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REPORT ON THE ALEXANDER
BAND'S TRANSITION TO LOCALLY
CONTROLLED EDUCATION:
RESULTS OF TWO SURVEYS

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Background Information

In 1982, the Alexander Indian Band assumed control of its own education program. It established a locally controlled on reserve school based on the principles of the Anisa model of education. Four years later, it has undertaken a comprehensive evaluation of the experiences and achievements of the school and the process of its establishment.

The evaluation of the innovative education program at Alexander has been undertaken with the support of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. It is intended to provide information about the human and financial resources required to make an effective changeover to local control and to provide information on the impacts of this changeover -- on students, the school, and community-school relations.

With respect to its education program, the Alexander Band is addressing the following evaluation issues:

1. How is local control defined and exercised?
2. How did the transition to local control take place?
3. What new achievements have been realized?
4. What are the most important remaining problems and how might they be overcome?
5. How have costs changed?

By addressing these issues the Band will "obtain insights into the transition process, costs, achievements, and solutions to remaining problems, encountered by the Alexander Band as it assumed control of its own education program from the Department" of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

To obtain data for the evaluation, multiple research methodologies have been used. Research strategies have included:

- a survey of community members,
- a survey of school teaching staff,
- interviews with: School Board officials and school administrators, counsellors, non-teaching school staff members, elders involved in school programs, federal government officials, and Alberta government officials,
- structured group discussions, and
- examination of a wide range of records and documents (including: School Board annual reports, publications, and policy statements, audit reports, budget documents, relevant Band Council resolutions, school records on the health, attendance, and educational attainment of students, staff contracts and staff orientation and development materials, and a wide range of materials from the headquarters and regional officers of Indian and Northern Affairs and from the Province of Alberta.

The Surveys

Results from the community survey and survey of teaching staff conducted by the Alexander Band were given to Canyltec for data processing and preliminary analysis of results. This report is a report on major findings from these activities.

The purpose of the community and teaching staff surveys was to obtain information about the experiences, concerns, and perceptions of community residents and teaching staff as a result of their experiences with the locally-controlled school. The data from these surveys tell us what some of the major participants in band-controlled education felt about such education after four years of direct experience with it.

The survey of community response to the Alexander program was conducted through in-person interviews with representatives of all households on the reserve. In the case of the teaching staff survey, print questionnaires were distributed during a meeting and filled out on-site by the respondents.

Respondents targeted for the community survey were spokespersons for the entire population of households on the reserves. Since interviews were successfully completed with representatives of every household on the Alexander reserve, there was a 100% response rate from the targeted population of respondents. Community results can be treated with a high degree of confidence to the extent that one is willing to accept the study assumption that the persons interviewed (often women) were knowledgeable about -- and effective spokespersons for -- the experiences, attitudes, and concerns of their households*.

One hundred and twenty six interviews were completed with community members.

Eighteen completed questionnaires were obtained from a teaching staff of 43. The response rates of teachers and assistant teachers were comparable; approximately 50% of each group responded to the survey. The overall response rate to the survey was 42%. Eight of the respondents were teachers and eight were assistant teachers. (Two respondents refused to identify themselves by position held).

Because the overall number of respondents is small, the responses of one or two staff members can affect the overall portrait of teaching staff perceptions and experiences which emerges from the data. If the persons who responded to the questionnaire are representative of the attitudes and experiences of the teaching staff as a whole, results obtained will be reliable. If not, percentages obtained will be different from those we would expect had a higher response rate been realized.

* an assumption strengthened by survey results -- the high response rate to questions and the many comments and suggestions obtained from respondents when questioned in different topic areas.

Format of the Report

Responses to questions asked by the surveys provide information about the attitudes, feelings, and concerns of selected key participants. Responses obtained are also a means of corroborating information from other sources. Where data are at odds with information obtained from other sources, questions can be asked about the accuracy of each source of information; for example, comments made by survey respondents may accurately reflect actual conditions and activities at the Alexander school -- or they may reflect misinformation among community members, a reflection of inadequate communication between school and community.

Results of the analysis by Canyltec are presented in this report. Combined with data from other sources of information on the Alexander experience from from 1982 - 1986^{*}, it is expected that these results will provide a useful resource for in-depth analysis of one community's transition to self-direction of education programs previously administered by Indian and Northern Affairs.

Results of the survey of community members are reported in Chapter II of this report. Results from the survey of teaching staff are summarized in Chapter III. Chapter IV of the report contains a few observations and conclusions made by the researchers at Canyltec based on the survey results.

Only a limited amount of interpretation of results appears in this chapter and in the two chapters on data results. It is expected that a careful interpretation of results will be undertaken as a part of the overall evaluation of the Alexander school, taking into account the overall context within which the school operates and the understandings obtained in the development and practice of the school.

* Interpretation of the community survey data will also be facilitated by comparison of the 1986 results with results obtained in a survey conducted in 1981, just before introduction of the locally controlled education program. (Comparison of data from the two surveys is not, however, a part of this report).

Responses to open-ended questions have been paraphrased in the summaries of survey results (Chapters II and III). These listings of responses to questions document the full range and variety of responses received -- and the contradictions and consistencies in these responses. As such, they constitute summaries of the ideas, suggestions, and thoughts of community members and teaching staff in a number of topic areas. They do not, however, provide information about the frequency with which each kind of response appeared. Appendices I and II contain complete listings of actual (verbatim) responses of survey respondents for use by readers interested in the actual wording and frequency of responses to certain questions.

CHAPTER II
SURVEY OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS

CHAPTER II
RESULTS: SURVEY OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS

ATTRIBUTES OF RESPONDENTS

Sex

Women constituted two - thirds of the respondents to the community questionnaire.

ATTRIBUTES OF RESPONDENTS
(Percentage of respondents)

Male	33
Female	68
(Reference: Question 30)	

Age

ATTRIBUTES OF RESPONDENTS
(Percentage of respondents by age)

17 - 24	23
25 - 29	20
30 - 39	24
40 - 59	20
60 - 97	12
(Reference: Question 29)	

Fifty-eight per cent of the respondents were between the ages of 20 and 35. However, community respondents represented a very wide range of ages -- from 17 to 97 years, a span of 80 years.

The majority of community respondents had been students of federal schools. However, former students of provincial and band-controlled schools were also represented in the sample.

Educational Experience

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS
(Percentage of respondents by type of school attended))

Band-controlled	9
Provincial	16
Federal	85

(Reference: Question 20)

People 40 years of age or older were most likely to have attended federal schools. People between 25 and 39 years were likely to have attended either provincial or federal schools. People 24 years old or younger were most likely to have attended provincial schools.

Of the respondents reporting personal experiences as students at band-controlled schools, 50% were 24 years old or younger, 13% were between 25 and 39 years of age, and 38% were 40 years old or more.

A number of the respondents had been students at more than one kind of school.

Given the wide range of ages represented in the sample, it is likely that the respondents' experiences cover much of the spectrum of school experiences of natives in Alberta.

OBTAINING MEASURES OF COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

To obtain indicators of satisfaction with the present educational system at Alexander, community members were asked to evaluate the quality of education at the Alexander school generally, in comparison to their own educations, and in comparison to the educational system used at Alexander just prior to the introduction of local control.

Community members were also asked to evaluate more specific aspects of schooling at Alexander. They were asked about the advantages and disadvantages of attending school on reserve. They were asked about

the adequacy of the education of students in core areas (mathematics, reading, writing) and about their satisfaction with the amount of attention paid to health and nutrition. Community members were also asked about their satisfaction with the amount of emphasis placed upon the teaching of Cree language and culture and about the role of elders at the school. Finally, they were asked to evaluate the counselling provided to students and school efforts to address the special education needs of students.

SATISFACTION WITH ALEXANDER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM -- OVERALL QUALITY

Evaluation of Overall Quality of Education

Asked to rate the quality of education provided to students at the reserve school, most respondents gave a moderately positive rating to education at Alexander. Forty - four per cent of the respondents said the quality of education was good, and 24% said it was fair. Only a small number of respondents (12%) rated the quality of education as poor or very poor.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PERCEPTIONS OF THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED TO STUDENTS AT THE RESERVE SCHOOL (Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Very Good	16
Good	44
Fair	24
Poor	7
Very Poor	5
Don't Know	3

(Reference: Question 4)

**SATISFACTION WITH ALEXANDER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM --
SELECTED PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

Evaluation of Education in Core Areas

Respondents were asked to evaluate the adequacy of the education being provided to students in a number of specific areas. Asked about the the children's learning of mathematics, reading, and writing, community members were more likely to perceive the education of their children as inadequate rather than adequate.

**COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF ADEQUACY OF
CHILDREN'S LEARNING IN CORE AREAS
(Percentage of respondents giving rating)**

	Enough	Not Enough	Don't Know
Reading and writing	37	44	19
Mathematics	29	43	28

(Reference: Questions 14, 15)

Satisfaction with Emphasis on Health and Nutrition

Community respondents were asked to report on their satisfaction with the amount of attention paid to health and nutrition. Results indicate that the community supports the attention paid by the school to matters of health and nutrition. In fact, almost one in three respondents stated that they would be happy to see an even greater emphasis on health and nutrition.

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ADEQUACY OF
SCHOOL'S EMPHASIS ON HEALTH AND NUTRITION
(Percentage of respondents giving rating)**

Too much	8
Enough	57
Too Little	31
Don't Know	4

(Reference: Question 20)

Satisfaction with Emphasis on Cree Language and Culture

Asked about the adequacy of the school's emphasis on Cree language and culture, community members tended to feel that the emphasis on these areas was either too little or enough. Only a very small proportion of the community felt that too much emphasis was being placed on Cree culture or language.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ADEQUACY OF SCHOOL'S EMPHASIS ON CREE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE (Percentage of respondents giving rating)

	Too Much	Enough	Too Little	Don't Know
Cree language	5	42	51	1
Cree culture	11	44	43	1

(Reference: Questions 18, 19)

Community Satisfaction with the Role of Elders

A large majority of the respondents were aware of the role of elders in the school.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS' AWARENESS OF ELDERS PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL (Percentage of respondents)

Yes	81
No	19

(Reference: Question 22)

Most community members felt participation by the elders was a positive thing. Forty-one percent of the respondents felt the current amount of participation was good; 56% wanted increased involvement of community elders. Almost none of the respondents (only 1%) supported less participation by elders. Thus, this element of the current education system at Alexander is one of the most consistently supported within the community.

COMMUNITY ATTITUDES TOWARD AMOUNT OF
INVOLVEMENT OF ELDERS IN SCHOOL
(Percentage of respondents)

Too much	1
Enough	41
Too little	56
Don't know	1
(Reference: Question 22)	

Community Satisfaction with Counselling Provided to Students

The majority of respondents (59%) expressed satisfaction with the counselling provided to students. A significant proportion of the community, however, said that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the counselling provided to students, and very few people expressed strong satisfaction in this area.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS' SATISFACTION WITH
COUNSELLING PROVIDED TO STUDENTS
(Percentage of respondents)

Very Satisfied	9
Satisfied	50
Dissatisfied	24
Very Dissatisfied	7
Don't Know	10
(Reference: Question 23)	

Satisfaction with School 's Emphasis on Special Education Needs

Almost one in two of the community members interviewed felt too little emphasis was being placed on the special education needs of students. In the minds of community members, this is one of the weakest areas of the Alexander program.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ADEQUACY OF
SCHOOL'S EMPHASIS ON SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS
(Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Too much	2
Enough	29
Too little	46
Don't know	23

(Reference: Question 21)

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION: SCHOOL BOARD PERFORMANCE

Community Evaluation of School Board Performance

The majority of community respondents positively evaluated the performance of the Alexander School Board.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS' EVALUATION OF SCHOOL BOARD PERFORMANCE
(Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Very Good	17
Good	39
Fair	30
Poor	4
Very Poor	2
Don't Know	8

(Reference: Question 6)

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION: SCHOOL - COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Involvement of the community can be realized through use of native teaching aides and elders. It can also be realized by creating and sustaining interest in the school and its activities, through contacts with the community and the ongoing communication to community members of what is happening in the school, and through the transmission of the specific message that the school belongs to them and can be shaped to reflect their interests and concerns.

Proportion of Community that Feels School Belongs to Them

More than 70% of the respondents reported that at least half of the community feels that the Alexander school belongs to them.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PROPORTION OF THE
COMMUNITY WHICH FEELS SCHOOL BELONGS TO THEM
(Percentage of respondents giving rating)

More than half	38
About half	34
Less than half	21
Don't know	7

(Reference: Question 5)

Perceived Responsiveness of School to Concerns of Parents

A somewhat larger percentage of respondents (24%) felt that the concerns of parents were not listened to by the school. Thus while satisfaction overall remained high, it may be that perceived non-response to their concerns provides more of an explanation for lack of communication between parents and teachers than does the shyness or other difficulty experienced by parents in communication with teachers.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS' EVALUATION OF WHETHER SCHOOL
LISTENS TO THE CONCERNS OF PARENTS
(Percentage of respondents)

Yes, listens	67
No, doesn't listen	24
Don't know	9

(Reference: Question 26)

Contacts between Community Members and Teaching Staff

Community respondents who were caregivers of children were asked to report the actual number of times they had met with teachers during the last year. Results indicate that almost one in four respondents had never met with a member of the teaching staff. A further 53% of respondents had met with teachers three times or less.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS' MEETINGS WITH TEACHERS
(Percentage of respondents reporting
number of meetings in past year)

Number of Visits	
0	23
1	14
2	27
3	12
4	15
5	0
6 - 10	6
11 - 20	2
20 or more	1

(Reference: Question 24)

Reported Ease of Communication with Teaching Staff

Asked about how comfortable they felt talking to the teachers, most respondents replied that communication was easy (54%) or very easy (28%). A small percentage of respondents (11%) said they found communication difficult.

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS' REPORTED EASE OF
COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS**
(Percentage of respondents)

Very Easy	28
Easy	54
Difficult	10
Very Difficult	1
Don't Know	7

(Reference: Question 25)

IMPACTS ON STUDENTS

The quality of education offered to students can result in acquisition of knowledge and skills import to students' later opportunities for educational advancement and employment. The content of education and the process of education can also affect students' opportunities for later success in a number of ways.

Educational experiences which build on the knowledge and personal day to day experiences of children can create interest and enthusiasm for learning. They can build self-confidence and self-esteem important for later initiatives and provide a context which facilitates further learning because new learning is based upon that which is already familiar and known to them.

The school at Alexander is directed toward the provision of educational experiences which reflect and value the individual -- his roots, environment, and heritage, and individual capabilities and needs. This is reflected in the content of courses (including the emphasis on Cree culture and language), the emphasis on dealing with the whole child (provision of counselling, emphasis on health and nutrition of the children), and in education geared to individual achievement levels (education for children with special needs, advancement of children at own rates of progress). It is also reflected in the way children are educated -- the use of native teaching staff and community elders in the classroom and efforts to involve parents and community in the school and school activities.

Reported Feelings of Children

The exposure of children to schools which are alien to them in curriculum, composition, and structure has been a prevalent concern of native peoples for many years. Children exposed to an unfamiliar culture and the unfamiliar demands of non-native society, it is felt, are often unhappy. They lose interest in school and drop out before achieving educations adequate for the demands of later life. One goal of on reserve education is the teaching of children in an environment in which they are comfortable, using concepts, ideas, and cultural examples with which they are already familiar.

At Alexander, community members report that few of their children are unhappy with the school. A full 90% of the persons interviewed reported that their children were either happy or very happy (25% reported children who were very happy at school).

COMMUNITY MEMBERS' PERCEPTIONS OF CHILDREN'S FEELINGS ABOUT SCHOOL
(Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Very Happy	23
Happy	67
Unhappy	7
Very Unhappy	1
Don't Know	1

(Reference: Question 13)

Expectations and Hopes for Educational Attainment of Children

With greater happiness at school, one can expect a greater likelihood that children will willingly remain in school for longer periods of time, acquiring the skills, knowledge and accreditation that will better ensure their access in future to better jobs.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS' EXPECTATIONS AND HOPES
FOR CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
(Percentage of respondents)

LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	DESIRED	ANTICIPATED
Grade 8	0	1
Grade 9	0	5
Grade 10	1	12
Grade 11	0	4
Grade 12/ High school grad	69	60
Post-secondary (unspecified)	5	1
College	2	2
University	22	13
Post-graduate	1	0
Don't Know	0	2

(Reference: Questions 16, 17)

Most parents at Alexander expected their children to remain at school for a shorter period than they themselves felt would be desirable. Thirty per cent of the respondents hoped their children would acquire some form of post-secondary education; only half as many (15%) expected their children actually would get this amount of education. Similarly, while 22% of the respondents felt it was realistic to expect their children will not complete high school, only one percent of the respondents felt this was desirable.

