

National Overview of
Elementary/Secondary Evaluation Projects

Volume I

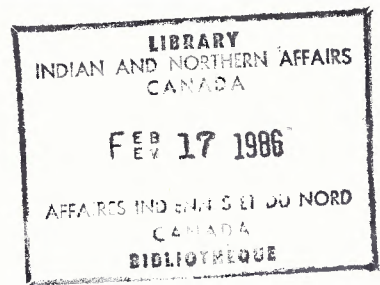
October 1984

Evaluation Branch
Corporate Policy
DIAND

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Executive Summary

In compliance with Treasury Board requirements to regularly review all Departmental programs, and in response to the concerns of the Indian community, the Evaluation Branch has conducted, and in some cases has assisted Bands in conducting a number of evaluation studies pertaining to Elementary/Secondary education programs. The purpose of this overview is to summarize the findings of evaluation studies undertaken since 1980 in order to provide senior Departmental and program management with key information arising from the studies.

The overview includes the following evaluation projects:

- a) The Educational Operational Review, carried out in Saskatchewan and Manitoba regions.
- b) An Evaluation Assessment of Education Committees and Boards.
- c) An Evaluation Assessment: Elementary/Secondary Instruction
- d) An Evaluation Study: Elementary/Secondary Instruction
- e) Five Band Case Studies in Education.

Limitations to Methodologies of the Studies

Of the evaluation projects summarized in this overview, only the Study of Elementary/Secondary Education and the Five Band-Case Studies could accurately be classified as evaluation studies. Despite limited availability and accessibility of data, the investigators responsible for the Band-Case Studies and the National Study of Elementary/Secondary Instruction managed to produce credible and descriptive reports using multiple sources of information and multiple methods to overcome limitations.

A shortcoming of all of the evaluation projects is the lack of consistency and comparability of each individual study to all of the other studies in the Elementary/Secondary Education area. The lack of comparable research designs and survey instruments is a limitation only from a corporate program evaluation point of view, and should not be viewed as a criticism of the consultants and the principal investigators of the studies.

A post-hoc effort to summarize and compare the Five Band Case Studies was completed and is included as Appendix II to this overview.

Main Findings and Recommendations

The Operational Review of Education made major statements concerning the management of the Education Program and are summarized as follows:

- . Major operational and management problems existed which, unless corrected, would prohibit the attainment of program objectives.
- . There was a lack of evidence to indicate that a clear commitment exists on the part of the Government of Canada towards fulfilling its responsibility for education of Indian people.
- . Efforts directed at ensuring the achievement of quality education were inadequate as were efforts directed to the achievement of local control and of accountability. Human resources dedicated to Education were also judged as inadequate.
- . A lack of co-ordination was identified as existing between the Education Program and various other services provided to Indian people.

The Operational Review recommended that the Department establish a clear commitment to the education of Indian peoples, and called for the support of Senior Management to the educators in a joint effort to take corrective action.

The National Evaluation of Elementary/Secondary Instruction and the Band Case Study evaluations, although differing significantly in scope and objectives revealed remarkably similar findings. Study findings coalesced around the following major points: serious deficiencies in the curriculum development area and in educational programming, difficulties in assessing student performance, problems stemming from poor attendance and high student mobility, the lack of Special Education Services and inadequacies in term of school personnel and facilities and in levels of community support for education.

Extensive recommendations were made in the National Evaluation Study as methods for rectifying problematic situations. Recommendations arising from the Case Study Evaluations were addressed to the specific Bands involved.

Implementation of Recommendations

Follow-up to the Operational Review exercise has consisted of an extensive education program review process carried out by DIAND education managers, and the preparation of a comprehensive policy paper titled "Indian Education Paper Phase I". Issues highlighted in the Operational Review and in the Evaluation Study of Elementary/Secondary Instruction have been included in a Discussion Paper and Cabinet memorandum on First Nation Education which was prepared by Departmental and Assembly of First Nations (A.F.N.) representatives and has been tabled in Cabinet.

Key Issues

The key issues which have emerged from these evaluation studies are:

1. Devolution and decentralization and the problems inherent in the transfer of control without the transfer of accountability.
2. Communication problems arising from the fact that many Indian children are entering the school system lacking facility in the official language of instruction.
3. Limitations to the methods available to assess student's achievement in school, particularly culturally-fair methods.
4. Education as only one factor in the broader context of the conditions confronting Indian people.

Future Directions

Suggested future directions arising from the overview exercise for Evaluation Branch regarding evaluation initiatives in the Education Program are as follows:

- . Increased emphasis on and resources dedicated to the evaluation of education programs Education to more accurately reflect the Departmental priorities for education,
- . Direction from the AFN Departmental endeavours in education to be used for determining the nature of future evaluation projects, and

- . Increased attention to relevant policy and program issues of interest to senior managers in the Department.

Prior to adopting a new direction, extensive consultation with the Education program management and senior management of the Indian and Inuit Affairs Program and the client groups is highly recommended.

NATIONAL OVERVIEW
ELEMENTARY/SECONDARY EDUCATION EVALUATION PROJECTS

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National Overview of Elementary/Secondary Evaluation Projects

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Program Evaluation Policy

The Department's program evaluation function, as mandated to the Evaluation Branch, Corporate Policy, derives from current Treasury Board of Canada policy. This policy was initially stated in TB Circular No. 1977-47 and has since been elaborated upon in several documents disseminated by the Office of the Comptroller General. The essence of the policy is that:

"Departments and agencies of the federal government will periodically review their programs to evaluate their effectiveness in meeting their objectives and the efficiency with which they are being administered."¹

In compliance with the Treasury Board policy and with the Evaluation Policy of DIAND itself, the Evaluation Branch has conducted a number of evaluation projects on Departmental

1. Guide on the Program Evaluation Function, Office of the Comptroller General, Treasury Board, May 1981, p.5.

programs. Through the annual and five-year evaluation planning exercises undertaken by the Branch, provision is made to ensure that all Departmental programs are subjected to evaluative study within a five-year cycle. To aid this process of observing a five-year cycle for the evaluation of Departmental programs, a program evaluation component structure has been devised by which activities and their related resources and outputs are grouped for evaluation purposes. This overview addresses recent evaluation projects completed on the Elementary/Secondary Education Program Evaluation Component.

