“KOGNAADAA WAA-NIIGAANZIJIG-- WE ARE RAISING THOSE THAT WILL LEAD”

A TRANSITION PROGRAM FOCUSED ON
A HOLISTIC SELF-REGULATION FRAMEWORK
FOR BEAUSOLEIL FIRST NATION STUDENTS

Peggy Monague McGregor

A Project submitted to the Faculty of Education
in conformity with the requirements for
the degree of Master of Education
in Aboriginal and World Indigenous Educational Studies Program

Faculty of Education
Queen’s University
Kingston, Ontario, Canada
February, 2016

© Peggy Monague McGregor 2016
Abstract

This project is a culmination of research for an Indigenous community known as Christian Island or Beausoleil First Nation (BFN). Beausoleil First Nation initiated the project in response to concerns over post-secondary withdrawal rates. Despite the injection of new, additional funds into the post-secondary sponsorship program, there remains retention issues, which were attributed by the leadership to deficiencies in life skills. Therefore, funding was set aside to investigate approaches and provide recommendations to the community for a transition program that would increase the post-secondary retention rates.

An educational technical term aligning to life skills referred to as self-regulation was used as the research term throughout this project. Self-regulation is seen as a viable approach, since the focus is on increasing skill-building in the area of planning, focusing attention, adaptability, cognitive ability, and communication while decreasing emotional stress, impulsivity, and isolation. The attributes of self-regulation and transition were studied and divided into quadrants using the medicine wheel as a holistic design framework for BFN.

A series of workshops aimed at self-regulation (goal-oriented planning, communication, emotional regulation, increasing cognitive ability, etc.) is recommended as the first phase in a process to achieve student success for the short-term. A long-term strategy is desired that would fully impact all levels of education at BFN and is presented as a framework to advance long-term planning and sustainability. This transition model is developed from a literature review and the author’s knowledge to provide future direction for a complete (holistic) framework.

Keywords: Indigenous, Self-Regulation, Transition, Post-Secondary, Framework, Holistic, Life Skills
Dedication

Over four decades ago, I was born and raised on Christian Island. My home has always been a source of strength for me. It is where my spirit is happiest, as I can feel my ancestors propelling me forward on this amazing, learning journey. It’s hard to put into words the ache in my heart I have for them— that they endured so many things for us to live in better circumstances. I have dedicated my working life to try to honor their struggle. We are all related on Christian Island in some shape or fashion so I’d like to thank these loving grandparents who gave me this strength of spirit and who continue to guide my efforts every day:

- Enoch and Sophia Sunday and their parents, and grandparents.
- Russell and Josephine Monague and their parents, and grandparents.

To my parents, who have believed in my capabilities from day one, despite the overwhelming, sometimes insurmountable barriers placed before me. I really believe that their high expectations and ideals made me the person I am today:

- Robert and Adely Monague (my father also gifted me with the name for the project in Anishinabemowin).

To my brother Rob, who has gone on to the spirit world. I wish there was such a program when we were growing up. Despite this, you were a true leader in your own right. Love you and miss you at the core of my being but I know that you had a hand in all of this. And, for my sister Michelle who is such a caring mom. I’m so proud of all that you do.

In my early 20’s I met this man who I was one day to spend the rest of my life with. I don’t wish for a second to change that destiny. To my husband, Mike who has been my support,
anchor, and sounding board for the last 10+ years of my educational journey. I appreciate his commitment to my never-ending pursuits but most of all, I love how he understands me.

To my children Joshua, Jeremy, Monikka and Violet. Creator couldn’t have blessed me with anything more beautiful than these gifts I have to look after, to watch you grow and now to have you by my side-- you are all unique in your own right and have brought me many blessings. Thank you for giving up your time for me to accomplish this.

Chi-Miigwetch to Dr. Elizabeth Lee for the guidance and patience in completing this and to Dr. John Freeman for your help and feedback.

Finally, I offer thanks to all those universities who continue to research, write and teach about Indigenous cultures and worldviews. Most especially thanks to Queen’s University and Ryerson University for sending me forward with authentic knowledge.

It has been a memorable learning experience.
# Table of Contents

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................... ii
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................................... v
Chapter One: Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1
Background on Education at Christian Island ...................................................................................... 1
Introduction to the Project .................................................................................................................... 7
Chapter Two: Self-Regulation and Transition: A Literature Review ................................................... 15
What is Self-regulation? ....................................................................................................................... 15
Definition .......................................................................................................................................... 15
Self-regulation as a Process ................................................................................................................ 18
The Importance of Motivation to Self-Regulated Learning ................................................................. 18
The Importance of Goal Setting in Self-Regulated Learning--Meta-cognitive. .................................. 21
The Importance of the Delay of Gratification in Self-Regulated Learning--Cognitive. .................... 22
The Importance of Feedback in Self-Regulated Learning--Behaviour ............................................. 23
Development of Self-Regulation ......................................................................................................... 26
Rationale for Self-Regulation ............................................................................................................ 29
Strategies for Self-Regulation ............................................................................................................ 32
Holistic Self-Regulation Framework Description ............................................................................. 36
1. East – Thinking- Visioning- Spiritual. ............................................................................................ 36
2. South-- Attention- Mental. ............................................................................................................ 44
3. West-- Behaviour & Motivation- Physical. .................................................................................... 50
4. North-- Feelings- Emotional. ......................................................................................................... 56
Transition --What is it? How does it relate to this project? ............................................................... 59
Indigenous Transition Projects .......................................................................................................... 62
Workshop Design .............................................................................................................................. 71
Workshop Model ............................................................................................................................... 72
Workshop Components ..................................................................................................................... 73
Examples of Engaging and Effective Workshop Design .................................................................... 74
Incorporating Circle Pedagogy into the Workshop Design ............................................................... 77
Sharing Circles ................................................................................................................................. 78
Mentoring Circles ............................................................................................................................. 79
Talking Circles.................................................................................................................................................. 80
Chapter Three: Beausoleil First Nation Workshops and Framework ......................................................... 82
Beausoleil First Nation Self-Regulation Framework-- ................................................................................ 84
“Preparing” Phase ......................................................................................................................................... 85
Curriculum and Structure of the Workshops ............................................................................................... 87
Section One: Workshops designed to improve Self-regulation ................................................................. 89
Workshop One. An introductory workshop--“We are raising those that will lead” ................................... 89
Workshop Two. Career Planning Workshop—“Connecting the dots”........................................................... 90
Workshop Three. Motivation—“Actions speak louder than words”............................................................ 92
Workshop Four. Goal Setting—“Creating my vision” .................................................................................... 95
Workshop Five. Help-Seeking—“It’s okay to ask”......................................................................................... 97
Workshop Six. Study and Learning Habits—“My learning bundle”............................................................ 98
Workshop Seven. Time Management—“Creating the ultimate win-win situation” .................................... 101
Workshop Eight. Attention— “Let’s Focus.” ............................................................................................... 103
Section Two—Workshops that Facilitate Self-regulation ......................................................................... 108
Workshop Nine. Communication—“Talk isn’t cheap” ............................................................................... 108
Workshop Ten. Negative Thinking—“Go all the way!” .............................................................................. 113
Chapter Four: Conclusion and Future Directions ..................................................................................... 117
Conclusion ................................................................................................................................................... 117
Future Directions ......................................................................................................................................... 119
Recommendations for Post Secondary Level. ............................................................................................ 120
Recommendations for Elementary and Secondary Level ......................................................................... 126
References.................................................................................................................................................. 132
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Background on Education at Christian Island

Christian Island is an Ojibway community in Southern Ontario and often referred to as “Beausoleil First Nation (BFN).” Students from Christian Island attend a federally-funded elementary school called Christian Island Elementary School (CIES). This school is locally controlled using the Ontario curriculum and is relatively homogenous, in that it is attended by solely Indigenous children from Christian Island. The school population at the elementary level is 125 students (N. Assance, personal communication, August, 2015), while the current on-reserve population is 700 year-round residents (Chimnissing website, 2015) (Beausoleil First Nation, 2015b).

Christian Island, Ontario is located on the southern tip of Georgian Bay and, though it is located in central Ontario, it is considered remote by the community and semi-remote by government agencies. This difference in definition by the people living there and the people deciding funding levels has been a source of contention through the years. However, irrespective of definitions tied to funding, the people of BFN have long considered this island their community and hence, affectionately also known as Chimnissing.

The Education Department at Christian Island is very undersized and budget underfunded. There are three staff overseeing a minutiae of educational activities from Early Learning Child Care to Adult Education, with a total budget of approximately 3.5 million dollars. Among these posts, there is elementary, secondary, and post-secondary level education,
each with its own reporting structures and strategic directions. The funding and reporting regime is tied to the Federal government, unlike the public-level schools and boards under the jurisdiction of the Province. This presents huge difficulties and disparities in the way that First Nation education departments are managed as they are often unable to realize economies in scale (e.g., information technology, joint purchasing) or benefit from collective decision-making or resource-sharing (e.g., educational research, best practices). Moreover, while the education department networks with other First Nation jurisdictions, it often operates in isolation as there is no regional board structure in place like provincial counterparts. Therefore, all educational opportunities and challenges for Christian Island students are under the purview of the education department and First Nation Chief and Council. This presents many unique challenges such as transportation, funding, academic achievement levels, boarding, retention, and graduation rates.

Students from Christian Island graduate from three (3) area high schools. They have the choice of attending three (3) schools: St. Theresa’s High School and Midland Secondary School in Midland, Ontario or Penetanguishene Secondary School (PSS) in Penetanguishene, Ontario. Secondary school students travel one-hour by boat and bus to get to their respective schools. Students leave home at 7:15 a.m. each day and arrive back home at 5:00 p.m, therefore leaving their homes for most of the day. This is a draining experience and takes determination and perseverance. As Christian Island is an actual “island,” students are also boarded throughout the winter months (January to March each year), as the bay freezes over and other winter conditions such as high winds and other weather impositions impact the ferry service to and from the island. In total, there are approximately 45-50 high school students on average each year (N. Assance, personal communication, August, 2015).
The transition from elementary school to high school can be a difficult one for any student. Many high schools recognize this and have implemented many programs just prior to school start-up for incoming elementary school grads. Resembling day camps, these transition programs introduce students to the larger building, lockers, timetables, the cafeteria, and the gym. In other words, students are transitioned into the world of an Ontario Secondary School. It is an exciting and challenging time in a young person’s life and one that is viewed as a big milestone for the students. Locally, a successful project to assist in this transition was established at Christian Island, called Christian Island Place of Learning (CIPL) in 2008 and ran for two years in partnership with the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB). The leaders of this project envisioned an opportunity where students could experience a successful first year of high school. CIPL was delivered locally on Christian Island and designed to have the same rigor as the secondary school curriculum and the requisite number of first-year credits. Therefore, the education was parallel and exceeded the provincial standards as more one-on-one time was afforded to students. Unfortunately, the project did not continue during later years due to leadership changes, lack of enrolment, and scheduling difficulties. Fortunately, with CIPL and other unique interventions, the high school graduation rate has almost doubled from 45% in 2008 to 80% from 2010-2014. This is, in part, due to some intensive support and high expectations from the community who have worked in partnership with the parents and the local secondary schools.

The transition from high school to post-secondary education (PSE) is now the focus of community educational improvement. BFN financially supports students to attend PSE in terms of living allowances and book costs. Additional efforts in the way of increased financial support have occurred with the BFN investing $250,000 in supplementary funds towards post-secondary
education since 2008. This included not only increasing the amount of candidates who could access tuition allowances— it also included increases to post-secondary allowances that students would receive while they are in school and a slight increase to book allowances. In subsequent years, the BFN continued to invest heavily and derived funds from the land claims trust (BFN Nookmis Trust Fund) and own-source revenue\(^1\) to provide adequate levels of funding in order to increase the educational attainment levels of community members who desired a higher education. While this has alleviated some of the concerns about funding, another recent trend has been noted by leadership related to the decline of post-secondary completion rates, despite the injection of new and enhanced funding. Therefore, there is a realization that there are secondary or deeper issues related to post-secondary completion and success.

Finnie, Sweetman, and Usher (2008) agree that there is a need to study persistence at the post-secondary level and have concluded that “interventions are required for disadvantaged youth that go beyond the finance-oriented factors.” (p. 29). Thus, funding appears as an important factor within research findings; however, it is ranked as a secondary factor for PSE student withdrawals. (Christofides, Hoy, Zhi, & Stengos, 2008; Finnie & Mueller, 2008; Mueller, 2008). Further, Frenette and Zeman (2008) noted that test scores, parental influences, and high school experiences influence post-secondary completion rates significantly more than funding. Christofides, et al. (2008) also discuss the importance of students’ aspirations as being a determining factor to post-secondary success, while Mueller (2008) recommends “interventions such as providing information, academic support and other opportunities related to the ‘culture’ of PSE” (p. 29). This is corroborated by Pillay (2004) as first-hand accounts by

---

\(^1\) Own-Source Revenue (OSR) is a term used to describe revenue sources (other than governmental sources e.g., Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development- AANDC). This can include land leases, business operations, taxation regimes, donations, gaming/fundraising, and other fees.
students within this study described student PSE experiences as challenging due largely to academic unpreparedness. In two studies by Mueller (2008) and Finnie and Mueller (2008), the top reason for withdrawal by students was related to the lack of engagement and consequently, students describe their reasons for dropping out as “lack of interest” or “not liking the program” (Mueller, 2008 p. 48) as one of the highest reasons for withdrawal from PSE. The rationale presented from these authors also justify the existence of other factors and determinants leading to students dropping out of PSE beyond monetary reasons. Likewise, Shah and Saleem (2015) found that the following concerns shifted student’s attention away from studies, presented in order of priority (p. 101):

- Mental worries 100%
- Environment 99.2%
- Health problems 98.8%
- Interest 98.1%
- Family problems 97.6%
- Long duration of lectures 97.6%
- Noise 95.2%
- Financial problems 92%

Specific strategies dealing with these concerns would help students manage these stresses and improve their ability to focus. Coincidentally, mental health has also been reported as one of the highest withdrawal issues reported by the BFN (N.Assance, personal communication November 23, 2015).
Indigenous students, therefore, face these same impediments to learning, but also have to negotiate a new environment that is culturally and even morally different than the worldview in which they grew up in. These factors highlight the fact that a complex web of theories and frameworks need to be studied, developed, and implemented. Confidence in the BFN-initiated process, therefore, is warranted as the community determines the best possible mixture of policy and interventions to support future student success.

An additional benefit to developing this project is that other Indigenous or First Nation communities may be able to augment transition information already produced, as the decline at the post-secondary level and hopes for success are not isolated to Beausoleil First Nation. Restoule, Mashford-Pringle, Chacaby, et al. (2013) noted that the post-secondary graduation rate overall for Indigenous students in Canada is 39% compared to the broader Canadian public post-secondary completion rate of 54% (p. 1). High priority is placed on post-secondary education completion by First Nation communities but also supported by government as illustrated by the completion of a highly informative handbook for students crafted by the IAHLA- Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (2011) located in British Columbia. As Restoule et al. (2013) further point out, it is the desire of 80% of Indigenous parents across Canada to have their children graduate from post-secondary and experience success leading to a prosperous life. In this same sentiment, the leadership of Beausoleil First Nation, wholly supported by the community, has therefore approved the development of a project that would help students transition from high school to the post-secondary level.
Introduction to the Project

The community of Christian Island has supported the development of a transition project that would assist Indigenous students (community members) to achieve a higher post-secondary graduation rate thereby experiencing success. This would necessitate a long-term strategy beginning in Kindergarten, however, for the purposes of this document and project, the design of a project will focus on the transition from high school to post-secondary studies.

It is the desire of the BFN community for all students to succeed. This success has been experienced to a certain degree at the secondary school level. However, since 2010, the PSE dropout rate is approximately 20% (N. Assance, personal communication, December 1, 2015). Therefore, the community has experienced a decline in the amount of post-secondary students successfully obtaining a completed credential. At a community meeting held in April, 2015, the community unanimously supported an initiative that would bolster student success at this level as 1) the community views education as a priority for community well-being and prosperity (i.e., the community wants to see students do well) and 2) the urgency of students completing post-secondary is tied to funding from the federal government and also internally through the Nookmis Trust (land claim trust funds).

Initially, the presentation of a proposed project was made under the banner of providing “life skills.” There were no parameters (in terms of detail) or timeframes provided as it was up to the education system to determine and interpret what would be a good course of action. Community funding was committed at this time with the understanding that additional funding might be provided for a longer-term project in the future. In particular, the presentation focused on the following aims, which received community approval (Table 1):
In follow-up discussions with community leaders and education staff to obtain further clarification, it was found that the general goal is to focus on an initiative to provide students with the life skills necessary to succeed at post-secondary, which has been defined as graduating with a completed credential.

Life skills can be defined as “skills and abilities individuals need in order to achieve success in life, within the context of their...cultural milieu, through the adaptation to, shaping of, and selection of environments” (Statistics Canada, 2005, p. 51). This definition leaves the expanse of topics open to interpretation by communities of people while organizations such as

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|}
\hline
\textbf{Table 1. Life Skills - $25,000.00- NOOKMIS BUDGET PRESENTATION, APRIL, 2015} \\
\textbf{Objectives:} \\
\hline
\ding{51} propose to identify challenges and difficulties with transition of students from Gr. 8 to High School and from High School to Post Secondary and determine what options of intervention support to ensuring effective preparation to overcome barriers and empower individuals towards greater success \\
\ding{51} what supports are needed to assist high school graduates in selecting post- secondary studies more effectively with insights to post completion opportunities - recommend and provide formal strategies. \\
\ding{51} capture system support needed to help students where needed, once they achieve post- secondary success (or leave the system prior to completion) to explore and prepare for career opportunities that are meaningful for them. \\
\ding{51} This item will likely involve the contracting of an educations/life skills specialist (hopefully a community member) that will undertake the work that a Terms Of Reference will highlight \\
\ding{51} May be lead under the auspices of the Education department \\
\ding{51} Cost associated with each of the recommendation ought to also be provided \\
\hline
\textbf{RECOMMENDATION :} That the community endorse the LIFE SKILLS item line of up to $25,000.00 from NEW revenue within the 2015 Nookmis Budget. Approved by Community. \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Obtained from the Nookmis Trust Office, Beausoleil First Nation, May, 2015. Reproduced with permission.}
\end{table}

\textit{Table 1:}
the 4H club has developed a framework. The 4 H Club’s conceptual life skills model encompass a wide variety of topics including the Heart, Mind, Hands, and Health. See figure below:

**Figure 1. Four "H" quadrants of Head, Heart, Hands, and Health in Life Skills**


The 4H model illustrates the large scale development that would need to occur if a comprehensive life skills program was developed. Under the scope of this project and paper, this development is unattainable because this skill-building involves a magnitude of subjects (35 life skills listed in Figure 1). However, the merit of developing a long-term strategy modelled on
this framework is justified in the future, as it has proven implementation and it is holistic in nature (Head, Heart, Hands and Health). Adapting this framework to an Indigenous long-term program covering the full-range of local schooling would be beneficial for future development.

However, for the purposes of this post-secondary project, the 4H model serves as a useful starting point which would cover the “head” quadrant or strategies to address the mental dexterity of students. An educational technical term aligning with this aspect of student well-being is called self-regulation. Such a concept would be more focused on short term development but targeting (as the 4H strategy suggests) certain zones of the quadrant-- aiming to examine and develop skill areas required based on the literature review and the needs of the students at Christian Island.

There has been an explosion of literature about self-regulation in the last couple of decades. Self-regulation focuses on the mental agility and processing by creating lasting change and sustained effort in an educational environment. It is recognized in the literature that improved mental processing can be accomplished through awareness, practice, and effort. As suggested, self-regulation is a component of life skills and can be applied to a project at BFN in the short-term. A long-term strategy and exploration on life skills is warranted, as Finnie, Sweetman and Usher (2008) note there are a myriad of complex issues related to PSE persistence and graduation attainment. Indeed, the issue of PSE completion and graduation rate is complex and is recognized by the BFN community as such. Accordingly, it is the intent “to develop a short-term project plan that may be extended to a multi-year strategy” (V. Monague, personal communication, May 6, 2015).

The primary objective of the project is to increase student success. Expression of student success within the community translates simply to increasing post-secondary graduation rates.
As the author is from this community, it is envisaged that a lengthier education is a guarantee for better work and economic prospects for the students. Much focus over the past number of years has been placed into education at all levels of the system, recognizing that this important area has the potential to have the greatest impact on the community’s economic circumstances. As Holmes (2006) also notes, it is generally recognized that more and more of new jobs in Canada will require a post-secondary degree and that completion of post-secondary education commonly pays off.

Several researchers like Bauer and Baumeister (2011) emphasize that self-regulation can promote disciplined behaviour and that, without it, underachievement and school drop-out tend to occur. Further they add that self-regulation is a key ingredient that can facilitate individual and cultural success (p. 75). Self-regulation is also supported by researchers (Paris & Paris, 2001; Schunk, 1991; Zimmerman, 2002) as a way through which students can be strategic, motivated, and independent learners. Self-regulation is listed as a learning skill within the Ontario Ministry of Education policy documents and is measured in report cards, which includes (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 12):

- Sets individual goals and monitors goals for achieving them
- Seeks clarification or assistance when needed
- Assesses and reflects critically on own strengths, needs and interests.
- Identifies learning opportunities, choices and strategies to meet personal needs and achieve goals.
- Perseveres and makes an effort when responding to challenges.
Moreover, several researchers (Bauer & Baumeister, 2011; Eisenberg and Sulik, 2012; Koole, van Dillen, & Sheppes, 2011; Rothman, Baldwin, Hertel, & Fuglestad, 2011) indicate that self-regulation strategies can be enlisted, learned, and enhanced by examining components of self-regulation, i.e., breaking down strategies. Thus, by researching effective self-regulation strategies and applying the concepts practically for post-secondary students, this may generate future success. An examination of self-regulation can be developed to tailor to the needs of the Christian Island students by way of a series of workshops designed to provide students with a foundation of self-regulation strategies for important areas of their lives, which, in turn, will promote lifelong educational learning and success.

