

Native Teacher Education in a Community Setting: The Mt. Currie Program

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La planification et la mise en oeuvre d'un programme de formation des enseignants chez la population autochtone du Canada doivent tenir compte de cinq éléments importants: la participation de la communauté elle-même, l'intégration de la langue et de la culture des autochtones, la décentralisation de l'administration, la révision des critères d'admission et la qualité du programme. Une expérience de la sorte, qui fut d'ailleurs un succès, a été tentée au Mount Currie. Le programme du Mount Currie, bien qu'il puisse servir de modèle à d'autres programmes de formation des enseignants chez la population autochtone, ne peut être transposé tel quel dans toutes les autres communautés. En effet ce programme ne correspond qu'aux besoins particuliers d'une communauté précise et des personnes qui la composent.

INTRODUCTION

One of many changes in the field of native education is the development of native teacher training programs. The National Indian Brotherhood position paper, *Indian Control of Indian Education* (1), a paper presented to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in 1972 and the basis for present DIAND educational policy, outlines the need for native teachers, along with proposals for change in all phases of native education. Uniting the guidelines for development is the suggestion that involvement of native people is crucial to the promotion of successful educational experiences for native children. Specifically, needs exist for local control of educational financing and increased local authority in decision making. In addition to increased administrative autonomy, Indian-oriented curriculum materials, and native teachers and counsellors who "have an intimate understanding of Indian ways of life . . . are required" (p. 18).

Since the early 1970s teacher-education programs for native people have begun in several places in Canada. Published information on these programs is, however, scanty. The purpose of this paper is to describe the Mt. Currie Native Teacher Education Program, based in this small reserve community 100 miles from Vancouver. Other programs mentioned give an indication of the variety of approaches being taken and of issues common to all. My experience as director of the Mt. Currie program and data available on other programs suggest there are five basic issues involved in the development of native teacher education programs (2, 3):

1. Community involvement at the local level
2. Incorporation of native language and culture
3. Decentralization
4. Entrance requirements and paraprofessional training
5. Program quality

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Alienation of native communities from schools is in most instances deeply rooted. In the past, schools have had the job of divesting native people of their language and culture. Administration by federal and provincial authorities has helped to widen the gap between community and school. Native teachers who participate fully in the activities of both the community and the school are a potential link between the two. Administration that is in the hands of native people is also a means of reducing alienation.

Community involvement is the hallmark of the Mt. Currie program. Events in the development of the all-native Mt. Currie Education Advisory Board and of the Mt. Currie Community Based Native Teacher Education Program illustrate steps taken to integrate the school and the native community. Until February 1973 the Mt. Currie School was administered by the Department of Indian Affairs. Then, under the terms set out in the policy paper *Indian Control of Indian Education*, the Education Advisory Board (hereafter referred to as the Board) composed of eight members chosen by the band council, took over administration of the school. This gave them the authority to hire staff, draw up the education budget, determine curriculum, and make long-range plans for the school's development. In September 1973 the Board approached the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University for assistance in preparing native teacher aides to become qualified teachers. In all phases of program development the principle of local native involvement guided action. I worked with Board members in drawing up a program proposal, choosing the site for the program, interviewing and selecting student teachers and program staff, and in making decisions about program content. Student teachers were involved in each of these processes except, naturally, their own selection for the program.

Program Proposal

The following objectives, set out in the program proposal, reflect the importance of native involvement:

1. to provide all practice teaching and academic course work *in the community*
2. to insure the Board plays an on-going role in program development: e.g. student, staff, and course selection
3. to adapt the program to the unique resources of the community
4. to provide for entry for native teacher aides who might not have the

usual university entrance requirements but who demonstrate potential for becoming successful teachers

5. to maintain program standards.

