

# Three Nations Education Group Incorporated (TNEGI)



## **A Strategic Plan**

*To carry us forward*

*Approved by the TNEGI Board of Directors, September 2014*

## Executive Summary

The TNEGI team has developed mission and vision statements to describe who TNEGI is and where it wants to go.

**Mission:** *A Mi'kmaq Maliseet education organization dedicated to improving education outcomes of First Nation students through advocacy, professional and educational supports, and building meaningful partnerships.*

**Vision:** *TNEGI is delivering services similar to a Mi'kmaq Maliseet Department of Education. There our experts work cooperatively with provincial staff. Both support quality services to First Nations students at every level of education. Children and families are engaged with community schools where the culture is celebrated and people are positive about their futures. Success has brought all parties together and moving quickly toward self-government.*

### Guiding Principles

TNEGI operates within the following principles:

**Community** -- TNEGI believes education responsibility rests with each First Nation family and their government. Community schools provide the most tailored services possible alongside unbridled accountability. Local systems that encourage individuals to invest in their futures will be supported by TNEGI.

**Fair** -- TNEGI ensures all of its support functions are provided impartially, and based on clear criteria that addresses both need and equality.

**Transparent** -- For TNEGI's roles to continue to receive community support, it must be transparent in all its operations and results; only by showing TNEGI remains true to its principles, can we secure ongoing support.

**Innovative** -- Education is always underfunded and different ways of sustaining education are needed; TNEGI will pioneer efforts to seek original and progressive ways to move First Nations education forward.

**Practical & professional** -- First Nation education systems require feasible supports in unique environments; TNEGI strives to meet those practical needs in an informed, professional manner.

**Culture** – Language, tradition and culture are indispensable parts of quality First Nation education; TNEGI works industriously to enhance these features.

## **Financial**

TNEGI is dependent on project based funding and such reliance means there is no reliable source of funding that the organization can count on year after year. The short term constraints on finance and administration have long term implications for the organization.

## **Strategic Goals and Priorities**

The analysis carried out on behalf of the TNEGI team confirms that in the short term at least, TNEGI must operate in a great deal of uncertainty within the current legal environment. This uncertainty however, may also be an opportunity for TNEGI to advocate and promote its version of school board-like services being a part of on-reserve education reform.

The TNEGI approach has yielded positive and measurable outcomes particularly in FNSSP. This can give TNEGI some legitimacy in implementing its strategic plan and in seeking new partners and projects.

The overall strategic goals of the organization are:

- Continue and Broaden First Nation Student Success
- Develop the Infrastructure & Partnerships to Deliver Quality Second & Third Level Services
- Ensure Financial Sustainability of Education Services
- Build a Professional Education Organization that can move Seamlessly to Self-Government

The strategic priorities needed to achieve the more long-term goals are:

- Sustaining TNEGI – developing an effective administration structure
- Pilot project for reform – Propose school board-like structure and work with AANDC toward a progressive structure offering services that result in positive education reform. (Proposal sent to Minister)
- TNEGI Communication Strategy – Complete a go-forward plan for strategic communications including such things as upgrading website, and annual reports
- Monitoring and preparing for reform - The uncertain legal context of on-reserve education reform requires active monitoring of the situation, ongoing briefings of elected officials, active communication on issues, and development of contingency plans
- Provincial capacity – need for closer working relationship with EECD, shared training plans for literacy and numeracy, Mi’Kmaq/Maliseet culture and history, and the need for a more robust Mi’Kmaq/Maliseet presence in EECD to ensure curriculum development and services in the department reflect our needs. And priorities.

Action plans to achieve these priorities are being developed.

## **1. Three Nations Education Group Incorporated (TNEGI)**

The education directors in the three member communities of the MAWIW Tribal Council often met to share experiences, challenges, and opportunities. The group took advantage of other working meetings to discuss practical education matters over many years. This informal coalition brought each of the respective education director's extensive experience, education, knowledge and networks to current issues. As sessions brought value to the respective programs, they gained importance to each Education Director. After time passed, participants felt the relationship, sessions and value they produced should become a more formalized part of their jobs.