Very broadly, self-regulated learning is the ability to be able to set goals (goal setting), act upon goals (implementation), and reflect upon goals (metacognition) (Paris & Paris, 2001). Some of the main processes of self-regulation involve; task initiation, attention, metacognition, persistence, and organization (among others) and are terms used to help describe components and strategies of self-regulation. Self-regulation definition and processes are explored further in the literature review section.

Particular attention is paid to the holistic well-being of Indigenous students. This is an important distinction and way of doing things that differs from mainstream society as it is also the desire of the community to develop a project that is holistic in nature (physical, emotional, mental, and physical components) so that the “whole” person can be addressed (V. Monague, personal communication, May 6, 2015). For example, metacognition is an important process and psychological construct of self-regulation as it is centered on thinking about one’s own thinking. In a similar fashion, an Indigenous sharing circle is a period of reflection by participants where profound learning can occur. Merging concepts and strategies from two
worlds is important in this framework as the overall intent is to address the holistic well-being of Indigenous students but also a way to help students through evidence-based approaches. Two crucial things to mention about the project include that it is a community-generated project and that it has the potential to be charted by the youth themselves in subsequent years. As Bell (2013a) points out, this is a traditional form of learning. “Learning is a process that is accomplished through interaction with others; it is always a shared, cooperative venture” (p.93).

Moreover, Schmid, Phelps and Lerner (2011), discuss in their research that youth, in fact, think a great deal about their future. They further noted that universally, across cultures, youth have future-oriented thoughts and ideas about their education, which forms a major part of their thinking from late adolescence to adulthood. The authors suggest that having this hopeful future is positively correlated with self-regulation, as students select behaviours (self-regulation techniques) to propel them towards their long-term goals. In moving forward, certain barriers exist that take effort and strategies in order to arrive at goal attainment. These goals are further attainable with the help of significant others or support people within a students’ life. To this end, Yeager and Dweck’s (2012, as cited in Educational Psychologist) incremental theory, has been developed which supports a blueprint for student success (p. 311):

**Figure 2. Incremental Theory for Student Intervention**

Educational Psychologist (2012). Mindsets that promote resilience: When students believe that personal characteristics can be developed. 47, 302-314. Author’s depiction.
The strategies section of this equation can be addressed by researching self-regulation from an Indigenous perspective. Help from others, as depicted in the blueprint above, is examined in relation to community involvement and by learning from other Indigenous transition projects, beliefs, and worldviews and includes statements back to the BFN community. Effort, such as that contained within the resilience literature, should be examined further in the long-term, particularly in embedding resilience and identity within the curriculum throughout all levels of school.

The literature review forms a framework for community-based and led implementation of a project plan that is short term initially (12 months or another condensed time period as identified by the community), with recommendations to be provided within the framework and Chapter four for longer-term plan and development.
CHAPTER TWO

SELF-REGULATION AND TRANSITION: A LITERATURE REVIEW

The surveyed literature on the topics of self-regulation and transition projects are studied within this document. There are no studies related to self-regulation specifically for Indigenous students. Rather, it is the desire of the author to describe self-regulation and to focus on selected techniques of self-regulation like attention, thinking, behaviour and feelings that are components of self-regulation and amalgamate this into a holistic discussion from an Indigenous perspective.

A literature review was conducted using various educational search engines such as Scholar’s Portal, EBSCO host, Proquest, GALE, Springer Books and the National Archives. Searches were conducted using the keywords self-regulation, self-regulated learning, self-directed learning, engaging workshops for youth, Indigenous transition projects, transition, workshop design for youth, youth Indigenous projects, and circle methodology.

**What is Self-regulation?**

There are at least two decades of research on self-regulation (Bauer & Baumeister, 2011, p. 66). Self-regulation, therefore, has multiple explanations based on different research but there are several common denominators of self-regulation as well.

**Definition**

Very basically, self-regulation encompasses management of the 1) physical, 2) emotional, 3) attention, and 4) behaviour of an individual (Blackwell, Yeager, Mische-Lawson, et al., 2014) during learning. These components include:
1) Physical--a physiological response to transitions

2) Emotional--are actions or behaviours that we use to identify, manage and express feelings while engaging in activities

3) Attention--is the ability to focus on a task

4) Behaviour--involves the ability to engage in adaptive, goal-directed behaviour like motivation and persistence.

Though this definition is from an early-years lens, it is instructive to break down the meaning of self-regulation into sections so that a critical analysis can be achieved. Further, this breakdown of self-regulation into four areas matches a holistic Indigenous approach, which is a circular quadrant. For example, the “thinking” aspect involves a spiritual focus (like reflection techniques) while thinking about the “behaviour” aspect (like motivation and persistence) can coincide to the mental quadrant on the medicine wheel or vice-versa depending on the needs of a project.

To further enunciate the definition, Garcia, (1996) points out that the definition of self-regulation can be pulled apart literally, depending on what you want to emphasize. She argues that the term “self” focuses on the individual as autonomous, independent and self-directed, while the term “regulation” focuses on the control of actions (physical, emotional, attention, and behaviour) towards a goal. So, taken together, she states that self-regulation is about the way in which individuals self-control and direct their actions in the achievement of a goal. This perspective views self-regulation as an activity that individuals do on their own.

Bandura (1991) presents a definition of self-regulation that includes the statement that self-regulation is “the very basis for purposeful action” (p. 248). As noted by Katz (2014), this purposeful action consists of monitoring and managing one’s thinking, attention, feelings, and
behaviour. Nichol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) also confirm that self-regulation refers to the “degree in which students can regulate aspects of their thinking, motivation, and behaviour during learning” (p. 199).

Taking these descriptions of self-regulation components and perspectives into consideration, a holistic approach to self-regulation based on a traditional Indigenous medicine wheel can be conceived:

**Figure 3. Holistic Indigenous Medicine Wheel corresponding to the components of Self-Regulation**

![Holistic Indigenous Medicine Wheel](image)

Author’s depiction of the components of self-regulation components based on descriptions of self-regulation.

Understanding self-regulation as a concept and linking it to the medicine wheel teachings as shown above is a first step. This was necessary to have the definition literally pulled apart so that a holistic model could be built as an important starting point. In practice, self-regulation is seen as a process of learning that must be studied concurrently in order to determine how best to design and implement a program where students become self-directed.
Self-regulation as a Process

Two researchers who are at the forefront of self-regulation research are Barry Zimmerman and Dale Schunk, both of whom have written innumerable articles on the topic. In an introductory article on the topic (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011), both authors jointly agree that self-regulated learning (SRL) as a definition refers to the process where students activate their behaviour, thinking, and monitoring functions toward the attainment of an educational goal. The main point about SRL is that it is self-directed and based on students beliefs in their selves, thereby turning their mental abilities into an academic performance skill (Zimmerman, 2008) and in this case, a life skill. Zimmerman (2008) views SRL as a proactive, personal progression where students develop mental processing skills versus a more reactive, external event that is determined by other people.

Importantly, it is noted that SRL is critical because it accounts for differences in achievement levels in students and consequently in examining it, it also becomes an effective way to improve the achievement level of students (Zimmerman & Schunk, p. 1). It is also noted that SRL is “neither an aptitude nor a disposition” (Zimmerman & Schunk, p. 313). Instead, it is explained that SRL is a vigorous series of events consisting of the motivation, cognitive, metacognitive, and behavioural strategies that students consciously perform while learning. This is highlighted below:

The Importance of Motivation to Self-Regulated Learning.

Marini and Boruchovitch (2014) discuss the importance of motivation to SRL. Motivation is key to students employing different learning strategies. Two theories in their research help explain underlying factors used to determine motivation. One predominant theory
is called the Self Determination Theory (SDT). In summary, the theory presents motivation on a scale starting from the absence of motivation, to different types of outward motivation and ends with inward motivation. This suggests that students fall somewhere on a continuum and that the motivation to learn is different for everyone. Having motivation weighted like this somewhat diminishes extrinsic motivation or “fulfilling tasks to obtain external rewards” (Marini & Boruchovitch, 2014, p. 235) and speaks to the importance of arriving at intrinsic learning or “the interest that an activity awakens in (students)” (Marini & Boruchovitch, 2014, p. 325). Students fall somewhere on this continuum and their placement is determined by many variables such as “success, values, gratification, interests and self-esteem, among others” (Brophy, 2010 as cited in Marini & Boruchovitch p. 325). Therefore, learning should endeavour to help students become intrinsically interested and to help students’ uncover their own sources of motivation.

A fallacy regarding school success is that intelligence level is fixed. If students were to recognize that academic ability is flexible and can be enhanced, further academic goal attainment could act as a motivator. Dweck (as cited in Canadian Education Association, 2007) differentiates what she terms a “fixed mindset” versus a “growth mindset” (pp. 6-10). Students who have a fixed mind-set believe that their level of intelligence is related to natural-born ability or hereditary factors, while students who have a growth mind-set believe that educational goals can be achieved with effort-- that they can, over time, become smarter. This perception and belief that one can become smarter has important implications for this project as 1) becoming better at academics is possible by targeting specific areas by teaching the growth mindset concept (see Dweck’s book-- Mindset for further information), 2) having a two-way communication about achievable (and sometimes unconsidered) career possibilities, e.g., Careers
in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and 3) praising students about their effort, strategy, choices, and persistence rather than praising solely on marks and intelligence.

Zimmerman (2002) also noted in his research that the underlying beliefs (i.e., intrinsic interest of the student) also have a heavy influence in how well a student does on a particular learning task. He added that people who have an intrinsic interest in a skill or a task and who move on to become considered as “experts” spend approximately four hours each day in study and practice and find these activities highly motivating (p. 66). Still others such as Schunk (1991) study self-efficacy theory and the effect that having low self-efficacy and high self-efficacy has on being motivated. Not surprisingly, it was found that those with high self-efficacy are more motivated to succeed in their academic activities and effort through personal goal setting.

From an Indigenous perspective, Hare and Pidgeon's (2011) Ontario study provided evidence that First Nation high school students also value close family and community connections and that these provided motivation for them to succeed in school (as cited in Preston & Claypool, 2013). This was supported further by Pidgeon, Archibald, and Hawkey (2014) who wrote about the importance of interconnection and relationships and that accepting this “is key to understanding Aboriginal student persistence in acquiring a postsecondary education” (p. 2).

Role models were also cited as one of the top motivators related to school success (Preston & Claypool, 2013). Finally, individual differences in students were studied, and it was also found that motivation increased when students had a solid career goal (Preston & Claypool, 2013).
Mueller (2008) discusses the fact that a barrier to success in relation to PSE success is the “lack of motivation” (p. 45). Students often lack motivation, however, this can be confronted by helping students pinpoint their motivation and in developing programs suited to their needs through a self-regulation framework. It is therefore integral to this project to teach topics such as the growth mindset in order to increase self-esteem or self-efficacy, which, in turn, increases motivation. Furthermore, strategies that help to develop intrinsic interest should be explored further throughout the BFN education system, which would aid in career planning and goal setting through the use of community role models.

The Importance of Goal Setting in Self-Regulated Learning-- Meta-cognitive.

Carver and Scheier (2011) highlight that individuals (students) establish goals and make adjustments or corrections throughout the entire process of self-regulation. Attaining a goal or not attaining a goal involves a feedback loop that individuals reflect upon and then adjust or alter their behaviour accordingly. This feedback loop helps people not only make corrections but helps people reflect back upon certain situations. Zimmerman (2000, as cited in Paris and Paris, 2001) notes that this feedback loop is cyclical in nature.

Schunk (1991) divides goal setting into two inter-related components: A goal is defined as something that an individual is consciously trying to accomplish (Ibid., p. 72), while setting a goal is defined as determining a goal and then adapting, as needed. This adaptability process is important to study since, as Schunk notes, when individuals view their progress as satisfactory (goal progress), they feel increasingly confident (self-efficacy) and, in turn, set new and more challenging goals. Overall, there is recognition that goal-setting requires realistic thinking and
also that setting goals requires training and modelling. Ideally, this training can happen
informally at home or within a community or more formally through the education system.

**The Importance of the Delay of Gratification in Self-Regulated Learning--Cognitive.**

In Bauer and Baumeister (2011) the authors explain that self-regulation is equivalent to
self-control. This self-control has to deal with delaying short-term rewards or gratification in
favour of long-term goals. For example; students might want to see a movie on a particular
evening at the same time they have to study for an exam. The short-term desire to see a movie
requires self-control in favour of delaying the gratification (e.g., seeing the movie the following
evening) to realize success (completing the studying immediately in order to pass the test).
Further, this self-control is about dealing with the exasperation that a student might experience in
the face of adversity. In this example, the student would have to enlist particular skills (like
stress management, metacognition-reflection) in the face of this internal dilemma. Wigfield,
Klauda, and Cambria (2011) also strongly agree that work on the academic delay of gratification
is a key component of self-regulation.

To support this, Metcalfe and Mischel (1999) describe the delay of gratification using
two zones--hot and cold. They base this hypothesis on decades of research related to brain
functions and self-regulation. The framework for analysis consists of a hot zone, which is
considered quick and impulsive, while the cold zone is considered slow and strategic (p. 3). To
achieve difficult goals, they argue, students have to be trained to recognize the differences in
both zones and to exert willpower in order to resist temptation. This training, they argue, results
in the “strategic mobilization of thought, action and feeling” (p. 3) which supports delay
gratification.
Success in later life is premised on the delay of gratification, as made famous by the “marshmallow” test (see Mischel, 2014), which had been used as an example for the past 50 years. The marshmallow study is an experiment in self-control that has been used to study the delay of gratification but also provides evidence that students who exert self-control of gratification fare better at school and beyond (Pollack, 2014). This view recognizes that students have choices and determining what influences their choices such as to eat or not eat the marshmallow now or later is important as strategies (e.g., looking away, distracting themselves) can be developed to help people overcome immediate gratification in favour of longer-term rewards or goals.

The Importance of Feedback in Self-Regulated Learning--Behaviour.

Feedback is important within self-regulated learning. Nichol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) examined feedback in relation to self-regulated learning and discussed the notion that students do have internal feedback (self-talk, monitoring of their own progress towards a goal, for example) and external feedback (teachers, peers, for example). Overall, they stated that self-regulation generally can be improved but that feedback in support of self-regulation is not researched widely enough. There are seven principles for external or outward feedback as advanced by Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick that work to increase motivation to learn (p. 205). These feedback principles can be used by educators, facilitators, and parents to increase students’ motivation and achievement-oriented behaviour:

1. clarify what good performance is (goals, criteria, expected standards);

2. facilitate the development of self-assessment (reflection) in learning;
3. deliver high quality information to students about their learning;

4. encourage teacher and peer dialogue around learning;

5. encourage positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem;

6. provide opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance;

7. provides information to teachers (and educators) that can be used to help shape teaching.

Mcleod (in Kenny & Fraser, 2012) speaks about the importance of the self-reflection or internal feedback process from an Indigenous perspective (p. 17):

…*I learn through a cyclical process of reflection, experience and self-direction. Reflection enables experience to be transformed into learning. Likewise, reflection on my experiences enables self-direction. Self-direction stems from understanding our personal stories. This process of reflection, experience and self-direction is fundamental to learning.*

In a traditional sense, self-regulation is embedded within the way that learning is traditionally viewed within Indigenous communities as Jones (2003) also supports. The exception is that Mcleod defines self-direction as “bringing about good change for all” (p. 20). This is revealing because defining it in this way is very different than solely concentrating on the success of one individual. Rather, in Indigenous terms, it means having goals that are individual but are related to the greater good or the collective, which supports traditional Indigenous worldviews.
In summary, self-regulation as a concept and self-regulation as a process (including SRL and goal setting) can orient the program towards greater student success. Self-regulation as a concept helps us build a holistic model; however, without the learning action part (SRL), it is just a model. Viewing self-regulation as a process figuratively “puts the wheels in motion” because, without a process, there will be no action. Tying the two together also leads to a systematic and authentic approach guided by supporting people.

Because this is a research model, a diagram depicting how the strategies of self-regulation are cyclical based on the literature review and the author’s understanding (P. Monague McGregor, 2015) is helpful.

**Figure 4. Conceptual Depiction of Self-Regulation Process**

![Diagram of self-regulation process]

Author’s depiction of the cyclical nature of self-regulation process, which can be described as a series or trajectory of goal-oriented actions (action theory as described by Bandura, 1991)
Additionally, embedded within the diagram is the notion of the process as being dynamic and fluid. Mastery of the strategies is expected to result in goal attainment in consideration of both short-term and long-term goals.

**Development of Self-Regulation**

Self-regulation is inextricably tied to a student’s personal development. Though self-regulation development begins in the early years (e.g., fixing your bed, following rules), it is has been highlighted (Dawson & Guarge, 2010) that self-regulation tasks progress on a steady continuum to adolescence (doing homework, organizing schoolwork, and chores, for example). In the early years, the ability to self-regulate is monitored and guided by parents and educators (Katz, 2014) up until early adulthood. In subsequent years, children and youth gradually build up their knowledge, skills, and abilities to be able to persevere (goal-oriented behaviour) with skills they have learned throughout the various development stages, which, in turn, ensures academic success. Sibthorp, Collins, Rathunde, et al. (2015) briefly discuss that self-regulation qualities can develop broadly through a myriad of ways like biological disposition, early childhood experiences, long family histories and schools with different expectations and demands (p. 27). Eisenberg and Sulik, 2012 also differentiate that self-regulation involves effortful control which can be extrinsic (parent-directed) or intrinsic (self-directed). Effortful control, they posit, involves the ability to shift focus when needed, inhibit behaviour when needed and to complete a task, even when it is unpleasant.

Paris and Paris (2001) further discuss this idea in their research where students become more self-regulated with age, experience, opportunity, and desire (p. 95). As noted above, this self-regulation is guided by teachers and parents. If self-regulation has been shaped and
influenced using self-assessment, self-reflection (metacognition), and engaging instruction
students tend to employ more positive academic strategies (Paris & Paris, 2001) and experience
success in school. Therefore, it follows that if students are given little control, the material is
irrelevant, and they are not taught to reflect on their learning, they will not develop self-
regulation skills as quickly and will experience less academic success.

Self-regulation in itself can be learned or re-learned, depending on an individual’s
on determining what aspect of self-regulation a student requires remediation in and then a focus
to draw upon these specific executive skill deficiencies. Executive skills within the literature
(Goldstein & Naglieri, 2014) is a physiological definition that refers to specific types of self-
regulation skills (like attention, emotion, problem solving) that are diverse in nature and
necessary for adaptive behaviour that is both goal-oriented and future-oriented. Typically, these
executive skills are fully-developed when someone reaches adulthood.

Opportunity for self-regulation/executive skill-building for youth between the ages of 17-
20 can thus be built upon and improved. For example: If a student needs help with note-taking
in the classroom (organization), then methods or ideas are prescribed for her to become better at
organizing. The technique used to formulate the student’s plan would be very specific and
measurable (e.g., student will take notes using the Cornell method 3 times per week over a
period of a month). The tools and techniques to do this look and sound very similar to an
Individual Education Plan (IEP) with emphasis on student involvement and self-determination.
Another example in terms of an organization executive skill is where a student might be
experiencing difficulty with remembering when assignments and tests are due. The student
could be taught to make a calendar and checklist or file-folders to make sure that his assignments
are due on time. Thus, the change that occurs over time in relation to a student’s behaviour, thinking, attention, and feelings towards school efforts become more positive in order to ensure academic success. This targeted approach turned a skill deficit into an adaptive behaviour which is a characteristic of self-regulation.

Another way to target specific self-regulatory deficits or concerns can be viewed by Scholer and Higgins (2011). The authors discuss that self-regulation is part of a hierarchy of concerns that can be differentiated by goals, strategies, and behaviour. The goals, strategies, and behavior are organized in a pyramid-type fashion, with each of the concerns at a higher or lower level. From this perspective, the authors argue that goals, tactics, and strategies using regulatory focus theory can be dissected. Using this pyramid structure, goals are identified as the top position in the hierarchy and determined first. Next, the individual’s regulation aspect is identified (e.g., learning strategies) and the motivation or tactics required (e.g., security, accomplishment) to attain the goal.

In conclusion, development of self-regulation is considered a personal trait that is honed throughout the lifespan. Generally, students cultivate these skills in school and at home and can follow a natural pathway. However, in some instances, certain aspects such as academic confidence and performance suffer due to many factors. In Indigenous communities, this can be attributed to the history of colonialism and chronic underfunding of education systems. However, this does not preclude interventions or learning that can occur at any stage in a students’ development and according to a community identified need. In fact, targeting specific skill deficits has been supported in the literature using various methods and can be further enriched by using indigenous methodology.
Rationale for Self-Regulation

Perhaps the most concise definition of self-regulation and its benefits comes from Harvard University (2015, para 1-4):

Self-regulation skills are the mental processes that enable us to plan, focus attention, recall instructions, and juggle multiple tasks successfully. When (students) have opportunities to develop executive function and self-regulation skills, individuals and (communities) experience lifelong benefits. These skills are crucial for learning and development. They also enable positive behaviour that enable people to make healthy choices. Self-regulation skills depend on three types of brain function: working memory, mental flexibility, and self-control. These functions are highly interrelated, as working memory governs our ability to retain information over short periods of time (thereby increasing cognitive ability), mental flexibility assists us in shifting attention to different demands (thereby increasing adaptability to changing situations) and self-control helps to set priorities and resist impulsive demands (thereby delaying gratification in favour of end reward or goal).

Furthermore, even though self-regulation and executive skill function are often studied as an early childhood education cornerstone, as briefly noted in the definition section, several researchers (Bauer & Baumeister, 2011; Eisenberg and Sulik, 2012; Koole, van Dillen, & Sheppes, 2011; Rothman et al., 2011) provide indication that strategies for self-regulation can be learned and enhanced. Self-regulation, we have learned, begins in early childhood and progresses throughout the lifespan (Eisenberg & Sulik, 2012). Deficits in self-regulation can be identified and targeted as an overall goal to student success. For example, learning strategies as a self-regulation strategy can be learned or re-learned if a student is in Grade 12 and entering a
Learning self-regulation at this critical juncture from Grade 12 to post-secondary studies is integral to not only future school success but, career success as well.

