pedagogy.

The results of the conference evaluation and the summative evaluation both indicate that the PoP project had a positive impact on the development of relationships between educational stakeholders. The development of the list of Elders and resource people, and related topic areas, also indicates that Elders and resource people trust school staff with their information and areas of expertise – a remarkable expression of commitment on
behalf of Elders and resource people to work with teachers and school staff to enhance learning environments for St’át’ímc students.

Moreover, the strong attendance at most of the Steering Committee meetings and project workshops indicates that the PoP project either established or, at the very least, contributed to the enhancement of working relationships between participating St’át’ímc community members and GTSD staff. Also, the PoP project provided a mechanism for enhancing the cooperative relationships between the Upper St’át’ímc Language, Culture and Education Society, the Lillooet Tribal Council, and the Ucwalmicw Centre in that each agency worked together throughout the project by either coming to one another’s space for meetings, engaging in informal conversations about the direction of the project on an as need basis, as well as cooperating with one another in the process of convening community members for meetings. When taken together, these many small linkages between individuals and groups amount to a significant positive impact of the PoP project on the relationships of educational stakeholders of Lillooet area schools.

The second general measure of success can be defined in terms of the degree to which the PoP project afforded local opportunities to educational stakeholders to discuss and select community-based strategies for integrating St’át’ímc knowledge and culture into Lillooet area schools. This second measure tests the PoP project on its claims to being a participatory project that is community-centric in its orientation. As the methodology section of this report explains, the PoP project included a diverse range of opportunities for community input, including:

- A teacher survey to elicit input on the degree to which St’át’ímc knowledge and culture is included in Lillooet area schools and their interests for future developmental directions in this regard;
- Five Steering Committee meetings to develop the project methodology and research ethics;
- A community-based conference and series of conference workshops that engaged over 120 educational stakeholders, including: St’át’ímc and non-St’át’ímc Elders, resource people, teachers, support workers, students and parents;
- A series of workshops with St’át’ímc Elders and resource people to identify the topics that the St’át’ímc people want to see reflected in the school curricula with relation to all subject areas and grade levels in the district;
- A joint workshop with St’át’ímc Elders, resource people, teachers, principals and support workers to discuss the topic areas identified by Elders/resource people and identify linkages between the named St’át’ímc knowledge and school subject areas/grade levels.

The evaluation results from the PoP community conference and the joint meeting between Elders, resource people, education coordinators, and GTSD staff, as well as the summative evaluation results of the Steering Committee (see appendices for analysis of results) all consisted of high marks for how the PoP project provided educational stakeholders with an opportunity to share their views about how to integrate St’át’ímc knowledge and culture into Lillooet area schools.
We define the third general measure of success of the PoP project in terms of whether it yielded research findings that were: (a) appropriate in scope and content from the perspective of the St’át’imc people; and, (b) applicable to the practical project of integrating St’át’imc knowledge and culture into Lillooet area schools.

With regard to the first aspect of this third general measure, it is important to note that we emphasize the notion of developing appropriate research findings because the Steering Committee, throughout the project, expressed the conviction that the PoP project must not make the mistake of mis-representing St’át’imc worldviews or facilitate the mis-use of the knowledge of St’át’imc worldviews. As such, the Steering Committee decided that the PoP project should not engage in the development of St’át’imc curriculum for use by teachers in schools. Although there can be merit to curriculumizing Indigenous Knowledge, which is to turn such knowledge into lesson plans that fit into a module on a particular topic that harmonizes with prescribed learning outcomes, such an act can risk reducing Indigenous Knowledge into forms of inert information that could be communicated by anyone, to anyone, and thereby undercut the living nature of Indigenous Knowledge, as well as the honored role of holding Indigenous Knowledge in one’s community. Moreover, to curriculumize Indigenous Knowledge is an act that often contradicts recent scholarship on Indigenous Knowledge and pedagogy, which argues that Indigenous Knowledge - its ecological orientation and the oral modes of acquisition, impartment, and application – should not be bound by Eurocentric modes of crafting curriculum, nor should the exchange or transfer of Indigenous Knowledge be truncated to conventional classroom pedagogy. The PoP Steering Committee argued for a project that would encourage schools to create a shared space where students can learn from and engage in dialogue with Elders and resource people to develop an understanding of the knowledge that is Indigenous to the people of the place where Lillooet area schools are located. The development of both living lists of St’át’imc Knowledge Systems (see: Figure 6 & 7 in this report), specifically the verbal approval of the content of these living lists by participating Elders and resource people, indicates that the PoP project developed findings that are appropriate for schools from the perspective of St’át’imc community leaders, and in step with the hopes of the PoP Steering Committee. Thus, the PoP project can be conceived as effectively addressing the challenge of developing appropriate research findings related to St’át’imc Knowledge Systems and schools.