In 2009 a new education entity was designed. The Three Nations Education Group was incorporated as a non-profit body in late 2009. That structure also allowed it to meet the federal criteria of a Regional Management Organization and be eligible to receive federal funds. Three Nations Education Group Incorporated or TNEGI as it became known, adopted a corporate bylaw and a strategic business plan that together described the following fundamental concepts of the organization

### **Purpose of the Three Nations Education Group**

To improve life-long education outcomes in all First Nation students in New Brunswick

### **Objectives of the Group**

- Enhance education services to First Nation students;
- Improve collaboration amongst all parties involved in Aboriginal education;
- Build long term partnerships that sustain education improvements;
- Share data and take steps to improve life-long education based on evidence;
- Measure results in key areas such as school readiness and age-grade outcomes and;
- Secure resources and build the relationships needed to accomplish objectives.

### **Priorities of the Group**

1. Implementation of FNSSP (First Nations Student Success Plan);
2. Build capacity of 3 Nations Education Group and;
3. Work toward a Centre of Excellence.

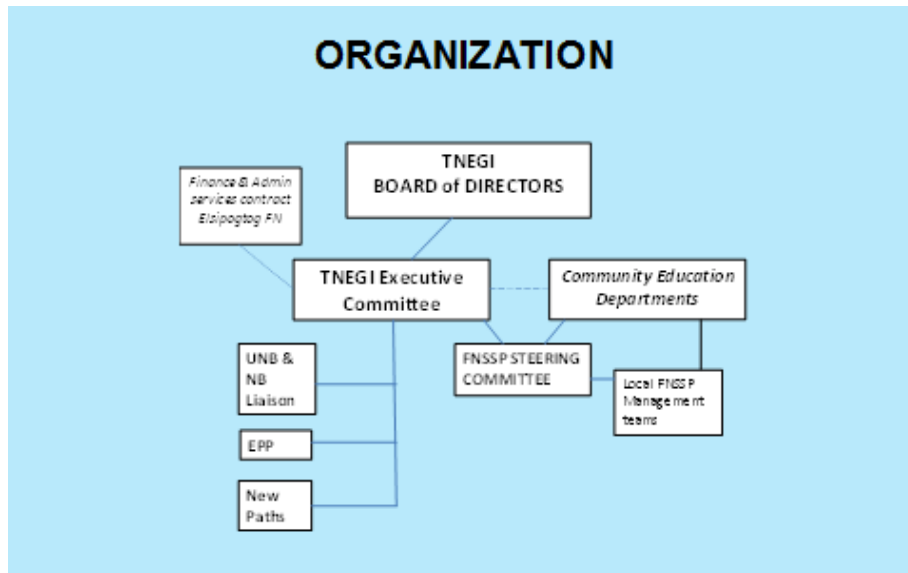
TNEGI did not begin substantive activity until late summer of 2010. At that time it took responsibility for the FNSSP and adopted an operational workplan for the remaining half of the fiscal year. That workplan described specific tasks for TNEGI's three priorities above and added two others areas of focus--development of finance and administration, and development of communication functions.

In early 2011 TNEGI's submitted a request for FNSSP funding for fiscal year 2011 - 2012, updated its business plan, and adopted an operating budget. Key expenditures included hiring an executive director, contracting out administration, gathering education data, and developing a web site. This is seen as when TNEGI began as a separate education entity.

### 1.1 TNEGI Governance

The TNEGI organizational structure reflects its development steps, relationships it has forged, and the focus on projects.

**Figure 1 TNEGI Organization**



TNEGI is a corporation governed by a six person Board of Directors comprised of:

- three Chiefs of the member First Nations, and
- three Education Directors

A smaller Executive Committee oversees operations, initiatives & projects. The Executive is made up of the three education directors and the Executive Director. Activities it has pursued include: FNSSP; New Paths; EPP; UNB Education Liaison; and NB Education liaison. The Committee works closely with the schools particularly on FNSSP where it has established a project Steering Committee that brings school principals to the table, which deals with a local Management Team in each school. Mechanisms for this and other major projects are also shown in figure 1.

