

## **Background**

Globally and with only a few exceptions, Indigenous and marginalized youth in traditional cultures currently have some of the lowest graduation rates from secondary school. Recent Canadian statistics indicate that 8.2% of the population of Greater Sudbury identify as Aboriginal; 41% of these individuals are 25 years or younger.

## **Global Research Initiative**

The City of Greater Sudbury (City) was successful in obtaining a \$250,000 grant through its Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) designation, from the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Department of the Government of Canada (INAC). The local and global partners include; the United Nations University, Institute for the Advanced Study on Sustainability the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Chair in Reorienting Teacher Education to Address Sustainability at York University, Shkagamik- Kwe Health Centre through its Mishk-Ode-Windum School (Rainbow District School Board) and Laurentian University.

This is a three year research project in which academic researchers from around the world will be participating, conducting research globally on how schools and their supporting formal education systems could change to better meet the local education needs of the youth in traditional communities.

## **The Reorienting Education Systems to Improve the Lives of Indigenous and Marginalized Youth Project**

The Global Research Initiative was recently held in the City of Greater Sudbury from October 15 to October 19, 2017 at Turtle Lodge( Laurentian University), Shkagamik-Kwe Health Centre and the Northern Water Sports Centre.

Global Regional Coordinators and Academic Researchers from around the world, along with local leaders and community partners came to the opening ceremony at Turtle Lodge(Laurentian University) to kick off this unique event.

Following the opening ceremony, the Global Regional Planning Meeting was launched in the City of Greater Sudbury, at the Northern Water Sports Centre. Charles Hopkins, the UNESCO Chair on Reorienting Teacher Education in Reorienting Teacher Education to Address Sustainability at York University began this initiative engaging over 70 academic institutions in 35 countries to take part. Regional planning meetings have been held in: Asia-Pacific, Andean South America, Central Asia, Southern Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. This meeting was summative in setting the stage for consolidating the North and Central American Region, as well as, hosting the first Regional Coordinators Meeting that united all researchers from around the world.

The goal of these meetings is to provide leadership and research to improve the lives of Indigenous and marginalized youth around the world. The research project will look at how best practices can be shared so that education and training systems can be reoriented to achieve positive educational outcomes for youth.

Through the global partnership plans will be made related to the research project, such as; research methodology, data baselines, defining research sites, acquiring funding, engaging other colleagues/institutions, developing communication platforms, sharing current good practice, etc. Researchers will work with schools and community leaders to explore curricula content and pedagogical approaches to more effectively engage the students and deliver a useful quality education.

## **Next Steps**

This research project intends to define best practices that can provide positive change not only here in the City of Greater Sudbury but in the entire world.

The City of Greater Sudbury's role is the main sponsor and will continue to collaborate with the Shkagamik-Kwe Health Centre in championing this research project to improve the lives of Indigenous and marginalized youth within the City of Greater Sudbury. Key deliverables and regular meetings will be established with the partners, to review progress of the research project.

Researchers will be brought back to the City of Greater Sudbury in March 2019 for a follow up to share research findings, best practices from around the world with the goal to move the Indigenous Youth Priority and our population upstream.

RCE Sudbury has been asked to chair the North and Central America Indigenous Research initiative.