Community Site

The Mt. Currie community and school were chosen as the site for the program to insure the maintenance of close contact with the community. One of the goals of the Board is to bring parents into the life of the school. All staff members are expected to make home visits to parents and encourage parents to come to the school as resource persons teaching cultural activities, or simply as visitors. At present one-third of the staff is non-native. Participation in community sports and social gatherings provide additional avenues for contact and are easily within the reach of native student teachers. Casual dissemination of information by student teachers about their work and the school has partially increased parental attendance at school meetings where curriculum, discipline, grading systems, expenditures for field trips, and values conveyed in the school are discussed.

Interviewing and Selection of Candidates

Applicants to the program were accepted or rejected after being interviewed at Mt. Currie by Board members and representatives of the Faculty of Education admissions committee — myself included. Each candidate had a minimum of two months of experience as a teacher aide (a prerequisite for entry) and was asked to tell the selection committee about work done in lesson preparation and implementation and classroom management. Candidates were also asked to comment on their reasons for working in and wanting to pursue a career in the Mt. Currie Community School. Previous academic experiences in high school or university were not ignored but neither were they given a high priority — a third of those accepted had not completed high school. Letters of reference were solicited from classroom teachers who had supervised the applicant's work. As well, a supervisor from the Faculty of Education documented and assessed the work of the applicants. Board members were able to provide background information on the growth, maturity, and commitment of applicants. The decision to accept an applicant carried with it a commitment on the part of the Board and the university to support the individual in strengthening professional skills. Detailed outlines of strengths and weaknesses provided check points for future assessments of improvement. Early diagnosis of problem areas (lateness, inadequate preparation, heavy handedness with children) let candidates know clearly what was acceptable behavior. Twelve individuals applied for the program and eight entered. Applicants who did not enter the program did not lose their jobs as aides. A number decided they wanted to continue as aides but did not want the extra responsibilities of being a student teacher. Others were judged not sufficiently prepared for admit-

tance.¹ Each applicant accepted is employed by the school as an intern and each has made a commitment to working for two years at the school after completing certification. The internship has eased financial difficulties normally experienced by students in other programs.²

The interview and discussion process was not only a procedure for assessing applicants, it provided Board members with an opportunity to develop their relationships with applicants and to broaden their knowledge of school activities. Establishing a close working relationship between Board and trainees provides a unique opportunity for developing long-term programming that is well integrated with community needs.

Choosing Courses and Instructors

The Simon Fraser University teacher education program is a one-year program consisting of one-and-a-half semesters of practicum, half a semester of curriculum workshops, and one semester of upper-level course work chosen from arts, science, or education. At Mt. Currie this program is supplemented with additional academic course work necessary for certification. Student teachers and Board members at Mt. Currie selected the courses to complement the practicum. The program started in July 1975 with an introductory English composition course and a linguistic course dealing with the fundamentals of reading and writing the native language. Subsequent courses included a more advanced course in the native language, Canadian literature and poetry, introduction to psychology, and curriculum studies. The five instructors for those courses were approved by the Board and student teachers as well as by the University. Every candidate visited Mt. Currie for an interview with students and the Board whose concern was to screen out individuals who wanted to "help the Indians" and to select those who showed initiative in adapting course material to the resources available in Mt. Currie. Ability to relate easily and informally to students was also highly valued.

Involvement can, in spite of its strong points, entail a number of difficulties. University administrators were concerned that giving too much control to the local school board in the selection of candidates could result in nepotism — that weaknesses would be overlooked where relatives were involved. Given the close and pervasive kinship ties in reserve communities it is virtually impossible to avoid situations where relatives make important decisions about each other. Board members' judgments were considered along with those of sponsor teachers and university supervisors; nonetheless, their opinions were striking for their forthrightness. While an individual might hesitate to point out the shortcomings of another's relatives, he was quite candid in constructive criticism of his own.

Other difficulties in community involvement have arisen. First, native people often show hesitancy in supporting their own people in positions of responsibility. Student teachers just completing their training find that

many of the people in the community have scoffed at the idea of their being teachers. They have for so long identified the role as one that is and ought to be occupied by non-Indians from outside the community that it is difficult for them now to believe that their own people are good enough. The Board had initially hoped that student teachers would be influential in drawing parents into the school. In some cases this has happened — increased attendance at school meetings is one sign of it. The Board will, however, have to do more to assure parents of native teachers' competence before the native teachers can in turn involve parents more in the school.