The other aspect of this third measure of success relates to questions about whether the products of the research can be translatable into policy and programming for making Lillooet area schools more culturally responsive. It is encouraging to note that even before the PoP project had ended, the School District had acted on the preliminary results of the project by starting to develop the Elders in the Classroom program in elementary schools. Moreover, the way that the recommendations have been articulated account for existing policy and program infrastructure in the District and seek to build upon the work to date by providing developmental directions that can be easily merged with existing educational goals. Sentiments to this effect are expressed in a letter by the District Principal of Aboriginal Learning, Shelley Oppenheim-Lacerte, which is featured in the PoP Curriculum Enhancement Toolkit (2008).
In light of the fact that the District has already translated some of the findings of the PoP project into its operations, and considering that the research report and the toolkit is centered on including Elders and resource people in school learning activities, and, moreover that all research products have been co-productions, we contend that the PoP project has managed to score well against this third measure of success. As such, the PoP project has positively impacted at least three areas of the educational system in Lillooet area schools. These positive impacts and the related research findings have implications for research, policy and programming related to Aboriginal learning in the GTSD.

There are two distinct implications of the PoP project for research in the District. First of all, the exact impacts of the PoP project on GTSD programs to integrate St’át’imc knowledge and culture into the curriculum and pedagogy of the four participating schools is an area for ongoing research. As such, an implication of PoP is a call to the task of researching the relationship between integration programs and projects and the extent to which St’át’imc knowledge and culture is integrated in curriculum and pedagogy. Addressing the following kind of question on a regular basis can provide data on how culturally responsive Lillooet area schools are over time: To what degree is St’át’imc knowledge and culture currently included in Lillooet area schools in comparison to the Power of Place baseline survey of 2007?

Second, and in a similar vein, it is instructive to develop an ongoing inquiry into the relationship between the practice of including St’át’imc knowledge into classrooms and Aboriginal learning achievement. The findings of such research are integral to the work of legitimating integration projects over time. Since the PoP project did not aim to prove its working assumption that the act of making schools more culturally responsive improves Aboriginal learning achievement, the burden of proof for such a claim will carry forward into subsequent initiatives in the District. Offloading the burden of proof for the District will involve generating data that would substantiate PoP’s working assumption. Even though other jurisdictions have made the case in numbers for culturally responsive schools (i.e., Alaska, etc.), and such data sets do legitimate integration projects in principle, there is no specific data available in GTSD that shows how Aboriginal learning achievement is improved by increasing student engagement with Indigenous Knowledge at school. A possible future research question in this regard is: What difference does St’át’imc knowledge and culture make for the learning achievement outcomes of St’át’imc students in Lillooet area schools?

With regard to the implications of PoP for District policy, there is one central area to discuss. The PoP project demonstrated effective democratic and accessible engagement processes for involving diverse educational stakeholders in an educational change initiative. Given the strong attendance at the PoP workshops, especially at the conference, one can assume that such stakeholders would have an appetite for ongoing community-based opportunities to participate in policy development related to their schools. Although we recognize that Lillooet area schools do have a series of mechanisms for including the voices of local educational stakeholders in decisions about
schools (e.g., boards, councils, working groups), it is instructive to ask questions about the degree to which such mechanisms are accessible to educational stakeholders who may face socio-economic barriers to participation in such bodies. For instance, what kinds of barriers may prevent local educational stakeholders from participating in the process of setting frameworks for implementing an educational change process and how can these barriers be removed? What kinds of sustainable opportunities can be afforded to those stakeholders who do not participate in the regular mechanisms for decision making to help shape policy related to their schools? And more specifically, how can future work on the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement include the participation of diverse educational stakeholders in ways that are similar to how PoP engaged local stakeholders?

In sum, the PoP project claimed a shared space in which diverse educational stakeholders identified ways to make Lillooet area schools more culturally responsive – to become places where St’át’imc students achieve learning success exactly as they are - St’át’imc. As such, the PoP project has had a positive impact on the education system in Lillooet area schools, and extending from the project are several implications for research and policy regarding Aboriginal learning.

6.2. PoP project implications for research, policy and programming with regard to integrating Indigenous Knowledge into schools, and Aboriginal learning beyond GTSD

The successful completion of PoP has several implications for research and policy on educational change initiatives that aim to integrate Indigenous Knowledge and culture into school curriculum and pedagogy with a view to enhancing learning environments for Aboriginal students. In this section, we address the implications of PoP for research, and then provide a discussion on the implications of PoP for policy and programming with regard to integrating Indigenous Knowledge into schools, and Aboriginal learning.

Albeit limited, our literature review identified several useful articles, books and other literature reviews that discussed some aspect of Indigenous Knowledge, pedagogy and/or related research and development methodologies; however, we did not identify a great deal of theoretical research or meta-analysis on different modes for integrating Indigenous Knowledge into school curriculum and pedagogy. Such an undertheorized area raises questions for educational theorists regarding the development of meta-theoretical frameworks that can account for the emerging multiplicity of methods for integrating Indigenous Knowledge into schools. Some specific future research for theorists include: What kind of typology could be developed that accounts for the diverse range of projects that aim to integrate Indigenous Knowledge into school curriculum and pedagogy? What are the different meanings of integration that are used to conceptualize projects for including Indigenous Knowledge in schools? What counts as a method for integrating Indigenous Knowledge? What are the criteria for assessing whether a project is successful at integrating Indigenous Knowledge into a school(s)?