COMMUNITY EVALUATION OF THE ALEXANDER PROGRAM -- IN A COMPARATIVE CONTEXT

Community members were asked which kind of school (federal, provincial or band-controlled) offers the best education for Indians. More specifically, they were asked to compare the quality of the education received by children under local control with the quality of the education received by children at Alexander prior to local control (1982) as well as with the quality of their own educations.

Community Evaluation of Different Kinds of Schools

Community members were asked to evaluate which kind of school -- federal, provincial, or band-controlled -- provides the best education for Indians. In answer to this question, the majority of respondents said band-controlled schools are best.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS EVALUATION OF WHICH KIND OF SCHOOL IS BEST FOR INDIANS (Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Band - controlled	68
Provincial	26
Federal	4
Band and Provincial	2

(Reference: Question 3)

Reasons for Positive and Negative Evaluations of Different School Types

More than two-thirds of the respondents felt that, in general, band-controlled schools provide the best education for Indians. Reasons given for the positive evaluation of band-controlled schools included:

- * the ability of the community to have input into the direction of school, its standards and program; (native people know best what native children need to learn; the community controls what is taught and who teaches it, is more aware of what is going on and how their children are being taught).
- * the emphasis on native culture, language, and identity provided by such schools; the ability to have native teachers who understand native ways and teach them to the children;
- * the enabling of children to stay on reserve (in a familiar environment, going to school in a community which is concerned about them (and own community members are teaching them) builds confidence and interest in education;
- * the all- native student population which results in an absence of discrimination, more unity;
- * better funding and more programs;
- * the likelihood of children attending school more regularly and remaining in school longer; and
- * children learning more and learning faster.

Some community members felt provincial schools provided the best education for Indians. They argued that provincial schools are best because:

- * children get better educations at provincial schools -- provincial schools have higher standards; children work more and learn more; teachers are better; better subjects, more up to date content; children learn more and learn faster;
- * discipline is better;
- * exposure to whites, etc. makes it easier for native children to adjust to the outside world, learn to associate with whites, be less shy; and
- * the preferential treatment of some children by some native teaching staff (at band-controlled schools) can be avoided.

Federal schools were not highly evaluated by many community members. Those who indicated a preference for federal schools did so because they felt such schools had better qualified teachers and provided better discipline for teachers.

Evaluation of Education at Alexander Before and After Local Control

COMMUNITY MEMBERS EVALUATION OF EDUCATION
OF CHILDREN NOW COMPARED TO BEFORE LOCAL CONTROL
(Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Not as good	17
About the same	17
Better	58
Don't know	7

(Reference: Question 1)

Asked specifically about the Alexander school, a smaller number -- but still a majority (58%) -- felt that the education of children was better under local control than it was before. Only 17% of the respondents felt that the quality of education at Alexander has deteriorated since the inception of local control.

Reasons for Positive and Negative Evaluations of Education at Alexander Now Compared to Before Local Control

When asked to compare the education that Alexander children are receiving today compared with the education they received prior to 1982, community members said the band-controlled school was better because:

- * The community is more interested and involved in what is happening at the school. People feel better about the school;
- * It's better to have native teachers teaching native children;
- * It's better for children to be taught by their own people than by strangers;
- * Children are more comfortable, feel safer;
- * Community direction and control of education allows input and problem-solving more easily;
- * Greater emphasis on teaching native culture and native language;
- * More up to date curriculum and books; more technologically advanced;
- * More teaching staff;
- * More things for students to do, learn about;
- * Lunch program;
- * Field trips;

- * Children are more interested, motivated by awards nights; children more content, better learning environment;
- * The method of teaching (model) is better designed to meet the needs of children; children learn according to their own individual abilities/(at their own speed; more attention and care shown to children than before;
- * Wholistic approach is more sensitive to native people; all areas of child looked at and taken care of, children treated with care and respect, receive encouragement and support
- * Children have more freedom and less pressure;
- * Children are happier, more interested in going to school; Children more stable, acting better, more confident
- * Evidence of increased student population, better attendance ratios; ,
- * More children go on to high school now;
- * Community control over curriculum, hiring staff; community members have more freedom/opportunity to participate in decision-making about school;
- * More use of elders;
- * Children able to stay in community to go to school. Less discrimination, children allowed to identify with own community and culture;
- * Children should stay with their own kind and be taught in an Indian school;

Community-identified weaknesses of the current education program included:

- * Too much culture;
- * Culture can't be taught from a book; children need to go and learn it themselves (eg. how to survive);
- * Children not getting a good education; are falling behind, not learning enough;
- * Children only go half days on Wednesdays;
- * Children have no homework;
- * Children all pass each year;
- * Hardly enough kids;
- * Too little discipline. Teachers need to be more strict. Children control teachers;
- * Too many field trips;
- * Way teachers discipline children;
- * Teachers not as qualified;
- * Inadequate supervision of after-school activities;
- * Employment of too many people from one family;
- * Inadequate communication with parents, no home visits;

In the opinion of some respondents, the community now has the right model for education. They still need, however, to overcome minor problems and fully implement it. In the opinion of others, things are still in transition and too little time has elapsed to permit adequate evaluation of the locally controlled school.

Evaluation of Education at Alexander In Comparison to Own Educations

COMMUNITY MEMBERS EVALUATION OF OWN SCHOOLING
 COMPARED TO EDUCATION OF CHILDREN NOW
 (Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Not as good	54
About the same	15
Better	25
Don't know	7

(Reference: Question 2)

When asked about their own schooling, most community members felt that the current education of children at Alexander was better (54%) or as good (15%) as the schooling they themselves had received. However, one in four respondents felt that the education they themselves had received was better than the education currently being provided to the children of Alexander.

Reasons for Positive and Negative Evaluations of Education at Alexander Now Compared Respondents' Own Schooling

Respondents who said that the schooling provided at Alexander now was better than their own schooling, gave a number reasons for this judgment. In their opinion, the educational program at Alexander is better because:

- * Children are taught their own culture; education is relevant;
- * Children are taught by people they know;
- * Less adjustment required than when outside schools are attended;
- * Children have more freedom (than, for example, at residential schools); less routine; less strictness;
- * Children have more choice and variety in what they learn;
- * Less discipline;

- * Children learn in own environment, are more comfortable and happier;
- * Children can more readily develop a strong self-identity;
- * More teacher interest in students;
- * More recreation;
- * More math;
- * Children respected as human beings more;
- * Less discrimination at Alexander school;
- * More opportunities for children in vocational areas;
- * Presence of a nutrition program;
- * Access to counselling when needed;
- * More up-to-date books;
- * Presence of natives in the school.
- * More teachers; better teachers;
- * Subjects are explained to students more;
- * Smaller classes;
- * Presence of computers;
- * Students learn Cree;
- * Community selection of teachers;
- * Opportunity for children to do away with age and grade differences and learn at their own pace;
- * More prime instructional time for students.

Many respondents identified their own schooling experiences as unhappy ones. Reasons given were the strictness of the schools, the requirement to learn materials which were not relevant to them (and meet standards inappropriate to them), the lack of care and attention paid to them by teachers, and having to leave home to go to school. In the words of one respondent, "Residential schools are the worst thing you could do to a kid".

While the majority of respondents felt their own schooling was worse than the schooling at Alexander now, some did not. Those who felt that their own schooling was better said:

- * They learned about their culture on their own (and it helping them survive;
- * Academic achievement by students was better; children learned more;
- * Teachers were better then; teachers were more qualified (off reserve, non-natives mentioned);
- * Discipline was better;
- * Children worked more, had homework;
- * There are better opportunities at white schools;
- * Provincial curriculum has higher standards;
- * Education was more Canadian and had higher standards than the present system at Alexander ("too American");
- * Religion was a part of the schooling;
- * Had a lot of math;
- * No field trips then;
- * There was no fighting;

- * Children were taught to respect teachers and elders;
- * Fewer holidays then; less time spent outside the classroom.

Respondents' evaluations of the different systems depended -- not only on their knowledge and perceptions of these systems -- but on the values they attached to the different aspects of these systems as well. Community respondents often mentioned differences in discipline when comparing characteristics of schooling at Alexander and characteristics of their own schooling. The data indicate a consensus among many community members that discipline is less strict today; there is less consensus, however, about whether or not this is a good thing. In a similar way, being taught by non-natives is seen positively by some people and negatively by others.

Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Attending School on Reserve

Community respondents were asked to identify some of the advantages of attending school on the reserve. In response, community members mentioned the following advantages of on-reserve schooling:

- * They are taught Cree culture and language. (They are bringing the Cree language back.)
- * They are with their own people, in their own culture. Students learn more about their own culture by staying in their home environment.
- * They can stay closer to home where it is safer and they feel more relaxed, comfortable. Can remain near families.
- * The children don't have to travel long distances.
- * School helps develop self-esteem, strong identities.
- * Children are provided with good role models.

- * Children progressing at their own pace facilitates reaching goals, avoids discouragement of more routinized education and application of more uniform standards. Individual program instruction.
- * Children are not exposed to discrimination.
- * Transportation are problems minimized.
- * Children are less shy, more willing to speak out about problems.
- * The children know the assistant teachers (people from the community).
- * There are more field trips. The children go out and see other places.
- * There are more things to do.
- * Children are given freedom, the opportunity to make choices.
- * The lunch program.
- * It's better for children to be in all-native classrooms.
- * There is good team work at the school.
- * The computers.
- * Children learn reading and writing skills.
- * Elders are involved.
- * Genuine concern and support from community (good for children's mental health).
- * Parental involvement.
- * Children are not put back in grades.
- * Children learn cooking, sewing, mechanics.

- * After-school programs.
- * More playground activities.
- * Children learn values.
- * Children can't skip classes.
- * Children can miss school whenever they want.
- * Exposure of children to arts and crafts.
- * Swimming.
- * Children have less stress and may continue their educations longer.
- * Children interact with other children on reserve and may form relationships that last their lifetimes.
- * Children get to know their own families better (than they would if they were sent off reserve to go to school).
- * Availability of dentist and nurse.
- * Native staff are aware of children's backgrounds.
- * Children are taught well. More teachers.
- * Children are taught respect.
- * Curriculum is more realistic.
- * Material and textbooks used are better.

Some respondents said there were no advantages to on-reserve education.

Asked to outline negative aspects of attending school on the reserve only, respondents enumerated the following disadvantages:

- * Lack of interaction, experience with non-whites. Experience limited to natives; too little exposure to other societies; children may not learn to mix well. Children will not be able to cope well in white society.
- * Children feel afraid, shy when attend white schools later.
- * Teachers don't live in the community.
- * Not enough students -- for team participation in outside competitions, to provide the kind of education they need.
- * Too much culture taught.
- * Not enough attention to teaching basics.
- * Too much emphasis on computers.
- * Missing some options available in other schools.
- * Too easy for children to leave school and go home.
- * Lack of exposure to prejudice (which will eventually be part of their experience).
- * Absence of certain desirable programs eg. music lessons.
- * Standards are lower. Children learn more in other schools. Other schools are more up-to-date.
- * Children not directed toward learning incentives (vs. living day to day).
- * Not enough discipline. Too few guidelines.
- * Not enough religion.

- * Children are too close to each other, too comfortable. They don't learn independence.
- * More qualified teachers elsewhere.
- * Not enough honesty from teachers reporting to parents.
- * Cree in the school. Too much dependence on Indian culture.
- * Not enough writing.
- * Not enough reading skills taught.
- * Close family ties and favouritism.
- * Involvement of community members in school; hard for children to adjust when situation changes when they leave the reserve.
- * Family problems get carried into the school.
- * Not enough facilities or numbers to allow competitions with other schools (a means of exposure).
- * Fewer options
- * Too much free time for children. Have to find a babysitter Wednesday afternoons.
- * Need to mix with more children their own age.
- * Too few schooling days compared to provincial schools.
- * Children don't work as hard.
- * Children are behind in grade level, learning, They get put back when go to white schools later.
- * No religious training.
- * Family interference.

* Relationships among people/families are often too close to deal with problems effectively.

Some respondents said there were no disadvantages to on-reserve education.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE

Ways to Improve Schooling on the Reserve

Respondents were asked for their suggestions of ways to improve schooling on the reserve. Responses to these questions included the following suggestions:

1. More concentration on basics (math, English, etc. to facilitate opportunities for natives to pursue further education.
2. More qualified teachers. More experienced teachers. Have more teachers than teacher aides. Require some university training before people teach.
3. A new school. New physical location (current location considered unsafe). More space.
4. Placing the school under provincial school.
5. Making the school correspond more to provincial system.
6. Demand more of the children; more homework, no Wednesday half-days off.
7. Ensure more socializing/contact with outside schools.
8. Have a religious program.
9. Community workshop; more community participation encouraged. More programs in the community (eg. recreation) that tie in with the school.
10. Encourage more involvement of parents/whole families.

11. Control use of school facilities by staff.
12. Teach more Cree culture and language.
13. Teach less Cree culture and language.
14. Make an effort to help children achieve strong self-identities.
15. Have School Board more aware of what is actually happening at the school (school dynamics, curriculum).
16. More discipline needed.
17. Bring outside people in (for example, elders); Bring in resource people (role models). and expose children to them to show children they can make it.
18. More workshops for youth.
19. Have an awareness program re sexual abuse.
20. Control children going off school grounds.
21. Control security within the school.
22. Less of one family working at the school.
23. Fewer field trips.
24. More direction of children's work by teachers. Better supervision. More direct instruction vs. children working on their own.
25. More control over smoking and fighting at the school.
26. A better principal.
27. Hire more teachers who understand native ways.

28. Have more field trips to other reserves so children appreciate what they have.
29. Better community understanding re how to run a school.
30. Have teachers become full community members, live on reserve.
31. More of a lunch program; full meals.
32. After school programs.
33. More counselling for students.
34. Tutoring for high school students.
35. Teach children to respect teachers. Have a life skills program to help staff and children cope with each other better.
36. More options for children, eg. music and dance lessons.
37. More elders and different elders.
38. Home visits by teaching staff.
39. Control security within the school.

Community Suggestions: What the School Should Do For the Children

Asked what the school should be doing for their children, community respondents said:

1. Teach the children all basic subjects (English, math) well.
2. Encourage the children to continue their education, go on to higher education. Prepare them for university, high school.
3. Incorporate/encourage community support for academic achievement.

4. Provide a good atmosphere so children enjoy learning, develop a thirst for knowledge.
5. Give the children more work to do; give them homework; no Wednesday half-days. Have same number of school days as other schools.
6. Discipline the children more. (Writing lines, detention).
7. Provide good counselling to help children with problems at home or in school.
8. Use more teacher aides from reserve, who have graduated from high school.
9. Encourage individuality and creativity. Continue individualized program.
10. Teach more Cree.
11. Teach religion. Have Catholic teachers.
12. Teach right from wrong. Help children develop in a way that compliments their values and morals.
13. Teach them about life beyond the reserve. Teach them that there are choices where to live (not just reserve) etc. Help them prepare for/adjust to life outside the reserve.
14. Teach more physical education.
15. Teach confidence, strong sense of identity.
16. Keep good cultural emphasis. More culture. Teach beading, dancing, making costumes. Teach children about their native background.
17. Provide career counselling.
18. Have exams at end of school year.

19. Supervise the children more. More instructional classes and fewer workbooks.
20. Have fewer field trips.
21. Have more evaluations like this one.
22. Do not restrict children from whatever food they bring in their lunches, but teach nutrition, consequences of foods.
23. Spend more time on problem students. Help problem students understand and deal with their feelings. Help students with their problems vs. disciplining them.
24. Have better/more qualified teachers.
25. Work more to involve families; help determine what people need to do.
26. Early detection of learning disabilities and a program to deal with these effectively. More effort in special needs areas. Should have LAP (learning abilities program).
27. More recreation. More sports/indoor sports.
28. Fewer teacher aides.
29. Teachers should be honest with parents; prepare parents.
30. Get more information from the parents.
31. Go back to government standards. Using the children as guinea pigs will end up hurting them.
32. Teachers and aides must set better examples for the students.
33. Need specialized teachers for different subjects.
34. Children should be made to repeat years when they cannot do the work.
35. Have music and dance options.

37. Need a larger library.
38. Help children learn to get along, treat each other as equal. Teach sharing and working together. Teach them to respect themselves and others. Teach obedience, responsibility, life skills.
39. Teach children to respect parents and elders.
40. Involve elders more.
41. Continue allowing the children to be themselves.
42. Continue making the children aware of their community and its function.
43. Teachers/school should strive more to understand the children and their concerns.
44. School should take the children to the wilderness to learn about survival.
45. More effort needed to teach children writing skills.
46. Need to involve elders more.
47. Meet emotional needs of children.
48. More supervision at play time needed.
49. Need more one-to-one counselling, other actions to get children to open up and develop trust
50. Have Indian staff.
51. Have fewer teacher aides.
52. Have less emphasis on culture.