In late 2012 TNEGI reported progress on the one year of activity against FNSSP objectives, particularly in literacy (results below). It submitted another FNSSP application for 2013 -2014 that included the new structural readiness portion. That portion was addressed through an

organizational assessment of TNEGI which confirmed the group's mandate and approach to First Nations education, but also identified significant gaps in organizational functions and services needed to fulfil those roles. These gaps included: consistency of Board meeting procedures, plans, and documents; defined roles in and use of Information technology and data; enhanced and targeted communications; improved district and provincial relations; quality of financial management; demonstration of Aboriginal curriculum usefulness and; common templates and samples for local administrators. A Capacity development plan was created to address those gaps and an overall workplan adopted for the up-coming year.

In late 2013 TNEGI engaged a consultant that has taken on some the Education Mentoring tasks identified in the capacity assessment as a way to address some capacity issues. He also helped prepare another FNSSP and structural readiness application, both based on continuing progress towards the goals of those programs.

Early in 2014 another consultant was engaged to work on a revised strategic plan and an annual report format.

## **1.2 TNEGI Outcomes**

Although TNEGI has only been active since late 2010, it has built on earlier cooperation efforts and combined new activities to produce many achievements in a short operating period. Earlier success led to enhanced service agreements with local school districts. TNEGI has assisted in strengthening the agreements and increasing services to First Nations students in provincial schools. TNEGI continues to work on direct links with Districts to forge stronger ties at both operational and management levels between off- and on-reserve schools.

There have been ongoing links with the University of New Brunswick (UNB) for many years. As a result UNB has an Aboriginal education focus and a Mi'kmaq Maliseet Institute (MMI) within its education department. UNB also offers specialized courses such as First Nation governance and has undertaken special intakes for First Nation students in key fields. All parts of UNB has heard TNEGI's constant advocacy for better research in First Nation education, changes in practices, more teaching professionals, and wider adoption of Aboriginal curriculum material. TNEGI has recently been assisting in the search for a new Chair of the MMI.

TNEGI members worked alongside 12 other First Nations in New Brunswick to enter an Education MOU with Canada and the province in 2008. That agreement continues to guide TNEGI efforts to improve educational outcomes of students through inter-government efforts. In 2010 the Premier committed to a new collaborative approach to addressing First Nations issues and progress has been made on topics like parent & community engagement in education, and teacher recruitment & retention.

Much of TNEGI's focus in the last year and a half has been the First Nations Student Success Program (FNSSP). Aligning directly with TNEGI's mandate to improve student outcomes, FNSSP funds plans for improvements in student literacy, numeracy and retention. While TNEGI

managed funds, reporting, and direction of the project, each school sorted out and undertook implementation details. The focus in year one (2011-2012) was on Literacy. TNEGI set a goal of improving provincial test scores by ten percent, and then building on that increase each subsequent year until scores met provincial averages. The decision to focus resources on immediate Literacy changes pushed similar plans for Numeracy improvements into years two and three of the project.

After one year of literacy focus the scores showed significant progress in two schools and confirmed the nature of anticipated local challenges in the third.

**Figure 2**  
 Literacy - Reading  
 Scores on Provincial Assessment by percent passing  
 Target of 10% increase each year

	Grade 2			Grade 4		
	2011	2012	<i>Difference</i>	2011	2012	<i>Difference</i>
<b>School</b>						
Elsipogotog	38	67	<b>29</b>	22	29	<b>7</b>
Mah Sos	33	67	<b>34</b>	66	71	<b>5</b>
Esgenooetitj	67	82	<b>15</b>	67	77	<b>10</b>

**Figure 3**  
 Literacy –Writing  
 Scores Provincial Assessment by Percent Passing  
 Target of 10% increase each year

	Grade 2			Grade 4		
	2011	2012	<i>Difference</i>	2011	2012	<i>Difference</i>
<b>School</b>						
Elsipogotog	38	85	<b>47</b>	5	17	<b>12</b>
Mah Sos	11	100	<b>89</b>	71	80	<b>9</b>
Esgenooetitj	72	72	<b>0</b>	100	85	<b>-15</b>

The other two FNSSP priorities - numeracy and retention- have established baseline data but not yet completed a year of enhanced activities. So there are no quantitative results to share. TNEGI’s plans for numeracy include introduction of a new math approach (Jump Math) while retention involves a range of cultural activities, family outreach, role models and more. The expectation is that Numeracy scores will trend much like Literacy, but that retention will take a couple of years before a trend shows up.