A second implication of the PoP project for research relates to teachers and students. Although the teacher participants in the Power of Place project presumably supported the
idea of integrating Indigenous Knowledge in the classroom by virtue of the fact that they engaged in project dialogues at the conference and at the joint workshop with Elders and resource people, the exactitudes of their attitudes toward the integration of Indigenous Knowledge in their classroom remains unknown. Similarly, in our review of the literature, we did not identify a great deal work that addressed empirical research questions on Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers’ attitudes toward including Indigenous Knowledge in their classroom in other jurisdictions. Moreover, the literature review did not identify research on Indigenous and non-Indigenous student attitudes toward Indigenous content as part of their school experience. Since our literature review identified only limited study in this regard (Kanu, 2005), questions on Indigenous and non-Indigenous teacher and student attitudes toward integrating Indigenous Knowledge in school curriculum, as well as comparative analyses of attitudinal differences between groups, remains pertinent to the research agenda for Aboriginal learning and the project of Indigenizing schools. Addressing questions on attitudes could shed more light on our understanding of what educational change agents think about integration work, what are the differences and similarities between perspectives on the matter, and what implications do such differences have for the design and implementation of integration projects.

Throughout the PoP project, teachers often raised questions about the relationship between increases in instruction in Indigenous Knowledge and culture in classrooms and student learning achievement outcomes. Although there is some excellent research on the positive impacts of integrating Indigenous Knowledge on Aboriginal student learning achievement, there is not a great deal of such excellent examples. The comments of teachers who participated in PoP underscore the importance of making the case in numbers about the positive relationship between Aboriginal student learning achievement and increased engagement with Indigenous Knowledge in the classroom. Making the case in numbers raises the following types of research questions: How do Aboriginal students who regularly engage with Indigenous Knowledge perform in key learning indicators compared to Aboriginal students who do not? To what degree does engagement with Indigenous Knowledge contribute to increases in high school graduation rates? What kind of engagement with Indigenous Knowledge do Aboriginal students require in order to improve their learning achievements?

These questions beg a series of corollary questions that relate to policy on integrating Indigenous Knowledge into school curriculum and pedagogy. By policies we are referring to the localized overarching frameworks that hold together the myriad of descriptions of educational goal statements, programs for reaching such goals, success measures, etc. Although the PoP project was largely successful because of the involvement of teachers, principals and members of the participating St’át’imc communities, an equally important component of the project were the supportive policy frameworks of GTSD, namely the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement and the Achievement Contract. The success of PoP demonstrates that local projects to integrate Indigenous Knowledge into schools need both policy support and grass roots support. It is difficult to conceive of PoP experiencing much success if either one of these key elements was not supporting the project.
Thus, the implication of PoP for policy is simple. A framework for educational change that has been negotiated with Aboriginal peoples, provincial government and the school district is fundamentally important to the success of any project for integrating Indigenous Knowledge into school curriculum and pedagogy. PoP demonstrates that integration projects in particular schools generally require the support of higher levels of an educational system. As such, it is instructive to consider the following policy-related questions: What are the characteristics of policy frameworks that facilitate effective projects for integrating Indigenous Knowledge? Conversely, what kinds of policy frameworks have prevented the development of projects for integrating Indigenous Knowledge into school curriculum and pedagogy? How have such frameworks been resisted and reformed by Indigenous educational stakeholders? Also, what are the types of integration projects that have demonstrated success in the absence of policy support? If so, what are the characteristics of these types of projects and how did such projects manage to achieve success?

With regard to the general implications of PoP for the design and implementation of integration projects, there are two major considerations to discuss. First, PoP demonstrated that a diverse range of Indigenous and non-Indigenous educational stakeholders can work together to design and implement a multi-year project of identifying and recommending methods for integrating Indigenous Knowledge into schools. In demonstrating the success of a community-based participatory action research method, it is useful to consider whether the PoP project method can be replicated in other jurisdictions. The success of PoP also highlights the fact that communities with relatively high levels of capacity to engage educational change work are best suited to undertake such work. Would any community be able to undertake such a project? Such a question raises other questions about the readiness of a community to drive an educational change process. Are there levels of school and community readiness for undertaking a project for integrating Indigenous Knowledge in local school(s)? What kinds of school/community readiness assessment could be developed to ascertain whether a community should engage in such work? What might such an assessment tool tell communities about the types of integration methods that are best suited for their level of capacity for educational change?

Like other historical and ongoing projects that have aimed to integrate Indigenous Knowledge into school curriculum and pedagogy, PoP has consisted of a series of tasks that aimed to simultaneously ignite educational change in schools by making space for Elders and resource people to clarify what they would like to contribute to student learning, and, at the same time, lay the foundation of relations and resources for ongoing integration work. Given the longer term nature of educational change, it is difficult to know about the depth of the success of PoP. To what degree will the recommendations of PoP become integrated into GTSD policy and school growth plans? To what degree will the curriculum enhancement toolkit be used and what kind of material difference will it make to teacher practice and student learning? Since it is too early to tell what kind of lasting impact PoP will have on Lilooet area schools, we can only hope the very best is wrought from this project for the benefit of St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc students alike.
7. Appendices

There are thirteen appendix in total. See the table of contents for titles of each appendix.