Community Interest in Adult Education Courses

Questions were included in the community survey to provide information on community interest in adult education courses. Asked whether they themselves would be interested in taking courses if they were offered on the reserve, 83% of all respondents said yes.

COMMUNITY INTEREST IN TAKING ADULT
EDUCATION COURSES ON THE RESERVE
(Percentage of respondents indicating interest in courses)

24 years or younger	93
25 - 39 years	87
40 years or older	70
All ages	83

(Reference: Question 10)

Interest in attending adult education courses was strongest among the younger residents -- 93% of the respondents under 24 years of age were interested in courses. However interest in adult education was high across all age groups. Seven out of eight residents between 25 and 34 years were interested in attending adult education courses. In the case of people 40 years or older, the proportion of people interested in further education was still high -- almost 3 out of 4 of the respondents.

Class Time Preferences

Asked when adult education classes should be held, half of the respondents said either day or evening classes would be fine. However, approximately one-fourth of the respondents specifically requested day classes; a similar proportion requested evening classes. Given this split in preferred time, it would seem reasonable for the school to attempt (if at all possible) to offer adult education classes in both time slots.

PREFERRED TIME FOR ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES
(Percentage of respondents)

Day	22
Evening	27
Wouldn't matter	52

(Reference: Question 10)

Course Content Preferences

Respondents were asked to identify the kinds of courses they would be interested in taking. Adult upgrading courses were most often cited as being of interest to the Alexander community members. However, considerable interest was also expressed in vocational courses and other course topics.

PREFERRED CONTENT OF ADULT EDUCATION COURSES
(Percentage of respondents expressing interest
in course type, each age category)

	24 Years or Less	25 - 39 Years	40 Years or More	All Ages
Adult upgrading	54	46	75	56
Vocational	54	40	32	41
Other	27	42	29	34

(Reference: Question 10)

Interest in different types of courses varied to some extent with age. Adults forty years of age or older expressed interest in adult upgrading courses much more often than they expressed interest in other types of courses; 75% of all respondents in this category were interested in adult upgrading courses compared to only 32% interested in vocational courses.. In contrast, people under 39 years of age were only almost as interested in vocational courses as they were in adult upgrading.

Almost all of the suggested areas for "other courses" were in areas which were of direct practical use to residents: English, literature, writing, report writing, managerial courses, sociology, cooking, reading, sewing, and administration.

CHAPTER III
SURVEY OF TEACHING STAFF

RESULTS: SURVEY OF TEACHING STAFF

STAFF RECRUITMENT, MOTIVATION, AND COMMITMENT

Recruitment of Teaching Staff

Most of the Alexander teaching staff first heard about their jobs through friends or newspaper advertisements. The majority of teachers had found out about their jobs through newspaper ads; the majority of assistant teachers had heard about their jobs either through friends or through the school itself.

RECRUITMENT OF CURRENT TEACHING STAFF:
FIRST SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT JOB
(Percentage of respondents)

Newspaper	38
Friends	44
The school	13
Other	6

(Question 21, N = 16)

Motivations for Accepting Teaching Position on Alexander Staff

Asked why they had chosen to accept the teaching position at Alexander, all of the teachers identified either the (wholistic) philosophy of the school or a desire to help natives realize change and/or self-direction as major motivations for coming to the school.

Motivations identified by assistant teachers included: a desire to work with children (or the children of Alexander specifically), a desire to act as a good role model for the children, a desire to be part of natives teaching (native culture to) native children, and a personal interest in the field of teaching.

Expressed Commitment to Teaching at Alexander

Development of a small stable core of teachers at Alexander might be considered desirable for a number of reasons. The existence of a small stable core of teachers can facilitate the integration of new members into the school and help ensure that the understandings and achievements of earlier years are not abandoned or lost. The preservation of close ties between school and community can be facilitated by the presence of staff with a history of interaction and participation within the community.

Continuity in staff can help protect and facilitate the developing practice and innovative orientation of the educational philosophy being implemented at Alexander, its special programs and relationships. However, the periodic introduction of new staff can bring new skills and fresh ideas to the school and community and help stimulate new growth and development.

One survey question asked how long respondents expected to remain on staff at the Alexander school. Because this question was answered by less than 25% of the teaching staff currently at the school, it is difficult to draw reliable conclusions from this question. Results obtained from those who responded (10 staff members) indicated varying degrees of commitment. Six of the respondents said they would like to remain at the school for two years or less.

SELF-REPORTED INTEREST OF TEACHING STAFF
IN CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT AT ALEXANDER
(Percentage of respondents expressing years of
future employment desired)

1	15
2	31
3	8
6	8
12	8
As long as possible/needed	15
After further education	8

(Question 23, N = 10)

Five respondents expressed a strong commitment to teaching at Alexander. Two respondents said they would stay as long as possible or as long as they were needed. Other respondents said that they would like to be on staff for 6 years, 12 years, and after leaving temporarily to obtain further accreditation for teaching. Such respondents constitute a basis for the small core of teachers needed to ensure stability and continuity at the Alexander school.

MORALE AND SENSE OF PURPOSE AT ALEXANDER

Staff Morale at Alexander

Teachers and assistant teachers were asked to rate staff morale at Alexander. Overall, the teaching staff at Alexander felt that morale at Alexander was good. Assistant teachers were more likely to say morale was very good than were teachers; no assistant teachers rated morale as poor.

TEACHING STAFF RATINGS OF MORALE OF TEACHING STAFF AT ALEXANDER (Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Very Good	28
Good	39
Fair	17
Poor	11
Very Poor	6

(Question 9, N = 18)

Sense Of Purpose At the Kipohtakaw Education Centre

Overall, staff felt that the Kipohtakaw Education Centre had a strong sense of purpose.

STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF SENSE OF PURPOSE
AT THE KIPOHTAKAW EDUCATION CENTRE
(Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Very Strong	24
Strong	59
Fair	12
Weak	6
Very Weak	0

(Question 11, N = 17)

All of the teachers characterized the Centre as having a strong sense of purpose (75% said it was strong and 25% said it was very strong). In contrast, the feelings of the assistant teachers were much more mixed: 14% said the Centre's sense of purpose was very strong, 43% said it was strong, 29% said it was fair, and 14% said it was weak.

Perceptions of Student Interest in the School at Alexander

The survey yielded considerable consensus that student interest was strong; fully two out of three respondents rated student interest at an intermediate positive level.

TEACHING STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT
INTEREST IN SCHOOL AT ALEXANDER
(Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Very Strong	6
Strong	67
Fair	22
Weak	6
Very Weak	0

(Question 4, N = 18)

Teachers and assistant teachers differed little in their assessments of students' interest in school.

RELATIONSHIPS OF TEACHING STAFF AND SELECTED OTHERS

Evaluation of the Quality of Interactions between Teaching Staff and Selected Others

Teachers and assistant teachers were asked to rate the quality of their interactions with a number of other people involved in education of the children of Alexander.

An overwhelming majority of respondents (over 94%) rated relationships among staff members as good or very good. Relationships between teaching staff and students were also highly rated -- 95% of the respondents said that their interactions with students were good or very good. As one respondent remarked, relations within the school are excellent.

TEACHING STAFF RATINGS OF INTERACTIONS WITH SELECTED OTHERS (Percentage of respondents giving rating)

	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
Students	28	67	6	0	0
Parents	11	44	33	11	0
Assistant teachers	50	44	6	0	0
Teachers	39	56	6	0	0
Elders at school	28	39	28	6	0
Community as a whole	11	50	22	17	0
Principal	39	33	22	6	0
School Board	11	44	28	6	11
Outside education professionals	6	47	29	6	12

(Question 6, N = 18)

In other areas, results were more mixed. Relationships with the school administration, the community as a whole, parents, elders, and outside education professionals were rated quite differently by different respondents. Staff interactions with the community as a whole, School Board, and outside educational professionals were identified as most problematic; as many as 1 in 6 of the respondents said interactions with these groups were poor or very poor.

Findings from this question were corroborated by a number of questions specifically directed at tapping the quality of the relationships between teaching staff and others involved in the Kipohtakaw experience. Comments made by respondents indicate that the quality of relationships between teaching staff and others are affected not only by attitudes and behaviour but also by a lack of resources. Heavy demands on staff time can make it difficult to have adequate time for interactions with some people. In other cases, structural or organizational problems may be responsible -- the fact that teachers do not live in the community full-time or that the School Board meets with staff only two or three times yearly.

Relationship Between Assistant Teachers and Teachers

Staff perceptions of the relationship between teachers and assistant teachers indicate that (in their own opinion) teachers and assistant teachers at Alexander have extremely good rapport.

TEACHING STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ASSISTANT TEACHERS AND TEACHERS (Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Very Good	72
Good	28
Fair	0
Poor	0
Very Poor	0

(Question 12, N = 18)

Accessibility of the Principal

TEACHING STAFF EVALUATION OF ACCESSIBILITY OF PRINCIPAL (Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Very Accessible	56
Moderately Accessible	33
Moderately Inaccessible	11
Very Inaccessible	0

(Question 8, N = 18)

The majority of the teaching staff at Alexander (56%) said the principal was very accessible. Thirty-three percent of the respondents reported that the principal was moderately accessible and slightly more than one in ten (11%) said that he was moderately inaccessible.

Teachers and assistant teachers found the principal to be equally accessible to them, indicating that differences in perceived accessibility had to do with the experience of individuals rather than with the category of staff involved.

ASSESSMENT OF RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

Evaluation of Selected Aspects of the Educational Environment

The teaching staff at Alexander expressed more satisfaction with certain elements of the educational environment than with others. Classroom supplies and classrooms were the areas most consistently highly rated. Classroom supplies were rated as good or very good by 77% of the respondents; the respondent's own classroom was rated as good or very good by 67% of the respondents.

A majority of respondents also rated the library, textbooks and education materials, and building maintenance favourably (although in the case of the last two areas, unfavourable assessments were also apparent).

TEACHING STAFF EVALUATIONS OF SELECTED ASPECTS OF EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AT ALEXANDER (Percentage of respondents giving rating)

	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Not Applicable
Person's classroom	17	50	22	6	6	0
Textbooks, education materials	22	33	28	17	0	0
Classroom supplies	33	44	17	6	0	0
Audio-visual equipment	18	29	41	6	0	6
Recreational facilities	6	33	28	22	6	6
Library	12	53	24	6	0	6
Building maintenance	6	50	17	17	11	0

(Question 2, N = 18)

Respondents most frequently expressed dissatisfaction with Alexander's audio-visual equipment, recreational facilities, and building maintenance. Twenty-eight percent of all respondents rated building maintenance and recreational facilities as unsatisfactory (poor or very poor).

While a majority of respondents (55%) positively rated the quality of textbooks and education materials, 17% gave this aspect of the environment a rating of poor, making this one of the least favourably rated aspects of the educational environment.

Staff Priorities for School Board Spending

The Alexander teaching staff were asked to consider the possibility of a School Board decision to change the way it spends a small portion of its budget. In such a situation, they were asked, where could the money be more usefully spent to improve the education program? Answers to this question varied considerably. Some suggestions made by staff included:

- Purchase of more/better materials for (native) arts and crafts programs,
- Development of better/more appropriate books and curriculum materials,
- Improvement of relations between community and school.
Suggested strategies included: building housing for teaching staff so they could live in and more fully be a part of the community, make the role of the elders a more integral part of the school, more efforts toward building community awareness of school activities and programs,
- Community events,
- An early intervention program (preconception to two years),
- Acquisition or development of materials that interact with/ utilize the culture better,

- Sponsorship of inter-band exchanges of both teachers and students,
- Exploration of shared use of facilities with local schools,
- Helping children seek their hidden talents be it music, sports, or drama,
- Summer programs for students and adults,
- Staff training,
- Home economics, nutrition programs, and
- More recreational activities for children of all ages.

Staff-Identified Needs To Increase Personal Happiness with Work

Asked what could be done to make them happier in their work, teachers and assistant teachers gave a variety of responses. These included:

- More clear definition of staff roles, responsibilities, resources/budgets.
- More job security. Collective agreements. Contracts for more than just one year.
- Better recognition of tasks and time demands on teaching staff. Not be over-demanding of staff to extent that stress and burnout result.
- Recognition and appreciation for work done.
- Honesty.
- Improved communication between School Board and staff.
- Improved communication between School Board and community.
- Native staff.

- More time for team planning.
- More time to plan the curriculum.
- More community involvement.
- Greater understanding, support for, and implementation of the educational philosophy.
- More parental involvement.
- A larger and better school.
- Less comparison to the outside society. Less application of standards of non-native society (which may not be appropriate).
- Programs for adults.
- Music and drama classes for older students.

As these responses indicate, happiness for some of the Alexander teaching staff could be increased through more job security, better recognition of their needs and the demands of their jobs, and more expressed appreciation for their work efforts. Others would be happier if the Alexander program were more fully implemented and expanded and if the community were more actively and closely involved in the school.

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND PERFORMANCE

Quality of Education Provided at Alexander

Asked about the quality of education at Alexander, the majority of respondents replied positively. Slightly more than one-third of the teaching staff indicated a very high level of satisfaction with the quality of education provided by the Alexander school. Twenty-nine percent of the respondents felt the quality of education was good and another 29% felt it was fair. A very small proportion of respondents (96%) said that the quality of education was poor.

TEACHING STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF THE QUALITY OF
EDUCATION PROVIDED TO STUDENTS AT THE ALEXANDER SCHOOL
(Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Very Good	35
Good	29
Fair	29
Poor	6
Very Poor	0

(Question 15, N = 17)

Staff Evaluation of Specific Aspects of Alexander's Education Program

In general, the Alexander teaching staff appears to be satisfied with many aspects of the education program. Considerable proportions of the staff rated the number of students per class, orientation provided for teachers, and administrative services as being very good. More than 80% of the respondents rated them as either good or very good.

TEACHING STAFF RATINGS OF SELECTED
ASPECTS OF EDUCATION PROGRAM AT ALEXANDER
(Percentage of respondents giving rating)

	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Not Applicable
Administrative services	28	56	11	6	0	0
Teacher orientation	39	44	17	0	0	0
Counselling	17	44	28	11	0	0
Recovery program	6	35	35	12	6	6
Special education	11	33	28	6	11	11
Students per class	44	44	13	0	0	0
In-service training	18	47	18	6	12	0
Involvement of elders	11	28	22	28	11	0
Other	67	0	0	33	0	0

(Question 3, N = 17)

Other areas were not as consistently highly evaluated but nonetheless received a positive rating overall -- counselling and in-service training were rated as good to very good by over 50% of the respondents.

The recovery program, special education, and involvement of elders received variable ratings. A number of respondents expressed little support for these aspects of the program -- at least as they are currently in place at Alexander.

Thirty nine percent of all respondents felt that the involvement of community elders was a poor or very poor component of the education program. However, 73% of the teachers compared to only 25% of the assistant teachers gave this component a negative rating. At the other end of the scale, 50% of the assistant teachers and only 12.5% of the teachers rated involvement of the elders positively. Clearly, involvement of the elders (in its present form) is much more highly favoured by the assistant teachers than it is by the teachers.

While responses to this question provide some indication of staff satisfaction with different program aspects, interpretation of ratings is difficult. Responses to this question must be treated with some caution because the ratings obtained through this question may reflect two different bases for evaluation. Staff's ratings might reflect respondents' perceptions of the merit of a particular component of the program -- or they might merely indicate respondents' perceptions of the current level of quality or performance in that component.

Staff Perceived Need For Curriculum Changes

STAFF REPORTED NEED FOR CURRICULUM CHANGES (Percentage of respondents)

Yes	80
No	20

(Question 17, N = 15)

Most of the teaching staff at Alexander felt there was room for improving certain aspects of the curriculum. Comments made by staff suggested that cultural and Cree language education were areas particularly in need of work. This is not unexpected since, as one respondent remarked, "Everything is in a state of evolution". Remarks made by staff about further development of these areas suggest the need for more emphasis of these areas, for improvements in program planning and delivery, for content which is alive, relevant and not dead knowledge, and for more skilled staff to teach these areas and integrate them with other areas of the curriculum.

Other recommended changes in the school curriculum included the use of one teacher only to teach physical education and the integration of more leisure time and life skill activities into the day (although not necessarily during regular school hours).

Evaluation of School Board Performance

Asked about the School Board's performance, most respondents (87%) gave the Board a rating of good to fair. A small proportion of respondents (13%) were very happy with the School Board's performance; none were unhappy with it.

