



# INDIGENOUS ACTION PLAN

2018-21

*KINA GBEZHGOMI*

The **Indigenous Action Plan** sets forth a number of meaningful actions for its pre-college, certificate, diploma and degree programs. These actions will empower and engage youth around post-secondary studies, promote success in educational and career paths, and connect local Indigenous communities to post-secondary and industry resources.

**Fanshawe College  
2018-2021 Indigenous Action Plan**

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## Land Acknowledgement

Welcome to the Indigenous Action Plan. As a starting point, we would like to make an Indigenous land acknowledgement:

*We acknowledge and honour the Anishnaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Lenape people of Southwestern Ontario as the traditional owners and custodians of the lands and waterways where Fanshawe College is located. Further, we acknowledge the cultural diversity of all Indigenous peoples and pay respect to Elders past, present and future.*

*We celebrate the continuous living cultures of the original inhabitants of Canada and acknowledge the important contributions Indigenous people have and continue to make in Canadian society. The College respects and acknowledges our Indigenous students, staff, Elders and Indigenous visitors who come from many nations.*

### Why is it important to make an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement?

Incorporating an Acknowledgement protocol into the Indigenous Action plan, a course introduction, and/or official meetings and events recognizes Indigenous people as the original inhabitants and custodians of their land. It promotes an awareness of the past and ongoing connection to the place and land of Indigenous peoples within Canada. An Acknowledgement doesn't replace a treaty, native title or land rights, but they're a small gesture of recognition of the association with land and place of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada, and their history.

## Approach

Fanshawe College's approach to improving life opportunities for Indigenous students and community is to embed accountabilities for our Indigenous agenda across the College. The Fanshawe College Indigenous Action Plan (IAP) 2018-2021 provides our overarching framework to achieve this aim. The IAP is framed to build on and extend the College's core business activities across eight key action areas:

- Governance & Leadership
- Community Partnerships
- Cultural Recognition & Awareness
- Engaging Indigenous Learners
- Enhancing Student Experiences
- Teaching, Learning & Curriculum Development
- Research
- Indigenous Employment

In the IAP we want to move from a deficit approach to Indigenous peoples to a reciprocal relationship that recognizes the important contribution that Indigenous staff, students and communities make to this College. Indigenous students enrich our social and cultural fabric and contribute to the development of a high-quality learning environment for all students. Our goal as a College is to nurture and educate Indigenous graduates who will go on to succeed in their professional lives and make a significant contribution to improving their community, and society as a whole. We aim to attract Indigenous students who are empowered to be problem solvers, lifelong learners, and community creators in a changing world.

We are a pathways College, and we continue our innovative work in creating multiple educational pathways tailored to the unique requirements of our Indigenous students. Our students are increasingly pursuing studies across a broader range of disciplines – applied technology, arts, business, health sciences, human services, information technology – than they have in the past. In our most recent year, we had Indigenous students graduate from upwards of 60 different programs. Education has a major role in reconciling with Indigenous students and communities. Achieving parity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students would have a major impact on community well-being. It will require a College approach that is complex, multi-faceted, and will take time to build. We have an opportunity to create a new relationship with Indigenous peoples, and to learn from past experiences to create a better future together – a future full of hope and opportunity.



## Educational Context

The national policy context for the College's approach has been established by Colleges and Institutes Canada, which developed the Indigenous Education Protocol to support members' commitment to improving and better serving Indigenous education. In January of 2015, Fanshawe College and the Indigenous community signed the Indigenous Education Protocol agreeing to:

- Make Indigenous education a priority;
- Ensure governance structures recognize and respect Indigenous peoples;
- Implement intellectual and cultural traditions of Indigenous peoples through curriculum and learning approaches relevant to learners and communities;
- Support students and employees to increase understanding and reciprocity among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples;
- Commit to increasing the number of Indigenous employees with ongoing appointments throughout the institution, including Indigenous senior administrators;
- Establish Indigenous-centred holistic services and learning environments for learner success; and,
- Build relationships and be accountable to Indigenous communities in support of self-determination through education, training and applied research.