Appendix A: Statement of research ethics

When working with St’át’imc participants, SPARC BC will follow the principles of respect, protection and participation. As such, all research undertaken in the PoP project will ensure the following:

∞ Respect for the culture, traditions and knowledge of St’át’imc participants and communities

∞ Collaboration and partnership with St’át’imc participants in the research process. This means:
  o Involving St’át’imc peoples in the design of the research project
  o Conceptualizing and conducting research with St’át’imc people as a partnership
  o Consulting with St’át’imc community members who have relevant expertise
  o Provide the community an opportunity to react and respond to research finding before the completion of the final report
  o Give due consideration, and accurately report, any disagreements about the interpretation of data in research reports or publications

∞ That, as much as possible, different segments of the population within St’át’imc communities will be able to express their viewpoints

∞ Provide information on the protection of the St’át’imc’s intellectual property and cultural estate

∞ That the research will empower St’át’imc communities involved in the research

As such, the PoP project team will:

∞ build relationships with organizations and communities prior to and during the research process

∞ design the research methodology in partnership with key stakeholders of the St’át’imc First Nation

∞ work within established community protocols regarding St’át’imc knowledge wherever applicable

∞ work in partnership to create any necessary guidelines regarding the protection of information members of the St’át’imc First Nation deems sensitive or inappropriate to be shared

∞ present the outcomes and results of any research to the St’át’imc Language Authority (SLA) in draft form for revisions before distribution and publication.

∞ acknowledge the contribution of individual or groups consulted in the final research report

∞ formally acknowledge St’át’imc First Nation ownership over any St’át’imc Knowledge that is produced through the PoP project
Appendix B: Glossary of key terms

In this appendix, we provide some basic definitions of the key words in this report.

**Aboriginal peoples**: Aboriginal peoples is a term in Canada’s 1982 Constitution that encompasses three groups of people: First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Aboriginal peoples can also be used to refer to Status and non-Status Indians, Native and Indigenous peoples. Generally, most people identify with the particular nation to which they belong (i.e., St’át’imc) before they identify as being an Aboriginal person. Some people reject the use of the term Aboriginal peoples and prefer to use Indigenous peoples, arguing that the term Indigenous is a term that is not marred in colonial thinking and practices.

**Assimilation**: Assimilation is the act or process of assimilating; the idea that Indigenous peoples should be improved by being civilized to learn, work, practice religion and speak in the language of a colonial power. Canadian residential schools are an example of an institution that aimed to assimilate Indigenous people into European ways of being.

**Colonialism**: A practice of domination through political and economical control, which generally involves a takeover of control of land and Indigenous people.

**Culture**: The patterned way of life of a people, including the land, language, practices and beliefs shared by members who identify with a particular group, community or nation.

**Critical pedagogy**: Refers to educational theory, teaching and learning practices that are designed to raise learners’ critical consciousness.

**Decolonization**: The action of undoing colonialism and the establishment of independent status, or the act of regaining authority or jurisdiction.

**Enculturation**: The process of adopting the behavioural patterns of the surrounding culture.

**Epistemology**: A branch of philosophy that is concerned with the nature and scope of human knowledge, beliefs, and truths.

**Ideology**: Ideology is a set of beliefs, goals and ideas tied together in a comprehensive vision for how the world does and should work.

**Indigenous education**: Indigenous education is a life-long learning process; it begins before birth and continues throughout life, it involves the development of the spiritual, emotional, physical and intellectual. It is holistic, comprehensive, and involves complex knowledge of the cultural heritage values and principles of Indigenous people locally and globally.
Indigenous people: A group who are original inhabitants to a place, territory, region or country.

Integrate: In local educational reform, to integrate is to facilitate a process of working with education stakeholders to put together generally separate community values and perspectives into a new model for designing, delivering and evaluating education.

Inter-cultural dialogue: Intercultural dialogue involves multiple viewpoints and the recognition of difference and multiplicity. It assumes that the differences of opinions, viewpoints, and values exist not only within each individual culture but also between cultures. Intercultural dialogue seeks to cultivate an understanding of those that do not see the world in the same way as ourselves.

Learning outcome: A learning outcome is a measure of what learners will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity.

Methodology: In research, a methodology is a set of tactics guided by principles that facilitate the development of responses to research questions.

Nlaká7mexw: Commonly recognized as Thompson people, which are comprised of 16 bands located in the Fraser Canyon and up into the Southern Interior of BC.

Pedagogy: The use of teaching methods to facilitate the development of prescribed competencies for students.

Racism: A set of beliefs, often negative, held by one group of people, or individuals about another group of people, or individuals which is based on perceived racial characteristics of that group or individual.

Secwépemc: Also recognized as Shushwap, are one of the largest First Nations in BC, comprised of 17 bands located in the South Central Interior of BC.

St’át’imc: St’át’imc people live on their territory in the Interior of BC, and consist of eleven bands. St’át’imc are also known as Lillooet people.

Theory: A theory is an expression of observations that are generally verifiable in some way, consisting of an interrelated, coherent set of ideas.
Appendix C: Curriculum review survey instrument

The Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) in partnership with GTSD and USLCES is initiating a project to look at developing a tool (yet to be defined) for integrating St’át’imc ‘traditional’ knowledge into the K-12 system at the three Lillooet area schools and Sk’il Mountain. Critical to the success of this project is teacher participation as ultimately it is teachers who will determine if the tool(s) developed are suitable for their needs.