Ongoing interaction with the schools on FNSSP confirms that each begins from very different starting points. Staffs are fully aware of the barriers to success in each school and believe that each can be addressed. However, schools and teachers need new resources and supports to achieve their common objectives for better education outcomes. And that a key support is addressing the increased data management and administration tasks that accompany new resources and approaches.

Both the success of FNSSP and the foreseeable needs for certain supports and services to continue that success, are both factors to consider in a TNEGI strategic plan.





## 2. What is a Strategic Plan?

A strategic plan identifies broad future goals and objectives and the barriers to achieving them. It sets out a strategy that is considered the best way to reach those objectives including how to address the barriers.

The end product of a strategic plan should be a cohesive direction for the future of the organization that serves as a framework for making decisions and allocating resources in order to pursue the strategy and achieve the goals.

The process of building a strategic plan is a cyclical one. A standard model is shown below.

Figure 4



Few Strategic plans start from a completely blank slate as generally an organization has either been operating for a while or was created for a certain purpose. In TNEGI's case both apply—it was created to support Band-Operated schools, and it has been functioning for about three years.

To build on its history the planning process started with the Foundations—mission, vision and principles. A review of TNEGI documents provided examples of each. The examples became the starting point for each of the foundation parts.

## 2.1 Refining the Mission

A mission statement addresses four main questions:

- Who the organization is;
- What it does;
- Who the clients are; and
- How it meets the clients' needs.

There are several examples of Mission-like statements in TNEGI Documents.

- To improve life-long educational outcomes in all First Nations students in New Brunswick. *(business & operational plan)*
- To provide a quality education in a safe and caring environment by promoting: respect, responsibility, skill development, and an understanding of the community's unique culture, language and traditions in partnership with students, families and community. *(old web site)*
- TNEGI's mandate is to improve the educational outcomes of First Nations children through advocacy, professional and educational supports, and building meaningful partnerships *(new web site)*

Group discussions concluded while some had good parts, none fully expressed a TNEGI Mission. A Revised mission was debated, drafted and considered. It was to be provided back for final review in this document.

## **TNEGI MISSION STATEMENT**

***A Mi'kmaq Maliseet education organization dedicated to improving education outcomes of First Nation students through advocacy, professional and educational supports, and building meaningful partnerships.***

## 2.2 Confirming a Vision

A vision describes the dream of those in an organization of what kind of organization they really, really want it to be. A vision communicates that dream to people outside and allows an organization to:

- Define a new future and focus energy to moving toward it;

- Plot directions and allocate scarce resources to achieve the dream;
- Have a common basis for working together;
- Give potential partners confidence in our abilities and directions; and
- Maintain momentum even as people and factors change.

TNEGI documents have produced some Vision-like statements:

- To assist, promote and establish educational opportunities for students of the MAWIW communities... *(Letters patent of 2010)*
- ...Every First Nation student will graduate with the skills and understanding which will enable them to lead a successful and responsible life. *(old web site)*
- The purpose of the organization is to provide common governance and programming in the field of education to member First Nations. *(2013 Financial Statements)*

The workshops analysis concluded that some parts of a vision were included, but none really expressed the future that a successful TNEGI should produce. As a result the group brainstormed what that desirable future could look like. Although some found difficulties with overcoming the many known obstacles to success, a consensus of the future did emerge. It was laid out and a request that a draft be brought back for final review. The Draft Vision is contained below.