An important distinction in relation to the development of self-regulation is that self-regulation skills are not based on intellectual ability. Rather, the development of self-regulation is an *empowerment process* where students transform their mental abilities into academic skills. This is done in a proactive way where students are provided with the tools, techniques, and strategies and then applying these tools to personal and academic pursuits and beyond. This is an important differentiation as students become self-aware of their strengths and limitations and doing for themselves (empowerment approach) versus a reliance on others (Zimmerman, 2002). Dawn, Harkin and Turner (2013) further describe empowerment from a theoretical construct called constructivism. Constructivism asserts that people have the power to “shape their own existence” and therefore, from this lens, learning should empower individuals “to experience and determine their own learning and understanding” (p. 35).

Additionally, it has been stated by Zimmerman (2002) that self-regulation requires explicit instruction while other researchers (Hadwin, Jarvella & Miller, 2011; Young, Marshall, Valach, et al., 2011) discuss the fact that the development of self-regulation skills requires support and assistance by encouraging people (peers, teachers, family, community). In Indigenous communities, the sentiment “it takes a community to raise a child” holds true and is embedded in Indigenous culture as children are traditionally cared for as part of an interdependent extended family structure; a circle of caring (Gerlach, 2008) that is founded on supportive and nurturing relationships. In learning contexts, this means that First Nation communities are entrusted to provide the necessary resources at every stage of educational development, nurturing lifelong learning.
An important aspect of becoming self-regulated is the ability to manage multiple concerns in one’s life space at multiple times in the achievement of different goals (Carver & Scheier, 2011). At the PSE level, there are many demands placed on students-- food, shelter, friendships, and academic pursuits. Students, therefore, need to develop not only academic skills for college and future career interests, but a self-regulatory framework that enables them to stay focused and pursue their goals, despite competing interests or barriers, is necessary.

Increased self-esteem and self-efficacy are outcomes of self-regulation skill building. There is much potential for students to develop an improved self-esteem as a result of any skill-building process contained within this project, particularly with the assistance of caring adults within their social circle. This improved self-esteem is found in the literature (McInerney, 2007) as a characteristic that enhances success at school.

To reiterate, self-regulation is the ability to regulate interest (attention) and goal direction (goal-oriented behaviour) to stay on a trajectory of life-long learning. Self-regulation has many possible outcomes like increased motivation, attention, planning and organization, persistence and metacognition development (also referred also as executive skills) required to accomplishing goals. In order to facilitate academic success then, attention to aspects of self-regulation should be stimulated and encouraged because “people cannot influence their own motivations and actions very well if they do not pay…attention to their own performance, the conditions under which they occur and the (short and long term) effects they produce” (Bandura, 1991, p. 250), which is essentially the rationale for self-regulation as a project strategy.

As we have learned, financial factors are a concern, but, not the prime reason for PSE withdrawals. Additionally, academic skills are necessary and important but in order to impart a holistic, integrated, and lasting approach- behaviour and meta-cognitive strategies need to be
embedded within a learning environment. Following this self-regulation framework, students adopt a “stick-with-it-ness” mindset and increased motivation, confidence, and performance as a result of training and practice focused on self-regulatory strategies.

**Strategies for Self-Regulation**

The aim of this section is to focus on various components of self-regulation using an Indigenous worldview that is holistic in nature: mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual that coincides with self-regulation skills. Approaching the project from this perspective ensures that students not only get the mental abilities like studying habits to succeed at school, but also the balance (mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual) needed within their lives to overcome challenges.

Recently, an Indigenous youth motivation consultant, Stan Wesley stated “We have always been told in mainstream to ‘think outside the box’, but, I am telling you, that as Indigenous people, we need instead to think within the circle” (Stan Wesley, personal communication, November 5, 2015). This project has been premised on this belief but also the desire of the community to have a holistic model in place.

According to Garrett, Brubaker, Torres-Rivera, et al. (2008), this work towards wellness for Indigenous people is “a process that involves the striving for balance and integration in one’s life, adding and refining skills, rethinking previous beliefs and stances toward issues as appropriate” (p. 164). Perhaps rather coincidentally, this corresponds to the notion of self-regulation as outlined in many sections, particularly in the area of skill refinement, reflection and behaviour.
Common to the descriptions about self-regulation is the focus on individuals or students making conscious choices according to their goals and then reflecting back on those choices. Students are generally guided by people in their social circle. Success of an Indigenous project hinges upon role models, social supports, and reflective periods as a foundation through the use of Indigenous circle methods, reflection journals, and opportunities to sit with elders or mentors.

Journaling has been found to be a useful tool in the self-regulated learning process because it propels students towards their goals and increases self-reflection, which is a key part of self-regulation. Journaling can be a great insight into the process of SRL (Bandura, 1991; Schmitz, King, & Schmitz, 2011) and can be shared within a group setting or individually to obtain greater meaning. Bandura (1991) further states that, by examining their own thought patterns, individuals can see how a particular way of thinking affects their emotional state, level of motivation, and performance (p. 251). Equipped with this self-knowledge about their thoughts and actions in particular circumstances, successful self-regulation can be achieved. Modeling techniques can also help students to gain information about “actions, processes and related consequences” associated with a particular course of action, topic or concept (Hadwin, Jarvela, & Miller, 2011, as cited in Greene, Robertson, & Croker Costa, 2011, p. 71).

In general, self-regulation strategies allow students to consciously control their thoughts, behaviour, actions, and feelings to accomplish a goal. In the face of difficulty or challenges, it has been highlighted that these self-regulation skills become crucial as the student has to navigate a complex, dynamic, and changing PSE and urban environment. This includes thinking, planning ahead, adapting to a situation, and reflecting-- which are mental processes to ensure student success. Under this project, these specific areas of executive skills have been divided into a holistic Indigenous model.
Division of the components of a holistic model for self-regulation and self-regulated learning are discussed here, according to the definition section that lays out the components into four areas: 1) Thinking, 2) Attention, 3) Emotional, and 4) Behaviour. This, in turn, has been harmonized with an Indigenous medicine wheel approach, using the four quadrants of Mental, Spiritual, Emotional, and Physical and often times referred to as the East, South, North, and West Doorways (Battiste, 2000; Hart, 1999).

There are several versions of the medicine wheel and descriptions. Hart (1999) distinguishes this in his writing that there is no one complete version of the medicine wheel. Further, he describes the medicine wheel as a teaching tool to help Indigenous people discover complex concepts, frameworks, and understanding that we “cannot physically see” (p. 92). The medicine wheel, according to Hart (1999) is “a central symbol…that helps us to understand perspectives and issues…reflect[ing] several key and interrelated concepts…that include wholeness, balance, connectedness, harmony and growth” (p.92).

Presented here is Garrett et al. (2008)’s description of the directions of the medicine wheel (p. 183):

East-- belonging and spirit characterized by a sense of caring and connection with certain special others: Who or what are you a part of, where do you belong or (opposite) not belong? [Thinking Skills-- Spiritual]

South--inner mastery and connection with the environment characterized by a recognition of one’s abilities and a meaningful sense of achievement in life: What do you enjoy doing or do well and (opposite) not enjoy doing or not do well? [Attention Skills-- Mental]
West--independence and physical awareness and resolve characterized by a belief in oneself through the presence of self-awareness, self-reliance, and self-discipline: What are your strengths, what’s important to you? [Behaviour Skills-- Physical]

North--generosity and wisdom of the mind characterized by an openness to different experiences through the recognition of a (potential) unique personal contribution: What do you have to offer or contribute to others and (opposite) what do you have to receive from others? [Mood (Feeling) Skills-- Emotion]

Condensed as a model using Garrett’s (2008) definition, this can be viewed along with the self-regulation model posed earlier as follows:

**Figure 5. Conceptual Drawing of Holistic Self-Regulation Framework**

![Image of Holistic Self-Regulation Framework]

Author’s depiction of a holistic self-regulation framework.
As is custom in the Anishinabe\(^2\) tradition, strategies for each are explained starting from the East and ending in the direction of North (clockwise).

**Holistic Self-Regulation Framework Description**

1. **East – Thinking- Visioning- Spiritual.**

   Visioning is important within Indigenous cultures. Cajete (2000) discusses the importance of visioning:

   There is a shared body of understanding among Indigenous people that education is really about helping people find his/her face, which means finding out who you are, where you come from and your unique character. That education should also help you find your heart, which is the passionate sense of self that motivates you and moves you along in life. In addition, education should help you to find a foundation on which you may most completely develop and express both your heart and face. That foundation is your vocation, the work that you do, whether it be an artist, lawyer or teacher. This, then, is the intent of Indigenous education. It is finding that special kind of work that most fully allows you to express yourself--your heart and your face (p. 183).

   Visioning does not have to be in traditional, sacred places (although one can argue that Mother Nature or the earth is sacred) or be a highly spiritual ceremony. Visioning for Indigenous people can happen in everyday living. Cajete (2000) describes his everyday guiding

---

\(^2\) Anishinabe, translated into English means “Original people” and belongs to the group of Indigenous people of the 3 Fires: Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomi who primarily occupy the regions around the Great lakes including Canada and the U.S.
thoughts received from elders about “looking to the mountain,” which translated into English means “striving to gain the highest perspective possible” (p. 181). Cajete’s work is instructive and brings work back into the circle as effective ways or strategies to work with youth are the use of metaphors, symbols, and art to teach the visioning process.

For Indigenous people, vision is the same as having goals. When we put down tobacco (semaa) in everyday life, usually we have a thought in mind that becomes a vision, goal, or destiny. This process is inherently spiritual in nature. Dawn, Harkin and Turner (2013) incorporate destiny in their description of self-regulation as “the ability of people to influence their own destiny” (p. 35). Bell (2013a), an Indigenous scholar, further describes traditional Indigenous teachings as a process for youth to develop “responsibility for (their) own destiny” (p. 31). The concepts of goals, vision, or destiny are important to self-regulation because it is concentrated on having focus-- having an end goal, vision or destiny in mind.

Scholer and Higgins (2011) suggest an effective intervention for the attainment of goals is “work backwards from what you want” (p. 155). This system suggests that students have clear goals and then work backwards to determine their motivation and the necessary regulation strategy required to achieve their goal(s). Steven Covey, the author of 7 Habits of Effective People, also supports the notion that successful people recognize that planning begins with the end in mind (Covey, 2004). Certainly, this backward design technique has worked in education curriculum development. Essentially, backward design from the context of courses and curriculum development in education works in a three-step process: 1) Student-Centered Goals e.g., What should students be able to do by the end of the course? 2) Assessment methods for individual goals e.g., writing and research tasks, and 3) Teaching Methods Chosen, e.g., a mixture of in-class and on-line learning (Davidovitch, 2013). Davidovitch (2013) describes
backward design as a switch from teaching-centered learning (focus on content-oriented) to learning-centered teaching (focused on learning goals) (pp. 330-331). Furthermore, he supports the view that backward design leads to higher quality learning contributes to increased metacognitive abilities for students, and is holistic in nature (p. 330).

Formatted as a figure, Davidovitch’s explanation can be illustrated as follows:

**Figure 6. Depiction of Davidovitch’s Backward Curriculum Design**


Author’s depiction of Davidovitch’s model of Backward design. Course and Curriculum Development.

Similarly, an Indigenous perspective on the self-regulation process can also be juxtaposed, as Bell (2013a) outlines (p. 93):

Learning begins with vision – of self, of goals, of the whole, of the direction a task is to go in. It is a process that goes through the stages of ‘seeing’ (vision), ‘relating’ to what it is, ‘figuring it out’ with heart and mind, and ‘acting’ on findings in some way (behaviour).

Thus, from an Indigenous perspective, the self-regulation process or SRL can be thought of as following:

These depictions emphasize the necessity of establishing goals (vision or destiny) at the beginning of any learning journey and as it relates to self-regulation, identifying the goal first and foremost.

Having an aspiration or a vision of what a student wants to achieve in the future is the same as goal setting. Christofides, Hoy, Zhi, and Stengos (2008) discuss that one of the key variables that impacts PSE access (entering college or university in the first place) is that of aspirations. According to this research, students who have aspirations tend to do better in post-secondary. Goal setting is a skill that is a characteristic of self-regulation and an area of mental flexibility that can be trained for future success.

Zimmerman (2002) proposed three-cyclical phases of self-regulation consisting of: forethought, performance, and self-reflection. He suggests that adept self-regulators use these phases expertly. Forethought consists of selecting goals first and then planning ahead. The performance phase is the same as implementation. The last phase according to Zimmerman is self-reflection, which is reflecting upon one’s actions at various points in time. Self-reflection
(Zimmerman, 2002) and self-monitoring (Bandura, 1991) are similar. Bandura (1991) explains that self-monitoring is a part of a process where individuals gauge their performance by monitoring their actions, situations, and the short- and long-term effects of a particular action. Both agree that self-monitoring or self-reflection provides important feedback which helps people to set realistic goals and to evaluate progress.

Additionally, Bandura (as cited in Hortz, Stevens, & Grim, 2011) further suggests that, for any goal-directed activity to be a success, it must also include reinforcements. For this reason, the main difference between Zimmerman’s model and Bandura’s model is that Bandura’s model includes the notion of reinforcements. Essentially, this means that individuals achieve self-regulation by creating incentives as rewards for the attainment of their goals. Bandura suggests that, when people make benefits (e.g., recreation activities, free time, and other types of rewards) conditional upon reaching a certain accomplishment, they motivate themselves to expend the effort needed to attain the performance desired to reach a goal. He labels this self-incentives.

Another way to enhance thinking and reflecting from the spiritual realm is called mindfulness training. Koole et al. (2011) offer an explanation that mindfulness meditation training is thought to reduce the negative thoughts (emotions) about self (p. 33) by reducing stress and anxiety about self. Zimmerman (2002) makes reference to the fact that our actions are determined by our beliefs. These beliefs are formed from our inner beliefs about ourselves (self-efficacy) and our perceptions of situations. Therefore, students who have negative beliefs about their selves or certain situations can be taught to think positive or to see the silver lining within a situation and light within themselves using mindfulness training. This can be facilitated
by supportive peers, teachers, and mentors, as mentioned earlier, but can also be enhanced using a technique called mindfulness training.

Mindfulness training has been in existence for the past three decades (Himelstein, Hastings, Shapiro, & Heely, 2012, p. 152). Mindfulness training correlates positively with happiness and healthy self-regulation (de Bruin, Zijlstra, van de Weijer-Bergsma, & Bögels, 2011, p. 208). This type of training has been effective across diverse populations, as it originated from Eastern cultures (de Bruin et al., 2011) and is used for various factors such as for pain, depression, and anxiety. Therefore, a benefit of using mindfulness training is the ability to increase psychological well-being (Himelstein et al., 2012). Mindfulness training emphasizes being in the present moment at the present time without judgement (de Bruin et al., 2011; Himelstein et al., 2012). Mindfulness training can lead to improvements in sleep, well-being, relaxation, and reduced reactivity. In addition, quantitative data uncovered that participants had improved self-esteem (Himelstein et al., 2012). Mindfulness research on adolescents is still in the early stages, however, what research does exists note that it is a promising intervention that warrants continued research (de Bruin, Zijlstra, & Bögels, 2014).

One program cited in Himelstein et al. (2012) provides mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) as fashioned under the Mind Body Awareness (MBA) project (p. 155). The MBA project is a project-based intervention developed for incarcerated youth that is 10 weeks in duration and focuses on 10 topics: 1) basic goodness, 2) mindfulness, 3) active listening, 4) impulse regulation, 5) emotional intelligence, 6) empathy, 7) forgiveness, 8) transforming negative core beliefs, 9) cause and effect, and 10) interpersonal relationships. This project was chosen within the research because of the focus on clinical expertise and on youth as it was noted that there has been very little research on adolescent (youth) and on diverse populations (p. 153).
In summary, the project of study undertaken by Himelstein et al. noted that mindfulness training would be beneficial and feasible for underserved and ethnically diverse populations (p. 162).

Swisa (2015) also noticed that the majority of the students in her class enjoyed experiential activities that included time and space for self-reflection, relaxation, and meditation. Her project in meditation and mindfulness is premised on the acronym BREATHE--Breathe, Reflect, Empathize, Accept, Thank, Hearten, and Engage. She posits that following this framework allows for a holistic approach to living a healthy and balanced life both inside and outside the classroom.

Sprengel and Fritts (2012) reviewed articles on mind-body intervention activities from a medical perspective and supported classroom oriented programs that incorporate mind-body practices because they have demonstrated positive outcomes for well-being, resilience, academic performance, test scores, individual self-perception, self-regulation, anxiety, stress, Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, insomnia, anger/aggressive behaviours, and chronic pain conditions.

From an Indigenous perspective, mindfulness can be considered synonymous with being “grounded” and further that, if shared within a group, the process is relational (Garrett, 2008). Being grounded as an individual involves introspection and mental focus. In a group environment, coming together to discuss life challenges and new possibilities (p. 179) is seen to be beneficial as an experiential exercise. Garrett (2008) understands that this has been done since time immemorial and therefore, is not a new process but rather a re-awakening of spirit, particularly in Indigenous cultures because it promotes growth, positive change, and balance.
Another area of visioning and centering for Indigenous people concerns connection to the land. While “going to the mountain” is discussed figuratively (Cajete, 2000), there are traditional Indigenous practices where going out on the land is a large part of connection and restoring health and well-being not only for students but the entire Indigenous population.

Developing a land-based connection is another area for examination as introduced by Cajete above. One research study conducted by Sibthorp et al. (2015) set out to determine whether or not students in an outdoor leadership program called National Outdoor Leadership School [NOLS] would leave the program having a more positive attitude about learning and have enhanced self-regulation skills. The findings of the study supported the authors’ assertion in that students who participated in this experiential program were more likely to better self-regulate upon completion of the program.

The NOLS program is situated to provide students with an experience that separates students from external distractions, allows them time for reflection, and is designed to be flexible and engaging. Most importantly, the program supports a model where students try, fail, and learn from their efforts (challenging), thereby improving their will to overcome learning obstacles through repetition and practice. This agency, students learn, is entirely regulated by their own determination.

Meditation, mindfulness, and being connected to the land helps students reflect and to “think about their thinking.” Being attentive to this and monitoring situations in this way results in adaptability and mental flexibility, two positive traits of successful self-regulation and worthy of development.
2. South—Attention-Mental.

In this section, a main focus is on analyzing ways to improve or develop self-regulation skills from a practical stand-point in the area of academic skill enhancement. Researchers, such as Paris and Paris (2001), support the notion that the theory and research around self-regulated learning can be translated into practice (i.e., in the classroom). Hertz, Stevens, and Grim (2011), however, note that there is a disconnect that exists between theory and practice. Researchers have a difficult time translating theory to practice, while practitioners (teachers) have a difficult time researching theory and incorporating it into teaching practices (Hertz, Stevens, & Grim, 2011).

Attention is seen as a crucial aspect of self-regulation. Shaw and Saleem (2015) describe attention as “.the ability to choose from many competing stimuli that surround us. Attention is one of the [most] important aspects of learning (p. 103).” Attention is also an important part of daily living that constantly shifts and effects the outcome of our goals because what we focus on becomes our reality. Attention is crucial to self-regulation and school success because (Shah & Saleem, 2015, p. 94):

i) Attention directs human energies and enables them to respond to some stimuli and ignore others. Attention makes individuals attentive to concentrate on one’s efforts in a certain direction so that things and ideas they attend to are relevant to their needs and purposes.

ii) Attention increases individual’s efficiency and helps them to get ready to meet any situation.

iii) Attention helps individuals in remembering and recalling things.
iv) Attention improves individuals sensory discrimination as a result make fine
distinctions in perceiving things which otherwise would have ignored.

Thus, improving attention level as a self-regulation strategy should be oriented towards helping students find learning intrinsically interesting and goal relevant. Shah and Saleem (2015) found that students with a high level of attention, had higher academic achievement and those that had low levels of attention, had lower academic achievement. To add to this, Finnie and Mueller (2008) have determined that it is the overall grades in high school that have a positive correlation to PSE success. Increased attention, therefore, is seen as a conduit to increasing overall academic achievement. Strategies to help students become cognitively engaged in all learning, no matter the subject area should be remedied and reinforced with a focus on attention strategies and critical thinking. These self-regulation attributes are crucial as, unfortunately, some teachers do not teach students to learn or behave in ways that promote self-regulation. Furthermore, parents may be ill-equipped and untrained to provide the self-regulatory skills identified and hence, the education system has a responsibility to help in this area by targeting specific zones of self-regulation. Importantly, the self-regulation areas of attention and critical thinking should be on reading, writing, and math, as these subjects assist in the comprehension of all other subjects.

Paris and Paris (2001) focus specifically on learning, development, and instruction in three domains: reading and writing, self-assessment, and cognitive engagement. In the first two domains, the researchers found that children who were explicitly taught strategies (e.g., making inferences, revising text, self-reflection techniques) and had these modelled by teachers (why, when, how to apply strategies) were more apt to develop thoughtful approaches to learning. Cognitive engagement requires more thoughtful approaches and is often left out of instructional
design because teachers find it a challenge to plan activities that support students’ deep engagement which in turn, promotes strategic and effortful learning. However, the authors stress the importance of intrinsic learning activities because students develop a sense of ownership, collaboration, and become immersed in a task. This is called cognitive engagement (Paris & Paris, 2001; Wigfield, 2011; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011). Cognitive engagement is perhaps misunderstood in Indigenous communities. Jorgensen (2013) discusses this misalignment, as it was observed that there have been considerable projects designed for Aboriginal students in order to increase educational outcomes but which have failed. This failure is attributed to poor design (designed around a whole host of recreational activities that did not focus on the educational outcome desired) and were not attuned to the specific interests of the students.

Being able to comprehend material, which is often complex, prior to entering college or university, is a pre-cursor to success. This also includes having the discipline to tackle academic writing through critical thinking and examination. Several secondary school students made remarks that they were unprepared and overwhelmed for the PSE environment (Pillay, 2004). This includes statements such as (p.217):

After going straight into university, I found that high school does not prepare students for high-level thinking. High school seemed totally concerned with right/wrong answers while in post-secondary, there are ambiguous issues which first year students are unprepared for.