A second factor hampering community involvement in the school is that it is structured according to conventional patterns where classroom rather than community learning experiences are given priority. Parents are skeptical about activities which diverge from past patterns — as much as they may be dissatisfied with the results of these — and teachers have not had the appropriate preparation to make full use of community resources in constructing learning activities. The teacher education program provides an avenue for the development of community-oriented education but innovations are undertaken only after careful preparation. Since student teachers are operating in a classroom context largely defined by their classroom teachers and reinforced by community views, this context dominates their experience. Excessive pressure for them to introduce radical innovations would thrust them directly into a conflict situation. Nonetheless, innovations such as curriculum development oriented to community resources are proceeding.

Developments in Other Programs

The emphasis given to community involvement in Mt. Currie is similar to what is being done in the Alaska Rural Teacher Training Corps (ARTTC), which strongly emphasizes involvement of interns in the village community. The program attempts "to establish a system in which community citizens participate in the governance of the project and function as resources to project development to the extent of their interest and willingness" (4, p. 1). Thus, at the very least, community people recommend candidates for the program — a characteristic of programs at Lakehead University, the universities of Alberta, British Columbia, Calgary, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Quebec. In addition, in ARTTC "teams [of students] in each community provide within their ability, educational opportunities and activities which the citizens of the communities state a need for, outside of the formal school program" (4, p. 1). Similarly the Lakehead Program identifies, as a major concern, community-oriented school programs in which an exchange of resources occurs between school and community. Aside from these instances of community involvement no indications are given in other program descriptions of well-defined, on-going roles for native advisory groups at the local community level. The advisory boards

of most programs are made up of native people drawn from a number of different communities and/or associations, reflecting the fact that these programs serve many native communities. The Mt. Currie program, which involves only one community, provides for greater direct involvement of a local advisory group.

INCORPORATION OF NATIVE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Placing native teachers in classrooms has the value of providing native children with positive role models, but the rationale for preparing native teachers extends beyond this. Native teachers are in a far better position than non-natives to bring native linguistic and cultural resources into the classroom. Incorporation of these is seen by native people and educators across North America as critical in reducing native students' alienation from school and in building positive self-images and educational success.

In spite of the high value placed on bringing native culture into the classroom there is concern that young native people — who are frequently those most interested in teaching — are not in the best position to draw on these resources. The assertion is frequently made that native people, particularly members of the younger generation, have lost their culture. This assertion arises when native culture is identified as traditional culture. Native culture of course includes traditional life, but it encompasses contemporary adaptive patterns as well. Thus, cultural materials for classroom use can be drawn from the present as well as the past and are well within the experience of young native teachers. Analysis of native literature and of contemporary political and social issues and discussion of personal experiences assist student teachers in identifying their concerns and values. This identification is a step in the process of defining contemporary cultural patterns. Student teachers can in turn guide their students through a similar process. In addition, through contacts with older relatives student teachers have access to traditional cultural resources and can integrate these into classroom experiences.

Because Board members and student teachers have strong feelings that native language and culture should form an integral part of the school curriculum, one of the earliest decisions made in planning the teacher education program was to include course work in the native (Lillooet) language and to adapt other university courses to cultural resources available at Mt. Currie. In the view of the Board (and of many others in education) feelings of pride and self-worth essential to educational success can be partially built on understanding, knowledge, and respect for native culture. Instead of rejecting the life style of parents and grandparents, that life style can be valued as a unique cultural adaptation. It is not the intent of the Board to completely resurrect traditional culture and turn the school and the community into a "living museum," but to present such facets of native life more positively than has been the case in the public schools.

Additionally, the Board and student teachers want to promote the development of contemporary native culture. This entails identifying resources in the present-day community and incorporating these resources into daily educational experiences. Steps were followed to implement these ideas.

All student teachers have completed two linguistic courses in which they developed skills in reading and writing their native language (Lillooet), and some are developing a graded language program for the school.