One of the project tasks is identifying what St’át’imc knowledge is currently being delivered in the curriculum. As a teacher in one of the four Lillooet area schools, we are asking you to complete this brief questionnaire. The information provided will be used solely for the purpose of identifying the degree to which St’át’imc knowledge and cultural activities are included in school learning.

To clarify what is meant by St’át’imc (Indigenous) Knowledge (also known as Traditional Ecological Knowledge, local knowledge, place-based knowledge, etc.), a definition that was developed by the United Nations’ Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Program is featured below:

1. Indigenous knowledge is the local knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. It is the basis for local-level decision-making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural resource management, and a host of other activities in rural communities.
2. Indigenous knowledge is the information base for a society, which facilitates communication and decision-making. Indigenous information systems are dynamic, and are continually influenced by internal creativity and experimentation as well as by contact with external systems.
3. Indigenous knowledge is the knowledge that people in a given community has developed over time, and continues to develop. It is based on experience, often tested over centuries of used, adapted to local culture and environment, dynamic and changing (Boven & Morohashi, 2002).

There are three questions in total. All responses will be represented at the aggregate level and your identify will be treated anonymously. The questionnaire should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Please return your questionnaire to your principal. Many thanks!
Please indicate the grade(s) that you teach: ___________________

1. Are you currently integrating St’át’imc or ‘local’ knowledge into your classroom curriculum.
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. If yes, in which subject area(s)? What pedagogy/process and resources do you use?

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3. In an ideal situation, what would you need to begin including St’át’imc knowledge into your class curriculum?

4. If you are willing to chat with the researcher about what you are doing in your classroom, or if you have questions about the project, please contact Brenda Ireland.
Appendix D: Agenda for Power of Place conference

Power of Place: Building Relationships and Enhancing Education

**Friday, February 15: 8:30 – 4:00**

8:30 – 9:00 Registration and Continental Breakfast

9:00 – Introductions/Opening Welcome and Ceremony (Elder Des Peters Sr. & T’it’q’et Chief Bill Machell)

9:30 – *The PoP project – Background, Overview and Objectives*
  Brenda Ireland – Project Co-ordinator
  *Intercultural Dialogue and Understanding* – Sarah Chandler

10:00 – *In Our Schools – Assets/Strengths & Issues/Challenges*

12:00 – Lunch (Catered)

1:00 – *The Power of Place: Place-Based Education and Integrating Indigenous Knowledge into School Curriculum and Ways of Teaching*
  Guests: Dr. Angayuq Oscar Kawagley (former Director of the Alaska Native Knowledge Network) and Dr. Ray Barnhardt (University of Alaska)

3:45 – Presentations/Closing Ceremony

5:00 – Banquet and Entertainment – Julianne Hall
Power of Place: Building Relationships and Enhancing Education

Saturday, February 16: 9:30 – 3:00

09:30 – Continental Breakfast

10:00 – Introductions and Opening Ceremony

10:10 – Reflecting on Yesterday – In Pictures and Words – And Reviewing Today

10:15 – St’at’imc World View and Education – Approaches, Diversity and Connection
Guest Speakers: Art Adolph and Scott Graham

11:00 – Working Together for Actionable Change – Ideas, Creativity and Energy

1:00 – Lunch (Catered)

1:30 – Selecting Priorities and Moving Forward – Why, How, Who and Next Steps?

3:00 – Evaluations/Closing Ceremonies/Presentations
Appendix E: Agenda for workshops with St’át’imc Elders and resource people

1. Welcome and prayer

2. Overview of the purpose of meeting and the Power of Place project

3. What are some examples of St’át’imc knowledge and pedagogy (i.e., traditional and contemporary examples)?

4. What are some examples of St’át’imc knowledge and pedagogy that ought to be included in Lillooet and area schools (i.e., traditional and contemporary examples)?

5. What St’át’imc sites do you think are critical for the students to visit and know about?

6. Summarize results of conversation and discussion of joint meeting with Elders and teachers
Appendix F: Agenda for workshop with GTSD staff, St’át’imc Elders and resource people

1. Opening prayers and welcome to Ucwalmicw Centre

2. Introductions

3. Overview of Power of Place and explanation of the morning activities

4. Gallery walk lead by St’át’imc Educational Research Team to review work of Elders and resource people

5. Dialogue about the areas of expertise of the Elders and resource people

6. Small group discussion with Elders: Are your areas of expertise most suitable for primary or secondary schooling, or both?

7. Small group discussion with school staff: What St’át’imc knowledge areas and cultural activities have relationship to the subject area(s) that you teach?

8. Summary of small group discussions

9. Large group visit to T’it’q’et S7istken

10. Lunch
Appendix G: Power of Place conference evaluation results

The power of Place Conference was evaluated using a simple questionnaire, which was completed at the end of the conference by participants. In total, there were twenty-three complete questionnaires returned to the PoP project team. The questionnaire elicited both quantitative and qualitative responses from participant regarding the effectiveness of the conference. In this section, we provide the results of the rating questions. The original question is featured, followed by participants’ average responses. In the next section, we provide an analysis of the comments that participants made regarding their involvement in the conference.