Various reading and comprehension strategies (e.g., learning and study skills session) can be enlisted to help students learn or refresh this important skill. Tonks and Taboada (2011) used Zimmerman’s social cognitive model of self-regulated learning for reading engagement. This included forethought, performance, and self-reflection, as discussed earlier (Zimmerman, 2002).
Engaged readers, as supported by the authors, elicit three key learning tasks: cognitive, motivation, and social processes towards deeper understanding and meaning within text. Tonks and Taboada (2011) further discuss a model called Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI), which supports self-regulation because it includes “cognitive strategy instruction, supporting autonomy and the use of extensive hands-on experience” (p. 174).

In relation to math-based self-regulation training, De Corte, Mason, Depaepe, and Verschaffel (2011) suggest that scaffolding in combination with hands-on training may be more effective as opposed to modeling techniques where an overall goal is the same for every student. In scaffolding, support is provided on an as-needed basis. It was found to result in greater gains for students (Hadwin et al., 2011). Scaffolding would require the support of teachers, parents or mentors within a classroom or tutoring environment.

As a longer-term project, an idea for hands-on experience is Project-Based Learning (PBL). PBL is a specific task-based approach that educators can use to support the development of self-regulated learning (Paris & Paris, p. 94). This approach supports students in becoming self-regulated because it places the responsibility on the students to first decide on a topic, find the information, organize their thoughts and actions in order to reach their goal, and perform self-reflection throughout (p. 94). In this learning environment, students design their own learning based on real problems, but the process is only effective if guided by a teacher (modelling and scaffolding) over a period of time (Ibid, p. 94) or socially encouraged and guided by important others (Zimmerman, 2002). Thus, the learning is oriented based on intrinsic learning versus having topics prescribed. This direction is also supported by Jorgensen (2013) who did a year-long ethnographic study with Aboriginal students in Australia using media (computers) to engage students. Additionally, Favell (2013) completed a study about a
community-based learning project involving 16 Pueblo high school students where students identified a community issue (environmental), developed strategies, and presented their findings. The students worked alongside elders and local leaders and were guided in their investigations, historical research, and final conclusions. The project proved that the traditional curricular subjects such as Language Arts, Math, and Social Studies could all be learned by students in the context of working with community members to improve their own community (Favell, 2013, p. 24). Furthermore, another project-based learning opportunity cited by the author (Favell, 2013) was a joint community project by Simon Fraser University and Nicola Valley Institute of Technology where students were able to obtain university credits for their locally-designed and delivered project. This is very similar to other university partnerships like the University of Toronto’s Summer Mentorship Program, which is delivered on-campus but provides exposure to health careers and university living and offers high school credits for Indigenous students (see http://www.ohpsa.utoronto.ca/smp.htm).

Therefore, using real-world examples and the local experiences of Indigenous students guided by the principles of project-based learning could be an ongoing experience provided to Christian Island students that could be offered as a summer learning activity in which full days are devoted to such projects. Such a project could be an integration of subjects that are locally designed and potentially accredited through a college or university as a transition program in the future. PBL has also shown high effectiveness in imparting life skills (including increased self-direction) that enable students to become productive members of society (Wurdingar & Rudolph, 2009).

Often, parents and society as a whole believe that academic ability is premised on talent. On the contrary, Zimmerman (2002) provides an important distinction in that self-regulation is
not an individual trait that a student inherently holds. Rather, it is comprised of key choices that a student makes to become proficient at a learning task such as math, reading, and writing. He suggests that students who are good self-regulators follow a process comprised of: a) setting goals, b) adopting strategies, c) monitoring performance, d) restructuring context to fit goals, e) managing time, f) self-evaluating, g) attributing causation to results, and h) adopting future methods (p. 66). This process can be incorporated effectively to fit into a learning and study skills workshop.

As mentioned in the background section, one such project that was successful in the community of Christian Island in the past was called “Christian Island Place of Learning” or “G’Chimissing Kinoomaagewigamig.” This project was originally developed for transitioning students from Grade 8 to Grade 9 from Christian Island and was developed in partnership with Simcoe County Board of Education, who developed the “lighthouse” application to the Ministry of Education. Therefore, it was fully funded by the Ministry during the two-year life span. The program, experienced success as in the first year of the program, 90% of eligible credits were attained (2007/2008) and, again in the second year (2008/2009), 90% of eligible credits were attained (Briefing Note, P. Monague-McGregor, November 13, 2009). It was found that all graduates of CIPL transferred their high success into Grade 10 and beyond as evidence of study habits as noted by the principal of the school who uncovered that students were practicing their skills daily-- before, during, and after school. (Natalia Pyskir, Principal, personal communication September, 2009). Furthermore, this program helped all students enrolled to complete Grade 12 as they were provided with the foundational skills to be successful at the secondary school level. Learning strategies were employed under this program, along with
other high school credits in Geography, Careers, History, and Computers. Topics were locally relevant and highly engaging for the participants.

Similarly, Favell (2013) noted in her research that students can greatly benefit from taking transition programs that offer basic courses in Science, Math, and Academic Writing, which help to ensure that they have the necessary skills to succeed in college or university. Wesley-Esquimaux and Boduc (2014) also discuss the importance of academic skill building for success at post-secondary. It is, therefore, recognized that certain knowledge sets are required in order for students to succeed at the post-secondary level. These knowledge sets can be enhanced and improved using a systematic process developed by BFN, as the BFN community recognizes that students have limited experience and knowledge in order to make the transition to a post-secondary environment.

3. West-- Behaviour & Motivation- Physical.

Supportive relationships are integral to success at PSE. Not reaching out or soliciting help at the PSE institution level has been found to be an impediment to success (Wesley-Esquimaux & Bolduc, 2014), while having social supports at home and in a PSE environment bolsters success for PSE students (Fente-Busche, 2013; Ontario Native Education Counsellors Association, 2011; Wesley-Esquimaux & Bolduc, 2014). Thus, help-seeking and communication as self-regulation tools are seen as important skills in pursuit of PSE success.

Roll, Aleven, McLaren, et al. (2011) state that “knowing when and how to seek help during learning is a key self-regulatory skill. Research in classrooms suggests that adaptive help-seeking behaviour helps students learn more effectively” (p. 267). This is called “help-seeking” and can be differentiated between help requests that are “instrumental,” which is asking
for help to learn versus “executive,” which is simply completing a task (i.e., without any deep learning occurring) (Roll et al., 2011). Help-seeking, as a form of self-regulation of learning, is adaptive because students ask for limited help insofar as necessary to obtain the answer independently (Roussel, Elliott, & Feltman, 2011). Therefore, learning to master instrumental help-seeking behaviour is thought to be an important predictor of learning success. The research study completed by Roll et al. (2011) was tested in a computerized environment where students were taught to ask only hint-like questions in order to achieve the final answers, thereby resulting in training in instrumental help-seeking. Students were not provided the end-answer. Instead, they were trained to a) ask for help and b) ask for just enough meaningful responses to arrive at the final answer. This study pointed to the fact that metacognitive monitoring within a tutoring system improves students’ help-seeking behaviour resulting in instrumental (or meaningful) learning. Finally, this research found evidence of students acquiring better help-seeking skills that transfer over to other subject areas within the same tutoring environment.

In Roussel et al.’s (2011) study, the effect of help-seeking from peers was examined. A complex experiment was designed to assess students through questionnaires related to friendships, current help-seeking behaviours, and achievement goals. Links between achievement and friendships and their impact on help-seeking behaviours was sought. Overall, it was found that achievement and social goals (peer-support) do operate in a complementary fashion to influence help-seeking. The researchers added that more research and application needs to occur within a student’s other social environments (such as relationships between teachers, parents etc.) to add to the literature on help-seeking behaviour-- which is emphasized as a learning strategy but also a social skill.
Cahill and Coffey (2013) studied help-seeking in a research study with high school students. Their findings suggest that students were reluctant to ask for help from professionals because they felt that “…[there were] a range of significant barriers to help-seeking, including anticipated breaches of privacy, negative judgement leading to labelling, and lack of warmth or friendliness. Most students expressed concern about privacy, and the worry that teachers and doctors would pass on information about them” (p. 7). Furthermore, they concluded that fear of negative judgement and stigma associated with asking for help are primary concerns. Cahill and Coffey added that this skill is even more compounded if students live in a rural area due to lack of services within the students’ vicinity and fear of losing privacy in a small town or village. The methodology included having students role-play with teacher candidates and medical professionals from a university environment to increase the students’ help-seeking behaviour. Post-intervention results showed that students had a better understanding and trust level for professionals and were positive about how they would seek help in the future for themselves or a friend. Asking for help for friends was important within the study as well, as students found it easy to ask for help for peers rather than asking for help for themselves. Moreover, Lehdonvirta, Nagashima, Lehdonvirta, and Baba (2012) found that men were more reluctant to seek help than women, and this “this reluctance to seek help results in increased risks, vulnerabilities, and impediments to learning” (p. 30). Finally, Gourash (1978) determined that those who seek help are predominately Caucasian, educated, middle-class, and female.

Social modelling (role models and peers) is also supported in the literature (Bandura, 1991). Bandura noted that social modelling is a powerful influence on behaviour and even more powerful when combined with self-reflection. Self-regulation is heightened when significant
others are involved, motivating people to succeed and to establishing new and more challenging goals.

Mentoring is a form of social modelling. Combining with tutoring and mentoring, as studied by Sorrentino (2006-2007), confirms that academic success can be improved along with other outcomes such as improved study time and time management. Further, it was found that there was increased student motivation, confidence, and commitment towards studies as a result of the intervention. The project, entitled “SEEK Program at the College of Staten Island, CUNY” was aimed at students who fell below a 2.5 grade point average and therefore, identified as “at-risk” students. Students were paired with trained mentors who were 1) advisors-teachers of academic material and 2) coaches in reaching short-and-long term goals (goal-setting). Sorrentino (2006-2007) used the framework of goal-setting theory as outlined in the following (p. 242):

The goal-setting theory assumes that people are motivated to complete goals when there is a discrepancy between where they would like to be and their current status, with regard to a particular state in life. For example, the mentor program is designed to highlight the discrepancy between pursuing a college degree and being at risk for dismissal. Through focusing on goals, performance is predicted to increase. The student will be better able to direct their attention to the task at hand, mobilize their efforts, increase their persistence, and replace unhelpful strategies with new ones. [Mentors were trained prior to the intervention and uses the over-arching] theory [which] instructs the mentors to develop goals…in a collaborative manner…that are specific, tailored, challenging, and attainable…in order to ensure the highest performance and commitment.
Similarly, the Aboriginal Leadership and Mentoring (ALM) program paired six Aboriginal students with mentoring but extended the learning to an e-mentoring program developed specifically for this project (Rawana, Sieukaran, Nguyen, & Pitawanakwat, 2015). Participants in the ALM project reported increased self-esteem and confidence (p. 22).

Karabenick and Knapp (1991, as cited in Zhusho and Barnett, 2011) found that the primary reason for students not asking for help was based on students’ perceptions that there was a “threat to their self-worth” (p. 153). For students who have low self-esteem as a pre-cursor to PSE studies, asking for help would be a scary venture. For Indigenous students, it is doubly difficult since Indigenous culture has been denigrated for centuries so there is low individual self-esteem but also low cultural-esteem. Further threats make it twice as hard to establish help-seeking behaviour but can be done using Indigenous ways of healing and learning.

Instructively, Zhusho and Barnett (2011) suggest that help-seeking be infused within an overall program as a systematic approach instead of a reliance on extra-curricular events (e.g., after-school programs). Moreover, it was suggested that an electronic means for asking for help should be explored further along with a program that facilitates help-seeking with mastery-oriented classes (focused on the development of competence), which emphasize learning and understanding through metacognitive processes inside a formal program.

Communication skills are also a crucial pre-requisite to working within a group in a post-secondary environment. Many assignments and topics are covered through group work (cooperative learning). Boekarts and Hijzen (2007) discuss how cooperative learning (CL) within a school environment is helpful for the co-regulation of the learning process (self-regulation in a group). They suggest that time needs to be provided to all students related to developing listening skills, giving opinions, evaluating other’s opinions, monitoring the group
learning process, requesting social support, reaching consensus, and solving group conflicts (p. 126). This suggests that having knowledge about and practicing communication is a crucial prerequisite to working within a cooperative learning environment in a post-secondary environment. Furthermore, effective communication between learners and educators is vital to ensuring student success. More recently, in the health literature, there is an increasing recognition that there are differences in communication styles between mainstream populations and Aboriginal-Indigenous populations. To illustrate, one research study was called “Quiet about pain: Experiences of two remote Aboriginal communities” where Aboriginal patients were literally quiet about their pain and hence did not report their pain to health professionals because of distrust and general problems or differences in communication (Strong, Williams, Huggins, & Sussex, 2015) This, combined with the assumption that youth “know how to communicate with each other,” lends itself to the misconception that Indigenous students enter post-secondary with the proper communication tools.

A mentoring program that incorporates learning strategies, mentoring, communication, and goal setting (such as the SEEK and ALM programs noted above) could be established for students from BFN. However, training and competence of mentors needs to be assured prior to undertaking this venture, and it is something to consider over the long-term. Perhaps a short-term Grade 8 to Grade 9 transition (as there are students in Grades 11 and 12 who can be trained) could be trialed first. This approach builds capacity, strength, and sustainability within the community as a reliance on external assistance is minimized, particularly when Christian Island is an island with limited resources.

Another idea that stems from Roussel’s work is to use some measurement tools like self-reporting mechanisms (e.g., questionnaires or themes) to begin discussing barriers to help-
seeking within a group support environment. Role-playing was also used successfully as a way to have students ask for help (Zhusho & Barnett, 2011).


Emotion relates to self-regulation as it is the feelings, thoughts, behaviours and physiological responses to an event or action (Koole et al., 2011). Wigfield, Klaudia, and Cambria (2011) discuss the importance of emotional regulation-- as it is the ability to monitor one’s emotional experiences towards a learning goal. Emotions and self-regulation are intertwined as the study of self-regulation from an emotional perspective is concerned with the responses (negative and positive) that individuals employ in relation to a situation or an event. This is crucial because having a positive or negative experience from an emotional perspective can facilitate learning or impede it. Therefore, it is imperative that students learn a variety of strategies to draw upon based on their first response (primary) and the ability to cope with this response (secondary) (Koole et al., 2011). Koole et al. suggest that the primary response to a situation or event is unregulated while the coping phase is considered regulated (p. 23). Thus, the importance of studying emotion in relation to self-regulation has merit. For example, students who fail on a test at school have emotions related to self-efficacy (feelings of doubt, intelligence level, etc.) after they receive the test score back. These emotions, when studied, can serve as an intervention where self-regulation can be enhanced through self-reflection or other exercises aimed at building a positive attitude. Indeed, Koole et al. provide research that emotional and self-regulation “deficits” can be improved upon through training and various interventions (p. 32) aimed at increasing emotional competencies.
Both Boekaerts (2011) and Rusk (2011) discuss an emotional self-regulation strategy called “Re-Appraising the situation.” They posit that this technique results in increased positive emotions and reduced negative emotions. In practical terms, reappraising a situation or finding a “silver lining” within a potentially emotional situation requires training and instruction. Lowenstein (as cited in Boekaerts, 2011) found that reappraising a situation is an effective way of emotional regulation (p. 420). Rusk (2011) also discusses another emotional regulation intervention called Acceptance and Commitment Therapy or ACT for short. Hayes, Luoma, Bond, Masuda & Lillis (2006) promote ACT as a model and process. This six-stage process consists of: 1) Acceptance, 2) Cognitive Diffusion, 3) Being present, 4) Self as Context, 5) Values, and 6) Committed Action (pp. 8-9). This behavioural and commitment change process focuses on acceptance at the core through techniques and interventions to teach individuals to accept whatever they are feeling and using self-talk or help from support people to diffuse a potentially negative thought using a person’s values. An example of an ACT that is medically-based was at McGill University where the focus was on the cognitive diffusion method using metaphors and music. Ivanova, Jesen, Cassoff, Gu, and Knauper (2015) also developed a project to increase physical activity in low-activity women. The project focused on helping participants disentangle their physical sensations (e.g., burning legs) from their thoughts (e.g., “I must stop exercising”) and behaviours (e.g., quit exercising). Acceptance techniques were used to help participants’ willingness to experience consequences of a valued behaviour (e.g., exercising) that might carry unpleasant physical sensations, without trying to change, control or reject the thoughts. The metaphor that was used in one of the exercises was an ice cube. Participants were provided with an ice cube to hold while experiencing their feelings (cold, uncomfortable, numb, etc.) and provided with instructions before (to not allow the feelings or thoughts to go away but
to accept them). A debriefing activity also occurred after the exercise to talk about strategies to move forward. This technique did assist women in performing high-intensity exercise for longer periods—decreasing the amount of perceived strain and making it more enjoyable. Therefore, the ACT intervention was successful for promoting physical activity and behavioural benefits and could be transferred to a student intervention.

For example, homework, academic tasks, time management, housing, and transportation difficulties can be taught to students using metaphors in either a circle (through a trained facilitator) or traditional workshop format (modelling). For example, instead of thinking about exercise when holding the ice-cube, students could think about homework or assignments using the ACT method. Students would think about homework, accept it (including unpleasant physical responses), and move forward thereby eliminating stress.

ACT has been used with adolescents (Livheim et al., 2015) in an 8-week program on a school-based intervention project. Related to this project, the researchers reported a significantly reduced amount of stress, anxiety, and psychological flexibility. The aforementioned study was aimed at students-at-risk, however, it could be used as a prevention focus. The 8 week ACT program was modelled upon a program by Hayes and Rowse (as cited in Livheim et al., 2015) and available through the Association of Contextual Behavioural Science, www.contextualscience.org. The ACT program:

…uses experiential mediums, for example painting and role-play, to facilitate adolescents’ experience of the six ACT processes. The use of art allows adolescents to explore their own experiences—increasing the opportunity for the processes to be new and fresh and reducing the likelihood of getting caught up in language processes.
Using a variation of these techniques, therefore, can result in an emotional shift in behaviour resulting in perseverance and managing multiple concerns within a student’s environment—components both conducive to supporting effective self-regulation.

Though these results were promising, it did not offer evidence of conclusive on-task abilities. Generally, however, effective emotional regulation is found to benefit cognitive performance because emotions put a strain on the cognitive reserves of students. This method was found beneficial for learning because it increased self-efficacy, positive mood, and the sharing of emotions (Boekaerts, 2011). Finnie and Mueller (2008) also discuss the importance of self-efficacy (student’s own perception of his/her own competence and confidence) as a great predictor and factor to improved attendance at PSE (p. 97).

**Transition --What is it? How does it relate to this project?**

Young, Marshall, Valach, et al. (2011) identify “transition” as a process that is comprised of a series of goal-direction actions that are intentional and meaningful. Indeed, the very word “transition” connotes an action. The authors suggest that, in the process of engaging in these actions, youth need to cognitively and emotionally regulate (self-regulate) their actions. Thus, the transition from secondary to post-secondary education is seen as a process by which individuals (who are identified in this project as typically students between the ages of 17-24) engage in a series of goal-directed actions that are meaningful and lasting.

Notably, Young et al. (2011) also describe the entire process of transition as preparatory and, because it is preparatory, that support in building clear skills needs to be provided by people, institutions, and agencies (p. 12) in order for an individual to make a successful transition. Cajete (2000) corroborates this view as he states that “Indigenous education is about
learning relationships in context. This context begins with the family. It extends to the clan, to the community and tribe and to all of the world” (p. 183). Clearly, this definition matches Beausoleil First Nation’s collective aspirations and need for interventions for this project to ensure PSE success.

From a theoretical perspective, Young et al. (2011) describes a conceptual framework to look at the transition process called action theory. This theory essentially provides a lens through which to view the transition process. The researchers outline that the use of action theory for transition is not an individual process but a social, collective process that is concerned with ensuring that pre-conditions like self-regulation and reflexivity (self-reflection) exist to make a successful transition.

Young et. al (2011) describe the action theory process as a clear snapshot because it is being observed as a goal-directed future process and not one based on background causes such as low income/poverty, educational attainment, family history, etc. which may cloud plans for a transition. They argue that this background information is unnecessary if you are looking forward. Hence, the authors determine that the first step of envisioning the transition is to conceptualize the transition in the present moment and perceive it as a future goal-oriented action (p. 41). Beausoleil First Nation not only perceives this forward-looking approach for PSE success, but, as the author (who is a former technician in education) can attest to, this community dreams about it.

True, much of the research conducted by Young et al. (2011) is on the transition from adolescence to adulthood but it remains relevant to this project. It is noted that “the age periods or stretches of time associated with age categories assigned to individuals within a particular (community) varies widely across cultures” (Young et al., p. 121). Meulemann (2003) states that
some youth perceive themselves as adults even when certain events like employment traditionally mark the transition to adulthood. This suggests that youth understand when they have reached adulthood by their own self-definition and further they understand that the transition is a process located within the life cycle. Smith, Nesbakken, Wirak, et al. (2007) also discuss the importance of this transition as a transformational process as children become adults and where biological and psychological processes are changing. Furthermore, Brady and Allingham (2010) explore whether or not the “victory lap” at the secondary level in Ontario is related to transition anxiety, as it is recognized as a major, important life change. Bartholomew and Horowitz (as cited in Brady & Allingham, 2010) rank the transition from secondary to PSE as one of the major “life changes similar to marriage or retirement in that it involves a new social role” (p. 5).

To connect this, Young (2011) points out that this transition can be perceived as a Rites of Passage, which can be a ceremony that publicly recognizes changes in individuals and is a meaningful way to acknowledge an individual’s entry into the adult world. This is also supported from an Indigenous perspective by Wesley-Esquimaux and Bolduc (2014), where it was stated that “Rites of Passage and their utility as a way to focus youth is a conversation we believe needs to happen across the entire country, and it is not well represented in the literature. We suggest the main reason is the dismissal of spiritual practices and prayer from the academic experience. We do know however, the experience of spiritual practices and ceremony has deep importance to Indigenous peoples” (p. 36). Furthermore, Cajete (2000) suggests that “the purpose of Indigenous education is to help an individual become a complete man or woman” (p. 183). This could be an exciting way in which the community of Beausoleil First Nation can acknowledge post-secondary students as entering a transition process but also to impart a sense of joint
responsibility for their education and for their contributions to the community in general. This is articulated by an Indigenous youth best (Steinhauer, 2012, p. 67): 

*I was taught by family members and tribal leaders about the importance of rising to one’s potential to make the best possible contribution possible to our people as a collective.*

A Rites of Passage could be an ongoing process--first as a transition and then to help students with other transitions and other important periods of time based on traditional Indigenous Rites of Passage. This fits the description of transition described above: that it is an action, that it is a social process, and that it is an important first step in a series of goal-directed actions.