Student teachers have also completed a course in English composition and one in Canadian literature. In the former, their own experiences — going to residential school, fishing, berry picking, attending potlatches, participating in road blocks and protest movements — provided the raw material for writing. In the literature course the vision of native life presented by native writers (Sarain Stump, Johnny Tetso, etc.) was contrasted with that of non-natives who write about native life (Christie Harris, George Ryga). Poems about Canadian rural life by non-native poets were contrasted with students' own views of their environment. In conjunction with both courses, student teachers carried over what they had learned into their own classrooms. Puppets in the elementary grades and VTR in the upper ones help to dramatize literary works. The fact that both courses and practice teaching take place in Mt. Currie and are scheduled concurrently facilitates this type of follow-up.

In addition to university course work providing material for a native language and culture curriculum, student teachers have themselves or with resource people initiated sessions in story telling, music and dance, fishing, basket-making, and snowshoe manufacturing. These activities involve learning skills which are part of the contemporary culture of Mt. Currie. Children's discussion of and writing about these activities provide practice in literacy and communication skills — a central concern of the school.

Developing knowledge of and familiarity with traditional and contemporary culture is not intended to be pursued to the exclusion of developing skills necessary for survival in contemporary western society. The Board feels both are necessary. But they are operating on the principle that children will learn best when they are learning in and through a familiar context. They can then build outward to familiarity with other contexts.

This approach has not always operated smoothly. While student teachers in the program (ages 19–40) do not consider themselves thoroughly knowledgeable in native language and culture, they have shown a sincere interest in learning. But a number of their students, particularly the older ones (junior and senior secondary) have not shown the same interest. On occasion they have been rude and inattentive to resource people who have visited the school. As well, a number have found the idea of learning to speak the native language laughable or boring.³ Such reactions are a serious challenge to the school's operating principles. The solutions to these dilemmas begin to emerge when the situation is viewed in historical perspective. Adolescents who attended public schools (as did most of the

secondary school students enrolled at Mt. Currie) have been alternatively ridiculed and ignored because they are native, and most have internalized a negative view of themselves. Native student teachers who have had similar experiences in their own schooling are doing an excellent job of helping students sort out their feelings about their identity as natives. They are also recognizing that conventional teaching strategies do not have this effect.

One step being taken to change strategies is to take students out into the community rather than bringing resource people to the school, where they are ill at ease.

Resource people who had lost interest in coming to classrooms are eager to work with students who come to their homes or accompany them on field trips. Students are beginning to take note of the fact that people in their community are knowledgeable and speak with authority. Two years ago they laughed at the idea of learning native songs; now singing and drumming initiated by the students are extremely popular.

Other changes are being made in teaching strategies. In the native language program, emphasis is given to oral rather than written activities, and efforts are being made to make native language a part of social studies and science rather than an isolated linguistic exercise. Such changes, together with student counselling, are slowly leading students to a more positive view of native culture. They are beginning to see that native culture is not just what happened 100 years ago — it is also the contemporary way of life of the community, *their* way of life as well as that of their parents. Recognition of this by students and teachers provides a wide spectrum of activities and knowledge which is constantly being added to and will serve as a source of materials for program development.

Other Programs

Virtually all native teacher education programs in Canada contain course work on native language and culture. The major difficulty which most encounter is that the age group most interested in teaching is least knowledgeable about traditional culture. Access to cultural resources poses significant difficulties. Adapting the resources for classroom use (curriculum development) is a major area of concern. Beginning teachers who are not yet fully comfortable in their new roles frequently do not have the time, skills, or access to resources necessary to develop curriculum. A number of solutions to these difficulties have emerged. At the University of Calgary the Indian Students University Program proposed the development of a curriculum centre where individuals would practise the skills required to adapt information about their culture for classroom use. A centre of this type has been established by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians. A standard part of the University of B.C.'s NITEP is a course in curriculum development focussing on native cultural resources. In the Northwest Territories, excellent locally developed curriculum materials serve as a model for on-going developments by native teachers. In the ARTTC,

interns take course work that trains them to gather resource data from community sources.