TEACHING STAFF EVALUATION OF SCHOOL BOARD PERFORMANCE (Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Very Good	13
Good	56
Fair	31
Poor	0
Very Poor	0

(Question 10, N = 16)

ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Staff Perception of Community Identification of the School as Theirs

The majority of staff respondents believed that fifty per cent or more of the community felt that the Alexander school belonged to them.

TEACHING STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF PROPORTION OF COMMUNITY FEELING SCHOOL BELONGS TO THEM (Percentage of respondents giving rating)

More than half	28
About half	50
Less than half	22

(Question 13, N = 18)

Staff Perceptions of Importance of Education to Community

Asked how important education was to the community, different staff had different answers. Some respondents (31%) felt that there was considerable community commitment to education, others (44%) felt it was only fair, and still others (25%) felt community commitment was weak.

TEACHING STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF IMPORTANCE PLACED ON EDUCATION BY COMMUNITY (Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Very Much	6
Much	25
Fair	44
Little	25
Very Little	0

(Question 7, N = 16)

Staff Perceptions of Parental Support for Education

Asked about parental commitment to education, there was more of a consensus among respondents than when they were asked about the commitment of the community in general. The vast majority of the staff at Alexander did not feel that the school receives strong support from the parents of students.

TEACHING STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF PARENT
SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION AT ALEXANDER
(Percentage of respondents giving rating)

Very Strong	0
Strong	6
Fair	56
Weak	28
Very Weak	11

(Question 5, N = 18)

Need for Community Changes for Benefit of the Children

TEACHING STAFF REPORTED NEED FOR COMMUNITY CHANGES
FOR BENEFIT OF CHILDREN AND THEIR EDUCATION
(Percentage of respondents)

Yes	88
No	12

(Question 19, N = 17)

Most of the respondents felt that changes in the community would have a positive effect on Alexander children and their education. A number of specific changes were suggested. Areas of identified need included the need for more parental involvement in school activities and for better communication and interaction between the school and community.

Some of the suggested areas of need were much broader:

- A need for economic development (the tangible value of education becomes visible with employment opportunities)
- A decrease in (treatment of) problems related to substance abuse -- alcohol, drugs,
- A need for community development -- building of knowledge of one another, community spirit, more interaction among community members, (support groups), and
- A need for improved parenting (facilitated by counselling, skills training of people for their roles as parents).

OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGY FOR EDUCATION AT ALEXANDER

Staff Evaluation of Different Kinds of Schools

Asked which kind of school provides the best education for Indians, the teaching staff gave overwhelming support to the band-controlled school.

TEACHING STAFF EVALUATIONS OF SCHOOLS AS
PROVIDERS OF EDUCATION FOR INDIANS
(Percentage of respondents rating school type as best)

Band-controlled	86
Provincial	7
Federal	0
Band-controlled & Provincial	7
(Question 14, N = 14)	

Reported **advantages** of band-controlled schools included:

- the enhancement of native peoples' sense of accomplishment, of control over their own fortunes -- allowing "for the people to achieve their goals in their own lives and the lives of future children"
- opportunity for the whole community to participate in decision-making (not having to live with decisions made by just a few people),
- community control over hiring of staff,
- the absence of pressures found in other kinds of schools,
- organization that permits children to learn at their own rate,
- native teachers who are more encouraging, sympathetic -- teachers with whom the children feel comfortable,
- smaller classes, more individual attention to students, and
- visible parental interest in the school, encouraging children to perform better.

Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Attending School on Reserve

The teaching staff at Alexander were asked if they could identify some of the advantages and disadvantages of attending school on the reserve.

Advantages of attending school on reserve were reported as follows:

- Presence of their own people as role models to follow (allows children to see what elders can do, better anticipate their future),
- Opportunities for children to build self-esteem and pride in themselves and their community,

- Exposure to, learning, and experiencing their own culture and language, cultural relevance,
- Closer to home and family, providing greater sense of security for child, ability for close home-school liaison (especially in crises),
- A more socially comfortable, caring environment -- more likelihood of greater interest in well-being of child,
- More attention paid to individual differences of children, individual needs and rates of development,
- Smaller classes,
- Removal of competition of dominant society, removal of exposure to racism, removal of concerns re clothing, etc.

Disadvantages identified by the teaching staff included:

- Too few good students to stimulate growth,
- Lack of exposure to other ethnic groups, less variety in experiences and interactions, missing out on possible enriching experiences off reserve, isolation
- Less access to resources, information on what is happening in education elsewhere, less adequate facilities and materials,
- Less exposure to the dominant outside culture, less experience interacting with non-whites -- leading to an inability to establish relationships with non-whites, lack of contacts for job hunting, an inability to compete in off-reserve situations and an "inability to change social status either on or off the reserve".

Chief among the possible disadvantages was the lack of exposure to non-native society. Teaching staff emphasized that, with on reserve schooling, special efforts have to be made to foster cross-cultural awareness -- through field trips, open houses with other schools, and other activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE

Staff Advice to Indian Communities Undertaking Local Control

The teaching staff at Alexander were asked what advice they would give Indian leaders elsewhere to help ensure that they have quality locally controlled programs in their communities.

Messages from the Alexander teaching staff to other native communities included the following:

- Develop community awareness/knowledge of program and plans; build a strong base of support within the community.

There should be widespread community awareness of plans before implementation, progress, and activities once implemented. If community members don't know about the program (and understand it), there can be little community support for it. The program will not "belong" to the community or be seen as belonging to it.

- Have a coherent philosophy underpinning and informing the program

The program needs to have a coherent, justifiable, and clearly articulated purpose, set of goals, and strategy for the realization of these goals. These must be communicated to -- and understood by -- the community.

The community must develop a set of long range goals and objectives for the program.

- Ensure early assumption of program control by the community.

The community itself must assume direction of the program, make decisions about its development, and take responsibility for its management and evolution. Change has to be initiated by the community, not imposed on it. Self-direction should be undertaken early in the process.

Participation should be broadly based to prevent the possibility of control by a small group and exclusion of others from participation.

- Have good, reliable communication.

Good, honest communication about what is happening is needed at all times. As one teacher said, "Make the people aware of how things are. Be honest. Nothing is perfect, tell it like it is". With good communication, problems can be more fully understood and with understanding, more community effort and support can be obtained to remedy problems. With good communication, too, achievements can be more widely known and celebrated (increasing support for the program and community satisfaction). Sharing triumphs and failures and being a part of these will make the program truly belong to the community.

- Carefully plan and implement each step (before proceeding to the next). Proceed slowly; take the time needed to plan and implement each component fully before going on to the next stage
- Use consultation as a process for solving problems.
- Base education on elders and culture.
- Hire as many reserve people as possible; involve of as many reserve people as possible.
- Encourage the involvement of parents.
- Make sure financial resources are managed well.
- Secure good relationships with federal and provincial departments of education
- Secure good working relationships with local government and people of the reserve
- Check credentials of advisors.
- Hire competent, dedicated staff (teaching and administrative). Balance staff weaknesses and strengths. Work toward building staff unity and commitment to goals.

- Insist all staff have provincial credentials or are legible for local certification.
- Ensure staff (native or non-native) are free of prejudice and appreciate native culture.
- Encourage staff to remain up-to-date on education methodologies and philosophies. (Arrange local training workshops)
- Have yearly or bi-yearly evaluations and an ongoing consultation agreement with a local university.
- Have courage in your convictions. Be supportive of one another when there are problems to be solved. Persevere.

Staff Advice Regarding Ways INAC Can Best Support Indian-controlled Schools

The Alexander teaching staff were also asked for advice to help the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development help Indian-controlled schools succeed. Responses obtained included the following advice:

- Let Indian people take complete control and do it their way. Remove rules and regulations.
- Simplify funding methods.
- Tie social programs to education. Reward initiative (of those who go to school).
- Give Indians resources needed. Do not underfund programs. Provide more funding to get or develop a native curriculum for schools, update books, texts, work problems.
- Ensure financial and educational accountability.

- Have faith in band controlled communities. Encourage them. Visit them. Recognize efforts and achievements publicly.
- Maintain good communication links between band government.
- Facilitate information exchange and sharing between bands.
- Use consulting agencies.
- Provide Indian education centres in every province -- to provide educators and administrators for advising bands, act as a clearing house for information and ideas sharing, and provide moral support and encouragement for bands and educators at reserve schools.
- Give long-term financial assistance to bands who want to achieve local control.
- "Organize the administrative machinery to meet the needs of native communities rather than having bands fit the needs of the bureaucratic system".
- "Believe that native people have an important part to play in the life of Canada".

CHAPTER IV
FINAL OBSERVATIONS

CHAPTER IV FINAL OBSERVATIONS

Overall results from the two surveys are consistent. They indicate a high level of support for band-controlled education on the part of both the Alexander teaching staff and the Alexander community itself. Contrasted with other kinds of education experienced by native people, the Alexander school experience is seen as being more complete and more humane. The children are reported as being happier and there is an increased optimism in the community regarding future academic achievement of the children.

Teaching staff and community alike give strong support for a number of key elements of the school program : Native culture and language training, the native assistant teacher program, the availability of one-on-one counselling, the involvement of elders, the nutrition program, the special education program, field trips, awards nights, etc. Comments in all of these areas indicate a desire overall for increased emphasis, rather than a de-emphasis, of these components.

Community concerns about the quality of education provided at Alexander revolve around whether or not the school is adequately preparing the children for achievement of higher education in the institutions of the larger society. Community members expressed concern that the Alexander school ensure that its educational standards be at least comparable to those of the provincial school system, especially in core areas such as mathematics and English. Some community members were concerned about the possibility of too little exposure of the children to the outside society. Inadequate exposure to non-native society, they felt, could result in later difficulties interacting with non-natives and achieving in non-native society. Many respondents felt it was important for the children to be aware of the world outside the reserve and to be confident of their right to a place within it.

The two areas of greatest concern to community members are areas which have been addressed in the Alexander school system. Children follow the provincial curriculum in core areas and are evaluated in each subject area according to provincial government grade standards. Field trips and student exchanges are organized to

ensure that students have adequate contact with the outside society. Communications skills and self-esteem are fostered and the emphasis on life skills training at the school is directed at preparation for students for effective living on or off reserves. Results from the community survey can be interpreted in two ways -- either the community feels that more emphasis should be placed on activities to address these areas of concern or there is a communication problem between community and school and some community members are simply not aware of the full amount of effort (and success of efforts) expended by the school to ensure the realization of high academic standards and exposure of the children to non-native society.

The teaching staff of Alexander expressed strong commitment to band control and to the wholistic model for education in use at Alexander. Major concerns of teachers centred around the need for more materials and better educational facilities, the need for staff time to prepare and develop the program, and the need for more parental and community involvement with the school.

Results from the two surveys contain considerable feedback from the community members and teaching staff at Alexander. After four years of major changes to the school -- and community -- participants had much to say about the strengths and weaknesses of their educational program. From the viewpoint of some respondents, certain elements of the program were weaknesses; from the viewpoint of others, these were strengths. Some people felt too much native culture is being taught; others feel too little is being taught. Some people feel the strategy of teaching caring, sharing and responsibility is a good strategy for achieving cooperation and order in the school; others feel that discipline is too lax and there is a need for corporal punishment to be reintroduced to the school.

As in all cases of major transition and change, old elements and expectations co-exist with newer ones. Expectations of participants vary; so do needs and desires. The Alexander school is charting a path, balancing often conflicting demands and goals and resolving these through communication and negotiation -- with staff members, community members, and students. These surveys constitute a part of this communication and negotiation.

APPENDIX I
COMMUNITY MEMBERS' RESPONSES TO OPEN QUESTIONS, COMMENTS

1. How would you say the education that Alexander children are receiving today compares to the way it was before local control? Can you say why?

- They have the right model but they are not enforcing it properly. The kids are beginning to catch up to their peers at the white schools.
- The books are more up to date.
- (better) The kids today have more freedom than when I was going to school.
- (better) Because they are learning their own culture.
- (better) My brothers like going to school there - by their opinion it must be better.
- (same) Before didn't have the native curriculum, more cultural aspect. Some things have been taken away, and because not enough time has elapsed to determine if it is good or bad.
- (better) The children are treated with a lot of care, concern and respect. All areas of the child are looked at and taken care of - such as physical, mental etc. concerns.
- (better) Learning more about our culture.
- (better) Have more education materials now.
- (better) Culture.
- (not as good) Too much culture.
- (better) Because before it wasn't holistic. To be more sensitive to the native people than they were before.
- (better) The children are learning more than they used to about Indian culture.
- (not as good) Because today the children are learning too much about their culture and culture does not teach you to survive. You can't just give the kids a book about culture, they have to go and learn it themselves.
- (better) The kids marks have picked up since then.
- (same) About the same but today they have different work.
- (better) Better to be run by the band, kids have more advantages today, than when I was going to school.
- The children act better and are more stable since the local control. They teach our children culture (Indian) here, which they wouldn't learn in the outside schools.
- Because the kids are getting poor education as of today.

- They don't learn much, no homework was brought home
- The teachers are better, because we get to choose the ones that fit our educational needs. The system that they use, that the kids are progressing at their own rate.
- A lot of improvement in the kids.
- Before the community did not have a say in what books are used. Now the community decides what to teach the kids.
- We run our own school, have our own teachers and our culture.
- I never go, but I am not very happy with the set up. The way the teachers discipline the children.
- Children are learning better skills
- Learn lots of things.
- Does not remember before local control.
- Kids open up more.
- Easier for children, they don't have to go out. Nutrition etc. No discrimination. Teaching culture, elders are welcomed.
- Children are allowed to identify with themselves. In provincial schools were not allowed the same freedom. Enables children to identify with their own community.
- Newer things every year, changing with the times - present system.
- You see improvement in the area; kids more confident, encouragement, support, exposure to the outside through the school, one on one contact.
- Hardly enough kids. They all pass every year.
- The teachers are doing a good job.
- The children today are slow in school. They don't progress in their grades. So it doesn't make any difference.
- We are running the school, the way we want it to be, to meet the needs of our people. And we don't have to operate according to Indian affairs or the province.
- Native people teaching native students native curriculum
- Lack of discipline in school. Good we are running our own school, but teachers need to be more strict with children. Otherwise set up okay.
- Teaching staff, community people, program.
- More native teachers.
- The students seem more content with school than before. Safe place.
- When I went to school the math was terrible. Curriculum was too old before, books were ancient.
- Have awards night. Kids are more interested, must be something there that they like. People feel better about the school.

- More teachers, more things for the students to do, more things to learn about.
- Now they have culture in the school.
- Teachers meet every Wednesday and children out of school too much.
- Because Indians are running it now.
- I don't really know, my kids don't go, and I don't know how it operates.
- Learn more about culture.
- Children have control of teachers. The kid knows too much, too many things they shouldn't and being exposed to negative ideas.
- Self direction and control and if you have a problem it is easier to go there to deal with it.
- More Indian culture ways than before. They have more teacher aides.
- It is a good set up, but lack of discipline.
- Because I find a difference, my daughter had to go back two grades when she went to a white school, because she was not prepared.
- The kids here are not learning anything. They're behind in their schooling.
- Kids aren't disciplined at all. Bring the strap into effect.
- I would say it is better because of the lunch program and the field trips.
- They used to learn more before. But the culture is terrific.
- It was better the way it was before the local control.
- Because the students are little bit slow.
- Own people teaching them. They have their own Indian ways, that's one thing that's good about. Learn better with their people teaching them instead of strangers.
- Too many field trips. Not learning enough. Not enough homework.
- Because the children are recognized for the ability that they have in themselves not the ability that the teacher thinks they should have.
- Because the band has more of a say in the administration and better learning atmosphere.
- They are more technologically advanced.
- Children don't seem to learn anything. They only go half days on Wednesday.
- I think they are still teaching same same things in school.
- Because of community participation, increase in student population and better attendance ratios.
- The way in which they teach the children, the model is designed to meet the need of the children.

- It appears to be a little better not really sure.
- I never found any change in the school.
- Because my kids like it, they learn about their culture.
- I like the new system, children can work at their own speed. They feel more comfortable because there is not as much peer pressure. The teachers are showing more care and concern than before.
- Because the children have gotten bad-worse. There is no discipline, too many relatives in one family employed. The teachers never do home visits and don't tell parents, if the child gets out of hand. After school functions are not properly supervised.
- Because they have cultural programs, nutrition programs that we never had.
- Environment, at home atmosphere.
- More freedom.
- Like how it is run now, but didn't before local control.
- The children are treated better and they like going to school now than they did in 1982.
- I see the teachers are better but the kids are not getting better education.
- The teachers get more money.
- Because the kids now enjoy going to school here.
- Too much culture.
- Better staffing.
- This is compared to the provincial schools today.
- They are still not at the grade level as the provincial system.
- Because it seems like the kids want to go to school.
- I can tell by the reports of my children. Compared to provincial schools my children are behind.
- Was not here.
- Don't know what school has to offer -- no children in school.
- Not many complaints that I know of.