**Indigenous Transition Projects**

Identification of transitions issues for Indigenous or Aboriginal students is not new. Indigenous students face many barriers in relation to not only education but the many other sectors like employment, housing, and health that are also part of the transition to an urban area and to institutes for higher learning (universities and colleges).

There is evidence of projects completed in Canada that have to deal specifically with Indigenous Transition Projects. In particular, a recent literature review conducted by Wesley-Esquimaux and Bolduc in 2014 led to the design of a transition program for Lakehead University. The literature review included interviews with Aboriginal students in addition to an exhaustive list of articles and books. The recommendations formed the basis of the design of a model that includes four principles that will guide the Indigenous PSE transition work at
Lakehead University starting in 2015 and include: 1) Family Connections, 2) Ceremonial and Spiritual, 3) Social Capital and Networks, and 4) Workshops and Training.

It is important to note that the literature review conducted by Wesley-Esquimaux and Bolduc (2014) focused on developing a model for a transition program specifically for Lakehead University. This literature review and recommendations, therefore, focused on students who were attending and enrolled in the PSE environment (post-entry experiences). Tinto (as cited in Finnie & Qiu, 2008, p. 181), describes this model as an “integration model,” which includes actions that increase the level of academic and social engagement while enrolled at university. University and college partnerships and targeted actions towards the retention and ongoing success of Indigenous students will benefit students in these post-entry, integration models. The work for Beausoleil First Nation in this regard will be to bridge the partnership with the institutions that offer specific transition and affiliation programs for their students and develop a different level of supports for students who attend institutions that do not have these integration-focused transition programs.

A different way to view the components of transition is to look at it through what is referred to as the “student attrition model” (Bean & Metzer, 1985, as cited in Finnie, Sweetman, & Usher, 2008). This theoretical framework studies post-secondary retention issues externally or apart from institutions like colleges and universities and prior to entry into a PSE environment. This framework zones in on issues such as academic performance and preparation at high school, employment, finances, self-efficacy, and attitude. Therefore, the big difference between the “integration model” and the “student attrition model” is that the focus for the student attrition model is “pre-entry” or factors to examine prior to entering college or university, while the integration model focuses on post-entry experiences. The Beausoleil First Nation is interested
in pursuing an examination of the post-entry experiences as part of a larger study, however; the objective of this project is to focus on pre-entry characteristics as a transition period related to student success.

The Ontario Native Education Counsellors Association (ONECA) completed a study on Aboriginal students nearing completion of high school, those considering entering post-secondary, and mature students under alternative education programs. The study involved students, parents, counsellors, and community members of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Students, commonly referred to as FNMI students. ONECA was interested in gathering data about a) Transition Practices for Aboriginal Students from Secondary to Post-Secondary and b) Factors Affecting Graduation for Aboriginal Post-Secondary students. In particular, they were looking at ways to assist students through technology. In fact, in writing this project, the author is aware of a host of tools recently made available for students, parents, counsellors, and institutions available on their website: www.oneca.com. The methodology used for the ONECA findings was an internet questionnaire in addition to focus groups all across Ontario. The findings of the focus groups in Barrie, Ontario (a city close to Christian Island) were as follows (pp. 11-12):

• Students talking – what to expect and how to be prepared for post-secondary, connecting with counsellors, opportunities, and challenges

• Problem solving blog series – various topics and various audiences e.g., Students to students; students to counsellors, counsellors to counsellors; educators talking to educators

• Tutor/mentor, on-line learning tutorials for academic preparedness
• Student wellness – finding and maintaining balance (e.g., mental, physical, emotional, spiritual).

• Parents talking – how to be an advocate for your child, your rights, finding resources – who’s who and where to start, post-secondary tours

• Community based programs, bridging programs

• Community initiatives to support post-secondary

• Student testimonials – the post-secondary experience - Where can I get help when I need it? e.g., tutors, elders, peer support - Supporting special learners (differently-abled)

• Managing Time – geared to secondary students

• Using technology to my advantage, e.g., alerts, alarms, research, computer programs, phones, student email (important messages from counsellors, faculty and institutions), blackboard training

• Starting my career – how to write resumes, job search methods

• Assessing my skills and gifts (determination) – include setting career goals

• Writing and Research Skills

• Paying for my education by work contract – communities sponsor students to reduce or eliminate student loans
• Making the Transition to post-secondary – talk about transitions, what you need to know, how to succeed, life skills, funding support, counsellor and other support services

• Balancing family life with education e.g., caring for family members, paying bills

• Role models – careers, elders, community people

• Budgeting - Financing post-secondary education e.g., software and technology

• Life away from home e.g., urban communities

• Time Management Tools

• Why get a degree/diploma? – use real life role models - Career pathways - map where you start, may not be clear in the beginning, may have multiple careers.

The suggestions provided within the ONECA consultation provide a good overall framework combined with the “Stepping Stones” framework discussed below (see also www.iahla.ca). Practical information on Indigenous transitions does exist. Certainly, the development of a transition project specifically for BFN is enhanced by this data, but, at the same time, this project and review allows room for the development of a locally-developed and meaningful process. This would happen as a multi-year strategy using some of the recently created tools particularly as they pertain to the workshops on both the ONECA website and Stepping Stones handbook.

Restoule et al. (2013) also highlight some recurring themes in research completed entitled, “Supporting Successful Transitions to Post-Secondary Education for Indigenous Students: Lessons from an Institutional Ethnography in Ontario, Canada.” This research focuses
on how post-secondary institutions can help change their practices in terms of helping Indigenous students succeed. Of particular note, youth involved in the study provided the following recommendations (pp. 6-7):

- Provide more information about “everyday issues” that relate to Aboriginal youth: funding (band funding, scholarships, OSAP), housing (single parent, on and off campus), food banks, childcare, and part-time jobs or job training opportunities.

- Have posters of successful post-secondary education graduates from their communities.

- Provide detailed information about what cultural supports, housing, academic help, etc. there are in post-secondary institutions. Are there Elders with whom to talk? Are there cultural events, tutors, and community centres?

- Have information about supports presented in packages with details and pictures (of Aboriginal youth).

- Have more speakers (that are Aboriginal youth) who can talk about more than just how important it is to go into post-secondary education.

- Have post-secondary education information made specifically for Aboriginal youth that includes a “what to expect” section, which takes applicants step-by-step through the first-year process. This would include information about preparing to apply to post-secondary education.

- Have all the information circulating earlier in secondary school (e.g., Grade 9).

- Have time, starting in Grade 9, devoted to discussing post-secondary education.
Again, youth raised the important issue of starting career planning and information beginning in Grade 9. Additionally, practical information is needed combined with guest speakers and role models—Indigenous people who have successfully graduated to speak about their pathway to success and support mechanisms. A common theme among youth related to ideas that would help them be better prepared for post-secondary studies is information and communication about the process and what to expect.

The Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association located in British Columbia completed a comprehensive reference for transitioning students entitled, “Aboriginal Student Transition Handbook (2011).” This handbook deals with many issues that youth identified in the consultations as reviewed above. Within the document, emphasis is placed on preparing students for challenges in order to make proactive decisions. The document is laid out as a transition process or “stepping stones” laid out in sequence like deciding on a career, applying to college/university, preparing to move, etc. Essentially, advice is provided but room left to think about questions related to transition like, “will you live in residence?”, “Do you have a mentor that you can stay in contact with?” The handbook also highlights that part of life skills (self-regulation) is taking care of the physical, emotional, spiritual and mental self as found in the Restoule study. Useful strategies such as budgeting, study skills, writing, library skills, assertiveness, navigating in institutions, and using resources are also outlined within the document and provide an excellent framework for community workshop topics that build self-regulation skills. This framework can be an important handbook on which to build a similar Beausoleil First Nation document.
Hunt-Jinnouchi (2009) conducted a study through the University of Victoria in response to funding for Aboriginal education transition projects. Some of the recommendations focused on successful approaches to supporting students and included (p. 10):

- Building community capacity through experiential learning opportunities
- Creating effective institutional partnerships
- Focusing on career counselling and academic advising
- Creating more efficient affiliation agreements that facilitate student transition
- Creating programs specifically targeting the recruitment of male students
- Developing a Best Practices handbook

Universities and colleges offer many transition programs for Indigenous (Aboriginal) youth. The University of Alberta, the University of Manitoba, Dalhousie University and the University of Toronto offer a “Transitional Year Program (TYP)” for Aboriginal youth. Brock University and University of Winnipeg offer an “Aboriginal (Access) Transition Program (AATP).” Holmes (2006) describes these transition programs (or enhanced support) as encompassing a wide range of initiatives and interventions for promising Aboriginal students who might not have the academic preparation necessary for university. Usually, these year-long supports consist of tutoring, mentoring, and academic skill building in the area of math, writing, and study skills. Throughout the process, students are exposed to university life while connecting to the faculty. Elders, and other students to build social support integral for success at this level.
The transition programs mentioned are delivered on-campus at various colleges and universities. In contrast, local delivery of Indigenous community-based post-secondary (and secondary) programs through innovative distance education models have proved successful (Simon, Burton, Lockhart, and O’Donnell, 2014). The difficulty with creating new models for a transition-type project based on local delivery and Indigenous priorities, is that few institutions know about these community-based models and therefore, do not create partnerships. Other hindrances to creating community-based transition projects is funding, geography, infrastructure, resources and political and community-will.

Despite this, there are examples of successful distance education programs completed in other First Nation communities like Elsipogtog First Nation in New Brunswick, Kitigan Zibi First Nation in Quebec, Fort Severn First Nation in Ontario, and Mishkeegogamang First Nation in Ontario (Simon, Burton, Lockhart, & O’Donnell, 2014 p. 4).

This distance education delivery models mentioned correspond to the development of community-based programs on Christian Island in the past, which were based on formal partnership agreements with post-secondary institutions and delivered locally. For example, the community successfully offered a unique range of programs that were delivered locally through government grants and internal resources and accredited by colleges. These have included Business- Tourism Diploma (8 graduates in 1988) partnership with Georgian College, Social Service Worker program with St. Lawrence College (12 graduates in 2000), Practical Nursing Diploma program with Loyalist College (4 graduates in 2007), Education Assistant Diploma program with Loyalist College (7 graduates in 2007/2008), Electrical Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate (4 graduates), and an E-Lab program that is an ongoing, distance education program, which is currently operating (5 graduates). Upon reflection about these programs with various
community leaders, it was discovered that graduates from these programs have gone on to meaningful employment, have gone on to attain higher education, have become leaders and advocate of local education training initiatives, and have encouraged family members by acting as role models for other community members. The benefits are small but have a ripple effect to the student’s immediate families but also the broader community (Monague-McGregor, 2009). Moreover, the value of providing PSE at the local level is obvious as students receive increased support (through family) and formal links to an institution (teacher to student connection).

In summary, Indigenous transition projects recommend providing support to students (self-regulation) and personal (holistic well-being), as supported by student and community views and corroborated by research. Specifically in the community of Christian Island, success in the way of community-based programs have been created that utilize a collective approach and based on reciprocal relationships with mainstream institutions. Thus, there is an understanding and knowledge base that exists for the delivery of locally-delivered education projects. Additional research, implementation, and evaluation is necessary as little information or case studies are available to obtain a systematic approach to pre-entry transition projects designed specifically for Indigenous students.

**Workshop Design**

A large part of the literature review has been devoted to self-regulation and transition. Self-regulation is a concept and a process, along with everyday life skills that can be used to design and deliver workshops that would be appropriate for students from Christian Island at the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary level. However, for the purposes of this project, focus will be put on the secondary to post-secondary transition.
For this reason, a series of workshops is chosen as an alternative, short-term solution towards a broader, longer-term strategy (at the early years transition, elementary transition, and career transition stages) that will get better as the years move forward and hopefully be evaluated and adapted accordingly. The workshop format is also ideal since it can teach skills and promote empowerment within an existing system (Brooks-Harris & Stock-Ward, 1999) as corroborated by Daly, Leeson, and Dixon (2011), below.

**Workshop Model**

Daly, Leveson, and Dixon (2011) discuss the workshop model (p.50):

- A flexible and adaptable method of developing skills.
- A method to highlight the importance and relevance of skills for students.
- A mechanism for involving (others) who would normally be either disinterested or unaware of the important role of skills capability among students.
- A means of introducing skills to students in a curriculum that is already crowded and with limited opportunities for developing these skills.
- A means for providing opportunities for students lacking a strong academic background to begin to develop these skills before the commencement of the (post-secondary) academic year.
- Adapted for a variety of students and situations.

Interestingly, Daly et al. (2011) also discuss in their workshop results section that students felt more self-reflective about certain aspects of their personal life and enjoyed learning in a social context-- learning from peers utilizing the workshop method.
Workshop Components

Brooks-Harris and Stock-Ward (1999) developed a step-by-step workshop sequence:

1. Needs of the Participants--Determine what the needs of the participants are by soliciting feedback.
2. Preparing for Workshop Design: Gathering Information and Setting Goals-- learning objectives and choosing resources.
3. Creating a Comprehensive Workshop--Work on the Beginning, Activities, End, and Theme.
4. Designing Effective Workshop Learning Activities-- Reflecting activities, experimenting activities, and planning activities.
5. Directing the Workshop and Creating a Learning Environment--Determining the physical environment, relationships, coherent messages, overview, and conclusion to consolidate learning.
6. Facilitation Style-- Engaging, informing, involving, and applying and planning for application.
7. Workshop Evaluation-- Reflecting, planning and choosing a strategy (formative, summative, qualitative, and quantitative).

The next section of this review focuses on the delivery of the workshops focused on youth, while taking into consideration the unique nature of Indigenous youth. This is not to say that the content will focus on topics of Indigenous culture and language as one might expect. Instead, the focus will be on topics or stories relevant to youth in an attempt to ensure the design of an engaging and meaningful workshop curriculum. Therefore, Indigenous Circle Pedagogy
and engaging workshop methods are reviewed. Both of these approaches have the potential to increase competencies in all areas and most importantly, in a holistic, reflective, and self-regulatory framework.

**Examples of Engaging and Effective Workshop Design**

There are several examples of workshops throughout Canada in Indigenous communities and in the mainstream population. Watts and Walstad (as cited in Totenhagen, 2015) reviewed literature concerning workshop delivery methods at the pre-college level. Their findings suggest that there was no empirical evidence to suggest that one single approach works more effectively in teaching or engaging youth. Totenhagen and colleagues (2015), however, revealed a number of “promising practices” with respect to (finance-related) workshops geared to youth after their review. These components are: “(a) interactive learning experiences, (b) use of real money, (c) integration of curriculum, (d) involving the community, and (e) a combination of other unique delivery methods.” (p. 177) The authors stress that there is a “need for 21st century experiential learning that is contextually meaningful” (p. 177), like hands-on learning, simulations, and partnerships (e.g., this study was on financial literacy--partnering with Credit Unions, parents, etc.). Of particular note, the study led to a discussion about the importance of having workshops aligned with youth interests and involvement of parents-- as they provide the immediate environment for learning a particular topic.

Dawn, Harkin and Turner (2013) published a book entitled, “Teaching Young Adults.” This book centered on effective teaching and learning methodologies for young adults. In summary, successful learning for youth occurs when it: 1) actively engages the learner and 2) social interaction is facilitated (p. 34). Social interaction is integral for youth as friendships are
paramount at this stage of their development and is often referred to as social capital and networking in the literature. In Indigenous communities, belonging and connectedness are crucial to success. Engagement can happen a number of different ways with the communication needs of youth at the forefront. For example, a youth engagement report completed for the Government of British Columbia found the following differences in communication styles between generations (with this generation labelled as Generation Y’ers):

**Figure 8. Communication Style for Generation Y’ers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Semi-formal</td>
<td>Not so serious; irrelevant</td>
<td>Eye catching, fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Detail; prose-style writing</td>
<td>Chunk it down but give me everything</td>
<td>Get to the point – what do I need to know?</td>
<td>If and when I need it, I’ll find it online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>Relevance to my security; historical perspective</td>
<td>Relevance to the bottom line and my rewards</td>
<td>Relevance to what matters to me</td>
<td>Relevance to now, today and my role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>Accepting and trusting of authority and hierarchy</td>
<td>Accept the “rules” as created by the Veterans</td>
<td>Openly questions authority; often branded as cynics and skeptics</td>
<td>OK with authority that earns their respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactics</td>
<td>Print; conventional mail; face-to-face dialogue or by phone; some online information and interaction</td>
<td>Print; conventional mail; face-to-face dialogue; online tools and resources</td>
<td>Online; some face-to-face meetings (if they’re really needed); games; technological interaction</td>
<td>Online; wired; seamlessly connected through technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed</td>
<td>Attainable within reasonable time frame</td>
<td>Available; handy</td>
<td>Immediate; when I need it</td>
<td>Five minutes ago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>In digestible amounts</td>
<td>As needed</td>
<td>Whenever</td>
<td>Constant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This information is particularly helpful as successful youth engagement strategies for Generation Y’ers (who this project is focused on) are described as containing a steady stream of activities that are technology-based, focused, fast, and fun!
A recent project trialed in the Northwest Territories for Aboriginal youth focused on an arts-based approach (video, music, visual arts, literature, etc.). Students were mentored by various local and regional artists as a way to engage and empower youth. The project was called “Evaluation of the Ko`ts`i`htla (‘We Light the Fire’) Project: building resiliency and connections through strengths-based creative arts programming for Indigenous youth.” Overall, the conclusion was that arts-based programming has the potential to build resiliency, strengthen relationships and engage students in discussions about community change (Fanian, Young, Mantla, et al., 2015 p. 1). Of particular note, the researchers highlighted that there has been little to no evaluations on Indigenous youth workshops and, therefore, it was an aim of this study to uncover the strengths and weaknesses of designing workshops for youth. Some of these recommendations are provided below:

- Flexibility is essential…structure or agenda should be evaluated daily...[to suit]…circumstances.
- Balance structure and non-structured time throughout the workshop, providing ample opportunities for youth to collaborate...while also providing the space and time for youth to autonomously choose what suits their needs.
- Facilitate group building and [recognize] individual work. Circles shouldn’t be forced, allow to happen organically [as everyone gets to know one another].
- Create a safe space by establishing ground rules as a group.
- Youth participants should have ownership over their [work]. They choose what, how, where and when they wish to showcase their [work].
- Share talents and skills.
• Depending on the number of youth and their interests, it may be worth selecting only a few types of [work] that met the needs and interests of youth participants rather than having too many activities going on.

• Ensure there is an appropriate ratio of facilitators to youth.

**Incorporating Circle Pedagogy into the Workshop Design**

Metacognition is crucial in the development of self-regulation. This includes the ability to think about your own thinking but also reflecting upon your choices and actions in order to evaluate a next course of action or inaction. Traditional Indigenous forms of learning have focused on learning and reflection through the use of circles. Circles are less structured and the supports such as teacher, elder, parent, or mentor form part of the circle, including the discussion and overall learning. Everyone is equal in the circle and everyone is made to feel safe and respected, recognizing that everyone has something to share through storytelling and reflecting—building a sense of identity. Tousignant and Sioui (2009) comment about the power of stories and sharing, as the habit of constructing the world through stories has been found at the core of Canadian Aboriginal youth's discourse on identity. Fundamentally, this is different than other cultures as the focus for Aboriginal youth is on narrative discourse versus an essentialist strategy to construct identity. Narrative focuses on stories that bridge together various moments, while essentialist focuses on abstract personality traits and physical attributes, i.e., permanent elements of their identity.

Circles take on many forms—some are sharing circles (story sharing and general learning), mentoring circles (learning about topics with mentors and teachers), and talking circles (learning about a specific issue).
Sharing Circles.

Dewey (as cited in Dawn et al., 2013) advocated a model in which there was a continuity of learning from educational settings to personal life experiences. He stated that students’ personal life experiences were their “greatest assets” (p. 35). The reason why this is important to discuss within the circle pedagogy discussion is because students can share in their personal experiences by talking about them within a circle configuration. To further expand on the value of personal experience, Dewey (as cited in Dawn et al., 2013) further states that learning with the assistance of personal experiences causes students to undergo changes, and these changes alter the quality of subsequent life experiences. In a circle context, learning about another student or mentor’s experience or transformation processes does have the potential to alter other students’ experiences, providing momentum for positive change and learning, provided, of course, that the facilitator evaluates the experience in terms of the potential for growth. Teachers and facilitators also benefit from circle pedagogy. One teacher (Bazylak, 2002) described sharing circles as “…the most rewarding, exhausting, and fulfilling experiences of my years as an educator” (p. 135).

Active engagement happens as youth are leading and directing the topics. “Social interaction” was also supported by Dawn et al. (2013) as a successful learning practice. This is also facilitated in circle as everyone in the circle becomes a part of a social circle and is responsible for the rules, guidelines, direction, sharing, and learning within the circle. As noted in the research by Fanian, the circle should be allowed to happen organically.
Mentoring Circles.

Felton-Busch, Maza, Ghee, et al. (2013) completed research using a traditional Indigenous mentoring circle for Indigenous students in Australia. This research study was designed in a similar fashion to a transition project that was geared specifically at nursing students in a remote part of Australia. The aim was to increase the retention rate and learning environment for students from local communities in order to graduate and succeed at nursing studies. Circles were introduced with mentors involved to create skills, and support structures and resilience so that students could succeed at post-secondary.