Analysis of participant responses to rating questions

1. Please indicate how relevant this conference was for your community?

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Average participant response: 4.5

2. Please indicate how the Power of Place Conference helped you connect with the people in your community.

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Average participant response: 4.0

3. Did the Power of Place Conference increase your interest in exploring new ways to work with people in your community to improve the K-12 education experience for all learners?

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Average participant response: 4.1
4. Did the conference provide you with an opportunity to share your views about how to enhance the K-12 education system for all learners?

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Average participant response: 3.7

5. Did the conference increase your understanding of how to integrate Indigenous Knowledge into school curriculum and pedagogy?

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Average participant response: 4.4

6. How would you rate the conference facilitators?

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Average participant response: 4.0

Analysis of participant responses to open ended questions

Participants were also asked two open ended questions. The two questions were: What was your favorite part of the conference? What was your least favorite part of the conference? The following text is an analysis of the responses to these questions.

Overall, the facilitators’ techniques were well received. Notably, they were praised for knowing when to contribute and when to lay out of a discussion among participants.

Conference participants noticed that the majority of teachers left between 3.00 and 3.15pm on Friday and did not return for the Saturday portion of the conference. Participants would welcome an explanation for this phenomenon and possibly some exploration into its possible meaning.
In general there was a feeling that the time allowed for discussions was too short. The topics were of a depth, and the aim of relationship-building during the conference, was of such significance that allowing more time for these goals to develop is recommended and would be welcomed. Teachers are valued members of the community so what facts or barriers might have kept them from staying or returning?

Different groups need time to develop a working culture that optimizes the interdependent contributions of all. The short time periods allocated to group work, and the fact that many teachers were absent from the conference, interfered with optimal cohesion.

The topics for discussion and the conference format were relevant and solid.

Participants felt connected with the community and gained a sense of affirmation that they as individuals are not isolated or unique in their concerns.

Participants hope that the energy, goodwill, and momentum established at the conference can be sustained in regular, everyday life in the school and community. There is a desire for change and a feeling that the conference could initiate a desirable, positive change. The concerns of participants reflect an awareness that it can be challenging to overcome the inertia of everyday patterns.
Appendix H: Evaluation results from workshop with teachers, Elders, principals and resource people

The following statements were submitted on pieces of blank paper at the end of the workshops with Elders, teachers, principals and resource people. As a simple and accessible evaluation, the only question asked of participants was: What did you get out of this workshop? The following comments are verbatim transcripts.

∞ I thoroughly enjoyed having the opportunity to be a part of this gathering today. During the gallery walk I learned many new ideas and thoughts that would be interesting to share with students. I think that it is very exciting to see the beginning of a wonderful working relationship between Elders and schools starting to take shape. I look forward to being a part of future learning experiences in the areas discussed today.

∞ Well, I really enjoyed the morning. I liked that we now have some concrete contacts for Elders to come to the school. We need to keep this going and build a closer relationship and partnerships with all the local communities. By partnership I mean a relationship in which the schools do things for the communities as well as the communities contribute to the schools.

∞ Although I understood I still had much to learn regarding this territory, I was reminded again today, that, even after living in Lillooet thirteen years, there is still so much to know! The prospect of this is exciting. In my class I will be using more in the way of local Elders and resources. In my English class I use aboriginal poetry, but I only have one poem by a local poet “Faces” by Saul Terry. I would love to be a part of collecting aboriginal, local poetry in order to create an anthology. What do you think?

∞ I was very interested in an impressed by the vast array of ideas and areas of concern and interest recorded on the chart paper around the room. I also have a better grasp of how this information can be worked into the curriculum.

∞ In reflecting about the day, I realize the ultimate long term affects this work will build within our young people. How they will benefit from knowing where they come from and how it will benefit them in their growth and development when they move onto further education. A definite win/win situation.

∞ Lots of sharing, lots of listening, lots of people (more than I expected).

∞ I very much appreciated being invited to the meeting. I like this idea of Elders and school district staff building a bridge together. I am hoping to use the Elders/resource list to invite speakers into our AVID classrooms. Also another brainstorming meeting would help productivity. Again I think the whole concept was marvelous.
It was great seeing the Elders interact with the SD personnel. I wish more teachers could have been involved. This was a very valuable day/session.

Excellent interaction between all of the people at the meeting! A great way to get to know the resource people!

I see that the school district schools are listening to what First Nations students need to succeed.

What I got out of this meeting: more different ideas then when Power of Place first began. I like the new ideas. When this first began it was for the children to be comfortable in themselves and not trying to be something are not, and to move forward and be successful with what they have.

What I got out of this workshop is how the school system and cultural component of life are trying to work together. We as support workers need to start working towards making these connections. The school I work at has three First Nations. We need to make a template of what we made from this project. Start with one nation and go from there. I enjoyed myself and look forward to using this information to build a promising future for our youth.

This circle grew up to 30 plus people including Elders and teachers. SD #74 Shelly, Resource People from Lillooet area, support staff, principles. Nora and Laura - great organization of this project, thank you for this opportunity, for all of us to be a part. A lot of information that was put onto the flip chart (brainstorming) papers. Great ideas and Elders sharing their expertise in to the school system. Big thank-you to Shelly for inviting us here. Good luck for the next phase of this project!