1.2 Elementary/Secondary Education Evaluation Component

The Elementary/Secondary Education Evaluation Component in its current composition was defined in the early spring of 1983 in the process of preparing the 1983-84 Departmental Evaluation Plan and updating the Five-Year Evaluation Plan (1983-88). The creation of the Elementary/Secondary component was one aspect of a major revision to the evaluation component structure for Departmental programs.

For the Indian and Inuit Affairs Program, the restructuring of components involved the aggregation of the original forty-nine

into twenty new components. The revised structure permits evaluation efforts of broader scope and hence more closely coordinated to management information needs vis à vis operational and strategic planning, and decision-making. Within the current structure, Elementary/Secondary Education is one of four program evaluation components which together form the Education Activity of the Indian and Inuit Affairs Program. The other three Education Activity evaluation components are Education Capital Facilities, Post-Secondary Education, and Cultural Services.

The current Elementary/Secondary component includes all the Planning Variables listed in the 1982-83 Chart of Accounts for the elementary/secondary area with the exception of those related to education capital facilities and activity management. The component includes, then, the following variables:²

- 3.3 Federal Schools
 - 3.4 O & M, Federally-Operated Facilities
 - 3.5 Provincial Schools
 - 3.6 Band-Operated Schools
 - 3.7 O & M, Band-Operated Facilities
 - 3.8 Student Support Services
 - 3.9 Guidance and Counselling
2. Planning variables from the 1982-83 Chart of Accounts. Both these and the corresponding variables from the new system for the 1985-86 Operational Planning Framework are attached as Appendix 1, in Volume II.

The most recent objective statement for elementary/secondary education is the following, taken from the Department's 1985-86 Operational Planning Framework document:

"To ensure that Indians and Inuit have access to a quality and range of elementary/secondary education that is comparable to that available to other Canadians in surrounding communities and that is relevant to the social, economic, and cultural needs and conditions of the individuals, bands, and communities being served."

In 1973, the then Minister, Jean Chrétien, accepted the principles of local control and parental responsibility in the domain of Indian education, as stated in the 1972 National Indian Brotherhood's policy paper Indian Control of Indian Education. These principles have formed the basis for Departmental and Indian initiatives in providing elementary/secondary education since that time.

Activities included within the component concern the provision of funding for/or direct provision of instructional services and supplies, and of appropriate services ancillary to instruction,

for eligible students at the kindergarten, elementary, and secondary levels. Eligible students are the children of registered Indians resident on reserves or Crown lands. The mandate for this responsibility is provided in the Indian Act, Sections 114-123, qualified by Section 4(3).

Provision of elementary/secondary education to Indian children may be direct, through federally-operated schools, or indirect, through schools of the provincial systems or those operated by Bands themselves.

Some 77,000 Indian students nationally are currently enrolled in the three delivery systems; about 55% attend schools in the provincial systems, 30% attend federal schools, and approximately 15% are enrolled in Band-operated schools. Expenditures attributed to this program evaluation component (all three delivery mechanisms) totalled some \$270 million in fiscal year 1982-83, with over 1500 person-years assigned to the component.

1.3 Purpose of the Overview

This overview paper provides a consolidation of the several evaluation projects undertaken in elementary/secondary education by the Evaluation Branch since 1980, the year in which the major study on education operations was completed.

The primary purpose of the overview is to provide senior Departmental and program management with the key information arising from recent evaluation endeavours. Consolidation and highlighting of evaluative information from several studies should feed into decision-making at the level of broad program strategies.

Additionally, preparation of such an overview offers a unique opportunity to identify directions for future evaluative endeavours in the elementary/secondary area. Reflection on what has been done and, conversely, on what remains to be done or should be repeated on an extensive, complex component such as the subject of this paper is essential to the planning of fruitful evaluation projects over the 5-year evaluation cycle, now at the renewal point.

2. THE EVALUATION PROJECTS

2.1 Introduction

This overview begins with the first phase of the Education Operational Review, for which field work began in the Saskatchewan region in 1979. This Review was the first evaluative undertaking by the Evaluation Branch on elementary/secondary education which

addressed the bulk of activities within the component, on a national basis. It is, thus, an appropriate point to designate as the beginning of the five-year cycle of evaluation undertakings on the component which culminated in 1983 with the completion of a major evaluation study of several key aspects of the elementary/secondary program and five Band case studies which addressed a broad range of issues.

2.2 The Education Operational Review

2.2.1 The Project

The operational review, as its name indicates, was not an evaluation study as this term is normally used by federal government evaluators. Rather, the exercise was aimed at addressing a broad range of operational issues which were identified in an earlier analytical work, entitled "A Recommended Plan for Evaluation in Indian Education", completed in 1978. The operational review was undertaken as an initial step toward undertaking "proper" evaluation projects, a step which was viewed as necessary to resolve problems in the operation of the program prior to designing and carrying out an actual evaluation or series of evaluations.

In-depth reviews were carried out in two regions on the education program – Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The Saskatchewan review was carried out during the fall of 1979 with the report being finalized in March of 1980. In Manitoba, the review period was late 1980 with the final report completed in April, 1981. The reviews were conducted under the aegis of the overall evaluation objective of the national review, which was:

"To identify courses of action which will contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Education Activity and facilitate its evaluation."

The Saskatchewan review was conducted by a five-person team consisting of two consultants from Audit Services Bureau and three Indian consultants. The work in Manitoba was carried out by two Audit Services Bureau consultants.

The Saskatchewan study was originally planned to be a pilot for the later conduct of similar studies in all regions. Upon completion, the Saskatchewan report was assessed by education managers and staff in each of the other regions and feedback was provided to the evaluation team on the applicability of the study findings to the particular region.

The feedback indicated that the main findings of the Saskatchewan review reflected the situation in most other regions, although there were variations in the severity of the problems being experienced. As a result, it was decided that a full review in every region would neither be necessary nor cost-effective. Measures to improve education program operations were to be developed by each region using the Saskatchewan review framework. Its findings and recommendations were to serve as starting points for undertaking an internal assessment of the particular region's situation.

The decision to have the study team assist Manitoba education staff in this process by conducting a review in that region arose out of recognition of the region's different organization structure and the role of the Manitoba Indian Education Board in program planning and delivery.