Specifically, in relation to self-regulation, the mentoring circles focused on “self-analysis-- looking at motivation, beliefs and goals, collaboration, and communication-- sharing ideas and stories with fellow students, asking questions and making their needs known” (p.136). Various topics came out of initial discussions within the circle; however, three areas of priority became apparent: Self-awareness, Time management, and Communication. Under the self-awareness aspect, students were provided with a mind-map with themselves at the center to direct their thinking and the conversation. This enabled the students to find out their motivation, beliefs, and actions in the PSE environment. As a result of the mentoring circles, specific classroom sessions were held to teach time management skills, while communication improved through the continued use of circles. The communication barrier of shyness also was overcome to a certain degree with the use of the mentoring circles, as this was found to be a root cause of most of the problems experienced by these students attending post-secondary.

Overall, the mentoring circles were successful in helping students to “solve problems, build relationships, and think reflectively” (p. 138). These are traits crucial to self-regulation and
as the authors (Fente-Busche et al.) posit, the circles “create a collaborative learning environment with positive social change and personal growth” (p. 138).

**Talking Circles.**

In another research-focused transition project, Young (2011) and his colleagues wanted to understand the transition of First Nation youth to urban centres, as little data currently exists. The approach was on selecting the behaviours that they wanted to understand for which they chose the theme of “growing up.” These conversations were video-recorded between the youth and their parents with observers (social supports and elders) who could help understand the various themes that arose from the conversations. Second, the researchers followed up with both the youth and adults to select and verify common themes. Lastly, all the participants were invited to a talking circle, which was consistent with Indigenous tradition to listen for ways that people located themselves and made sense of one another and the community. This approach assisted the researchers and the family to identify actions, which, taken together, contributed to the transition to adulthood. The actions or actions needed involved the past, present, and future. In one of the examples, the First Nation youth spoke about “responsibility,” and each parent and community talked about what responsibility meant to them.

The talking circle is similar to a social support group within the above-noted instances, but, also acts as a way for students and parents to share and plan action steps for their future. This is important as social support and connection are seen as a protective factor for at-risk youth (Chandler & Lalonde, 2008). Chandler and Lalonde (2008) further note that First Nation communities taking proactive steps over community concerns is a good step forward as the development of local solutions to local issues is paramount. Almost 45 years have passed since
the document, “Indian Control of Indian Education” was produced. The advancement of local solutions to education issues as outlined in this document and revealed by meaningful conversations that are future-oriented will support the Beausoleil First Nation in “…raising those that will lead.”
CHAPTER THREE
BEAUSOLEIL FIRST NATION WORKSHOPS AND FRAMEWORK

As a result of knowledge obtained from the literature review and the author’s understanding of the BFN community, a framework based on a holistic medicine wheel is recommended. This framework will guide the workshop design, content and sequence of workshops for Post-Secondary students, focused in this project to the “preparing phase” – phase 1 or the eastern (yellow) doorway.

The workshop series is not meant to be all-encompassing. There is considerable room to enhance, skip, or add on to the series based on community needs. The template used is general and focuses on 2-3 workshop activities that are designed to be fun, challenging, and engaging. It should be noted that the delivery of the workshops should be undertaken by a trained facilitator or teacher and that the location of the workshops is conducive to student comfort (example: students might feel uncomfortable learning in a small boardroom where space is limited or in a classroom space designed for little interaction).

This workshop series can successfully be delivered as a summer program (3 weeks) with incentives built in (example as a summer student career or employment program) or by having the program formally recognized by a nearby college or university as a preparatory credit. Another idea for incentives is to have a game like bingo where students fill their cards when they attend and have stamped and initialed by the facilitator for rewards such as college “care packages” like grocery certificates, supper certificates, certificates from their chosen institution for books (there are never enough funds for books), and/or larger offers such as laptops upon completion. All these incentives are designed to have students participate fully in all of the workshops to gain the most benefit for their future.
“Kognaadad Waa-Niigaanzijig- We are Raising those that will lead”

A Holistic Framework for BFN Post-Secondary Students

Part 1: Preparing Phase—Self-Regulation Workshops
Beausoleil First Nation Self-Regulation Framework--
“Preparing” Phase

What follows will be a general outline of the Workshop series. This Workshop Series is not meant to be all-encompassing as there is some room for development and to develop unique programs catered to the needs of the community based on needs, intensity, and depth. Furthermore, the sequence of the workshops according to the framework will be: 1) Planning your Post-Secondary Journey, 2) Practicing Skills for the next steps, 3) Performing at School/Career/Training, and 4) Appraising the Situation.

For the purposes of this project, I am focusing on the “Planning” phase (within the medicine wheel framework), which includes various components of self-regulation and skills that support self-regulated learning (SRL). The attached workshops focus on developing positive behaviour (self-regulation) that promotes healthy choices, including a focus on working memory, mental flexibility, self-control, and resisting impulsive demands. In this project, this translates into goal-setting, learning and studying, motivation, time management, career planning, and help-seeking. The workshops that support SRL are also important because, as noted within the literature review section, self-regulation is a process that is premised on students’ believing in themselves, thereby turning mental abilities into performance (or academic) skills. These supporting skills are just as crucial as the direct self-regulation skills because they enhance self-regulation by assisting in freeing up the cognitive reserves of students (related to working memory) and efficiency on academic tasks. For example, Indigenous students who are worried about a relationship or are missing their family far from home or cannot cope with emotional turmoil (particularly as a result of historical trauma) require ancillary strategies to help them remain on task or to lessen their emotions. Therefore, for Indigenous students, those workshops that facilitate self-regulation should be designed and included which
will increase mental flexibility and free up cognitive reserves to concentrate on academic success. Attending post-secondary for the first time represents a huge stress that some researchers consider as “transition anxiety” (Brady & Allingham, 2010). This transition includes cultural shock, separation, and a lack of control that have important consequences in how students persist in their studies. Therefore, strategies to assist Indigenous students with emotions and negative thinking are imperative. In this project, a general overview of each workshop will be provided, followed by some concrete examples of workshops under this framework that builds upon the general overview provided.

The workshop format is the same throughout the series with some having more or less than two (2) larger activities, depending on the subject. The series can be delivered within a certain time period (e.g., September to June) or can be delivered in intensive-mode (e.g., during March Break or summer holidays). A celebration can be planned at the conclusion of this phase. The “practicing” phase is recommended to be a summer program where students can practice life skills like those mentioned in the framework in preparation for PSE. Identification of these life skills can be done in consultation with parents and students in order to concentrate on specific skill sets and again, to provide youth with the opportunity to chart the course. In fact, one of the programs in British Columbia is called “post-secondary survival skills” did run throughout the summer months for Indigenous students. This, combined with a handbook, is worthy of development.

The remaining phases are self-explanatory with the “performing” and “apPraising” phases done during the first year of PSE which ensures that students complete the crucial first year of PSE. Celebrations and connection are an important part of Indigenous cultures and as such, comprise part of the last two phases.
Workshops

The general outline of workshops listed provides a starting point to develop more intricate plans within the community based on local needs and youth aspirations, which will emerge into a youth-led project that is truly empowering. As mentioned in the “We light the Fire” youth workshop evaluation (Fanian, Young, Mantla, Daniels, & Chatwood, 2015) organization of workshops should happen organically and not be forced. Therefore, a general organization should be proposed inviting input from youth about potential guest speakers, field trips, music, and videos.

Curriculum and Structure of the Workshops

Each day of the workshops can begin with a smudge and a prayer, facilitated in a circle by an elder or the facilitator. The importance of beginning a workshop in this way is outlined by Archibald (2008) “beginning [the day or activity] with this spiritual practice creates a cultural learning practice” (p. 1) that leads to the achievement of a goal for the day. Furthermore, it introduces the concept of visioning- an integral part of self-regulation. This can be followed by an overview of the purpose behind the workshop along with expectations and protocols or rules governing the day’s activities.

Icebreakers should be included in each workshop format. The inclusion of icebreakers helps people to become involved mentally, physically, and emotionally and promote involvement at the beginning of a session by engaging students. Icebreakers also tend to raise the energy level and create a shared sense of purpose. Traditional activities can also be introduced in the icebreaker portion such as drumming and storytelling activities which are fun
and instructive at the same time. Check-in activities can also be used in the icebreaker portion to have students communicating about their emotional well-being.

Transitions between activities, breaks, and icebreakers should be facilitated with the use of music to keep momentum and excitement present. Another idea is to call the breaks “social media breaks,” so that students understand that texting and checking their phones will be allocated a time within the schedule (allow at least 15 minute breaks). This results in a win-win situation as students should be asked to shut phones off during the delivery of the workshops with the understanding that scheduled social media breaks will be provided.

Activities should focus on developing skills in specific areas but also, where possible, to incorporate cultural competence, connection and identity as a form of building self-confidence and self-efficacy. In some instances, it may be impossible to include these components due to the nature of the topic i.e., academic skill-building or due to shortened time-frames, but, this is ultimately a community decision.

In implementing activities, the scope and breadth of a particular topic may be shortened or lengthened depending on the wishes of the students. Therefore, an introductory workshop is imperative towards targeting specific skill-building workshops based on student feedback. Consideration should be given to variety, comfort level, engagement, intensity, and location of workshops well in advance.

At the end of each workshop, a reflective circle should be instituted by a trained facilitator who is connected to the youth or who has a proven track record with connecting with youth. Talking circles at the end of each activity will be standard so that students can reflect and learn from one another. This is highlighted in Scholer, Ozaki, and Higgins (2014) as self-
evaluation and reflection plays an important part in guiding behavior across many domains in life by gauging a student’s thinking and feelings at the end of each session. Furthermore, Scholer, Ozaki, and Higgins (2014) also describe the benefits of self-evaluation as a way to shift motivational concerns, focus on promotion and prevention and improve positive thinking. This culminating circle (at the end of the day) can also be closed with a traditional smudge.

Exit cards can also be used to facilitate discussion or it can be simply a question such as “What was your greatest learning today?” “How will you apply this in your life/academic studies?” “How can we follow up as a group?” Circle wrap-ups typically take anywhere from one hour to two hours, so ample time should be provided to ensure deep learning, reflection time, closing comments by facilitator and/or guest speakers, along with a smudge or hand-drum song.

Section One: Workshops designed to improve Self-regulation

Workshop One. An introductory workshop--“We are raising those that will lead”

Purpose-- This introductory workshop will provide students with the overall post-secondary workshop format and framework. It will focus on student success from a holistic perspective that allows input from the students on what they view as the self-regulation and life skills necessary for their future success. Having feedback from students on the topics, direction, length, and format of the workshops is integral to obtaining their interest and commitment to any workshop series. The vision will be introduced by leaders of the community as valuable supporters and champions of any initiative and shows the youth that leaders care for their wellbeing. Self-regulation will be introduced as a “goal-oriented” concept. Finally, an introductory workshop will focus on having students connect with one another as team members and end with a goal-oriented – future activity.
Activities-- The vision will be introduced by leaders (role models) of the community as guest speakers, and as valuable supporters and champions of any initiative and shows the youth that leaders care for their wellbeing. An introduction will also include an introduction to the concepts of self-regulation with youth identifying self-regulation topics, so that there is an understanding that the workshops are youth-led and supported by the community. Additionally, an introductory workshop will focus on having students connect with one another as a team through teambuilding.

As a culminating activity, students will write down specific items that they are apprehensive about in attending post-secondary in the upcoming months. As a team, students will volunteer different strategies or solutions to various issues that could arise. This provides students with insight into problems that may occur in advance so that issues can be mitigated.

Indigenous connections— the value of role models from the community have been stated by youth themselves as a need (Ontario Native Education Counsellor’s Association, 2007). Importantly, students need role models who are “…living examples of the human spirit, the desire for us to do and be our very best” (Brown, 2006).

Workshop Two. Career Planning Workshop—“Connecting the dots”

Purpose-- Having a career goal is integral to student success at post-secondary and beyond. As mentioned by Finnie and Mueller (2008) students cited the top reason for dropping out of school as lack of interest either because they were not fully knowledgeable about their career choice or that the program was not what they had expected. Therefore, it is important to solidify students’ understanding of a particular career and potentially explore additional careers within a given sector e.g., within the health sector alone, there are many careers such as a paramedic, medical lab technician, pharmacy assistant, and nursing careers. Stories shared by
Indigenous people are also important to help students’ visualize a career interest. For example, a local elder or guest speaker will provide students with stories related to their journey—these are people achieving their destiny through culture, identity, belief and tenacity. Storytelling, as Archibald (2008) points out is a means to educate the heart, mind, and body. For example, Kirkness (2013) as a Cree elder describes her journey of progress from a one-room school house to becoming the Director of Education for the National Indian Brotherhood /Assembly of First Nations. She describes this as doorways that have opened up for her because she has always known she wanted to be a teacher and involved in the field of education (goal). She also describes her internal and external struggles within her story which relates to student challenges. Kirkness maintains that “You must know the past, to understand the present, to plan for the future” (p. 14). Stories, therefore, have the potential to profoundly impact students’ career quests.

Activities-- Part of this workshop could include homework prior to the event where students research a sector, as opposed to a particular career prior to coming to the workshop or could be facilitated in a manner where students have a quick opportunity to research on-line and therefore, laptops would form a major part of the materials needed. A career workshop should also focus on self-exploration uncovering students’ skills, values and interests in order to help them achieve congruence with this exploration and their chosen career. Connecting with students in this manner requires that several caring and connected adults are present so that one-on-one attention can be provided to achieve a plan for a career goal. The supporting adults should also have some knowledge of career or employment trends or be briefed prior to the workshop.
It is important that this workshop be augmented by storytelling (such as Kirkness, 2013) or Youtube videos by aboriginal scholars, youth, or athletes who have established career goals and maintained their vision. The inclusion of art and media into this workshop would be beneficial as a culminating activity perhaps through mind maps showcasing skills, abilities, dreams, and other resources required to achieve their career goal. Ensure that at the end of the session, students have the opportunity to “voice” their choices within the circle format. This way, the career choice becomes a vision and one step closer to reality.

Indigenous Connections— Activities can include a component where students explore career interests along with parents. Parents need to be on side in any career decision and this creates a holistic way to approach a decision (by having various people contribute and support the career decision). Bazylak (2002) cited the importance of family to Indigenous student success. The involvement of family plays a crucial role on graduation success.

Workshop Three. Motivation—“Actions speak louder than words”

Purpose— The motivation workshop will focus on self-efficacy and self-esteem building. Zimmerman, Bandura, and Martina Pons (1992) highlighted that perceived self-efficacy motivates students academically by influencing personal goal setting. Therefore, activities within this workshop will focus on self-confidence (the power of affirmations and in positive beliefs about self), teaching the growth mindset (the understanding that intelligence levels are not fixed, Canadian Education Association, 2007), and on making solid commitments to their goals (through commitment contracts and /or voicing these to one another or with parents present). A discussion about extrinsic and intrinsic motivation should be captured within the time-frame so that students are aware of the joy of learning versus the notion that learning is something that
happens to them. Students will examine their past and present behaviour and beliefs to understand how this impacts their future goal, which will serve as motivation to change their future behaviour and beliefs. This will be a fundamental shift for some students, as Bandura (as cited in Schunk, 1991) hypothesized, self-efficacy affects a person’s choice of activities, effort, and persistence. The overall goal of this project is to ensure that students persist in the face of difficult challenges—personally and academically.

Activities—Have students watch a Youtube video on self-confidence (Dr. Ivan Joseph https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-HYZv6HzAs). Next, have students draw a table with three columns with the titles: Behaviour, Affirmation and Repetition. Ask the students to close their eyes and think of areas of their school life that they would like to change (e.g., getting better at studying). Next ask them to think of some affirmation statements that they can repeat to themselves in the situation they identified (have a listing of some positive affirmation statements). The last part of this activity involves repetition. In the video by Dr. Ivan Joseph, he explains the successful soccer player who got better at soccer just by kicking the ball against the wall, day after day, again and again. Ask students to think of ways or strategies that will remind them to use the positive affirmation statement when they encounter difficulty and then write in the repetition column. Ask them to share their insight in the circle.

Next, have students watch a Youtube video on the Growth mindset (The Power of Belief-mindset and success https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pN34FNboKXc). The facilitator will then share a personal story about a time they had to overcome challenges in order to get better at something. This personal story will be related to the video. In the facilitator’s story, highlight a) hard work, b) strategies, c) help from others, and d) planning. Ask students to divide into groups of three. Ask them to share a story about how they made their brains smarter. This leads
to a discussion about how working hard, taking challenges, and finding the right strategy can indeed lead to success.

Finally, give students two blank cards and instruct them to fill in two different responses on the subject: “What can I do to motivate myself to study for an exam or complete an assignment?” Collect the cards and then shuffle the deck. Hand out two random cards back to each student and ask them to talk about the responses within the circle. Next, give them another two cards, providing the following question: “What type of small reward can I give myself for doing well on an exam or completing an assignment?” Again, collect the cards and shuffle the deck. Hand out two random cards again and ask them to talk about the responses in the circle. Introduce some more strategies to help students delay gratification in favour of long-term academic rewards and their own self-rewards.

As a culminating activity ask students to commit to a contract for their learning. They can devise their own self-contract for college or university success. Ensure that the template consists of small learning steps and strategies. Have sample templates available for use. Following the completion of their contract, they can read-a-loud to the group and also have a First Nation education representative on-hand to witness their learning contract. As an added bonus, you could have students track their progress using computer applications (apps) like www.stikk.com or a performance and accountability platform such as www.irunurun.com.

Indigenous connections—This workshop focuses on sharing which is central to Indigenous ways of knowing and being. There are distinct and contextually specific sharing processes found in Indigenous communities most commonly found within stories. Furthermore, these stories, when expressed within circles are “…perceived as holding ‘medicine’” and the process of sharing stories…acts [as a] healing tool” (Smylie, Olding, & Ziegler, 2014)
Workshop Four. Goal Setting—“Creating my vision”

Purpose--This workshop will take place in an outdoor location within a community setting. For the purposes of this workshop, the terms goal, vision and destiny will be the same, as supported by Cajete (2000), Bell (2013a), and Dawn, Harkin and Turner (2013). The concepts of goals, vision, or destiny are important to self-regulation because it is concentrated on having focus--having an end goal, vision, or destiny in mind. Goal attainment plays an important part in developing identity and in influencing career prospects and can transcend all areas of a student’s lives causing a shift in how goals are attained. Dembo and Seli (2013) underline that goal-setting is one of the key processes of self-regulation (p. 106).

The location of the workshop will be left up to the facilitator upon consultation with local elders or community members and may have some spiritual significance. For example, the community may have spiritual grounds or places where people go to fast or host traditional ceremonies. Furthermore, full, informed consent should be provided by parents at the outset of the workshop. Delivery of the workshop should happen in consultation and co-facilitated by a local elder or traditional healing provider(s), as knowledge-keepers within a community or area.

Activities--The workshop will not be a full-fasting ceremony as in traditional times. Rather, students will be introduced to visioning in close surroundings provided by skilled people. The workshop will begin in circle format where students will be imbued with stories of

---

An Anishinabe or Ojibway “fast” consists of moments of solitude where individuals are at one with creation. It is a traditional ceremony that is practiced within contemporary times. Traditionally, fasting was offered during different times throughout the life cycle (e.g., reaching puberty). Individuals were encouraged to dream/vision and as such, were withdraw to secluded areas, with a shelter where they “. . . fasted for a period of four to ten days according to one’s endurance . . . [and where] special songs, visions and wisdom were revealed to the dreamer at these sacred times” (Thunderhorse, 1988, p. 1).
traditional fasting practices by the local elder and will be instructed on the protocols for the day. Next, a visioning exercise will be modelled within the circle (e.g., similar to a five minute meditation exercise) where students are taught to relax, and allow their mind, spirit, and body to “go with the flow” but to focus on their future career goals. As a starter, the facilitator might ask students to consider the following question while fasting--“What will my future look like?”

Following this, the students will be instructed that they will be doing mini “fasting” for one to two hours in close proximity to the main workshop delivery (outdoors). Upon completion of the fast, students will come back to the circle where a debriefing will be held. Students will be asked to share their experiences within the circle, focusing on their career vision or other areas in their life, as appropriate. This portion of the workshop should take one-half day with a lunch/celebration taking place after their “fast”, as is customary.

The second half of the workshop would deal with practical tools to help students remain committed to their goals. Dembo and Seli (2013) affirm that without goals, it is difficult to remain motivated (p. 106) and this workshop should help students to take responsibility for their vision/destiny. The practical portion can be interactive activities filled with instruction on short, medium, and long-term goal setting. This includes an examination of how behavior influences actions. Have youth sit in a circle to discuss at least one of the goals they will implement over the coming month and how they will monitor their progress (based on SMART goals- specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) as a culminating activity. Students can be also shown various computer applications (apps) to help them keep their vision in mind and/or they can write letters to themselves (to be mailed by the facilitator) for a future time period (chosen by them) to remind themselves of their long term goal.
Indigenous connections- This activity emphasizes that students obtain the “highest perspective possible” as outlined by Cajete (2000). This involves the ability to see oneself achieving and taking steps towards a vision. Additionally, land-based education is seen as crucial to indigenous education (Bell, 2013b).

Workshop Five. Help-Seeking—“It’s okay to ask”

Purpose-- Gourash (1978) defines help-seeking as “any communication about a problem or troublesome event which is directed toward obtaining support, advice or assistance in times of distress. Help-seeking, thus, includes both general discussions about problems and specific appeals for aid…It encompasses requests for assistance from friends, relatives, and neighbours, as well as…professionals” (p. 413). Wesley-Esquimaux and Bolduc (2014) identified that Indigenous students are more apt not to ask for help. Furthermore, help-seeking was identified as a self-regulation strategy that if enlisted, results in PSE success. Therefore, the purpose of having the “It’s okay to ask” workshop is to practice asking for help in order to succeed in a PSE environment.

