# Editorial: Indian Control of Indian Education—40 Years Later

*Michelle Pidgeon*
*Simon Fraser University*

*Jo-ann Archibald*
*University of British Columbia*

*Marissa Muñoz*
*University of British Columbia*

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In 1972, the Canadian National Indian Brotherhood (now Assembly of First Nations) released the *Indian Control of Indian Education (ICIE)* policy paper. The ICIE policy paper addressed the following areas in relation to Indigenous education: local control of education; parental responsibility; programs, curriculum, and values; teachers and counsellors; facilities and services; and research.

Now, over 40 years after the release of the *Indian Control of Indian Education* policy paper, the editors of the 2013 theme issue of the *Canadian Journal of Native Education* asked the following questions in their call for papers:

- What progress has been made in any of the areas included in the ICIE policy paper? What are indicators of success from Indigenous perspectives?
- What have we learned about overcoming systemic barriers to the ICIE? What lessons emerge from our research practices to inform Indigenous education either for, by, or with Indigenous peoples?
- What else needs to be done to realize the ideals and approaches of the ICIE policy paper?
- How can current Indigenous provincial, national, and international treaties, policies, jurisdiction, and agreements advance Indigenous education?

The editors for this CJNE theme issue include Michelle Pidgeon, Assistant Professor at Simon Fraser University (SFU), Jo-ann Archibald, Associate Dean for Indigenous Education and Professor at the University of British Columbia (UBC), and Marissa Muñoz, PhD candidate at the University of British Columbia (UBC). The articles in this theme issue address these questions. Most importantly, they share research, ideas, programs, and approaches that show signs of success related to some of the principles of the *Indian Control of Indian Education* document.

We begin with an article written by the issue's editors and Verna J. Kirkness, which focuses on intergenerational ICIE perspectives that span a 40-year plus timeframe. The next set of articles, by authors Bell, Aquash, and MacLellan, feature case studies about Indigenous schools. Articles about the roles of First Nations principals, by Stockdale, Parsons, and Beauchamp, and the roles of non-Native teachers, by Oskineegish and Berger, follow. When we look to the future, we must address the educational needs of urban Aboriginal children in care. Johnson's article on this topic helps to extend the principles of ICIE for these children. We conclude the issue with a book review by Martin on Verna J. Kirkness' life as an Indigenous educator. Each article is described in more detail below.

The *Indian Control of Indian Education* (ICIE) (1972) document was, and continues to be, evidence of the power of Aboriginal peoples in Canada working together to speak up against government assimilationist policies. The voices in the article *Indian Control of Indian Education: Reflections and Envisioning the Next 40 Years* represent four generations of Indigenous scholars since this influential document was created. Kirkness, Archibald, Pidgeon, and Muñoz share their reflections on the original ICIE document, the impact of this policy in their education careers, and their ICIE visions of the future. Drawing from these foundations, the authors also turn a critical eye upon the federal government's proposed *Bill on First Nation Education.* The article shares lessons learned, reflections on power and knowledge, and visions for reciprocal relationships that embody the values articulated over 40 years ago within the ICIE policy paper.

In *Just Do It: Anishinaabe Culture-Based Education*, Bell reflects on her own visioning and implementation of the Anishinaabe Bimaadiziwin Cultural Healing and Learning Program as an example of the 1972 *Indian Control of Indian Education* policy in action. Created to support Anishinaabe-specific cultural practices in educational spaces, the program was established in Peterborough, Ontario in an off-reserve community, balancing Anishinaabe cultural knowledge with mainstream academic subjects. Bell writes, "I firmly believe that as Anishinaabe teachers and parents, we can teach Anishinaabe children how to live in two cultures successfully and still retain Anishinaabe culture in a contemporary society." Working from the medicine wheel as both a research framework and seasonal curricular organizer, Bell describes the daily logistics, community support, and evaluation of the learning program as a model of self-determination through cultural preservation. In this way, the Anishinaabe Bimaadiziwin Cultural Healing and Learning Program centred Indigenous knowledges and embodied the philosophy behind the *Indian Control of Indian Education* document.