2. How would you compare your own schooling to schooling at Alexander today? Can you tell me why you feel that way?

- There was a lot more discipline when I went to school.
- (Not as good) It was too strict. Hardly enough kids or friends when we were going to school.
- (not as good) I went to a mostly white school; I wouldn't mind learning how to speak Cree instead of French.
- (same) My schooling was geared towards mainstream society. I was never exposed to the Culture Values system.
- (Not as good) Very rigid structures that were not set up for native children. Geared to the white population and taught only at their level.
- (not as good) Subjects were not explained enough to us - these children have more advantages now.
- (not as good) Now there are better teachers. Now they are more prepared to leave the reserve if they have to or when they have to.
- (not as good) Work and play based.
- (not as good) No culture taught.
- (not as good) Because when I went into Grade 7 I was behind in the work.
- (not as good) We didn't learn about our culture.
- (better) I learned about my culture on my own and its teaching me how to survive.
- (better) Because the kids today are behind the level I was at.
- (not as good) Not as good because I just didn't enjoy it, there weren't as many things to do in school then.
- (not as good) Never liked school, because it was boring.
- I use to run away from school, because I hated school.
- The nuns taught us school and I feel I didn't learn anything. The other children were mean to certain children and the nuns didn't do anything about the situation.
- Well qualified teachers.
- When I was going to school I learned a lot. Today the kids aren't learning as much.
- Too many grades in the class; classes were too big. Federal teachers weren't good. Residential schools are the worst thing you could do to a kid.
- We didn't learn as much as they do now; we didn't have computers.

- I went to a convent school and all you did was learn French. After that, when I came to school here, the teacher was always drunk.
- It was better because we were taught lots of things in my time, like sewing, cooking and discipline. No running around and playing.
- No discipline, the children have no respect for elders. We got discipline in school in my time. The teachers should be strict with the children.
- I didn't have the chance to go to school.
- More opportunities - buses - used to use horses. More acceptance into other schooling than before.
- Strict, had to obey rules.
- Work more than education subjects taught.
- Community was not involved in selection of teachers. Community had no involvement in course. W. I. A. implemented progress. Children were removed from families and community.
- Busing is better today. Better set up today.
- Is still lacking teaching the kids endurance still room for improvement. (Alexander today)
- There were teachers that weren't from here teaching the students.
- I never went to school long.
- We didn't learn enough we just worked.
- I was in a convent, we weren't allowed to get higher education than grade 7. We had to work. I didn't have a chance to progress. Now the children have that opportunity.
- Because of the material and text books used. Also the format was different, and the children today are taught about their tradition and there is more teachers today that can give more attention to individual students.
- No natives in other schools
- More opportunities today. Teachers they know and they're taught their culture.
- Parents allowed individual to benefit from progress. Except Jr. High.
- Teachers show interest in students more now than before.
- Attended residential school, the way it was run, didn't have any freedom, feel it is important that there is freedom.
- Books were too old, dated too far back.
- Didn't know own culture.
- Because I never stayed in school long.
- There was no culture.

- Got homework when I went to school. A lot of math when I went to school and the kids don't seem to be learning anything.
- I didn't like the school I went to.
- It was harder to adjust to outside schools.
- Here today students have a choice, before was by one rule and the material they teach today is better and they have more variety of subjects today.
- I attending white schooling, they provide better opportunity. Present system in Alexander is too American. Should be Canadian because we have higher standards.
- Need to have religion at school so the kids can learn and have better understanding.
- Not as good because I didn't learn anything, that is why I quit. They didn't have any counselling back then.
- We were behind in grades when we went to outside schools.
- Because I ran into the same problem as my daughter.
- All the better teachers we had outside the Reserve, I guess.
- All white teachers teaching when I was going to school. I also had a lot of homework, but now there is hardly any.
- Went to a white school.
- Because of lack of discipline - and qualified teachers the teachers were more stricter then, than now.
- Better because the teachers were more strict. The teachers are not as qualified.
- We had discipline and a lot of religion classes.
- Because I am smarter.
- I didn't feel I learned anything because I was always switched from school to school. Attending was poor.
- We used to have homework. No field trips.
- It was more structured and disciplined, more routine.
- They are not as much prejudiced today. There was too much discipline.
- I was sick so spent most time in hospital or at home.
- More recreation. Better math.
- Appears to be more opportunity for children to participate in vocational area. Compare to just physical involvement. To learn in own environment is a benefit as opposed to learn in an imposed non-selected environment. Development of a strong self identity. - Opportunity for children to do away with age and grade differences to learn at their own pace. More prime instructional time for students.

- I was raised off reserve and not exposed to the system on reserve.
- I don't really know what's going on in the school. Was stricter when I went to school, not as strict now, kids control teachers.
- The children today don't appear to be doing a lot of work like I did when I went to school.
- It depended on the teachers a lot, we didn't learn about things that were relevant to us.
- Because in my own experience it was the opposite of what I stated before.
- We had religion which was the major thing. There was no fighting. We spent more time in school than holidays. All our hours were spent in the classroom learning and we were all well disciplined -- taught to respect our teachers and elders.
- Because they have cultural programs, nutrition programs that we never had.
- You weren't treated as a human being in the other school, you were put in desks and had to sit there. I went because I had to go.
- I went to outside schools and there was a lot of discrimination.
- Because the teachers were more strict than they are now.
- Improved a lot since I was going, more teachers.
- Because we were not taught about our culture and language.
- Provincial curriculum is higher.
- The teachers were a lot more strict than at Alexander, there were better teachers back then.
- Because we were not taught Cree or our culture.
- No.
- More parenting and more involvement.
- When went off was better.
- There wasn't enough help for students and families.

3. What kind of school offers the best education for Indians? Can you tell me why you feel that kind of school is best?

- (band- controlled) But they would need outside help. There are not enough native teachers yet.
- (provincial) Because the one child is getting a better education at a provincial school than she was here.
- (band) The kids feel more comfortable in their own area. They also learn to know that they know one another.
- (provincial) I learned a lot in the provincial system, as well as associating with other societies and different people.
- (band) They know what the curriculum should be - heritage could be included.
- (band) Who can tell better what a people want than the people themselves.
- (band) More input and decision making from the community - which is extremely important to the people.
- (band) They don't go to school with the white people.
- Learn to work on the outside - adapted to outside the reserve. Teaching standards are higher.
- (provincial) I feel they learn more in provincial- don't learn enough in band- controlled.
- (band) It's holistic plus they teach the kids native culture.
- (band) By band they learn more about their culture.
- (band) They are learning their own culture. More Indian staff.
- (federal) Because on the reserves they are closer at home and they tend to get away with more.
- (band) Because the band has first-hand knowledge of what's going on.
- (provincial) Because they are more up to date on work.
- (band) Today the school has a lot more things for the students to do.
- Because there are Indian teachers here and they teach our children about the Indian ways, and our children will regain their native ways.
- Because if it was band controlled the kids wouldn't have no control at all.
- Better for kids to stay in one place now and the kids play hooky in school.
- Then you can control who you hire as teachers. You also control the curriculum and the system used.

- Because you have the option of getting your own materials, everything is not handed down by Indian affairs.
- No discrimination in our school. And Indian teachers here.
- I feel our children are not up to date in their learning skills. The teachers here get involved with just individual children that they are related to.
- Our children learn more here than they would in outside schools. Here they attend regularly and not quit like they do in outside schools.
- Learn native Cree, and respect for elders.
- They should know what their children need. Better quality teachers now.
- You know where the children are at all times.
- Able to teach culture.
- Allows you the freedom to hire teachers, set up curriculum, enables children to identify with community, home- based.
- If we want to keep the school here we need to support it more.
- Have not seen the product of local control to determine if band controlled is better.
- Provincial schools are much more strict; the student learns more faster.
- Kids learn more.
- They learn more education in the outside schools.
- This kind of school is best because we have our own teachers and they teach our children about their native ways. The children's education has improved in our reserve, but I would like to see more educated children in the future to graduate and university.
- Because of the material and text books used. Also the format was different, and the children today are taught about their tradition and there are more teachers today that can give more attention to individual students.
- Children learn better in an environment they are accustomed to.
- They can employ people from the reserve, ie: teacher aides. They teach the culture.
- You have a say on programs which are put in, one which benefits most children. Community input.
- Native teachers, teaching native students.
- Children get more education, also in other areas.
- The school deals with culture, important. Local native staff people working at school important. Makes them comfortable, encourages them to come to school.

- They include native culture. Children learn at own pace not forced to learn, need to be pushed a little. Lot more concern at the reserve about progress of students.
- Culture and identity getting to know oneself.
- Band controlled is much better than provincial- federal schools, because I been there.
- Provincial has higher standard of education.
- Learning more everyday. Students spend more time in school.
- To learn the traditional way is better and to learn amongst your own kind, build confidence.
- Easier for kid to adjust to the outside world.
- To learn more about their heritage, so the culture won't die. Give them an idea what it will be like when the students have to run the reserve, know their laws and their rights.
- I only attended provincial school.
- Because it is our own. We are able to provide the direction we want to take.
- Band- controlled is best for students because the band runs it.
- They are more strict and push the children to learn, not very much free time. and they are more strict with attendance.
- But they also have to better meet the needs of the children.
- More educated students.
- Provincial school is best because we learned more. We had more homework. We also knew how to handwrite, right now the 5 year old can't enough handwrite.
- Band- controlled: there learning is more about culture. Provincial: they have to learn and get along with the white society.
- The teachers are more qualified and more strict.
- They used to learn more before. But the culture is terrific.
- We had all white teachers that were qualified.
- Kids are sure learning a lot faster. They sure learn a lot.
- Any of them could offer a good education if the caring was like it is on Alexander.
- The culture is coming back, more native teachers who understand the native way.
- Learn more away from reserve.
- Closer to reserve. Better to be exposed to other people than only their own culture, get used to white people.
- We choose own standards.
- Band controlled can offer education to the children in their own community.

- To have the kids mix with other kids. To learn to associate with others, won't be shy with people. Learn manners.
- They learn more and work.
- Because with Band Controlled they have a lot of unity whereas with provincial or federal they tend to band together and separate from whites. Also, Band Control knows what kind of teaching they need.
- Because of our culture and way of relating with white people is quite different. Also, it is run by band people and they can see what is happening in their community. Whereas you have a superintendant who may not know what is happening in white schools.
- I feel it is best because they get prepared for first communion, more discipline, the parents are informed if the child leaves school grounds or is not in the classroom. They learn to associate with the white society. The children would be up to date with their grade level and would fit in any school. They get along better.
- Because they have cultural programs, nutrition programs that we never had.
- Teachers are good. good selection.
- Not much for Indians in provincial.
- More freedom, and more concern of the teachers. No corporal punishment.
- Culture is integrated into the school.
- Same grade level as everyone else.
- There is no discrimination in this school because they are all native.
- Because the band has control of who to have as teachers and which system to use/
- More funding and more programs.
- It is better because the community controls what is taught.
- Because I like to have band members involved.
- Because they discipline the children.
- Doesn't make a difference you still have to work from what you get.
- Because the band says who the teachers are and what is to be taught.
- No.
- More people from band involved in school who know the children.
- Computers, subjects could be better.
- They are more established.
- It provides the best education and it helps the students learn.
- You can put in the programs that best meet the communities needs.

- The Band itself is running the school the way that they want to, not like a provincial school. They try to change everything. Now we can teach Cree and use the elders. People weren't considered, the community was not involved. There aren't as many drop outs now as when the federal government was running it.
- It was pretty good, the set- up we have.
- Indians run it better because the white man goes around corners. Not providing what we really need. Not knowing what the Indians are really like. We can keep our culture.
- Band- controlled, if the staff is well educated.
- They stay with the Indians and it is better for them.
- Band- controlled is better for us.
- You have a chance to regain or restore your identity. Without you' re a lost person.
- Because of the discrimination of the other schools. They teach them their culture here.
- Because there are all Indians in this school.
- They learn more in the outside schools and they learn discipline.
- More qualified teachers to teach children more discipline.
- More education in the outside schools.
- I would say the children are better off in reserve schools than outside.

4. What is your feeling about the quality of education provided to students at the reserve school?

- There is a steady improvement.
- Between good and very good.
- They would learn more elsewhere.
- If they go to another school our children are always behind.
- Better quality teachers
- Quality of education is subject to community, biased opinion, but good and negative responses enable the school to better itself.
- Lots of one on one.
- Cultural.
- Learning native language, etc.
- Now, I don't know, but when I was there it was poor.
- Because it depends on the individual child.
- Should have hired outsiders. Don't see the value of having teacher aids.
- Can't say very good because there is still room for improvement.
- More strict for discipline. More discipline.
- Junior High, and High School, more to be done.
- Cultural.
- Behind in years in books.
- Could use a lot of improvement because they are still behind the other systems.
- They do not teach enough basic education.
- High grade levels should corresponded with provincial curriculum.
- There is room for improvement.
- But I would like them to speak more Cree. Because some children I can't talk to. All the teachers should be Indian.
- Our children are a little behind in work.
- Need better facilities.

5. In your view, what proportion of the community feels that the reserve school belongs to them?

- I think that most of our community feel they own the school, I can't speak for anyone, but I think that I own the school.
- More involvement.
- Even when negative responses, they are speaking about their own school, otherwise no comment would be made.
- I can't answer that, because I don't know how the people feel about our school, for myself I think I own some of it.
- Not enough concern from parent and need community involvement.
- I don't know because no- one ever talks to me about the school.
- I don't know.
- Don't get information about the school. Just letter about field trips or no school.
- Not enough concern from parents; need community involvement.
- I don't know because no one ever talks to me about the school.
- I don't know.
- Don't get information about the school. Just letter about field trips or no school.
- Should be more employment for our people.
- Majority of the people come to school functions.

6. What kind of job do you think that the School Board is doing?

- I don't know because all the workshops they go to...we never get any feedback.
- Good to very good.
- Still learning, will get better.
- All are committed to betterment of education on the reserve.
- Don't really know how the Board operates. Don't get enough information.
- I don't have any idea.
- Don't know.
- I really don't know very much about what goes on at the school.
- I don't know.
- See it as somewhat of a problem with school board members being taken away from work.
- The board has all the knowledge but don't share it with others.
- I don't know what the school board is doing.
- They know what is going on.
- Need some improvement.
- If they work together, it is very good.

7. Can you identify some important advantages children have in attending school on the reserve?

- They get to learn more about their culture. They are in a home environment.
- Setting good examples; reaching their goals; schooling is much closer.
- They go out and see other places.
- School is much closer, learning their own language
- Culture
- They learn heritage, to speak their language.
- Culture values, holistic education; closer to home, family, friends; developing of self identity; I feel they are beginning to weave the white society into the local control school to give a strong foundation; field trips, letting the kids experience things away from the classroom.
- Cultural advantage. Genuine concern which is important to the mental health of the children. Parental involvement.
- Learn more about our culture.
- Wouldn't be scared to speak out problems. Relaxed atmosphere - not scared. Easy for busing.
- Learn writing and reading skills.
- Culture. Being with their own people. The school works together as a team not only as one.
- The school is much closer. More things for the kids to do. The kids go on more field trips.
- Here they learn about their culture and how to speak Cree. They stay with their own kind of people.
- I like the lunch program. The computers are a good idea.
- Today the kids can go anywhere on trips. When we were going to school we never had such things.
- They teach our children how to cook, sew, mechanics and other stuff which I think is very good.
- I like this school.
- Children have more advantages today.
- More teachers.
- They attend school right at home. Attend school with people you will live your life with. They are also learning about their culture and about themselves.
- They are right at home.
- Because it is close to home and families.

- None
- they're here with their own people.
- Yes, Beading - fancy dancing, talking Cree.
- Learn more.
- Learn their culture.
- Cree, don't have to get up 7:00 to go to school.
- Culture, more active because of culture at school.
- Teach culture, respect. Taught well.
- Home-based school, makes children feel part of reserve.
- To be at home, here they will be treated with equality, more caring. Culture to know that their Indians. Because we own the school and we are running it.
- Awareness of hand on experiences, field trips. Curriculum is more realistic. Use of local people, role models, gives kid incentives. Culture to understand it, and be a proud Indian. Community support to bring kids back to reserve school.
- Learn more Cree and they're doing things the Indian way. School a lot closer for the reserve kids. The grades aren't high enough. - School is very close.
- The children here learn to speak Cree and they stay with their own people.
- I don't know what kind of advantage education our children are getting, I am an elder and I feel I should be involved more, so I know what is going on. If I got asked to go to the school I would be glad.
- Because of the material and text books used. Also the format was different, and the children today are taught about their tradition and there are more teachers today that can give more attention to individual students.
- More comfortable in all native classroom.
- Lunch program. Culture, field trips. They are familiar with teacher aides. No discrimination.
- Community support in classroom. Individual program and instruction and one to one counselling.
- Don't have to travel long distances. Among their own people.
- Easier to stay at reserve school; not put back in grades.
- Culture. Freedom: given opportunity to make choices, and the students needs are being met with.
- They are with their own people. Bringing Native language back.
- School provides everything for them. Development of identity.
- More activities in the playground. School is much closer and they go on a lot of trips.