While the original plan to conduct a national review of education operations in which all regions would be studied in depth was modified, it can be affirmed that the end-product of the exercise was in many respects a review of national scope. The formal reviews in the two regions produced very similar findings on the broader issues, and feedback from the remaining regions attested that many of the problems identified were widely shared.

2.2.2 Findings and Conclusions

The two in-depth reviews and the results of the consultations with education staff and management in the other regional offices were summarized in a separate report, Executive Overviews: National Education Operational Review, prepared within the Evaluation Branch in early 1982. The main findings of the reviews and the subsequent discussions as provided below were taken from the Executive Overview.

- a) As noted earlier, the operational review was not an evaluation study in which an assessment was carried out of the degree to which elementary/secondary program objectives had been achieved. The overall theme arising from the review, however, was that there were major operational and management problems in evidence that, unless corrected, would prohibit the attainment of these objectives.

- b) The main finding of the Saskatchewan review was the lack of evidence of a clear commitment on the part of the Government of Canada towards fulfilling its responsibility for the education of Indian people. This was seen as the root cause

of the specific problems identified in the review.

Accordingly, the first and most fundamental recommendation for change was the establishment of a clear commitment by the Department to the fact of this obligation and of the two major objectives. The Manitoba report called for the development of "completely fresh initiatives" in order that program objectives might be realized.

- c) Departmental efforts directed towards the quality of education per se, and towards quality as defined by the Indian people themselves, were judged to be seriously inadequate. To a large degree, the various shortcomings delineated in this area were seen as the result of the preoccupation of the professional educators (whose business quality is) with the demands of the administrative and financial accounting systems of the Department. Even if these demands on educators were to be diminished, there was evidence that human resources for the Education Activity are inadequate in relation to its mandate and to the proportion of the Department's financial resources allocated to it.

- d) The Department's efforts toward transferring control of education programs to the Indian peoples were shown to be deficient in several basic respects, an issue which was emphasized strongly in the feedback from the other regions. There was, first of all, no clear and accepted definition of Indian control. Bands which had assumed control of their education programs were carrying out more of an administrative role rather than a management one. Under transfer agreements Band Councils had become, in essence, extensions of the federal bureaucracy, and lacked the mandate to make management decisions such as the setting of objectives. The transfer process was found to be seriously impeded by the absence of clear policies and procedures for takeover. As well, the limited funds available in the program meant that insufficient developmental monies were available to meet the short-term additional assistance required by Bands during the planning and initial stages of assumption of control.
- e) The Saskatchewan review brought to the fore an issue concerning the very basis of responsible management practice: accountability for Indian education remains an unresolved question in terms of who is answerable to whom, for what, on

what assessment criteria, and through what mechanism. Its resolution will require a restructuring of the legal framework within which the Department/Indian relationships operate. It will also require that accountability relationships be clearly established between:

- DIAND to the Indian Bands and to Indian Band Governments
- Indian Band Governments to DIAND
- Indian Band Governments to their communities
- DIAND to the Government of Canada
- Provincial schools to the Indian Bands,

all in the context of Indian control of Indian education.

- f) The review pointed to the need for greater co-ordination between education programs and services and the various other forms of socio-economic assistance provided to Indians, in recognition of the powerful effects of socio-economic factors on a child's education achievement.

2.3 Evaluation Assessment of Education Committees and Boards

2.3.1 The Project

This evaluation project, undertaken by an Evaluation Branch Staff member, with assistance from Pamela White, Consultant, addressed only a small sub-component of the Elementary/Secondary Education Evaluation Component as now constituted. Within the component structure in place when this assessment was undertaken, Education Committees and Boards was a program evaluation component on its own. It was assigned a high priority in evaluation planning terms at that time because of the critical role these groups are believed to play in furthering the Indian control of Indian Education. In the 1978 evaluation report cited earlier, "A Recommended Plan for Evaluation in Indian Education", local control of Indian education was one of four main lines of enquiry identified as appropriate key directions for ensuing evaluation endeavours.

Research and field visit aspects of the assessment task were completed in the fall of 1981. The report was put in final form in June 1982. The delay was the result of efforts to ensure that the directions suggested for further evaluative undertakings on

Education Committees and Boards did not duplicate or conflict with those of other evaluation assessment which were then in progress on related programs.

The Education Committees and Boards program dates back to 1956 when an experimental program was set up involving the establishment of school committees on sixteen reserves. The experimental program was judged by those involved as successful on two fronts: as a vehicle for input by community members to the Department's operation of the on-reserve schools and as a means to promote community interest in education. By 1963, there were forty-one school committees in existence and the program was extended to all Bands who requested it.

The term "Education Committees and Boards" is a shorter version of the official program title "Education Committees, Boards, and Authorities" used by the Department. It includes a fairly broad range of organizational entities which have assumed a variety of titles and responsibilities. As well, the program includes education organization whose scope of operation is broader than that of the individual reserve. A typology is presented below:

- . Provincial Indian Education Boards are Indian Education boards or councils where members represent a majority of bands in a province. The board or council may be a part of or affiliated with a provincial Indian organization.

- . District, Tribal or Area Education Boards or councils, are boards or councils where board members represent a group of bands.

- . Band Education Boards, Authorities, or Committees are boards, authorities, or committees where board members represent the membership of a band. These boards, authorities or committees may have sole responsibility, or the major responsibility for the management of education programs for a band.

- . School Committees, Home and School organizations, and Parent Teachers Associations primarily form a communication link between parents and the school. They may act in an advisory capacity to chiefs and councils, school boards or authorities and school staff. In some instances they have responsibility for managing portions of the education program. (Most Bands fall into this category.)

- . Representation on Provincial School Boards. This board membership may constitute full board membership under provincial law or advisory membership.

The program's budget allocation in 1980-81 was approximately \$900,000, divided amongst nearly six hundred organizations. The Department's activities under the program are the provision of basic (or maintenance) funding of a small sum and advice and guidance to the organization's members.

Funding of education programs operated by a Band's government or, through delegation, by the school committee, is in the form of an accountable contribution and is entirely separate from the basic budget provided under the Education Committees and Boards program. Similarly, departmental funds for training of school committee members are allocated separately and under a separate authority, generally from outside the Education Activity altogether.

2.3.2 Findings and Conclusions

The primary conclusion of the assessment was that a discrete evaluation study specifically on the Education Committees and Boards program was inappropriate. This conclusion was based on the fact that Education Committees and Boards was too limited in scope to be accorded status as a program evaluation component. The program was only one (and a small one in terms of departmental

resources) of several activities and programs which were directed towards achievement of the same objectives. In any study of the effectiveness of this one program, it would have been very difficult to establish cause and effect linkages.