### **TNEGI VISION**

***TNEGI is delivering services similar to a Mi'kmaq Maliseet Department of Education. There our experts work cooperatively with provincial staff. Both support quality services to First Nations students at every level of education. Children and families are engaged with community schools where the culture is celebrated and people are positive about their futures. Success has brought all parties together and moving quickly toward self-government.***

### **2.3 Describing Guiding Principles**

The final piece of the foundation of a strategic plan, are the Principles. These are the values that guide staff when building the organization's future. They are what staff can turn to when deciding difficult questions. And they are the principles which people want their work to be known for.

Guiding principles were discussed at length and samples of other organizations' principles reviewed. A selection of possible TNEGI principles was developed. These were to be developed into draft statements and brought back for final changes. The drafts are as follows:

**Community** -- TNEGI believes education responsibility rests with each First Nation family and their government. Community schools provide the most tailored services possible alongside unbridled accountability. Local systems that encourage individuals to invest in their futures will be supported by TNEGI.

**Fair** -- TNEGI ensures all of its support functions are provided impartially, and based on clear criteria that addresses both need and equality.

**Transparent** -- For TNEGI's roles to continue to receive community support, it must be transparent in all its operations and results; only by showing TNEGI remains true to its principles, can we secure ongoing support.

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**Culture** -- Language, tradition and culture are indispensable parts of quality First Nation education; TNEGI works industriously to enhance these features.

### **3. Situation Analysis**

This stage lays out the major issues that must be addressed in the strategic plan. Strategic issues are few in number yet huge in importance to the future performance of the organisation.

Analysis addresses both internal and external factors and should provide insight into advantages, disadvantages, barriers and prospects for the future of the organization. From that situation analysis will emerge the issues that must be addressed with strategies, plans and targets, in order to make progress on the mission and vision.

There are four critical elements of the analysis and they have become known as SWOT or Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Strengths provide an analysis of advantages. Weaknesses consider areas of disadvantage. Opportunities list untapped or

emerging possibilities. While Threats explore the external environment that could bring new conditions or factors to bear on the organization.

The following SWOT results for TNEGI emerged

### **Strengths**

- TNEGI staff are Educators themselves
- TNEGI staff have school and program administration experience
- As a result TNEGI staff know the issues from all sides
- TNEGI operates on consensus across issues
- Everyone is open to new ideas
- Share a community and student focus
- FNSSP and other services through TNEGI reinforces the focus
- Each staff has networks to draw on & So can access required expertise
- TNEGI meet inexpensively
- Share views on matters
- There is cross community cooperation on programs
- Created a process of working closely with front line staff on major issues
- TNEGI is operationally separate from each Band's financial matters
- Chiefs are involved in TNEGI Board
- TNEGI is getting central finance function underway

### **Weaknesses**

- No central office
- Too much time spent on travel
- Project-by-project life for TNEGI
- Inability to grow or mature as an organization
- Web site needs to be completed, kept current & maintained
- Better documentation needed
- Records of decisions incomplete
- Communications efforts need improvement

### **Opportunities**

- FNEA abeyance may open door for TNEGI Vision
- The federal public recognition of need for new resources in Education
- FNSSP Success at Schools shows positive results from TNEGI approach
- TNEGI track record & new Strategic plan should position it well for whatever comes next

### **Threats**

- Uncertainty of how the FNEA will unfold and what role it may hold for TNEGI
- FNSSP Future is tied to FNEA so it is uncertain too

- Readiness budget has already been reduced; lowers ability to prepare for contingencies
- FNEII & Canada's desire for one group in a province continues to cloud issues in NB
- Local Politics can always interfere with cooperative services

#### **4. Financial Summary**

TNEGI is dependent on project based funding. Its revenues for two of the past three years are wholly from Aboriginal Affairs Canada and flows through seven different programs. One year has additional funding from First Nation Education Initiatives and the First Nation Cultural Foundation.

Reliance on project funding means there is no regular administrative funding. Each project must seek to secure separate administrative funding. To avoid creating ongoing costs TNEGI has kept its operational costs low and contracted some administrative services. However, this approach also means TNEGI has not able to create internal administrative capacity. The lack particularly of financial capacity, has been a concern expressed by AANDC officials. In the past few months TNEGI has moved to commit to hiring a full time Financial and administrative officer. The long term ability to maintain that capacity is now an issue.

