



Indigenous Engagement Committee Action Plan

2025-28

great plains
college

Introduction

Great Plains College established its Indigenous Engagement Committee (IEC) in 2018 as an advisory body composed of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous members, including staff and community representatives, to support administration, faculty and students. This initiative aligns with the College’s strategic directions to Optimize Student Success and Build and Enhance Partnerships, and reflects a deep commitment to reconciliation and inclusive education. Guided by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action – particularly sections 62 and 63 – the committee plays a vital role in advancing intercultural understanding, supporting Indigenous student success, and fostering meaningful engagement across the college and the communities it serves.

In March 2024, the IEC undertook a comprehensive strategic planning session with participation and feedback from committee members, senior leadership, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and local Indigenous and Métis leaders. The sessions included a full assessment of the College’s ongoing IEC activities and community partnerships across all campuses, followed by an exploration of opportunities for deeper engagement and improvement.

During this process, the College was introduced to Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan)’s Indigenous Education Protocol – a national framework grounded in seven guiding principles that promote culturally responsive education, inclusive governance, and respectful, reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities.

These principles aligned strongly with the values and priorities identified during the planning sessions. In recognition of this alignment, Great Plains College formally committed to the CICan protocol and adopted its principles as the foundation for the 2025-28 Action Plan. This decision ensures the College’s efforts are both nationally aligned and locally informed, reinforcing a shared vision for reconciliation, inclusion and educational excellence.



Follow the link or scan to view the full
CICan Indigenous Education Protocol.

Indigenous Engagement Committee Action Plan 2025-28

To ensure meaningful progress and accountability, Great Plains College will use the seven guiding principles of CICan’s Indigenous Education Protocol as a framework to prioritize and align the activities of the Indigenous Engagement Committee.

These principles will serve not only as a guide for decision-making and planning, but also as a measure of our commitment to reconciliACTION, inclusion, and educational excellence. By grounding our actions in this protocol, along with the guidance from our local Indigenous and Métis Elders and Knowledge Keepers, we aim to make a lasting impact and deliver on the promises we make to students, our communities and partners.

While each campus will approach this work in ways that reflect its unique context, the 2025-28 Indigenous Engagement Committee Action Plan identifies key college-wide action items.



Commit to making Indigenous education a priority.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Reaffirm commitment to TRC Calls to Action (Section 63) annually, including:
 - Continue offering “In a Good Way: From Reconciliation to ReconciliACTion” as in-service and onboarding training; explore the development of an online format
 - Provide staff with additional Indigenous training, resources, and cultural opportunities through our Indigenous partners
 - Engage Elders and Knowledge Keepers to integrate land-based education and Indigenous-centered programming across the college
 - Educate staff on protocols and access to Elders and Knowledge Keepers
 - Honour significant Indigenous dates in a meaningful way
 - Build authentic relationships by liaising with First Nations and Indigenous organizations
- Pursue grants to support Indigenous education initiatives (including South Sask Community Foundation and Dakota Dunes)



Ensure governance structures recognize and respect Indigenous peoples.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Include Elders and Knowledge Keepers in key events and planning (e.g., staff events, student orientations and graduations)
- Educate staff on First Nations and Métis protocols; develop campus-level processes for tobacco, honorariums, and gifts
- Seek feedback from Indigenous partners to inform decisions
- Train Communications and Development staff on protocol surrounding language, symbols, and media
- Include Indigenous knowledge and cultural competency in job postings
- Incorporate a reconciliation goal in staff workplans



Implement intellectual and cultural traditions of Indigenous peoples through curriculum and learning approaches relevant to learners and communities.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Embed meaningful treaty acknowledgements in meetings, events and presentations
- Follow and educate students and communities on First Nations and Metis protocol for gift and tobacco offerings for presenters
- Share local Indigenous events and training opportunities
- Use Indigenous-authored books and resources across programs
- Partner with newcomer organizations to foster a shared understanding of histories, cultures and worldviews
- Integrate Indigenous history, treaties, culture, special ways of knowing, and special interest (e.g., Oskapiyoos learning) into programs
- Dedicate campus spaces for prayer, Elder support, ceremony, and smudging
- Display signed protocols and treaty flags at each campus to reflect reconciliation commitments



Support students and employees to increase understanding and reciprocity among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Continue offering “In a Good Way: From Reconciliation to ReconciliACTion” training to all staff
- Create a shared calendar of Indigenous education and cultural events for staff, students, community partners, and local Reconciliation committees (Prairie River, Southwest Truth and Reconciliation)
- Partner with newcomer organizations to promote cultural understanding
- Embed Indigenous history, treaties, and worldviews into programming



Commit to increasing the number of Indigenous employees with ongoing appointments throughout the institution, including Indigenous senior administrators.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Review hiring policies and provide training on inclusive practices
- Share job posting with Indigenous recruitment agencies, local First Nations and Tribal Councils
- Prioritize diversity in staff and board member recruitment



Establish Indigenous-centered holistic services and learning environments for learner success.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Dedicate space at each campus for prayer, Elder support, ceremony and smudging
- Ensure online and physical spaces reflect reconciliation (e.g., treaty flags, signed Indigenous protocols)
- Provide on-site Elder support at each campus
- Collaborate with community partners, recruitment, student advisers and coordinators to promote programs and assist students through the application process
- Identify and address barriers to participation (e.g., finances, transportation)
- Partner with First Nations to promote employment and funding opportunities
- Work with local First Nations and Tribal Councils to increase awareness of mental health supports beyond campus services
- Offer Life Skills and Essential Skills for the Workplace (ESWP) programming that incorporates Indigenous guest speakers and supports practicum placements at Indigenous businesses



Build relationships and be accountable to Indigenous communities in support of self-determination through education, training and applied research.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Prioritize Elder consultation and attendance at key college events and planning sessions (e.g., Staff kick-off, orientations, Staff Gathering, graduations)
- Strengthen collaboration and communication with First Nations and Indigenous organizations
- Maintain a shared calendar and attend local events to build meaningful relationships
- Expand partnerships with Nekaneet/Chinook committee for student recruitment and retention
- Collaborate with local reconciliation groups (Southwest Truth and Reconciliation Committee and Prairie Rivers Reconciliation Committee) to support community events

A Living Commitment: Guided by the Medicine Wheel

Great Plains College also recognizes that reconciliation is not a checklist – it is a continuous, evolving journey. To honour this, our Indigenous Engagement Committee and the actions identified in this plan are grounded in the Cree cultural teachings of the medicine wheel, shared with us by Elder Dale Mosquito. This holistic framework guides our ongoing efforts through four interconnected phases: commitment, illumination, activation and renewal.

These four pillars were further developed in collaboration with Delvin Kanewiyakiho of Four Winds Consulting and translated into the nêhiyaw language and Cree syllabics. This cultural lens complements the CICan Indigenous Education Protocol and the priorities of the IEC by offering a continuous, cyclical approach to Indigenous engagement – one grounded in relationships, reflection and renewal. It ensures our work remains responsive, accountable, and rooted in Indigenous worldviews.

As such, Great Plains College is committed to using this living framework to guide ongoing reflection, action and renewal – supporting meaningful, sustainable progress across all campuses.



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Great Plains College provides educational services in Treaty 4 and 6 Territories and the Traditional Homeland of the Métis People.

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