AN ANALYSIS OF PROVINCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AROUND THE INCLUSION OF MARGINALIZED STUDENTS IN ONTARIO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In a content analysis of Ministry of Colleges, Training and Universities (MTCU), Ministry of Education (EDU) and Toronto District School Board) TDSB policy documents from the past two decades, we examine how these agencies have targeted the issue of post-secondary education (PSE) and marginalized groups who are under-represented in Ontario's post-secondary system. Our previous research indicates that students with special education needs (SEN), particularly those from low-income groups, have very low likelihoods of attending university or college. We also found in our previous work that Black male students were under-represented among those attending PSE institutions.

2. We approach our analysis from an intersectionality perspective, which argues that identities in terms of race, class and gender in varying combinations give individuals unique positions and experiences. These positions can work together to marginalize or to privilege their experiences of social mobility. The use of an intersectional approach serves to highlight the importance of not any one identity, but the intersection of identities as these impact on the transition to PSE.

3. We find that over time, policies increasingly use language that moves away from a focus on structural barriers to social mobility to one of "access," which we understand to imply a shift in the understanding of social mobility from structural problems to individual deficiencies.

4. The term "access" is mostly employed by PSE to refer to technology and streamlining of credits for transfer purposes or mobility between universities and colleges. This focus works against implementing an intersectionality approach to equity, social justice and access.

5. Most policies (the Rae Report being a notable exception) fail to discuss race, yet much of current social science research sees race as very important. We ask why race is being ignored in policy making, particularly at the ministry and school board levels

6. MTCU analysis shows concentrated focus on access and groups, with increasing attention being paid to barriers and SEN. The racial category is under-discussed.

7. The analysis of overall documents reveals that the Rae years link with a focus on race and inequality of other marginalized student populations. This contrasts with the Harris era, when race was infrequently discussed. This shift is accompanied by the use of language; language shifts foci from a consideration of circumstances to a discussion of opportunities for individuals.

8. MTCU targets four populations: students with disabilities, francophone, Aboriginal and first generation. We find, however, that PSE institutions—particularly universities—sustain their autonomy by providing the ministry with evidence that they work to serve these populations while at the same time, serving other marginalized populations within their geographical jurisdiction. However, an analysis of MYAA data shows little evidence (in our sample of universities) that the target groups focused on by the MTCU have seen increased enrolments.

9. There is little sign of intersectionality being employed in policies/practices on PSE websites. Mostly, PSE institutions focus on one axis of difference, be it low income, first generation or Aboriginal status.
10. We conclude by arguing that the ministry's focus on selected groups and the absence of focus on other groups (in terms of race) and intersectional factors is problematic and a hindrance to any measurable gains in equity to marginalized groups. We see an urgent need for the creation of a longitudinal data set on youth in Ontario.

INTRODUCTION

This research is a continuation of findings from a previous OHCRIF-supported project that identified characteristics influencing the likelihood of Ontario high school students transitioning to post-secondary education (PSE). Longitudinal data from the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) and the Ontario university and college application centres were employed to examine the determinants of post-secondary pathways of students in this school board. Our analysis of these data was motivated by an intersectionality approach, which is based on the premise that individuals' combinations of ascribed characteristics (e.g., race, ethno-racial group, disability, social class, etc.) combine to influence their opportunities. These combinations of characteristics —rather than traits considered in singularity—must be considered when making recommendations for advancements in social mobility, including the transition to post-secondary education. This perspective, we argue, provides us with a fresh look at public policy and a new lens through which to examine marginalized student populations in terms of their access to PSE, their persistence in PSE, and their successful transition to the labour market. We believe this approach is particularly appropriate for the markedly diverse group of students serviced by the TDSB.

Our findings revealed that income, race, gender and SEN were intimately linked and together help to explain the PSE confirmations of students. For example, Black males were significantly less likely to attend university compared to other groups, students with SEN had limited post-secondary horizons and only those with sufficient economic resources stood a chance of attending a community college. These findings raised the question as to what sorts of interventions are possible to alter these existing situations, which limit the life chances of young people.