The College also initiated a literature review of Indigenous Higher Education and a review of Indigenous student outcomes since 2010. The reviews looked at ways in which higher education outcomes can contribute to community building and to the reduction of Indigenous disadvantage. The research identified a number of critical educational challenges including:

- The need to support the development of an educational vision for Indigenous peoples that includes post-secondary education as an option;
- The educational gap in literacy and numeracy achievement for Indigenous high school students;
- The low completion rate of Indigenous students for higher education when taken as a sector wide average;
- The need to develop initiatives that enhance outcomes and retention in both the secondary school and the College systems;

- The relatively small numbers of Indigenous students who pursue educational paths that include math and science;
- The need to create a shared, consistent methodology from tracking Indigenous student outcomes throughout Ontario institutions;
- The need to create safe, dedicated spaces for Indigenous students on campus, and incorporate Indigenous elders/knowledge keepers in both curriculum design and student support; and,
- The need to develop in-community program delivery that is responsive to Indigenous community needs and priorities.

In the spring of 2017, College leadership initiated a process to identify strategic goals to cover the period from April 1, 2017 through 2021. As part of the goal to enhance innovative practices for exceptional student learning, the College committed to develop an Indigenous Strategy, by fall 2018, that aligns with the Indigenous Education Protocol for Colleges and Institutes and the TRC Recommendations. The Indigenous Action Plan is the first step in our journey to increase Indigenous student access to higher education, and the fulfilment of their study and career aspirations.

## Indigenous Context

Ontario industries have a need for workers versed in 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills. Indigenous peoples are both the fastest growing and the most youth-based segment of Ontario's population. Indigenous peoples make up 5% of the Ontario population with almost two of every three individuals being under the age of 30 in First Nation communities. The average age of the Indigenous population in Ontario is 29 years of age. Many of the largest First Nations communities in Ontario are situated within an hour and a half of the London campus. Despite these large numbers, there are significant educational gaps at both the high school and post secondary levels between Indigenous and their non-Indigenous counterparts.

The Indigenous Action Plan is designed to address this gap and produce graduates who can provide valuable leadership, perspective, and connection to local communities, from which many employers in Ontario can directly benefit. Indigenous peoples face substantial barriers to success, with significantly lower labor force participation rates and the highest unemployment rates among all racial groups in Ontario. Indigenous peoples also have the lowest median income among all racial groups and the highest poverty rate. Household income and employment compound structural and historical conditions that contribute to a history of social and economic challenges for Indigenous peoples. The educational system in First Nation communities has high teacher turnover and insufficient resources in a geographically dispersed context, where providing high quality, in-person instruction to small communities poses a logistical challenge.



The Indigenous Action plan sets forth a number of meaningful actions for its pre-college, certificate, diploma, and degree components aimed at empowering and engaging youth around post-secondary studies, promoting success in educational and career paths, and connecting local Indigenous communities to post-secondary and industry resources. In addition to supporting individual students, the Indigenous Action Plan is designed to effect system change to improve the climate for Indigenous students within Ontario's education system, and Ontario industries.

## Truth and Reconciliation Recommendations

The Indigenous Action Plan supports the implementation of the following TRC recommendations:

### Education

7. We call upon the federal government to develop with [Indigenous] groups a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between [Indigenous] and non-[Indigenous] Canadians.

9. We call upon the federal government to prepare and publish annual reports comparing funding for the education of First Nations children on and off reserves, as well as educational and income attainments of [Indigenous] peoples in Canada compared with non-[Indigenous] people.

10. We call on the federal government to draft new [Indigenous] education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of [Indigenous] peoples. The new legislation would include a commitment to sufficient funding and would incorporate the following principles:

- i. Providing sufficient funding to close identified educational achievement gaps within one generation;
- ii. Improving education attainment levels and success rates;
- iii. Developing culturally appropriate curricula; and,
- iv. Protecting the right to [Indigenous] languages, including the teaching of [Indigenous] languages as credit courses.

12. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and [Indigenous] governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for [Indigenous] families.