Touching base with the other professionals and our Elders to work towards an amalgamated effort to enhance students. Involvement within our education system and with our Elders as mentors. The Elders are the curricula.

I was moved to create a three month plan for bringing resource people into my English class. I have been grappling with a coherent plan rather than just bringing people in here and there and also with the problem of classroom management when resource people come in. I think I’ve figured it out, and I will let you know how it goes. I am driving home with the resource person in my school so we can plan a bit more on the way home.

Personal connections with Elders No1. Great reviews of the areas that St’át’imc Elders brainstormed last Tuesday. Terrific meeting with teachers and staff about how the St’át’imc themes tie in with the curriculum. We talked about choosing one theme (salmon) and working on a scope and sequence from K-7 as a school staff.
Appendix I: Final evaluation results for PoP project

This appendix features the questions and results of the final evaluation of the PoP project. Twenty-one Steering Committee members were sent this evaluation form via email after having reviewed the final research report and the curriculum enhancement toolkit. The average results of the eight forms that were returned have been summarized below. Steering Committee member written comments are featured in italics, after the average participant response to the rating question.

1. Did the Power of Place project increase your interest in making schools more responsive to St’át’imc knowledge and culture?

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Average participant response: 4.0

Comments:

Yes, the Power of Place project did increase my interest of assisting in making the schools more responsive to St’át’imc knowledge and culture. However, it would have been great if representative from the provincial government were on side also, committing to legislative changes and support for more Aboriginal teachers all of which will insure the success of Aboriginal students.

We need to persist in our effort to make schools places of learning for Aboriginal students. I am more interested now that I have some better tools to do this educational change work. Together, we can make this happen – but only together.

I was already interested, but this project certainly encouraged me to stay engaged.
2. Did the Power of Place project provide you with an opportunity to share your views about how to include St’át’ímc knowledge and culture in school curriculum and pedagogy?

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Average participant response: 4.7

Comments:

*Yes. A great deal.*

*Yes. The timeline was good. We had some time to reflect on what we were trying to do and that helped a lot in making decisions about what we wanted this project to achieve.*

*We had many meetings over a good length of time. It never felt like a burden to participate in this project. – Good job team!*  

3. To what degree did the Power of Place project develop intercultural relationships between Upper St’át’ímc Elders, resource people, teachers and principals in the School District?

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Average participant response: 3.5

Comments:

*Because of many constraints, the Power of Place project was unable to fully develop intercultural relationships between St’át’ímc Elders and resource people with teachers and principals of the School District. It may take more than a couple of years to unravel the many decades of institutional ethnocentrism that exists in our school systems that promotes a anthropocentric worldview – humans at centre of universe over kincentric worldviews – respecting the interconnection of all, the land, water, plants, animals, fish and humans.*

*I enjoyed meeting new people and exploring ways of working together. However, it will take time for us to start working really well together.*

*The work has only begun for us. This is a good start.*
4. To what degree did the Power of Place project contribute to the inclusion of St’át’imc knowledge and culture into school curriculum and pedagogy?

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Average participant response: 4.5

Comments:

The Power of Place project actually initiated individuals from the local school system and Aboriginal communities to begin discussing a process of integrating St’át’imc knowledge into the school system.

The PoP project did get the ball rolling in a good direction. Now we need to keep it rolling.

The key to this whole project was Elder and resource involvement. The school district needs model PoP in an ongoing way by keeping Elders and resource people engaged and involved in meaningful ways.

5. The aim of the Power of Place project was to engage local educational stakeholders in a participatory process of identifying community-based strategies for including St’át’imc knowledge and culture in Lillooet area school curriculum and pedagogy, and thereby contribute to the enhancement of learning environments for St’át’imc students. Please indicate the overall success of the Power of Place project.

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Average participant response: 4.8

Comments:

The work has only begun, there is going to have to be a long term process put in place that fully recognizes the Self Determination of Aboriginal People, which begins with the inclusion of Aboriginal Elders, Aboriginal teachers, and Aboriginal resource people in the teaching of Aboriginal children in the school system.
Appendix J: Stʼátʼimc resources at the Lillooet Tribal Council

The following list of resources represents the some of school appropriate materials related to the Stʼátʼimc held at the Lillooet Tribal Council office in Lillooet.


Declaration of the Interior Tribes of British Columbia


Turner, Nancy. (1997). Draft Paper: Plants of the Xaxl’ep (Stl’atl’imx or Fraser River Lillooet) People of British Columbia (featuring the Botanical Knowledge of Sam Mitchell, Martina LaRochelle, Edith O’Donaghey, Bill Edwards and Desmond Peters Sr.)


Appendix K: St’át’ímc resources at the Upper St’át’ímc Language, Culture and Education Society (USLCES)

The available resources at USLCES have been catalogued in two sections: publications and multi-media resources; and, other resources.

Publications and multi-media resources


Burton, Strang. (2004). Let’s play and learn about body parts in St’át’ímcets (St’át’ímcets PC CD-ROM Game). Lilooet, BC: The Upper St’át’ímc Language, Culture and Education Society.


