Renegotiating Family-School Relationships Among Indigenous Peoples in Southern Ontario

by

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AUTHOR DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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ABSTRACT

Academic success in public schools is facilitated by strong bonds between families and schools, including a shared sense of purpose and mutual trust and understanding (Lareau, 1987, 2000, 2002, 2011; Lareau and Weininger, 2003; Fan, 2001; Barnard, 2004; Sheldon and Epstein, 2005; Englund, Luckner, Whaley, and Egeland, 2004). However, for Indigenous peoples these relationships are often broken, undermined by the legacy of residential schooling and assimilative educational practices, as well as by structural barriers to participation. This thesis argues that the examination of family-school relationships is crucial to understanding educational achievement gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. Using social and cultural capital theory this thesis examines the dynamics of educational inequality associated with Indigenous family-school relationships to understand family and school-based mechanisms that are seen to limit or encourage Indigenous student achievement. Drawing on interviews with 218 Indigenous (mainly Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and Métis) and non-Indigenous parents and educators, this research asks two questions. First, what encourages or limits meaningful home-school connections between Indigenous peoples and schools in southern Ontario? Second, how are these connections seen to influence educational achievement among Indigenous students? This thesis will consider how, potentially, legacies of discriminatory educational practices and social class may be seen as contributing to differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous family-school relationships, as well as differences in educational experiences and outcomes.

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

The gap in educational achievement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians is one of the great social policy challenges in Canada (Richards, 2008; Richards and Scott, 2009).[1,2,3] The 2012 Aboriginal Peoples Survey shows that 28% of First Nations peoples living off-reserve, 58% of Inuit, and 23% of Métis aged 18-44 had not completed high school (Statistics Canada, 2013) compared to 11% of the non-Indigenous population (Bougie et al., 2013, pg. 6). Further, 43% of off-reserve First Nations peoples, 26% of Inuit, and 47% of Métis aged 18 to 44 had some form of post-secondary credentials (Statistics Canada, 2013), compared to 64% of the non-Indigenous population (Bougie et al., 2013, pg. 6). First Nations peoples are also least likely to participate in post-secondary education of any kind, compared to Canadian born and immigrant European, African/Latin Americans, East Asians, and other Asians (Thiessen, 2009).[4]

Income and employment disparities experienced by Indigenous peoples have also been well documented (Broadbent Institute, 2012; Shapcott, 2009; Canada Human Rights Commission, 2008; Reading and Wein, 2009)[5]. Low levels of educational achievement is a major cause of chronic poverty among the Indigenous Canadian population (Richards and Vining, 2004), and increased levels of education has been identified as a solution to alleviate the poverty and marginalization experienced by Indigenous peoples (Richards and Scott 2009, pg. 4). Research is needed to further understand the challenges that negatively impact, as well as the strategies that encourage, Indigenous students' academic achievement.

Family-school relationships are often conceptualized as a collaborative relationship formed between parents, teachers, school administrators and personnel, and extended family members to support children's academic success. Research, primarily from the USA, has examined family-

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[1] The term Indigenous will be used throughout this thesis to refer to descendants of the original Indigenous inhabitants of North America. In this study participants voluntarily identified their cultural background; interviewees identified themselves as "Indigenous," "Aboriginal" "Native," "Haudenosaunee," "Anishinaabe," and "Métis." This information was used to distinguish between Indigenous and non-Indigenous interviewees. Although using the term Indigenous obscures cultural variation, this is the most appropriate term for the thesis.

[2] The Indigenous/non-Indigenous gap for any age group and education level is defined as "the difference between the share of the relevant non-Aboriginal population with that education level or higher and the corresponding share of the relevant Aboriginal population with that education level" (Richards, 2008, pg. 1).

[3] To date, the research on achievement gaps among Indigenous families has produced a wealth of information including that significant education gaps begin to emerge between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in early primary grades and widen at higher grades (Richards and Scott, 2009, pg. 22). As education levels among younger Indigenous groups have increased, education levels among other Canadians have also increased; indeed, the gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples at all education levels appear to be widening (Statistics Canada, 2006b, pg. 19; Gordon and White, 2013).

[4] Indigenous students are more likely to be first generation post-secondary students as well as more likely leave post-secondary education without graduating in their first or second year than non-Indigenous students (Finnie et al., 2010a).

[5] Indigenous peoples earned 70 cents for every dollar earned by non-Indigenous people in 2006 (Broadbent Institute, 2012, pg. 10) and one in four Indigenous children lives in poverty (Broadbent Institute, 2012, pg. 10). Indigenous households are three times more likely to be living in poverty compared to non-Indigenous households (Shapcott, 2009) and in 1996 58% of Indigenous children from birth to age five were living in low-income families (Canada Human Rights Commission, 2008).

school relations among Euro-American/Euro-Canadian, Latino/Hispanic, African American, Mexican, and Asian families (e.g., Lareau 2002, 2011; Lareau and Horvat, 1999; Mau, 1997; Suizzo et al., 2014; Lee and Bowen, 2006; Aspiazu, Bauer and Spillett, 1998; Goldenberg et al., 2001; Birch and Ferrin, 2002; Halle et al., 1997; Gutman and McLoyd, 2000; Kim, 2002; Neblett et al., 2009; Neblett et al., 2006; Neblett et al., 2008; Banerjee, Harrell and Johnson, 2011; Howard and Reynolds, 2008). Researchers have examined tensions between Canadian Indigenous peoples and schools rooted in legacies of residential schooling (Wotherspoon and Schissel, 2003; Wotherspoon, 2006), as well as the role of Indigenous parental education, family income, parents' schooling expectations and emphasis on academic performance on educational achievement (Richards and Scott, 2009; Richards et. al., 2008; Richards and Vining, 2004). According to reports published by Statistics Canada, having a family member who attended residential schools is associated with lower school success (Bougie, 2009) and a lower probability of completing high school (Arriagada, 2015). However, there is little known about the micro-foundations of family-school relationships among Indigenous communities. Filling this "black box", this thesis offers an empirical contribution to understanding the dynamics of educational inequality associated with Indigenous family-school relationships.

This dissertation extends current research by documenting the relationship between Indigenous families and schools. I complement this analysis by including a comparable sample of non-Indigenous families (based on family social class and geographic location) in order to illuminate the unique challenges that Indigenous families face when connecting with schools, while also identifying those challenges shared by non-Indigenous families struggling with economic and social disadvantages. Specifically this thesis asks: What encourages or limits meaningful home-school connections between Indigenous peoples and schools in southern Ontario? How are these connections seen to influence educational achievement among Indigenous students? This thesis compares dynamics of family-school relations among Indigenous and non-Indigenous families and considers how differences may shape Indigenous student achievement. The analysis also considers differences in family-school relations based on social class and the legacies of racial discrimination in schooling.

Social and cultural capital theories provide a useful framework to examine the resources that families have and how families are able to draw on these resources to navigate schooling processes and gain schooling advantages for their children. Theories of social and cultural capital are central to the notion of family-school relationships and offer an alternative to "cultural deficit" approaches[6] (for example see Ogbu, 2003, 1994, 1991, 1987) by highlighting the relationship between family-school connections and academic success. Cultural capital refers to the "micro-interactional processes" where an individual's use of knowledge, skills, and competence interacts with institutionalized standards of evaluation (Lareau and Weininger, 2003, pg. 569), whereas social capital is a resource based on relationships, networks and group

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[6] In the past, some functionalists assumed that "lower class" families did not value education or aspire to it, and lacked the home support for academic achievement. Critics often re-described the same themes but asserted that class differences must be due to discrimination of some sort and that schools did not reward the many "assets" that poor families brought to schools. The problem is that studies have continued to rarely find discrimination by teachers (Wineburg, 1987) and critics have not created Model Schools to show us how to do school properly.

membership (Bourdieu 1998). Although everyone may possess capital to invest, individual ability to activate capital and the value attributed to displays of capital in social settings may differ (Lareau and Horvat, 1999). Lareau and Horvat conceptualize "moments of inclusion" and "moments of exclusion" as a framework to examine parental strategies to support children's schooling. Parental efforts to gain educational advantages for their children that are legitimated by school actors, and are successful, would be considered moments of inclusion, while parental efforts that are considered unhelpful, and are unsuccessful, would be considered moments of exclusion.

The study primarily draws on interviews with 218 participants (70 educators and 148 parents) within four Ontario school boards. Of those interviewees, 20 teachers and 20 parents are from a First Nation, Métis or Inuit background. Four non-Indigenous parent interviewees have children with Indigenous ancestry and six non-Indigenous teachers have Indigenous education as an area of specialization. I also draw on data from a survey distributed to educators from one of the four school boards. 17 teachers responded to the survey. Two of the survey respondents are from a First Nation, Métis or Inuit background.

This thesis finds that legacies of residential schools and racial discrimination in schooling against Indigenous peoples complicate Indigenous parents' ability to form close relationships with educators. Findings also suggest that Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents share similar class-based experiences of parent-teacher interaction. However, legacies of racial discrimination affect family-school relations among middle- and lower-class Indigenous parents in different ways. Middle-class Indigenous parents engage in what I term "alignment-plus." These parents align their parenting with practices of concerted cultivation and schools' institutionalized requirements (Lareau, 2011, discussed further below). Plus they intensify parenting practices in order to shield their children from experiencing discrimination at school. Alternatively, lower-class parents deescalate parenting practices in response to the historical context of Indigenous education. Further, there are organizational barriers to implementing Indigenous focused schooling initiatives that aim to reduce educational disparities connected to family-school relationships, resulting in more symbolic benefits than actual change in educational experiences and outcomes.

The following sections provide context for the broader empirical agenda of this study, which examines dynamics of educational inequality associated with Indigenous family-school relationships. Family-school relationships, Indigenous family-school relations in historical context, research contributions, and an overview of this thesis are discussed below.

1.1   Family-School Relationships

> *Although many researchers have validated the relationship between parental involvement and student achievement, they have not investigated these issues from the perspective of Native parents* (Friedel, 1999, pg. 140).

The literature on educational inequality considers the role of schools (including its teachers, resources and curricula) and family effects (including social, cultural, environmental or resource

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deficits).[i] Research finds that family social class plays a role in determining educational outcomes as well as the relationship between families and schools (Lareau, 1987, 2000, 2002, 2011; Lareau and Weininger, 2003; Sirin, 2005; Conley and Albright, 2004; Willms, 2002, 2009; Finnie et al., 2010b; Finnie, 2012). Family social class is closely tied to differences in parenting styles (Lareau, 2002, 2011), the likelihood of parental involvement in schooling (Hill and Taylor, 2004), school readiness (Janus and Duku, 2007), the amount of time and interaction parents have with children (Sayer et al., 2004; Hart and Risley, 1995), involvement in activities that develop children's literary and numeracy skills (Council of Ministers of Education Canada, 2013), and whether children continue to learn at school-year learning rates during summer vacation (Alexander et al., 2007; Davies and Aurini, 2013; Frenette, 2007). These differences are partly explained by parents' financial security and investments in their children's development, but also a variety of non-financial investments.[7] Non-economic factors include culturally based resources such as the strength and *quality* of family and school connections (De Graaf et al., 2000; Demerath, 2009; Lareau, 2003; Looker, 2004; Desimone, 1999).

Family resources do not operate in a vacuum. Rather than focusing on either schools *or* families, researchers examine how these two institutions interact in ways that generate differences in academic achievement. According to Lareau (2011), not only do family practices differ by social class but such family practices and values are not equally evaluated by institutions. Lareau's research captures variation in what she terms a "cultural logic of child rearing" and its resulting family-school relationships (Lareau, 1987, 2000, 2002, 2011). Although not inherently middle-class, Lareau finds that middle-class parents tend to draw on social and cultural capital, economic resources, as well as first-hand knowledge of the education system to effectively navigate through schooling processes and gain advantages for their children. Middle-class parents tend to actively monitor their children's schooling and are more knowledgeable about ways their children may be struggling. These parents also tend to work with educators to find solutions and supplement schooling experiences outside of regular school. In comparison, Lareau suggests that working-class and poor parents tend to assume a more passive role when it comes to their children's education and rely more heavily on the expertise of educators to guide and manage their children's schooling experience. Clearly, family-school relationships are an important consideration in the analysis of educational experiences and academic achievement.

Among Indigenous communities, research has linked parental education and family income with children's educational prospects, family schooling and career expectations, emphasis on academic performance, and monitoring children's schooling (Richards et al., 2008; Richards and Vining, 2004). Research suggests that Indigenous parents have low levels of schooling support and encouragement, or what some have termed as "non-interference" (Dehyle, 1992), which has been associated with poor performance and drop-out among Indigenous students (Coladarci, 1983; Dehyle, 1992). According to Friedel (1999) "one of the outcomes of low involvement rates is that Aboriginal parents, through their nonparticipation [in schooling], are held partly

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[7] A study by Statistics Canada found that 84% of the gap in university attendance across the income distribution is related to other, non-economic factors (Frenette, 2007). Family "cultural factors," such as the communication parents have with children regarding post-secondary schooling, also have a significant effect on education outcomes (Finnie, 2012).

responsible for the overwhelming negative statistics concerning Aboriginal education without a comprehensive understanding of the reasons for this phenomenon" (pg.139).

The history of racial discrimination in schooling complicates understanding the link between Indigenous families and schools.[8] Indigenous student, parent, and community perspectives on the school system have been negatively affected by residential school experiences, leading to intergenerational mistrust of the education system (Perley, 1993; Wotherspoon, 2006, 2008; Wotherspoon and Schissel, 2003). Legacies of residential schooling have undermined educational prospects and perceptions of schooling in Indigenous populations (Wotherspoon and Schissel, 2003). Feelings of distrust may create barriers to Indigenous parent involvement in their children's schooling and conditions in which adults are unable to promote and support education among children (Reading and Wein, 2009, pg. 12). This history may complicate the ability for Indigenous parents to establish quality connections with schools, leading to various (dis)advantages for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children as they advance in their academic careers. This study examines family characteristics (e.g., parents' role in their children's education, parents' social class) in combination with historical influences as integral components of overall educational success in Indigenous communities.

1.2   Canadian Indigenous Family-School Relations in Historical Context

This thesis argues that legacies of racial discrimination against Indigenous peoples in schooling influence the role that Indigenous parents play in their children's education. The following section provides a brief overview of the history of Indigenous education in Canada -from policy and practice based on assimilation to accommodation- to facilitate an understanding of Indigenous education policy, practices and experiences in context. This discussion is not exhaustive, as anything further is beyond the scope of this thesis.

1.2.1   Assimilation

> *We've had almost 200 years where everything we did was illegal, everything we did was wrong. We had to learn and learn and learn until we were unlearned. Take the Indian out of the child. Kill the Indian, keep the child. That was the idea. Total assimilation or death. That was the choice that we were facing* (Rick, Indigenous cultural advisor, East Haven).

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[8] Direct discrimination involves differential treatment (i.e. being denied an opportunity or advantage) because of group membership resulting in overt exclusions and mistreatment (Sheppard, 2010). Systemic discrimination, on the other hand, takes place when direct discrimination and stereotyping becomes pervasive within cultural, structural and institutional context and when social practices and policies have exclusionary effects on different groups in society (Sheppard, 2010).

Assimilation in Indigenous policy

Educational inequality experienced by Indigenous peoples in the past may be framed by principles of assimilation. In theory, assimilation policies seek to eliminate Indigenous difference by absorbing Indigenous peoples into Canadian society. The process of assimilation involves the dominant groups in society imposing their culture, authority, values, and institutions on subordinate groups, resulting in the loss of their distinctiveness as peoples (Fleras, 2011, pg. 13). Historically, Canadian government policies and practices reflected processes of colonization and served to oppress Indigenous Canadians.

> Colonization is a process that includes geographic incursion, socio-cultural dislocation, the establishment of external political control and economic dispossession, the provision of low-level social services and ultimately, the creation of ideological formulations around race and skin colour that position the colonizer at a higher evolution level than the colonized (Reading and Wein, 2009, pg. 21 citing Kelm, 1998).

In Canada, under British and French colonial rule, perceptions of European superiority were the basis for asserting dominance over Indigenous peoples. Anglo-conformity was the underlying principle of assimilative government policy and practice. Indigenous values and traditions were dismissed as inferior and Indigenous populations were expected to comply with dominant cultural values and social practices of mainstream society (Fleras, 2010, 2011). Principles of assimilation have been expressed in government policies which intended to advance dominant Canadian culture by eliminating Indigenous cultural difference by doing away with preferential laws (e.g., status and rights) and programs specific for Indigenous peoples; consequently, enforcing the integration of Indigenous peoples into majority society as "normal" citizens. According to this logic, Indigenous peoples could become "full" and "equal" citizens in Canadian society by removing difference and making them just like everyone else.

Treaties represent binding obligations and have been a fundamental component of First Nations peoples and state relations in Canadian history. In the past, however, Indigenous rights and status have been dismissed and treaty agreements have been broken. Tension and resentment developed among Indigenous peoples because Indigenous difference – or the "politics of Aboriginality" based on the status of Indigenous peoples as descendants of the original occupants - is the principle for negotiation and change (Fleras, 2010, 2011). When Confederation was achieved and the *British North America Act* (or Constitution Act) was passed in 1867 all aspects of Indigenous affairs became the responsibility of the Canadian federal government. In 1876 *The Indian Act* became the principal framework for federal jurisdiction over Indigenous peoples and, specifically sections 113 to 122 of the Act, served to regulate all aspects of Indigenous peoples' lives. Reinforcing paternalist attitudes, the Indian Act and successive revisions constricted Indigenous rights and freedoms, and deprived Indigenous peoples of the rights to their land, culture, self-governance, political voice, and involvement in the education of Indigenous children. Scholars have argued that contemporary negative effects of colonial processes are manifested in high rates of unemployment, limited economic opportunities, low literacy and educational attainment, poor health and housing, and higher rates of interaction with the criminal

justice system and incarceration (Leeuw and Greenwood, 2011; McMullin, 2010; Smylie, 2009; Reading and Wein, 2009).

Assimilation in practices of Indigenous education

Education is a treaty obligation and control over education is a right of Indigenous peoples; these rights were dismissed in favour of European conquest and perceptions of superiority. *The Royal Proclamation* 1763 initially defined the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples wherein exclusive authority, termed sovereignty, of Indigenous government was recognized by the Crown. Further, as agreed upon in each of the eleven treaties, from 1871 to 1921, treaties explicitly identify the provision of education as a Treaty Entitlement and confirm Indigenous jurisdiction over education (see Assembly of First Nations, 1988, pg. 2). As well, section 35 of Canada's Constitution Act, 1982, recognizes and affirms the existing treaty rights of Indigenous peoples outside the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms based on the status of original occupancy. The treaty and inherent rights of Indigenous jurisdiction over education as well as rights to Indigenous models of self-determining autonomy are protected within Canada's Constitution. These historical documents identify that Canada has a legal obligation to provide and resource Indigenous education, and that Indigenous peoples have the right to jurisdiction over Indigenous education. Government action disregarding Indigenous rights to Indigenous education is a key expression of assimilation in Indigenous education.

Historically, Indigenous families and communities were identified by church and government leaders as the obstacle to impressing the ways of dominant society upon Indigenous children. Therefore, Indigenous education in Canada separated children from the influence of their parents and culture.

> It was widely believed among the settlers that continued contact between Indigenous children and their parents and people was a virtually insurmountable obstacle to even the most rudimentary form of European-style education...Educators at the time believed the sole remedy to this obstacle was separation of the child from parents and family, and the more absolute this was, the better (Paquette and Fallon, 2010, pg. 5, 6).

Residential schooling was a powerful mechanism of assimilation used by European colonizers to assimilate and "civilize" Indigenous children into mainstream Canadian society (Legacy of Hope Foundation, 2014; Chansonneuve, 2005, pg. 5). [9] Residential schools may include industrial schools, boarding schools, homes for students, hostels, billets, residential schools, and residential schools with a majority of day students (Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2001, pg. 5). Regarded as an experiment in social engineering and cultural genocide, residential schooling destroyed

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[9] Initially, Indigenous parents and communities consented to participating in residential schooling to obtain a European-style education for their children (Miller, 1996). Many Indigenous people desired literacy and technical knowledge and realized they had to adapt and function within the developing Euro-Canadian society. However, no one consented to the abuse and mistreatment that took place (Miller, 1996). Further, not all residential schools and not all students experienced sexual and physical abuse, and some students went on to become successful contributing members of Canadian society (Miller, 1996).

culture, language, family ties and community networks (Miller, 1996; Legacy of Hope Foundation, 2014; Reading and Wein, 2009). Schools suppressed Indigenous language and culture, imposed Christian ideologies and belief systems, and problems of student health and safety, child labour (at times connected to vocational training), and physical and sexual abuse were common (Miller, 1996; Wotherspoon and Schissel, 2003; Legacy of Hope Foundation, 2014; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996; RCAP hereafter). Residential schools wanted Indigenous children, "above all," to be like "the ideal middle-class Canadian child" (Hawthorn et al., 1967, pg. 6). Teachers were therefore confronted with the task of "helping children overcome their Indianness" (Hawthorn et al., 1967, pg. 121). The residential school system has been criticised for leaving hundreds of Indigenous children and families broken, creating intergenerational legacy of social dysfunction linked to "residential school syndrome" (Miller, 1996) and "generations of damaged people" (Schissel and Wotherspoon, 2003; also see RCAP, 1996; Reading and Wein, 2009, Leeuw and Greenwood, 2011; Smylie, 2009).

Legacy of Hope Foundation (2014) dates the first of a network of residential schools as opening in 1831. In the 1920's all former industrial and boarding establishments became residential schools (White and Peters, 2009, pg. 18). 139 schools operated across Canada and were operated by various churches (Legacy of Hope Foundation, 2014; also see Miller, 1996). Over 150,000 First Nation, Métis and Inuit children attended residential schools between 1831 and 1996, when the last residential school closed (Legacy of Hope Foundation, 2014; Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2012; Miller, 1996).

In the 1940s and 1950s it was becoming evident to government administration that residential schools were failing to educate and assimilate Indigenous children (White and Peters, 2009, pg. 20). In 1946 assimilative policies were officially abandoned in favour of policy based on the "integration" of Indigenous peoples into dominant Canadian society in order to overcome issues of Indigenous dependence on the state (Ormiston, 2002, pg. 5). The residential school model was abandoned and in1951[10] and the Indian Act was revised to indicate that, where possible, Indigenous children were to be integrated into mainstream provincial schools.[11] Indigenous students were to receive the same educational programs, activities and opportunities as Euro-Canadian children.

Despite the official policy shift many schooling ideas and practices remained predicated on principles of assimilative control. At the integration stage, education policy and practice attempted to socialize Indigenous children along Euro-Canadian lines based on standard educational means and measures of the non-Indigenous Canadian majority. Schooling facilitated the enculturation of Indigenous children to the behaviour patterns, customs, knowledge and values shared by mainstream Canadian society. In other words, children learned to function like members of the general population.

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[10] However, in 1960 over 60 residential schools remained open (see The Aboriginal Healing foundation, 2001).
[11] Richards (Richards, 2008; Richards et al., 2008; Richards and Scott, 2009) distinguishes between Indigenous students, who are "registered Indian" students, attending on-reserve schools and Indigenous students attending off-reserve schools with non-Indigenous students. He clarifies, that currently, jurisdiction of on-reserve education of Indigenous students lies formally with the Department of Indian Affairs and, in practice, control lies with the relevant individual band councils. Off-reserve schooling lies with the relevant provincial jurisdiction. To clarify, on-reserve schools are operated by local band councils but, formally, under the jurisdiction of the federal government.

The past unequal treatment of Indigenous peoples may shape current dynamics of Indigenous family-school relationships. The RCAP report provides insight into implications of past mistreatment.

> Parental involvement and local control of schools are standard practice in Canada - but not for Aboriginal people. Instead, they have long been the object of attempts by state and church authorities to use education to control and assimilate them, during the residential school era, certainly, but also, more subtly, today (RCAP, 1996).

Disadvantage and inequality appear characteristic of the Indigenous peoples-Canadian state relationship specifically with reference to status, rights, and government policy. As a result, Indigenous communities may have negative feelings towards schooling and a deep mistrust of mainstream educational institutions, leading to parental and community disengagement with Indigenous children's schooling (see Perley, 1993). These feelings may be rooted in personal experiences of oppressive treatment within residential schools or the knowledge of others experiences. Feelings may also arise from general past negative schooling experiences, perhaps reflecting failure to achieve academic success in the Euro-Canadian school system. Alternatively, or in addition, negative feelings may be in reaction to the perception that schools continue to be colonizing force within the community and a means of further assimilation, regarding culture, language and traditions (Perley, 1993). Richardson and Scott (2009, pg. 37-66) identify cultural expectations for formal academic achievement as a factor in explaining education outcomes among Indigenous populations. They draw a connection between the demand for education by students and their families and a deep mistrust among some Indigenous peoples of mainstream educational institutions.

Education systems may be perceived as a means of continued assimilation and colonial oppression (Ormiston, 2002; Hookimaw-Witt, 1998; Perley, 1993) by transmitting and legitimating dominant culture and knowledge through what is taught, how it's taught, and how learning is measured (Ormiston, 2002; McCarthy, 1990; Battiste and Henderson, 2009; Donald, 2009, 2012; St. Denis, 2011). Scholars advocate for decolonizing the education system by way of acknowledging and infusing Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing into student learning, which have previously been excluded from contemporary "colonial system of education" (for detailed description see Battiste, 2013, 1998; Dei, 2012; Alfred 2014, 2005, 2009; Munroe et al., 2013; Donald, 2009,2012).

1.2.2 Accommodation

Accommodation in Indigenous policy

Canada's current Indigenous peoples-state relationship may be framed by a political framework of accommodation which embraces mutual adjustment and balances principles of assimilation and autonomy. Within this framework, efforts to decolonize the Indigenous state of affairs is perceived as necessary and the legacy of colonization is recognized as contributing to problems Indigenous populations currently experience (Fleras, 2010, 2011). Within this framework the

problem is the broken relationship between Indigenous peoples and the state, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. In response, government policy and practice aim to repair the relationship through mutual accommodation by the system, peoples, and community (Fleras, 2010, 2011).

The current state of Indigenous-non-Indigenous affairs may be further characterized by a neo-colonial model of governance. Within a neo-colonial framework, the relationship between Indigenous peoples and Canada and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples remains embedded in the existing system based upon principles of a Eurocentric constitutional order. The Canadian system is invested in maintaining the existing colonial infrastructure and resistant to fundamental change, wherein, "conventions that refer to the rules may change, but rules that inform the conventions rarely do" (Fleras, 2011, pg. 185). Although overt assimilative practices may not be as prevalent or obvious, during periods of neo-colonialism government policies and practices may continue to oppress Indigenous peoples and advance dominant interests in society. An accommodation and neo-colonial framework may provide compromise between the competing Indigenous and the state agendas by alleviating some tension, although little transformation may occur.

Current policy, practice and political dialogue express principles of accommodation by taking Indigenous difference seriously and recognizing Indigenous rights as different from the non-Indigenous Canadian population. Within an accommodation model of governance, policy frameworks for managing Indigenous diversity have taken the form of devolution and conditional autonomy. Devolution, according to Fleras (2010, 2011), reflects the practice of transferring responsibilities and structures to the local level (often involving lower-level managerial control). The logic of transferring responsibility considers that those closest to a community have a better understanding of the realities of that community than government officials. Within a neo-colonial framework, the degree of Indigenous self-determination and jurisdiction is limited by working within the existing system. The current phase in government policy also reflects the notion of "conditional autonomy" (Fleras, 2010, 2011), which acknowledges the rights of Indigenous peoples as "nations within" and involves a sharing of jurisdiction as opposed to absolute self-determining autonomy. Conditional autonomy endorses Indigenous peoples as autonomous political communities; though, the degree of autonomy is provisional and may be limited to the devolution of administrative levels of control. At this phase, policies of conditional autonomy are framed by government definitions of rules, structures, and priorities.

In 1969 the Canadian political climate began to shift away from principles of assimilation and toward processes of accommodation. Pierre Trudeau released the 1969 *White Paper* which intended to eliminate Indigenous difference. The report was perceived as a mechanism for cultural genocide, stimulating protest among Indigenous peoples and position papers voicing opposition. Headed by The National Indian Brotherhood (NIB), Indigenous peoples responded in 1970 with *Citizens Plus*, also known as *The Red Paper,* and successfully lobbied against and defeated the policy.[12] The NIB promoted political organization of Indigenous peoples and

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[12] In current policy, proposed means to achieve goals to accommodate Indigenous difference may be considered to reflect the notion of "Citizens Plus," in connection to Alan Cairns' *Citizens Plus: Aboriginal Peoples and the*

became a lobbying group for Indigenous rights in Canada, facilitating shift towards the current climate of accommodation. Government action began to consider Indigenous peoples concerns and perspectives. Canadian government actions currently aim to right historical wrongs by now acknowledging Indigenous title rights and devising modern equivalents of pre-20th century treaties. Framed by principles of devolution, the main government strategies during the 1970s and 1980s involved devolving responsibility for reserve-based programming to band councils and increasing financial transfers (Richards and Scott, 2009, pg.4). Government actions may be considered to reflect accommodating Indigenous difference by taking Indigenous special status and rights into account as the basis for repairing past injustice and establishing a foundation for moving forward.

Accommodation in Indigenous education practices

Principles of accommodation are reflected in Indigenous education processes that acknowledge and express regret for events that happened in the past, and take Indigenous difference into account in the present. The Canadian government has acknowledged the damaging effects of colonial practices, including the disregard of Indigenous status and rights, as well as general mistreatment involving the loss of language and culture, and abuse that took place within the residential schools. For example, Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement began on September 19, 2007. On behalf of the Government of Canada, Prime Minister Stephen Harper offered an apology to former students of residential schools on June 11, 2008. The Statement of Apology identified government actions as misguided and acknowledged the devastating impact caused to Indigenous children, families and communities. As indicated in The Statement of Apology:

> For more than a century, Indian Residential Schools separated over 150,000 Aboriginal children from their families and communities…Two primary objectives of the Residential Schools system were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture. These objectives were based on the assumption Aboriginal cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal. Indeed, some sought, as it was infamously said, "to kill the Indian in the child." Today, we recognize that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2008, pg. 1).

Current Indigenous education in practice reflects principles of accommodation by creating plans and promises of progress that take Indigenous difference into account.[13] In Canada, off-reserve schooling lies with the relevant provincial jurisdiction. The Ontario Ministry of Education has declared a commitment to First Nation, Métis, and Inuit student success. The Ministry of

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Canadian State (2000). The Citizen Plus concept considers that Indigenous Peoples have the same rights as all Canadians as well as additional rights in connection to the status as descendants of original occupants. According to the Citizen Plus model, Indigenous difference and rights are recognized and, at the same time, Indigenous people receive the benefits of a common Canadian citizenship (Cairns, 2000).

[13] For example, principles of accommodation in Indigenous education policy are evident in *Gathering Strength: Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan,* 1997, and *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 2008.