Further complicating TNEGI's future is the general funding uncertainty for on-reserve education. The proposed legal changes were to come with significant new funding. Both the law and funding are now in dispute. At the same time there has been a significant reduction in the readiness project funding, which was a large part of TNEGI's financial plans for this coming year.

In sum, the short term constraints on finance and administration have long term implications for TNEGI's future.

#### **5. Strategic Goals & Priorities**

The analysis provides a range of factors to consider for TNEGI's future. Experience strongly suggests that focus must be on the most urgent and important items. That number should be around six priorities or less. More, and the plan will probably get into operational matters rather than strategic ones.

The analysis confirms that in the short term at least, TNEGI must operate in a great deal of uncertainty over the legal environment. Much of its future is seen as tied to that debate. However, it is also clear that while the FNEA encouraged common administration of schools, it did not provide funds for second level supporting services that most school boards supply. So the uncertainty may also be an opportunity for TNEGI to advocate and promote its version of school board-like services being a part of on-reserve education reform.

The TNEGI approach has yielded positive and measurable outcomes particularly in FNSSP. This can give TNEGI some legitimacy in implementing its strategic plan and in seeking new partners and projects.

### **Overall TNEGI Strategic Goals**

Continue and Broaden First Nation Student Success  
Develop the Infrastructure & Partnerships to Deliver Quality Second & Third  
Level Services  
Ensure Financial Sustainability of Education Services  
Build a Professional Education Organization that can move Seamlessly to Self-  
Government

## **5.1 Strategic Priorities**

### **5.1.1 Priority One Sustaining TNEGI**

TNEGI's first years have been built around projects. It now seeks to become a more permanent education support organization. Staff believe that key to this transformation is an effective administration structure. An efficient central office that follows standard policies and practices, offers space for more regular meetings, and helps build better communications and new partnerships, is necessary for this transformation.

Priority One Objectives:

- Secure adequate financial resources for TNEGI
- Secure office space in the Fredericton area
- Develop key policies and procedures
- Link the office to communication strategy needs

### **5.1.2 Priority Two Pilot project for reform**

The group decided that there was a convergence of factors that allowed consideration of an immediate action—development of a proposal for TNEGI's approach as a pilot project while the legal environment is being clarified. The approach would consist of Community delivered schools, continuing to build on literacy and numeracy success, and supported by genuine second level services from TNEGI. The project would be attractive as it does not change any existing federal systems, but offers to pilot on-reserve school board roles in a tangible way, which in turn can inform and ideally improve, the debate over on-reserve education structures.

Priority Two objectives:

- Develop a school board-like pilot proposal as quickly as possible and seek to secure federal approval of it.

### **5.1.3 Priority Three TNEGI Communications strategy**

TNEGI is committed to improving both the understanding and transparency, of its role and activities. Enhanced communications is the route identified to implement this priority.

In the complex environment of on-reserve education, TNEGI plays an unusual role. Plain language explanations of TNEGI's roles, goals, and progress are necessary. Explanations of TNEGI's activities, results and financial investments are needed to ensure transparency and accountability of the organization to elected officials, member communities, school staff, students and families, as well as to funding agencies and other education partners. The belief is that stronger communication alongside new transparency and accountability measures, will build better knowledge of TNEGI and lead to increasing support for its mandate.

Priority Three Objectives:

- Complete the communication strategy.
- Complete the new web site and carry out a "Launch Plan".
- Develop a mock-up of a TNEGI annual report.

### **5.1.4 Priority four -- Monitoring and preparing for reform**

The uncertain legal context of on-reserve education reform requires active monitoring of the situation, ongoing briefings of elected officials, active communication on issues, and development of contingency plans (in addition to Priority one—development of a TNEGI pilot project).