- Exposure to culture. Learning from a native teacher and native aides...role models.
- Don't see any advantages about going to school on the reserve.
- To learn about native people and more value learning.
- They can't skip their classes.
- Learning about culture and heritage. Going to school with people you know. Support system. Community people working at school, shy kids, incentive, role model, helps them get along.
- Would be ideal for kid on the reserve. Distance to travel and to learn culture.
- Get exposed to our culture. Field trips are good, the travelling, exposure, computer, good to exposure the kid to arts and crafts, swimming.
- They learn to cook at school, they have Cree lessons, and have Wednesdays off, after school programs.
- The culture, the community and it is all Indian children. And the children feel comfortable with each other.
- They children are allowed to work at their own pace rather than at a grade level pace.
- More trips. Not enough school.
- The school close to the kids. And they also have computers. And they also have Cree taught in school.
- They're close to home. Get to learn about culture more.
- Because of their own culture, with their own kind of people.
- The computers are better.
- They learn about our culture; they teach them Cree.
- Close to home and around their own rate.
- Counselling, learn with modern type of computers. School is close to home. Working with elders. Learning their own language (Cree).
- Close to school. A lot of field trips. No homework. Not enough science.
- It is a feeling that the school belongs to them and they belong to the school.
- Not exposed to discrimination at an early age. The school is more of a family atmosphere. They are learning about their culture while attending school.
- Close to home. They have a good lunch program. (all classes should have them).
- Computer exposure. More comfortable at own reserve.
- Own environment. Role models are important - utilize local resource people. teachers/assistants etc. Opportunity for the children to be what and who they want to be.

- Get to know own culture. Less problems getting bused out. Get to know their own families better.
- I can't see what is good about it.
- They go to school in their own communities. They learn their own culture. Teacher- aides come from their own community.
- They have a chance to develop relationships with children in the community, who they will see more of in their lives. Culture input that they receive in the curriculum. With the system that they have, they have less stress and may continue their education longer.
- They can miss whenever they want. They don't need lunch. They know all staff and children. Dentist and nurse. field trips.
- They learn their culture.
- Unity, bond between children.
- Cree language and culture.
- No prejudice, no right or wrong way of doing things and don't have to follow one specific way.
- Learning more about Cree culture and carrying on their culture.
- Going in their own community.
- Culture and Cree.
- There is a lunch program they attend more regularly.
- They are learning Cree and they are learning about their culture.
- More education.
- They learn about their culture, they stay on the reserve.
- Culture, feel comfortable can associate with people in classroom, no discrimination.

8. What disadvantages might there be to attending school only on the reserve?

- They may not be able to interact with non- natives.
- Too easy for the kids to just leave the school and go home without supervision.
- They feel uncomfortable, scared when they go to a white school.
- More children are likely schooling.
- Mixture in white society; shy to talk to anyone; not enough experience.
- They wouldn't miss anything.
- Lack of communication with other societies.
- They might not learn to mix with other people.
- Restricted to one area, closed in. Limit of experiences only to reserve, should have more outside exposure. Cultural disadvantages
- not be aware of other people/culture - reverse of the school before takeover. Not having the numbers to be able to provide the education that is needed.
- Outside experiences.
- They don't learn as much, cut the culture a bit and have more education.
- Not meeting other people from other schools.
- Too much culture taught here. Computers are the easy way out - need to learn basics.
- Get familiar with the white society.
- Too much culture is in the school, should be taught by elders. The kids are being taught differently from what I was taught.
- Be too shy and won't be able to mix with the other students.
- Mixing with the white society.
- Behind in writing, and school.
- Attending school with the white society.
- More children are liking school.
- They are not being introduced to the white society, environment or people with different cultural backgrounds.
- They do not have the protection of the reserve as they do now
- They will not integrate with the whites very well.
- They will miss the up to date work done in other schools. Shyness.
- They don't learn enough, I think.
- No disadvantages.
- Higher education.
- Brighter students are not pushed to their limit.
- Wednesdays should be all day. Becomes too routine for them.

- There is need for high school here.
- The teaching of two different Indian Cultures, assuming they are the same. Being able to distinguish the difference. Networking with other groups off reserve. Family interference. Wednesday halfday - difficult for parents, too much free time for kids. School should be able to accommodate the students needs and work with parents. Relationships of families, sometimes too close to effectively deal with problems.
- Their Indian Culture. But they'll learn a lot at school.
- How to cope with the white society.
- They are missing more education. They are also missing religion.
- There are no disadvantages for children attending school only on the reserve. This is their home and they belong here.
- Some facilities, such as swimming pools and bigger gymnasiums.
- Not introduced to racism, which is a part of life they have to deal with.
- Should have more programs for children. eg: music lessons, etc.
- Culture don't really need for outside world.
- If they attend Native schools too long, they live in fear going to school outside to get along with other students. Should have exchange program with provincial school to develop contact.
- Don't learn enough about white society to be able to cope. Lack of respecting all people for what they are. The standard of education is lower. Need to learn incentives. Living from day to day.
- Meeting different people and exposure to the outside world.
- Nothing to miss, only their Cree culture.
- Not associating with other group of people and not learning to be together with other people.
- Learn more off the reserve.
- Be limited to associate with their own kind, should have some exposure to other people.
- Being able to learn to associate with other kids not from the reserve Lacking that exposure.
- It may be hard for the students to adjust once they have to leave the reserve. Community people working at school, a dependence on Indianism. Close family ties and favouritism.
- Kids not being disciplined, the teacher let them learn at their own, sometimes they need more guidance.
- No disadvantages.
- Their Indian culture.
- Lack of rules and lack of experience in the outside system and they don't know how to socialize with the white people (children).

- There is not enough honesty from the teachers on reporting to parents on a one to one basis.
- They would be shy to talk to others in school. Not enough writing in school.
- Cree
- They won't be able to cope with the white society.
- I don't think they will be missing too much except for the qualified teachers. Better education and more schooling equipment.
- Too shy to talk in school and in class. Learn must better if they were shy.
- Discipline- higher qualified teachers and more religion classes.
- Adjusting with the white society.
- Getting involved with the white society.
- Getting acquainted with other kids. They wouldn't be able to adjust right away in a white society. Feel different going to a white school.
- Need more exposure to the surrounding communities.
- They won't be missing anything.
- Too close to each other, not independent. Too comfortable at the reserve.
- Assimilation, the world is not all red or Indian. Exposure is important. Association at the junior and high school levels. Competing with other school require facilities, possibly lack of numbers of students to afford. Family problems get carried into school.
- Lack of interacting with other cultures. For teachers and counsellors to get to know the families better especially when teachers are not from the reserve or do not live here. Confidentially. Better facilities.
- The school is not strict enough.
- Not getting exposed to what goes on outside the reserve.
- There is not much exposure to what goes on around them.
- It may be a disadvantage that they don't learn to integrate.
- Socializing, religion, more options. All programs. Qualified counselling and special needs programs. Parenting counselling, more activities in gym. Meet new friends. Different nationalities. We would like to see the new generation out in the future. More of a challenge. Professional staff in options.
- I don't see any.
- Mix with white world.
- Wednesday afternoons have to find babysitter.
- Interacting with other children their own age.

- Provincial curriculum.
 - It is hard for the children to leave the reserve schools when they go into higher grades.
 - Miss some options from that offered in other school.
 - Not enough students for team participation in outside competitions.
- Teachers not living in community.
- The kids don't get to go to a white school and learn with other kids.
 - They'll probably be shy, the work seems harder to do at a white school.
 - I don't think that they are missing anything.
 - No integration

9. What could be done to improve schooling on the reserve?

- Put more emphasis on math and English so the children would be more prepared for secondary and post-secondary schools.
- Take out the half days on Wednesdays.
- Qualify teachers.
- Get a new school.
- Would help to socialize more with other schools.
- Community workshop; total involvement from the families; to teach the children to be comfortable in schools whether here or elsewhere; to develop self identity.
- Anything possible.
- Better educated teachers. Putting the school under provincial control.
- Having an awareness program - sexual abuse. More workshops for the youth. Bring outside people in like the elders.
- I like it the way it is.
- We should have a new school, more culture, more discipline.
- Less culture.
- Have more teachers than teacher aides. Religion program in the curriculum.
- Get some better teachers with more experience. A new school for more space.
- Introduce more homework, have a bigger school, have a lot more qualified teachers.
- More got dam school days than trips
- To have qualified teachers
- 1. More native ways. 2. More Catholic religion. The set up is fine the way it is.
- More education for students. More homework.
- Develop our own curriculum.
- More workshops for the children. More outdoor sports for the kids.
- The culture taught should have more to it. The language should be taught more (more meaningful). Should have a qualified teacher who teaches Cree.
- Higher qualified teachers. So the children won't be behind in their grades. More religion and culture should be taught to our children.
- More discipline of the children. They have no respect for elders.
- More culture. More religion.
- Lower grades okay, High school - if always go away some children to

grade 12 then will not meet potential.

- Bigger school. High school- Junior High program should be improved, but not feasible due to lack of funds.
- New facility - building. Need new location, need more space.
- Communication with parents eg. open doors system school board. Curriculum enrichment. What is the formula for takeover of one grade a year. Community needs to know. Adaptability for the provincial system.
- More homework. It is a new school. Get involved more in the whole society.
- A bigger school.
- They should teach the children more culture and education.
- 1. There should be more Catholic teachers so the children will know about their religion. 2. Most of my grandchildren don't know how to pray, they don't know what church is about. 3. They should know what church means. If they don't go to church now, they will never learn what it is about.
- We should get a new school, as soon as possible and more parent and community involvement.
- Bring standards up in provincial curriculum. More than just basics.
- More discipline, more culture, Cree - proper sentences, language structure, conversational Cree. Teachers should be Catholic, so we could have religion in our school.
- More community participation. School Board should be more involved in understanding school dynamics. ie: curriculum
- More parental support, and involvement at school. School board more aware of what actually goes on at school.
- Teachers should expect more of the students to teach them to push themselves. Wednesday afternoon should be cut down to once a month. School should be adaptable to the provincial system.
- Physical location, unsafe present location. Control kids going off school grounds. Security within the school and use of school properties by staff to be controlled.
- Give more homework. Not so many trips and not so much of one family working there. Try to give other people a chance.
- I don't know and I don't know enough about the way the school is.
- Parents day, involvement, group session with parents, parents to know what goes on at school, more information to parents.
- Include more about own people, traditional way.
- Go with provincial standards of education, keep tradition of Cree in the school.

- Cut down on field trips, should spend a little more time studying in the classroom. System in place so student can adjust to the provincial system if they go on.
- Improve discipline and confidentiality to be included. Teachers to spend more time teaching (should spend 90% of time) with the kids, the kids work too much on their own. More qualified teachers and aides. Less teacher aides and need some University to be in classes.
- Culture, needs to be more thoroughly explained to the kids by someone who knows - elder. Include religion.
- A new school and more space, more restrictions on smoking and fighting.
- Improve the discipline, less field trips - more education, I would like to see religion put back in the schools, the teachers should be all Catholics, and qualified.
- Band members must get involved. Students need to be kept close.
- Get more white teachers. More homework for students. Not have so many trips.
- They need more space.(a new school)
- More of a qualified staff instead of teacher aids and more in culture.
- More qualified teachers- out with the teacher aids and more discipline. Have religion classes.
- A new school.
- No more field trips. Not enough education. Not enough learning facilities. Not enough supervising the students. A better principal.
- More parental involvement. More programs in the community (like recreation) that tie in with the school.
- Bring in resource people (role models) and expose these kids to them so the kids can see that they can make it. More field trips to other reserves so that they can appreciate what they have. - Hire more teachers who have more understanding to native ways.
- Get teacher aides out. Put more white people in. More certified teacher, people from reserve.
- Stricter teachers, not hand picked, all workers should be screened. More supervision.
- Better facilities, better community understanding in running a school. Perhaps the teachers becoming full community members- living on reserve.
- Teach respect of the teachers. For the kids to respect. There is lots that could be done to improve it. The kids swear at teachers, teachers can't do anything. Teacher can't handle the students.
- Make the children work harder and they have too much free time.
- There should be more options such as music and dance lessons.

- What I see that could be improved, is not up to the school, it is the parents. My kids always ask me why can't I do that, other kids do that, I don't know if the school can do something about that situation. I think they are doing a good job.
- More parent involvement, the teachers should make home visits there should be more discipline the staff children should have a life skills program to cope with each other, there should be more aids (qualified and older) spend more time in classrooms. All staff should make an effort to do family visits before calling up a workshop for the community and I would like to see the religion put back on school hours. More different elders that children feel comfortable with.
- More courses for the Junior high there does not seem to be enough work for the exam.
- Nothing, moving along well.
- More instructional classes rather than working on one's own.
- More duties for upper end, basketball etc.
- Staffing- more native staff, who speak Cree in class.
- More parent involvement.
- More of a lunch program, full meals. More discipline. There should be religion classes.
- Have better after school programs for all the kids like sports.
- Improve the schooling and have more classes.
- Nothing, it has already been done.

10. What kinds of courses would you be interested in taking?

- Literature, report writing
- Managerial
- University
- Sociology, English
- Cooking.
- Reading and writing, Sewing.
- Administration.

14. Do you feel that the children are learning enough or not enough basic reading and writing skills in school?

- They should be taught more. Education.
- Writing skills should be more visible.
- Because it is all based on the individual child.
- Not so much reading but they need more writing skills.
- Because it is all based on the individual child.
- Not so much reading but they need more writing skills.

15. Do you feel that the children are learning enough or not enough basic mathematics skills in school?

- They should be taught more, education.
- Should be more visible.
- Because it is all based on the individual child.
- Never brings work, only brings pictures.

17. What grade level do you think they will achieve?

- I think they will take some trade afterwards.
- I think she will graduate and go to university.

18. Do you feel that the emphasis on learning Cree at school is...?

- Cree words in sentences not animals.
- The manner in which Cree is taught is not appropriate.
- Need to talk in sentences, need to be taught in a different way. There is one paragraph that can be used that has all the words there would be needed to learn the language.
- Not enough Cree taught.
- All grades seem to be learning the same thing over and over. eg: horse, animals - - what about other things?
- Should be longer, and more Cree.

19. Do you feel that the emphasis on Cree culture in the school is...?

- Alexander heritage should be taught by a local person.
- Need to find an even balance between the two cultures.
- For little ones, more for older.
- They are not taught enough Cree. The teachers that are there don't talk enough of our language.
- Not enough, they should be taught more so they don't forget their language.

20. Do you feel that the amount of attention paid to health and nutrition at the school is...

- I don't know about the health.
- Because they come home hungry.
- Should be continued.
- Enough nutrition and more attention to health.
- The sugar bugs theory was totally condemning rather than an understanding of why or why not sugar.
- If children are not allowed sugar, what about teacher. People need a certain amount of sugar.
- Give more of a lunch so the children are full. I know they don't get full because they come here after school and ask for food. The nurse should be there once a week.

21. Do you feel that students with special education needs receive too much, enough or too little attention?

- I am not familiar with the system.
- (too little) I think, there's not enough, you have to have more qualified people to teach.
- Have more attention to the kids while at school.
- I'm not involved in the school enough to answer this question in all honesty.
- Not sure because I am not familiar with the program.
- More of a lunch. Regular checkups once a month.
- I can't answer this because I don't know what goes on in school.
- More attention should be given to these children
- They should be watched more closely and more discipline.
- Look into special education programme to meet children's needs.
- Have seen good results.
- Give all the same amount of attention to each individual.
- They don't teach them enough on how to behave.
- More help from home, parents.
- No discipline.
- Small numbers, hard to put in effective program. Should have professionally trained teacher.
- There needs to be more space to accommodate all the kids who needed special education.
- Need to determine the special education need sooner; to help the student as soon as possible.
- I didn't know they had a special education program.
- My boy needs special attention, and he seems to be getting enough.
- What is the special education program? I don't know what it does.
- I don't know about the special education program.
- I don't know much about it, haven't seen much of the program in operation.
- The students need more individualized attention.
- The more the better.
- Not too much attention to students that need it.
- They receive a lot of personal attention and not enough learning attention.
- I'm not sure that there is a difference and I don't know if he is getting enough.
- The slow learners should get more attention.