Education is advancing education policy frameworks that formally emphasize principles of inclusion as the means to increase the success of Indigenous students, as articulated in the *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007; Ontario Policy Framework hereafter).[14]

Inclusion is articulated within the Ontario Policy Framework as the solution to improving academic achievement among Indigenous students. The Ontario Policy Framework encourages Indigenous representation in the workforce by increasing the number of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit teaching and non-teaching staff within the various levels of schooling; therefore, increasing Indigenous representation and Indigenous "voice." Policy objectives involve ensuring cultural sensitivity and understanding of Indigenous cultures, perspectives and histories among school and school board staff as well as elected trustees. The Ontario Policy Framework states that educators should be respectful and responsive to Indigenous perspectives on schooling which have been shaped by residential school experiences, resulting in "intergenerational mistrust of the education system" (pg. 6). Educational models of enrichment, enlightenment, and empowerment (Fleras, 2011, pg. 349-52) are also evident. The Ministry commits to integrating content that reflects First Nation, Métis, and Inuit histories, cultures, and perspectives throughout the Ontario curriculum (pg. 7, 18)[15], to support identity building for Indigenous students (pg. 17, 18), and ensure all students in Ontario know and appreciate contemporary and traditional Indigenous cultures. Most significant, the Ontario Policy Framework calls for increasing the direct and active participation of Indigenous parents, families, communities, Elders, and organizations in the education of Indigenous students. Specifically, strategy 3.3 calls to "Foster Supportive and Engaged Families and Communities" (pg.19).

Wade Cole (2011) argues that "Indigenous peoples differ from most other racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic minorities by virtue of their exceptional clams to sovereignty under international and domestic law" (pg. xvii). Indigenous peoples have rights of self-determination and, in this way, are distinct from other marginalized groups competing for rights and resources. Cole argues that this unique political status accounts for the existence and continuation of post-secondary institutions for Indigenous peoples. He further considers the incorporation of culturally distinctive content into formal curriculum as an organizational outcome. Drawing on Cole's logic, Indigenous Canadians' claim to sovereign status supports the establishment of culturally distinct curricular programming in Ontario public schools and supports the distinct recognition of Indigenous content (versus absorption into multicultural reforms, at least at the rhetoric level,

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[14] Institutional inclusiveness may reflect modifying institutional structures, values and practices to reflect minority difference and creating services that provide reasonable accommodation for those who have experienced disadvantage in the past (Fleras, 2010, 2011). Equality and equity models of institutional inclusivity have: workforce composition ("minority-izing"), ensure equal participation via organizational rules and operations, equitable workplace culture, culturally sensitive service delivery, and community relations (e.g., community input and power-sharing) (Humpage and Fleras, 2001; Fleras, 2010, pg. 319).

[15] First Nation, Métis, and Inuit content has been incorporated into Ontario curriculum in social studies (Grades 1-6), history and geography (Grades 7 and 8), Canadian and world studies (Grades 9-12), mathematics (Grade 1-11), Kindergarten, language (Grades 1-8), guidance and career education (Grades 9-12), and business studies (Grades 9-12). Curriculum documents can be found online for elementary (http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/index.html) and secondary (http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/index.html).

which incorporates diverse cultures and worldviews of non-indigenous minorities). Based on Cole's argument, claims to sovereignty give Indigenous peoples in Canada the authority to preserve their traditions, languages, and cultures within public schooling.

The above discussion provides insight into the historical relationships between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state. Policy has formally shifted away from efforts to eliminate Indigenous difference and shifted towards policies that embrace and empower Indigenous differences. Progress has been made towards adopting a more inclusionary versus exclusionary educational framework for defining and solving problems of Indigenous education. The Ontario Policy Framework is designed to improve the quality of education by enhancing Indigenous student, parent and community participation in provincial education structures and improve learning outcomes for Indigenous learners. Yet, inclusion and involvement is a two way process requiring Indigenous families and communities to "buy in". Legacies of racial discrimination against Indigenous peoples in schooling may influence the role that Indigenous parents play in their children's education, creating different educational experiences for Indigenous families compared to non-Indigenous families.

1.3   Research Contributions

This study makes important empirical, theoretical, substantive contributions. First, by exploring the perspectives of educators as well as Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents this study offers an empirical contribution to the understanding of family and school-based mechanisms that limit or facilitate student achievement.

Second this research makes important contributions in the areas of family-school relations, as well as educational and social inequality. An important objective of this research is to modify existing theoretical models of family-school relations to the specific context of Indigenous family-school relationships in Canada. Specifically, this thesis draws from and builds onto the work of Annette Lareau (2002, 2011; Lareau and Horvat, 1999). Lareau and Horvat (1999) examine family-school relationships and the impact of social class and discrimination in schooling against Black Americans, whereas the current study focuses on family-school relationships as shaped by social class and racial discrimination in schooling against Indigenous Canadians. Contributing new insights to the existing literature, this thesis draws on the perspectives of Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents from a range of social class backgrounds as well as Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers to reveal the micro-foundations of family-school relationships among Indigenous communities in Ontario, Canada. By considering the relations of class (middle- and lower-class) and race (Indigenous and non-Indigenous), this study will reveal contextual and comparative relations within the interview data.

Third, this research has practical application within educational policy and program development. As mentioned, researchers have identified the educational disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians as a great social policy challenge facing Canada (Richards, 2008; Richards and Scott, 2009). This thesis extends current scholarship by contributing empirical insight to further understand the challenges that impact Indigenous

students' educational experiences, as well as the perspectives and experiences of Indigenous parents and educators regarding schooling initiatives that aim to reduce educational disparities among Indigenous communities. My research has already made a positive impact on educational practice. I prepared and submitted a report to one school board involved in this study which outlined my findings and a policy recommendation (see chapter six). This report was used to justify and leverage the creation of one full-time position from April to June 2014 and the hiring of two full-time educators in the 2014-2015 school year within the board.

1.4   Thesis Overview

Chapter two outlines the theoretical framework and **Chapter three** addresses the research methods used to inform this study. The main findings of this study are presented in chapters four through six. Chapter four and five document the relationship between Indigenous families and schools. **Chapter four** considers how legacies of residential schools and racial discrimination in schooling may continue to impact contemporary Indigenous peoples' perceptions and experiences with education and, therefore, current levels of Indigenous student achievement. **Chapter five** considers Indigenous and non-Indigenous family-school relationship differences based on race and social class, with a focus on the individual interactions of teachers and parents. **Chapter six** considers the perspectives and experiences of Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents and teachers regarding schooling initiatives that aim to reduce educational disparities in Indigenous communities by way of including Indigenous families, communities and content in schooling. This chapter also offers a case study describing a successful schooling initiative implemented in the East Haven Summer Learning Program and a policy recommendation based on how the effective practices of this program can be transferred into the regular school year. In particular, the prospective role of a "FNMI Itinerant Teacher" in schools with large Indigenous populations will be considered. In conclusion, **chapter seven** reviews key arguments made in this dissertation.

CHAPTER 2 - THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The examination of family-school relationships is critical to understanding educational achievement gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. This study examines the dynamics of educational inequality associated with Indigenous family-school relationships using social capital and cultural capital theory. In brief, social capital refers to resources in the form of social networks, whereas cultural capital pertains to resources such as knowledge, skills and abilities. Parents can use these resources to acquire educational advantages for their children. Social and cultural capital theories draw connections between family dynamics and class position, and are useful in examining not only the resources that families have but also how families are able to draw on these resources to negotiate schooling processes.

Drawing on social and cultural capital theory, this thesis considers how racial discrimination in past educational practices and social class may contribute to differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous family-school relationships and, as a result, differences in educational experiences and outcomes. The following chapter first attends to social and cultural capital theory. This chapter next considers standards of schooling expectations, followed by variability in parents' ability to meet schooling expectations based on social class and race.

2.1   Social and Cultural Capital

Social capital

Social capital is a resource available to actors based on group membership, relationships and networks (Bourdieu, 1998), and is considered a resource for children's academic achievement (McNeal, 1999; Coleman, 1988; Coleman and Hoffer, 1987; Slates et al., 2012). Within the context of family-school relationships, social capital can take the form of connections that parents have with teachers, administrators, other parents and extended family members. Social relations that involve trust (e.g., trust of educators and the school system), information (e.g., about resources, homework help, enrichment activities), norms (e.g., standards of active parental involvement) and obligations (e.g., direction given during parent-teacher meetings) are also considered forms of social capital (Coleman, 1988). These relationships are considered to help parents acquire information about their children's educational progress, academic needs, schooling processes, how to effectively intervene in schooling matters and gain access to resources and programs to enhance their children's academic achievement (Horvat et al., 2003; Wang, 2008; Useem, 1992; Hill and Taylor, 2004; Dufur, 2013; Baker and Stevenson, 1986; Ong-Dean, 2009; Chin, 2000; Demerath, 2009).

Mignone and O'Neil (2005) identify bonding (relations among community members), bridging (connections between communities) and linking (ties between communities and formal institutions) as three types of social capital that are particularly relevant to Indigenous communities (see also Hill and Cooke, 2013). The authors recognize these types of social capital to include components of: socially invested resources (e.g., symbolic recourses regarding the identity of the community, human capacity relating to education), culture (e.g., trust, reciprocity,

participation) and networks (diversity, inclusiveness, flexibility) (2005, pg. 14-15). Linking social capital is relevant to the current study and is further defined as "connections between a particular First Nation communities and institutions like federal/provincial government departments and public/private corporations (e.g., Manitoba Hydro, banks)" (Mignone and O'Neil, 2005, pg. 14). Linking social capital would therefore encompass the connections between Indigenous communities and schools, and include components of trust, cooperation, and parent participation and engagement in schooling for the benefit of Indigenous student achievement.

Cultural capital

Bourdieu's (1998) concept of cultural capital refers to the cultural traditions and tastes of the dominant social class, which includes values, skill-sets, awareness of social norms (appropriate behaviour in various social contexts) and knowledge of the arts (e.g., classical music, theatre) (Bourdieu, 1998, 1977, 1984; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). Bourdieu argues that cultural capital is transmitted through class based exclusionary cultural practices. According to this logic, schools are active agents of social reproduction. Education systems reward privileged or elite types of cultural practices, contributing to social reproduction and the allocation of children into positions of social class (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). Privileged children/families who are familiar with the types of cultural resources valued by schools have an advantage and lower-class children/families who have less familiarity or do not possess the types of cultural resources are at a disadvantage. Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital has developed over three generations and into different streams (Davies and Rizk, 2014, 2015). Davies and Rizk recognize a "Lareau tradition" of cultural capital research, which "uses qualitative observations of families to interpret cultural capital as routines that align with schools' institutional requirements" (2015, pg.1). The current study adds to this cultural capital tradition.

Parenting practices associated with cultural capital create educational advantages for children. Studies have found that parents who are actively developing children's skills and abilities, monitoring children's progress, advocating on behalf of children's educational interests, and discussing schooling and educational aspirations with children can generate positive educational outcomes (Hart and Risley, 1995; Lareau, 2011; Catsambis, 2001; Fan and Chen, 2001; Singh et al., 1995). For example, Milne and Aurini (2015) observed that the flexibility, discretion, and parent involvement that is built into Ontario school discipline policies allows middle-class parents to effectively negotiate more favourable disciplinary outcomes for their children.

Lamont and Lareau (1988) consider that cultural resources are converted into cultural capital when signals are institutionalised as legitimate. Lamont and Lareau define cultural capital in terms of "institutionalized, i.e. widely shared, high status cultural signals (attitudes, preferences, formal knowledge, behaviours, goods and credentials) used for social and cultural exclusion" (1988, pg. 156). Lareau and Weininger offer further clarity, conceptualizing cultural capital as "micro-interactional processes whereby individuals' strategic use of knowledge, skills, and competence comes into contact with institutionalized standards of evaluation" (2003, pg. 569). Based on this logic, parents' cultural resources become capital when they facilitate parents' ability to comply with schools informal and formal institutionalized expectations. Further, social

class differences may reproduce variation in the ability of students and parents to meet these standard expectations held by educators (Lareau, 2002, 2011, 1987; Lareau and Weininger, 2003; Lareau and Horvat, 1999).

Moments of "inclusion" and "exclusion"

Drawing on the work of Bourdieu, Lareau and Horvat (1999) offer a conceptual framework of "moments of inclusion" and "moments of exclusion" (Lamont and Lareau, 1988). Based on this logic, everyone possesses capital to invest. What varies, however, is the ability of actors to activate capital and the value and legitimacy attributed to displays of capital in particular social settings.

> To understand the character of these moments, one needs to look at the context in which the capital is situated, the efforts by individuals to activate their capital, the skill with which individuals activate their capital, and the institutional response to the activation. These factors, working together, can produce moments of reproduction or moments of contestation, challenge, and social change (pg.38).

Lareau and Horvat define moments of inclusion as "the objective completion of or gaining access to a particular school task" (pg.48). Moments of inclusion reflect parents' ability to successfully gain schooling advantages for their children, such as access to an academically gifted program. In contrast, moments of exclusion would reflect placement in remedial courses. They suggest this approach draws attention to parental strategies to gaining educational advantages. Successful strategies are legitimated by school actors and, therefore, deemed moments of inclusion, whereas strategies that are seen as unhelpful and are unsuccessful are considered moments of exclusion.

Lareau and Horvat (1999, pg. 39) refer to Bourdieu's analogy of a card game (Bourdieu, 1976) to illustrate their argument. Paraphrasing Lareau and Horvat , in a card game (or social setting such as a school), players are dealt a different set of cards (e.g., individuals possess cultural capital such as knowledge and resources), each card and each hand have different values based on the rules of the game (displays of capital have different value based on the norms and expectations of the social setting), and each player draws on their own skill set to play their cards (individual ability to activate capital in ways that, for example, generate educational advantages for their children). A player's hand of cards has value based on their ability to play the cards according to the rules of the game. Similarly, a parent's social and cultural capital has value based on the parent's ability to activate their capital in ways that align with schools' formal and informal expectations of parents. Therefore, within the current research, parental displays of desirable attributes during interactions with educators and interventions in schooling processes would be considered capital in school settings because this would align with schools informal and formal institutionalized expectations of parents (Lareau and Weininger, 2003; Lareau and Horvat, 1999).

Drawing on the framework of moments of inclusion and exclusion, this thesis considers the influence of social class and race, specifically historical legacies of racial discrimination in

schooling, in Indigenous and non-Indigenous family-school relationships and considers how differences may be seen to shape Indigenous student achievement.

Lareau and Weininger (2003, pg. 588-597) identify the importance of documenting formal and informal standards and expectations educators use to evaluate students/parents, as well as variations among students/parents in their ability to meet the expectations held by educators. Further, Lareau's work is based on the education system in the United States and differences may exist between the US and Canadian education system that lead to differences in the ways that family characteristics and experiences shape educational experiences. To situate the current study in the context of Ontario Canada, the chapter proceeds as follows: schooling informal and formal standards used to evaluate parents in general and within Ontario, and variation in the ability to comply with expectations by class and race.

2.2 Standards of Schooling Expectations

Educators expect parents to be involved in their children's schooling (Lareau, 2011, 2002; Ontario Ministry of Education 2010, 2012) since parental involvement is believed to facilitate academic success (Fan 2001; Barnard, 2004; Sheldon and Epstein, 2005; Englund et al., 2004; Becker and Epstein, 1982). Parent involvement includes establishing a supportive home environment, two way communications between the home and school, facilitating home learning, and parent leadership related to school governance (Epstein, 1992; Epstein and Dauber, 1991; Epstein et al., 2009).

Parent involvement is a component of many policies that aim to reduce educational disparities and achievement gaps (Fan and Chen, 2001; Hill and Tyson, 2009; Patall, Cooper, and Robinson, 2008). Pertinent to the current study, Ontario has formal expectations that all parents be involved in their children's schooling (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010,2012). Parents are portrayed in these documents as playing an active role in children's education at home and at school.

> Parental involvement is a broad term and includes such things as good parenting, helping with homework, serving on school councils and board committees, communicating and meeting with teachers and volunteering in the classroom or on school trips. All forms of parental involvement are beneficial. In every form, parental involvement in education shows children that their parents care about what they are doing and learning, and that they value a good education (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, pg. 14, citing Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005).

Lareau and Horvat suggest that educators' definitions of acceptable behaviours are narrowly defined (1999, pg. 42). Education professionals have created a specific set of evaluative criteria by which the behaviours and actions of parents are judged (Lareau and Horvat, 1999; Lareau and Weininger, 2003). Educators want parents to be supportive of their children's education, to "back them up" and defer to their professional judgement and assessment, display a sense of trust, cooperation, and partnership with the school, feel entitled to interact with teachers as relative

equals, and engage in polite and positive interactions with school personnel (Lareau, 2002, 2011, 1987; Lareau and Horvat, 1999). Teachers also prefer that parents be involved in schooling by taking an active and assertive role, be educated and informed about their schooling, and advocate on children's behalf (Lareau and Weininger, 2003). Assuming an active role may involve participating in schooling and classroom events, attending parent-teacher conferences, volunteering, communicating with teachers about concerns they have (Lareau, 1989), supporting and supplementing student's learning outside of school (Lareau, 2002, 2011), and overseeing homework (Deslandes and Rouseeau, 2007).[16]

Teachers perceive that parents who are involved at school value education, and this is associated with higher student academic achievement ratings by the teacher (see Hill and Craft, 2003). In contrast, parents who are unable to attend school may be perceived by teachers as not caring or not valuing education (see Lareau and Shumar, 1996; Lee and Bowen, 2013). Parents who assume a passive role in children's education, challenge teachers professional judgement, and/or express feelings of distrust, discomfort and apprehension during interactions fail to comply with schools evaluative standards of family-school relations, potentially resulting in moments of exclusion for parents within the school setting.

2.3   Variability within Family-School Relations

In the abstract, all parents value education and have high aspirations for their children's educational success (Boethel, 2003; Lareau, 2011, 1987, 2002; Fan, 2001; Halle et al., 1997; Goldenberg et al., 2001; Aspiazu et al., 1998; Kim, 2002). However, parents may differ in the ways they promote educational success and their ability to effectively activate resources during schooling interactions (Lareau, 1987, 2002, 2011; Lareau and Horvat, 1999; Vincent and Martin, 2002; Boethel, 2003; Dermerath, 2009; Smit et al., 2007; Denessen et al., 2001; Driessen and Valkenberg, 2000; Driessen, 2001; Driessen et al., 2005). The legacy of residential schooling and discriminatory educational practices as well as family social class may further complicate the relationship that Indigenous parents/families have with schools. In what ways do family social class and race lead to variation in parents' ability to comply with the informal and formal standards of evaluation of schools?

2.3.1   Social Class

Social class may shape dynamics of family-school relationships among Indigenous and non-Indigenous families and generate variable schooling experiences and outcomes.[17] Below, I

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[16] Research has also found that parent involvement is modestly related to student achievement and hypothesise that parents' high expectations for school performance is what makes the difference (Robinson and Harris, 2014)

[17] Definitions and measures of social class vary. Scholars frequently use the term inequality instead of class; and income inequality is often considered synonymous with the study of inequality (Lareau, 2008; Grusky and Weeden, 2008). Lareau considers that, "rather than measure and analyze 'class,' studies often use the terms 'inequality,' 'stratification,' 'family background,' or specific indicators (such as education, wealth, income, or occupation) – sometimes interchangeably" (Lareau, 2008, pg. 3). Lareau advocates for using the term "class," which reflects the notion of groups and social structure, over the term "inequality", which emphasizes ranking according to the amount of resources held (Lareau, 2008, pg. 13). Education level, income, and occupation status are standard characteristics

consider the role of social class within family-school relations and within Indigenous Canadian family-school relations.

Lareau's research captures variation in what she terms a "cultural logic of child rearing" and its influence on family-school relationships (Lareau, 1987, 2000, 2002, 2011). Although not inherently a middle-class practice, middle-class parents were more likely to adopt a "concerted cultivation" approach to parenting which draws on expert knowledge advanced by education and medical professionals about how children should be raised (2011, pg. 4). She found that middle-class families actively stimulate children's abilities and skill development, and pursue learning opportunities that could provide children advantages later in life. In contrast, working-class and poor parents tend to adhere to a parenting logic she refers to as "accomplishment of natural growth" where children are allowed to grow and develop without active stimulation. Lareau found that the degree parents were able to respond to educators' expectations of involvement was directly related to parents' social class and associated resources parents had access to.

Germane to the current study examining social class differences in family-school relations, Lareau observed social class differences in interactions with institutions, such as the school.[18] According to Lareau, middle-class parents feel entitled to participate in their children's schooling. These parents tended to actively monitor and intervene in their children's schooling, drawing on their own knowledge of the education system to navigate schooling processes, as well as the resources to participate in and supplement schooling (e.g., pay for tutoring or sibling child care, access to transportation and employment flexibility). Middle-class parents were confident and comfortable in school settings, interacting with educators as equals, and expecting educators to respond and accommodate their individual requests and needs. Alternatively, Lareau observed a sense of constraint among their working class and poor counterparts with schooling interactions and with their ability to support their children's education. Parents felt they had inadequate educational knowledge and skills to intervene and support their children's schooling, as well as limited resources to supplement schooling and attend schooling events. As a result, these parents tended to assume a more passive role within their children's education, leaving the responsibility of their children's education to the school (also see O'Connor, 2001). These parents were often fearful and distrustful of educators, demonstrating feelings of caution, intimidation, and powerlessness during institutional interactions.

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used to assign individuals into social class categories (for example see Lareau, 1987, 2000, 2002, 2011). The current study draws on a combination of education level and income to determine social class position (see chapter three for further description).

[18] Lareau observed the organization of daily life, language patterns, and institutional interactions as key dimensions of class-based parenting practices that shape children's educational experiences (1987, 2002, 2011). She observed social class differences in the quality and quantity of children's outside of school activities. Middle-class parents involve their children in multiple adult-organized activities to ensure they had every opportunity to develop skills and talents, and working-class and poor children tend to involve in fewer organized activities, spending time "hanging out" and in informal play (also see Bennett et al., 2012; Chin and Phillips, 2004). Lareau also observed differences within family language patterns. Middle-class parents were more likely to actively teach their children to develop communication skills, including how to negotiate perspectives and socially appropriate ways to interact with authority figures. Working class and poor parents, on the other hand, were less likely to engage children in extended conversations (see also Hart and Risley, 1995).

Lareau showed that practices of concerted cultivation were consistent over time. Middle-class parents continued to monitor, assist and intervene in their children's lives, and manage their transitions through primary, secondary and post secondary schooling. Middle-class parents continued to draw on their own knowledge of institutional systems, including higher education admission processes and professional job opportunities, and gain advantages for their children; advantages that children from working-class and poor families did not have.

School policies expect parents to assume an active, assertive, and leading role in their children's schooling. Therefore, middle-class parents may have more ability to comply with the standards of educators and children from middle-class families have advantages within the informal realms of schooling. Children from working-class and poor families are seen to be at a disadvantage because childrearing strategies are "seen as unhelpful or even harmful to children's life chances" and out of sync with the standards of schools (2011, pg. 3,13). Lareau found that social class becomes cultural capital in school settings since resources (e.g., education, income) and associated childrearing patterns facilitates parents' compliance with the active and engaged role that educators expect. For Lareau, parents orientation toward schooling and children's development helps to explain why "social class remains one of the most powerful predictors of children's educational success and life outcomes" (2011, pg. 29, 391; see also Goldthorpe and Jackson, 2008; Lareau, 2002, 2011; Lareau and Weininger, 2003; Sirin, 2005; Conley and Albright, 2004; Krahn, 2004; Willms, 2009).

Social Class and Indigenous Canadians

Social class may play a role in family-school relations among Indigenous Canadians in this study. Research has identified various connections between social class and educational attainment among the Indigenous Canadian population (Frenette, 2010; Thiessen, 2009; Richards and Scott, 2009; Richards et. al., 2008; Richards and Vining, 2004). Frenette (2010b) found that 53% of gap in high school completion and 90% of the university attendance gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth can be accounted for by differences in characteristics such as the home environment (e.g., maternal education and involvement, books in the home). Thiessen (2009) found that structural (e.g., education and occupation prestige of mother and father) and cultural (e.g. university aspirations, importance of post-secondary education to parents) disadvantages account for low academic performance in high school and low participation in post-secondary education of First Nations peoples.

Richards articulates the social class characteristics of students' families as a partial explanation for the education gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. In particular, Richards identifies the "two most important socioeconomic variables pertinent to children's education prospects are parental education and family income" (Richards et al., 2008, pg. 7). Among Indigenous families, Richards and Vining (2004, pg. 13) find that poor families often have lower expectations for their children's careers and place less emphasis on their academic performance. Reinforcing Lareau's research, Richards and Vining consider that wealthier Indigenous parents may monitor their children's schooling and school teaching quality more than do parents of poor families and, therefore, schools in wealthier neighbourhoods may recruit better teachers and perform better (pg.13).

As previously stated, there is little known about the micro-foundations of family-school relationships among Indigenous communities. Research with non-Indigenous populations shows that middle-class families are more likely than their lower-class counterparts to have the type of social and cultural capital that facilitates children's school success. Upper- and middle-class parents are more likely than lower-class parents to forge connections with teachers and schools (Lareau, 1987, 2000, 2002, 2011), and have social networks that enable to them to secure educational advantages for their children (e.g., Demerath, 2009) and preferential programs or schools (e.g., Ong-Dean, 2009; Chin, 2000). Middle-class parents tend to have greater knowledge of schooling processes, understand how to align with institutional norms of schooling and advocate on the children's behalf in ways that maximize educational advantages (De Graaf et al., 2000; Lareau, 2002, 2011; Demerath, 2009; Khan, 2010; Lareau and Horvat, 1999; Reay, 2005). This thesis extends this literature by documenting relationships between Indigenous families and schools, and considering how social class may shape these relations

2.3.2   Race

Race may impact dynamics of family-school relations and lead to different educational experiences and outcomes (Olsen, 2011; Fleras, 2014).[19] Race shapes the role that parents play in children's education (Hill and Taylor, 2004; Hill and Craft, 2003; Hill, 2001). The degree of parent involvement varies by racial background (Boethel, 2003; Denessen et al., 2001; Driessen and Valkenberg, 2000; Driessen, 2001; Driessen et al., 2005; Smit et al., 2007; Lee and Bowen, 2006). Latino (Aspiazu, Bauer and Spillett, 1998; Goldenberg et al., 2001), Mexican American (Birch and Ferrin, 2002), African American (Halle et al., 1997; Gutman and McLoyd, 2000), and Korean American (Kim, 2002) families from a range of social class backgrounds have high aspirations for their children and play an active and supportive role within their schooling. Henderson and Mapp conclude however that, "Asian, Hispanic, and African American parents were as active in their middle and high school children's education as white parents, but in slightly different ways" (2002, pg. 37).

Lee and Bowen (2006) found that European American parents had more involvement at school but made less efforts to manage their children's time at home than Hispanic and African American parents. European American parents also had more parent-child educational discussions than Hispanic parents (see also Mau, 1997; Lee and Bowen, 2006; Ramey and Ramey, 2010; National Center for Education Statistics, 1994; Balli, 1996). Ramey and Ramey (2010) found that Black and Hispanic parents in the United States spend less time in childcare (which includes teaching children, reading, and helping with homework) than Euro-American parents. Among less educated parents, Black and Hispanic mothers spend about 3 hours less, and Black and Hispanic fathers spend 1.4 to 1.9 hours less per week in childcare than other parents. Among college-educated parents, Black mothers spend 3 hours less and Hispanic mothers spend about 2 hours less, and Black fathers spend half an hour less and Hispanic fathers 2 hours less in

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[19] Scholars focus on "status groups" within conceptions of social inequality. Social distinction made on the basis of physical or cultural characteristics such as sex, race, age, or sexual orientation can contribute to unequal treatment (Olsen, 2011; Fleras, 2014).To clarify, differences based on physical or cultural distinctions are not actual basis of inferiority but are "socially constructed" based on perceptions of individuals or groups and reinforced through social practices (Olsen, 2011; Fleras, 2014).

childcare per week than other parents. In another study, Mau (1997) found that Euro-American parents were more involved in school activities than Asian immigrants and Asian Americans parents, but Asian immigrants and Asian Americans parents had higher educational expectations and their children spent more time on homework than their Euro-American counterparts. Racial minority families may provide more home-based versus school-based support and in general tend to assume a more limited role in schooling, deferring the responsibility of their children's education to the school (Driessen and Valkenberg, 2000; Boethel, 2003; Vincent and Martin, 2002; Henderson and Mapp, 2002; McGrath and Kuriloff, 1999; Birch and Ferrin, 2002).

Some racial minority parents feel limited in their ability to support their children due to a lack of resources (e.g., time to attend school events, transportation). They may also feel uninformed about schooling processes, unqualified to participate in their children's education, and distrustful and uncomfortable within school settings (Smit et al., 2007; Birch and Ferrin, 2002; McGrath and Kuriloff, 1999; Lareau and Horvat, 1999). Epstein and Dauber (1991) found that teachers who are of a different cultural background than the family are less likely to know the parents and more likely to believe that parents are disinterested in schooling. Further, Downey (2008) argued that poor school behaviours and achievement among Black students, compared to their Euro-American peers, is related to physical and social isolation. Rather than devaluing school, he argued that parents have limited access to the expertise or skills to support their children's schooling and students have limited exposure to the kinds of skills that promote academic achievement.

However, research has also found that the effects of race on parent involvement vary by family social class (see Lee and Bowen, 2006). Lower-class families from a variety of racial backgrounds have lower levels of involvement in schooling processes than their middle-class counterparts (Lareau, 1987, 2011; McGrath and Kuriloff, 1999; Lareau and Horvat, 1999). Fan, for example, found that once he adjusted for social class, "degrees of parent involvement of the four major ethnic groups were comparable" (2001, pg. 56). [20]

Race and Indigenous Canadians

The history of Indigenous education in Canada may lead to variation in parents' ability to comply with educator expectations of involvement. Government policies and practices of the past were seen to contribute to the exclusion of Indigenous families and communities.

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[20] Other U.S. research has found difference by race and social class. Desimone (1999) found parents volunteering at school more significantly predicted student achievement for white and middle income students but not for Black, Hispanic and low-income students. Parent involvement in Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) was a stronger predictor of grades for Black students than for Asian, Hispanic, or low income students. Further, educational discussions between parents and children were significantly more predictive of gains in achievement among white students and discussions about post-secondary plans were only significant among middle income students. In another study, McNeal (1999) found that parent involvement (parent-child discussions, PTO, monitoring schooling and educational support practices) had greater effect among higher-class white students than among racial minority students (African American, Hispanic, and Asian American students), students from low-class families, and single parent lead homes. Jeynes (2003) found that parent involvement (e.g., communication with the school, participating in schooling activities, encouraging home reading) had more effect with African Americans and Latinos than Asian Americans.

Indigenous education policies in Canada have shifted from a focus on assimilation to accommodation.[21] This thesis considers how past assimilative policy and practices and racial discrimination in schooling may be significant in current Indigenous family-school relationships.