By examining the broader power dynamics of colonization, Aquash suggests, in his article *First Nations Control of Education: One Community's Experience,* Habermas' theory of communicative action as a means for creating cooperative education efforts that support and strengthen First

Nations communities. Aquash draws from his own positionality as a Potawatomi/Ojibwe Anishinaabe researcher with long-standing relationships to the First Nations community in Ontario where this ethnographic study was conducted. His study examines the challenges and successes of implementing *Indian Control of Indian Education* by focusing on community interviews and reflections before community control of education, after community control of education, and then looking to the future. One innovative leadership approach examined in the study that improved student learning and engagement was a management team of school and community staff that reflected aspects of Indigenous ways of working together.

*Mokasige: Redeploying a Colonial Institution to Reaffirm and Revitalize Algonquin Culture* presents the case of Kitigan Zibi Kikinamadinan, a community-controlled school in Kitigan Zibi, which is an Anishinaabe First Nations reserve in the Gatineau region of Quebec. MacLellan spent three months living and working on the reserve, volunteering at the school, and portrays for us, through ethnography, a rich example of what *Indian Control of Indian Education* looks like in practice. She describes the rich, student-centric learning environment of the Algonquin immersion program as an example of Indigenous knowledge and pedagogies centred in what appears to be a Western school environment. Through a series of interviews with teachers, former students, and community members, MacLellan extracts six main themes relating to the success of the school. These themes are: (1) cultural education; (2) comparison with provincial schools; (3) racism and culture; (4) giving back to the community; (5) self-determination; and (6) expansion of activity.

In *Instructional Leadership in First Nations Schools*, two academics, Parsons and Beauchamp, partner with Stockdale, a First Nations principal of a Kindergarten to Grade 6 (K-6) school, to write this article. The authors apply research-supported best practices in the field to the Ermineskin Elementary School in Maskwacis, Alberta. Research suggests that school leadership has direct implications on student success through such influences as support networks and professional development for teachers. For First Nations schools, a shared vision between the school faculty, staff, and families in the community is crucial, as is mutual respect and trust. Authors Parsons and Beauchamp turn to Stockdale to distill the key leadership characteristics from their research that help to support her work as a successful principal in an on-reserve First Nations school, drawing from her personal reflections to suggest guidelines for other First Nations school leaders.

In *The Role of the Non-Native Teacher in Remote First Nations Communities in Northern Ontario,* Oskineegish and Berger explore the roles and responsibilities of non-Native educators who teach in Native communities, suggesting that by building reciprocal relationships with communities, non-Native educators can respectfully honour the intentions of *Indian Con-*

*trol of Indian Education*. The authors build on the history of how education has been used in Canada as a tool for cultural oppression, discussing the lasting impacts of the residential school system, as well as the ongoing lack of culturally-sensitive teacher training, language support, and community representation in the curriculum. Oskineegish describes a project in which in-depth interviews were conducted with experienced educators of both First Nations and non-First Nations ancestry. The resulting themes focus on how non-Native educators can develop into community allies and successfully support the learners, the families, and the knowledges of First Nations communities as a responsible visitor.

In *We Are the Ones We've Been Waiting For: Towards the Development of an Indigenous Educational Advocacy Organization for Aboriginal Children in Canada's Custody*, Johnson traces the complex histories and circumstances that have contributed to the issue of Indigenous children being removed from their homes as the foundation for understanding the ongoing, systemic, educational disparities of Aboriginal youth in care. Working in collaboration with urban Indigenous child protection agency staff, Elders, teachers, and former youth with direct experience in the BC child protection system, Johnson interviewed and conducted talking circles with 29 participants: 15 Indigenous former children in custody and 14 Indigenous agency members. Life stories suggested common themes, such as poverty before care and abuse within the system, each with direct educational impacts. As one key finding, Johnson urges that, "Canada establish an independent urban Indigenous child advocacy organization focused solely on the educational success of the Indigenous children in its custody."

We thank the authors and the reviewers for their thoughtful scholarship and thought-provoking comments. The questions that began the search for scholarship, to help us better understand, learn from, and share research results about *Indian Control of Indian Education—40 Years Later*, created good inquiry pathways. In another 40 years, we wonder what successful Indigenous education will look like. What seems evident is that local community decision making, parental engagement, Indigenous knowledge, and well-prepared Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators must become stronger and more central to education in general. Increasing and sustaining these practices are our future challenges and opportunities for good quality education.