- The teacher class because their students in one class. It's not very nice to classify other student to teacher from teacher.
- We can't help it if the kids aren't quick learners.
- They should learn how to handle and cope with the children with special needs.
- Reading ability. Lacking manners.
- Hardly any supervisors.
- Not aware of the program.
- Your boy is doing very good. If not for that program he wouldn't be in school.
- Not enough trained staff.
- Not sufficient fund or total qualified persons to deal effectively with the special need. Need to change the attitudes of special need being problems children.
- I believe if there was more funding the program for special need student could be better provided for.
- The program doesn't meet the need immediately or soon enough.
- I don't know any special education needs students.
- I am not too sure of what is going on in that area.
- No improvement. They spend too much time on the childrens' behaviour instead of their learning not treating the children equal it puts their self esteem down, qualified people for their needs only.
- Not enough attention to bad behaviour to kids.
- There are our poor children which I think should get more attention and help than the other healthy children. They need the care.
- Students with education needs should be helped as much as possible.

22. Are you aware of the role elders play in the school? (Do you feel that elders are involved too much, enough, too little?).

- I know they're there. They show respect and set an example.
- Elders restrict themselves.
- I know that they are involved. I don't know how much and to what extent.
- Know that they are there.
- Not really, I know that they are there.
- I would like to see different elders come in.
- Know that they go there but don't know what they do.
- The children would benefit from it.
- I think that stopped.
- How can an elder get involved when they get invited once or twice a year. The elders don't know how the children are because they don't get invited at all.

23. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with counselling provided to students?

- Counsellors are not doing their jobs, when a student has to go to their friends. And they are never there when you need to talk to them you have to look all over.
- Every time I go there, there are students sitting by the office - lots of bad kids. There's lots of drugs, alcohol, smoking at a young age.
- I think that the counsellors should be qualified in special area or upgrading in the problem area identified at the school.
- They don't have the right counsellors there.
- Too much relation.
- Counselling is very good for the students if they would only listen.
- They need more counselling for drinking and smoking.
- If they were counselled, they would behave differently
- The children should get more counselling.
- They're helpful.
- When the students have problems the counsellor needs to deal with it or refer to a person who can help that student. School Board needs to do something about it. Counsellor to work with drop- outs.
- Difficult for family relative to counsel effectively. Counsellor was not qualified so only provide support. Parental counselling - parent support group needed.
- They should invite the elders to sit in on some counselling, so we know what is going on. There should be a counsellor from our reserve, so this way we know the person.
- I would say that there should be a qualified counsellor and more discipline for the children.
- Don't know if my kids go to counselling.
- They should get a qualified - stricter counsellor- more attention for the children with problems with a qualified instructor
- Children with problem at least they have someone to talk to. And they also learn to trust someone. Some children have a hard time, it really helps to get counselling. To find where they're at.
- Not enough counselling.
- The counsellor needs to get more training and must be free from problems themselves. Should also take some teacher training.
- Don't think children get enough counselling.
- I think that the counsellor do not have the specialized trained needed to deal with the problems of the community and children, also ineffective in dealing with children and need more knowledgeable

background.

- Need to meet the parents. Confidentially.
- Counselling not being provided soon enough, seem to be the last in the list all the time. Counsellor not qualified enough to help. Need neutral person. Someone who doesn't know student. Confidentially for student and for family.
- Doing good job. Was there when my daughter needed her.
- I don't even know who the counsellor is.
- I feel that the behaviour problem children are not being dealt with properly. I think some of the parents need counselling.
- There should be a qualified counsellor that is not well known, to work with parents and children.
- No experience with counselling. But satisfied what observed with counselling.
- Need to give children more motivation.
- Counsellor doing good job.
- The two counsellor have done their best to meet the need of the kids.
- Counsellor are very concerned, able to refer to professionals when necessary.
- There should have been a counsellor along time ago.
- I didn't know there was a counsellor.
- What counselling do they have? Do they have a counsellor?
- I didn't know that they had counselling for students.
- Counsellors need more knowledge and more awareness of the kids. Not really aware who counsellor who as there is a lack of information.
- Get into too many personal problems at home.
- Their counselling should be confidential the counsellor shouldn't discuss the children's problems with anyone but the principal and the parents.
- I think they should get more counselling because some of the students drink.

24. On average, how often in the past year have you met with teachers to discuss the progress of your child or children?

- But don't listen.
- Teacher interviews, have met on other occasions.
- Have discussed troubles with teachers on many occasions throughout the whole year.
- Talk to teachers regularly about program of children. More than the scheduled visits

25. Do you find it easy or difficult to talk to teachers at the school?

- They are all friendly. They are all doing their jobs.
- I've always found it hard to talk to teachers.
- (difficult) Try to push people to get their children in school too young.
- I didn't talk to teachers because I never go there.
- Goes in one ear to another.
- I never talk to the teachers.
- No comment.
- Teachers are open- minded to receiving community members at all times.
- They are good people.
- Difficult for the teachers to understand the situation we express - involve parents in culture awareness week. Do as a whole community effort.
- Because it's a small school, and the teachers really take time to spend with you.
- I get along with all the teachers, I find it easy to talk to them.
- I don't know the teachers so I can't say it is easy or not easy.
- I haven't went
- I can always see the kids work at school.
- I find it easier to talk to the white teachers instead of teacher aids because of confidential reasons.
- I know most of the teachers.
- I'm not a parent so tends to be an invisible divide with some teachers, lack of a common ground, which should not be there if it is a community school.
- It depends on which one I am talking to. Some are easy and some are difficult.

- Because of the atmosphere, feel more relaxed at home, I felt they weren't being honest with me about my children and are scared to use too much of their time, because you are on a schedule (parent teacher interview)
- Dominates conversation, feel intimidated.
- Familiar with teacher aid, teachers are good listeners.
- Teachers are outgoing and teachers are open to share their ideas.
- They try.
- It has been difficult with some teachers.
- Some easy, some very difficult - staff too busy or not available. Gone on trips a lot.
- Teachers are very friendly.
- Have not talked to them.
- I have never talked to teachers at the school.
- They are willing to teach and they are pretty good.
- I have no problems.
- None.
- I feel very comfortable in going to the school and talking to the teachers because I know them all.
- It depends on who you are talking to and what you are talking about.

26. Do you feel that the school listens to the concerns of parents?

- Don't know.
- I am not quite sure.
- Appears to be a barrier, the school hears things about certain families so gets their guard up.
- I don't think so because they think we are just stupid elders.
- Because you have to make an appointment, do not deal with immediately.
- Some teachers don't.
- It's the teachers way or no way.
- I don't know.
- I don't know I haven't had to yet.
- But it is difficult sometimes, can't satisfy everyone.
- Not really.
- I don't know if they do, I never had no complaints.
- Don't like some of the attitudes they give they say they will do something but they don't. Nothing seems to sink into their heads.
- Has had problems with daughter being sent home for her own protection.

27. In your own words, what do you think the school should be doing for the children?

- They should be helping the children to understand all the basic subjects and encourage them to go to higher education institutes.
- They should learn a lot of things.
- Longer schooling on Wednesday, because what's the use of sending 1/2 a day and not learn anything? New teachers.
- Think there should be an incentive for the children to continue to go to school.
- Have a good education; make them learn; provide a good counsellor; help them with any problems at home or in school.
- Good foundation for the children, but also be able to fit into mainstream, provide opportunity for self image/identity for the children. Good strong cultural aspects.
- Develop their confidence, which allows one to do anything he/she wants. The key to success.
- Teach them better schooling.
- Keep kids in school as long as possible - encourage the students.
- Keep doing what they are doing.
- Should provide the basic subjects that students need. School should not restrict kids from having whatever food they take in their lunches. Instead they should teach control or understanding of what certain foods do to the body.
- The school should discipline the children and teach them more reading and math.
- Get more teacher aides from the reserve who have graduated from high school.
- Attempt to better the program.
- The school should have more of an understanding with the children, listen to them more about their concerns.
- Help more on education.
- Learn more Cree. Learn more school work. More homework.
- Giving them an education. Other than that the school is doing enough.
- I would like to see a music program. More recreation for the children as well as a phys. ed. teacher.
- I think the teachers should try harder with the children.
- I would like to see the children taught more religion in our school.
- Make them learn more.
- Educate them. More than english and math. Teaching sharing, not to be selfish.

- To learn respect of all things. Teach to obey rules, learn to be responsible. Life skills.
- Teach them the best they can.
- Continue allowing children to be themselves. Continue making children aware of their community and its function, because the school is located on the reserve, the children can identify with it.
- To provide an education. There is never too little to learn. We never learn enough, teach them to learn. Prepare them for their futures.
- Do away with Wednesday afternoon off- structure in a school program for those times. Discipline, build endurance. Teach respect of one another. Culture program utilization. Teach sharing and working together. Build confidence to express oneself.
- I would like to see a little more discipline, more Catholic teachers to teach our children.
- The school should provide the necessary education required- academically- spiritually- physically and mentally
- Should provide a good atmosphere. Make them enjoy school.
- More Cree, more religion.
- Should continue to have individualized program. Encourage academics, individuality, creativity and cree.
- To provide the kids with a good education as possible.
- Teach them right from wrong. Basic academics to be taught. Teach about life, teach them that the reserve is no the only home to be had.
- Need to learn basic subject ex: math. For the children to learn.
- Give them homework, they never seem to have any work to do.
- Have less meetings to take student away from leisure and learn more math and more physical education programs.
- Give them a good education all of the time. Confidence, identity and teach to learn.
- Teach the children as much as they can.
- School should do an achievements program. Community support to students included in school, school back up the students, will be behind them if they want further training and support system.
- Should have exams at end of the year like other school. and should attend school same days as the other students in other schools. and should do more evaluations like this.
- Educate them.
- More supervision at play time.
- The school should teach the children more discipline. Put Catholic teachers and religion back in school.

- I would like the teachers to be honest with the parents and to prepare the parents.
- More education.
- They go on too many field trips. Not enough supervision. Too many kids getting hurt. Too much playtime.
- They should teach them more religion and culture.
- More counselling- more discipline. More religion- more crec and culture- more qualified staff more time should be spent with problem students
- Make learning easier.
- The principal has no responsibilities. Not enough supervision.
- I think they have to focus on the family and determine what we need to do, then get them all involved.
- Make them more aware of what is happening outside of Alexander, in all areas. Should do career counselling.
- They should be teaching the importance of school and how they will benefit from it in the future as we all know, education is very important if we want to survive in the future.
- Help them more in the special need areas. LAP, learning ability program should be here in Alexander. Feel a lot of student could use the program. Get more information from the parents.
- Have more supervision, less teacher aides. More recreation. Indoor sports.
- Provide children with the learning tools to be able to adjust. To develop in a way that compliments their values and morals. To be able to determine learning disabilities at a very early age and to provide a system that deals effectively with those learning disabilities. To provide the best possible education anywhere in the world.
- To give quality education. Teach them a thirst for knowledge. Teach them to enjoy education.
- Should be able to give education to all students whether they have problems or not. Need to help the troubled school, make more effort for those kids. Teach the kids to deal with feeling and understand. Teachers should deal with some of the problems of the students rather than send them to office all the time.
- Give more education, more work. Less holidays, too much time off.
- Options for music and dance. A larger library and more sports.
- Basically what the school should do is give good basic education skills for them to continue their education without needing upgrading.
- Teach them religion respect to get along and to see each other as an equal and discipline.
- The school should improve the discipline of the children.

- More math, more curriculum subjects and less play time.
- More instructional classes, less workbooks.
- Skills to go on.
- Learn more about native background and speaking the language.
- More culture and more creole.
- I am happy with the way it is.
- They should be getting the kids ready for university and high school as best as they can.
- Beading, cultural dancing, learning to make their own costumes could be taught by the school.
- Should repeat years when they cannot do the work.
- The school should be giving more homework on the basic courses. To prepare them for high school and university.
- They have to teach them better, less teacher aids and hire better teachers. The teachers and aides must set better examples for the children, needs specialized teachers for different subjects.
- They should go back to the government standards, because it is the children that will be hurt by it. They have to be taught right instead of being used as guinea pigs.
- The school should be giving the kids more sports and teaching them the best they can.
- Discipline, religion, culture.
- Educate them, prepare them for the outside world, teaching them how to respect others and themselves, and to associate with other people.
- Offer courses that help them in the future, for jobs, etc.
- Teach them to have more respect.
- To provide an education for kids, kept them in school don't let them drop out, prepare them for a future, teach them what a job is.
- The school has to meet the emotional needs of the children.
- The children should be taught more culture, elders should be more involved. The teachers here should show the children to respect their elders and their parents. They should learn them now before the elders are gone or the culture will die off. The school should take the children to the wilderness to learn survival.
- I would like to see the teachers help our children more, I think some of our children are not learning anything at this school.
- More culture more religion like I said before.
- I am really glad that the children are getting educated here. I never had the opportunity to go to school. In the future the children have to be well educated to survive.
- The teachers should put more effort in teaching the children writing skills.

- Give the children a good education.
- More one to one counselling with children to get children to open up and develop trust.
- I would suggest more discipline, such as writing lines or detentions.
- They should teach them more crec and culture.
- They should teach the children religion and have all Catholic teachers.
- The school should show the children more discipline and more education.
- More education, less culture.
- More culture, religion, teachers and Indian staff.

APPENDIX II

TEACHING STAFF RESPONSES TO OPEN QUESTIONS, COMMENTS

**APPENDIX II:
TEACHING STAFF RESPONSES: OPEN QUESTIONS, COMMENTS**

2. How would you rate the following aspects of the educational environment at Alexander?

Comment:

TEACHERS:

- Poor ventilation system in trailers, desks, shelves etc are never washed, light bulbs not replaced (one washroom has had no light now for 4 months), florescent lamps not replaced (5 not working now), garbage not picked up outside the trailers (in garbage cans) - have had garbage there now for 4 months, no lock- up system to put items like scissors, thread etc (lost a lot of things last year), not enough film projectors, screens etc.
- The physical plant at Alexander leaves much to be desired.
- The school material is relevant to the children's needs.
- Excellent supplies in such a small community.
- Growth and addition of portables create far too many problems!
- With the type of philosophy we are trying to implement, we need materials and supplies and manpower to reach our goal. If we are forever running out of materials and supplies it is kind of frustrating, especially when we are asked to give so much of ourselves as teachers, we should have the resources we need to carry out our objectives.

ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

- Should be more outdoor recreation facilities. Should be more "up to date" textbooks and materials. Should have tape recorders and headphones for children to use in the library. Should have more musical instruments e.g. guitars, violins, drums etc.
- Classroom square footage is a little small.

3. How would you rate the following aspects of the educational program at Alexander?

TEACHERS:

Other aspects:

- Parental involvement
- The cooperative aspect of all staff

Comments:

- I don't see too much parental involvement. The only time I've seen parents are at parent/teacher interviews or at special events.
- Minimal parental involvement, no volunteers for any school activities.

ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

Other aspects:

- Job entry
- Early childhood

Comments:

- "Recovery Program" boys and girls should not be allowed to integrate with grade 8's. They are older. Was not satisfied with our student counsellors. Too much preaching and not enough counselling. All year long we had only one elder. Was not fair to the rest of the elders in the community.

NO INDICATION OF POSITION HELD

- Elders involvement is immensely improved. Counselling needs work. More expertise with sexual abuse, neglect, drugs, alcohol. Retreats provide very good cultural orientation, evaluation.

6. How would you rate the quality of your interaction with [selected others listed] ?

Comments:

TEACHERS:

- Most answers I have given are averages with a number of specific instances being represented in other rating categories by the arrows.

Excessive demands on time eliminate satisfactory interaction with teaching staff and professionals. Infrequent interaction with school board perhaps 2 or 3 times a year.

- I have had little interaction with community because I do not live in the community. If I lived in the community I feel that I would be more aware therefore be a more effective teacher.

ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

- The staff we have at present are a group of warm and loving people. Its too bad they don't show it to the children at all times. Our principal is one of them. Children hate being yelled at. They rebel when this happens.

NO INDICATION OF POSITION HELD

- Community responds very well to parent conferences, community events sponsored by the school, but many seem to project their own problems onto the school, blaming the school for problems with a kid. There are very few rational processes used to make decisions about a child's future. The relations within the school are excellent.

7. How much importance do you feel the community, as a whole, places on education?

TEACHERS:

- The contact I have had with parents has been very positive and I know they care for their children and want them to get the best education possible.

NO INDICATION OF POSITION HELD

- Parents vary an awful lot on this issue and relegate much decision making to the children. Some parents are very concerned, others are unconcerned.

How accessible or unaccessible is the principal?

TEACHERS:

- Accessible but not approachable.