The history of Indigenous education in Canada is a history of exclusion. Broadly, exclusion may be understood in terms of removing family representation, decision-making ability, as well as cultural influence from the education of Indigenous children. Historically, Indigenous families and communities were identified as the problem and considered an obstacle to "re-educating" Indigenous students into the "superior" Euro-Canadian cultural ways. Residential schooling was key means used to separate children from the influence of their parents and culture (see chapter one). Residential schooling had horrific consequences for many families and communities, including destroying culture, language and family ties, and problems of health and safety, physical and sexual abuse were common (Legacy of Hope Foundation, 2014; Miller, 1996; Reading and Wein, 2009; Wotherspoon and Schissel, 2003; RCAP, 1996). Reports published by Statistics Canada found that having a family member who attended residential schools is associated with lower school success (Bougie, 2009; Arriagada, 2015). Having a family member who attended residential schools lowers the probability of off-reserve First Nations females (57% compared to 76% of females without a history of residential schooling) and males (54% compared to 69% with no family history of residential schooling) completing high school by age 18 (Arriagada, 2015, pg.6).

Few studies have considered family-school relationships among Indigenous communities.[22] Daniel (2015) reported Indigenous parents perceive lower levels of teacher facilitated parental participation in the home, school, and community than for other families in his sample. In a study with First Nations parents and Euro-Canadian teachers from a small fly-in reserve in Northwestern Ontario, Agbo (2007) found that "parents felt that they were not welcome in the school and, paradoxically, teachers also accused parents of not involving themselves in their children's education" (pg.6). Parents did not feel obligated to be involved in children's education or schooling affairs, nor were parents aware that they could visit the school or talk to the teachers about their children's progress. Parents viewed educators as knowledgeable schooling professionals and, therefore, "did not want to interfere" (pg.7; also see Lareau, 2002, 2011). In contrast, teachers identified that the lack of parental involvement in schooling was "the most frustrating aspect of their job" (pg.6).

Deyhle (1991) found that differences between the Navajo and Anglo participants in her sample associated with cultural-specific values, child-rearing practices, communication about school-

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[21] Briefly, if policy were to adhere to principles of assimilation, educational practices would aim to absorb Indigenous students into the mainstream society by repressing cultural difference and instilling dominant knowledge, values and social practices. Alternatively, if education were to follow principles of accommodation, educational practices would be respectful of Indigenous difference although Indigenous education would remain firmly embedded within a Eurocentric infrastructure.

[22] A search using electronic data bases (ERIC, SCOPUS, Scholars Portal, Google Scholar) was conducted using a combination of key words (family-school partnerships and Indigenous, family-school relationships and Indigenous, home-school partnerships and Indigenous, home-school relationships and Indigenous, parent engagement and Indigenous, parent involvement and Indigenous, family-school relationships and Native, family-school relationships and First Nations, etc.,) to generate a list of relevant studies. This search revealed few relevant results.

related matters and organization. Differences led Anglo school officials to "dismiss Navajo parent involvement as confusing, unproductive and inarticulate" (pg. 295) and "dis-empower" Navajo parent involvement in schooling. In another study involving remote Alaska Native communities, Kushman and Barnhardt (2001) found that "many parents and community members are content to leave education to the educators" (pg.21). Parents and educators saw parents' primary role in schooling as promoting education at home (e.g., monitoring school work and homework, reading to children and encouraging them to read) (pg.19). Both parties placed less importance on understanding the schools educational program and attending parent-teacher-school association meetings, and "far less" importance on involvement in school planning and decision making, and volunteering as components of parents' role (pg.19). Indigenous communities may experience lower levels of participation and involvement in schooling (Coladarci, 1983; Dehyle, 1992, 1991; Friedel, 1999), difficulty communicating and interacting with non-Indigenous educators and having their voice heard in school settings (Deyhle, 1991)

Social class and race play a complex and interconnected role within the educational experiences of Indigenous children and families. As Lareau noted, schooling expectations are linked to parents' relationship with the school and the role parents play in the education of their children. The history of Indigenous education and potential feelings of tension and mistrust of the education system may lead to variation in the roles that Indigenous parents play in the education of their children.

2.4   Discussion: Social Class and Race within Family-School Relations

> *Navajo parents are not likely to play the role that Anglo teachers and schools might expect them to* (Deyhle, 1991, pg.292).

Parent involvement in schooling has changed drastically over time (Berger, 1991). Mainstream norms of parent involvement in schooling have increased; particularly, parent involvement has risen substantially among dominant middle-class groups (Lareau, 1987; McNeal, 1999). Affluent parents possess the desire and the means to buy educational advantages for their children, ensuring they are ideal post-secondary applicants (Alon, 2009; Kahn, 2010; Stevens, 2007; Demerath, 2009).[23] According to Stevens, "the system that the elite colleges and universities developed to evaluate the best and the brightest is now the template for what counts as ideal childrearing" (Stevens, 2007, pg. 247). He further states, "it seems hardly coincidental that the rise of concerted cultivation has occurred in tandem with the formalization of evaluation criteria at the nations selective colleges and with the growing difficulty of being admitted to top schools" (2007, pg. 246). Alon (2009) observed that affluent families "adapt" to changing admission criteria by investing resources (e.g., hiring private tutors) in order to gain competitive advantages for their children. Academic differences can be attributed to, "the adaptation of the privileged and the failure of the underprivileged to keep pace" (pg. 737, 746, 750). Although norms of

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[23] Meritocracy of individual talent, measured by academic, extracurricular and athletic accomplishments, is the primary currency of higher education admission (Kahn, 2010; Stevens, 2007). However, Kahn (2010) argued, "there is nothing innate about merit," "what seems natural is made [and] access to that making is strictly limited" (pg. 8-9).

parent involvement have increased, the history of Indigenous education in Canada continues to complicate family-school relations among Indigenous Canadians which, as this thesis suggests, creates barriers to strong family-school connections.

Parents from different social class and racial backgrounds place similar value on education but may differ in the resources they are able to draw from (and how they activate them), in the ways they negotiate schooling processes, and in their perceptions of appropriate family-school relationships. Annette Lareau's work is particularly relevant to the current study. Lareau observed how race and class impact parents' ability to comply with dominant standard schooling expectations and shape children's schooling experiences (Lareau, 2002, 2011; Lareau and Horvat, 1999). While Lareau and Horvat (1999) examined family-school relationships and the impact of social class and discrimination in schooling against Black Americans, the current study focuses on family-school relationships as shaped by social class and racial discrimination in schooling against Indigenous Canadians.

Lareau and Horvat (1999) found that race, independent of class, effects family-school relationships. They argue that due to the historical legacies of racial discrimination against Black people in education, it is more difficult for Black parents to comply with standards of trusting and positive schooling relationships. Some Black parents who were concerned about discrimination approach the school with suspicion, criticism, and distrust. Alternatively, Euro-American parents had more comfort and trust in the relations they had with the school and this lack of suspicion held more value during schooling interactions. Lareau and Horvat also found that class mediated the way Black parents expressed their concerns and, as a result, middle-class Black and Euro-American parents have access to important forms of cultural capital to navigate schooling interactions that working-class and poor Black and Euro-American parents do not. Therefore, in school settings "being white becomes a type of cultural capital" (1999, pg. 42). Lareau and Horvat do not suggest that being Black is a disadvantage, rather "in this field of interaction, the rules of the game are built on race-specific interactions" (1999, pg. 42).

The current study builds onto Lareau's work examining how race and social class shape family-school relationships using social and cultural capital (Lareau, 2002, 2011; Lareau and Horvat, 1999). Specifically, this thesis extends Lareau's work by drawing on the perspectives of Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents from a range of social class backgrounds as well as educators to reveal the micro-foundations of family-school relationships among Indigenous communities in southern Ontario.

This thesis argues that the examination of family-school relationships is crucial to understanding educational experiences and outcomes among Indigenous communities. The Canadian Indigenous population has distinct educational experiences and perceptions which may impact dynamics of family-school relationships. This thesis will consider how, potentially, legacies of racial discrimination in schooling practices and social class may be seen as contributing to differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous family-school relationships, as well as educational experiences and outcomes. This thesis examines dynamics of educational inequality to further understand challenges that impact and strategies that encourage Indigenous students' academic achievement.

CHAPTER 3 - RESEARCH METHODS

This study primarily draws on in-depth interviews with Indigenous (mainly Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and Métis, based on those who identified a specific cultural group) and non-Indigenous parents, and educators within the province of Ontario. This thesis focuses specifically on primary students attending Ontario provincial off-reserve schools. This population is of particular research interest because four in five Indigenous students in Canada are attending a school within a provincial K to 12 system (Richards 2008; Richards et al., 2008) and significant education gaps begin to emerge between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in early primary grades (Richards and Scott, 2009, pg. 22).[24]

To generate a sample, this study draws on a population of parents and educators involved in the Summer Learning Program (SLP). An ideal site for data collection, the SLP is one educational initiative that has: i) embraced parental and community engagement within children's education, and ii) embedded Indigenous culture into programming as part of a strategy to increase Indigenous student achievement. This study draws on interviews with 218 participants (70 educators and 148 parents) within four Ontario school boards (see Table 3.1). A survey was also distributed to educators involved in the East Haven SLP, of which 17 teachers responded. In this sample, 20 teachers and 20 parents interviewed, as well as two teacher survey respondents are from a First Nation, Métis or Inuit background. As well, six non-Indigenous educator interviewees have Indigenous education as an area of specialization and four non-Indigenous parent interviewees have children with Indigenous ancestry.

The following chapter outlines my research design through the consideration of: a) program demographics, b) population, c) recruiting, d) data collection, e) data analysis and coding, and f) challenges and limitations.

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[24] There are approximately 78,000 school-aged Indigenous youth, ages 5-19, living in Ontario and approximately 64,000 of these students are attending provincial Ontario schools (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013).

Table 3.1 - Participant Numbers[25]	Educator Totals						Parents			
	Total # Interviews	Total # Participants	# who are FNMI	# FNMI ed. in portfolio (not FNMI)	Total # Survey Respondents	# who are FNMI	Total # of Interviews	Total # of Participants	# who are FNMI	# not FNMI but have FNMI children (other parent)
East Haven School Board										
2012										
Site 1	6	7		2			20	22		
Site 2	5	5	4	1			5	5	1	
2013										
Site 1	9	9	1	1			31	31		
Site 2	5	6	2	1			8	8	2	
Site 3	1	2	2				6	6	2	1
Site 4	2	2	1	1			4	4	1	1
Survey					17	2				
2014										
Site 5	2	2	2				6	6	6	
Aurora School Board										
2012										
Site 1	10	11	2				14	15	1	
2013										
Site 1	11	12	2				34	35	2	1
2014										
Site 1	2	2	2				4	4	3	
North View School Board										
2013										
Site 1	3	3					3	3		
Site 2	8	8	1				6	7	1	
Summer Side School Board										
2014										
Site 1	1	1	1				2	2	1	1
Total	65	70	20	6	17	2	143	148	20	4

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[25] Note, at times both parents or two teachers participated in a single interview.

3.1   Program Description

In 2010 the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat (Ontario Ministry of Education) launched a province wide Summer Learning Program (SLP). The program consists of an intensive two or three week literacy summer program targeted at grades 1, 2 and 3 students who are vulnerable to summer learning loss or who have social and economic challenges that compromise their academic achievement. The program is free and staffed by certified teachers. Ontario school boards selected to participate in the program were funded to organize varying numbers of summer learning classes within school sites of their choosing. Individual classes consist of approximately 15 students.

In 2010 and 2011, several school boards with large First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) populations reported low levels of support from Indigenous parents. While many boards reported waiting lists, these boards had difficulty recruiting students to the program and maintaining high levels of participation and attendance throughout the program. In response to these difficulties, in 2012 and 2013 the Ministry funded summer literacy learning classes specifically for Indigenous students. The SLP is in line with the objectives of the Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007). Working with Indigenous communities, the programs are intended to embed literacy learning within a program that speaks to First Nation, Métis and Inuit cultures and heritage; support identity building for Indigenous students; enhance cultural sensitivity and understanding among non-Indigenous school board staff, students and families; and increase the direct and active participation of Indigenous parents, families, communities, Elders, and organizations in the education of Indigenous students. The SLP is one educational initiative that has embraced institutional inclusivity, and specifically parental and community engagement, as a strategy to increase Indigenous student achievement.[26]

My personal connection with the SLP provided ideal conditions to embark on this research. Since April 2009, I have assisted Drs. Janice Aurini and Scott Davies who are conducting a multi-method longitudinal analysis of the SLP. This is an ongoing Ontario-wide research project in partnership with the Literacy and Numeracy Secretary (Ontario Ministry of Education) and the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) examining summer setback (the loss of numeracy and literacy skills over the summer months) among disadvantaged students in grades 1, 2, and 3. My thesis research draws from this existing study by adding a focus on Indigenous family-school relations. My role as the Lead RA provided a point of entry to access research sites and participants to examine the connection between family-school relationships and achievement gaps.

The SLP is an optimal site for collecting data to further understanding the dynamics of home-school relationships for two key reasons. First, *Indigenous* specific SLPs have been implemented in boards across the province. The Ministry of Education funded eight Indigenous specific summer learning classes in 2012, ten classes in 2013, and 24 classes in 2014. Second, *family-*

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[26] Broadly, institutional inclusiveness may reflect modifying institutional structures, values and practices to reflect minority difference and creating services that provide reasonable accommodation for those who have experienced disadvantage in the past (Fleras, 2010, 2011).

school relationships have become a significant consideration in the development and implementation of summer programs and in the research protocol. Summer program teachers and program administrators perform a variety of informal (e.g., communicating with families) and formal (e.g., sending book bags home) connections that strengthen home-school relationships. In addition, a number of summer program sites established formal parent drop-in programs that reinforced engagement with the program and positive relationships with educators that continued throughout the school year. The focus on parental engagement has expanded to the point where building connections with parents and assisting them to help their children achieve greater success in learning has been identified as a goal of SLPs (Summer Literacy Programme and Planning Guide, 2012, pg. 21). Beginning in 2012 and expanding in 2013, the summer learning research protocol employed a deep examination of parental engagement among families involved with the program.

Interviews have been conducted with 218 Indigenous and non-Indigenous families of primary children, as well as Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers from four school boards in Ontario (see Table 3.2 for a description of school demographics). In 2012, I was given access to summer programs offered in two school boards, Aurora and East Haven. In 2013, I was granted access to the same population of parents and teachers within these two school boards, as well as an additional school board, North View. In 2014 I was again given access to summer programs offered in Aurora and East Haven school boards, as well as a new board Summer Side. Within these four school boards I attended three summer program sites in 2012 and seven summer sites in 2013, and three sites in 2014.

Table 3.2 - School Demographics[27]		
School Board	% of students living in lower-income households	% of student's parents with some university education
Provincial average	16.5%	36.9%
Aurora	38.3%[28]	8.3%[29]
East Haven	23.4%[30]	21.8%[31]
North View	2%[32]	18%[33]
Summer Side	32%	5%

School boards involved in the SLP are given the autonomy to organize their summer programs in a way that best suited their community. As a result, boards organized their programs in various ways. The Aurora school board, along with a few other school boards in the province, ran all of their summer program classes out of a single school location; essentially creating all-in-one summer experience, rotating students through numeracy, literacy, physical fitness, and

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[27] This data comes from school board websites hosted by the Ministry. Links are not provided to protect the confidentiality of participating schools and families.
[28] average of 50%, 25%, and 40%
[29] average of 8%, 12%, and 5%
[30] average of 33%, 15%, 24%, 11%, and 34%
[31] average 18%, 32%, 24%, 22%, and 13%
[32] average of 2% and 2%
[33] average 19%, and 17%

Indigenous focused classroom instruction. In 2012, Aurora offered five literacy classes and one FNMI specific literacy class. Each class had roughly 20 students. In 2013, Aurora offered five combined literacy and numeracy program classes, as well as three FNMI specific literacy classes. In 2014 they offered eight combined literacy and numeracy program classes and four FNMI classes. Although Aurora's 2012 literacy, and the 2013 and 2014 combined literacy/numeracy programs were not Indigenous specific, all students who attended the summer program participated in FNMI focused literacy programming and activities facilitated by the FNMI teaching staff. Aurora offered all classes out of one school site.[34] However, this program drew from a population of students who attended this school during the regular school year as well as students who regularly attended two other schools in the surrounding area.

The majority of school boards, including the East Haven 2012 program, ran separate summer program classes where each class focused on a separate learning focus. For example, one class focused on *numeracy* learning, one class focused on *literacy* learning, one class was designated as an *FNMI literacy* class and focused on literacy learning through an FNMI cultural lens. At East Haven I was given access to two separate summer program sites in 2012. Site one ran two FNMI specific summer program class, with approximately 15 students per class. Site two was literacy based (and not FNMI specific) and ran six summer program classes; again with approximately 15 students per class.

Quite distinct, in 2013, East Haven chose to merge all of their literacy and FNMI focused literacy classes. In other words, all 2013 East Haven summer literacy programs were taught through a lens of Indigenous culture and heritage. In 2013, I was given access to the same two summer program sites as in 2012; site one ran six classes and site two ran four classes, with 15 students approximately per class. I was also given access to two additional sites in 2013, each running four classes each with around 15 students per class. Lastly, in 2014 I attended a new site within the board which ran five FNMI literacy classes, each class with of approximately 15 students.

In 2013 I was given access to the North View school board and in 2014 I was given access to the Summer Side school board. Similar to the East Haven 2012 program, North View and Summer Side ran separate summer program classes where each class had a separate learning focus. At North View, I had access to two summer sites. Each school site hosted one class of approximately 10 students. One site ran a FNMI specific literacy program and the second site ran a literacy program (and not Indigenous specific). At Summer Side, I attended one school site which had four FNMI classes, with approximately 15 students per class.

I had access to these sites in connection to my role as the Lead RA for the SLP. The sites were selected by Dr. Aurini in consultation with her contacts facilitating the SLP within the CODE and Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat. As well, the school boards selected as research sites were chosen because of geographic proximately to both myself and Dr. Aurini, and to each other.

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[34] This board's program expanded in 2014 to include another and separate school location which also drew from the population of students attending surrounding schools. However, I did not attend nor collect interview data from this new site in 2014.

North View, however, was selected to provide geographic variation and representation of a northern community in the sample.

Parents who participated in an interview were asked to fill-in a demographic survey to generate context about those in the sample (see Appendix C). Drawing on data collected from the parent surveys, Table 3.3 and 3.4 provide information about the household income and education levels of the participants.

Table 3.3 - Description of Highest Level of Education (participants only)					
	No response	Less than High School	High School Diploma	College/ Some College Education	University/ Some University Education
Non-Indigenous Sample 2012,2013, 2014 (n=124)	16.9% (21)	5.6% (7)	23.4% (29)	33.1% (41)	21% (26)
Indigenous Sample 2012,2013, 2014 (n=20)	5% (1)	5% (1)	25% (5)	40% (8)	25% (5)
Sample with FNMI children (not FNMI themselves) 2013, 2014 (n=4)	(0)	25% (1)	50% (2)	25% (1)	(0)
Total (n=148)	14.9% (22)	6.1% (9)	24.3% (36)	33.8% (50)	21% (31)

Note, percentages have been rounded to the nearest tenth.

Table 3.4 - Description of Total Family Income From All Sources					
	No response	$0 – 29,000	$30,000 – 69,999	$70,000 – 99,999	$100,000 +
Non-Indigenous Sample 2012,2013, 2014 (n=124)	26.6% (33)	25.8% (32)	28.2% (35)	12.9% (16)	6.5% (8)
Indigenous Sample 2012,2013, 2014 (n=20)	20% (4)	15% (3)	45% (9)	15% (3)	5% (1)
Sample with FNMI children (not FNMI themselves) 2013, 2014 (n=4)	(0)	50% (2)	50% (2)	(0)	(0)
Total (n=148)	25% (37)	25% (37)	31.1% (46)	12.8% (19)	6.1% (9)

Note, percentages have been rounded to the nearest tenth.

The average family size within my sample is 4 people (rounded from 4.15). The average low income cut-off (LICO) for families with four people and across community size as of 2013 in

Ontario is $32,055 (Statistics Canada, 2014a, pg.16). This number has been rounded to $30,000. For the purposes of this study, families who earn a total annual household income below the lower income cut-off (LICO, $30,000) and have not completed high school or have high school as their highest level of education are defined as "lower-class." The median total family income in Ontario in 2012 was $74,890 (Statistics Canada, 2014b). This number has been rounded to $69,000. For current purposes, families who earn a total annual household income between the LICO ($30,000) and the rounded median family income ($69,999), and who have completed some kind of post-secondary (e.g., college, university) are defined as "lower-middle-class". Families who earn a total annual household income between the median family income and 150% of the median ($112,335) (Heisz, 2007), and who have completed some kind of post-secondary education are considered "upper-middle-class."

3.2   Population

The school boards and school sites participating in this research have large Indigenous populations and have been identified by the province as having more acute economic, social or other challenges. Moreover, these boards are participating in an intensive summer learning program that has a particular focus on strengthening home-school relationships and embedding Indigenous culture and heritage into student learning. This program provides a unique venue to not only examine Indigenous and non-Indigenous families at risk of low achievement but also to situate my analysis within an institutional context that is sensitive to the challenges associated with engineering stronger home-school bonds. Drawing on interview data with those involved in the SLP, this study intends to generate empirical insight into the perspectives and experiences of Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents and educators regarding strategies that aim to challenge educational disadvantages connected to family-school relationships.

Importantly, I have had the opportunity to capture Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents with similar social class backgrounds (middle- and lower-class) and geographic location (Southern Ontario). With this comparable sample of Indigenous and non-Indigenous families, it is possible to draw a comparison between families from lower- and middle-class backgrounds in order to document the unique challenges that Indigenous families face when connecting with schools as well as identify challenges shared by families struggling more generally with economic and social disadvantages.

This study uses a comparative research design and aims to identify potential differences in how Indigenous families compared to non-Indigenous families understand and experience relationships with schools. This study also intends to gain insight into the role of teachers, considering how Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers perceive relationships with Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents. Ultimately, this research aims to document potential differences in the dynamics of Indigenous and non-Indigenous family-school relationships and consider how differences may shape Indigenous student achievement.

3.3   Recruiting

To recruit interview participation from parents I attended parent-information sessions in July and August 2012, 2013, and 2014. These sessions were organized by the school boards and held during the summer programs. I gave a three-to-five minute information presentation, introducing myself and the project. At this time, and throughout the program, I distributed recruitment flyers to all parents and invited them to participate in an interview. Summer program teachers also distributed the recruitment flyers to parents of participating students. To recruit interviews with educators I distributed the letter of invitation to the teachers in the program, inviting them for an interview.

Both parent and educator interviews were entirely voluntary; I only scheduled interviews with those who were interested or contacted me to schedule an interview. Interviews ranged from approximately 45 minutes to three hours in length. The majority of interviews with teachers and parents were conducted at the SLP locations; a few interviews were conducted at local public spaces such as community centers or libraries and a few interviews were conducted over the phone.

To place the interviews into context, a demographic survey was given to all parents following the interview (see Appendix C). The survey asked for information about the participant's age, race, level of education and occupation. (A further description of the survey is provided below.)

A survey was distributed to teachers who participated in the 2013 East Haven summer program in order to gain further insight into the perspectives and experiences of educators involved in the program. I worked in collaboration with the Indigenous consultant and SLP program coordinator to craft the survey using "Google Forms" which is a survey option within "Google Drive"[35]. Once the survey was finalized, the East Haven program coordinator emailed the online survey link to the summer program educators. The educators were then able to open the survey link, sent via email, fill-in the questions online and submit the survey electronically by selecting the "submit" button at the end of the survey. All completed surveys were anonymous and sent electronically to my Google Drive account.

3.4   Data Collection Methods

3.4.1   Interviews

This study draws primarily on interviews with Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents and teachers. Interviews have been conducted with 218 non-Indigenous and Indigenous parents and teachers who are involved with the SLP.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face; interviews were semi-structured using open-ended questions. All interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. During each interview, I selectively made notes about the participants' reactions and responses to questions. I also made

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[35] Google Drive is a file sharing service provided by Google (http://www.google.com/drive/apps.html).

notes following the interview to record any observations and general feelings I had about the participant or interview more generally. Interview questions considered how Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents perceive and understand schooling processes and how understandings shape their practices. During the interviews with Indigenous teachers and parents I tried to gain deeper insight into the present effects of past discriminatory education practices and how potential feelings of mistrust may shape present family-school relationships and therefore shape the educational experiences of Indigenous students.

I spent a considerable amount of time on location. In 2012, 2013 and 2014, I spent two weeks at the Aurora site and three weeks at the East Haven sites. I spent two weeks in 2013 at the North View sites and one week in 2014 at the Summer Side site. In total, I spent 18 weeks at the summer programs. I had numerous informal conversations with parents and teachers outside of the interviews. I regularly participated in classroom activities and attended the various parent engagement sessions organized by the program coordinators. The time I spent on site helped me to develop a more nuanced understanding of the school community, families and staff. I made field notes about events that took place, as well as my thoughts and experiences about what was going on around me. I made these notes while I was onsite and offsite after I had time to reflect.

Interview questions reflect four key themes (see Appendix A and Appendix B). First, I examined themes associated with: How educators and parents understand and define parent-school relationships. Sub-questions considered: (i) What is perceived as the ideal relationship? (ii) How does the ideal differ from reality and why? (iii) Are their differences in how Indigenous and non-Indigenous families relate to schools and teachers? (iv) Are their differences in how Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents understand and define their role in schooling processes, and therefore the actions they associate with these definitions?

Second, I explored themes connected to: How educators and parents define the roles and expectations of educators and of parents. Questions considered: (i) What do educators and schools expect of parents and the family? (ii) What do parents/families expect of educators? (iii) What types of parental engagement is encouraged or discouraged? (iv) What limits or encourages parental engagement in schooling (e.g., social class, family/parent education levels, attitudes about schooling, parents own schooling experiences)? Third, I considered: What do educators believe are the biggest challenges faced by struggling students (i.e., individual, family, or community level challenges)? And, what strategies have been the most successful in reaching students and families?

Fourth, I explored themes associated with: How parents and educators perceive the effectiveness of Summer Learning Programs or similar schooling initiatives that aim to boost Indigenous achievement by way of enhancing family inclusion within children's education and embedding Indigenous culture into student learning. Further questions considered: (i) How are Indigenous parents and communities perceiving, experiencing, and responding to SLPs? (ii) In what ways have the Indigenous programs been successful and what challenges do they face? (iii) What has been learned about engaging Indigenous students and parents that can transfer into regular schooling? (iv) What are the perceptions regarding the level of awareness among educators about Indigenous perspectives, values, and cultures? And to what degree are Indigenous cultures

and heritage embedded or included into the school communities and regular school year classroom learning?

See Appendix A and B

3.4.2   Demographic Questionnaire

A demographic questionnaire was given to all parents following the interview (see Appendix C). The purpose of the survey was to collect information to place the interviews into context. Survey questions asked for the participant's age, race, level of education and occupation. The parent demographic information was also recorded in the excel spreadsheet. I created columns pertaining to each survey question and recorded survey responses in the participants' respective row.

See Appendix C

3.4.3   Teacher Survey

A survey was distributed to teachers involved in the East Haven 2013 summer program and 17 were returned completed (see Appendix D). In 2013 I was able to attend four summer program sites in this board; however programs were running at additional sites that I did not visit. The purpose of the teacher survey was to add further insight to the data I was collecting, by capturing the perspectives and experiences of individual educators that I was not able to collect by way of in-person interview that year.

This survey was only distributed to teachers from East Haven because I developed a strong relationship with the board's program coordinator and, as a result, she provided me expanded access. The board was also interested in collecting this information. The board program coordinator and the Indigenous education consultant worked with me to craft the teacher survey. Following the program, a report was submitted to this board based on the parent and teacher interviews, and teacher surveys. Further, East Haven had a large number of summer program sites that were dispersed throughout the school board; it was difficult for me to travel to all sites to conduct the in-person teacher interviews. (In comparison, the Aurora school board ran all summer classes out of a single school site where I was able to easily approach all teaching staff and recruit their participation in an interview.)

See Appendix D

3.4.4   Data Management

After each day in the field I downloaded the mp3 interview file from my voice recorder onto my personal office computer. I saved each file using a file name generated from the first and last initial of the interview participant, their role (parent, teacher, EA, etc.) and location (Aurora, East Haven, etc.). (I also saved a backup version on my personal external hard-drive.) I then deleted the original mp3 interview from the voice recorder. I stapled together each participant's signed

consent form and their filled-in demographic survey, and placed this document into my office filing cabinet.

I used an online transcription service Datagain (Datagain, 2011) to transcribe all interviews verbatim. Once I had conducted at least three interviews, I logged into my secure account on the Datagain site and I uploaded the mp3 interview files to be transcribed. I then downloaded the completed interview transcripts to my personal office computer, reviewed the document and made any necessary corrections. I named each document the same way I named the interview mp3 file. (Again, a backup version was saved on my personal external hard-drive.)

I created an excel spreadsheet to organize, manage and document the data collection process. I updated the excel spreadsheet every day I collected data with information about the interviews conducted. With each new participant, a row was added to the spreadsheet and their information was filled into the designated columns. Spreadsheet columns contain participant names, contact information, the date and location of the interview, as well as their role in the summer program (parent, or teacher, site principal etc.). I also created a column where all field notes pertaining to each interview were typed. The spreadsheet is organized into sections pertaining to the year the interview was conducted (i.e., 2012, 2013 or 2014), and further subdivided into sections for each school board (and sections for the different program sites within each board) as well as by participant type (teacher or parent).

3.5   Data Analysis and Coding Approach

My methods of data analysis followed a general process. All 208 audio-recorded interviews (65 educator interviews and 143 parent interviews) with 218 participants (70 teachers and 148 parents) were transcribed verbatim. I then organized the data using NVivo 10 and analyzed the data to draw out patterns from concepts and insights. Interviews were conducted over a three year period during the months of July and August. I made preliminary jottings (Saldaña, 2009) throughout the period of data collection; I made note of words and phrases to be used for codes and ideas for analytic consideration. I coded all of the new interview transcripts at the end of each data collection period.

I used QSR NVivo 10 (QSR NVivo, 2015) a software program that assists to organize qualitative data. I first imported my interview transcripts and survey results into NVivo. I then attached labels to segments of text from these sources which allowed me to group and compare similar and related responses. My first cycle of coding involved: attribute coding, structural coding and descriptive coding (Saldaña, 2013). Attribute coding is a data management technique which involved coding basic descriptive information for each data source. For example, I added information about the site location, participant characteristics (race, social class, parent or educator) and data format (survey, interview transcript). I then used a structural coding strategy where I coded the materials based on the questions pre-outlined in my interview schedule. Descriptive coding was next. I assigned labels to summarize basic topics discussed in segments of data. I then added sub-codes to these primary codes to detail the entries (Miles et al., 2014;

Saldana, 2013). For example, I added tree nodes for themes I initially identified as emerging from the data. This first cycle of coding was primarily focused on summarizing segments of data.

Eclectic and pattern coding were used in the second cycle of coding (Saldaña, 2013). Eclectic coding was used to refine and recode and synthesize primary codes I had created to this point. I then used a pattern coding method to group the previously identified summaries (Saldaña, 2013; Miles et al., 2014). I organized and re-organized the data multiple times according to increasingly specific emerging themes and concepts. This phase involved organizing interview responses into more abstract and theoretically informed categories. In particular, I was able to group the data using two coding strategies and then look for relationships (Saldaña, 2013). I used an open-coding strategy where I added tree nodes as patterns and recurring themes emerged from the data. I then coded the interviews using pre-established theories of cultural capital and social capital.