Access to and continuity in the development of local resource materials is facilitated at Mt. Currie by the fact that the program operates entirely in the community. Instructors are committed to orienting their courses to the local context, and when student teachers feel they do not have necessary skills it is relatively easy to find someone in the community who does.

DECENTRALIZATION

Rural areas of Canada, Indian reserves in particular, have always had to bear the brunt of teacher shortages and mobility. Urban-bred teachers frequently see non-urban schools as temporary diversions in a career path that leads to the city. On the other hand, potential teachers from reserves are often frustrated in their career plans because they are unable to move families and homes to metropolitan university centres, and in some cases are unable to adapt to the conditions of big city life. Frequently those who do make the move experience difficulties in readapting to their home environments; reserve and city life styles conflict with each other. Decentralization provides a mechanism for circumventing these problems.

Students at Mt. Currie were not able to attend a teacher education program on an urban university campus — physical and psychological adjustments as well as financial considerations made this extremely difficult. A number had attended programs in Vancouver and found them unsatisfactory. Among the younger members of the groups, considerable shyness and apprehension were expressed about going to the city.

The Mt. Currie program bridges the gap between the reserve and the city. Students work on the reserve and educational resources are brought into a milieu where the student teachers feel at home. One of the added advantages of holding the program in Mt. Currie is that internship arrangements with the Board have eased financial difficulties.

Curriculum workshops held every other week by visiting members of the Faculty of Education and classes in linguistics, English, and psychology held on a weekly basis have provided considerable variety; support from individuals instructing in these courses has been excellent. Organization of and follow-up on workshops by the resident faculty associate, who also supervises day-to-day practice teaching, has done a great deal to maximize the value of these sessions. The faculty associate is able to spend time co-ordinating these activities because he is responsible for supervising eight student teachers — half the usual assignment. Because library and audiovisual resources are difficult to arrange and student teachers have increasingly felt the need to see the way other schools operate, visits to schools in Vancouver (100 miles from Mt. Currie) are being arranged. When trips of this type were suggested by program staff earlier in the program, interest was low. Growth in interest can be interpreted as a reflection of growth of self-confidence and understanding of the teaching process.

Other Programs

Decentralization is an integral part of the operation of the program at the University of British Columbia, Brandon University, the University of Alaska, and the Northwest Territories Program as well as a number of others. It is generally recognized that to expect potential reserve teachers to take their training in urban schools is self-defeating.

The programs mentioned above, with the exception of Mt. Currie, involve short-term summer orientations, and in some cases a full year of course work at the university centre. In the Mt. Currie program it is possible to complete the requirements for a British Columbia Teaching License (one semester of academic course work and three semesters of teacher preparation) entirely at Mt. Currie. Additional work towards the next levels of certification may be completed at Mt. Currie or the university — formal plans for this stage of training are now in process and will depend on the extent of financial support available from the university and the Department of Indian Affairs.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS AND PARAPROFESSIONAL TRAINING

There are growing numbers of native people in Canada who are working effectively in educational settings but who have not completed high school or entered university. Special grants from the Department of Indian Affairs and Canada Manpower create jobs for teacher aides, cultural resource personnel, language teachers, and counsellors. Thus, there is a pool of potential teachers whose practical experience can serve as an alternate criterion for university entrance and as a basis for granting advanced standing in teacher education programs. At Mt. Currie and in other native teacher education programs paraprofessional training is recognized as an alternative to strictly academic entrance criteria.

Entry to the Simon Fraser University teacher education program requires two years of university work with a C+ average. Entry to the Mt. Currie program requires demonstrated teaching ability developed through experience as a classroom aide — it is not necessary that the applicant have completed high school or be 23 years of age (university mature-student entry age). A minimum of eight weeks of experience as an aide is credited as one-third of the total practicum experience. Academic course work which is ordinarily a prerequisite for entry is taken concurrently with and after completion of the practicum. Commitment to and aptitude for teaching, rather than prior academic success, are being considered as predictors of success in teaching. Observations of aides by university personnel and thorough selection procedures, described earlier, make this admissions procedure a viable one.