Activities-- Preferably, this workshop will be held on campus at a college or university so that students can benefit from an early orientation at a tertiary institution (Cahill & Coffey, 2013). To begin, students will be exposed to the concept of help-seeking and various instances (Youtube videos) where help-seeking is promoted. Following this, several role-playing exercises will be provided so that students gain experience in asking for help as role playing results in the construction of identity and a technique that helps youth overcome fears (Rosselet & Stauffer, 2013). Help-seeking can also be viewed as an important self-regulation skill that is imperative to Indigenous student success as advanced by Wesley-Esquimaux and Bolduc (2014). Guest speakers will be on-hand to discuss the various services that are offered. This should
include an introduction to Aboriginal units, academic advising departments, Registrar’s office, reception, loans/bursaries, residence, and career centres. Students will have the opportunity to ask questions thereby eliminating any perceived barriers to asking for help. A culminating activity can include a “think, pair, share” exercise where students are asked to pair up with one of the guest speakers to respond to various scenarios (e.g., where would I go if I require extra help with a subject? Where would I go to find out about post-secondary activities on campus? Where would I go to obtain documentation for my First Nation?).

Indigenous connections—Gerlach (2008), Hadwin, Jarvella & Miller (2011), and Young, Marshall, et al. (2011) underscore the importance of youth having supporting adults within their support circles. For Indigenous students, this is important as supporting adults need to be connected to students. A sense of connection (as outlined by Chandler & Lalonde, 2008) serves as a protective factor for Indigenous youth and developing this connection needs to be heightened within urban environments.

Workshop Six. Study and Learning Habits—“My learning bundle”

Purpose--Workshops related to study and learning habits are important self-regulation tools that are vital to student success. This workshop can be provided over a two-day period, focusing on: 1) learning and 2) studying.

Activities--Part one will emphasize learning using the “growth mindset” as advanced by Dweck (in Canadian Education Association, 2007) and traditional learning which is experiential in nature. As Dembo and Seli (2013) note “[PSE] material is complex and requires greater understanding of content; therefore, students require learning and study strategies” (p. 196).
1) Learning—

To begin, students will be shown Ted Talks or Youtube videos on the “growth mindset” (see for example Ted Talk: The Power of Belief- mindset and success

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pN34FNbOKXc or Growing your mind- Khan Academy

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtKJrB5rOKs)

This will give students important insight and motivation into how achievement is not tied to hereditary factors or innate ability, but, rather that success is achieved through beliefs and strategic actions.

The facilitator should describe how learning differs vastly at the post-secondary level from the secondary school level, as learning at the college or university level is self-directed. Exercises and strategies will be provided where students practise reading, summarizing, and recalling information. This can include excerpts from Indigenous studies which will also impart a pride in identity and related to youth (see for example: Community-based Indigenous Digital Storytelling with Elders and Youth, Iseke & Moore, 2011). The exercises should help students deconstruct meaning in addition to thinking critically about the material, which will help them read future post-secondary level material. Facilitating meaning of unusual terms and an introduction to a reading strategy can be introduced. The overall purpose of the exercise is to commit material to long-term memory and to understand that reading material can be enjoyable and significant, by using strategies and focusing on certain components to deconstruct and obtain meaning.
A continuation of the workshop on learning can be about going beyond reading to doing further research. The second half of the workshop will be an extension of the reading exercise related to Indigenous content. For example, students can interview elders or community members in groups of two (project-based learning). Students will listen to stories related to historical facts and stories (storytelling) for an hour and then report back their findings. In advance, a list of potential interviewees can be enlisted for participation in the exercise. A sample questionnaire can be provided and then a presentation within the circle as a closing exercise can be provided.

2) Studying—

Guest speakers from the students’ community will be invited to provide reflections on their own study habits within a PSE environment will begin the day. These role models (at least two) will give participants the opportunity to obtain insight into tools and techniques for studying within their textbooks, lectures, and for homework. Students will be asked to take notes so that an examination can occur at the end about specific strategies and enlightening moments. A question and answer period will be offered to students once the guest presenter has finished their presentation and as a whole group activity, students will share their own technique for taking notes while the guest speakers were speaking will be discussed.

The next half of the workshop can be on practical and helpful exercises that will assist students on important process required for taking exams (as opposed to cramming). This can include experiential exercises related to taking reviewing notes, notes from lectures, and allocating time to organize.
On day two of the studying workshop, a librarian will be asked to provide a half-day to a full-day workshop on studying and researching within a post-secondary institution. The library is an invaluable resource within a PSE environment. This workshop will focus on demonstrating to students how to research information and how to access electronic learning systems such as D2L, electronic blackboards, and moodle, which are post-secondary on-line forums often used for resources and the submission of assignments.

Indigenous Connections—Students will be provided with strategies that influence their rate of success at post-secondary. Students will be reminded about the concept of “bringing about good change for all” (McLeod, as cited in Kenny & Fraser, 2012) or the collective community of Beausoleil First Nation as an impetus for learning better studying and learning habits.

Workshop Seven. Time Management—“Creating the ultimate win-win situation”

Purpose— This workshop, another crucial component of self-regulation, will help students resist temptation in the face of other competing priorities (delay of self-gratification) through role-playing. Further, self-reflection will be an integral part of the workshop as students examine where, why, when, and how they currently spend their time in efforts to change their behavior if it is problematic or foster use of current strategies if they are working well.

Activities— To begin, students will be introduced to the concept of time-management through the use of Youtube videos (e.g., Knowing where your time goes: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHJUuUKeqsI&list=PLnF3QGKZ0ISs-DHQGq8z6lvQ96a2LPVMU&index=9)
As an exercise, hand students a medicine wheel with the four quadrants with the student at the centre. Include another circle off to the side, labelled “time-wasters” and another circle for the “total.” Model a sample of where time might be spent by showcasing the facilitator’s constructed medicine wheel. For example, the physical realm can include exercise—one hour per day, the spiritual realm can include meditation—half an hour per day, the emotional realm can include spending time with friends and family—three hours per day, and the mental realm can include school work—two hours per day. The facilitator can model to the students how much time is spent on social media or television as a “time-waster” and explain how to add up their hours per day within the total circle, explaining that the time should add up to 24 hours. Provide students with at least 15 minutes to reflect on their day. Once they are finished, ask students to join a circle. The reflections will increase student’s self-awareness of the time spent on certain activities in addition to highlighting “time-wasters.” Most importantly, it will ensure that students will develop a healthy outlook to the way they manage their time, while away at post-secondary.

Another exercise could involve role plays about scenarios that may occur while away at post-secondary where attention may get diverted. Give students a piece of paper and ask them to write situations where their attention may be compromised (e.g., having a peer asking them to go out to the movies when they have an exam within the week). Next, in pairs, students will work out different scenarios, coming up with practicing responses and strategies, helping them to diffuse the urge to do recreational activities, focusing on delaying their reward.

A think-pair-share item could involve asking students to share in small groups a) how they spend a typical day (eg., homework, work), b) what other things are included in their typical day (eg., sleeping, eating, social media), c) how much time is spent on these activities,
and d) how they balance these items. Alternatively, the facilitator might read a student scenario involving tasks and time management and ask the whole class- what went wrong? How can this schedule be balanced? A schedule can be observed on the smart board or powerpoint to illustrate the value of planning.

As an interactive exercise at the end, the facilitator can show students On-Line Resources for schedules and organization, as follows:

- 2 Do (App) http://www.2doapp.com/
- Stickies (utility program) http://www.zhornsoftware.co.uk/stickies/

Indigenous Connections—Students will examine their lives through the use of the medicine wheel. They will also use the Seven Grandfather Teachings to bring about changes to their thinking and doing (in the future) as a result of the holistic self-examination.

Workshop Eight. Attention-- “Let’s Focus.”

Purpose—Shah and Saleem (2015) found that there is a positive correlation between academic and attention scores-- meaning that the higher the attention of the student, the higher the student’s academic performance. Therefore, it is essential to help students to focus on their academic pathway by becoming intrinsically interested in a task and in avoiding distractions. Attention also increases efficiency towards goal attainment and helps students in recalling and remembering information (Shah & Saleem, p. 101). In the context of this workshop, critical thinking is a part of holding students’ attention.
Activities—These activities will involve helping students to concentrate and build up their brain muscles (physical aspect) in order to develop concentrated attention. Ensure that the facilitator shares the overall objective with students—that over time, students can, through practice, control their mind and direct their thoughts just the same as they can their arm, hand, or foot.

A) Learning about a topic

Instruction to students: Concentration in school requires that you think critically about a discipline. There are many areas of discipline such as mathematics, economics, sociology, chemistry, etc. It may be important to think creatively within a subject area in order to focus attention and interest and understand content. For the exercise today, we will concentrate on the discipline of astronomy. Ask students, “how many have studied astronomy?” Perform a KWL chart with students on what they know about astronomy as a start.

Ask an elder to come in to give a teaching on some of the stars or star constellations. If there is no one available, try to access Wilfred Buck via Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre on Skype or in-person (see article”Stories of the Stars: http://www.slideshare.net/guesta6856e/first-nations-star-stories). Encourage all students to ask questions- this helps students learn to ask questions within a classroom environment. Once the presentation finished, complete the KWL chart.

Next, learn about the star constellations through a purely scientific or mainstream lens. Provide students with information sheets on the constellations (in groups of 3-4) and have them summarize the data available on the sheets into a poem. The poem can take any form- provide
samples of the different forms. Once each group has completed their poem, ask one group member to recite the poem to the larger group.

Once the presentations are entirely over, have students arrange in circle. Ask them what they have learned about astronomy. Was it more difficult or easier as a result of looking at it from two perspectives (or two disciplines) and thinking creatively? Were they surprised what they learned? Does this pique your interest to learn more about astronomy? Stress that it’s important to formulate ideas to guide thinking in any discipline. Paul and Elder (2001) stress the fact that students’ need to state, elaborate, and illustrate their ideas in their own words and that this is the path to critical thinking. Critical thinking is important to post-secondary students because it is different than secondary school, where they are provided with the questions. In post-secondary, students will be asked to think critically on their own and come up with their own questions. Highlight for the students that it is sometimes necessary to think about a certain subject across disciplines to see how it applies to other areas-- like math, engineering, social work, and indigenous worldviews. All subjects are interdependent and students’ can make meaning of a subject by observing a topic through a different lens. Instructions to students such as this will ensure that the full meaning of lectures, notes, and observations be thought about using a critical framework and pique attention.

The next exercises are simple exercises designed to strengthen concentration.

Meditate:

Play hand drum music- tell students to get in a relaxing position. They can lay down or sit still. Tell them to thoroughly relax their muscles and to concentrate on the beating of their heart. Do not pay any attention to anything else. Think how this great organ is pumping the
blood to every part of the body; try to actually picture the blood leaving the great reservoir and going in one stream right down to the toes. Picture another going down the arms to the tips of the fingers.

Do this for 5 minutes. Teach the students that just with 5 minutes of mediation, they can change their focus. Ask for quick feedback.

Observe:

Instruct students to practice concentrating on a familiar object in the room that is uninteresting. The less interesting it is (i.e., a window) the better exercise will it be. Ask students to focus on the one object for 5 minutes. Impart to the students that if they do this every day, they can center their attention on uninteresting subjects at will. The point of the exercise is that students’ can gain control of their body and mind (paying attention) and become masterful at shifting their attention accordingly. Debrief on this aspect of the lesson by asking for feedback on how to keep the focus on reading for a course while wanting to check social media. Suggestions for this can include small rewards, breaks, and allocating time to specific tasks.

Smell:

1) Take students for a walk in a forest in the spring, summer or fall. If it is wintertime, have various sacred medicines (sage, cedar, tobacco and sweet grass) available for an indoor activity.

2) Have student’s concentrate on the odor of the flowers, trees or plants. If the activity is happening in a forest, ask students to observe how many different kinds of trees, flowers or medicines they can detect. Then choose one particular kind and try to sense only this. Ask students to bring back a sample of what they have focused upon.
3) Debrief with students (outdoors or upon re-entry to workshop area) by doing a circle talk about what it was like to concentrate on one smell. Describe how this concentration is similar to a school environment where you are concentrated on one task eg., once they concentrate, they will find that this strongly intensifies the sense of smell. Similarly, once they concentrate on studies, their knowledge increases.

4) Encourage the further development of smell by telling students to be alert for different odors in their environment in the future. They will find the air laden with all sorts of smells, but, to concentrate on one smell in order to bring their concentration back to focus.

5) Debrief in circle format on learning to concentrate using the various methods. Discuss how a physical activity can improve concentration and how concentrating on an object can keep focus.

Indigenous connections—The star teachings or other Indigenous teachings juxtaposed within a discipline connect students to their culture. Furthermore, experiential, outdoor education provides deep learning for Indigenous students while holism is covered through the use of the senses.
Section Two—Workshops that Facilitate Self-regulation

Workshop Nine. Communication—“Talk isn’t cheap”

Purpose-- Strong, Williams, Huggins, & Sussex (2015) discuss the notion that Indigenous people often fear communication due to the possible repercussion of negative judgement. This, combined with the common misperception that youth know how to communicate is challenging since youth are accustomed to texting, instant messaging, and social networking. Walmsley (2014) also identified that many students lack the communication and skills necessary for success at PSE. Boekarts and Hijzen (2007) suggested that training in listening skills, giving opinions, evaluating other’s opinions, monitoring the group learning process, requesting social support, reaching consensus, and solving group conflicts (p. 126) are important crucial pre-requisites to success at PSE.

The communication skills workshop should focus on two aspects: 1) communicating in groups and 2) communicating through listening and writing. Listening is also naturally built into the sharing circles, as students listen to others in a respectful manner.

For this aspect, games will be used as León and Cely (2010) found that games encouraged students to improve their speaking skills, especially when they involve group work, motivation, and competition. They also add that there is a wide array of games – picture games, sound games, card and board games, memory games, guessing games, and caring and sharing games (p. 16). Eisenberg and Sulik (2012) also found that games also helped improved self-regulation skills.

Activities--

1) Communicating in groups and individually
Teaching youth group communication should be taught in groups. Groups can be divided into four to five people depending on the size (adjust as necessary). For this section, a storytelling game can be used to introduce the groups to speaking within a group. Give each student a “funny” image which can be retrieved from the internet and provide them with starter sentences such as “This is my life story and this is how it impacted me…” or “This is the story behind the picture…” Each student takes their turn sharing their story within the circle, using the starter sentences and their pictures, rotating clockwise. Students will be instructed that their “talk” should be at least 1 minute long. In consideration of this, have someone in the group with a timer who will start the timer when it is their turn to tell their story. It is meant to be a fun way to introduce the topic of communication within a group, using laughter and dialogue. Following this, ask students to come back to the larger circle and have a brief dialogue about what they found the easiest and the most difficult about the exercise.

Next, do the same kind of exercise in “storyteller” format but this time, provide them with cultural images or people from the Indigenous community. Again, divide into groups and provide one starter sentence for each group. This can include sentences like “This person is successful because…” or “This represents my culture because…” Once that round is concluded, provide them with more images that are similar in nature or thematic, such as a lacrosse game or a pow wow. Tell them that they have to tell one part of the story according to the image they are provided—continue the story as best as they can using the previous formats.

Once the two exercises are done, have the group sit in the larger circle and talk about how it is a much richer discussion to add your opinion to a group (to form part of the story or larger objective), and how it takes practice to be able to communicate.
The final part of this workshop should focus on giving student topics individually (transcribe topic on index cards and hand out), ask them to think about their topic for 5 minutes and then deliver their presentation in 1 minute intervals within their small group setting (you can change the group structure so that students can practice in new audiences). Debrief with students at the end of this exercise.

2) Communication within Groups—Teamwork and Listening

The next part of the communicating in the group session should focus on the concept of teamwork. Teamwork was introduced in the previous section as students had to add their piece of the story. Begin by showing a Youtube video such as “Lessons of the Geese” (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hazitrxzhPk). Talk about the benefits of teamwork—providing an introduction about teamwork in a college and university setting (focusing on respecting others points of view) and how it’s important to gain confidence and assertiveness within a group (valuing everyone’s opinion).

To begin, have different cultural objects or art in different parts of the room. Ask students to identify with one object or art and to place themselves in the section of the room that they feel the most compelled towards. The facilitator will model which object they find most appealing by walking over to it and thinking out loud to instruct students on how to choose one. Once each one of the students has walked to the object, ask them to have a discussion with one another on why they chose that particular object. The facilitator can lead off the discussion by providing starter sentences like “Why do you think we all like the same object?”, “Do we think the same?”, and “Do we have the same interests?” Once this is complete, the facilitator calls each group back to the circle and ask them to debrief and focus on how there are different types
of people within groups, sometimes with similar attitudes or outlook and other people with
different or varying opinions.

For the second part, a focus on listening skills is recommended since youth become pre-
occupied with texting, checking social media, and concentrating on other tasks as opposed to
listening. Therefore, listening and focusing on a discussion like a lecture or communication
within a group is an important skill. Begin the active listening discussion by showing them a
complicated video (facilitator recommended with complicated facts that need to be memorized).
Instruct the students that they can talk with friends or go on their phone while viewing this video.
Following the video, ask the students to summarize the video. This discussion should highlight
the fact that they found it distracting and didn’t really get the message.

Next, show the students a Youtube video on youth active listening (see Katie Owens at
TEDx Youth Talks: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v+WER63AY8zB8). Discuss the Katie
Owens video and discuss some suggestions for active listening, highlighting suggestions for
improving listening like making eye contact, affirmative nods, asking questions, paraphrasing,
and avoiding distractive activities (like playing with phone).

The second part of the workshop can focus on improving communication with parents
and /or caregivers. Bazylak (2004) stated that the most important motivational factor for
Aboriginal students was family. Having family involved in the transition is crucial. For the
activity, have parents watch a Youtube video-- How to build communication bridges with your
teen, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzHkBhH7Wvc (this will be apart from the students).
Instruct parents that the exercise will focus on having them monitor a) their body language, b)
eye contact, c) emotions, and d) listening without speaking. The students, on the other hand
(another room) will be instructed to think of a situation they are nervous about concerning their
upcoming enrollment at college or university. Give the students a template of possible questions to address about their identified concern. When both groups are finished, have students sit face-to-face with their parents to discuss their dilemma. The parents have to do the four things identified in their instructions and after the dialogue, parents will be instructed to provide a positive affirmation. Afterwards, debrief with both students and parents about the value of communication in a circle format. This session, if appropriate, can be followed up with another face-to-face exercise where both parties will be committed to communication.

End the day with having a fun activity around listening if time permits. Identify a main report related to Indigenous issues (such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report-TRC) in which students will have to put a feather inside the circle each time they hear a particular key word such as “call to action” and “government.” Provide some context before playing the game. Forming a circle, each student is provided with a feather. They pass their feather to the right or left of them when they hear the key words. Direct them to pass it right each time they hear the words “call to action” and pass it to the left when they hear “government” while listening to the TRC report. After the exercise, talk about the difficulty in listening for key terms and the importance of having some understanding of terms prior to discussions and lectures and how much more meaningful learning is when you listen. Combined, these exercises bring understanding to Indigenous issues, working as a team, and listening to comprehend together as a teaching.

Indigenous Connections—Students will begin or advance their belief that Indigenous methodology and worldviews are valuable to communicate in any circle or group. There should be a huge focus on respect- one of the Seven Grandfather Teachings. This respect involves 1)
different people and 2) various points of view through listening and appreciation, and 3) parental involvement.

Workshop Ten. Negative Thinking—“Go all the way!”

Purpose- For this exercise, students will be taught methods of how to view the “silver lining” within a situation by identifying negative thinking and replacing it with positive attitudes and beliefs. This facilitates self-regulation because how we feel affects learning. If students can use self-talk, meditation, and a positive outlook, negative thinking leading to poor performance will be replaced by positive thinking and a focus on academics. Eisenberg and Sulik (2012) support this notion as they found that people who are able to regulate their emotional reactivity in various situations deal well with stressful events. This includes shifting their attention away from the distressing stimulus and “…focusing attention on positive aspects of the situation or on other means of coping can also decrease negative emotion” (p. 78). Attending a post-secondary institution, moving far away from home into a new environment are stressful, often negative events. Thus, strategies to help student overcome negative thinking (emotional self-regulation) is crucial to success.

Activities-- Begin the session by reviewing Jordin Tootoo’s video about mental well-being and resilience (www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/49065.html). Main message in the video is to “go all the way!”

Have a discussion about how people are faced with numerous obstacles that forced them to work harder, and show more determination. Within the circle, ask for feedback on others that they know within the community or other famous people who have had set-backs but persevered. Outline the negative thinking and/or obstacles they faced and some solutions.
For this exercise, students will write reflection journals using the Seven Grandfather Teachings explained from a concept into practical situations (see Jones, 2003 for descriptions of each teaching and practicality). The reflection journal will be about certain situations in the students’ past in which they were not particularly happy with the outcome or an unpleasant experience that they would have handled differently. Have students sit in a large circle. Talk about the Seven Grandfather teachings and how this can form a model for reflection. Share with students the value of meditation to search for answers in their everyday lives.

For the exercise, give students a few moments to close their eyes and think about a situation that was unpleasant and involved negative thinking. While their eyes are shut ask them to think about the situation more (pausing between each point) and think about 1) Wisdom-- the situation-- think about why you wanted to handle it better, 2) Bravery-- the initial thoughts about the situation— think about what you said to yourself, was it a negative thought or thinking—was I feeling guilty, sad, unworthy etc., 3) Honesty—search for the source of negative belief— where did it come from? Is there a deep belief- search your heart, 4) Humility-- challenge your thinking—look at evidence both for and against your thinking. Have you been in a situation like this before? What strengths do you bring to this situation?, 5) Truth-- consequences—what are the short-term and long-term consequences of your thinking? Look at the four areas of yourself: emotional, physical, mental and spiritual self, and 6) Love--alternative thinking--now that you have looked at the situation, think of a healthier way to think about the situation e.g., I learned from the situation or I have everything I need, etc., and 7) Respect-- affirmation—tell the students to use the phrase “I am going all the way” or “I can handle this” or “I got this” (or some other affirmation about overcoming negative thinking but use only one). Ask the students to
gently open their eyes. Next, have a circle debriefing about the exercise. Ask them what they can do to support new ways of thinking or strategies that people currently use.

A written exercise following the circle will involve writing down the same situation using the Seven Grandfather stages of the reflection journal—have a template with each stage listed so that students can address each stage in written format. Encourage the use of meditating for each stage—this assists students in using meditation as a way to view problems and come up with solutions based on the Seven Grandfather Teachings.