Third, I split the data in each code (Saldaña, 2013) into two child nodes that represented Indigenous and non-Indigenous respondents. Fourth, additional phases of coding aimed to refine the contents of each code. I continued to look for patterns and connections within each category (e.g., similarities and differences in how parents understand schooling processes) and further subdivided the codes into tree nodes to capture the complexity of interview responses.

I kept notes, or jottings (Miles et al., 2014), throughout the coding process. I created a word document with my overarching research questions in the page header, which provided direction in my analysis. I recorded notes about what the data was saying, my interpretations of what the data meant, and connections I was making between the data and literature in the area of sociology of education and social inequality. I also made notes about similarities and differences I observed in the interview responses.

3.6   Challenges and Limitations

I am not of First Nations, Métis, or Inuit family background. Initially, I was concerned that my "outsider" status as a non-Indigenous person may affect my ability to conduct research with Indigenous participants. However, my experience in the field suggests otherwise. I experienced no issue either approaching or recruiting Indigenous interview participants. Nor do I feel that my "outsider" status shaped Indigenous participants willingness to openly talk with me about their perspectives, attitudes and experiences in connection to their own schooling or the education of their children. My experiences are supported in the literature. For example, considering race, age, gender, and socio-economic status, Weiss argues "these differences have little effect on the quality of the interviewing partnership. They become like a difference in height: there, but unimportant" (1994, pg. 139). Weiss contends that some of his best interviews were done as an outsider who needed detailed explanations to better understand the context of the interviewee responses (1994, pg. 137).

This research has limitations. The parents, students and educators that I am studying may not be representative. It is not possible to generalize results and findings of this study to that of the population, or transfer findings to other contexts or settings. Only a select group of parents and

teachers may involve themselves and their children with the Summer Learning Programs. Further, among those involved with the SLP, only a select group of individuals may agree to participate in an interview. Therefore, my sample of teachers, parents and students may differ on certain dimensions in comparison to the larger population. Taking this into consideration, I have attempted to capture a diverse range of interview participants. Interview participants have been recruited from separate SLP sites, located in different Ontario school boards. I am aware that the value of qualitative research lies in the ability to generate descriptions and themes that develop within the particular context of research sites.

Second, in general, qualitative research encounters challenges of reliability and validity. Mainly, this study draws on second hand accounts of self-interested actors and not direct observation. In other words, information reported in this study has been filtered through the views and perspectives of the interview participants. There are also challenges associated with dependability or replicability. It is uncertain that if another researcher re-interviewed and re-surveyed the same participants that the same information would be shared the second time.

3.6.1   Establishing Trustworthiness

Despite the challenges of qualitative research, precautions have been taken to ensure the trustworthiness of research findings detailed within this study. In particular, I had "prolonged engagement" with participants in the field, I cross-checked interview data, I engaged in debriefing sessions with my supervisor, member checking and triangulation, and I have provided a thick description of findings (Creswell, 2009; Shenton, 2004).

In 2012, 2013, and 2014, I stayed for a prolonged period in the field while conducting observations and interviews. This time allowed me to gain trust of educators and parents and develop a deeper understanding of family-school dynamics. As well, 208 interviews have been conducted with 218 participants. It is difficult to predetermine an exact number of educator and parent interviews needed in order to reach saturation and to establish coherent justification for identified themes. However, the current total of 208 interviews exceeds the recommended 12 (Guest et al., 2006), 20-30 (Creswell, 2007, pg.128), and even 30-60 (Morse, 2000, pg. 4) interviews needed to reach data saturation. The high number of interviews included in my analysis allowed the opportunity to reflect upon multiple perspectives as well as the ability to cross-check interview data, achieving a higher degree of credibility and continuity.

I engaged in informal and formal member checking. Over the three year span of this study I developed relationships with many of the educators involved with the summer programs. This provided many opportunities to engage in informal conversations with educators about my preliminary findings during my time at the SLP locations. Further, and more formally, I incorporated questions related to my preliminary findings into a number of my educator and parent interviews. My efforts to engage in member checking gave participants opportunities to assess the accuracy of my preliminary findings based on their experience. Participants had the opportunity to challenge what they perceived as wrong interpretations as well as offer additional information and personal examples of patterns I had observed in previous interviews. I also had frequent debriefing sessions with my supervisor, Dr. Aurini, during data collection to discuss my

findings and interpretations. Dr. Aurini often visited me onsite and met with me after each round of data collection.

My findings draw on the triangulation of different data sources. This study draws on interview verbatim transcripts, field notes, a demographic questionnaire, and an educator survey. Findings reported here are based on the converging of data from these four sources. Drawing on information gained from a wide range of informants is also considered a form of triangulation (Shenton, 2004, pg. 66). Further this dissertation provides rich, thick descriptions of individuals, their perspectives, situations and experiences to convey findings. Many perspectives are shared regarding individual themes identified. Fundamentally, conducting interviews with Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators and parents has provided the data necessary to achieve my research objectives.

CHAPTER 4 - FAMILY-SCHOOL RELATIONS AND LEGACIES OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

> *As Aboriginal people, we have a lot of issues. You got to look at how colonization impacted our people. You got to look at the how the residential school movement impacted our people, having our children taken from homes. We don't have that same love and compassionate nature anymore. We haven't been taught that. These things are deeply imbedded in us and impact our people in a lot of different directions - social issues, economic issues, our housing, where we live, our demographics. We have a lot of things that plague our people...we have a lot of years to undo and we're not going to change this stuff overnight* (Andrew, Indigenous parent, East Haven).

There is a link between current Indigenous family - school relationships and legacies of residential schools and assimilative practices. This chapter documents how historical legacies of discriminatory practices and residential schooling may continue to impact educational experiences among Indigenous peoples in the present, while chapter five considers class-based similarities and differences in how Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents interact with teachers.

Achievement gaps between Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students (Richards et al., 2008) reflect exclusionary government policies and practices – in consequence if not always by intent. Fittingly, current education policy promotes parent involvement and family inclusion as a solution to alleviate educational disparities (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010) and to improve academic achievement among Indigenous students (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007). Germane to the current study, schools have institutionalized informal and formal expectations that parents play an active and engaged role in their children's schooling (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010; 2012). Historically, however, Indigenous parents, families and communities were excluded from Indigenous children's education. Legacies of assimilative practices may have created barriers for current Indigenous parents' involvement in schooling. This chapter examines how legacies of residential schooling and assimilative practices may have compromised Indigenous parents' ability to establish strong connections with teachers and have trust in the education system.

Furthering our understanding of family-school dynamics that limit meaningful home-school connections, this chapter considers: implications of past policy and practice within current family-school relations, as well as the schooling experiences of parents and children.

4.1   Current Implications of Past Policy and Practice

Past practices have implications within current family-school relationships as, according to interviewees, the history of racial discrimination in schooling against Indigenous peoples is "deeply rooted" in the history of Canada and in the minds of Indigenous Canadians. A number of

Indigenous parents felt the history of Indigenous education in Canada continues to shape dynamics of Indigenous family-school relationships.

Jocelyn is an Indigenous teacher in Aurora and a mother of two children. Similar with other interviewees, Jocelyn shared her personal experiences dealing with the intergenerational impact of residential schooling and became emotional.

> My father went to residential school so you have broken families; some of the small kids that are here [at school] their grandparents went to a residential school. People don't really understand the dynamics unless they've lived it, unless you truly experienced 30 years of your dad's shit because he went to residential school, and how that affects me as a person. [Another Indigenous teacher] and I were just talking upstairs about how as we get older in our lives most of our stuff is from our childhood shit. You have those intergenerational effects - I hope I don't pass them onto my daughter, the garbage that you carry around, that pain and dysfunction. Does that affect our families today? Does that affect those little kids in those classrooms? Absolutely. "Why won't uncle come into the gym? Why won't mom and dad pick me up? Why won't they come into parent night? I'm crying, sorry...

Due to legacies of residential schooling interviewees believed "there's now generations of families who don't know how to parent" and properly support their children's social and emotional development (Ava, Indigenous education coordinator, Summer Side). Ava's parents attended residential schools; she said is constantly struggling and working towards being a better parent to her children. Her parenting struggles have a direct impact on her children's schooling. For instance, she has difficulty enforcing that her children are at school and on-time every day.

Abbygail is an Indigenous mother of five children and the director of a private high school for Indigenous students in East Haven. She believed that the history of Indigenous education continues to play a role in current family-school relations. According to Abbygail, "the history hasn't gone away" and the children who are currently in school are not far removed from what took place.

> To have somebody who is in residential school and nobody ever got them out..think about it from their perspective. You have somebody in grade nine…they come home, "I just don't want to do it, mom. I just can't take it. I'm being teased, there's racism, there's bullying"…How does it feel for that mother or that father to say, "then don't go. If you don't want to go, don't go?" Because nobody did that for them. Nobody saved them…think about it from that perspective. "Geez, I wish somebody could have taken me out and said it was okay, or saved me when things were really bad"…Just so you have that perspective of where that parent is coming from. And it's not from, "oh, we hate school. We hate-." No, because we love our kid. They're suffering and nobody saved us when we were suffering.

At times, Indigenous parents may not know how to respond when their children express the difficulties they are having in school. Parents do not want their children to "suffer" as they did in

school or as their parents did. As a result, parents may consent to their children dropping out of school and assist them to enter the work force. Natalie, a member of the Indigenous community and the East Haven Indigenous liaison worker, argued that "for a lot of Native families [the school] it's not a place parents are comfortable." According to Natalie, many Indigenous parents are not comfortable sending their children to school but do so because it is the law. Indigenous parents may be "intimidated" by educators and "very guarded" during interactions with the school. Interviewees believed that many Indigenous families do not trust that schooling will be beneficial for their children since parents' and grandparents' experiences were so negative. Parents may pass this attitude on to their children and, interviewees believe as a result, "if you don't trust something or someone, you're not going to give it your all" (Caroline, Indigenous educator, East Haven).

Most interviewees I spoke to believed that Indigenous experiences across Canada would be relatively similar. Forcing Indigenous students to attend residential schooling was federal policy and repercussions were therefore felt across Canada.

> Experiences from coast to coast and different nations would be fairly similar. There were a bunch of residential schools in each province. Of course you have different experiences in residential schools...But common things would have happened across Canada like reshaping communities and they definitely reshaped roles and responsibilities of the men and women, and what they took from us (Ryan, Indigenous teacher, Aurora).

Ryan believed that Indigenous communities from across Canada would have experienced residential schools in relatively similar ways. All interviewees that I spoke to agreed, from across Canada, issues of distrust and discomfort of educators and school systems would be common outcomes of residential schooling legacies.

Aaliyah is an Indigenous educator from East Haven and explained that parent involvement in schooling (e.g., helping with homework, attending parent-teacher meetings, volunteering) is a relatively new concept. In general, parents in previous generations were not expected to assume the active role in children's education that is the norm today. In Indigenous communities in particular, interviewees felt that the concept of parent involvement in schooling is "new," "unknown," and parents are "wary of it."

> Parent involvement, it's so different from how things have gone on. For so much of the history, from their introduction to school, parents were being completely removed from their children in school. We're trying to encourage being involved but learning from our history there is no good moment for that. The history in itself makes it a huge challenge.

There is often "distance" between schools and Indigenous families and "lack of engagement" among Indigenous parents partly because parent involvement is such a new concept. The history of Indigenous education continues to impact Indigenous family-school relations.[36]

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[36] In chapter five, I discuss how this relationship is mediated by social class.

4.2   Schooling Experiences

> *You get called dirt enough times you're going to feel it, right? And not just*
> *Natives; you degrade anybody for a long enough time, it doesn't matter if it's*
> *race or colour, they're going to feel it. That makes it hard for people to rise above*
> (Alexa, Indigenous parent, East Haven).

Indigenous peoples perceptions of the school system have been deeply affected by repercussions of residential schooling[37] (see also Wotherspoon 2006, 2008). As discussed below, the history of discrimination in education against Indigenous peoples continues to shape current schooling experiences in terms of: experiencing racism at school, negative stereotypes, and pressure to fit in with the majority student population.

4.2.1   Experiences of Racism at School

A number of Indigenous teachers and parents experienced racial discrimination while in school. Indigenous children were treated differently than non-Indigenous children and students with features that are often considered "typically" Indigenous (e.g., dark eyes, long black hair, dark complexion) experienced the most difficulty. It was as if "an extension of residential school carried on in public school" regarding the mentalities that some educators had towards Indigenous students (Ava, Indigenous education coordinator, Summer Side).

Derogatory and incorrect information was taught in school about Indigenous peoples and culture. Interviewees, such as Alanna, an Indigenous parent from Aurora, were taught about "savage Indians" and negative stereotypical information about their ancestors and culture.

> When I was in school, learning about the pioneers, they were referring to the Native
> people as savages and that was their word in my class. I went home and I was like, "Mom
> I never knew I was a savage." I was just a little girl and she was like, "What?" She told
> the principal and my teacher came and she gave me shit for telling my mom.

Indigenous students and their families often feel uncomfortable and disrespected due to the way Indigenous peoples are portrayed at school. Ryan, an Indigenous educator from Aurora, explained that Indigenous peoples are often depicted in stereotypical ways (e.g., wearing loin cloths, headdresses and moccasins) which perpetuates misperceptions that Indigenous peoples are "more primitive, that [they] existed in history but no longer exist" (see chapter six for further description).

Misunderstanding and misinformation about Indigenous peoples was also seen to lead to bullying. Tiffany is a non-Indigenous educator in North View and teaches in schools with large

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[37] Interviewees also told me that many who experienced residential school refused to teach their children and grandchildren their native language and traditions because they wanted them to be "safe" and believed "it brings anger to the world" (Fiona, non-Indigenous parent, East Haven). Now, there is a real fear that the language and cultural traditions will be lost because many of the elders who used to speak and teach the language have passed away.

Indigenous populations. According to Tiffany, there is a "lot of prejudice and racism" in her school community and Indigenous students are treated poorly by other students. She said "it starts at such a young age" and, as educators, Tiffany and her coworkers "try and un-write that prejudice before it can form." Further, within a single family some children may have more features considered to be "typically" Indigenous (black hair, dark complexion) and other children may be able to "pass for a white kid." Indigenous parents felt that their children who looked "visibly Native" experienced higher instances of racism than their other children with fairer complexions, lighter eyes and hair. These parents felt their "visibly Native" children were bullied more by their peers, were given a harder treatment by the teachers, and parents felt they needed to intervene more on their behalf regarding school matters. Further, racism expressed at school may not be one sided. Leona, an Indigenous mother from Aurora, described Indigenous mothers at school who tell their children, "don't play with those [non-Indigenous] children; they're not from your kind."

Repercussions and backlash from media attention on disputes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians can also feed negative stereotypes that are associated with Indigenous peoples and children. Two different Indigenous parents described that when issues erupted in 2006 in Caledonia Ontario[38] their children "felt it" at school. During this time, children frequently heard derogatory comments from their peers, such as "all Native peoples do is complain."

Some educators assume that all children and parents have the same cultural knowledge and single them out to explain cultural concepts and information. Many Indigenous families "know they are brown and they are Native" but "because of colonization that cultural knowledge has been lost in a lot of families" (Ava, Indigenous education coordinator, Summer Side).[39] Calling on students and parents during and/or outside of class can make them feel ashamed and embarrassed if they feel unable or too uncomfortable to contribute. Ayanna, an Indigenous grandmother from Aurora, explained that this form of "stereotyping and targeting" of Indigenous children in the classroom is "a form of oppression." To illustrate her argument she said, for example, just because someone looks Middle Eastern does not mean they could explain the religion of Islam and just because someone is Caucasian does not mean they know about Christianity.

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[38] For example for more information see Globe and Mail article "the true cost of Caledonia" available at: http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/the-true-costs-of-caledonia/article590038/

[39] Ava further explained, "don't expect that all Aboriginal people have the same level of teachings, know their name, know what nation they belong to, what their language is, where they geographically come from because of the 60's scoop that went into the 70's and the 80's. Kids were taken from their families and adopted out. Some people, they know they're a Native but still don't know anything else. Some people are still putting that puzzle together" (Ava, Indigenous education coordinator, Summer Side). The "60's Scoop" refers to the Canadian practice of removing Indigenous children from their families, placing them into the child welfare system, and adopting children out to non-Indigenous families in the '60s, '70s and early '80s (for example see Sixties Scoop Class Action Lawsuit website: http://sixtiesscoopclaim.com/). This was a strategy used in Canada that took place in the wake of residential schools.

Just because they're a First Nations student doesn't mean you call on them and say, "Oh, you're Native, you should know x, y, z"...targeting like this is another form of racism and stereotyping. First Nations people have come a long way and why would you as educator want to put that on a young person. [Educators] they can't say "look at you, you're bad" but it's just another way that non-Native people found to oppress First Nations youth in the classroom, so that they feel embarrassed and humiliated for being a First Nations person (Ayanna, Indigenous grandparent, Aurora).

Respondents felt that educators should ask the class in general "would anyone like to talk about this?" (Ayanna, Indigenous grandparent, Aurora). Singling out children in class as an "expert" when children may not know anything about their culture or history is considered "a form of racism" and "detrimental to that child" (Abbygail, Indigenous parent, East Haven).

Despite these ongoing challenges, several of my Indigenous interviewees believed that the dynamics of racial inequality against Indigenous peoples in schooling is slowly changing for the better.[40] There are also a variety of community services and schooling initiatives that aim to help Indigenous students succeed in school, facilitate positive Indigenous parental involvement schooling, and encourage non-Indigenous students and educators to develop an awareness of and sympathies towards Indigenous culture and heritage. Maddison is a young Indigenous mother from East Haven. She has two sons and is working towards her undergraduate degree at a local university. She is drawing on various services available to the Indigenous student community (e.g., Aboriginal Student Services Office, free child care) and experiencing success with her studies. Compared to what has happened historically, Maddison was positive about changes taking place in education and in society more generally.

There are still hard feelings but I think it's the point where the younger generation, we will bring our culture back. My mom may have struggled but it's about change...it's cool to be Indian now, it's popular, it's in fashion. Everyone has moccasins; they're sold at Wal-Mart!..there is so much educational opportunities and Native programming is everywhere now. You can't miss it (Maddison, Indigenous parent, East Haven).

4.2.2   Negotiating Stereotypes

Many Indigenous interviewees who had gone on to pursue post-secondary education were the first in their families to do so. Ava, an Indigenous education coordinator from Summer Side, explained that growing up, she felt that attending university was out of reach for Indigenous students. She said, "Native people just don't go to university and they're not encouraged to go there either." Ava's mother reached grade eight in high school and there were no Indigenous scholars, professors, doctors, or role models for her to look to who had successfully pursued higher levels of education and professional careers. Ava's younger sister enrolled in university and was the first Indigenous person Ava knew who attended. Her sister inspired her. Ava followed in her sister's footsteps; she applied to university and was also accepted. Ava received As in her undergraduate courses and, when she graduated, went straight into her Masters' degree

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[40] In fact, the older Indigenous parents and educators (aged 35 and older) I interviewed described experiencing more issues of racial discrimination than the younger Indigenous parents I spoke to (aged 35 and younger).

where she also received As. She had internalized negative stereotypes about "stupid Indians" that she had heard growing up, creating barriers she had to overcome. It was "embedded" in her as a child that she would never be successful in school and that "all Indians were dirty, drunks and alcoholics." She had to constantly affirm to herself that she "could do it" and she was "smart enough." Other interviewees had similar experiences. Ayanna is an Indigenous mother and grandmother from Aurora. For Ayanna, it "took a long time" for her to accept the fact that "[she] could be a First Nations person going to university and was going to finish [her] degree."

> I was very encouraged by my community, from Six Nations, to go get an education but they also said, you know, "it's gonna be hard. You're gonna encounter a lot of racism, you're gonna encounter people putting you down." I didn't want to believe them but that is what I encountered.

Ayanna had difficulty completing her post-secondary education. Although she did not want to give up because she felt quitting would only perpetuate ideas that Indigenous peoples are not successful in university. Drawing on the experiences of my interviewees, existing negative stereotypes about Indigenous Canadians have a negative effect on educational aspirations among Indigenous youth. Researchers have documented this phenomenon termed "stereotype threat;" the idea that pressures created by negative stereotypes are associated with underperformance among minority students (see Steele, 1997; Steele and Aronson, 1995). Stereotype threat has been validated in numerous studies (e.g., Walton and Stevens, 2009; Walton and Cohen, 2007)

4.2.3 "Trying to Blend In"

There is a mismatch at times between Indigenous culture and the school or peer group culture which may create pressure for Indigenous students to try and fit in. Caroline, an Indigenous educator in East Haven, explained that Indigenous students are often quiet and become withdrawn when culture is discussed in schools; they "just don't feel like they fit in school and it hinders them at school." Andrew is an Indigenous parent of two children from East Haven and he does a lot of work advocating on behalf of the Indigenous community. He believes that Indigenous children are often "afraid to be Indian in front of the non-Indigenous kids cause they are looking for acceptance." Andrew described a particular instance involving his 11 year old son. His son had been bullied and picked on at school for a number of years because of his long hair.[41] However, this past school year, Andrew's son decided to have his hair cut. Andrew allowed this because he could see how the bullying was negatively affecting his son.

> I was hurt when my son got his hair cut. I was very emotionally hurt because everything that I advocate and try to teach him was totally contradicted at the point in time. When his hair was cut, I was like, why am I doing the work that I'm doing if it's still not strong enough to affect my own son. I throw my arms up. Maybe we should just fit in too.

Andrew was deeply affected by this event, to the point where he began to question all of the advocacy work he had done to have Indigenous rights recognized and difference acknowledged.

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[41] It is part of Andrew's culture that men do not cut their hair. I was told that in some Indigenous cultures getting ones hair cut is considered a sin.

Bella, an Indigenous mother of 3 children, ages 7,5, and 1, provided another example. She described an incident where her children's school had an Indigenous cultural presentation involving drumming, dancing and singing. Children were encouraged to get up and dance along with the presenters. All of the children danced except for her children, the only two Indigenous children in the group. Bella's children dance at powwows and at home, and her two eldest children are competitive Native dancers at various events. Yet they were "standoffish and shy" at school and "they weren't proud to get right in there and do it." This experience was very upsetting for Bella. She recognized, however, that it was a good experience for her children to see that other non-Indigenous children were involved and excited about the presentation. Interviewees also shared stories about how some Indigenous families and children do not want to disclose they are Indigenous to the school; some Indigenous parents will tell their children "don't let anybody know you're Native and pretend to be White" (Ava, Indigenous education coordinator, Summer Side). Children may even abandon cultural identifiers in order to blend in with the non-Indigenous children (e.g., the desire to "dye their hair blond to look Caucasian"). Indigenous children may be "afraid of being teased and afraid of being different" (Amanda, Indigenous parent, East Haven).

On the other side of the spectrum, Indigenous children that do not have features often considered to be "typically" Indigenous, including dark hair and completion, face criticism when they choose to identify publically as Indigenous. Ryan is of Indigenous ancestry and is a Mohawk language teacher in the Aurora school board. He explained that many of his students have "learned to push their [Indigenous] identity away" and do not identify with their Indigenous heritage. He said feeling segregated and not knowing where they fit in is a "huge issue with a lot of urban Aboriginal families."

> Students immigrate here and try to integrate themselves into class. But it's like, you know what they are. This kid's from Japan and this kid's from India. It's normalized now because there's just so much immigration. But people don't know what an Aboriginal person looks like. You know from the book because it tells you that they're brown, they have black hair and high cheek bones. But there's so much interracial partnerships that we don't look like we do in the books anymore. So when you say, "I'm Mohawk" but you have fair skin and blond hair, the kids go, "you're not Mohawk - why do you look like that?"

Ryan believed that the classroom is a microcosm of society; Indigenous peoples have been on the periphery of society for generations and, therefore, Indigenous students may feel they are outsiders in a classroom which turns into a lack of self esteem and lack of cultural pride. From another perspective, Leona is an Indigenous mother from Aurora. Her daughter identifies as Indigenous; she has "sandy brown, copper-coloured hair" and begs her mother to dye her hair black "so [she] can look like the rest of [her] culture." I also spoke to a few parents and educators who are half Indigenous and half Euro-Canadian and encounter discrimination from both the Indigenous and Euro-Canadian community. Alexa is "not accepted" and has always questioned where she "fits" because she is "not full blooded" but "half White and half Native."[42]

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[42] Another interviewee, Aaliyah, shared a similar story. Her mother is Indigenous and her father is Euro-Canadian, and she has long blonde hair and blue eyes. People frequently tell her "you're not Native" which she feels is very

4.3   Discussion

This chapter contributes to understanding how the history of Indigenous education in Canada continues to complicate family-school relations among Indigenous Canadians. As described above, relationships between Indigenous peoples and schools have been undermined by the legacy of residential schooling and assimilative practices. This may lead to educational disadvantages among Indigenous communities.

Relationships, social networks and norms of reciprocity, trust, and positive emotion are key components of social capital (Paxton, 1999; Coleman, 1988; Bourdieu 1998). Relationships between parents (or caregivers) and schools rooted in these characteristics are considered to facilitate academic achievement, in terms of helping parents obtain information about their children's progress or schooling processes, and access resources to support achievement (Horvat, et al. 2003; Wang, 2008; Useem, 1992; Hill and Taylor, 2004; Ong-Dean, 2009; Chin, 2000; Demerath, 2009). As mentioned, the norms of parent involvement have increased over the past generation which has been accompanied by greater involvement among dominant middle-class groups. This shift may contribute to growing participation disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents. Further, educators define appropriate and preferred family-school relations based on mutual trust, cooperation, partnership, positive and open communication, and expect parents to be actively involved in education at home and at school (Lareau, 1987, 2000, 2002, 2011; Lareau and Horvat, 1999; Reay, 1998). However, expectations of inclusion and involvement may be problematic as some Indigenous student, parent, and community perspective on, and experiences with, the school system have been negatively affected by past educational practices and policies.

This thesis builds onto the work of Lareau. Lareau and Horvat (1999) found that historical legacies of racial discrimination against Black people in education created more difficulty for Black parents, compared to Euro-American parents, to comply with standards of trusting and positive schooling relationships. They found that Black parents approached the school with more criticism and distrust, while Euro-American parents established more trusting and comfortable relationships with the school and it was this type of relationship that held more value during schooling interactions. This logic can be extended into the current context of Indigenous family-school relationships in Ontario Canada. Due to historical legacies of racial discrimination in schooling Indigenous parents do appear to approach schooling and educators with more hesitation, criticism, and distrust than non-Indigenous parents in my sample.

Based on these findings, there is reason to suggest that discriminatory barriers connected to colonialism and colonization continue to shape educational experiences as well as Indigenous family and school relationships within the present. Interviewees identified educational barriers connected to experiences of racial discrimination, negative stereotypes, student desires to blend-in with the majority student population, and concerns that children would encounter racial discrimination at school; similar experiences and concerns were not shared by the non-Indigenous parents/educators in my sample (see also Lareau, 2002; Lareau and Horvat, 1999).

offensive.

This chapter considers how Indigenous family-school relationships are complicated by historical legacies of residential schooling and discriminatory education practices; chapter five considers how family-school relations vary by social class.

CHAPTER 5 - PARENT-TEACHER INTERACTIONS: RACE AND SOCIAL CLASS

> *Walking through the hallways knowing that you're labeled every single day does not make anyone comfortable walking through a school ever again. Now we have to bring it around where, "it's a place that you and your children are welcome here. It's okay for you to be comfortable here, and we're going to respect you for who you are and who your children are, and all that stuff that happened before is no longer going to happen." Teachers and staff and principals need to be hyper aware that whenever you have an Aboriginal family in the school that's a huge thing* (Natalie, Indigenous liaison worker, East Haven).

In what ways do issues of social class and race shape family-school relationships among Indigenous peoples in southern Ontario? Whereas the previous chapter provided context on how the history of Indigenous education in Canada may continue to impact current family-school relationships, the current chapter examines parent-teacher interactions among Indigenous and non-Indigenous middle and lower-class parents. The discussion below considers the unique challenges that Indigenous families face when connecting with schools and also identifies those challenges shared by families struggling with economic and social disadvantages. This chapter considers how social class and legacies of racial discrimination in schooling interact in different ways for middle- and lower- class Indigenous families.

The current research finds that Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents share similar class-based experiences along dimensions of: trust and comfort levels, roles and responsibility, and agency; categories that align with schools informal and formal institutionalized expectations of parents. Findings also suggest that Indigenous parents and educators were concerned with monitoring their children's lives for signs of racial discrimination at school. This concern was not expressed by non-Indigenous parents (see also Lareau, 2002; Lareau and Horvat, 1999 for parallel findings about Black and Euro-American differences in the USA).[43] Further, Indigenous parents respond to concerns in different ways, especially by their social background, since they access different class-based resources when doing so (e.g., experience negotiating school matters, feeling entitled to approach teachers with questions and concerns).

I show how the historical context of Indigenous education encourages middle-class Indigenous parents to intensify their parenting practices, what I term "alignment-plus."[44] Indigenous parents with higher levels of education and income shared much with similar non-Indigenous parents in the sample, in terms of aligning with standard concerted cultivation and institutional requirements of schooling (Lareau, 2011). These parents tended to be more comfortable

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[43] One African American mother from East Haven, Loren, mentioned concerns of racial difference/ discrimination at school. She told me that she was concerned her son was experiencing issues fitting in because he was "the only Black face in a sea of one hundred." However, this comment was made in passing. She was not concerned to the same extent as Indigenous parents in my sample, and her concerns did not shape her approach to schooling or view of schools and school personnel.

[44] This term was intentionally created to parallel Alan Cairns' concept of *Citizens Plus* (2000) discussed above. Recall, the Citizen Plus concept considers that Indigenous peoples have the same rights as all Canadians as well as additional rights due to the status as descendants of original occupants.

approaching educators with questions and concerns, were more knowledgeable about schooling process and educational skills, and felt entitled to intervene in school matters on their children's behalf. However, Indigenous middle-class parents also, or "plus", see themselves as playing the role of "cultural shields." These parents are more involved and forceful with schools in order to protect their children from negative events pertaining to their culture and heritage. Middle-class Indigenous parents actively looked for potential signs of racial discrimination and more often chose to respond to concerns by proactively intervening and interacting with the school in ways that led to "moments of inclusion." This makes for a more complex cultural alignment between family and schooling: on the one hand, they try to align with several "educational positives" (reading with kids, doing homework with them, etc.), but in addition their shielding is an extension of cultivation that Lareau did not discuss or encounter much.

The level of parent engagement among lower-class Indigenous parents is similar to the non-Indigenous parents in my sample. Both lower-class groups' encountered barriers to participation in schooling related to educational skills, knowledge of the schooling system, employment flexibility, child care, transportation, and expressed anxiety that school authorities would have their children taken away (see Lareau, 2002, 2011). Yet, for lower-class Indigenous parents the history of discrimination in schooling appears to magnify feelings of distrust and discomfort with schooling in ways that further limits strong family-school relationships. Indigenous lower-class parents are much more distrusting of schools, while schooling is somewhat off the radar screens for non-Indigenous lower class parents and is not central to their outlooks on their children. This chapter finds that legacies of racial discrimination create "moments of exclusion" for lower-class Indigenous parents and complicates their ability to comply with the expectations of educators (Lareau and Horvat, 1999).