### Languages

16. We call upon post-secondary institutions to create university and college degree and diploma programs in [Indigenous] languages.

### Health

24. We call upon medical and nursing schools in Canada to require all students to take a course dealing with [Indigenous] health issues, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and [Indigenous] rights, and Indigenous teachings and practices. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

### Justice

28. We call upon law schools in Canada to require all law students to take a course in [Indigenous] people and the law, which includes the history and legacy of residential schools, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Treaties and [Indigenous] rights, Indigenous law, and [Indigenous]–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

### Reconciliation Education

62. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, [Indigenous] peoples, and educators, to:

- i. Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and [Indigenous] peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement;
- ii. Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms; and,

- iii. Provide the necessary funding to [Indigenous] schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms.

### Media and Reconciliation

86. We call upon Canadian journalism programs and media schools to require education for all students on the history of Indigenous peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Indigenous rights, Indigenous law, and Indigenous – Crown relations.



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## The Vision

Through learning and teaching, research and community engagement activities, our vision for an Indigenous Action Plan is to support a College system:

- Where equity exists between Indigenous peoples and other Canadians in all areas including education and employment attainment, and quality of life;
- Where Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are respectful of each other's history, values, ways of being and aspirations, working towards addressing the legacies of the past;
- Where we support an engagement process built on mutual respect and understanding, and a commitment to meaningful actions, supporting our reconciliation efforts by developing partnerships with Indigenous peoples and communities;
- Where we advance research, knowledge and awareness of Indigenous peoples, culture and issues;
- Where we recruit, support and retain indigenous students, faculty members, administration and support staff;
- Where Indigenous student outcomes are everyone's business and a shared responsibility;
- Where our Indigenous students are enriched and highly capable in their field of study;
- Where our Indigenous graduates are leaders who remained committed and engaged with the College throughout their working life and beyond; and,
- Where we demonstrate leadership as higher education providers for Indigenous peoples.

## Goals

To achieve parity in educational outcomes for Indigenous students by:

- Recruiting Indigenous students with the potential to succeed in College education, and developing educational innovation and alternative pathways that create the opportunities to realize this aspiration;
- Providing Indigenous students with a high-quality educational experience that nurtures excellence and personal achievement;
- Creating a culturally safe, learning environment for Indigenous students;
- Enabling an enriching and transformative College experience for Indigenous students who also have a significant contribution to make to College life; and
- Realizing the capabilities of Indigenous peoples to have a transformative impact on Canadian society and Indigenous community development.

## Measurable Targets

The College is a global institution with national reach in relation to its domestic student population. As such, parity benchmarks for Indigenous student recruitment should be set to the proportion of Indigenous peoples as a whole. In Ontario, over 600,000 individuals identify as having Indigenous ancestry representing a 4.6 per cent share of the total population, and a significant per cent increase since 2006, a growth rate more than four times that of their non-Indigenous counterparts. The growth is attributed to both natural growth and the fact that Indigenous people appear to be more willing to identify themselves. The Indigenous population in Ontario is younger – 29 years old, on average, compared to 41 years old for non-Indigenous – thereby comprising a larger percentage of the student population. In Ontario, Indigenous peoples represent over 6% of the total population under the age of 25.

The College's key targets are framed to meet the following objectives:

- To achieve parity in the College domestic post-secondary student population equivalent to the Indigenous proportion of the Ontario population by 2025.
- To plan College targets based on the proportion of the prime student age population as a proportion of the Ontario population to 2030.
- To develop and review completion and enrolment targets for each five-year period leading to 2030.
- To maintain a level one completion rate on par with overall student retention rates (measured by good standing at the end of level 1) among Indigenous students by 2025.
- To maintain a program completion rate on par with overall student completion rates (measured by the average annual commencements as a proportion of average annual completions) among Indigenous students by 2028.
- To achieve parity between domestic and Indigenous student populations in relation to post graduation employment by 2028.
- To provide Indigenous Awareness/Competency training to 20% of staff annually commencing 2020.
- To incorporate Indigenous Learning Outcomes into at least one course per level for programs in Liberal Arts, Media & Design, Business, and Health, Community Studies and Public Safety by 2030 (integrating into the program review cycle starting 2020).