The recommended evaluation approach was that the Evaluation Branch undertake to monitor other studies which touch on the program area, and to promote the inclusion of evaluation questions specific to the program within the parameters of current evaluation initiatives to the extent feasible.

2.4 Evaluation Assessment: Elementary/Secondary Instruction

2.4.1 The Project

This evaluation assessment was undertaken on a contract basis by ESM and Associates of Ottawa over the period September 1981 to March 1982. It addressed the program evaluation component "Instruction - Elementary/Secondary Education", from the earlier program evaluation component structure. In the present structure, this former component is subsumed within the larger one, Elementary/Secondary Education.

While the assessment addressed the entire Instruction component, it focussed particularly on the following three aspects: school and program quality, curriculum development, and the effects of local control. These foci were drawn in part from the key "lines of enquiry" proposed for future evaluation projects in the report "A Recommended Plan for Evaluation" completed in 1978.

The evaluation team interviewed DIAND staff, both central office and regional staff, and interviewed a number of Indian persons including educators in Indian associations and in a reserve school. A number of DIAND reports related to the evaluation of education programs were reviewed along with the general literature of evaluation research in minority-group education programs. The team visited the Tobique reserve and observed an evaluation team working in the reserve school. The team also visited the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C. to discuss the evaluation research of that Bureau.

After discussions with the headquarters DIAND education staff, evaluation options were presented to DIAND senior management. The selected option was then developed into a work-plan and presented in the assessment report as a proposal for the next phase of evaluation research.

2.4.2 Findings and Conclusions

The evaluation team presented three options for subsequent evaluation endeavours to DIAND management. The full set of evaluation issues identified in the course of the assessment are presented as Appendix II (in Volume II) to this report because they form a coherent and comprehensive set of questions which should continue to be utilized in the planning of future evaluation projects.

The three options were:

- . Evaluate the effectiveness of DIAND training, advice and support for transition to Indian control of instruction.
- . Develop an evaluation framework for assessing the quality of instruction in Federal and Band schools, based upon the testing and reporting of student achievement.
- . Evaluate the curriculum development component of the elementary/secondary education programs.

Departmental management selected a preferred option which focussed strongly on issues relating to quality of instruction rather than on Indian control. This preferred option drew from the second and third options presented by the team and the sets of evaluation issues outlined within those options. The evaluation study which followed from this assessment got underway early in the summer of 1982, and is addressed below in section 2.5 of this report.

2.5 Evaluation Study: Elementary/Secondary Instruction

2.5.1 The Project

Following on from the evaluation assessment described in the preceding section, this study addressed the following three tasks:

- a) Development of an evaluation framework for Band-level education evaluations;
- b) Review of approaches to school and program standards and indicators of quality of instruction;
- c) Review of the development of special curriculum materials for Indian students.

The study was carried out by ESM and Associates of Ottawa, on contract to the Evaluation Branch, over the period June 1982 to April 1983. The study was national in scope with the main approaches to collecting data and information consisting of:

- a survey, by mailed questionnaire, of principals of all Indian elementary/secondary schools;
- discussions with departmental education staff in each region, and at headquarters;
- contacts with provincial departments of education and education faculties of selected universities;
- several field visits to Indian schools;
- literature and departmental document review.

An evaluation advisory committee composed of two regional Directors of Education, the Director of Education at headquarters, and an Evaluation Branch staff member provided direction and guidance throughout the project. Throughout the study, various

Indian education leaders were consulted for guidance and input to the study tasks.

2.5.2 Findings and Conclusions

The completion of the first task, the development of an evaluation framework for Band-level evaluations, resulted in the preparation of a draft handbook entitled "A Resource Book for Self-help Evaluations of Instruction Programs in Indian Schools".

The Resource Book, prepared for use by Bands, is a "draft" in the sense that its use is voluntary and it is subject to modification and adaptation in specific situations. Nevertheless it is hoped that having such a resource book available will contribute towards the evolution of a more standard approach to the evaluation of Indian schools, and that information collected through this more standard approach will over time become a resource for managers formulating DIAND policies at the national and regional levels.

The Resource Book describes procedures for planning and implementing an evaluation, for involving the community, for collecting information, for identifying issues and community priorities, and for presenting recommendations for improvement of

instruction programs. It is anticipated that some of the book's material is transferable to assist in Band-initiated evaluations of other program areas.

The second task of the evaluation study culminated in a report entitled "Methods of Evaluating Quality of Instruction in Indian Schools". The report addresses the use of provincial and other achievement tests in Indian schools, reviews the availability of appropriate testing instruments, analyses the likely effectiveness of these testing instruments as norms for the Indian student population, and suggests some of the important issues to be considered in consultation with Indian teachers, parents, and students.

The report stresses that Indian schools have a number of important unmet needs in the area of evaluating quality of instruction. Among these, there are four which stand out as being both widespread and urgent:

- a) Three-quarters of Indian schools use standardized achievement tests. Of the 209 principals who responded to this question in the survey, 111 reported using the Canadian Test of Basic Skills and 43 the Gates McGinitie Reading Test. However,

there is a high level of frustration and concern among principals that the standards are not appropriate for Indian pupils. There is also a great variety of tests being used. Aside from the CTBS and Gates McGinitie, some thirty other standardized tests were mentioned by school principals.

- b) Efforts to evaluate the quality of instruction in Indian schools are often frustrated by basic communication problems. If a student cannot read the instructions in a math test, for example, then the test is not likely to measure his ability in mathematics. This was the second most frequently-cited problem in the survey responses, following the concern about lack of appropriate standardized tests.

- c) Virtually all Indian schools follow the Provincial Curriculum, with only minor modifications overall. About a tenth of the principals surveyed expressed concern with the lack of criterion-referenced tests for the particular Provincial Curriculum. (Criterion-referenced tests are used mainly to measure a child's mastery of a certain unit of subject matter in a particular curriculum whereas the standardized tests referred to in a) above are designed to assess a student's general academic performance in relation to other students.)

- d) In many Indian schools, irregular attendance/absenteeism makes a farce of an achievement testing program. Yet, very few schools take attendance into account in promoting students to the next grade, and the curricula are generally not modified to respond to sporadic attendance.