5.1   Trust and Comfort[45]

> *I have the worst fear of teachers, to be honest with you. Even if the teachers the same age as me, I'm nervous around them* (Alexa, Indigenous parent, East Haven).

Parents who trust educators may believe that teachers are dependable, act in children's best interest, are receptive to parent input, and are friendly and approachable (Adams and Christenson, 2000). Parents in my sample varied in their ability to demonstrate this attribute; interviewees described how the history of Indigenous education in Canada has led to deep-rooted distrust of teachers and the education system. Quoted below, Jocelyn is an Indigenous teacher from Aurora and shared her experiences of working with parents in schools with large Indigenous populations.

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[45] There is US based literature on African Americans which concludes that historical and contemporary experiences of discrimination, and racial segregation and ghettoization, have lead to current "ethnoracial gaps in trust" in poor inner city communities (Smith, 2010, 2007).

Some of the [Indigenous] parents wouldn't even come to the school door, the aunts and uncles that pick them up won't even come past the fence gate. There are generational effects because of the things that happened to them in school... how do we expect them to come into the classroom and have a positive experience with their child if they themselves have not had a positive experience?

From another perspective, Caitlyn is an Indigenous parent from East Haven and is also employed by the school board as a youth councillor. Caitlyn believed that Indigenous parents often have "that definite us and them mentality" because on school property "this is the teacher's domain, this where they have the power, control, and expertise." Perceptions of differential power between the school and the home were evident in my conversation with Caitlyn, and during my interviews with lower-class Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents (see Lareau and Shumar, 1996). According to Caitlyn, "overall Aboriginal parents do want to be involved with their kids' education, but there's still that fear and intimidation because of the history [i.e. residential schooling] that holds them back."

5.1.1   Lower-Class Families

A number of lower-class Indigenous parents and the majority of lower-class non-Indigenous parents described feeling comfortable interacting with educators in more informal terms (e.g., saying "hello" during pick up and drop off); however, these same parents did not feel empowered to question or challenge educators, advocate for educational considerations or services, nor entitled to interact with educators as relative equals (e.g., teachers seemed "unfriendly" and "unapproachable").[46]

Erika's contact with teachers is fairly typical. A lower-class Indigenous widow from East Haven, Erika has 2 children, ages 4 and 8.[47] She has "very minimal" contact with her children's teachers and has had "a couple conversations" with the principal. The communication she has had with the school revolves around her daughter's frequent "lates" and absences. In the past, Erika has tried to communicate directly with educators about how to help her daughter makeup for the missed class time. However, "they kept blowing [her] off" and "never gave [her] anything helpful." Erika's efforts to establish written communication with the teachers have also been unsuccessful. Erika's literacy skills are limited; she is reluctant to write notes to the school because, in the past, a few teachers have "felt compelled to circle with red pen" spelling and grammatical mistakes. Erika told me she feels helpless.

Erika had a negative and traumatic schooling experience which has made it difficult for her to feel comfortable attending the school and communicating with teachers. Erika recalled her experiences at school and started to weep.

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[46] Non-Indigenous lower-class parents also expressed feeling uncomfortable interacting with educators. For example, Meaghan is a lower-class mother of two children, ages 5 and 7, from East Haven. She expressed feeling a distance between educators and parents; "like 'we're the professionals and you're the parent. I'm busy and she doesn't understand because she is a parent.'" As a result, Meaghan refrains from approaching teachers to ask questions about school material or sharing strategies that work for her son at home.

[47] Erika has a high school diploma and has not attended post-secondary. She earns between $0-29,000 annually.

I got beat up a lot. I had brown skin and it was as simple as that. I didn't blend in with the others...I try not to cry when I'm in the school talking to the teachers. That's one of the reasons why I make minimal contact...Sorry, I can't stop crying.

Erika is hopeful that her children will not encounter racial discrimination at school as she did. She encourages her children to have a positive attitude towards school and tries not to let her children know about her own negative experiences. Negative schooling experiences were common among parents from both lower-class groups; however, these experiences for Indigenous parents appeared to be compounded by legacies of racial discrimination in schooling.

Alexa, quoted above as saying she has "the worst fear of teachers", is an Indigenous lower-class parent from East Haven. She is a single, stay-home mother of three children ages 8, 4, and 3. She recalled her own difficult schooling experiences, as well as what she had been told about the negative experiences of her parents and others in the community. Her own teachers "hated kids," were "only there for the paycheck," and would demonstrate their authority over the students by using "the strap." Lower-class parents in particular have not spent a prolonged time learning the education system (i.e., pursued post-secondary). Similar to Alexa, the conceptions these parents have of schooling are based on their own negative schooling experiences connected to racial discrimination and what they have learned from their parents and community members about past mistreatment in residential schools. According to interviewees, Indigenous parents who are perceived as distrustful and uncomfortable with schools/teachers are seen by educators to be unhelpful in children's education (see Lareau and Horvat, 1999, for parallel findings about Black and Euro-American differences in the USA). Educators felt "frustrated" when Indigenous families continually "shut them out" because they are unable to properly support the needs of Indigenous students, leading to a "downward spiral" in students' education (Benjamin, non-Indigenous teacher, East Haven).[48]

5.1.2 Middle-Class Families

Many middle-class Indigenous parents and all middle-class non-Indigenous parents expressed feeling comfortable interacting with educators but their interaction went beyond informal conversations that were common among lower-class parents. Both groups of middle-class parents felt entitled to question teachers, make requests and demands regarding their children's schooling.[49] These parents sought out the advice from educators and were comfortable bringing forward concerns and issues. Efforts of middle-class parents to intervene in schooling were not

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[48] Benjamin further explained the following: "it got to be frustrating because I really was doing what I thought was best for the students, I really was advocating for them and I wanted to be on their side, but it didn't matter what I said because it was me saying it...Nobody's denying that this particular family or this particular student is in need of this support, but because it's me offering the support there's mistrust there... The more teachers and staff are trying their best to help and the more they are shut out, that [education] gap widens. A bit of downward spiral."

[49] Feelings of entitlement were shared among middle-class non-Indigenous parents. For example, Shannon is a middle-class mother of four children from East Haven. One of her sons was diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. When her son was two years old, she had concerns about his speech development and pursued a diagnosis by actively seeking out doctors and specialists. Shannon continued to be pro-active and took the initiative to seek out advice from teachers and educators within the school.

always successful (see Lareau, 2011; Lareau and Horvat, 1999; Lareau and Shumar, 1996). However, the active approach taken to negotiate school matters and the resources parents drew on to do so were markedly different than their lower-class counterparts.

Yet, legacies of racism and discriminations profoundly shaped the lens through which middle-class parents interpreted events at schools and their interactions with educators. While middle-class parents from both groups engage in similar parenting practices, Indigenous parents like Marlee engaged in more intensive forms of parenting practices than non-Indigenous parents in an effort to protect their children from negative experiences related to their culture and heritage at school (see Lareau, 2011, for the profile of a Black middle-class family who adopted a parallel strategy). Marlee is a middle-class Indigenous parent of five children and an educator at an alternative education program for Indigenous high school students. Marlee described instances where she intervened in her children's education due to concerns about discrimination. For example, her son was selected to play the "Aboriginal or Native part" in the school play. When she found out, she responded by calling the teacher immediately for clarification. She wanted to find out from her son, and from the teacher directly, if her son had offered to play the part or if the teacher assigned him the part because he is Indigenous. When Marlee confronted the teacher about her concerns, the teacher acknowledged and complied with her requests. In the end, she learned that her son chose to play the part because he felt it was his responsibility. Marlee was satisfied with this explanation and allowed her son to play the part in the play.

Similarly, Sophia is a middle-class Indigenous parent of three children from East Haven who prioritized supporting her children's learning in and outside of school. She has a university education, earns between $30,000 and $69,000 a year, and works as the parent coordinator at a local Indigenous organization. Her daughter Evelyn experienced learning difficulties and was frequently at odds with teachers. Sophia described a conflict between Evelyn and her grade three teacher:

> The teacher said to me, "she is the only one who is different." And I said, "aren't you lucky to teach someone who is going to challenge you?" He couldn't see it. I said, "you're fired. I will find someone else who can work with my child." He started laughing at me and said, "you can't fire me." And I said, "watch. You will be fired. You will no longer be teaching my child."

Sophia went directly to speak with the principal following this conversation with the teacher. She told the principal that "by the end of the day [she] expected [her] daughter to be in another classroom." Her efforts were successful. The principal made the necessary arrangements and the next day Evelyn was to join another grade three class in the school.

Sophia had "never had a positive relationship with the school" and had negative feelings towards teachers. As a result, she described herself as "very protective" of her children while they are at school. She feels obligated to closely monitor what happens at school and frequently intervene. At times, negative emotion is evident during interactions with educators.[50] Expressing these

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[50] Not all of Sophia's efforts have been successful. A few months prior to our interview, she had an argument with a French teacher over the phone where "it went too far," she "lost it," and hung up the phone on the teacher.

emotions does not align with schooling norms of displaying positive attitudes towards the school and engaging in polite conversations with educators. Not all interviewees drew on their cultural resources in a way that was legitimated by the school (see also Lareau 2011; Lareau and Horvat 1999), however these interactions often resulted in the school or teacher providing middle-class parents and their children with accommodations.[51]

5.2   Roles and Responsibilities

> *We have so many [Indigenous parents] that went through the residential school*
> *experience...They want their kids to have good lives but they don't see how*
> *education can help with that* (Heidi, curriculum administrator, North View).

Educators expect parents to play an active and assertive role in their children's education and assume responsibilities that include: showing interest in school work, maintaining regular communication with the school, and displaying positive attitudes towards learning and schooling (Lareau, 2002, 2011; Lareau and Horvat, 1999; Lareau and Weininger, 2003). Interviewees felt that some Indigenous parents play an "extremely engaged" role in their children's education while other parents are "nonexistent," taking the perspective that "school is school and home is home, it's very separate" (Natalie, Indigenous liaison worker, East Haven; also see Lareau and Shumar, 1996; Lareau, 2000, 2011).[52] Interviewees believed there are lower levels of parent involvement in schooling, as well as more irregular student attendance and parent communication among Indigenous families compared to non-Indigenous families.

> In a non-Native family, kids don't do homework, report cards are bad, then parents' red
> flags go up and they do something. That might not happen in an Aboriginal family. So
> it's not necessarily priority (Whitney, Indigenous parent, East Haven).

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[51] Not everyone had stories of successful intervention. Indigenous teachers also experienced problems advocating on behalf of Indigenous children within the school setting. Jocelyn is a middle-class Indigenous parent who is also an educator with the Aurora school board. She described a time that a senior educational executive stopped by her school. Jocelyn approached this individual and explained how she feels about the Indigenous initiatives at the Aurora board; this conversation did not go well. "I stuck my foot in my mouth. I said, 'Aurora is behind in terms of FNMI resources and teachers.' Then [she] said, 'Well it's really about money and declining enrollment.' I'm like, 'I'm tired of hearing that there's not enough money. I don't mean to sound racist but refugees have more opportunities in the Aurora board than my own kids do." Jocelyn felt defeated. She became emotional when the executive told her the funds were not available to implement the FNMI resources she requested and, at that point, the individual ended the conversation. She finally had an opportunity to have her views heard by someone who could make a difference in the education of her children and her students. However, because she reacted with emotion, she came across "like the whiny Native girl" instead of effectively articulating her position and her efforts were dismissed as a result. For years she had been actively advocating for improved FNMI resources in the board but felt she has gotten nowhere; she felt her only option was to "give up" and leave the board. When I interviewed Jocelyn in 2013 she informed me that she accepted a job in another school board and was scheduled to start her new position the following September.

[52] One Indigenous parent described a different perspective. Some Indigenous families view a separation between home and school learning, in which school learning focuses on math and literacy and home learning focuses on cultural teachings (Abbygail, Indigenous parent, East Haven).

Annika has had extensive experience working with Indigenous families as the First Nation, Métis and Inuit student support teacher for East Haven. According to Annika, educators often have difficulty communicating with Indigenous parents. When teachers *are* able to contact parents, parents "just won't follow through" with teacher requests. In comparison, the Euro-Canadian parents Annika has worked with "trust the education system" and are therefore "accessible," communication is "easy," and they are "more involved" in schooling. Annika believed there are differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous family-school relations due to legacies of residential schooling and the resulting "mistrust in education" among Indigenous communities. Although sympathetic to family circumstances, a number of educators expressed difficulty helping Indigenous students progress academically when parents are perceived as not strongly supporting and participating in children's schooling.

5.2.1   Lower-Class Families

Lower-class Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents both struggled to align with schooling expectations due to economic barriers (e.g., inflexibility in work schedules preventing attendance at schooling events) and limited educational knowledge and skills (e.g., unable to help children with homework) (see also Lareau and Shumar, 1996). These parents had limited involvement at school or engagement with learning at home and inconsistent communication with the school. Lower-class parents from both groups were highly dependent on teachers to guide and direct the education of their children (see Lareau, 2011).[53]

Both groups of lower-class parents engaged in similar parenting practices, yet Indigenous parents, such as Lindsey, are more reserved and hesitant when engaging with schools than non-Indigenous parents due to the history of exclusion and discrimination Indigenous peoples experienced in schooling. Lindsey is a lower-class Indigenous mother of twin 7 year old girls from East Haven. Lindsey and her husband both completed high school as their highest level of education. Lindsey was a stay-home-mother until a few years ago when her and her husband opened a thrift store. She used to communicate with the teachers on a regular basis but, since she opened the store, she has not had as much time to dedicate to her children's education. Once she picks up her two girls from an after school program, makes dinner and gives them baths, "there isn't time to be doing other things." Lindsey and her husband also struggled to help their children with homework.

> My husband's not a speller. He doesn't like reading with them because sometimes he gives them the wrong words when he's correcting them. It's difficult if you don't understand what the kids are doing, and that's in grade two. How are we supposed to help them? And who wants to admit to your child that you don't know what they're doing?

Lindsey and her husband were reluctant to help their children with reading and math homework because they were concerned with teaching them incorrectly. They were also unsure about how

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[53] For example, Julianna is a non-Indigenous lower-class parent with three children from Aurora. She is single, a stay-home-mother, and high school is her highest level of education. Julianna struggled to support her children's learning. When her children would ask for help with their school work, she would tell them: "you're on your own. I failed this horribly in school...I have no idea, so I can't help you."

to approach teacher for direction. Lindsey recently found out that both of her children are behind and reading below grade level. This news came as a complete surprise.

Alanna provided another perspective. She is a lower-class Indigenous mother of three children, ages 8, 7 and 2, from the Aurora school board. She completed grade 11 in high school and is a stay-home-mother. Her two eldest children lived with their grandmother for the first years of their life; Alanna spent time in jail and needed time to get her life in order before regaining custody of her children. She has since had another son and currently has custody of her older children part-time. At home, her children spend most of their time "laying around and watching TV." Alanna is not involved in helping with or overseeing her children's homework because she feels she is "not good at it" and "doesn't know anything about it." She spends little time at the school and has never initiated communication with the teacher or principal about her children.

Lower-class Indigenous parents may have little involvement with their children's schooling because they themselves have had negative schooling experiences, are intimidated by educators and are unaware of norms of parental involvement common among middle-class dominant groups because their schooling experiences (and the experiences of their parents) have been so different. Recall from chapter four, the concept of parent involvement in schooling is considered to be "new" and "unknown" in Indigenous communities.

5.2.2   Middle-Class Families

Middle-class Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents assumed a more active role in their children's schooling. These parents tended to have the financial resources to purchase educational materials (e.g., tutors, books), flexibility in their work schedules to support schooling at home and at school, and educational knowledge to help guide their children's learning (also see Lareau and Shumar, 1996). Middle-class parents were informed about what was happening at school, monitored children's progress, supported and supplemented learning at home, and instilled post-secondary expectations more so than parents from lower-class backgrounds.[54]

Middle-class Indigenous parents like Caroline engaged in "alignment-plus" forms of parenting practices. These parents saw it as their role to shield children from negative experiences related to their cultural background and therefore maintained a strong presents at the school, monitored and intervened in daily schooling activities at a more intensive level than their counterparts. Caroline is an Indigenous mother of two children, she is a university educated middle-class parent who is also employed as an educator within the East Haven school board. Caroline recognized that her children "stand out in their little school" because both of her children have features that are often taken to be "typically" Indigenous, with long black hair and dark eyes. She worried that her children felt as though they did not fit in at school and believed it was her responsibility to do something about it.

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[54] For example, Samantha, a middle-class non-Indigenous mother of three children from Aurora, told me that it is her role to "develop" her children's educational knowledge and skills, as well as teach them to become courteous, conscientious adults. From her perspective, she had the opportunity "to use the teachers and their experiences to [her] advantage to do that."

> My daughter [Jillian], when she first started school, said she wanted blonde hair. And I said, "Why?" And she goes, "because no one in my class has dark hair like me." And I said, "[Jillian], your hair is beautiful." I said, "you know, the girls in your class probably love your hair because it's different." I said, "that's who you are"...There was no one in her room with the dark hair like her….And the dark, dark eyes….And I felt sad for her. So then that's when I saw it as my job to pump her up more as a parent.

Caroline tried to "find an in" for her children. Caroline looked for openings in both of her children's classes, points in the curriculum where it would be fitting to provide a cultural presentation to the class in order to educate the teacher and her children's peers about Indigenous culture. For example, in grade three, Jillian learned about early settlers and her teacher included "a brief little thing" on how Indigenous peoples contributed to the development of Canada. Caroline approached the teacher and asked if she could bring in traditional Mohawk foods and cultural artifacts to share with the class.

> I had my mom make some fry bread and we brought in some strawberry juice, and **[**Jillian] brought in our drum. I let her wear her traditional dress in, and that's when the kids really were like, "can you bring more in?" And, "oh, you're so lucky, you get to go to these things", and, "look at your beautiful dress," and, "you're mom made that for you?!" And that's when she started to feel good about herself...she was proud then. She didn't want the blonde hair after that. She was happy with her dark hair.

Caroline described other instances where she found "ins" for her daughters to share their culture in class. Caroline approached her eldest daughter Johanna's grade six teacher about her willingness to help contribute to cultural events or arrange cultural presentations during the year. The teacher "ran with it" and tried to incorporate Indigenous material throughout the entire school year. The teacher frequently contacted Caroline when planning future classes in case she had ideas about ways to contribute, such as including Native Canadian artists in various art units, plants used in traditional medicines, and Indigenous books. Similarly, Caroline proactively taught her children how to respond in a "kind and respectful way" when teachers said something that was incorrect about Indigenous culture and/or peoples. Caroline taught her children to approach the teacher if an incident took place, ask to speak to them quietly, and say "this is what I've been taught," or "maybe you could talk to my mom" instead of "blurting out, 'no, you're wrong!'" Caroline explained that when her and her children respond in a more respectful way it creates an environment where people are more open, and do not get offended and dismiss what is being said.

Whitney shared similar experiences. Whitney is also an Indigenous middle-class parent of two children who attend schools in East Haven. She works with the local Indigenous community justice program and is in the process of completing her Masters' of Social Work. Every September she approached her children's teachers, introduced herself, and let them know that she was willing to assist in class with cultural content. Her family became well known in the school community for facilitating cultural demonstrations and performances for individual classes and the entire school.

Whitney described a particular instance involving her son. Her son has very long hair; it is part of their culture that males do not cut their hair. She took him to places where it was affirmed that men have long hair but at school, where this is not the norm, he was constantly being teased. She wanted to be proactive. She helped her son arrange an assembly where he spoke to the entire school about what it means to be Indigenous and why he has long hair. Members from the Indigenous community attended to show their support. This was an educational experience for both the students and teachers. Afterwards, students were interested to learn more about her son's cultural background and approached him with questions. Also, the teasing stopped.

Caroline and Whitney were both middle-class parents who drew on class-based cultural resources to address their concerns of discrimination and did so in a way that strengthened their relationship with the school and teachers. They were proactive in monitoring their children's schooling experiences and frequently asserted themselves and intervened to ensure their children had positive schooling experiences related to their culture. At the same time, these parents displayed positive attitudes towards the teachers and schooling, and frequently participated in classroom and school-wide events. Caroline and Whitney's approach aligns with the expectations of schools. Their efforts were deemed helpful and were appreciated by the school.

5.3   Agency

> *Education is a right, not a privilege. Your driver's license is a privilege not a*
> *right. There's a difference* (Ayanna, Indigenous grandparent, Aurora).

Many parents in my sample varied in their ability to make decisions and act in ways that institutionally aligned with schooling expectations. Some parents were assertive and proactively supported their children's development, while other parents took a more passive role (Lareau, 2002, 2011; Lareau and Horvat, 1999; Lareau and Weininger, 2003). North View and East Haven school boards both had an Indigenous liaison worker who was employed by the board and worked jointly with local Indigenous organizations. These positions focused on supporting Indigenous families and students interact with schools; there are no equivalent positions for any other racial groups. The existence of such positions suggests Indigenous and non-Indigenous families are not on a level playing field pertaining to interactions with the schools.

Natalie, a member of the Indigenous community and the Indigenous liaison worker in East Haven, said there is a "huge barrier" between teachers and many Indigenous parents. According to Natalie, "numerous" Indigenous families experience issues in school but parents are "really scared" and "too uncomfortable" to approach educators and address these situations, "lead[ing] to a horrible experience for the child." Many Indigenous parents "don't know what they can say, what they can't say" to educators and "won't challenge the teacher or ask questions." Lyla shared this perspective. Lyla is an Indigenous educator in East Haven and recalled how her parents would tell her, "just go to school and listen."

> We have to go back historically, why we are this way, which brings us to the residential
> school. My parents both went there. When I was going to school, my parents taught me

what they learned from their experience - you better go there, you better listen, and you better do whatever they say. My parents were this way [when I was in school]. My mother would never ever ask questions because that's the way she was taught.

Interviewees felt that this experience is common among many Indigenous communities and as a result Indigenous parents are often unaware they can take an active role in their children's education. Lyla and Natalie advocated for active parental engagement in schooling among the Indigenous community, encouraging families to interact with the teachers and get involved in schooling. Parents who may not have cultural resources but do have social networks to draw on that include school personnel (e.g., Natalie, Lyla), parents in the school community or family members who are knowledgeable about schooling and comfortable communicating with teachers have an advantage over others who do not.

5.3.1   Lower-Class Families

Both lower-class Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents tended to assume a passive role in schooling matters, accept educator decisions and actions without question, and did not attempt to exert influence on the course of schooling events. Further, a number of lower-class parents from both groups had concerns about their child(ren)'s development and educational progress; however, they did not recognize these as problems and did not try to find solutions.[55]

Lower-class Indigenous parents such as Kirsten refrained from interacting with educators and attending the school due the negative schooling experiences her and her family have had, as well as the lasting implications of past racial discrimination in the school system. Kirsten is a lower-class Indigenous mother from Summer Side and has four children, ages 6, 5, 3 and a new born. She is single, a stay-home-mother, and had her first child when she was 16 years old. As a young mother, she attended high school on and off and recently graduated from high school at the age of 24. Her children have experienced many issues at school, mostly related to bullying. At first, she "didn't really know how to go about addressing the issue" and she "didn't want to go and talk to them [at the school]." After the bullying happened multiple times she eventually spoke with several teachers; however the bullying continued.

Growing up, her parents were not involved in her schooling. I asked if her parents ever attended school events, helped her with homework, or engaged her in conversations about her schooling. In response, she said, "I didn't have any of that." I asked Kirsten about the role she has had in her children's education; she said that because her children have only been in school for a few years, "[she] doesn't know how to go about that kind of stuff."

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[55] For example, Kylee, a lower-class non-Indigenous mother from Aurora, had concerns about her 8 year old son's speech, as well as behavioural and social development. However, "it wasn't brought to [her] as an issue until after he started [school]." It was the school that identified his speech as an issue and the need for additional support. It was the school that connected him to various speech and language supports, including weekly sessions with a speech pathologist, and arranged for his involvement in a special speech program during the school year.

I personally have not gone to classroom or school stuff. I didn't know that we could go in and watch a play or anything during school. I thought we were supposed to bring our kids [to school] and that's it.

Kirsten dropped off and picked up her children from school every day. She frequently said "hello" to the teachers and asked questions related to their behaviour; whether they were "good or bad," and "if they had a good day or bad day." During our meeting, Kristin placed a lot of emphasis on her children's behaviour and wanted her children to "do the same things at home and at school." Explaining her approach to parenting, Kristen described how she emphasizes "no hitting, or no fighting, no swearing."

Compared to middle-class parents, lower-class Indigenous parents were less likely to respond to concerns of discrimination or see the school as a resource to voice their concerns (even though the incident is occurring on the school grounds). Some lower-class Indigenous parents saw problems or issues that arose at school as a private matter, something that was handled by the parents or by community members. I was told that several lower-class parents "disengage." As a consequence, educators "lose their respect" and these experiences reinforce negative perceptions of schooling (Abbygail, middle-class Indigenous parent, East Haven). According to Abbygail, if an issue took place at school with a lower-class Indigenous family, educators "might hear about it but they may not."

If they have [Indigenous] children in their class and those children come home and tell their parents [about something offensive that happened or was said at school], some parents will pick up that phone and be really upset, other parents will just talk about it within their very large families and it will take away from the creditability of that teacher or that administrator in that school.

Responding to concerns of discrimination by disengaging from the school led some parents to withdraw from teachers and schooling and, as a result, less actively participate in at-school involvement. Efforts from Indigenous parents that choose to respond with disengagement may be perceived by educators as disinterested in schooling and unhelpful (see Lareau and Shumar, 1996; Lee and Bowen, 2013).

5.3.2 Middle-Class Families

Compared to parents like Kirsten, middle-class Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents were more likely to intervene in schooling matters, guide and direct their children's schooling and take charge of school matters. Middle-class parents were familiar with the inner-workings of the school system. They were able to draw on their own experiential knowledge of schooling to effectively navigate school processes and gain educational advantages for their children. Not only did they know how to source-out information about resources, supports and programs, they felt empowered to advocate for what they believed was best for their children and insist on change.[56]

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[56] For example, Sandy, a non-Indigenous middle-class parent from Aurora learned that the type of gifted program her 7 year old son needed was not available for very young children. Unfazed, she worked with the school, sought

Ayanna is a middle-class Indigenous grandparent from Aurora. She is a university graduate, employed as a child and youth worker, and earns between $50-60,000 per year. Her youngest son is 18 years old; he lives at home and has a child of his own, Emilia, whom she is now helping to raise. Ayanna has been involved with committees and councils at the school board and at the schools her children and grandchild have attended. Being part of these groups has been the "greatest asset" for her in terms of both "a free education about the school system," and the ability to network with knowledgeable and powerful people in the school board.

Ayanna has been the main advocate in the board pushing to have Indigenous programming incorporated into elementary schools. Initially, the way schooling was set up, Emilia would be exposed to Indigenous programming and language instruction at preschool but would not have access to any further programming until high school. Ayanna initiated a petition with the intent to start a Mohawk language program at Emilia's elementary school.

> I wrote to politicians saying, "you need to get behind this and you need to support it. We can have First Nations people protesting here, that's not an issue, but we want this to be positive and proactive. So work with us and go forward"....We've had to educate politicians, the school board, and school staff about why this is needed...They say, "you're lucky to have your programming." I'm just the opposite, saying, "no I'm not lucky, I demand that this be part of these kid's education."

Ayanna was able to mobilize other parents, community members and school board personnel in her network to create desired change in her granddaughter's school. Emilia's elementary school was selected to pilot the JK and SK Mohawk language program which, when we spoke, had been in place for four years. The program grew in enrollment every year and has shifted to focus on students in grades four through eight. She continued to be involved with the program, "keeping tabs on what's going on."

From another perspective, Ava is a middle-class Indigenous parent as well as an Indigenous education coordinator from Summer Side. Her and her sister both had attended post-secondary and were employed by the school board. Ava and her sister opted to strategically remove their children from school when certain topics or units were being covered that, potentially, may be offensive. Ava's sisters' children are older than her own which gave her the opportunity to learn from what her nieces and nephew experienced in school and be more proactive with her own children as a result. For example, her sister's eldest child came home from school upset one day because of how Indigenous peoples were portrayed in a lesson about pioneers. Her sister contacted the teacher immediately and explained that her son would not return to school until the unit was finished. Ava told me that "[teachers] talk about Native people in a negative light" and "[they] didn't want [their] kids exposed to that." From then on, both sisters made a conscious

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the advice of other professions, and linked to various online and community organizations. She had a sophisticated understanding that "there is an institutional structure that exists" and according to her, her job was to figure it out and "manipulate" the system to her son's advantage. Through her efforts, she was able to secure a variety of accommodations for her son. According to Sandy, these accommodations "empowered [her son] and made him feel like a real person."

effort to find out what units were being covered ahead of time and removed their children from school strategically to protect them from potential negative experiences. Ava has provided another example of "alignment-plus," in which middle-class Indigenous parenting practices align with standard concerted cultivation and the expectations of schooling (Lareau, 2011), but these aligning strategies have an added dimension consisting of working through perceived discrimination.

Middle-class Indigenous parents in my sample took the initiative to approach teachers on a regular basis and ask questions about class content and materials ahead of time. These efforts gave parents the information needed to intervene in their children's education and circumvent situations where children may experience discrimination. These middle-class parents were not challenging teacher's judgements and were not creating negative or confrontational situations with the school. In this way, these parents may be seen to be complying with schools evaluative standards of family-school relations.

5.4   Discussion

There are strong social class differences in the ways that Indigenous parents interacted with schools. These variations affected how well parents align with institutionalized schooling expectations and the legitimacy attributed to such displays within school settings. This study finds that Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents share similar roles in children's schooling and similar experience interacting with educators based on social class. Middle-class Indigenous and non-Indigenous families demonstrated a high degree of sophistication when confronting educators, accessing resources and advocating for their children. Lower-class Indigenous and non-Indigenous families were less successful in developing strong home-school relationships. Class-based resources also mediated how parents respond to concerns of racial discrimination (see Lareau and Horvat, 1999).

This study finds that the legacies of discrimination in schooling affected family-school relations among middle- and lower-class Indigenous parents, but in different ways. The history of Indigenous education appeared to drive middle-class Indigenous parents to intensify the nature of parental involvement, what I term "alignment-plus". In addition to monitoring their children's social and academic development by way of concerted cultivation (Lareau, 2011), Middle-class Indigenous parents act as cultural shields by looking for signs of racial discrimination and were more informed when incidents took place that may be interpreted as discriminatory. In short, middle-class Indigenous parents were actively involved in children's schooling in order to protect children from negative images or situations pertaining to their heritage and culture. Such parents were more forceful in advocating on their children's behalf, and more likely to respond to concerns with active intervention in ways that led to moments of inclusion.