Priority Four Objectives:

- TNEGI becomes recognized as a source of good information on education reform
- Staff develop & Maintain potential reform scenarios for Leadership
- Have contingency plans for most probable reforms ready

### **5.1.5 Priority five – Provincial Capacity**

As most on-reserve students enter the provincial system at some point, the province has developed some expertise on First Nations education. However, it does not regard it as a priority and is more reactive than proactive. Enhancing provincial capacity in First Nations education remains a TNEGI priority.

Priority Five Objectives:



- Closer working relationships on TNEGI policy and curriculum matters
- Develop a protocol for provincial role in the Pilot project
- Implementation of Aboriginal history module
- Shared training plans for literacy and numeracy
- Local service agreements

## 6. Priority Action Plans

Each strategic priority must be supported by action that makes progress toward the objectives. An Action plan for each of the five priorities is provided below. These plans must be considered as guides to decision making, not prescriptions. Facts will change quickly and the need and desirability of suggested actions will change as the facts do. Action is still required to advance priorities, but it must be informed of the latest information and the decision rests with those that have both the authority and accountability for those decisions. As a result the action plans will be constantly reviewed, updated and renewed.

ACTION PLANS TO BE REVIEWED by WARREN AND BILL

### 6.1 Priority One Sustaining TNEGI

Priority One Objectives:

- Secure adequate financial resources for TNEGI
- Secure office space in the Fredericton area
- Develop key policies and procedures
- Link the office to communication strategy needs

#### Suggested Priority one actions

Potential actions	Lead person	Timing	Costs involved	Completed on
Canvass for acceptable space and terms for office in Fredericton area	Ex Director	2 months	Internal	
Describe policy and procedure needs	Ex director	5 months	Internal	
Establish & equip office		10 months	\$8000	
Draft urgent policies & procedures	Executive	8 months	consultant	
Board adoption of policies	Board	12 months	none	
consider job descriptions and ensure new functions including office,	Ex Director	12 months	Consultant	

communication, and planning are all addressed				
Posting on web of policies & Procedures	Ex director	12 months	internal	

## 6.2 Priority Two Pilot project for reform

Priority Two objectives:

- Develop a school board-like pilot proposal as quickly as possible and seek to secure federal approval of it.

### Suggested priority two actions

Potential actions	Lead person	Timing	Costs involved	Completed on
Search public comments for federal priorities	Consultant	immediate	none	
Outline a proposal & Strategy for submission	Consultant	1 month	none	
Executive review	Executive	1 month	None	
Informal contacts	Consultant & Ex Director	2 months	None	
Final draft	Board	2 months	None	
Implement submission strategy	Ex Director	2- 3 months	None	
Seek meeting	One of more Chiefs on Board	3 months	Possible travel costs	
Lobby & monitor	Executive	4 months	Possible travel costs	

## 6.3 Priority Three TNEGI Communications strategy

Priority Three Objectives:

- Complete the communication strategy.
- Complete the new web site and carry out a “Launch Plan”.
- Develop a mock-up a TNEGI annual report.

### Priority Three suggested actions

Potential actions	Lead person	Timing	Costs involved	Completed on
Review efforts on communication strategy and identify actions to complete	Ex Dir.	1 month		
Finalize web site & implement a launch	Ex Dir.	2 – 3 months		
Consider the annual report mock-up	Executive	1 month		
Draft actual annual report	Ex Dir.	2 months		
Revise as required & Implement communications strategy	Board & Executive	6 months		
Monitor results of strategy and bring issues to executive	Ex Dir.	Year end		

#### 6.4 Priority four -- Monitoring and preparing for reform

Priority Four Objectives:

- TNEGI becomes recognized as a source of good information on education reform
- Staff develop & Maintain potential reform scenarios for Leadership
- Have contingency plans for most probable reforms ready

Priority four suggested actions

Potential actions	Lead person	Timing	Costs involved	Completed on
Assign examination of reform to senior staff	Board	1 months	Internal	
outline areas of interest to examine	Executive	2 months	Internal	
Assigned staff oversees development of briefs & possible reactions	Ex. Dir.	4 months	Internal	
considers scenarios and options and identifies priorities	Executive	5 months	Internal	
Creation of contingency plans for reform scenarios	Ex Dir.	8 months	Internal	
Briefings for leadership on education reform issues, options and preferences for TNEGI interests	Executive	9 months	Internal	


