

obstacle to ensuring that Métis people have control over the education of their young people. The Métis remain without recognized jurisdiction and authority even though they have equal protection under Section 35 of the Constitution.⁶⁷ The result is that Métis children generally are educated in public or Catholic school systems in which school boards are not specifically held accountable for the education needs of Métis children.⁶⁸ The Commission believes all levels of government should consult with Métis parents, communities, and national organizations to provide Métis-specific educational programming.

Inuit students face one of the largest gaps in terms of educational attainment. A disproportionately high number of northern parents are residential school Survivors or inter-generational Survivors. Inuit are among Canada's youngest citizens, with a median age of twenty-two. In response to the intense needs of its young population, Inuit peoples have been leading the way to dramatic change. Inuit education is on the cusp of significant transformation, with some of the most promising models for self-governing education coming out of northern communities. But these changes have not been without obstacles. Some regions have a greater capacity to develop the necessary resources than others. A shortage of bilingual educators is one of the greatest barriers to expanding bilingual education in Inuit schools. There is also a lack of teaching and reading materials in Inuit languages.⁶⁹

Another major problem is the lack of supports both within and outside the education system that are necessary to ensure student success. Inuit educators have long recognized that it is important to begin working with children as early as possible, but the North lacks good-quality daycare and preschool spaces.⁷⁰

Post-secondary education

To help close the income and employment gap, Aboriginal people need increased access to post-secondary education. Only 8.7% of First Nations people, 5.1% of Inuit, and 11.7% of Métis have a university degree, according to the 2011 census.⁷¹ The federal auditor general has commented: "In 2004, we noted that at existing rates, it would take 28 years for First Nations communities to reach the national average. More recent trends suggest that the time needed may be still longer."⁷² The barriers to post-secondary education have had profound effects. Geraldine Bob attended residential school at Kamloops, British Columbia. She told the Commission at a Community Hearing in Fort Simpson, Northwest Territories, that poor education and negative experiences at residential school delayed her attendance at university and her entry into the workforce as a teacher. She suggested that

the residential school system owes me those lost years. You know, I lost my retirement; I have to keep working, I don't have a good retirement fund because it was so late when I went to school. And I've proven that I can go to university and