Middle- and lower-class Indigenous parents both expressed negative attitudes towards schooling that were rooted in legacies of discrimination. However middle-class Indigenous parents managed to put their feelings aside during interactions with the teachers and other staff members; and their education and occupational background provided them with the confidence

to engage educators as equals and advocate for their children's social or academic needs. By way of contrast, these negative feelings coloured the actions and behaviours of lower-class parents, creating further distance between families and the school, and led to less involvement and engagement with schooling. Many of these parents felt too uncomfortable, fearful or intimidated to approach teachers or engage in open and consistent communication with educators.

My findings extend Lareau's conception of concerted cultivation (2002, 2011). Middle-class Indigenous parents engaged in distinct parenting practices which aligned and intensified standards of concerted cultivation and, in addition, engaged in cultural shielding and discrimination protection. Lareau did not discuss this type of parenting. I have termed this parenting practice "alignment-plus." Findings also extend Lareau and Horvat's conceptual framework of "moments of inclusion" and "moments of exclusion" (1999). Specifically, Lareau and Horvat consider moments of inclusion to include parents' ability to successfully gain schooling advantages for their children (e.g., access to an academically gifted program) by way of activating cultural capital in a way is deemed legitimate by school officials. Extending this argument, Indigenous parents in my sample were able to employ cultural resources deemed appropriate and helpful by the school to create advantages for their children in terms of cultural awareness and sympathies among their children's peers and the school staff. As Caroline explained, "you catch more flies with honey than vinegar." In other words, her approach was based on the belief that if she responded to educators with kindness, her efforts would be more successful.

Based on the logic of cultural capital, parents' cultural resources in the form of behavioural patterns, preferences, attitudes, etc., are eventually adopted by their children (Bourdieu, 1998, 1977, 1984; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). Caroline, for example, taught her children to approach teachers in a "respectful way" when culturally inappropriate or offensive information was shared or terms were used in class. Caroline's children experienced success with this positive approach compared to the Indigenous students who were reprimanded by teachers for confronting teachers.[57,58]

In my sample, legacies of residential schools and racial discrimination in schooling against Indigenous peoples shaped the approach that middle and lower-class Indigenous parents took in

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[57] Interviewees described instances where Indigenous children confronted teachers during class time, and "called the teacher out," when something inaccurate was said about Indigenous culture or peoples, or incorrect terminology was used. According to Rick, the Indigenous advisor in East Haven, the children's marks were dropped as a result. Ayanna, an Indigenous grandmother from Aurora, knows Indigenous students who were "reprimanded" by teachers and "kicked out of class." Student's own efforts to intervene in classroom matters were not legitimated when students confronted teachers in a way they deemed to be disrespectful.

[58] The concept of within-family social capital is also relevant which exists in "the relations between children and parents" as well as other present family members (Coleman and Hoffer, 1987, pg. 223; also see Coleman, 1988). This form of capital is considered the means by which parents pass on their knowledge, skills and abilities to their children. Coleman and Hoffer argue that social capital requires purposeful investment; in other words, the degree of within-family social capital reflects the benefit that children gain from their parent's skills and knowledge. The functional form of within-family social capital refers to parental investment in children and may include parental attitudes and behaviours. Caroline's efforts to teach her children how to respond to instances of discrimination in ways that would be deemed appropriate in school settings may be considered an example of within-family social capital.

children's education. Research is needed to better understand culturally distinct ways that Indigenous parents are involved in schooling and promote academic achievement, and how Indigenous home-school relationships intersect with social class.

CHAPTER 6 - SCHOOLING INITIATIVES AND PRACTICES

> *We don't have anywhere else to go to learn the culture and language except for here in North America. If you're here and you're Japanese, you can go to Japan and learn that all over again. We're from here. If we lose it here, it's gone. We have nowhere else to go to get that back. So it's important that somehow it continues here* (Bella, Indigenous parent, East Haven).

Bourdieu (1998) offers a reproduction version of cultural capital which suggests that schools reward privileged types of cultural capital (cultural traditions and tastes of the dominant social class, e.g., awareness of social norms and values) and are active agents of social reproduction. According to the cultural reproduction model, it is to the advantage of dominant groups that academic achievement is attributed to ability rather than inherited social class advantage and, therefore, reproduction in education remains hidden (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). There are limitations in Bourdieu's framework for looking at school reform. He was locked into a reproduction framework from the 1970s, during an era in which few of today's inclusion and equity frameworks existed.

Weininger and Lareau (2003) point out that Bourdieu's conception of cultural capital is based on the French education system which differs from the US education system and by extension the Canadian system as well. They argue the impact that family practices have on schooling is "visible" in education research, policy and practices. Demands of the general public as well as government agencies, for example, encourage accountability from schools regarding academic achievement. Weininger and Lareau describe the prevalence of institutional mechanisms which intend to "harmonize" and "ameliorate" educational disadvantages attributed to social class (2003, pg. 375-376, 400). For example, parent-teacher-conferences can "clarify for parents the expectations that the institution holds for their children and the means it uses to realize them" (pg. 384). Educational institutions may implement policies, practices and initiatives to support students and their parents, alleviating disparities in schooling experiences created by differences in family-school dynamics (e.g., variability in the role parents assume in their children's schooling).

Weininger and Lareau's argument can be extended into the context of Indigenous family-school relationships. Historical legacies of racial discrimination against Indigenous peoples in schooling and unequal educational experiences among Canadian Indigenous communities are highly visible within public and political spheres, and various policies and initiatives have been implemented to ameliorate educational disadvantages. As discussed previously, Indigenous inclusion and representation in schooling is articulated in current education policy as a solution to alleviate educational disparities and to improve academic achievement among Indigenous students (see Ontario Policy Framework). The objectives of the Ontario Policy Framework include integrating content that reflects First Nation, Métis, and Inuit histories, cultures, and perspectives throughout the Ontario curriculum, ensuring all students in Ontario know and appreciate contemporary and

traditional Indigenous cultures,[59] and creating positive and welcoming environments for Indigenous families within the school. The Policy Framework also encourages Indigenous representation in the workforce as well as sensitivity and understanding of Indigenous cultures, perspectives and histories among school staff. Inclusionary policies and initiatives may facilitate trust, understanding and comfort with schooling/educators among parents, and encourage parents' active schooling involvement at home and school for the benefit of Indigenous student achievement. In this way, policies and practices may be considered a schooling mechanism for boosting Indigenous parents' social capital (Mignone and O'Neil, 2005; Coleman, 1988) as well as compliance with schooling standards of family-school relationships (Lareau, 2011).

Do these formal structures make a difference in student achievement, parental involvement, and family-school connections?[60] Currently, 92% of Ontario's provincially funded elementary and 96% of secondary schools have Indigenous students, yet 51% of elementary and 41% of secondary schools offer no Indigenous education opportunities such as professional development for teachers or cultural support programs (Gallagher-Mackay et al., 2013). Powers (2006) found that cultural-based programming in schools effect urban Indigenous students' educational outcomes, by way of "enhancing those educational conditions that promote school success for all students" (pg. 42; also see Gibson, 1997a) and have found a stronger association between cultural programming and student outcomes for students who most strongly identified with their culture (also see Powers et al., 2003).

This chapter explores how Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators, parents and student are responding to Indigenous focused initiatives within their schools.[61] The discussion below

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[59] First Nation, Métis, and Inuit content has been incorporated into Ontario curriculum in social studies (Grades 1-6), history and geography (Grades 7 and 8), Canadian and world studies (Grades 9-12), mathematics (Grade 1-11), Kindergarten, language (Grades 1-8), guidance and career education (Grades 9-12), and business studies (Grades 9-12).

[60] The Toronto District School Board has established two Africentric Alternative Schools with the intent to improve student self-esteem and reduce achievement gaps and drop-out rates (Toronto District School Board, 2014). These schools advocate for African-centered education which is committed to cultural, academic and social goals in order to address the needs of the black student population (Dragnea and Erling, 2008). No research has been published confirming the effectiveness of these schools, yet reports show students achievement has improved (MacDonald, 2010; Education Quality and Accountability Office, 2015). Important to note, however, factors inside (e.g., teacher expectations) and outside (e.g., parental expectations) the classroom both contribute to achievement. Further, the Black Canadian and Indigenous Canadian populations differ. The Canadian black population has not experienced residential schooling and assimilation techniques in schooling that aimed to eliminate their culture. The Indigenous population are Canada's original inhabitants who have had European values and culture imposed on them.

[61] The initiatives discussed below were identified by my interviewees. There are, however, numerous provincial and local school board initiatives that exist in Ontario public schools are there not mentioned. There are initiatives to support Ontario Indigenous students. For example, in 2011-2012, 5,970 students were enrolled in Native Language courses and 13,375 students were enrolled in Native Studies courses in Ontario public schools (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, pg. 33). Alternative Secondary School Programs were established in 1990, in partnership Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres and local district school boards, to help Indigenous students complete high school (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, pg. 34). In 2011-2012 this program was delivered at eleven Friendship Centres in Ontario and had more than 1,000 students enrolled. Professional development opportunities have been established and resources have been made available to support educators working with Indigenous students. For example, *Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit* and accompanying guide was created and is available on the Ontario Ministry of Education website (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009b), and additional Native Studies textbooks and teachers' guides have been published. There have also been initiatives in Ontario to improve all

considers the significance of Indigenous content in schooling, current educational initiatives, and the school work environment for Indigenous educators. Interviewees spoke about barriers to implementing Indigenous initiatives and how these barriers impact educational experiences of Indigenous students and families. This chapter also offers a case study that describes a successful programming initiative implemented in the East Haven school board as well as a policy recommendation based on how the successful practices of this program may be transferred into the regular school year. This chapter builds on previous material by furthering understanding of what encourages and limits meaningful home-school connections between Indigenous peoples and schools.

6.1   Significance of Indigenous Content in Schools

6.1.1   Significance for Indigenous Community

Interviewees discussed the importance of embedding content based on Indigenous culture, perspectives, and history into public schools and saw it as one way to encourage meaningful home-school connections. Further, Indigenous peoples "have nowhere else to go but here" to learn about and preserve their culture and traditions. Interviewees expressed that many Indigenous peoples living in urban settings do not have access to cultural resources either in the community or in their families, and have limited ability to pass cultural traditions on to their children. [62] There are various resources available to families living on reserves (e.g., language instruction); therefore, I was told many families felt "trapped" since they want to expose their children to their culture, but do not necessarily want to live on the reserve. Interviewees identified the school as an ideal location for programming since not all parents have the ability to sources out and access community resources and programming opportunities (e.g., due to limited transportation, time, finances, limited cultural connections in the community). Caitlyn for example, an Indigenous mother from East Haven, has not facilitated her daughter's cultural learning at home because she lacks the resources to do so and feels as though she is "failing [her] kid." When we spoke Caitlyn was recently able to enroll her daughter into Indigenous programming for the first time since it was offered through the school.

Of particular significance, interviewees explained that when Indigenous children are exposed to cultural teachings and historical information at school they pass this information on to their parents and in many cases grandparents. As discussed in previous chapters, assimilative policies and practices of the past have had intergenerational effects on Indigenous communities in terms of the preservation of cultural traditions, culture, and language. As Fiona explained, Indigenous families have realized some benefits from learning about Indigenous culture and history at

students' and educators' knowledge in Ontario about the cultures, perspectives, and histories of Indigenous peoples. For example, as of 2013, 64 (out of 72) school boards in Ontario had a designated Indigenous Education Lead who not only lead Indigenous education in the boards' schools and classrooms, but also implement initiatives to support Indigenous students and increase awareness about Indigenous peoples (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, pg. 43).

[62] A number of interviewees told me that "culture and language have been lost" among many Indigenous people due to past assimilation policies and programs (e.g., Ava, Indigenous education coordinator, Summer Side).

school.[63] Fiona is a non-Indigenous mother from East Haven, and her husband and children identify as Indigenous. She enrolled her children into an Indigenous program offered by the school because "[she] can't teach [her] kids about who they are." The Indigenous program was helpful because her children shared what they learned with her, enabling them to "learn as a family."

Student self-esteem, self-worth and self-confidence are associated with academic achievement (see Rosli et al., 2012; Pullmann and Allik, 2008; Aryana, 2010). Indigenous students may come to school with preconceived notions that they "don't fit in" at school because of the way Indigenous peoples have been disrespected and oppressed in schooling in the past. Further, interviewees explained that "a lot" of parents "aren't confident in their own identity as an Indigenous person and of course that gets passed down" which translates into how Indigenous students feel about themselves and the confidence they have when approaching schooling (Whitney, Indigenous parent, East Haven). Caroline, an Indigenous teacher from East Haven, said that Indigenous students, like any other students, want to feel "accepted socially." However, compared to children from other cultural backgrounds, Indigenous children often do not feel they "fit" in school and as a result may be quiet and withdrawn.

> Our children don't have that pride yet for being Aboriginal and feeling that sense of belonging. There's just something that doesn't fit. You don't feel like you fit in schools and it hinders them. Within schools they feel that and so they're quite...We need to give our kids positive experiences, pump them up at school and make them feel like they matter and their voice matter.

Indigenous students may feel apprehensive and reserved in school, not want to engage or participate, which may create barriers in their education. Leona is an Indigenous mother from Aurora and spoke to me about how some Indigenous students see attending school as being put into the "White man's world" where students feel they need to be on the defense.

> You stick [Indigenous students] in a White man's world, then this is what happens, they shut down because they're not taught any different. White men are bad and that's what Native children are taught...Teachers can open a door for kids to walk through by having books and stuff with them in it. And then kids say, "Okay, I'm going to be a part of this. It's my culture. They're teaching it. Maybe [school] it's not so bad." And then kids choose to be a part of it instead of being of the stand point where Natives hate non-Natives."

Interviewees expressed that Indigenous students may feel more accepted, comfortable in school, and are more willing to participate in class when they see Indigenous peoples, cultures and histories reflected in class material and that information is represented in a respectful way. At that point, Indigenous students know "everybody is okay with [their] culture and [their] not

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[63] For example, Bella shared the following with me; "It's important for us to rejuvenate our culture and our language. My grandpa passed away two years ago. Everybody else in my family, its minimal language. I hardly have any language. So now that my kid is starting to learn [in school], these little kids are teaching us. My one son can count up to 35 in Cayuga; I can barely count to ten. He's teaching me" (Bella, Indigenous parent, East Haven).

going to be put down" (Ayanna, Indigenous grandparent, Aurora). Further, seeing Indigenous content incorporated in schooling in a positive way "encourages [Indigenous] kids to feel proud of their heritage and proud to learn about it and to realize that it's ok to be Native" (Alexa, Indigenous parent, East Haven). From a broader perspective, this finding may lend support for the argument that self-confidence and self-esteem are positively associated with academic engagement and perhaps, as a result, even achievement (e.g., Rosli et al., 2012; Pullmann and Allik, 2008; Hansford and Hattie, 1982; Aryana, 2010).

6.1.2 Facilitate Awareness Among Non-Indigenous Students[64]

According to interviewees, cultural content within regular schooling also benefits non-Indigenous children. Indigenous culture and heritage is part of Canadian history and, therefore, schooling should encourage non-Indigenous students to develop an understanding. A number of interviewees explained that "there's still a lot of racism out there" (Alexa, Indigenous parent, East Haven). Interviewees believed that exposing non-Indigenous children to Indigenous cultural and historical content in school facilitates compassion, tolerance, understanding, acceptance of diversity, quells stereotypes, and may contribute to the "fight against racism" (see also Okoye-Johnson, 2011). Further, non-Indigenous children are sharing information they have learned about Indigenous peoples with their parents which further facilitates cultural awareness and acceptance for diversity among the non-Indigenous population. For example, Aaliyah, an Indigenous teacher from East Haven, said that the "[they] have [non-Indigenous] parents that don't know about residential schools and [they] have students educating them; their kids are coming home and telling them about it."

Andrew is an Indigenous consultant and has two children who attend schools in East Haven. He believed that often Indigenous peoples are portrayed in society and schools as "deficient" and as though "there's something wrong with [them]." Andrew is often commissioned to do cultural advising work for the Ontario Ministry of Education. He struggled with his belief that schools "don't use authentic material content and [material] it's sugar-coated." He said that many non-Indigenous people are unaware and misinformed about Indigenous peoples and history, and he told me about a high school presentation he gave recently to illustrate this argument.

> I asked the kids if they had learned about the Holocaust and the class had a lot to say; some even showed hatred towards the Germans and the Nazi German movement. When I posed the question, "do you realize that the Holocaust happened here in North America through residential schools?" Everybody seemed baffled, like, "what are you talking about?" I was actually in shock; probably nine out of ten kids didn't know what residential schools were. But on the flipside, I know firsthand how it rolled out. My grandparents were in residential schools and I've heard the stories from many people in

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[64] Schools may offer programming that is specifically for Indigenous students where, for example, students are pulled out of class to do a separate program. One interviewee, Paul, an Indigenous educator from Aurora, participated in this kind of programming when he was younger which he said "always made [him] feel segregated." The other students thought he was involved in an English as a Second Language program and assigned negative labels to the program. Versus the "segregated" approach, Paul felt that all students would have benefited from the instruction he received and now advocates for inclusive programming where all Indigenous and non-Indigenous students learn about Indigenous culture and heritage together.

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all our communities. I know how bad it was. Yet, our neighbours don't have a clue what happened...part of the biggest problem is that we're not educating the non-Aboriginal people about what happened.

Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous interviewees identified a lack of awareness among non-Indigenous students about historical practices of racial discrimination against Indigenous Canadians, and that building this awareness through schooling initiatives was a mechanism to combat racism and prejudice in the community.[65]

6.2   Indigenous Content within Current Educational Practices

Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous interviewees cited the importance of embedding Indigenous content into the classroom. Yet, interviewees also said that materials are not sufficiently incorporated into classroom practices, even at schools with large Indigenous student populations. A number of non-Indigenous educators described only recently learning about the history of discrimination against the Canadian Indigenous population, and many parents were unaware of the history of Indigenous mistreatment in Canada.

As mentioned previously, Ontario has launched specific initiatives to support the learning and achievement of Indigenous students which are articulated in the Ontario Policy Framework. However, there are non-Indigenous teachers, such as Elise (an educator with the Aurora school board), who are unfamiliar with these initiatives. Referring to the policy, Elise claimed that "[n]obody's ever opened it":

> The Ministry of Education came up with an Aboriginal curriculum. Nobody's ever opened it. Is it an Aboriginal curriculum? I'm not even sure what it's called. It's an actual separate curriculum document. I've never actually even taken the initiative to use it and it was never pushed upon us to use that either. It's an Ontario curriculum document. So that's the sad part about it, right?

Similarly, when I asked Teresa, a non-Indigenous teacher from Aurora, if she was familiar with the Indigenous focused components of Ontario curriculum, in a joking manner, she responded by saying "No!"

Part of the reason that educators are reluctant to incorporate Indigenous material in the classroom is because working with First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) materials is often intimidating for non-Indigenous teachers. Further, Indigenous teachers feel that "it's frustrating to sit back watch because people fumble around, not knowing what to do" (Ryan, Indigenous teacher, Aurora).[66]

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[65] I had a similar experience in my second year Sociology of Education course (Fall 2014). I asked the class of 71 students if they knew what a residential school was; approximately ten students raised their hand. The majority of the students in my class had reached their second year of post-secondary studies and still had not learned about the residential schooling in Canada.

[66] Indigenous parents also recognized teachers' apprehension. Describing her experience with the Indigenous curriculum that is traditionally offered during the school year, one Indigenous parent noted, "..if this is her first exposure, her first time teaching it, they're fumbling. We're trying to be politically correct. I think sometimes

Teachers are still not touching it [content about Aboriginal culture and heritage]. I know because they tell me that…They just don't include it, so we still have children in this country going through the education system that don't have a clue. It's not just about educating our children; it's about creating a path that every child in Canada can have an understanding and perspective on the first people of this country (Jocelyn, Indigenous teacher, Aurora).

According to interviewees, non-Indigenous educators who feel uncomfortable and uncertain about including Indigenous material in their classroom often avoid it altogether. As a result, children may go through their entire schooling career without learning about Indigenous culture and the history of Indigenous discrimination in Canada. Not only did educators and parents express a lack of understanding among non-Indigenous teachers around what to include, but interviewees also described a lack of awareness around how to present information to students. Jocelyn further explained the following:

When other teachers talk about FNMI stuff, and this is a common, they have no idea where to get resources. They have no idea who to talk to in their board about where they can find those resources. And even if they did, they're not sure how to implement it into their classroom. They're afraid because they don't want to offend somebody or do it wrong. I've heard that so many times from teachers - The Ministry [of Education] has documents but they're so not friendly. It's like a teacher can't pick it up and go, "Oh, I get it." They need something that's tangible.

I was informed that non-Indigenous teachers are intimidated and uncertain about what to teach and how, and that typical professional development raises awareness but does not necessarily change classroom practices. As one teacher pointed out, "teachers have been to sensitivity training and PD…but going to them and actually putting into practice what you've learned are two different things" (Caroline, Indigenous teacher, East Haven). Being told about Indigenous culture is different than understanding Indigenous culture. Challenges for non-Indigenous teachers include not knowing what to teach or how to teach Indigenous cultural material in a sensitive and authentic way, and what resources to use and where to find them.

Beyond teaching practices, (as briefly mentioned in chapter four), Indigenous students and their families often feel uncomfortable with ways that Indigenous peoples are portrayed at school and in school materials. Indigenous peoples are often framed in stereotypical ways (e.g., "more primitive," wearing traditional dress), as "extinct" and "people of the past." For example, Caitlyn is an Indigenous mother from East Haven and also works with the board. She explained that Indigenous cultures are often taught in the past tense and as if "obsolete."

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teachers avoid it because they're just so uncomfortable with it, they don't know how to go about doing it. Yeah, I would be terrified if someone said, 'okay, go present Buddhism'" (Caitlyn, Indigenous parent, East Haven).

Oftentimes I feel like they present Aboriginal cultures as if they're something that's obsolete. Yes, it's happened in the past. But, "they used to go to powwows, they used to dance" - no, there's still a very active Aboriginal culture. So I think acknowledging that as well and not having it presented so that when an Aboriginal person is walking to school, [students expect] they're going to be in buckskin Regalia.

Caitlyn was also frustrated because she felt that schools do not acknowledge or recognize past discriminatory policy and practice within education, creating "an elephant in the room." Educators and parents described the need for educational content to recognize current and traditional Canadian Indigenous cultures as well as local Indigenous communities, and to consider the history of conflict and discrimination between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state. Andrew, an Indigenous parent from East Haven, shared this perspective. He does consulting work for government organizations and is often is consulted regarding developments in the Ontario curriculum. He said that when Canadian Indigenous peoples are discussed in schools the information is "sugar coated," creating a different image of Indigenous peoples that is "cartooned," and that the real history and the real stories are not being told. From another viewpoint, during two separate interviews, two Indigenous educators described how Indigenous materials are often located in school library sections titled "people of the past."

Even today, you go into libraries…look in the section "People of the Past." You see all of the ancient civilizations and ancient peoples and there's a subheading "Aboriginals" with a whole section of Aboriginal literature in there. How are you supposed to, as a person and more specifically as an Aboriginal person, supposed to progress when everybody thinks you don't exist because of what they're being taught or what they're reading in school? (Ryan, Indigenous teacher, Aurora).

In addition, Indigenous interviewees shared experiences where non-Indigenous teachers have taken Indigenous content (e.g., a traditional story) and misappropriated information, presenting the information to the class incorrectly. Indigenous interviewees also said that non-Indigenous teachers commonly blend or lump traditions, practices and ways of life from a variety of different Indigenous groups into a single representation about Indigenous peoples. This practice is referred to as "Pan-Indianism" and may be very offensive to some Indigenous families.

When you're dealing with First Nations people it's like saying "African people." How many countries are in Africa and how many tribes are within each of those countries and how many different languages and practices are there, right? It's huge. Well, it's the same thing with First Nations people. So, to say "Medicine wheel is a First Nations teaching" is not the way to go about that because the medicine wheel isn't everybody's. What you need to say is "The medicine wheel is used by the following groups of people." You have to identify whatever it is. Not saying "Aboriginal people use these items" because that's what we call Pan-Indianism when you're making a blanket statement about something. "African people use that." Well, we don't know who. You have to identify (Abbygail, Indigenous parent, East Haven).

Interviewees expressed that it is crucial for Indigenous peoples to feel their community and culture is being properly represented in schools and classrooms. There are 127 First Nation communities in Ontario officially recognized by the government[67] and The Chiefs of Ontario recognize 133 First Nations communities within Ontario.[68] Ayanna, an Indigenous grandparent, pointed out that among the communities it is common sense that there would be differences. She argued that if the Ontario government distinguishes different Indigenous communities it is appropriate for teachers to differentiate communities as well.

Yet acknowledging differences can also lead to tension among the Indigenous communities. Heidi, a non-Indigenous curriculum administrator in North View, described how difficult it is for a school board to authentically incorporate Indigenous culture into school and classroom activities. At her school board, there are there are seven different Indigenous communities that each have a different cultural perspective. Heidi described the conflict and costs associated when one group feels that their culture is not adequately represented:

> Okay, do I get an Elder from this Band or do I get an Elder from that Band? And then you always had to pay money, a big honorarium, offer the tobacco, give a blanket. There were all the things that went along with it and it was becoming an incredible amount of money to try and keep this going. And then inevitably you would make somebody upset because "Well, that's not our culture. That's their culture. You should be doing it this way not that way." There were fights started.

In the end, similar to East Haven, North View hired an Indigenous advisor whose role was to manage and oversee all of the Indigenous curricular content in schools and classrooms. Heidi expressed that in this way the advisor facilitates "blending the cultural aspect into the curriculum" which is more long lasting rather than content being presented by an Elder in the form of "show and tell" on particular days.

6.3   Indigenous Programs and Initiatives

Interviewees identified barriers and challenges regarding Indigenous policies, programs and initiatives implemented at their schools. In particular, Indigenous interviewees frequently spoke about the importance of including Indigenous programming in school and that programming needs to continually be offered to Indigenous children throughout their educational careers. Students may have access to Indigenous cultural programming at the pre-school level (e.g., through the local Aboriginal Head Start) and at the post-secondary level, however there is very little programming available for Indigenous children from the ages of about 4 to 18.

There is an exception in Aurora. A few schools in the board do offer Native language instruction programs for students.[69] However, a few interviewees had concerns because the Native language

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[67] Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. Aboriginal People in Ontario: Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs Quick Facts. Accessed from: http://www.aboriginalaffairs.gov.on.ca/english/services/datasheets/Aboriginal.pdf

[68] See Chiefs of Ontario: http://www.chiefs-of-ontario.org/directory

[69] Similar language programs are not offered in the other boards involved in this study.

programs start in grade four. These parents involved their children in Native language instruction at the local Head Start pre-school and were concerned their children would lose their language skills by the time they were able to enroll in the program.

> My son took Mohawk in pre-school and now he can't take it till grade four. He's gonna lose everything he learned in pre-school! There's gonna be three years that he's going without having any type of the Mohawk program (Barbara, Indigenous parent, Aurora).

Interviewees also shared concerns that Indigenous programs are not considered equal to other programs. Paul and his wife are both Indigenous educators in Aurora; his wife is a Native language teacher for students in grades four through eight. Paul told me that his wife struggled with the fact that language instruction is not offered in grades nine through twelve at her school. They believe it is unfair for students since, outside the family, there are no other options for language instruction available in the community and students' skills would inevitably suffer. Of particular significance, Paul spoke to me about the fact that the French language and Mohawk language, for example, are not considered equal. French and English are the official languages in Canada and, as a result, people are given options (or "boxes") to identify (or "check off") if they can read, write and speak French (e.g., job and schooling applications) but there are no such options for Native language speakers. Paul shared additional examples with me where Indigenous programs "aren't being recognized."

> There was an Aboriginal history course at our school. A lot of the kids don't want to take it because they get no credit for it in grade 10 or grade 11. They can take it and do all that work but get no credit for it. Who's gonna take it?...you're already setting it up for failure. You're already saying it has no value. You're doing systemic damage. You're saying the French that we're teaching here is really important and you'll get a diploma saying that you've mastered French. But then you go to the Mohawk and you're like, oh, we really don't give you credit for it...families and students aren't gonna treat it as an equal because it's not equal to begin with.

A number of interviewees shared the concern that Indigenous programming is often structured in a way that it competes with non-Indigenous programming. I spoke to Indigenous parents who were given the option to enroll their children in a Native language program instead of French. However, Indigenous parents were put in a difficult position. They were given the option to choose *either* French or a Native language, and many chose French because they believed French instruction would provide their children with greater advantages later in life (e.g., in the job market). As one Indigenous mother shared with me, "I put [my child] in French because you definitely get more from the French than the Mohawk, I mean, it's kind of proven right?" (Alanna, Indigenous parent, Aurora).[70]

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[70] Ayanna, an Indigenous mother and grandmother, pointed out to me that school boards need to "allow some leeway" when hiring individuals to run and teach Indigenous programs. She argued, for example, there is no program available where Native language teachers can acquire a Mohawk or Ojibwe certification or qualification to prove the individual is fluent in the language in a way similar to that of French. Ayanna argued that the school board needs to consult the community and hire people to facilitate Indigenous programming "that are qualified in the community's eyes." Supporting this position, Abbygail, an Indigenous mother and educator, told me that schools need to confirm an individual's credentials before hiring them or requesting they provide a cultural presentation in a

A few interviewees spoke to me about issues of trust, support and conflict between the Indigenous community in Aurora and the school board Indigenous community liaison worker. Although this individual is Indigenous, she "pushes the non-Native agenda" in terms of an approach that focuses on public relations and perceptions (i.e., what makes the school board look good versus what is good for individual Indigenous students and families), and only recognizes those Indigenous children and families that have an Indian Status card.[71] Interviewees expressed that, as a result, "people are not willing to engage in what the school board has to offer" because they feel new schooling efforts are just "same old same old," more of what has happened in the past, and therefore "why bother" (Ayanna, Indigenous grandparent, Aurora). I was informed that this individual has created "a lot of negative experiences for families" and is a barrier to parent, family and community involvement in school and board initiatives (Ayanna, Indigenous grandparent, Aurora). It is clear based on my conversations with interviewees that for the Indigenous community to "buy-in" to Indigenous schooling programs and initiatives they need to have confidence and trust in the individual facilitating these initiatives. This does not appear to be the case in Aurora and, as a result, community members and organizations do not "step-in" and support school board initiatives and "won't utilize the board resources" (Ayanna, Indigenous grandparent, Aurora).

Many boards in the province have also implemented the "Aboriginal Student Self-Identification" initiative where students are encouraged to come forward and voluntarily identify themselves as Indigenous to the school and the school board.[72] This initiative is intended to facilitate the collection of accurate and reliable data and improve programs and supports for Indigenous students. Interviewees explained that school boards receive a certain amount of money from the Ontario Ministry of Education for Indigenous resources based on the number of Indigenous students they have; therefore, the more Indigenous students in a board that identify, the more money the board receives to fund Indigenous initiatives. However, many families do not want their children to identify.

> Parents didn't want to self-identify. "What happens then? What happens if I label my kids as Native? Then what's going to happen? Are you going to pick on them?" Parents still don't trust the education system and they still don't trust teachers (Jocelyn, Indigenous teacher, Aurora).