- e) Some of the problems which the study identified arise from the extreme decentralization of the Indian school "system". Specialist services such as diagnostic screening for students with learning disabilities cannot be provided by one isolated school.

The report concluding the third task area of the study ("Curricula in Indian Schools") provided an assessment of the needs with regard to curriculum development and the rationale for future DIAND support of activity in curriculum development. There is a review of the historical involvement in curriculum development by DIAND National Office, and of the support of curriculum development by the DIAND regional offices in more recent years. The level of activity, however, has been very low, and the efforts have been sporadic and reactive. Also, the level of knowledge within DIAND was low regarding the activities of other regions,

and other Provincial governments. The study team found very little activity to evaluate in terms of results and therefore focussed primarily on establishing what present practices in Indian schools are and what the main needs for DIAND support in future might be.

- a) Most Indian schools lack the funds, time and expertise to undertake curriculum development or major curriculum modification. Half of the principals responding to the survey explicitly named these lacks as the major barrier to curriculum development or modification within their schools.
- b) Three key problem areas in Indian school curricula were identified as:
 - modification of the "core" subjects of the provincial curricula to make them more compatible with the needs of Indian schools;
 - provision of adequate second language, language arts, and E.S.L. materials;
 - provision of materials related to Indian cultures broader than a single reserve.

- c) Most curriculum materials developed for Indian students are made in the classroom by teachers. No other single source stands out as especially important. In particular, the Cultural Education Centres are not used significantly more than several other sources. A more centralized approach both to preparation and to dissemination of curriculum materials is required, once needs have been identified by the Indian bands in relation to their own education goals for their children.

2.6 Five Band Case Studies in Education

2.6.1 The Projects

Over the period 1981-83, the Evaluation Branch provided assistance, in the form of guidance and funds, to five Indian communities in the conduct of evaluations of the education programs available to their youth, primarily through their schools on the reserve. All five studies were initiated by Band officials, not by the Evaluation Branch. In the second volume of this overview report, Appendix II provides a detailed consolidation of the five. As the Appendix conveys, the five evaluations were not initially intended by the Evaluation Branch to be used as case studies to enrich the information arising from

national scope evaluations on elementary/secondary education. Assistance was provided initially simply because it was needed. When the first two were completed - at Alexander and Tobique - the quality and depth of information of the studies indicated that such studies could readily serve both ends, that of responding to a need and of providing additional insights in the conduct of larger studies.

(a) The Alexander Band

In 1980, The Alexander Band of Alberta initiated an Education Improvement Project which was rooted in the desire to make schooling more successful for their children. A major part of the Education Improvement Project was an evaluation of the education available to children of the Alexander Band. The evaluation was carried out over the period June 1981 to April 1982 by a research team headed by Professor Philip N. Lane of the University of Lethbridge. The purpose of the evaluation was to identify for the Band the reasons for the apparent failure of education for the children of the Alexander Band. Midway through the evaluation study, the Alexander Band decided to assume control over their school and educational program. This decision was implemented some months later, after the study was completed.

(b) The Tobique Band

The Tobique Band (New Brunswick) assumed responsibility for its own school and education program in 1975, but had turned this responsibility back to the Department of Indian Affairs in 1977. Since then, both agencies had been involved in the school's operation. In 1981, the Chief and Council made a request to the Evaluation Branch for assistance with an evaluation study designed to assist the Band in determining when and how they might proceed to assume full operational control over the education program, and to identify any problems in the program currently offered in the school. The study, undertaken by Professors W.D. Hamilton and R.D. Owston of the University of New Brunswick, was completed in March 1982.

(c) The Hobbema Four Bands

The Hobbema Four Bands community (Alberta) and its administration represent the Samson, Montana, Louis Bull, and Ermineskin Bands. The Department operates a primary and a junior high school in the Four Bands community which is situated near Edmonton, Alberta. The Education Committee initiated an evaluation of the schools in

order to gain knowledge and understanding of the process, nature and quality of the education program being offered. The evaluation, undertaken by Mentor Associates of Calgary, was carried out over the period January to August 1982.

(d) The Alexis Band

This community, also located near Edmonton, Alberta, has a federally-operated elementary school on-site, although many of the Band children of elementary school age attend the schools of the provincial system in the nearby town of Lac St. Anne. The major reason for the request by Band officials for an education evaluation was to identify reasons for the perceived failure of education for the children in the community. The firm, Resources for the Future Consulting Limited (R and F) was contracted to conduct the evaluation which was undertaken over the period November 1982 to May 1983. Professor Philip N. Lane, who was the principal investigator in the Alexander Study, assisted R. and F.

(e) The Chapel Island Band

In September of 1981, the Chapel Island Band of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, assumed responsibility for Mi'kmawey, the on-reserve

school. After one year of operating the school, the Band asked the Evaluation Branch of D.I.A.N.D. to assist them in having an evaluation conducted. The Band had the following specific areas of concern which it wanted an evaluation to address: community expectations, organization and administration, curriculum, instruction, pupil achievement, human resources and physical facilities. Professors R.D. Owston and W.D. Hamilton from the Education Faculty at the University of New Brunswick were the principal investigators contracted for this study, which was completed in June 1983.

2.6.2 Findings and Conclusions

a) Curriculum and Programming Deficiencies

All of the schools included in this review were attempting to follow the provincial curriculum in place. In several of the studies evaluators reported that the curriculum was being implemented very inflexibly, often with little connection between what the teacher was teaching and what the students were prepared to learn. Evaluators reported that the teachers at the Hobbema

Four Bands schools had attempted to adapt the curriculum to the students' needs. The Chapel Island Band teaching staff were following the provincial program in most areas, but were making efforts as well to enrich/adapt the program to a more Native focus.

At the other schools involved in the review, teachers expressed concern over the inappropriateness of the provincial curriculum for native students. Three of the study reports, Tobique, Chapel Island and Hobbema, indicated that there was a lack of, and a need for, curriculum plan implementation policies in order to ensure continuity and integration.

In all of the case studies, the curriculum material used was not oriented to Native children. According to the Alexis and Alexander reports, there was a lack of recognition of the Native child as a student with distinct learning styles and curriculum requirements. These reports expressed the view that inadequate and culturally irrelevant learning materials and inappropriate teaching styles have compounded the educational problems. It should be noted that teachers at the Hobbema Four Bands schools and the Chapel Island School had been developing special materials for their students, although on an ad hoc basis.

