

Negotiations Questions

1. Who was involved in the education negotiations?

The negotiations involved the Union of Ontario Indians and the Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs. The Union of Ontario Indians is the political organization that represents Anishinabek First Nations. The Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada represents the federal government.

2. Why are only the Anishinabek First Nations involved in these negotiations? Why are no other Ontario First Nations involved in this Education Agreement?

The Anishinabek Chiefs in Assembly voted in 1995 to start these negotiations. The mandate included only Anishinabek First Nations. Other First Nations in Ontario are negotiating their own education agreements with the federal government. Examples include the Mohawks of Akwesasne and the Nishnawbe Aski Nation.

3. When did negotiations begin? When was the Agreement-in-Principle signed?

The negotiations formally started in 1995 with a resolution passed by the Anishinabek Nation Chiefs in Assembly. The Education Agreement-in-Principle was signed on November 29, 2002 at the Chippewas of Rama First Nation.

4. Why did it take so long to negotiate the Education Agreement?

The issues in these negotiations were complex. When the talks began, there were no examples of aboriginal self-government in education from which the negotiators could gain insight and advance their discussions. Even now that the talks have concluded, there is only one other education self-government agreement in Canada – the [Mi'kmaq Education System](#) in Nova Scotia.

As well, the negotiators needed time to consult the 39 First Nations on the development of the education system, and to find a common solution.

5. Are negotiations over?

Yes. The negotiations ended in 2015. Negotiators put their initials on the agreement — the final step in the discussions. Now the First Nations and the federal government are preparing to give the agreement their formal approval.

In the meantime, negotiators are still discussing a self-government agreement that is completely separate from the education agreement. They expect to complete those discussions next year.

6. What are the next steps before the Education Agreement is in effect and how long will it take?

The First Nations and the federal government must give the agreement their formal approval before it can take effect. The First Nations will hold community votes between November 28th and December 2nd of this year. If enough people approve, then the federal government will ask Parliament to approve it as well. The agreement could take two years to work its way through the House of Commons and the Senate.

7. How have the negotiations been funded?

The federal government paid for the negotiations. This meant the Anishinabek Nation had the resources and experts it needed to negotiate.