Many Indigenous interviewees described the reluctance and hesitation from families to come forward. Right away, parents may question, "are [schools] going to use it against [families] like they did in the past" (Whitney, Indigenous parent, East Haven). Parents may not want to identify, mainly, because of the distrust they have for the school boards and experiences that have impacted previous generations. One Indigenous interviewee, Andrew, was very vocal about his

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school. To clarify, by credentials she is not referring to a university degree, she is referring to "the community, or Elders, or the Friendship Centre board of directors says yes this person is qualified." She recommended creating register of appropriate people who are able and willing to provide cultural presentations in the board.

[71] I was told by many interviewees that Indigenous families may identify as Indigenous even though the government may not consider them "Indian enough" to acquire an Indian Status card.

[72] For more information see Ontario Ministry of Education "Aboriginal Student Self-Identification" website: http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/selfid.html

aversion to this initiative. He said, "it segregates us, I think it's racist." Educators understand parents' reservation but, at the same time, educators encouraged students to self-identify in order to access funding and resources needed to support the Indigenous community. The "self-ID" initiative is intended to support the appropriate distribution of Indigenous resources however legacies of racial discrimination is a barrier inhibiting buy-in among some communities and/or some families.

6.4   Work Environment

Indigenous interviewees described the challenges they experience working in a predominantly non-Indigenous work environment. In particular, a few interviewees spoke to me about their experiences working in a school culture that was not supportive of Indigenous educational programming and awareness.

Ryan, an Indigenous educator from Aurora, shared his past teaching experiences. While in teachers college, Ryan completed his teaching practicum in a school on a reserve. He described a particular instance where he was conducting a professional development workshop for the teachers about Indigenous student focused programming. A non-Indigenous teacher confronted him, questioning "why Aboriginal students? What about the White kids?" Ryan was startled by this comment, since the school was located on a reserve and all students were Indigenous. He also shared his experience working to establish an in-school Indigenous initiative in an Aurora high school. He would overhear non-Indigenous educators talking about the program, "why do they get special treatment...and why do they get a special room?" Ryan said there is "uneducated ignorance" among many teachers regarding students of different cultures and racial backgrounds.

> So some people never get it, but most will if you actually just sit down and talk to them. It's kind of weird because as much as you think things have changed, and they have, there's still some pretty old school thinking out there and sometimes it just feels like nothing's changed (Ryan, Indigenous teacher, Aurora).

Ryan explained that every work environment has been different for him; he has encountered varying degrees of negativity and push back regarding the Indigenous focused initiatives he has tried to implement. He always responded in the same way; he consciously sought out every educator and staff member at the school, tried to establish a rapport, and explained the program he was advocating to facilitate an understanding.

Other interviewees shared similar experiences. Whitney is an Indigenous mother from East Haven. In the past, Whitney was employed as an Indigenous youth counsellor for the school board and for the local community college. At both locations, "it was very hard." She was continually questioned about "why would we need an Indigenous counselor specifically?" She felt isolated and felt a lot of tension and negativity from the other employees. Whitney eventually left each of the jobs because she found the school work environments to be too stressful.[73]

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[73] Holly provides another example. She is a mother of two boys in East Haven. When we spoke, she worked at the local Aboriginal Friendship Centre and found it to be a very stressful work environment. In fact when we had our

Similarly, Ava, an Indigenous education coordinator at Summer Side, told me about her past experience working in a university Indigenous education centre. She found it very difficult to fit in and feel comfortable at the university. She said that working in "White Eurocentric academia is like trying to fit a round peg into a square hole." Many employees did not feel there should be a centre and vocalized this perspective. For example, a policy was implemented mandating that the centre needed to give a weeks' notice in order to smudge;[74] employees complained about the smell and students spread rumors that "pot" was being smoked in the centre. Similar to Ryan and Whitney, Ava was continuously confronted with comments about "why do you guys get to do x, what makes you so special?" Ava struggled emotionally to deal with the negative environment and eventually quit. In this position, her salary was also very low compared to equity and diversity positions in other universities which she believed reflected the value the university associated with her position and the centre more generally.

6.5   Case Study: What Worked

This section offers a case study illustrating how the East Haven school board successfully: a) implemented a First Nation, Métis and Inuit focused Summer Learning Program (SLP) and b) made a positive impact on dynamics of Indigenous family-school and Indigenous community-school relationships. I argue this program contributed to building linking social capital (Mignone and O'Neil, 2005) between Indigenous communities, families and schools, in terms of facilitating trust, cooperation, reinforcing student Indigenous cultural identity as well as cultural representation in the schools, and parent engagement in schooling for the benefit of Indigenous student achievement. This program contributed to overcoming barriers such as negative attitudes towards schooling as well as distrust and discomfort of the school system/educators among Indigenous parents and community members, as well as educator misrepresentation and misunderstanding of Indigenous cultures and histories. This section documents the program's successful practices as well as how key stakeholders - Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents, teachers and community members - responded to the program.

6.5.1   Context

This section draws specifically on a population of parents and educators involved in the East Haven 2013 SLPs.[75] In July 2013 I spent three weeks at four SLP sites within the East Haven board. I spoke to 19 educators and 49 parents, totalling 68 interview participants. In this sample, six educators identify as Indigenous, three non-Indigenous educators have Indigenous education

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interview she had just returned from a two-month stress leave. Holly told me, "It's not a very welcoming place because I'm half white and I'm half Native. When you're pitting white people against Native people, it's not right. There are a lot of power struggles and a lot of hidden agendas." She used to bring her family to the Friendship Centre for cultural programming and education but has stopped. Holly had few options for cultural education because she lived outside of the reserve and no longer felt comfortable bringing her children to the Friendship center.

[74] Broadly, smudging is a purification or cleansing ceremony that involves burning sage and other herbs (e.g., to cleanse the negative energy in a location, to purify the mind, body and spirit).

[75] Please refer to the methods chapter for a detailed description of the Summer Learning Program.

as a specialization in their teaching portfolio, five parents identify as Indigenous and two parents have children with Indigenous ancestry. A survey was also distributed to all educators involved in the 2013 East Haven SLP; of which, 17 educators responded and two of the survey respondents identify as Indigenous. (Refer to Table 6.1 below for a participant overview). During the interviews with educators, attention was given to how effective teaching practices may be transferred into the regular school year.

School boards involved in the SLP were given the autonomy to organize their summer programs in a way that best suited their community. As a result, boards organized their programs in various ways. The majority of school boards ran separate summer programs where each site focused on a separate learning focus (e.g., one site focused on numeracy learning, another site focused on literacy learning through Indigenous content). A few boards ran all of their summer programs out of one school, essentially creating all-in-one summer experience, rotating students through, for example, numeracy, literacy, physical fitness, and Indigenous focused classroom instruction. Quite distinct, East Haven chose to merge all of their literacy program sites (non-Indigenous specific) with the FNMI literacy sites. Therefore, all literacy programs in this board were run as Indigenous based SLPs.

Three key aspects of the East Haven summer program were identified by interviewees as particularly successful. First, the program maintained a model of learning integration. Program facilitators and educators authentically embedded Indigenous culture and heritage into everyday learning, compared to material being taught and framed as a theme or unit. Second, Indigenous educators and community members were directly involved in the development and creation of the program, and day-to-day activities during the program. For example, Indigenous educators and staff created the mentor text used to organize and guide the program. Indigenous community members spent time storytelling and sharing cultural teachings with children and teachers. Indigenous community members also participated directly in the program by providing various cultural presentations and demonstrations (e.g., Peace Presentation, Hoop Dancers) and engaged students, teachers and parents. Third, the program was open for all students and teachers. Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers participated in the program.

Table 6.1 - East Haven 2013 Participant Overview									
Educator Totals						**Parents**			
	Total # Interviews	Total # Participants	# who are FNMI	# FNMI ed. in portfolio (not FNMI)	Total # Survey Respondents	# who are FNMI	Total # of Interviews	Total # of Participants	# who are FNMI	# not FNMI but have FNMI children (other parent)
Site 1	9	9	1	1			31	31		
Site 2	5	6	2	1			8	8	2	
Site 3	1	2	2				6	6	2	1
Site 4	2	2	1	1			4	4	1	1
Survey					17	2				
Total	**17**	**19**	**6**	**3**	**17**	**2**	**49**	**49**	**5**	**2**

6.5.2   Enhancing Cultural Sensitivity and Understanding, and Teaching Capacity Among Non-Indigenous Educators

The East Haven program not only exposed students to Indigenous teachings and traditions, but was also building awareness and capacity among teachers. The program coordinators described that the goal of the program was to have all students and teachers exposed to literacy learning though content based on Indigenous culture, traditions and teachings. The program coordinators put various mechanisms in place to support teachers, recognizing the majority of the teaching staff did not have an Indigenous background or an Indigenous educational background. East Haven provided staff an in-service orientation day. Educators were also provided with a mentor text designed specifically for the summer program. The text included lessons and extension activities, the big idea connections to existing curriculum, as well as background information and cultural context. Importantly, the each school site had an "FNMI Coach" or Indigenous consultant on-site to support teachers as they integrated Indigenous cultural content into the classroom activities. Coaches were selected based on their intimate knowledge of Indigenous culture and history. This role involved working closely with summer program teachers to support their learning about Indigenous culture and to ensure Indigenous content was authentically embedded into the classroom. Teachers received this kind of support for the three weeks duration of the summer program. Yet, they described leaving the summer program feeling like they had the tools to incorporate Indigenous content into their regular classroom teaching (such as resources to support learning and contacts including members of the Indigenous community who could provide further guidance and information with schooling activities).

Non-Indigenous teachers described their experience with the summer program as an eye opening experience as many educators had little or no knowledge of Indigenous histories and culture prior to the program. For example, Olivia, a non-Indigenous educator, explained the following:

As a result of my involvement with [program name] planning last year, I jumped into the integration by having my students participate in an Aboriginal art unit. My students loved it and I already have it integrated into my planning for this year. I know have more people to contact in the Aboriginal community that can come into my class and share their experiences and culture like Elders and music groups. Before this year at [program name], I would not have thought to contact anyone from the Aboriginal community.

Similarly, Violet, a non-Indigenous teacher, explained that before the summer program she had "very limited familiarity with Aboriginal culture" though because of her experience with the program she "feel[s] more comfortable jumping in the Social Studies curriculum that deals with Aboriginal history because [she] ha[s] been able to ask questions and learn firsthand from people in the community." Another non-Indigenous educator, Victoria, described her interest in Indigenous culture and history and realized that she focused class instruction on "the injustices of their past rather than the positive aspects of the culture." However, as a result of her experience with the program, Victoria "will focus more on integrating the more positive aspects of the culture like oral traditions, environmental stewardship, community teachings, and arts into the curriculum."

According to interviewees, what made the difference was the teacher support provided by a FNMI Coach. Having a knowledgeable expert on-hand offering constant guidance, created opportunities for teachers to learn about Indigenous cultures and heritage and practice teaching Indigenous material in essentially a "risk-free" environment. Kaden is a non-Indigenous educator who was overseeing a number of summer program sites. He explained that having the FNMI Coach on hand created an open environment for questions, explanations, and understanding, and lead to "break[ing] down walls and makes [educators] more comfortable." He believed the summer program provided non-Indigenous educators a professional development experience they would draw from throughout their careers.

Caroline is an Indigenous educator and an FNMI Coach for the summer program. She explained that adults have set ways of understanding which makes it is more challenging for educators to grasp the different concepts, ways of thinking, and information than the students. Caroline observed non-Indigenous teachers gain more confidence in their ability to teach Indigenous content on their own during the course of the program.[76]

> On the first day when they had to do it, they were a little apprehensive because they wanted to do it right….So I've been going into classes and doing the lessons. And little by little, I've been able to release a lot of that and they are taking more on…They started the Three Sisters [teaching] without me, which was nice, and I think they are more confident in what they're doing.

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[76] Similar to Caroline's experience, other FNMI Coaches were confident that non-Indigenous teachers were developing capacity and confidence. Natalie, one of the FNMI Coaches, and the Indigenous liaison worker for the board, told me that at the beginning of the program she could "pick up on like a nervousness" of the educators "because the lack of understanding." However, as the program continued the material was "just being picked up and understood" by the educators and Natalie was confident based on this experience that educators would "definitely incorporate things into their classroom."

Having the FNMI Coach gave non-Indigenous teachers what they needed to: acquire cultural sensitivity and understanding; develop the capacity to authentically embed Indigenous cultural content into classroom instruction; and gain confidence in their ability to continue embedding Indigenous content into their regular teaching practice during the school year. Teachers who described themselves as initially "ignorant" to Indigenous heritage and culture and therefore "reluctant" to incorporate Indigenous content into their regular teaching practices, left the program feeling confident and capable in their ability to transfer their own summer learning into their regular school year teaching.

6.5.3   Stakeholder Responses

My findings suggest that the East Haven program was well received by Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers, Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents, as well as the Indigenous community. Annika for example, the Indigenous student support teacher for the board, was thrilled with the willingness of non-Indigenous teachers and students to embrace the program.

> The biggest learning has been for me actually is that teachers and even students are really positive when it comes to learning about Aboriginal heritage… I'm shocked by how great the response has been and how willing and motivated the teachers have been to want to do it and then how engaged the students are… This [program] is an amazing way to strengthen Aboriginal values and communities.

From another perspective, Bianca, a non-Indigenous teacher from East Haven, said she "absolutely" felt more comfortable embedding Indigenous content into the classroom since participating in the program. She further explained, "[her] comfort level has gone from a 2 to an 8!..This program certainly provided [teachers] with a wealth of knowledge and understanding of the Aboriginal culture!"

Non-Indigenous parents also appreciated the program. A number of non-Indigenous parents expressed that exposing their children to the diversity of different cultures and cultural practices as part of their role as a parent. Based on this logic, they saw this program as a means to help their children develop an "expanded worldview" (Patricia, non-Indigenous parent, East Haven). As illustrated below by Mya, a non-Indigenous parent, parents credited the program with teaching their children to be more tolerant, empathetic, and respectful towards others.

> He's starting to develop empathy. Empathy starts out being logic based where something is fair or unfair, so he's starting to realize that a lot of the ways that Aboriginals were treated historically has been not fair. I think it's helping his gradual development of empathy just to see the beauty of something and how it's so sad that we've done so much to stop that historically.

At home, Mya tried to build onto what her son was learning about during the SLP in terms of both Indigenous culture and differentiating right from wrong. She wanted her son to understand "our role in the demise of the Native culture" because "we're not gonna prevent things like that

in the future if we don't learn from our past mistakes." From another perspective, Arianna, a non-Indigenous mother, told me that the Indigenous focus was "the deciding factor" to enroll her daughter in the SLP. She explained that there are various options for summer academic enrichment, but it was "hugely important" for children from non-Indigenous backgrounds to learn about Indigenous cultural and, in that respect, this program provided a unique opportunity to her family. She said, "given the horror that the Indigenous community has experience, [she] really want[ed] [her] children to participate in all of the healing that has to happen." Arianna was very passionate and emotional about the past injustice experienced by Indigenous Canadians and felt this program was, in a small way, contributing to understanding of and respect for difference among students, parents, school staff and community. Interviewees believed that the program facilitated cultural awareness and understanding among the non-Indigenous children who participated.

Interview data reveals how Indigenous parents, students, teachers, and community members also embraced the program. Caroline, an FNMI Coach with the program, described an Indigenous boy who was distant at the beginning of the program, often sitting off by himself and choosing not to engage with the other children. However, as the program continued he became more engaged, feeling more accepted and confident.

> Once he saw that the kids did have an interest in the things that we were talking about, the Talking Stick and the Corn Spirit, and I was bringing in some artifacts from home, that the kids were interested in that. Then I noticed he started wearing his necklace with his bear on it. And the kids were like, "Hey, what is that?" And then he would say, "It's mine, my uncle made it." So, little by little he's coming out of his shell and he's saying, "This is me, and I'm proud." And his mom said he'll come home and his grandmother will listen to him, and it's wonderful. I think it really is.

Other teachers shared similar stories. For example, Lyla, an Indigenous educator and FNMI Coach with the program, shared that a number of Indigenous students "have self-esteem now, they feel accepted, they feel proud" because of their experiences with this summer program. Interviewees described the positive experiences Indigenous children were having in the programs, not only seeing their culture being celebrated in the classroom learning but also seeing non-Indigenous students interested, excited and engaged right along with them. Interviewees described the East Haven program as contributing to positive cultural identity among Indigenous students.

Indigenous parents positively responded to the program. For example, Alexa, a lower-class Indigenous mother, spoke very highly of the program. She "loved" the program. She was thrilled with how excited the students were to learn about Indigenous culture and heritage, and most importantly that the students are sharing what they have learned with their parents.

> I think it's actually great because my kids, they get taught the stuff. They not only learn, they also come home and teach me. This wasn't there when I was a kid. I didn't get to learn any of this because of my issues that my mom had to deal with when she was a kid and her mom had to deal with when she was a kid. So there's almost three decades of

information that was lost. And my kids are getting to learn more about it than I am, and they come home and tell me about it…So not only the kids are learning, the kids are also teaching the parents.

Interviewees felt that the East Haven summer program facilitated the strengthening of Indigenous community and school relations. For example, Natalie, one of the Indigenous teachers with the program and the Indigenous liaison worker for the board, said that, "for a long time, there was a thing where [Indigenous peoples] don't share the traditional teachings and they're not meant to be known to anyone outside because of what happened previously in history." She further described that in connection to the program, "what we're seeing is when it is shared it's not knocked down but it's grasped onto and respected and [non-Indigenous people] want it to flourish as much as everything else." Natalie spoke about the positive impact the summer program had in connecting the Indigenous community with schools.

> We're bridging both communities together in a good way right now and through summer [program name]… the program definitely shows people that it's okay that we have this program and that Native and non-Native kids are part of it…Then you have adults who are doing the same thing, "I'm willing to work in the Aboriginal specific summer [program name]." Right, like that's huge, that's huge. So it's bridging gaps because now all these teachers are going to go back to their classroom and share their experiences about what they're learning over these next three weeks. I get to go back to the Native community and say, "Wow that was totally awesome. Look our kids are thriving and they're doing well in school"…It's very healing the program you know. If there's one way that can really tie it all together, it's healing.

The East Haven program appears to have successfully implemented a First Nation, Métis and Inuit focused SLP that was well received by Indigenous parents, teachers and community, as well as non-Indigenous parents and teachers. This case shows that non-Indigenous educators are open and willing to change their perspectives and practices, to adopt new ways of doing things and incorporate Indigenous culture and content into their teaching practice. Based on this experience, non-Indigenous educators were identifying limitations in their own understandings of Indigenous peoples and cultures, and in how they taught Indigenous content in the classroom. Non-Indigenous educators and students left the program with greater awareness of Indigenous cultures, histories and perspectives, as well as cultural sensitivity.

This program also contributed to linking social capital (Mignone and O'Neil, 2005) by creating positive schooling experiences and attitudes, contributing to building trust and comfort with schooling, and facilitating family-school relationship among Indigenous parents and community. Indigenous parents and community members not only supported the program, but also regularly attended at the school sites and participated in activities and events.

6.6   Policy Recommendation: FNMI Itinerant Teacher

> *I really find that I think the focus now has to turn to teaching the teachers how to teach Native curriculum* (Ryan, Indigenous teacher, Aurora).

I offer a policy recommendation based on how the effective practices of East Haven can be transferred into the regular school year. I propose that the FNMI Coach model could be implemented in schools with large Indigenous populations during the regular school year to support non-Indigenous teachers, Indigenous student success, connections between families and schools, as well as cultural awareness among non-Indigenous students. Importantly, this model would contribute to facilitating social capital (Mignone and O'Neil, 2005; Coleman, 1988) among Indigenous parents and community in the form of trust, connections and relations with schools and educators.

Currently, some Ontario school boards have an Indigenous liaison or similar role. However, educators in this role tend to serve dozens of schools and focus on supporting certain families or struggling students. What is missing is an FNMI Itinerant Teacher - someone to provide on-the-ground support for teachers as they navigate the curriculum and try to connect with Indigenous families and communities.

Interviewees saw the value of the FNMI Coach during the summer programs and related this role to the Literacy or Numeracy Coaches currently working in Ontario school boards. Similar to the summer program FNMI Coach, the role of the FNMI Itinerant Teacher may include working closely with teachers as they start to incorporate the materials in their classroom and ensure activities are culturally appropriate. The FNMI Teacher Itinerate would: a) facilitate understanding of Indigenous culture within the school community, b) build teacher capacity, and c) create connections between the school and Indigenous family's and community. The role of an FNMI Teacher Itinerate would be filled by someone from an Indigenous background, and/or has background in Indigenous education and an intimate familiarity with Indigenous culture and heritage.

6.6.1   Facilitate Understanding

Findings suggest low levels of understanding and knowledge of Indigenous cultures and histories among non-Indigenous educators and students may create barriers among Indigenous parent/community to feel respected and comfortable in schools. A number of non-Indigenous East Haven educators described the shock they experienced during the summer program in-service orientation, learning for the first time about Canada's history of discrimination against Indigenous peoples. One teacher described, "I was so ignorant to it. Why don't people know more? I can't believe that I didn't know" (Vivian, non-Indigenous teacher, East Haven). Little awareness of the history of Indigenous mistreatment in Canada was common among non-Indigenous teachers interviewed. Further, due to little understanding, or lack thereof, educators often avoided including Indigenous content in their classrooms altogether which only perpetuates the cycle of unawareness.

Cultural concepts, significance and meaning can be misunderstood by educators and therefore inappropriately conveyed to students during a lesson. For example, Chloe, an Indigenous educator and Indigenous curriculum consultant for the board, spoke about the importance of having a knowledgeable expert on-hand to intervene in these instances.

> Somebody said, "it'd be great to do story time with the kids and they could all do storytelling." So that was one of the questions and I said, "well storytelling is actually done by an Elder and the story – so it's not like a story time." So they said, "oh, I didn't know that"…It's great to have that resource person there because otherwise they kind of misconstrue some of the ideas in the lessons…because what storytelling is to some people is not what storytelling is to other people.

The role of an FNMI Itinerate Teacher would be to create understanding about Indigenous heritage and cultures among staff, educators, and students. The Itinerate Teacher would ensure appropriate resources are available for educators (e.g., books, guest speakers and presenters from the local Indigenous community), answer questions, address misunderstandings, and ensure appropriate representation of Indigenous perspectives, cultures, and histories within classrooms and schools.

6.6.2 Build capacity

The FNMI Itinerate role would focus on building capacity in schools, vis-à-vis co-planning and co-teaching, modeling the curriculum, and coaching teachers around how to embed Indigenous perspectives and culture into curriculum and lesson plans in a sensitive and authentic way. The initial goal of the FNMI Itinerate would focus on initiating and driving an Indigenous cultural awareness within the school (e.g., accessing books and materials that reflect the local Indigenous communities) and helping teachers acquire the tools they need to integrate Indigenous culture into the existing classroom and school culture.

Ongoing support and mentorship is key but does not have to be indefinite. The FNMI Itinerate could be stationed in a single school for a period of time (e.g., half the school year) before moving onto the next school. However, the FNMI Itinerate could continue to be a resource person for their previous school location (e.g., returning to the previous school one day a week for the second half of the school year) to ensure the Indigenous educational focus maintains momentum within the school.

6.6.3 Establishing Relationships

This role has the potential to facilitate positive connection between the school and Indigenous families and community to help support children's learning. The FNMI Itinerant role would involve connecting with Indigenous families and students in the school, and working on building on those relationships to also include teaching and administrative school staff.

As discussed previously, Indigenous students' and parents' perceptions of schooling may have been negatively affected by the history of Indigenous education in Canada contributing to

feelings of discomfort and mistrust of schools and educators. The role of the FNMI Itinerate would involve creating a welcoming environment that encourages Indigenous student and parent engagement. For example, the FNMI Itinerate could establish relationships with the Indigenous families, invite their participation in schooling and classroom activities, and, potentially, provide direct support for Indigenous parents during interactions with schools and/or in navigating the intricacies of schooling processes. The FNMI Itinerate role has the potential to act as a liaison between the school and Indigenous family's and community, to build relationships that will help support Indigenous student's learning and in the process further non-Indigenous students and teachers understanding and awareness of Indigenous heritage and culture.

I spoke to Indigenous and non-Indigenous interviewees about the idea of extending the summer program FNMI Coach into the school year. Interviewees agreed that an FNMI Itinerate would go a long way to establishing and building family-school relationships. For example, Kaden is a non-Indigenous school principal in East Haven and he oversaw a number of program sites during the East Haven summer program. He was deeply impacted by this experience. He considered the positive impact that having an FNMI Itinerate would have in his school, to the extent of contributing to "breaking down walls of hesitation" with the family and with the teaching staff.

> As a principal I would bring in an Aboriginal liaison to help break down those walls, to let me in and be able to have a relationship with the parents, so that they learn to trust me as well. I need to bring in someone that genuinely knows the culture to be that liaison to build those relationships of trust. Once you have the trust then it doesn't matter what culture, they now trust you that you're building a culture of acceptance and everyone's welcome, everyone.

Part of the role of the FNMI Itinerate would also involve establishing connections between the school community and the local Indigenous community. For example, the FNMI Itinerate could create a roster of immediate and extended Indigenous family members in the school community and Indigenous community members willing to participate in school activities, cultural events and demonstrations, and/or deliver culturally sensitive lessons or teachings.

In summary effective practices of the East Haven program can be transferred into the regular school year through the implementation of an FNMI Itinerate teacher into schools with large Indigenous populations during the regular school year to support both non-Indigenous teachers with cultural content, Indigenous student success, and developing connections with Indigenous families and local communities. The role of the FNMI Itinerate would parallel the role of Literacy Coaches, Numeracy Coaches or ESL teachers currently working within Ontario school boards in terms of providing teachers with guidance and coaching to learn how to effectively embed FNMI content into their regular practice. I conclude that implementing FNMI Itinerate teachers would facilitate bridging policy rhetoric of cultural and family inclusion and schooling reality by providing the support needed to facilitate cultural awareness among students and teachers, include Indigenous family and community in education, and authentically embed Indigenous culture within school communities and teaching practices.

Importantly, implementing the FNMI Itinerant Teacher model would facilitate social capital among Indigenous communities and families in the form of trust, mutual understanding and reciprocity, as well as common value and norm consensus with that of the school. Social relationships among students, parents and adults within social institutions (such as schools) and the larger school community is considered a form of social capital and, thus, an educational resource for parents and children (Coleman, 1988). Coleman and Hoffer (1987) document the role of intergenerational community norms in successful educational outcomes. They examine achievement measures among three sample groups of students and find that better academic performance can be attributed to the strength of community values. Community norms exist within "functional communities" (pg. 6-8) where parents, children, teachers, children's friends and their parents are part of a network with shared common values that facilitate compliance with behaviours that are seen to effect school performance. Coleman and Hoffer argue that this network of supportive relationships connecting the community, home and school, provides social capital due, in part, to a value consensus around teaching and learning. This shared valued consensus is believed to inspire academic achievement and may be encouraged vis-à-vis the FNMI Itinerate.[77]

6.7   Discussion

Interviewees described barriers to meaningful school involvement of Indigenous families and to the successful implementation of Indigenous focused schooling initiatives. Interviewees saw these barriers as directly influencing the educational experiences of Indigenous students and the connections that Indigenous parents have with schools. Barriers may include perceptions of inequality associated with Indigenous programming, distrust of school personnel, and distrust of schooling more generally due to legacies of racial discrimination. Barriers may also consist of non-Indigenous educators remaining unaware of, or uncomfortable with, Indigenous focused curriculum requirements and school initiatives. Unwelcoming school working environments for Indigenous educators and support workers also contributes to negative perceptions and attitudes towards schooling.

The East Haven summer program is an example of one successful Indigenous focused initiative. This program facilitated: positive connections between the school and Indigenous families and community; active participation of Indigenous parents and community in children's education; cultural sensitivity and understanding among non-Indigenous students and educators; and capacity building pertaining to the ability of non-Indigenous educators to incorporate Indigenous content into their teaching. Recall, social capital is a resource based on relationships and includes the connections that parents have with teachers and the school. Cultural capital refers to the interaction between individual behaviours and attitudes and the expectations that educators have of parents, which includes developing relationships with schools/teachers based on comfort and trust, and displaying positive attitudes towards schooling. I argue the East Haven program contributed to overcoming barriers to strong family-school relationships by way of promoting positive attitudes towards schooling as well as comfort with schooling and educators. Also, by

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[77] Researchers have argued against this argument. Davies (2013) found that Catholic schools in Ontario fare better than public schools mainly because of family selection processes.

encouraging non-Indigenous educators to develop cultural awareness and understand appropriate ways to integrate Indigenous content into the classroom, this program may not only reduce instances where information about Indigenous peoples is misappropriated or misrepresented in the classroom but also contribute to a more positive work environment for Indigenous educators. In general, I argue the program facilitated the development of stronger connections between the school, and Indigenous parents and community.[78]

However, the case presented in this chapter is an example of one initiative that experienced success. In general, my findings suggest that non-Indigenous teachers struggle with how to embed Indigenous content into the classroom, ensure all school personnel have cultural awareness and sensitivity, and establish strong connections with Indigenous families. Existing research supports these findings. Wotherspoon (2006, 2008) found varying teacher responses to reforms oriented to improve educational experiences of Indigenous students. While some educators increased sensitivity to Indigenous students, curricular and programming, and wanted to implement change in curriculum content and instructional methods, other educators remained fixated on teaching their subject along a universal standard curriculum mandate and believed that all students should be treated the same (2006, pg. 683). Further, there are challenges of having "truly" authentic Indigenous content in schooling. Most Indigenous content may be, by necessity, highly symbolic and expressed through contemporary equity and diversity frameworks. It would be impossible to truly re-fashion curricula to reflect the true diversity of First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures and histories. The majority of Indigenous schooling content may reflect a standard formula of highlighting historical injustices, showing formal signs of respect to the culture, and inclusion of some Indigenous stories, artifacts, art, crafts, and dances. This approach may ease many tensions that existed in old fashioned classrooms but whether this approach makes a dent in schooling achievement and attainment is unclear.

Lareau and Weininger (2003) suggest that institutional mechanisms to improve disadvantages that have historically permeated the schooling system may, in fact, be ineffective due to the existence of different family based cultural resources (e.g., attitudes, skills, knowledge, abilities). Lareau and Weininger argue, "the institutionalization of home-school relations can serve to create new avenues for the influence of social class to impact children's education" (Lareau and Weininger, 2003, pg. 382). In Canada, sources of educational inequality among Indigenous communities have been acknowledged within school policy and practice. Mechanisms have been implemented to "harmonize" these disparities, such as Indigenous education policies of inclusion (e.g., The Ontario Policy Framework). Education policies of Indigenous inclusion potentially may serve as a mechanism to improve family-school relationships and reduce the impact of educational inequality among Indigenous students and, therefore, lead to increased levels of Indigenous student achievement. However, based on Lareau's and Weininger's argument, and

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[78] I am unable to measure whether or not inclusionary initiatives, such as Indigenous focused school programming and Indigenous content embedded incorporated into the curriculum, penetrate the student learning process and impact student achievement. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that such initiatives contribute to student self-confidence and self-esteem which may contribute to student educational experiences and, indirectly, student achievement.

the findings presented above, it is possible that sustained tensions and distrust between Indigenous families and academic systems may create barriers for the potential "ameliorating" capability of strategies developed to meet the particular educational needs of Indigenous students. Educators' own perceptions and responses regarding Indigenous inclusion policies may also create barriers to implementation. Further barriers may reflect the institutional environment of schooling and organizational dilemmas within which the policy is implemented. Fundamentally, while new curricula and educational initiatives may have some symbolic benefits, they may do little to forge strong family-school connections and ameliorate associated educational disparities.