## Strategic Framework

The Strategic framework for the IAP identifies a number of critical interventions and articulation points along the student journey that requires a comprehensive approach to realizing our vision and goals. These include:

- Pathways to College initiatives for Indigenous youth;
- Recruitment and promotion of higher education certificate, diploma, degree, and graduate certificate programs;
- Transition and retention programs; and,
- Career advising, Co-op education, and experiential learning programs.

Our Life Long Learning model provides a platform to open up all possible educational opportunities to Indigenous peoples. However, some pathways require a particular focus either because the educational decision points are set quite early in the educational journey, or they frame an opportunity to broaden the educational options available to Indigenous students. It is our intent that we would provide an integrated approach to increasing participation across all fields of study. Enhancing access to some pathways will require unique intervention strategies.



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## LIFELONG LEARNING ACCESS & TRANSITION

### GRADUATE SUCCESS

Scholarship & financial support; life supports & advising; academic supports & advising; academic research & skill building; career awareness; team building work; summer co-op & internships; exposure to Indigenous mentors.

### EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING TEAMS

Experiential project-based learning; involve Indigenous communities; involve Indigenous mentors; student/mentor partnership; involves head, heart, hand & spirit; team building; recognition for success; public exhibition of results.

### COLLEGE TRANSITION

Team building; study groups; study space & resources; Indigenous counselling; life support & advising; academic support & advising; social activities; financial budgeting; time management; job placement assistance; research opportunities; exposure to Indigenous mentors.

### SUMMER COLLEGE

College students starting in fall; 1st year academic preparation; residential experience on campus; team building work; supports & advising; social activities; professionalism & skill building; computer skill enhancement; exposure to Indigenous mentors; scholarship & bursary.

### SUMMER ACCELERATOR

Grade 11 students; college program exploration; academic preparation; residence experience on campus; experiential learning modules; team building work; supports & advising; field trips; exposure to Indigenous mentors; scholarship & bursary.

### i-SCHOOL & CAREER EXPLORATION

Career exploration; academic program exploration; residential experience on campus; experiential learning modules; team building work; social activities; field trips; exposure to Indigenous mentors.

## KEY TARGETS

#### ACCESS

Enhance access pathways to ensure Indigenous students are represented in college programs based on the proportion on Indigenous prime student age population as a proportion of the overall domestic students (currently 7.5%).

#### RETENTION

Maintain level one completion rate of 80% for Indigenous students measured by the number of students in good standing.

#### GRADUATION

Maintain a program completion rate of 75% among Indigenous students.

#### EMPLOYMENT

To achieve parity between domestic and Indigenous student populations in relation to post graduate employment.

## Institutional Model

One of the key challenges in Indigenous higher education is to develop a College model that optimizes the quality of services and activities, as well as maximising the recruitment, retention and completion rates of Indigenous students across the breadth of College programs. Arguably, based on outcomes, no college has yet developed the ideal model. Equally so, it is likely that the optimal model will be one that is adapted to an organization's local institutional history, context and mission.

Our review of Indigenous Higher Education offers some key insights. The first is to reconfigure the relationship between a college Indigenous education centre and the various schools within that college. This means moving away from a highly centralised model to one in which programs have clear accountabilities. The second trajectory entails developing an organizational framework that integrates student recruitment and support activities with an academic development agenda in teaching and learning and research.

At present, the First Nations Centre integrates both student recruitment and student success support functions into its structure. This provides an organizational structure to link Indigenous academic development with employment and student success programs. According to the new institutional model, responsibility for Indigenous student programs is distributed across the full range of schools and administrative divisions. The following sets out the role and responsibilities of these various constituencies in the delivery of Indigenous student programs.

### Indigenous Action Plan Implementation Committee

With the support of the College President, and the Board of Governors, the Indigenous Action Plan Implementation Committee guides the development and implementation of the action plan. On an annual basis, the IAP Implementation Committee will provide an update on activities related to each of the seven action items of the Indigenous Education Protocol for Colleges and Institutes.

