



Promising Practices: Increasing and Supporting Participation for Aboriginal Students in Ontario

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This paper is the result of a review of over 40 programs in Ontario colleges and universities that were designed to increase recruitment, participation and retention of Aboriginal students in postsecondary education. It involved a literature review, site visits to 6 postsecondary institutions and qualitative interviews with program administrators and coordinators at 28 institutions in Ontario.

The researchers found that significant progress has been made in developing support programs for Aboriginal students. It's noted in the paper that almost all colleges and universities in Ontario now have some form of support program and many institutions have taken a holistic approach and have implemented a number of programs targeting different underlying causes of lower participation and retention among Aboriginal students.

Progress is noted in the area of Aboriginal management bodies which are in place to help inform the design and implementation of Aboriginal-focused programs. Aboriginal Elders are being consulted and are playing a more active role on college and university campuses. As well, the number of courses being offered in the native languages of Ontario's First Nations Peoples has increased, and the number of Aboriginal teachers available to teach and serve as role models has also increased.

As the name suggests, the report also provides a broad snapshot of promising practices aimed at increasing Aboriginal recruitment and retention.

About the Author

R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. is a major national research and program evaluation firm specializing in the evaluation of social programs. The firm has extensive experience in the evaluation of advanced education programs in general and has completed several studies that focus on attraction, retention and transition of Aboriginal students in both the K-12 and postsecondary systems. For more information about the company, please visit their website at www.malatest.com.