CHAPTER 7 - CONCLUSION

The Ontario Ministry of Education has committed to First Nation, Métis, and Inuit student success. Current Indigenous education policy, The Ontario Policy Framework (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007), identifies specific initiatives to support the learning and achievement of Indigenous students and is intended to provide strategic context for meeting two key objectives by 2016 (pg.5): to improve achievement among First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students; and, to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in the areas of literacy and numeracy, student retention, graduation rates, and advancement to post-secondary schooling.[79] Significant progress has been made to improve Indigenous educational experiences and outcomes. Yet, much ground has yet to be covered before the provincial goal to close the Indigenous and non-Indigenous achievement gap is reached. Educational inequalities persist despite the creation of policies and initiatives that aim to reduce educational disparities by way of including Indigenous families, communities, cultures and histories in the education of Indigenous (and non-Indigenous) children.

This thesis contributes to literature considering how race and class shapes the role that parents play in children's education (Hill and Taylor, 2004; Hill and Craft, 2003; Hill, 2001) by furthering our understanding of the mechanisms that encourage and limit strong Indigenous family-school connections. Research on achievement and family-school relations tends to focus on African American, Mexican, Asian, Hispanic/Spanish populations (e.g., Lareau 2002, 2011; Lareau and Horvat, 1999; Mau, 1997; Suizzo et al., 2014; Lee and Bowen, 2006; Aspiazu, Bauer, and Spillett, 1998; Goldenberg et al., 2001; Birch and Ferrin, 2002; Halle et al., 1997; Gutman and McLoyd, 2000; Kim, 2002; Neblett et al., 2009; Neblett et al., 2006; Neblett et al., 2008; Banerjee, Harrell, and Johnson, 2011; Howard and Reynolds, 2008). The Canadian Indigenous population has distinct educational experiences and perceptions that need to be considered in their own right and with similar consideration. This is especially true since the Canadian Indigenous population represent one of the fastest growing groups in Canada and one of the most disadvantaged (Canada Human Rights Commission, 2008).[80] Further research is needed to better understand the culturally distinct ways that Indigenous parents are involved in schooling.

7.1   Home-School Relationships: Social Class and Race Dimensions

Parental involvement is considered to facilitate academic success (Fan, 2001; Barnard, 2004; Sheldon and Epstein, 2005; Englund et al., 2004; Becker and Epstein, 1982) and educators now expect parents to be involved in their children's schooling (Lareau 2002). Yet not all parents' have the ability to be involved in their children's schooling, particularly in a manner that is

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[79] The Ontario Ministry of Education has published two progress reports to the 2007 document (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009a; 2013). The "two primary objectives by the year 2016" was change in the 2013 document to include: "improve achievement among First Nation, Métis and Inuit students and to close the achievement gap between Aboriginal students and all students" (pg.3).
[80] Indigenous peoples formed 3.8% of Canada's population in 2006 and 4.3% of the total Canadian population identified as Indigenous in 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2011b). The largest proportion of Indigenous peoples lives in Ontario and represents 21.5% of the total Canadian Indigenous population (Statistics Canada, 2011b).

considered appropriate and welcome by schooling organizations (e.g., Lareau, 1987, 2000, 2002, 2011; Kahn, 2010; Dermerath, 2009; Henderson and Mapp, 2002; Mau, 1997; Lee and Bowen, 2006; NCES, 1994). Henderson and Mapp conclude that Asian, Hispanic, and African American parents were as involved in their children's education as White parents but did so "in slightly different ways" (2002, pg. 37). Lareau further concludes that middle-class children gain individually insignificant but cumulatively important schooling advantages due to class-based differences in parenting strategies (2011, pg. 163).

Definitions of parent involvement are often based on generalized conceptions that do not consider culturally distinct parenting behaviours and strategies (e.g., Barnard, 2004; NcNeal, 1999; El Nokali, Bachman and Votruba-Drazl, 2010; Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow and Fendrich, 1999). Normative definitions of parent involvement and family-school relationships may be problematic as they tend to reflect cultural and class specific assumptions, values and parenting logic, and thus create equity issues in family-school relationships along the lines of race and class (Baquedano-Lopez et al., 2013; Theodorou, 2007; Lareau and Horvat, 1999). Theodorou (2007) problematizes the notion of universal home-school partnerships and the potentially negative implications that the built-in cultural and class specific assumptions may have on socially vulnerable groups, potentially contributing to furthering marginalization (also see Baquedano-Lopez et al., 2013). McKay et al. (2003) argues that little research has considered the influence of racism in association with parental strategies of school involvement.

> Relatively little prior research has examined the unique obstacles (e.g., prior negative contact with school staff, concerns regarding their abilities to provide educational assistance to their children, perceptions of racism, clashes regarding cultural values) experienced by low-income parents of color which potentially act to discourage parental involvement at school (McKay et al., 2003, pg. 107-108)

This thesis offers an original contribution within the area of family and schools, and educational inequality, by considering how race and social class shape family-school relations among Indigenous families. This thesis finds that Indigenous parents' approach to their children's schooling was shaped by the legacies of residential schooling and assimilative practices, parent concerns of continued racial discrimination at school, as well as social class. Education policy, program and practice need to consider problems inherent in a standard definition of family-school relationships as not all parents are able to participate in their children's education in the same way.

7.2   Social and Cultural Capital

Social capital is a resource based on relationships that involve trust, positive emotion, communication and information sharing (Bourdieu, 1998; Coleman, 1988; Paxton, 1999), and may take the form of connections that parents have with teachers, administrators, and other parents. Cultural capital refers to the "micro-interactional processes" where an individual's use of knowledge, skills, and competence interacts with institutionalized standards of evaluation (Lareau and Weininger, 2003, pg. 569). Schools have institutionalized formal and informal

expectations of parents that include: developing relationships with schools/teachers based on comfort and trust, deferring to teachers professional judgment, and displaying positive attitudes towards schooling. This thesis has examined how legacies of residential schooling and assimilative practices may have compromised Indigenous parents' ability to establish strong connections with schools as well as misalignment between schooling standards and parenting behaviours, contributing to moments of exclusion (Lareau and Horvat, 1999).

This thesis builds onto the work of Annette Lareau (2002, 2011; Lareau and Horvat, 1999) by applying theoretical models of family-school relations to the specific context of Indigenous family-school relationships in Canada. While Lareau and Horvat (1999) examine the impact of social class and discrimination in schooling against black Americans in family-school relations, the current study focuses on social class and racial discrimination in schooling against Indigenous Canadians. Similar to the work of Lareau, this thesis finds that legacies of racial discrimination in schooling as well as social class shape how some Indigenous parents' approach schooling. In my sample, Indigenous parents expressed concerns that their children would experience racial discrimination in schooling and, similar to Lareau and Horvat's findings, social class mediated how parents responded to such concerns.[81]

The framework of moments of inclusion and exclusion is relevant in Canada and to the relationships between Indigenous parents and schools. My dissertation extends the Lareau framework from its Euro-American-Black dichotomy into the realm of Indigenous peoples; while Indigenous peoples may have some parallels with African Americans or Canadians, there are key distinctions that make for a unique analysis within the sociology of education. The African Canadian population has not experienced residential schooling and assimilative practices in schooling that aimed to eliminate their culture. The Indigenous populations are Canada's original inhabitants who have had European values and culture imposed on them. This thesis contributes to better understanding the distinct educational experiences and perceptions among the Canadian Indigenous population.

Findings suggest that middle-class Indigenous parents intensify parenting practices while lower-class parents lessen parenting practices in response to the historical context of Indigenous education. Middle-class Indigenous parents appear driven to be more involved and forceful with schools in order to protect their children from negative events pertaining to their culture and heritage. These parents engage in what I term "alignment-plus" by not only aligning with standards of concerted cultivation and schooling requirements (Lareau, 2011) but also engaging

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[81] Lareau and Horvat describe two sets of parents Mr. and Mrs. Irving (Black, middle-class) and Mr. and Mrs. Mason (Black, working-class), both concerned about racial discrimination the school. The Irving family actively monitored their daughters schooling (e.g., volunteering, stopping by to check in) to ensure she was not subjected to unfair treatment but did not reveal the source of their concern to educators. Alternatively, the Mason family openly expressed anger, hostility and criticism towards the educators (e.g., regarding the celebration of Halloween but not the celebration of Black heroes). The Irving's intervened in their children's schooling in a way that educators defined as helpful, supportive and legitimate, while the Mason's interventions were considered "destructive" and unhelpful. As a result, when the Irving's made special requests of the teachers (e.g., requesting their daughter be tested for a gifted program) she was tested and admitted (Lareau and Horvat, 1999). Alternatively, the special requests made by the Mason's (e.g. placement in a higher level reading group) were not successful and may be considered a moment of exclusion (Lareau and Horvat, 1999).

in practices of cultural shielding and discriminatory protection. In contrast, the history of discrimination in schooling appears to magnify feelings of distrust and discomfort with schooling among lower-class Indigenous parents, further complicating home-school relationships. For example, as detailed in chapter five, Erika, a lower-class Indigenous mother, had a negative and traumatic schooling experience due to instances of racial discrimination. As a result, Erika felt uncomfortable interacting with the school and therefore had "minimal contact." Caroline had a very different experience. A middle-class Indigenous mother, Caroline took a proactive approach to address her concerns of discrimination. Caroline looked for openings or "ins" where it would be fitting to provide cultural presentations in her children's classes in order to educate the teacher and students about their culture. Compared to Erika who responded to concerns through little interaction with the school, Caroline's approach involved spending more time at the school interacting with teachers and resulted in a stronger relationship between her and the school and a much better outcome for her children.

Findings presented in this thesis provide reason to suggest that discriminatory barriers connected to colonization and legacies of racial discrimination continue to shape educational experiences as well as Indigenous family and school relationships within the present. As well, there are organizational barriers to implementing Indigenous focused schooling initiatives that may result in more symbolic benefits than actual change. In closing, I identify two questions that remain to be answered and provide direction for extending the current research.

What are the Distinct Ways Indigenous Parents are Involved in Children's Schooling?

Research suggests that experiences of racial discrimination are negatively associated with academic achievement (Neblett et al., 2009; Neblett et al., 2006; Neblett et al., 2008). Minority parents perceive twice as much racism at school as compared to teachers (McKay et al., 2003). Awareness of racism is negatively related to parents' involvement at school (e.g., contact with teachers, attending schooling events) and positively related to parents' involvement at home (McKay et al., 2003). Yet, parental involvement in schooling is associated with lower incidence of children being discriminated against based on race (Jeynes, 2008) and is associated with children's academic achievement, regardless of the children's racial background (Jeyne, 2003; Mau, 1997). Although parental involvement in children's education is clearly significant, parents have different social and cultural resources and educational experiences that lead to varied perceptions of schooling and teachers (e.g., distrust, discomfort, fear) and responses to concerns of racism at school.

Further research is needed to explore the distinct ways that Indigenous parents are involved in children's schooling, with reference to promoting academic achievement and responding to children's experiences of racism (or parents' concerns that children will encounter racism). Such research has been conducted with African American, Asian and Hispanic populations (e.g., Neblett et al., 2009; Neblett et al., 2006; Neblett et al., 2008; Mau, 1997; Banerjee, Harrell and Johnson, 2011; Howard and Reynolds, 2008), but not with Indigenous populations. There is much to learn about Indigenous educational experiences in connection to dynamics of Indigenous family-school relationships.

This thesis calls for a more culturally sensitive approach to examining parental involvement that moves beyond normative and potentially problematic conceptions of involvement with built-in cultural and class-based assumptions, and reflects nuanced aspects of parental involvement relevant to Indigenous populations (Theodorou, 2007; Baquedano-Lopex et al., 2013). Potential findings will contribute to development and implementation of schooling initiatives that inform Indigenous parents and educators about the contextual barriers that Indigenous children face and ways parents can become involved to overcome those barriers. These educational programs and practices would contribute to efforts to reduce educational disparities among Canada's Indigenous population.

What Initiatives have been Implemented in Ontario Public Schools that are Targeted Towards Engaging Indigenous Parents their children's Education? And, are they effective?

Further research is needed to investigate Ontario public school initiatives that aim to reduce educational disparities within Indigenous communities by way of enhancing family-school relationships. This research would consider the experiences of stakeholders (Indigenous families and educators, as well as non-Indigenous school personnel) as well as the effectiveness of such programs.

This research question is in line with the Ontario Ministry of Education's framework to improve Indigenous student achievement. The Ontario Framework, strategy 3.3, calls to "foster supportive and engaged families and communities" (2007). Performance measure 8 in the Ontario Framework calls for "increased participation of First Nation, Métis and Inuit parents in the education of their children" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007; 2009; 2013). Yet, little has been reported about specific initiatives to forge strong connections between families and schools.

According to the Ontario Ministry of Education (2013), 171 projects have been funded by the Parents Reaching Out initiative which focus on enhancing parent engagement at the local, regional and provincial levels of Ontario schooling (pg.42). What do such initiatives look like, how are they implemented, and how are parents/educators responding? Are the effective in terms of both forging stronger family-school relationships (e.g., contributing to positive attitudes towards schooling among parents, increased participation of parents in children's schooling) and impacting student achievement and learning processes (e.g., increased motivation, positive attitudes and connection to schooling)? This research would contribute to effective educational policy, practices and programs and contribute to scholarship connecting micro-level processes (individual interaction and agency) and macro-institutional environments (organizational structure of schooling). This research would also contribute to a deeper understanding of Indigenous student achievement gaps and successful strategies to reduce them.

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Appendix A - Parent Interview Schedule

	Question/Instruction:
A1	CAN YOU TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR FAMILY? (E.G., HOW MANY CHILDREN, AGES AND GRADE LEVELS)
A2	BEFORE YOU ENROLLED YOUR CHILD(REN) IN SCHOOL, WHAT DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THE SCHOOLS IN THE AREA?
	INTERVIEWEE:
	Summer Program Parents: Now I'd like to ask you some questions that are specifically about your child who is participating in the summer program.
B1	CAN YOU TELL ME A BIT ABOUT YOUR SON/DAUGHTER? HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE HIM/HER?
B2	BEFORE YOUR CHILD STARTED SCHOOL, WHAT CHILDCARE ARRANGMENT DID YOU HAVE?
B3	CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE PROCESS OF DECIDING ON THAT ARRANGMENT?
B4	BEFORE STARTING SCHOOL, DID YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT?
B5	IF YES, WHAT WERE YOUR CONCERNS? HOW DID YOU RESPOND TO 'X'? (E.G., TALKED TO FAMILY DR.)
B6	IF YES - IN YOUR OPINION, DID YOU GET THE HELP YOU NEEDED? IF NOT, WHAT BARRIERS DID YOU/YOUR CHILD EXPERIENCE? (E.G., LONG WAITING LISTS)
B7	IF YES, ARE YOU STILL CONCERNED ABOUT 'X'? WHY OR WHY NOT? (E.G., TREATMENT WORKED).
B8	IF YES, CAN YOU DESCRIBE TO ME HOW (IF AT ALL) YOU ARE YOU WORKING WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER/SCHOOL TO DEAL WITH 'X' ?
B9	HOW (IF AT ALL) DO YOU THINK 'X' INFLUENCES YOUR CHILD'S ABILITY TO REACH HIS/HER PERSONAL BEST?
C1	CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR SON/DAUGHTER'S LITERACY SKILLS?
	WHAT KINDS OF LITERACY ACTIVITIES DOES HE/SHE STRUGGLE WITH?

	IN YOUR OPINION, DOES YOUR SON/DAUGHTER SEE HIM/HER SELF AS A 'READER' (OR GOOD AT READING)?
	DOES HE/SHE SEE HIM/HERSELF AS GOOD AT MATH?
C2	THINKING OF THIS PAST SCHOOL YEAR, HOW WELL DID YOUR CHILD DO? WHAT ARE HIS/HER AREAS OF STRENGTH? WEAKNESS?
C3	HOW DID HE/SHE DO IN READING? WHAT GRADE DID HE/SHE RECEIVE?
C4	HOW DID HE/SHE DO IN MATH? WHAT GRADE DID HE/SHE RECEIVE?
C5	DOES YOUR CHILD LIKE SCHOOL? WHY OR WHY NOT? HOW DOES HE/SHE EXPRESS THESE FEELINGS?
D1	CAN YOU DESCRIBE TO ME THE TYPE OF CONTACT YOU HAVE WITH YOUR CHILD'S CLASSROOM TEACHER?
D2	IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN OR WANTED TO SHARE SOMETHING WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER, DO YOU APPROACH HIM/HER? WHY OR WHY NOT?
	IF YES, WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME? CAN YOU GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE?
D3	DID YOU ATTEND A PARENT-TEACHER MEETING LAST YEAR? WHY OR WHY NOT?
	IF YES, DID YOU HAVE ANY ISSUES/CONCERNS/THOUGHTS THAT YOU WANTED TO SHARE? WERE YOU ABLE TO VOICE THOSE CONCERNS? WHY OR WHY NOT?
D4	CAN YOU RECALL A TIME THAT YOUR CHILD WAS HAVING AN ISSUE AT SCHOOL?
	WHAT WAS THE ISSUE? HOW DID YOU DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM? WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME?
D5	MORE GENERALLY, ARE YOU ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITES?

D6	THE TERM "PARENT ENGAGEMENT" IS USED A LOT THESE DAYS. WHAT DOES THAT TERM MEAN TO YOU? WHAT ACTIONS DO YOU ASSOCIATE WITH THAT TERM? CAN YOU GIVE ME SOME EXAMPLES?
	(Note: If response is too general e.g., "parents should be supportive" – probe deeper and ask: e.g., "what do you mean by 'supportive'? How does "support" translate into a specific activity/action or range of actions? Can you give me an example?").
D7	WHAT DOES A GOOD RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTS AND TEACHERS/SCHOOLS LOOK LIKE?
D8	HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR ROLE IN YOUR CHILDREN'S SCHOOLING? (E.G., WHAT DOES THAT INVOLVE OR LOOK LIKE?)
	HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR ROLE IN YOUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND LEARNING MORE GENERALLY?
D9	HOW DO YOU SEE THE ROLE OF TEACHERS AND THE SCHOOL IN CHILDREN'S EDUCATION?
D10	HOW ARE THE ROLES OF THE PARENT/ FAMILY AND THE TEACHER THE SAME? HOW ARE THEY DIFFERENT?
D11	WHAT ROLE *SHOULD* PARENTS PLAY IN THEIR CHILD'S EDUCATION?
D12	DO YOU SEE YOURSELF AS A PARTNER WITH SCHOOLS/TEACHERS?
	-If yes: In what way? And why do you see yourself as a partner – what has led you to feel this way?
	-If no: What led you to feel this way?
D13	ONE THING THAT WE'RE REALLY INTERESTED IN IS LEARNING MORE ABOUT HOW WE CAN MAKE STRONGER CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARENTS AND TEACHERS/SCHOOLS. WE KNOW THAT CHILDREN'S SCHOOL SUCCESS IS SUPPORTED WHEN PARENTS ARE ACTIVITY ENGAGED IN THEIR CHILD'S SCHOOLING. PART OF THAT IS FEELING CONNECTED TO SCHOOLS, TALKING TO TEACHERS, PARTICIPATING IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ETC - IN IN YOUR OPINION:
	-WHAT BARRIERS PREVENT PARENTS FROM CONNECTING TO SCHOOLS/TEACHERS?

	-WHAT BARRIERS PREVENT PARENTS FROM PARTICIPATING IN SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITES?
	-WHAT DO YOU THINK INSPIRES REALLY POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TEACHERS/SCHOOLS AND PARENTS?
	-WHAT DO YOU THINK COULD STRENGTHEN PARENT-ENGAGEMENT?
D14	AS A PARENT, WHAT RESOURCES, INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES ARE MOST HELPFUL IN TERMS OF HELPING YOU HELP YOUR CHILD?
	Can you tell me what led you to this opinion? Can you give me an example?
E1	CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT THE PROCESS OF COMING TO THE SLLP? (E.G., HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT IT?)
E2	WHAT ARE YOU HOPING WILL BE THE OUTCOME OF THE SLLP? IN WHAT WAYS ARE YOU HOPING YOUR CHILD WILL BENEFIT?
E3	IS THIS YOUR CHILD'S FIRST YEAR ATTENDING?
E4	IF NO: CAN YOU DESCRIBE TO ME YOUR CHILD'S EXPERIENCE WITH THE SLLP LAST YEAR?
E5	IF NO: DO YOU THINK THE SLLP MADE A DIFFERENCE? IF YES, IN WHAT WAY?
	DO YOU FEEL THE PROGRAM MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THE FOLLOWING SCHOOL YEAR FOR YOUR CHILD? IF YES, IN WHAT WAY?
E6	IF YES: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CHILD'S EXPERIENCE SO FAR?
F1	DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR, CAN YOU DESCRIBE TO ME WHAT YOUR CHILD DOES AFTER-SCHOOL? WHAT DOES A TYPICAL NIGHT CONSIST OF?
F2	IS YOUR CHILD INVOLVED IN ANY ORGANIZED AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES? IF YES, CAN YOU DESCRIBE TO ME THE TYPES OF ACTIVIES, HOW MANY TIMES PER WEEK?
F4	ARE THERE ANY AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITES THAT YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN? IF YES, WHAT (IF ANY) ARE THE BARRIERS?
F5	THINKING OF THIS SUMMER, WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS?

	HOW WILL YOUR SON/DAUGHTER SPEND HER DAYS? WHAT DOES A TYPICAL WEEK LOOK LIKE?
	INTERVIEWEE: NOW I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR FUTURE GOALS
G1	WHAT EDUCATIONAL GOALS DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUR CHILD?
G2	DO YOU ANTICIPATE ANY BARRIERS (THAT PREVENT YOU/YOUR CHILD) FROM REALIZING THESE GOALS?
	INTERVIEWEE: NOW I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH SCHOOL.
H1	DID YOU ENJOY SCHOOL? WHAT ASPECTS DID YOU ENJOY/NOT ENJOY?
H2	WHAT MESSAGES DID YOUR PARENTS GIVE YOU ABOUT SCHOOL?
	IN WHAT WAYS DO THOSE MESSAGES SHAPE HOW YOU PARENT YOUR OWN CHILD?
	Are there any other topics or stories you'd like to share that I didn't ask about?

Appendix B - Teacher Interview Schedule

	QUESTION
A	CAN YOU TELL ME A BIT ABOUT YOUR TEACHING BACKGROUND AND YOUR CURRENT POSITION?
	HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THIS PARTICULAR SCHOOL COMMUNITY? STUDENTS? PARENTS?
	AS A TEACHER, WHAT ARE THE MAIN CHALLENGES OF TEACHING IN THIS COMMUNITY?
	WHAT ARE THE GREATEST BARRIERS/CHALLENGES FACED BY STUDENTS IN THIS COMMUNITY? WHAT FACTORS LIMIT THEIR EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS?
B	EDUCATORS AND RESEARCHERS OFTEN USE THE TERM "PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT". WHAT DOES THAT TERM MEAN TO YOU?
	HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE IDEAL PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP?
	HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE TYPICAL PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP?
	HOW DO PARENTS SEE THEIR ROLE IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION? HOW DO THEY CONCEPTUALIZE THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL/TEACHER?
	DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR, HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CONTACT/COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS? WHEN DOES THIS CONTACT/COMMUNICATION MOST OFTEN HAPPEN?
	WHAT EXPLAINS HIGH/LOWER CONTACT/COMMUNICATION? EXAMPLES?
C	HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE QUALITY OF PARENT ENGAGEMENT AT THIS SCHOOL/ BOARD?
	IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT EXPLAINS THE QUALITY OF THIS RELATIONSHIP?
	WHAT, IF ANY, HAVE BEEN THE CONSEQUENCES OF HIGH/LOWER QUALITY PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT (POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE)?

	HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR BOARDS SPECIFIC APPROACH TO PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT? WHAT STRATEGIES ARE USED?
	IN YOUR OPINION, WHICH STRATEGIES ARE MOST SUCCESSFUL AND WHY? EXAMPLES?
	IN YOUR OPINION, WHICH STRATEGIES ARE LEAST SUCESSFUL AND WHY? EXAMPLES?
	WHAT DO YOU THINK INFLUENCES PARENTAL ATTITUDES ABOUT SCHOOLING?
	INTERVIEWEE: NOW I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS SPECIFICALLY ABOUT THE SLLP.
D	WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE SLLP?
	HOW WERE STUDENTS RECRUITED TO THE PROGRAM?
	WHAT WORKED WELL (IN TERMS OF RECRUITMENT)? ANY CHALLENGES?
	CAN YOU TALK TO ME A BIT ABOUT HOW THIS PROGRAM IS ORGANIZED? TYPES OF ACTIVITIES ETC.?
	HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE SUMMER PROGRAM STUDENTS AT THIS SITE?
	HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE SUMMER PROGRAM PARENTS AT THIS SITE?
	WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACED BY STUDENTS ATTENDING THIS PROGRAM?
	AS AN EDUCATOR, WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL BE YOUR GREATEST CHALLENGES THIS SUMMER?
	BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCE, WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR GREATEST SUCCESSES THIS SUMMER?
	WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR STUDENTS' GREATEST SUCCESSES THIS SUMMER?
E	CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE LEVEL OF PARENT INTEREST (FOR THE SLLP)?
	CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE LEVEL/QUALITY OF PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT THIS SUMMER?
	IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT EXPLAINS THE LEVEL OF PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT THIS SUMMER?

	WHAT STRATEGIES HAVE BEEN USED TO ENCOURAGE PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT?
	WHICH OF THESE STRATEGIES HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY SUCCESSFUL AND WHY? EXAMPLES?
	WHICH OF THESE STRATEGIES HAS BEEN LESS SUCCESSFUL AND WHY? EXAMPLES?
	ARE THE PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES DURING THE SLLP DIFFERENT OR SIMILAR TO THOSE USED DURING THE REGULAR SCHOOL YEAR? HOW/HOW NOT? AND WHY?
	WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT FROM THE SLLP? ANY TAKE-AWAY MESSAGES THAT WE CAN BRIDGE FORWARD INTO THE SCHOOL YEAR?
	Is there anything else you'd like to share with me?

Appendix C - Demographic Questionnaire

Please answer the following information about *yourself*:

Sex : _____ Age: _____ Race: _____

Highest level of education: _____ Occupation: _____

Hours of work: _____ (shifts: ____ weekends: _____)

Weeks of holidays each year: _____ Marital status: _____

Residence: Own or Rent or Other: _____

If applicable, please answer the following information about your *spouse/ partner*:

Age: _____ Race: _____ Relationship status: _____

Spouse's occupation: _____

Spouse's highest level of education: _____

Hours of work: _____ (shifts: ___ weekends: _____)

Weeks of holidays each year: _____

Please answer the following general information:

How many children live in the home full-time? _____ Ages? _____

How many children live in the home part-time? _____ How often? _____ Ages? _____

What is your best estimate of your total household income, received by all household members, from all sources, before taxes and deductions, during the year ending December 31, 2012?
 Please check off which category best fits you:

____ $0 - $29,999

____ $30,000 - $69,999

____ $70,000 - $99,999

____ $100,000 and more

Appendix D: East Haven 2013 Teacher and Administrator Survey

QUESTION: How would you describe the level or quality of parental engagement during Summer Heat? And during regular school?

a) In your opinion, what explains the quality of these relationships? What explains the differences?
b) Did you notice any differences in how parents connect with you, the school, or with their child during Summer Heat (vs. regular school)?
c) What can we learn about parental engagement from Summer Heat? Are there any take-away messages that we can bridge forward into the school year?

QUESTION: What were the biggest challenges faced by students attending Summer Heat?

a) What were your students' greatest successes this summer?

QUESTION: As an educator, what were *your* greatest challenges this summer?

a) What were *your* greatest successes this summer?

QUESTION: How would you describe your familiarity with Aboriginal culture and history prior to, and after, your involvement in Summer Heat?

a) Prior to your involvement in the Summer Heat program, to what degree have you embedded Aboriginal perspectives and cultures into your lessons?
b) Since your involvement with Summer Heat, are you more comfortable to embed Aboriginal material into your lessons, and/or more willing to do this in the future?

QUESTION: How would you describe your level of comfort working with the Aboriginal Summer Heat lessons and resources during the program?

a) Is there anything else that would have been helpful in terms of your ability or level of comfort working with the lessons plans?
b) What worked well in terms of the Summer Heat lesson plans and professional development?
c) What didn't work? Is there anything you would change or would have liked to see?

QUESTION: How (if at all) has your experience with Summer Heat made an impact on you as an educator?

a) Is there anything you did differently in Summer Heat than you would do in the regular school practice?
b) Is there anything you will do differently now in your regular school practice as a result of your experience with Summer Heat?

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[i] Research has found that schools contribute to educational inequality by way of curricular content, extracurricular activities, and school resources (Bennett et al. 2012; Stevens 2007; Klugman 2012; Murillo and Román 2011; Condron and Roscigno 2003), teacher credentials (Clotfelter et al. 2010) and educator expectations (Rist 1977; Cicourel and Kitsuse 1977). For example, early research found support for educational self-fulfilling prophecy claims, wherein students' academic self perception and achievement, as well as intelligence are affected by teacher expectations (Wineburg 1987; Rist 1977). However, studies that aimed to replicate and follow-up early research have shown little relationship between teachers' expectations and student intelligence (Wineburg 1987). Yet, Rist (1977) believed there is a future for the self-fulfilling claim used in conjunction with the conceptual framework of labeling theory which provides a framework to understand the processes and outcomes of transforming attitudes into behaviours. For example, Cicourel and Kitsuse (1977) examined school administrators' role in differentiating students into categories of college-qualified and non-college-qualified. They found that high school guidance counselors monitor students' courses and programs and make decisions that will include or exclude students from future postsecondary prospects. The authors observed these judgments are based on grades and test scores, in addition to students' appearance and social class. As a further example, in affluent neighbourhoods schools leverage community resources and families contribute private resources to support schools and to assure high quality (Demerath 2009). Schools may offer qualitatively and quantitatively different activities and resources based on the social class of the catchment area and children attending (Bennett et al. 2012; Stevens 2007; Klugman 2012). Importantly, research has linked school-level spending (and associated school resource) and student achievement (Condron and Roscigno 2003).

Also with reference to schooling, Bowles and Gintis (1976) articulate "the correspondence principle," to explain the consistency between the organization of schooling (e.g., social relationships of domination and subordination) and the organization of the capitalist workforce. They argue that schooling socializes students for their place in the class hierarchy and future adult work roles, though socializes students differently based on their social class background (e.g., lower-class students are taught to be disciplined workers in preparation for lower wage jobs). They argue that schools reproduce social relations of production, and justify pre-existing class (dis)advantage, attributing positions of disparity to personal failure.