



Report To:	Program Planning Committee
From:	Donna Stewart, Director of Integrated Social Services and Lori Clark, Children's Programs Supervisor
Date:	October 25, 2017
Re:	Journey Together – Issue Report

### **Background:**

As the Service System Manager for child care and Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres, the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board is responsible for programming for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children and families off-reserve. The demographic data is limited regarding Indigenous children and families in the area. For the purposes of this proposal the National Household Survey was used, the 2011 data is very limited as the National Household Survey was a non-mandatory survey and much of the data was suppressed. Based on this data, between 5 and 17% of the population in the district self-identify as Aboriginal. It is expected that the Aboriginal Identity data for the 2016 census will be released later this month.

In November 2016, the DSB submitted a capacity funding proposal to MEDU to support the implementation of the Ministry of Education's Early Years initiatives under *The Journey Together: Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples*. The DSB worked with Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute (KTEI) to develop a capacity building proposal intended to engage in meaningful, collaborative discussions.

We received confirmation on January 19, 2017 that the proposal was approved and we received the full allocation of \$49,800. Aboriginal Cultural Competency Learning sessions and family engagement activities were held last spring across the district.

The learning and planning sessions resulted in the development of a community vision that we: "*create a generation who naturally dismantle oppression*".

To achieve the vision, several goals have been identified:

- Increased access to culturally relevant services and programs for Indigenous families.
- Enhanced and accurate Indigenous content.
- Fostering Indigenous Identity.
- Supporting Indigenous and non-Indigenous develop capacity.

**Purpose:**

The child care and child and family programs are committed to improving outcomes for all children and families in the community. They are committed to achieving the goals outlined above and recognize that additional professional development and reflection is necessary to achieve the vision.

We are proposing that a place of learning be established on Manitoulin Island with extensive outreach across the district that would serve as a research and training hub and cultural learning centre for child care programs, family programs, educators and families.

The proposed program will:

- support the delivery of culturally relevant programming that includes history, language and land based learning.
- support appropriate teaching methods based on Aboriginal learning styles, and;
- support positive Aboriginal self-identity and support connections to extended family and the community.
- increase access to culturally relevant programs and services for children and families which will increase awareness and access of other community services leading to the holistic development of children.

The proposed program supports the view of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board and the Manitoulin Sudbury Best Start Network that all children and families in the catchment area have the right to experiences that promote healthy, holistic child and family development. The proposed program will increase access to culturally relevant programs and services for children and families which will increase awareness and access of other community services leading to the holistic development of children.

The proposed budget for this program is \$597,300 for 2018 and \$553,300 for 2019, this proposal is for new funding and will not require any municipal contribution as it will be funded 100% by the province.

**Conclusion:**

The Board support the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB's *Journey Together* proposal submission in partnership with Kenjgewin Teg to the Ministry of Education (MEDU).