All of the native teacher training programs in Canada admit students through mature-student entry clauses, and a number have mechanisms for granting advanced standing. This procedure raises the issues of reverse

discrimination. Similar procedures (e.g. mature-student entry directly into teacher training programs) are generally not applicable to non-native students. Many of the developers of native education programs feel, however, that as long as overall program quality is not affected, adapting entry requirements is the only way to insure that the inequalities present in education are levelled. The dropout rate among native people in public schools is approximately 95%. If successful high school completion and two years of university are maintained as requirements it will be very difficult to increase the number of native teachers — a vital step in insuring educational success for native children. Using alternative criteria provides a needed avenue for entry. It also helps to maintain program quality.

PROGRAM QUALITY

It is often asked whether program quality is sacrificed where there is community involvement, native language and culture, decentralization, and entry based on paraprofessional experience. Community involvement may be criticized because it engages non-professionals in critical educational decision making. Incorporation of native language and culture can be seen as expending energy on activities that have no survival value in the modern world. Decentralization makes it difficult to deliver resources, and adapting entry requirements may be seen as lowering standards.

Contrary to these views, community involvement is not simply a matter of throwing responsibility for decision making to people without providing the requisite knowledge for decision making; it can serve as an educational process for non-professionals to learn about options in education. Similarly, concentration on native language and culture is not a suicidal attempt to drown in the past. In all discussions by native people of their educational futures, they have stated that they and their children must have the skills necessary to function in modern society. Decentralization does pose difficulties in the delivery of services, but rural non-native as well as native communities are demanding that these difficulties be overcome. University extension programs, use of video, and programmed course materials are beginning to meet the needs of non-urban areas. Furthermore, adapting entrance criteria to respond to the special talents of a group of students is not the same as lowering criteria; it is recognition of the fact that expertise can be acquired and expressed in a variety of ways.

The Mt. Currie program suggests ways for native teacher education programs to differ from standard models without loss of quality. Community involvement in program planning provides an opportunity for non-professionals to study a variety of teacher education models before deciding what would be best for their community. It gives them the additional experience of learning how to interview and assess the work of native aides. Integration of course work on native language and culture with work focusing on contemporary skills such as literacy and curriculum planning is occurring without jeopardizing achievements in either area.

Grades for courses in native language and English literature show a normal distribution. Competency in classroom teaching is developing at a regular pace. Program participants unanimously reject the idea of being coddled or given a watered-down education because they are native. Some were concerned that program decentralization and modified entrance requirements would adversely affect program quality. Staff from the university teaching at Mt. Currie indicate that students work as hard as students in other programs. The differences they note are greater cautiousness about becoming involved in new activities, and in the case of some individuals (a minority) considerable difficulty with academic skill development. Assistance from the Faculty Associate and individualized instruction by university personnel allows individuals to develop academic skills while engaged in course work and practice teaching. Consequently students are, in a number of instances, carrying a heavier workload than would normally be the case. Recommendations by university staff and supervising classroom teachers indicate that the work of students in the Mt. Currie program qualifies them for the same provincial teaching credentials received by student teachers in other programs.⁴

Like the Mt. Currie program, all other native teacher education programs in Canada are dealing with the issues of community involvement, native language and culture, decentralization, and entrance requirements and the way in which these affect program quality. All programs, as in Mt. Currie, grant standard teaching credentials to their students, indicating that provincial departments of education across Canada are recognizing the validity of these alternative programs. A comprehensive evaluation of the Mt. Currie program is not yet available, nor to my knowledge are comparable evaluations available for other programs. The purpose of this article is to explore the major issues raised by these programs rather than to do a comprehensive evaluation of their effectiveness. Assessments of program quality at Mt. Currie made here cannot and should not go beyond the data currently available. Long-term effects on the educational achievements of children at Mt. Currie are not yet known.