- Vice-President Student Services
- Vice-President Academic
- Vice-President Corporate Strategy & Business Development
- Vice-President Finance & Administration
- Special Advisor, Indigenous Education and Development
- Executive Director, Student Success
- Executive Director, Business Development & Strategic Support
- Executive Director, Employment & Entrepreneurial Services
- Associate Dean, Language and Liberal Studies
- Indigenous Elder/Knowledge Keeper
- Indigenous Staff/Faculty/Community Representative

### Indigenous Action Plan Working Groups (IWG)

The IAP Implementation Committee will initiate working groups to work on the implementation of key priorities of the Indigenous Action Plan such as the:

- **Indigenization Working Group** to provide leadership and support to the schools and programs in the development of culturally appropriate curriculum and educational approaches that reduce educational gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians;

- **Life Long Learning Working Group** to provide leadership and support to schools, programs, and student services in increasing participation in College, and successful transition and retention of Indigenous students;
- **Indigenous Reconciliation in Education** working group to work with Indigenous peoples and educators to provide profession development to leaders, support staff, and faculty to increase understanding of residential schools, treaties, Indigenous peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada;
- **Indigenous Spaces Working Group** to work with Indigenous peoples, communities and educators to establish Indigenous facilities and spaces giving prominence and recognition to local Indigenous communities and ways of being.

Each IWG will be comprised of Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff from a cross-section of faculties, schools, and student services that can contribute to the success of the initiative. It is expected that four to five priorities will be selected per year, with the IWGs providing updates on their progress quarterly to the IAP Implementation Committee.

### **The Institute of Indigenous Learning (First Nations Centre)**

As we implement the Indigenous Action Plan, we recognize that our actions will include student services for Indigenous students through The Institute of Indigenous Learning (formerly First Nations Centre) and also additional actions related to Indigenous learning, research and community based initiatives. The Institute of Indigenous Learning will be the umbrella for all Indigenous initiatives, and will:

- Collaborate with other areas of the College on Indigenous initiatives.
- Provide strategic, policy and planning leadership on Indigenous matters to the College.
- Promote best-practice and evidence-based initiatives in Indigenous programs.
- Enhance the College's relationships with Indigenous communities through outreach, partnership development, and community-based education delivery.
- Support schools to take a leadership role in Indigenous student programs and College portfolios to meet their accountabilities for Indigenous students.
- Deliver transition and mentor programs for Indigenous students moving to London and the College.
- Undertake recruitment and promotional work that complements the recruitment activities of Reputation & Brand Management, the Registrar and of the schools.
- Support Indigenous students to access College student services, participate where relevant in service coordination processes, and support College student services to enhance their capabilities in relation to Indigenous students.
- Provide targeted support to Indigenous students at critical transition points across the student lifecycle (selection, transition to College and graduation), as well as a program of enrichment activities that enhance the Indigenous student experience.
- Provide leadership on the development of college Indigenous programs and priorities.

### **Schools**

- In the spirit of the TRC, Schools have custodial responsibility for programs in which Indigenous students are enrolled, and responsibility for ensuring that Indigenous students have a high quality teaching and learning experience.
- Enhance the educational experience for all college students through visiting Indigenous scholars and artists, and developing relationships with Indigenous communities.

- Collaborate with College services to ensure outcomes are maximized for Indigenous students.
- Manage selection and enrolment of all students in collaboration with the Office of the Registrar and supported by the Institute of Indigenous Learning. Include strategies for selection and enrolment in highly competitive programs.
- Develop targeted recruitment and promotion strategies, educational pathways and student support programs relevant to their programs and priorities.
- Develop an inclusive academic environment through the appointment of Indigenous academics in their relevant fields of expertise and the delivery of high-quality curricula on Indigenous issues.
- Provide leadership in the local implementation of the College's Indigenous Action Plan.
- Provide leadership on the development of College Indigenous programs and priorities.