Despite expressed interest by leaders and various officials of all five communities in restoring pride in Native culture and in expressing and preserving native heritage, there were no formal Native programs. Teachers at the Chapel Island and Hobbema Reserves were trying to involve community members as teachers/demonstrators of the traditional ways and also to provide students with culturally-relevant materials. These attempts were made by individual teachers and did not reflect a school policy or curriculum plan. None of the schools reviewed had explicit plans for Native projects/programs to be implemented into the existing school program.

b) Student Performance

At all of the schools reviewed, the majority of students were performing well below grade level, according to a number of indicators. Teachers, parents and students from the Hobbema Four Bands Reserve noted that expectations were lower for students in the federal system.

Teachers at the schools expressed concern over students' health problems and the impact of these problems on their learning ability. As an example of the health problems, testing at the

Alexander Band Reserve revealed that over 45% of the children tested were hearing-impaired to some extent, and at the Alexis Band Reserve testing revealed that 26.8% of the students had hearing abnormalities.

c) Student Attendance and Mobility

Poor attendance was identified as a serious problem in the reports from the Alexis Band, the Hobbema Four Bands and the Chapel Island Band. The Hobbema report emphasized poor attendance and its impact on learning and also criticized the school's open door attendance policy. Student mobility was mentioned as a detractor to learning in the Tobique and the Hobbema reports.

Mobility of students was a serious concern to administrators and teachers at the Tobique school as enrollment was declining very rapidly. Many parents in the community, apparently having lost confidence in the Band school, were transferring their students to the local provincial school. A strategy for restoring the confidence of parents in the Reserve school was being sought by Band leaders in order to stem the flow of Native children to the provincial schools. Teachers from the Hobbema Four Bands Schools

reported that students transferred in and out of the reserve schools quite frequently and suggested that this mobility be discouraged as it disrupts the learning process.

d) Special Educational Services

There was no provision made for special educational services at any of the case study schools. These Indian communities did not have access to diagnostic specialists (psychologists and psychometrists). No special services were being provided to them through the provincial system. None of the teachers had received training in special education, although the Hobbema Four Bands Schools had classes designated as Special Education Classes.

e) School Personnel

The Alexander, Alexis, and the Hobbema Four Bands studies reported problems with the hiring process. Specific difficulties were noted as being: D.I.A.N.D. is responsible for hiring of teachers and all competitions involve a lengthy and protracted process; federal salaries are reported to be lower than provincial salaries for teachers and the benefit packages are considerably less attractive in the federal system; as well, wages for supply

teachers are also much lower. In addition to these problems, the Bands expressed concern over the fact that many of the teachers hired by D.I.A.N.D. were unfamiliar with the Canadian school system and that English was a second language to many of the teachers.

The Chapel Island Band, because the school was under its own management was directly involved in the hiring of teachers. The assessment of the hiring process at Chapel Island revealed a more positive situation.

All of the teachers employed in the schools of the five communities are professionally qualified teachers with varying levels of teaching experience. The majority of the teachers were working under difficult conditions - students needing special attention/programming, lack of parental involvement, isolation from specialist services and resources, poor communication both within the school administrative system and with the community, lack of psychological/counselling services for students, and in some cases, no teacher aides.

The problems for the Tobique Band were compounded by inexperienced teachers and a serious communication breakdown within the school. The Alexis Band and the Alexander Band were confronted with high staff turnover and very low morale. The report for the Hobbema Four Bands study stated that the teachers were exceptionally dedicated and doing far more than would normally be expected of them. At Chapel Island the community expressed satisfaction with the teachers, and described them as being very enthusiastic and committed to their work.

The Chapel Island and Hobbema reports indicated good lines of communication existing between teachers and principals and/or school coordinators, although the Hobbema team reported that there was some dissatisfaction with the District Office administration. Possibilities were said to exist for in-service training for schools of both communities, but advantage of these opportunities had not been taken.

Staff support and supervision were not mentioned in the Alexander report, while the Alexis and the Tobique reports stated that there was little supervision or teacher development opportunities. In general, supervision that is provided in provincial schools was lacking in schools addressed in the five studies, as were most specialist services.

f) Facilities

All the schools evaluated were assessed as being structurally adequate for the present needs of the community, but should enrollment expand, most of the schools would require modification. Good potential for modification of the physical structure was found for all the schools. Many specific problems were noted for each of the schools. A sample of shortcomings of the facilities includes a lack of physical recreation facilities, poor lighting, classroom doors opening in the wrong direction, poor parking facilities for teachers' cars and for the school buses, drab decorating and uneven temperature. The libraries constituted a major problem for all of the schools; a lack of books, cataloguing systems, library personnel and furniture were most frequently noted as shortcomings.

g) Community Support for Education

When surveyed, community members from all five communities expressed interest in being involved in the educational process with their children and also expressed views indicating they placed a high value on education. In many instances, the stated interest and beliefs were very different from the respondents'

actions. The Alexander and the Alexis Community members stated general satisfaction with the schools and indicated that they would be willing to spend time in class with students on a regular basis. Based on observations made by teachers and by the evaluators, there was little direct involvement with the school, parents were difficult to contact and there had actually been some hostility between teachers and community members. Hobbema teachers expressed concern over parental attitudes toward education, and their (perceived) disinterest in the school and suggested that education was not viewed as a criterion for success by the parents.

Community members at Chapel Island expressed interest in being involved in education and stressed the importance of education to improving the quality of Native life, as well as emphasizing the need for and right to the highest quality of education. Here also, there was little actual involvement of parents and community members in educational activities, in spite of efforts on the part of the teachers to involve the community and the avowed interest of community members in being involved in school activities. The majority of parents in the Tobique community expressed a lack of confidence in the reserve school and demonstrated this by transferring their children out to the Provincial System.

This picture arising from the five studies of community members' support for education – the discrepancy between stated beliefs or values and actual behaviour and the low level of parental involvement in school events/meetings – must be placed in perspective, however. That is, one must ask the question as to whether the picture is much different in non-native communities.

It would appear that educational issues in native communities are magnifications of the issues confronting the non-native communities.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The Two Evaluation Assessments

As is appropriate with evaluation assessment undertakings, the recommendations presented in the reports concerned proposals for subsequent evaluative projects rather than actions for program managers toward immediate program improvements.