CONCLUSIONS

Native teacher education programs across Canada (and the U.S.) reflect a variety of approaches. Although community involvement, incorporation of native language and culture, decentralization, entrance requirements and paraprofessional training, and program quality are issues of concern to all programs, the programs are far from identical.

The hallmark of the Mt. Currie program is community involvement. Other aspects of the program follow from community involvement. First, native language and culture are easier to incorporate in a community-run school than in, for example, a provincial school. Second, the Mt. Currie program illustrates that community involvement can lessen the problems of

decentralization for students. Although decentralization is part of other native teacher education programs, decentralization in and of itself does not necessarily solve the problems native students experience in urban centres. Often decentralization means that native student teachers work away from urban university centres but also away from their home communities. Alienation from a small (but foreign) rural community may thus be substituted for alienation from an urban setting. The Mt. Currie student teachers are working in their own community at their own school. Community involvement here makes for successful decentralization; but decentralization does not guarantee community involvement. Finally, community involvement in the school and the teacher education program means that potentially successful teachers can be spotted by a community board personally familiar with a candidate's strengths and weaknesses. This, coupled with the community's support of student teachers throughout their education, means that program quality is not sacrificed.

The Mt. Currie program has come about because the Mt. Currie Board is convinced that educational success for native people is closely linked with their gaining control in education. The program developed as a response to the needs of a particular community; in no other instance has the development of a native teacher education program been so closely articulated with the development of a native community school.⁵ Over a 3- to 4-year period it will prepare 18 teachers, all of whom intend to continue working in the community school. When their education is complete the program will be dissolved — native teachers for other native communities or for the provincial schools are not being trained at Mt. Currie, nor will they be.

The Mt. Currie program is one model for native teacher education, one in which community involvement is the key ingredient. Repeating the program elsewhere depends on the extent to which community involvement in education can be stimulated and the degree of government and university support for native community education. This type of program is not possible everywhere. Mt. Currie has the largest population (1200) of all bands in British Columbia; enrolment in the community school (formerly a Federal Indian Day school) is about 300, and the school has programs for students from nursery to grade 12. The size of the community and the school has made it possible to run the school independently. Smaller communities and Day schools have been more readily absorbed by the provincial school system; many lack the educational facilities and number of potential teachers needed to support a community-based teacher education program. Moreover, an increasing number of status Indians live off reserve, and they, like non-status Indians, may not be part of a geographically distinct Indian community. Although "Indian control of Indian education" is the official policy of DIA (the Department of Indian Affairs) there are only about a dozen Indian-run schools in Canada. Because 60%

of native children attend provincial schools, most native teachers will be trained in this setting, which does not as yet allow for the degree of native involvement that is possible where the school is located on the reserve and is under the control of a local native Board.

Small programs catering to single communities are not typically part of university commitments, and universities may be reluctant to support many such programs. For all these reasons Mt. Currie cannot serve as a model for the training of all native teachers. Community involvement, however, carries with it many benefits and is a worthy goal of any program.

The creation of native teacher education programs has been a step forward in developing equal educational opportunities for native people. Future positive developments depend on increasing the educational options open to communities and individuals. Diversity in programming, rather than uniformity, must be encouraged.

NOTES

1. These individuals were admitted to the program one year later.
2. Internship salaries and tuition are paid by the band with funds received from the Department of Indian Affairs. All other program costs are paid by the Faculty of Education, SFU.
3. Most children in Mt. Currie understand but do not speak the native language when they enter school. By the time they reach grade 2 or 3 they have forgotten most of what they knew. There are still a large number of adults in the community who speak the language.
4. The first group of 8 student teachers admitted to the program in July 1975 all completed Licenses by December 1976. The second group of 10 admitted in July 1976 will complete Licenses by December 1977.
5. At the band-controlled school in Fort Alexander, Manitoba, native student teachers in the IMPACTE Program (Brandon University) do part of their practicum in this school; however, not all of these individuals are from or plan to remain in Fort Alexander. Neither has the development of the school been so centred on the development of the IMPACTE program.

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