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### **Student Services**

- Provide leadership and expert advice to the College regarding Indigenous student engagement and support.
- Provide leadership in embedding support for Indigenous students within mainstream student services.
- Ensure the needs of Indigenous students are addressed through the ongoing development of our Student Advising Model.
- Provide accommodation, care and education support for Indigenous students.
- Provide leadership on the development of College Indigenous programs and priorities

### **Reputation & Brand Management**

- Takes responsibility for the roll-out of the recruitment agenda for the College and works to maximize Indigenous participation in its recruitment programs (with the support of the Institute of Indigenous Learning).
- Provides support in specialized areas including strategic and communications planning, web development and marketing of the College's Indigenous program.
- Where appropriate, modifies its recruitment programs to build Indigenous participation.
- Partners with the Institute of Indigenous Learning on targeted recruitment initiatives.

### **Office of the Registrar**

- Seek to establish residential scholarships and financial aid for Indigenous students where there is need.
- Work as key partners of the College in advising Indigenous students.
- Provide leadership on the development of College Indigenous programs and priorities.

## Action Plan Areas

In developing the Indigenous Action Plan, the College reviewed the work of other post-secondary institutions that have developed Indigenous strategies and action plans. Additionally, it was important that the action areas are grounded in the seven guiding principles of the Indigenous Education Protocol. The College is utilizing the following seven Action Areas, each of which was targeted to contribute to the vision of the IAP:

**Governance, Leadership & Institutional Support** - We start from a position recognizing that there is much to be gained in this educational journey learning from our Indigenous communities and our Indigenous communities learning from Fanshawe College. By learning together, we can learn about our differences and our commonalities, acknowledge our unique values and ways of looking at the world we live and work in, and identify ways to work side-by-side for mutual benefit.

**Involve & Support Indigenous Communities** - We recognize that engagement with Indigenous learners and communities is a key component to having long-term successful learning outcomes. It is about building relationships, it is about building trusting and respectful relationships. Discussions with Indigenous people need to be outcome based. To build the relationship discussions need to lead to tangible, meaningful actions.

**Embrace Indigenous Knowledge** - Historically, Indigenous people have been excluded from higher education by policy and circumstances, but they have also encountered curricula that either ignore Indigenous issues and perspectives, or regard Indigenous people as objects of study rather than participants in the creation of knowledge. Fanshawe College has an obligation to assure that an accurate and developed understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures, and perspectives are integrated into its existing curricula, and that emerging work in relevant fields is broadly communicated to the greater public.

**Engage Indigenous Learners** - Indigenous students complete high school at a significantly lower rate than the general population. Colleges establishing and maintaining contact with Indigenous learners from an early age can make a significant difference in their participation in post-secondary education. Indigenous students want to hear the stories of other Indigenous students with whom they can identify. They also want to see educational institutions in their community more often, not just when they want to make a post-secondary choice.

**Enhance Student Experiences** - It is not enough for Fanshawe College to attract Indigenous students to the College; it must also ensure that the College is a productive and supportive environment for their work. Research shows that there are educational performance gaps for Indigenous students entering post-secondary education. We are committed to ensuring that adequate support services are available to address the specific needs and expectations of Indigenous students prior to attending College, during the transition year, and throughout their educational experience.

**Teaching, Learning & Curriculum Development** - Indigenous knowledge must be understood to be part of the relationships Indigenous people have with the community and the land of their ancestors, and to all of creation. To support Indigenous ways and worldviews in curriculum is to acknowledge that both Indigenous and Western Knowledge are legitimate forms of knowledge. This is not integrating knowledge systems, or taking Indigenous knowledge and appending them to Western knowledge and approaches, but entering into a relationship with Indigenous people, allowing us to see a worldview that is different, interesting, and of value to the student experience.

**Indigenous Staff Employment** – As per our commitment in signing the Indigenous Education Protocol, the College aspires to increase the number of Indigenous employees, including Indigenous senior administrators. It is a way of creating an inclusive workforce and furthering our commitment to making Indigenous education a priority. It is an acknowledgement that it is important for Indigenous students to see themselves in the College, to see that the College values Indigenous experiences in supporting Indigenous students.