14. Why do you feel this kind of school offers the best education for Indians?

TEACHERS:

- Children will perform better if they know that their parents are interested in the school.
- Because it provides a sense of ownership and control over one's own fortunes.
- It gives the people a sense of accomplishment and achievement. It will allow for the people to achieve their goals in their own lives and the lives of their future children.
- Most important aspect in the situation is that the band has the authority to hire teachers and other staff who they feel will provide the quality work that is essential to a successful school.
- Children gain from close, culturally relevant curriculum and environment. Beyond the elementary grades, closer integration with other native and non- native children is, I believe, essential. For this and other reasons i.e. lack of academic stimulus; insufficient numbers to provide a variety of programs; need for specialist teachers- high schools should be built for joint band control (where this is reasonable geographically). Urban reserves should access provincial high schools.
- If it is run by the people then they are the ones who will have a say in all aspects of the school and not one person making all of the decisions and making all the rules.
- Ridiculous question, contingent on instruction and geographic location.

ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

- It gave the kids a chance to learn at their own speed.
- Because we can get native teachers and native staff. Only native teachers understand the native child. We are teaching the child in a wholistic manner which I think is just super.
- I feel this is an inadequate question. Native people have the right to the best kind of education as any one else.
- Better quality of education.

- I had the opportunity to experience all three levels of the education system as listed above. I felt that there were certain pressures coming from the provincial and federal schools that I attended. The comfort and attention that was received from the teachers were very negative. As with the band- controlled schools I felt comfortable and at home with the kind of people that were around me, giving the encouragement that I needed.

- Because there is a lot of one to one, especially with the classes being so small. It gives the teachers a lot of time to do their job.

NO INDICATION OF POSITION HELD

- Because of the fact, you get to learn your own identity as a person

- The ability of the community to determine its own destiny. However a school that goes to local control unprepared may be worse off. They need to have a strong philosophical base supported by the community and staff.

16. Can you identify some important advantages children have in attending school on the reserve?

TEACHERS:

- Reserve school- smaller class- rooms, better relationship of students to staff, less exposure to racism/prejudice
- They are able to go to school in a socially comfortable environment. A greater interest in the well being of the child is more likely in a local school.
- They have direct role models to follow. They see what their elders can do and what their future holds in store for them.
- Have a chance to build self- esteem and pride in themselves and their community. Close proximity to child's home. Working with own people as role models. Knowing that people care. Learn about: themselves and their long lineage of Indian ancestors, treaties, culture, language and sense of responsibility that goes along with being of Indian origin.
- Strong sense of identity. Close supervision by family members, Closer school home liaison especially during crisis times.
- Close to home. Cultural relevance. Security of nearby family members. Competition of dominant society removed.
- They are with their native peer group. Nobody will call them down because they are Indian.

ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

- They can have a better understanding of their culture. Be able to be with their relatives and friends.
- To be in their environment and to learn about their culture.
- 1) Culture- they learn what it is; 2) They can be themselves (Indians) instead of putting on airs; 3) Identity crisis.
- Learning their culture.
- Cree cultural program.
- There are native staff involved in the education system; teachers, administrators, support staff and teacher- aides. This makes the native student more secure and encourages them to continue.
- They don't have to go as far. They don't have to worry about how they dress.

NO INDICATION OF POSITION HELD

- As to job training and attending recovery schooling later to UCE program to up their grades
- Caring environment, individualized approach- concern for differences, cultural knowledge.

17. Are there any aspects of the curriculum that need improvement?

TEACHERS:

- The integration of more leisure time and life skill activities into the day (not necessarily the school day)
- They are now in the process of developing a curriculum which will meet the needs of the children.
- We need a composite Cree language and culture curriculum program. We need a teacher who is proficient in both curriculum development and Cree instruction who can handle this area.
- Cultural and Cree language programs need extensive help and direction particularly in planning and delivery.
- Relevant curriculum, a curriculum designed by the people, a curriculum that is alive and not dead knowledge.
- Cultural relevance, adherence to/meeting provincial standards.

ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

- 1 Cree program - not much of it, very poor; 2) Physical education - should be one specific teacher for physical education only so the child will benefit more.
- The Cree program should be more about an hour to get all children talking sentences instead of little phrases.
- We need to have the Dick and Jane books made into Eagle, Raven books.

NO INDICATION OF POSITION HELD

- The Cree program and the involvement of the community
- Everything is in the state of evolution. I think it will take a generation of work to make a strong curriculum. The Cree curriculum and instruction are still fairly weak because of the staff teaching it. Inculcation of process needs much work as does arts, math, language.

18. What disadvantages might there be to attending school only on the reserve?

TEACHERS:

- Children do not have more exposure to other ethnic groups/less interaction/experiences. Teachers do not have access to resource materials. Less information as to what is happening in education in Alberta.
- A lack of exposure to enriching experiences outside the boundaries

of the reserve.

- The segregation aspect, however this can be overcome by going on field trips and having consistent open houses with other schools.
- Unless the school can properly handle cross-cultural awareness, this aspect of a child's development tends to lack in comparison to a child who is found in a multicultural setting.
- Isolation, inability to establish relationships with non-native children. Lack of contacts for job market. Inability to compete in off reserve situations. Inability to change social status either on or off the reserve.
- Adjusting to a white school where maybe things are looked at differently.
- Isolation in upper grades. Lack of programs, materials, facilities. Poor socialization skills in upper grades. Lack of employment opportunities on reserve limits growth.

ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

- There will be no integrating with the white society.
- The disadvantages might be that the children here might not face discrimination here but going to school off the reserve could run into this.
- There could be some disadvantages in attending school on a reserve, one of them is that students that do attend reserve schools are unable to compete with the outside world, because they really haven't made any challenges or exposure in the outside world- white society.
- Not knowing the whiteman ways in which to survive in the white man's world.

NO INDICATION OF POSITION HELD

- Interacting with the outside world as to different cultures and nationalities
- Not enough good students to stimulate growth. Although that seems to be improving. Lack of cultural mix. However, I think natives need to appreciate their own culture before they will appreciate others.

19. Are there any needed changes in the community, outside of the school, which would have a positive effect on children and their education?

TEACHERS:

- Families are isolated from each other. Kids in my class don't even know where other kids live on the reserve. More interaction in getting to know each other. Perhaps activities, support groups etc.)
- Parents spending more time with children. Parents taking child rearing more seriously.
- The community are growing in their awareness of both their own and their children's needs for positive change to take place. Since these are many and complex I feel it would be negative to specify especially when many changes are beginning.
- Chemical abuse should be dealt with.
- As in any other community.

ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

- More parent involvement!! There is no parent involvement at all.
- drugs/alcohol
- That more people, I mean more people should take an advantage in their child progress at school and take part in more parental involvement.
- There definitely has to be a better communication system set up for our school and community, that these two can have better and closer contact. The school staff and school board should make an effort to make better contact with community.
- When there are open houses, parent teacher nights, it would be nice to have more community involved.

NO INDICATION OF POSITION HELD

- A program in survive and how to hunt like their fathers and grand fathers used to.
- Economic development so that people see a tangible need for education and don't have to be so dependent on the federal government. Drugs and alcohol, cultural training. Assistance in terms of counselling, training for parents who neglect and abuse children. People learning to like each other. Unity. Get rid of backstabbing jealousy.

20. Suppose the School Board wants to change the way it spends a small portion of its budget. How could this money be more usefully spent to improve the education program?

TEACHERS:

- Parents should get to know the teachers better - perhaps housing on the reserve so community can live side by side with teachers. Bring in elders to school - make them more an integral part of the school.
- Use the money now being paid out in return for very little product (poor value), for enrichment of the present program (reduce waste).
- Improvising the curriculum, which directly affects the education material being taught to the children.
- Develop material and also buy craft products that would allow every child in the school to learn how to make cultural crafts such as dance outfits, including beadwork and sewing material. Summer programs for students and adults.
- By sponsoring inter- band exchanges of both teachers and pupils, and exploring shared use of facilities with local schools.
- Community awareness- on all aspects of the education program.
- Directly spent on children and programs.

ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

- They should get education programs that interact with the culture in some way or another.
- To put the money into the school for our children to have a better education.
- Help our children seek their hidden talents, Be it music, sports or drama.
- Nutrition program, home economics
- By having more recreational activities for all youngsters, and not only for a certain age and up.
- To develop better books and curriculum material that will meet the students' standards and as native students.
- Buying more native cultural materials.

NO INDICATION OF POSITION HELD

- I really don't have a clue on the dollars
- Staff training, community events, earlier intervention program- preconception to age 2.

21. How did you first hear about the teaching staff position you currently hold?

- I assisted in the school for about a year then the school had openings and I applied.
- Staff from Alexander were being trained at National University in San Diego where I was working.

22. Why did you chose to accept a position as a teacher or teacher's assistant at Alexander?

TEACHERS:

- Attracted by philosophy of school
- Because of the program direction and vision being to my liking.
- I really am impressed with their philosophy of education and the approach they are using to best educate the students.
- I believe in wholistic philosophy in education. I believe in band control for native education. I believe that the direction in which the school is progressing is the right direction for the Alexander situation. I saw that the staff were united when I came to observe the school prior to my arrival. And this unity still exists.
- To experience intercultural education and assist the native people in their struggle for change.
- Challenge, philosophy.
- Because I believe in the philosophy of the school and I firmly believe it is one of the answers to how well native children can learn.

ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

- It gave me the opportunity to work with the kids from Alexander. And to be a good role model.
- Because I like children and sharing what I know.
- I choose the assistant teacher job to hopefully become a teacher for our community some day.
- I like our children and my dream is to teach children. Native children need native workers to care, love and be patient with them.
- To see and find out if becoming a teacher is for me, and what qualities or something I could get out of being an assistant teacher.

- I accepted a position as assistant teacher at Alexander because I felt that there were great contributions to be made by myself, to share the knowledge and also expand my interest and knowledge in the teaching field.
- I wanted to experience the job and now like it very much.

NO INDICATION OF POSITION HELD

- To teach our native tongue Cree and the culture of our native people
- The opportunity to apply Anisa. Desire to see native people take their rightful place in society.

23. How many years would you like to continue teaching at Alexander?

TEACHERS:

- For as long as possible.
- I want to continue to strive for personal growth, i.e. back to university, learn in other areas, travel.

ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

- This is hard to say because I'm going back to university to pursue a career as a teacher, but I'd sure like to come back and be staff again as a real teacher.

NO INDICATION OF POSITION HELD

- For however long I'm needed

24. What could be done at Alexander to make you happier with your work?

TEACHERS:

- More parental involvement, less comparison to 'them' and 'us' - provincial guidelines need not necessarily be applicable.
- More clearly define staff roles, responsibilities, and resources (budgets etc)
- A new school, an issue which is being considered now.
- I would like to see programs in place for adults. Programs that range in interest from recreation, leisure, to training for prospective teachers on reserve.
- Consideration for the individuals personal need to spend time with their families, and understanding that professionally trained staff need time for marking, preparation, planning, and professional development if they are to function to the best of their abilities without suffering stress and burnout. Teaching in a band-controlled school is exhausting and challenging. Without any collective agreements and one year contracts it is a powerless position and staff who support homes or families are in a tenuous position.
- More actual carrying out of the philosophy and more native people who understood and believe in it. Too much talk and not enough doing it.
- Community involvement; improved facility; improved communication between Board and staff; occasional receiving of thanks; honesty.

ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

- Nothing, right on!
- A better and larger school to work in.
- I would like to see music, drama taught to our older children. I know we have a lot of talent in Alexander.
- I don't think Alexander is responsible for my happiness at work or anyplace else.
- By having a native staff, since this is a band- controlled school.
- More involvement of community people at school and home learning
- That the people of our community begin to take part in the education system more closely. That the School Board begin to have closer contact with community members and school staff.
- The kids could listen, more parent- teacher involvement.

NO INDICATION OF POSITION HELD

- More time for team planning, more time to plan curriculum.

25. Based on your experience as a teacher or assistant teacher at Alexander, what would you tell leaders of other Indian communities are the most important steps to take in order to have a quality locally controlled program?

TEACHERS:

- The most important thing to do is to lay out a strong foundation to the base the educational system. Community have to initiate the change. Change has to come from within the community- not from the outside. Community has to be aware of the school's philosophy before it can be implemented. Teachers/staff shouldn't be explaining to community what we're doing here - community should be telling us what to do.

- 1) Choose a philosophy and make sure it can be articulated and sold to the community.

2) Get your fiscal act together, take your time, do a good job of each program you embark upon, and don't bite off more than you can chew just because there is funding available (money does not replace know- how)

- Taking the first initiative of going forward and wanting to be band- controlled.

- Hire quality, dedicated staff including administration. Base education on elders and culture. Hire as many reserve people that are willing to train for positions. Involve reserve strength as much as possible. Develop long range goals and objectives for educational programming. Secure relationship with federal government and provincial education department. Secure good working relationship with local government, programs, and people of the reserve. Have a united staff who share similar philosophy. Balancing staffing strengths, qualities and personalities.

- Check very carefully the credentials of those who advise. Insist on all staff having provincial credentials or be eligible for local certification. Yearly or bi- yearly evaluation and on going consultation agreement with a local university. Community involvement particularly of elders is essential if the school is to meet the needs of all the community and not just a dominant group.

- Please involve the people right from the start. Involve the elders and ask them first for guidance and involve them all the time, not just a few times a year. Make the people aware of how things are. Be honest. Nothing is perfect, tell it like it is.

- 1) Honesty in all aspects; 2) appropriate/efficient management of funds; 3) energy directed toward funds; 4) limit travel, rely on community input as it can create commitment; 5) encourage teachers

to maintain current in education methodologies and philosophies (local workshops).

ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

- 1) most important - culture; 2) Teachers that are sincere and honest and understanding; 3) If possible, all native teachers and assistants; 4) Parent involvement; 5) Community involvement.
- To get the students interested in school again I guess there is nothing a person could do unless they were willing to do something about it.
- That the community has to come to a complete agreement that this is what they want and that the people themselves are going to take initial steps in making sure that the school is functioning properly, through their cooperation as individuals. And also, that the community members themselves, whether with School Board or Council, are going to support each other at trial and tribulation situations.
- Parent- teacher involvement, better community-school relationship.

NO INDICATION OF POSITION HELD

- 1. Strong philosophy 2. courageous leaders from own band who aren't afraid of being criticized. Courage of convictions(not politically afraid) 3. Community support 4. Use of consultation as a process to solve problems. 5. Hiring of a dedicated staff, not necessarily native, who are free of prejudice and appreciate native culture. They should also be the best teachers able to handle difficult problems and work as a team. 6. Don't go into it lightly. Be persevering, be honest.

26. Based on your experience as a teacher or assistant teacher at Alexander, what would you tell the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development he should do to help give Indian- controlled schools the best chances of succeeding?

TEACHERS:

- Let the Indian people take complete control - you have never succeeded in educating our people. Remove regulations/rules etc. Let the Indian people do it there way.
- Simplify funding methods (too much talent, energy, and time is spent lobbying and seeking funding). Tie social programs to education (people should be paid to go to school rather than collect social assistance). Reward initiative.
- Telling them to have faith and encouragement for those schools that have gone band control.
- Do not allow Indian controlled schools to become too slack. But on the other hand do not try to act as father figure and try to tell them how to do things. Provide a measure of communication between federal and band at all times. Encourage bands to share between each other information such as positive and negative programming. Such as this questionnaire might succeed at doing.
- Provide Indian education centers in every province where teams of experienced educators and administrators are available to provide help and advice to bands, and importantly, become central resource centres for the sharing of ideas and moral support of teachers who work in band- controlled schools. This might help to eliminate some of the disreputable consultants who exploit the present situation.
- Give the people what they need to run a good program. Do not underfund them. Help the indian people honestly as they are trying to help themselves. Remove the obstacles as you alone have the power to remove them.
- Financial and educational accountability.

ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

- This is a biased statement. I feel in order for band- controlled schools to succeed they should have all Indian teachers and lots of parent and community involvement.
- I think the best chance they can give us at succeeding is to work with us.
- Well, I don't know what to say to them. I, myself, am just getting to know about band- controlled.
- On our behalf, Alexander Reserve need a new school definitely,

that we are expanding as staff and student ratio is going up every year. And also the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development should see or visit the schools for his own interest, so he will be able to see the needs of each Indian controlled school.

- More funding to get or develop a native curriculum for schools.

Update books, texts, work problems.

NO INDICATION OF POSITION HELD

- 1. Believe that native people have an important part to play in the life of Canada, that without them Canada will suffer greatly.
- 2. Believe that native people can and should run their own affairs.
- 3. Organize the administration machinery to meet the needs of native communities rather than having bands fit the needs of the bureaucratic system.
- 4. Publicly praise native people, especially those who are working on their own.
- 5. Give long term financial support to bands who want to go to local control. Also use such successful programs as consulting agencies.