To end the session, do several exercises to build self-esteem—replacing the negative beliefs with positive beliefs. Ask students to draw their upcoming PSE experience as a metaphor. You can model a metaphor as a river with leaves floating down with both negative and positive thoughts and describe how you will just grab a hold of the positive thoughts in the river. Ask students to work in pairs for 10-15 minutes to draw and think about this as they will present their metaphors to the rest of the students upon completion. Choosing how to feel in a particular situation can be controlled and is instructive for students.

For the next part, have students sitting in a circle. With their eyes closed again, ask them to envision another situation where they experienced negative reactions and feelings. Now, ask them to picture their problem getting smaller. Use dialogue to reinforce the concepts of the Seven Grandfather Teachings, focused on self-worth and self-talk. Help the students envision their problem getting smaller and smaller-- making the feelings fade after each direction from the facilitator. This helps students see that problems can be observed from far away and that students have the power within themselves to face adversity.
As a final exercise, have students prepare a “spirit tree” as an art form. This art would involve having students create a three-dimensional (3D) tree. This is their spirit tree. Have objects and craft materials available for them to make objects that hang from the tree that represent their spirit. Afterwards, have students describe the components of their spirit trees to the larger group using the circle pedagogy.

Indigenous connections- The Seven Grandfather Teachings as traditional teachings will be largely used within the negative thinking workshop as a holistic self-examination process. “These teachings state that human beings are responsible to act with wisdom, respect, love, honesty, humility, bravery, and truth toward each other and all creation (Verbos & Humphries, 2014 p. 1). Therefore, the Seven Grandfather Teachings can act as a moral compass for students relations with others and with themselves.
CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Conclusion

Education is of great importance to Beausoleil First Nation as evidenced in their commitment to students through this initiative-- effort, energy, and resources. I draw your attention back to the equation that I posed in the beginning regarding a blueprint for success as advanced by Yeager and Dweck (2012):

\[
\text{Effort + Strategies + Help from Others = Success}
\]

In this document the strategies consisted of a holistic way of looking at self-regulation strategies that encompasses life skills and academic skills. Self-regulation is an effective way to institute behaviour change through empowering processes which translate help students not only at the post-secondary level, but into employment environments and beyond. Self-regulation is also a way to increase the academic confidence and academic performance of students with help from others in the community. Certainly, this help from others also includes parents and colleges and universities themselves who are developing strategies to attract and retain Indigenous students. The holistic framework posed, along with materials available through Indigenous organizations and information on effective workshop design will indeed equal success. Ongoing evaluation is crucial to any workshop facilitation or process so that future initiatives can grow and become increasingly effective.

There is strong evidence to support a growing post-entry transition programming for Indigenous students. Our job, on the other hand, is to assist students with one of the foremost decisions and processes in their lives, which is the important transition to post-secondary. This
is not to say that there shouldn’t be challenges, but, a proactive approach is required that will provide the tools, resources, skills, and the support that will promote the development of life-long skills, which translate into effective academic preparation and navigation in unfamiliar terrain that includes the PSE environment within larger towns and cities.

Included as part of this project are some proactive recommendations for the BFN’s consideration because although the PSE model framework is complete, the goal of the community for long-term planning is incomplete. For centuries, there have been gaps in the way Indigenous people have been treated and are still treated today. Indigenous people have the responsibility for coming up with their own local solutions, as pointed out by Chandler (2010) from the best standpoint, as discussed by Cajete (2000). Additionally, it has been stressed throughout the document that Indigenous students are not only striving for success for themselves, but, for the collective or the community in general. Responsibility for identifying issues and solutions in community matters is entrusted to community members. Archibald (2008) discusses the importance of the “four R’s in post-secondary education- respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility” (p. 1). Responsibility in terms of “sharing back” to the community is of prime importance. It is from this place of responsibility, respect, relevance and reciprocity that I therefore offer the following recommendations, entitled “future directions” as my way of giving back to the place where my spirit soars and my ancestors reside.
Future Directions

“In the Indigenous world, there is a principle called the seven generations. It instructs us to reflect on our actions and to be aware of the consequences seven generations hence.”

Carolyn Kenny (2012, p. 3)

It is from this mindset of “generational thinking” that the author outlines recommendations below for consideration.

To begin, students from Christian Island experience several disruptions like geographic isolation, transitioning from elementary to secondary school, the transition from secondary to post-secondary, and being Indigenous with a unique culture combined with historical issues that impact their school careers. These disruptions, combined together, make it challenging for a student to succeed and create a complex set of barriers to participation and success that are common to society in general. Some are surface issues that can be remedied (e.g., Financial barriers) but there are many other long term issues (e.g., Self-esteem, high aspirations, motivation) that require redress. BFN has recognized this conundrum and is proactively working towards addressing the factors related to the underlying “culture” of PSE success that needs to be addressed over a long period of time.

Self-regulation is a concept and a process that can be applied to practical projects related to PSE education completion in the community of Christian Island for 2016/2017. This, of course, is done with the understanding that long-term planning is required in order to secure longer-term success for seven generations to come. In the interim, a practical mixture of interventions and planning can be completed which are included under the recommendations
section. As mentioned previously, effort, such as that contained within the resilience literature, should be examined further in the long-term, particularly in embedding resilience and identity within the curriculum throughout all levels of school. This coincides with what one school counsellor (Sylvia Norton-Sutherland, personal communication, November 23, 2015) stated that some students are fatigued or tired by the time they complete secondary school. This merits attention and discussion should occur around this topic.

**Recommendations for Post Secondary Level.**

BFN post-secondary policy work has been modified throughout the past five years. Policies are meant to be “living” documents and therefore, additional policy work is recommended to obtain the right mix of pathways for students. For example, Finnie, Sweetman, and Usher (2008) suggest that experiments can be conducted to obtain the right mixture of funding levels, as stated previously, financial factors are not always the top factor and to view it in this manner is narrow and limiting. To a certain degree, this has been done with the injection of funding into the system for living allowance of books. An ongoing evaluation and experimenting with different levels of funding should continue to be explored.

In cooperation with the funding level exploration, PSE priority funding should be reviewed, especially since it was found that:

- Finnie, Sweetman and Usher (2008) note that 50% of all students fail to complete their “initial” program, but only about 10-15% are considered true-drop outs (leavers) because they return to PSE at a later point in life (typically three years). Setting up work or work placements prior to entering PSE could be considered favourably by the BFN. This would provide students more opportunity to pursue work related to their aspirations and
enter PSE at a later time (e.g., 1-3 years). This would mean entering the funding system and program at a later date. Another intervention that is interesting is the “victory lap” phenomenon where it was found that male students (47.8%) as compared to females (20.8%) were more apt to attend for another year of secondary school. The top reasons cited by male students for staying in secondary school another year was related to the opportunity to participate in sports and the self-recognition that they were not quite ready to move on (i.e., their maturity level) as one male student said “I would have been 17 if I had of gone straight to university, which is too young to live on my own in my opinion” (Male) (Brady & Allingham, 2010 p. 15).

- Some of the drop-outs are considered “switchers” (Finnie, Sweetman & Usher, 2008, p. 17). That is, they finish a different program from the one they started or at a different college or university. This suggests that students upon entering college or university decide after the fact that the career choice is not achievable or desirable. Having career programming or options (e.g., Blueprint for Success) available for all students beginning in Grade 9 would help alleviate the notion of “switching.” Career planning could be a part of the policy and requirement for funding.

- To support the efforts of ongoing evaluation of post-secondary success, information on statistics (trends) in education should be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that the information being collected is valid and informative. Information should be used to make long-range decisions that directly impact policy and funding for the range of BFN educational programs. Therefore, setting up a new information system or revising the current information technology to suit the community needs is recommended. This
would entail capacity building for existing staff to manage and analyze data on a regular basis.

- Ongoing evaluation of BFN post-secondary “leavers,” graduates, and pre-entry students in one-on-one discussions will result in rich data in order to formulate strategies and implement interventions to increase success. This can involve a standardized approach that can operate much like an exit interview.

For students in their first year of college and university, intensive support needs to be provided. This includes pre-entry transition strategies that include formal ceremonies such as a “Thanksgiving Homecoming,” “Christmas Check-In Dinner.” A “Home-going” strategy was also found to be successful whereby Indigenous students are supported to “come home” on a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly intervals (Waterman, 2012). Lakehead University’s program, for example, advocates a strong connection to community and in increasing social networks and supports especially, during the post-entry transition year. Support also consists of keeping in regular contact with students and institutions during the crucial first year of transition because Indigenous students “…find sources of strength in their families, communities, and culture” (Waterman, 2012 p. 194). A program for both students and parents in California, called the “First Generation Student Success Program,” ensures that families are involved partners in their children’s post-secondary success through a special program called “family engagement services” (Lee, 2013 p. 22). Daily interaction could encompass a group social link via facebook or other social media program should be implemented. “For many Indigenous students, key supports, including mothers, partners, friends and professors, assist them in remaining motivated to continue with their program of study when they otherwise feel isolated and unsure” (Stewart & Reeves, 2013 p. 98). Mueller (2008) notes that students are “most
likely to leave PSE during their first year and the probability of leaving thereafter decreases” (p. 49). Therefore, having a comprehensive first-year strategy is crucial to first year success which sets students up to succeed beyond their first year.

Though post-secondary success has been the topic of this paper, it has been enlightening to think that some students have different or alternate education pathway aspirations. These aspirations and gifts should be honoured as well. These include non-traditional pathways into direct apprenticeships from high school or direct entry to a working environment or the armed forces for example. This transition to work should also be assisted and supported by the BFN through other departments in cooperation with the education department.

Partnerships with colleges and universities to bridge connections for students should be implemented. Lakehead University, for example, has a well-researched model that is woven with Indigenous principles and concepts. Students, as much as possible, should be steered to the institutions that help students develop a sense of belonging, have understanding about the transition, and can provide a nurturing, holistic environment that is attuned to the needs of the students of Christian Island. The Education Manager (as PSE lead) can play an increased role in having students, together with their parents, visit these institutions prior to entry. Other activities (introduction to bussing/transportation, book purchasing, supports, etc.) can be undertaken as well to ease the transition into urban areas. Mentoring within the college or university environment in addition to mentorships in their own personal lives at this time is crucial and has been shown to increase successful career development (Stewart & Reeves, 2013). Therefore, having these relationships coordinated pre-entry would work wonders.

The Education Manager should lead and play a crucial role in ensuring on-going workshops for post-secondary students, modelled on the workshops contained within this
document but more importantly, those that are favored by the youth themselves. These can include an ongoing “Post-secondary survival skills” summer program whereby Grade 12 students are paid at the end of the term to participate in these sessions. The 2009 Challenge week and Challenge Day implemented by the Education department demonstrated success in using this approach. Furthermore, Finnie, Sweetman and Usher (2008, in Finnie et al., 2008) also had similar recommendations whereby students in Grade 9 obtain funding throughout their secondary school careers to participate in activities related to help orient and propel them towards post-secondary success. This project, “Future to Discover” was funded by the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation and is operating in New Brunswick and Manitoba (p. 27).

Finally and perhaps most importantly, it is imperative that ongoing career planning happen on a yearly basis. Dietsche (2013) highlights that there is an information gap in regards to students’ choices at the secondary level. His study on secondary school counsellors from across Canada suggests that very little time is dedicated to one-on-one interactions with students related to their career choices. This is further outlined in a study by Pilley (2004) in which students expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of guidance at high school (p. 221). Therefore, there are many grey areas for students in terms of choosing the wrong career and with little guidance it becomes a larger challenge and the consequence of PSE withdrawal. This is a gap in service that BFN should work toward eradicating through a community-driven process. Ongoing evaluation of these and any new initiatives would be imperative if the BFN were to implement this initiative. The secondary school transition work also needs steady focus and to be included as part of the secondary school Counsellor’s job functions as well. Special attention needs to be paid to those students where parental guidance is either lacking or where the capacity is not present.
As mentioned earlier, PSE students tend to drop-out and then re-enter the system at some point in time (Finnie & Qiu, 2008, p. 180). Therefore, the issue of PSE drop-outs may not be as dire as first thought. A longitudinal study should be conducted that tracks the progress of all members entering and leaving the system within a five-year time frame--this can be done through both a qualitative and quantitative analysis, as simply studying the drop-out rates from year to year may be incorrect. There are many possible outcomes and these beneficial outcomes can be articulated by BFN prior to undertaking a long-term study. Some of these possible outcomes can be: returning to school at a later date, changing programs, finding meaningful employment, attending training, or not entering the system in the first place. This analysis would provide a clearer view about “attainment” or “success” versus strictly PSE graduation rates. This author has noted that a comprehensive community plan is underway and perhaps this is an area for consideration within that process.

One aspect of the research that has been highlighted is the low participation in PSE by males versus females (Finnie, Sweetman & Usher, 2008; Frenette & Zeman, 2008). This research suggests that there is a greater number of females completing post-secondary and that the reasons are related to higher goal-orientation and academic and social preparations. Though a broad study on PSE graduation attainment has not been formulated, it is likely that the BFN situation mirrors that of society in general. It is therefore recommended that a male-oriented strategy be completed so that male students access, participate in, and graduate from PSE. This specific strategy, again, needs to begin in elementary school.

Finally, a common first-year program for post-secondary could be developed where PSE students experience the first-year college (such as General Arts and Science) or university (B.A-General programming) right on Christian Island. Past post-secondary delivery of programs right
on Christian Island has also proven successful. Furthermore, research (Mueller, 2008) has shown that students are, to reiterate “most likely to leave PSE during their first year and the probability of leaving thereafter decreases” (p. 49). This can be structured where students merge into the institution of their choice for the first year and gives them a window of opportunity to explore different career choices.

**Recommendations for Elementary and Secondary Level.**

Collaborative partnerships within the community should be established to ensure that children experience a wide range of preventative and promotional activities. Each BFN department has its area of expertise and this should be recognized with the understanding that workshops will be on-going, hands-on, interactive, and dynamic. This approach also supports a holistic healing approach.

Life skills topics such as those mentioned under the 4H model can be approached systematically. Relevant topics can include things like financial literacy which can be delivered by an economic development department, healthy eating and cooking which can be delivered by a health department, communication skills can be delivered by a social services department, and career choices which can be delivered by the education department. In addition, external partnerships in these areas could also be established e.g., Credit unions and banks for financial literacy programs, district Health Units for health topics, etc. These partnerships, over time, would result in updated knowledge and learning experiences for youth on a yearly basis with well-trained community and partnership advisors.

Any interventions should include evaluative measures to determine what areas are most effective in the long-term. Smith et al. (2007) discuss the “promising practices” of social (life
skills) projects (p. 44). These promising practices include the following characteristics: School and Community Links, Visionary Leadership, Collaborative Practices, Reflective Learning practices, Multiple Approaches, and Development Strategies. They further cautioned that these characteristics are inter-related and not independent, thereby promoting a holistic approach (pp. 44-45). This set of values could be endorsed as a set of guiding principles for the life skills project.

Elementary and secondary education play an important role in ensuring post-secondary success. The primacy of promoting PSE preparation and thinking that begins at the elementary level is written about by Heckman (as cited in Mueller, 2008). These results speak to the importance of directing actions towards students earlier in life if the long-term goal is to increase PSE success. Students and parents have to adopt the mindset that PSE is important. For example, in a recent elementary school evaluation conducted at Christian Island Elementary School (CIES), parents were of the opinion that having a PSE did not matter and instead upheld Grade 12 as the bar for education (Christian Island Elementary School- CIES Evaluation, June, 2015). This bar needs to be heightened.

Initiatives such as the role model program and community guest speakers at circle talks can be beneficial, along with having a “rites of passage” for Grade 12 graduates as a ceremony. This would assist graduates in understanding their responsibilities with regard to themselves first and foremost but to the community as well. Moreover, life skills, health, and other social topics should be integrated into the curriculum creatively and holistically and begin at the elementary level--with explicit instruction in self-esteem and self-discipline as well as focusing on the caring and nurturing of others (Smith, 2007, p.57). An interesting direction to explore in this regard is called Whole Schooling using the Circle of Courage framework (see
www.wholeschooling.net) where students can receive official reports home based on Belonging, Generosity, Mastery, and Independence (holistic framework). BFN could venture so far as to include this as part of the Report Card framework. Another such framework is the Challenge Week framework, which has been implemented in the BFN community previously and has structured curriculum to empower, nurture, and validate children. Finally and most importantly, children at the elementary level should be introduced to Anishinabe cultural beliefs and practices throughout the curriculum. This most of all, will result in pride in students’ unique identity and raise self-confidence levels that will garner success.

Alongside this, a growth mindset (as advanced by Yeager & Dweck, 2012) is recommended as a principle that permeates the curriculum. This will invariably assist in academic underachievement because students are taught throughout that they have the aptitude to achieve if effort, desire, and motivation is expended through their own developing abilities (Yeager & Dweck, 2012). In short, teaching about the growth mindset helps develop student’s resiliency in many situations e.g., to understand that situations are not fixed, which promotes overall success not just for PSE but for all facets of life and supports the holistic nature that BFN desires. These components can also be included as part of an Orientation or Pre-service training for teachers. Teacher orientation should also emphasize the value of creating positive school and classroom climate, positive self-esteem, attendance issues, generous praise, and strong support to master subjects (McInerney, 2007).

Teachers at the elementary level and those involved in education would do well to come together to develop a framework or principles of teaching at Christian Island Elementary School and to review these on a yearly basis. Teachers are guided overall by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT); however, a best practice could be that they establish local principles and work
together to develop these. Ownership and enacting of the principles would be owned by them, and, as such, it has the potential to result in improved academic performance. Another instance is coming together strictly as “educators” (everyone within the system) to develop long-range goals for 5 to 10 years down the road. These include all the educators along the education continuum. Everyone will have the same understanding and establish yearly goals to that effect. Educators will themselves will have vision of a strong, vibrant BFN education system.

Alongside this, a “train the trainers” model needs to be developed focusing on a resiliency and restorative principles framework. The Penn Resiliency Project (http://www.positivepsychology.org/services/penn-resilience-training) trains schools, institutions, and organizations in resiliency methods focusing on helping students to handle everyday problems, which can be implemented along the education continuum. Restorative Practices is also delivered by a train the trainers model through the International Institute of Restorative Practices (IIRP) (www.iirp.org). Practitioners have the ability to become certified and the organization delivers within communities. This further promotes “development from within” the community, especially considering Christian Island’s unique location and limited funding opportunities. It is recommended as well that parents actively be encouraged to take any training that helps their children to succeed at all levels of education.

Again at the elementary level, more awareness needs to be created about post-secondary program requirements. For example, if students have a goal to be engineers, then they have to understand that math and science play a critical component of acceptance into any engineering program. Armed with this information, students will choose the proper courses at the secondary level instead of being unprepared and therefore unable to attend their program of choice at the end of their secondary career.
Coupled with awareness, students need to be academically prepared for their secondary and post-secondary journey. Specific focus needs to be implemented on academic preparation (Finnie, Sweetman & Usher, 2008) at the secondary level. Continued evaluation of the Education Quality and Assessment of Ontario (EQAO) scores for Grades 3 and 6 and other evaluative measures like the Grade 10 Literacy scores or a combination of measures suitable to BFN should be pursued. This pursuit will ensure that the students have clear goals and the academic preparation to succeed at post-secondary.

Also, in relation to elementary education; teaching strategies (in particular strategy teaching), assessment, and novel learning environments should be pursued (De Corte, Mason, Dapaepe, et al., 2011, p. 166). Accountability for design of a system-wide school plan can take place on a monthly basis (First Nation Student Success Program), yearly basis (long-range plans by school staff), and in five-year school success plans (school improvement plans).

The Christian Island Place of Learning (CIPL) was a successful project that served to ease the transition from elementary to high school level. It was tailored specifically to the needs of the community and “saved” the students from having to board out in surrounding towns during the winter freeze-up period. This program should be offered to Grade 9 students in the same format. Alternatively, if this possibility is not supported, there should be more support people helping students develop life skills during January to March each year, particularly with the BFN-owned boarding homes no longer in existence.

The secondary school counsellor should continue to monitor marks and attendance and make visits to connect at home with parents and youth to ensure the continued secondary school success. Additionally, the BFN should train tutors and mentors to assist in areas requiring remediation, as recommended by the secondary school counsellor.
Self-regulation, which has been the topic of this paper, should also be assessed regularly not just as a learning attribute, but, a formal model at the early childhood development stages. Eisenberg ad Sulik (2012) do provide recommendations for assessing self-regulation. Formal assessments include Stroop tasks, gift-wrap tasks (variation of marshmallow test), continuous performance tasks (CPT), Kochaska’s tasks and Rothbart and colleagues’ questionnaires (p.80) are examples. Culturally appropriate testing or adaptations can be developed to suit the needs of the community based on these and similar tests. Of important note, however, is to use the data like self-regulation questionnaires, other assessments and EQAO to drive instruction and learning.

Finally, just as self-regulation concepts and strategies need to be explicitly taught to students, so too must parent involvement be sought. Building relationships and coming to joint understandings about parents’ involvement and First Nation involvement at every step of the learning journey will help ensure continued success. Steinhauer (2012) outlines the many negative experiences Indigenous parents have faced with negative talk like “they are unreliable,” “they don’t care,” and “they never show up” (p. 64). Instead, a positive focus and discussion with parents in a planned approach in terms of involvement are recommended in the future.

It’s exciting to think that the BFN community has high education aspirations. This is evidenced by a commitment to this undertaking and the high expectations and hopes that the community has for students. Aspirations are a very important predictor of PSE success (Christofides et al., 2008). Levels of parental education is a huge factor that determines PSE success (Finnie & Mueller, 2008). As generations of our BFN members become educated with a systematic process in place, this becomes a true ripple effect where students entering PSE will have an advantage and the disadvantage will exist no more.
References


doi: [http://dx.doi.org.proxy.queensu.ca/10.17953/aicr.35.4.4588445552858866](http://dx.doi.org.proxy.queensu.ca/10.17953/aicr.35.4.4588445552858866)


Walmsley, A. (2014). Unplug the kids: Technology isolates children from each other and may be hampering their communication and collaboration skills. *Phi Delta Kappan, 95*(6), 80.