## 6.5 Priority five – Provincial Capacity

### Priority Five Objectives:

- Closer working relationships on TNEGI policy and curriculum matters
- Develop a protocol for provincial role in the Pilot project
- Implementation of Aboriginal history module
- Shared training plans for literacy and numeracy
- Local service agreements

### Suggested priority five actions

Potential actions	Lead person	Timing	Costs involved	Completed on
Brief Chiefs on need for better relations with province & options for improvement	executive	Next Board meeting	Internal	
Work with FNEI to develop common priorities	Executive	3 months		
Establish priorities such as Aboriginal curriculum, as workplan items for joint NB - First Nations working groups	Executive	Next NB education meeting	Internal	
At district level advocate for First Nations students services and joint training of staff	Executive & School principals	1 month for notice 3 months to begin	Internal	
Track results at District and provincial levels	Executive & School principals	10 months	Internal	



## **APPENDIX ONE**

### **On-Reserve Education Context & this Plan**

Most constitutional authority for education in Canada rests with provinces, while authority for Indians and Indian reserves, rests with Canada. While First Nations argue that education of their children remains their responsibility that requires the support of other governments. However, until about 1972, First Nations education was firmly under the control of Canada and religious institutions. Since that era education services for First Nations students in Canada has been a complex mix of jurisdictions and responsibilities.

The Indian Act sets out powers for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) for the elementary/secondary education of First Nations students on-reserves. As a result, AANDC funds the education of on-reserve children in Kindergarten to Grade 12 who attend schools on reserves (about 60%) or who attend provincially-run schools off-reserve (40%). Notably First Nation students that do not live on-reserve are considered to be under provincial education jurisdiction and services.

AANDC funds also include a number of project initiatives such as professional development for teaching staff, teacher recruitment and retention, and greater parent and community engagement in education. FNSSP and Education Partnership Program (EPP) fit into this group of project funds. These services are directed at on-reserve schooling.

Although undertaken under a different legislative regime, on-reserve elementary/secondary education is linked to provincial elementary/secondary regimes through comparability of key items such as teacher certification, curriculum, and most controversially, funding levels.

Post-Secondary Education (PSE) is not covered by the Indian Act and funding in this field is characterized by Canada as a policy response to the need for more Aboriginal PSE graduates. PSE funding flows to First Nation governments which can support eligible students regardless of their residency, to attend accredited post-secondary institutions.

Also related to life-long learning are other federal programs such as: Early Childhood Development; adult basic education; life skills; training programs; labour force development; EI programming; and Career development. TNEGI member communities may have access to funds from any or all of these related fields.

In the past couple of years Canada has prepared and circulated a draft First Nations Education Act (FNEA). A program called Structural Readiness provided funding to assist First Nation education organizations in preparing themselves for such an Act. TNEGI has accessed those funds and undertaken work to prepare for a federal Act.

After circulation of the bill the FNEA underwent modification. It became the First Nations Control of First Nations Education Act and was to establish minimum education standards on-

reserve consistent with provincial standards off-reserve. It required First Nation schools to have a core curriculum that meets or exceeds provincial standards, that students meet minimum attendance requirements, that teachers are properly certified, and that First Nation schools award recognized diplomas or certificates. The revised Act set out roles and responsibilities for First Nation education administrators, annual reporting requirements, and allows for establishment of First Nation Education Authorities that could manage groups of Schools.

Canada and the AFN announced that the revised Act was expected to be turned into law within a year. However, that announcement sparked significant criticism from First Nations leaders across the country, resulting in the resignation of the AFN Chief and the federal government placing a hold on the proposed Act.

TNEGI visited Ottawa and sought insights into how the situation would be handled. There were no clear answers.

While initially TNEGI wanted a strategic plan to guide it through implementation of any new law, in this new context, it was decided a strategic plan would be of value in guiding it through what had become a period of significant uncertainty.