Frank, Beverly. The day the Cougar attacked (Larrane Leech's Story) (Na Sq’ita i T’áxilas na Swúw’a). Lilooet, BC: The Upper St’át’ímc Language, Culture and Education Society. (Includes audio cassette)


**Other resources**

Declaration: St’át’imcets and English

Traditional and Contemporary Recipes

Word lists: Animal/hunting, hide tanning, soap berry, salmon

St’át’imcets Calendar

Animal counting and colouring books

Introduction to St’át’imc Basketry – Interactive CD ROM (forthcoming)

Intermediate Level St’át’imcets to English Dictionary (forthcoming)

Advanced Level English – St’át’imcets Dictionary (forthcoming)
Appendix L: Endnotes

1 For more details see: http://www.sd74.bc.ca/district.htm. Retrieved on December 1, 2008.

2 These words were spoken by Elder Linda Redan at a preliminary meeting for the PoP project. Elder Redan provided verbal approval of her statement for this research. Elders Linda Redan is a St’át’imcets Teacher.

3 The words ‘Indigenous’ and ‘Aboriginal’ will be used interchangeably throughout this paper.

4 Although Wildcat refers to American Indians, his observations are more broadly applicable throughout North America. Other Indigenous scholars also argue for an Indigenous-centred approach to education, pedagogy and learning systems more generally. For examples of such arguments, see: Battiste (2000).

5 For statistical data on Aboriginal student learning achievement, see: http://www.sd74.bc.ca/abed/firstnations.htm


7 These words were spoken by an anonymous Steering Committee Member at the second Power of Place Steering Committee meeting in June, 2006.

8 For further definitions and attributes of Traditional Ecological Knowledge, see also: Glen Aikenhead (2000), and Butler (2002).

9 For an example of this kind of work see: Boaz, F. (1900).

10 On this point, see also: Battiste & McLean (2005).

11 The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the US, including the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues. The CCSSO is located in Washington, D.C.

12 These comments are based on Brenda Ireland’s experience as Manager of Aboriginal Programming at a post-secondary institution in British Columbia.
In this study, Smith features three teachers and their pedagogical approaches to place-based education as framed by Gruenewald’s concepts of rehabilitation (reclaiming of place and environment) and decolonization (acknowledging destructive behaviour – misuse of people and land - and endeavouring to restore both).

For more information on the IISH, see: Institute of Integrative Science and Health, Cape Breton University: website: http://msit.cbu.ca/


For complete details on the “Rekindling traditions: Cross-Cultural Science & Technology Units” (CCSTU) project, see: http://www.usask.ca/education/ccstu/welcome.html.

AKRSI was established under the auspices of the Alaska Federation of Natives in cooperation with the University of Alaska.

For complete details on these guidelines, see: Alaska Native Knowledge Network, http://ankn.uaf.edu.

The twelve themes are: Family, language/communication, cultural expression, community, health/wellness, living in place, outdoor survival, ANCSA (Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act), subsistence, applied technology, energy/ecology, exploring horizons.

Seidl examines the ways in which cultural and political knowledge can be explored, understood, and personalized for prospective teachers in developing culturally relevant approaches. Although the research involves developing culturally relevant approaches for use in classrooms with high percentages of African American students, Seidl’s comments and findings are arguable relevant to the Indigenous experience as well because she is dealing with a historically marginalized population group.

For more on CREDE, see: Centre for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence, “History,” Centre for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence, http://crede.berkeley.edu/about/history.html
Indicators for each standard have also been developed, which are listed on the CREDE website. http://crede.berkeley.edu/standards/standards/html

For complete details, see the British Columbia Ministry of Education website: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed.


This is an illustration of a First Nation’s adoption of customs and norms of other Indigenous groups to replace traditions and heritage destroyed by colonial attitudes and practices. Perhaps this is inevitable since culture is not static - it evolves and changes to reflect contemporary values and beliefs. What is lamentable is the process that has driven this evolution. A natural progression would have allowed the St’át’icm to retain, practice and honour their own beliefs, values and traditions, instead they have experienced a profound cultural loss and are now engaged in attempts to reconnect with practices that help structure identify and clarify what it means to be ‘Indigenous’. Adopting the practices and norms of other Indigenous groups until one’s own can be reclaimed is a viable and commendable. The danger is that communities may not have the resources needed to engage Elders in research to identify and revitalize place and culture-specific practices, culture, and ceremonies that will ultimately be lost. This could further support the adoption of pan-Indian culture and identity based primarily on prairie practices which would undermine and diminish the rich cultural heritage that is Indigenous to St’át’icm territory.

For more details on the Cree School Board and related activities, see: http://www.cscree.qc.ca/

For more information on Rock Point Community School, see: http://www.rpcs.bia.edu/

For more details on Halau Ku Mana, see: http://www.halaukumana.org/

The results of this exercise can be viewed in Power of Place Conference Summary Report, April 1: 2007. See: www.sparc.bc.ca/publications
Appendix M: References

This reference list is divided into six sub-sections: journal articles, books, literature reviews, reports and working papers, conference presentations and websites.

Journal articles


Books


Literature reviews


Reports, working papers and online news articles


Conference presentations


Websites


Cape Breton University. Institute of Integrative Science and Health. Cape Breton University. http://msit.capebreton.ca/


Cree School Board. http://www.cscree.qc.ca


Rock Point Community School. http://www.rpcs.bia.edu/