As described in sections 2.4 and 2.5 of this report, the evaluation assessment of instruction at the elementary and secondary levels was followed immediately by an extensive

evaluation study of national scope. The study addressed aspects, chosen by senior departmental managers, of the options presented in the assessment report.

It was noted earlier in section 2.3 that the conclusion of the Committees and Boards assessment indicated that a separate evaluation study of this program was inappropriate. The recommendation was that, at least in the short-term, efforts should be made by the Evaluation Branch to gather more information on the program through monitoring other broader-based evaluations and, where feasible, inserting specific questions on the program into the plan for these studies. To the extent that opportunities arose to pursue these two routes the recommendation was carried out.

A small number of evaluation questions on Committees and Boards was included in the evaluation of the Band Training program, completed in February 1983. The study provided evidence that Band Training, as then constituted was not filling the training needs of school committees nor of the Indian School Boards which has assumed administrative responsibility for education programs.

(The former Band Training program, now called the Inuit/Indian Management Development Program, has since undergone significant design and delivery changes.)

As of this writing, there has been no other opportunity to include, as part of another evaluation project, evaluation questions directly related to the Committees and Boards program. Nevertheless, the Evaluation Branch's experience in assisting with the five Band-level evaluation studies attests to the importance of these organizations in promoting and focussing community members' interest and involvement in education programming provided to their children.

3.2 The Two National Evaluation Projects

As discussed earlier, the key elements of the Education Operations Review were the in-depth reviews carried out in Saskatchewan and Manitoba regions. A large number of recommendations resulted from both undertakings, many of them requiring extensive further study and consultation among the key parties - the Indian peoples and their leaders, the regional and headquarters education staff of the department. The level of implementation of those

recommendations amenable to action at the regional level was fairly high. The broader and more complex recommendations, while not implemented, have been addressed by further study and consultation as part of the extensive education program review process initiated by DIAND education managers and carried out over the period 1982-84. As a key part of the review, a comprehensive document entitled Indian Education Paper - Phase I was produced early in 1983 and distributed to Indian Bands and organizations to inaugurate dialogue on the deficiencies of the education programs and services available and the new directions to be taken.

The most recent phase of this comprehensive review process has been the preparation, by Departmental and Assembly of First Nations representatives, of a Discussion Paper on First Nations education, which was recently tabled before Cabinet Ministers along with a Memorandum to Cabinet. Both documents address the whole spectrum of positive and negative aspects of Indian education, including those issues highlighted in the Operational Review and the needs identified by the more recent Elementary/Secondary Instruction (1983) evaluation study. The latter study, in fact, provided a considerable portion of the data

used in presenting the issues in the two cabinet documents. The level of implementation of these two national evaluation studies' recommendations will correspond to the extent to which the department and A.F.N. are able to carry to fruition the initiatives proposed in the Cabinet Documents.

3.3 The Band-level Evaluations

In four of the five Band-level studies, the degree of implementation of study recommendations has been high. This is to be expected given that the Bands themselves initiated the evaluations and their officials played lead roles throughout the course of the projects. There has, as of this writing, been little implementation in the case of the Alexis Band study, but it was only completed some eight months ago and there has been a change in the principalship of the school during this period. A brief account of implementation and post evaluation experience in the four communities follows.

3.3.1 Tobique Band

In Tobique, a committee composed of Band and District office officials has devised and implemented a new organizational

structure wherein the Band is in charge of school operations, supervisory services are provided by the Department, and respective responsibilities are clearly defined. This interim arrangement, from all reports, appears to be working effectively. Plans are being made for the Band to assume full responsibility of the educational program in September 1985. The committee also addressed the other study recommendations and the majority have been implemented.

3.3.2 The Alexander Band

Since the evaluation study, the Alexander Band has assumed full control of the on-reserve school and has instituted throughout the school a new model for early childhood education believed to be better suited to the needs of the children. A number of measures have been taken to assist children with vision and hearing difficulties to learn at a normal pace, such as the setting up of listening centres, language master machines, a perception centre for retraining and also retesting. Out-of-date and inappropriate texts have been replaced and materials have been purchased which are suitable for specific need and learning styles of the student population. A learning environment has been established which

recognizes the specific learning styles of the children and teachers have been trained for this environment. A careful selection process for teaching and non-teaching personnel has been developed. Extensive renovations and repairs have been made to the physical facilities in addition to all of these other major changes. Alexander officials report that in the first year of Band management of the school and with the recommended changes in place, considerable achievement gains have been made by the children and attendance rates have dramatically improved.

3.3.3 Hobbema Four Bands

Recommendations which lent themselves to immediate action are either at the planning stage or at the implementation stage. The skills mastery system has been partially implemented in reading and language arts and a number of teaching models have been reviewed by the Education Committee. Several of the major recommendations have been implemented; a special committee has been set up to implement study findings not yet addressed. Although not a recommendation of the evaluation study, Four Band leaders are taking steps toward assuming full control of their education program within the next few years.

3.3.4 Chapel Island Band

The Chapel Island Band has acted on or is putting in place the majority of recommendations put forth by the evaluation team. D.I.A.N.D. has agreed to provide a curriculum development consultant, and to assist in developing specific terms of reference for the school board, a job description for the coordinator, and a handbook of policies and procedures. The School Committee has agreed that maintaining or surpassing provincial curriculum standards should be their priority goal and have implemented a number of changes to realize this goal, such as lengthening the school day, keeping subject teaching to a minimum, increased testing and individualized pupil instruction.

4. KEY ISSUES

Several issues stand out as key ones in reviewing the body of evaluation projects covered in this overview.

4.1 Devolution and Decentralization

The present delivery system for the provision of elementary and secondary level schooling to Registered Indian children is highly

decentralized in the sense that the on-reserve schools are many in number, and, with few exceptions, have very small enrollments. The on-reserve schools under DIAND administration are in many ways no less isolated, one from another, than those under Band administration.

Under neither administration is there the education support system common to the provincial system. Even with the availability of more funds, the problems in providing appropriate support to many small schools, often geographically isolated, and serving communities which pose their own unique characteristics and challenges are not readily addressed. The difficulties in providing, with even some regard to economy, of such support as visiting subject specialists, curriculum development assistance, staff in-service training, diagnostic services, and, in the case of Band-administered schools, basic staff benefit packages suggest the need for innovative solutions, indeed a range of different approaches depending on the community and its situation.

As more and more Bands assume responsibility for their own schools, other needs arise. The smooth transition of a school from departmental to Band control frequently is hampered by the

lack of resources in the department to meet planning and research costs, curriculum development or modification requirements, and to provide, where requested, support and advice requiring the time of departmental staff during the transition period. Availability of appropriate training in the management of an education program is generally inadequate. The funding and accountability processes required of the department in turn impose undue limitations in many areas on the flexibility available to Bands to tailor the school's program to their own situation.

4.2 Communication Issues

Approximately 60% of Indian children enter school lacking facility in the official language of instruction – French or English. For many, the native language has been their only language. Very few on-reserve school programs take this into account, either by providing special second language training and staff equipped to deliver it, or by offering instruction in the native language. Special language programs are virtually non-existent for the more than half of Indian children who attend provincial schools. The effects of this incongruence on a child's ability to progress in the school are self-evident. The communication problems must also promote alienation of parents from the school environment.

The language problems faces by Indian students at school are compounded by the use of texts and instructional materials largely irrelevant to their own life experience. The evaluations have demonstrated as well the very limited extent of modification of curriculum content or teaching approaches to the needs of the Indian student.

4.3 Assessing the Student's Achievement in School

Most on-reserve schools are employing three main methods for measuring student achievement: general records of student work; teacher-developed tests, and standardized achievement tests. The standardized battery most often used, both in Band and federal schools, is The Canadian Test of Basic Skills. Although there is a high level of usage of standardized tests, it is accompanied by a high level of dissatisfaction on the part of the staff who administer them. These tests are neither oriented in their content towards the experiences of Indian children nor are they normed for a comparable population of Indian children.

Efforts to evaluate achievement, by whatever method, are often further frustrated by the basic communications problems referred to in section 4.2. If a student cannot read the instructions in a

math test, for example, then the test is not likely to measure his or her ability in math. In many Indian schools, high levels of irregularity of attendance/absenteeism make achievement testing fruitless. The extreme centralization of the Indian school "system" mitigates against the provision of testing services by specialists, such as in diagnostic screening.

4.4 Education in the Broader Context

Again, a self-evident problem, yet further attested to by the evaluations, is the fact that the most enriched, top-quality education program cannot meet with the success due it and deserved by the children as long as socio-economic conditions in Indian communities remain so far below acceptable standards.

This section has provided a brief recapitulation of the main issues raised in the various evaluations. Neither this overview report, nor the evaluation themselves, can provide a comprehensive account of the problems in Indian education in Canada; more importantly, they cannot convey the perspective of the Indian peoples on which have more priority than others and where to begin to focus improvements. The recent establishment through Cabinet

decision, of a joint First Nations Education Secretariat to address the provision of education to Indians throughout the country is a significant positive step toward the major revamping required.

5. Future Directions for Evaluation Endeavours

One of the purposes of this particular overview exercise was to delineate in broad terms, the direction and scope of future evaluation initiatives within the Education component. Several key points emerged as a result of this review of evaluation initiatives which could be used to guide future evaluation endeavours. The key points are discussed in the following pages.

Education as a Priority Program for D.I.A.N.D.

The Education and Social Development Program in 1984/85 budget dollars, including salaries and capital expenditures, accounts for 52% of the dollars and 47% of the person years of the Indian and Inuit Affairs Program. The 1985/86 M.Y.O.P. figures for the Elementary/Secondary component only, are \$314,755,000 and 1,754 person years. (Note that the dollar figures exclude salaries.)

As Education constitutes a major part of the Departmental budget, and has now been recognized and identified as a priority issue for D.I.A.N.D., and will undoubtedly remain an important issue far into the future, it would be appropriate for the activities of Evaluation Branch to reflect the Departmental emphasis on Education. The major direction emerging from this overview is that more evaluation resources should be dedicated to the evaluation of education program than have been dedicated in the past.

Evaluative inquiry can yield information relevant to the making of decisions about direction and focus of programs, resource allocations and program improvements. To date, much of the focus of evaluation projects in the Elementary/Secondary Component has been on making education programs more amenable to evaluation; in short this has meant clarifying program objectives, developing performance indicators and establishing community-based resources for evaluation. As part of the evolution of the role of Evaluation Branch within the Department, new evaluation endeavours must increasingly focus on whether Education programs are achieving their objectives and on whether the programs are being effective. It is imperative that evaluation exercises focus on issues identified to be of direct interest to senior managers in the Department.

If the focus on Educational programs, specifically the Elementary/Secondary Component, were to be strengthened there would be a need to examine the Five Year Evaluation Plan. In the present Evaluation Plan, (1983/84-1987/88), there are no evaluations scheduled for the Elementary/Secondary Component until 1986/87. This scheduling is not reflective of Departmental priorities for Education.

It is recommended that Evaluation Branch revise the Five Year Evaluation Plan after consultation with senior managers of the Indian and Inuit Affairs Program. It is anticipated that the nature of future evaluation projects will be determined by the joint AFN/Departmental planning efforts now going on.

Focus on Issues of Interest to Senior Managers

In addition to the suggested direction of more closely reflecting the Departmental priority for Education, an indication is gained from the review of evaluations completed to date that much of the focus has been on increasing the measurability of Education programs. As a means of evolving and becoming more relevant to the Department, there is a clear indication that evaluation studies, as well as increasing their focus on program effectiveness issues, should increasingly address major policy concerns of the senior managers of the Department.

Major issues have been identified by the Education program and could quite feasibly be used as a starting point for discussion concerning future evaluation studies. The policy issues identified as being most relevant to D.I.A.N.D's Education Program are as follows:

1. Quality of Indian Education,
2. Local Control of Indian Education,
3. Education Management Framework, and
4. Funding Issues.

Detailed coverage of these policy issues is provided in the "Indian Education Paper, Phase I" prepared in 1982 by the Education and Social Development Branch. An evaluation strategy titled "A Recommended Plan for Evaluation in Indian Education" prepared in 1978 for Evaluation Branch suggested roughly similar policy issues as a thematic focus for evaluations. More strenuous adherence to those issues of direct interest to senior managers is advocated as a means of ensuring that evaluations are relevant to decision making.