We argued in our previous report that a one-size fits all policy approach is unlikely to be of use in addressing the inequities we observed in PSE confirmations. Rather, policy that recognizes the intersection of gender, race and class, as well as SEN, must be utilized. In this report, we explore the extent to which this intersectional approach to policy has been taken up on in policy documents related to equity and inclusion in Ontario over the last two decades. In particular, following suggestions from Museus and Griffin (2011) around the best practice of implementing intersectionality frameworks to PSE policy, we give particular focus to if and how energies have been invested in two marginalized groups that we have previously identified as being the least likely to transition to PSE: 1) Black males and 2) students with SEN from low-income groups.

BACKGROUND

The emphasis on PSE training as a pathway to economic opportunity is not a new idea, but it is certainly one that is being stressed in the current discourse around improving the life chances of marginalized individuals. Access to PSE is understood to be a key marker in ensuring the economic competitiveness of a country in a global sense, but also an indicator of equity *within* a

country (Finnie and Pavlic 2013). PSE attainment across all Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries is strongly associated with improved employment prospects and earnings, with lessened gender disparity in income and greater likelihood of full-time work (OECD 2013). There has indeed been a great surge in the volume of discussion dedicated to "improving access" to PSE, such as the *Stepping Up* framework introduced by the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services (2013). This framework is intended to provide support to youth through various levels of service to help them succeed, with one marker of success being the pursuit of PSE. Recently, the Ontario Liberal government set a post-secondary attainment rate target of 70% of adults by 2020 (*Open Ontario Plan*).

Following from these policies, it is clear that there is renewed interest in increasing the numbers of marginalized student populations—such as persons with disabilities, recent immigrants, first generation[1], low income and racialized groups—in PSE. Such an interest requires addressing barriers that have hitherto prevented such groups from full participation. Thus, it is important to reflect on the sorts of priorities that have informed provincial policies both in the past and in the present. What student groups have been identified as marginalized? To what extent have policies placed such marginalized student populations up front as important priorities? What sorts of levers for producing positive changes in PSE participation and persistence by marginalized student populations have been developed? In addition to policies, practices and strategies introduced at the secondary and PSE levels can also produce positive changes. Examining policies within school boards and the different approaches employed in universities and community colleges can be informative in detailing "best" practices and contributing to discussions around the issue by different stakeholders committed to the increased participation and achievement by marginalized student populations. PSE achievement frequently translates into comparable success in the labour market.

Our previous OHCRIF research identified characteristics of secondary students that act—in combination with one another—to hinder or facilitate transition to PSE in Ontario. We found that each of these characteristics act independently as barriers to PSE participation. We also found that these characteristics can be additive—in other words, the more "risk" factors an individual possesses, the less likely s/he is to go on to PSE. This point is particularly relevant since race, class and SEN are highly correlated with each other. Rather than possessing just a single "risk" factor (or "axis of difference" as the intersectionality literature refers to these traits), individuals are likely to be located at various intersections of these identities. This finding also raises an important question: To what extent do policies formulated by government take into account the notion of intersectionality (either implicitly or explicitly)? The historical analysis of government

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[1]The importance of developing access strategies for first generation students was first discussed in the Rae report (Ontario: A Leader in Learning). In the Rae report it is stated that "One of the strongest predictors of a student going on to postsecondary studies is if his or her parents went, too. We need to pay attention to the student who is the first in the family to participate in postsecondary education. The province, together with school boards, schools and postsecondary institutions, should develop a First Generation Strategy that involves early outreach to students and ongoing supports to ensure success while they are enroled."(p. 12)

and institutional policies and practices within universities and colleges in relation to marginalized student populations will also prove of interest in reflecting on the (future) direction and foci of labour market policy, programs and service delivery in Ontario. After taking stock, we can ask "What directions are we taking?" and "What needs to happen?" to provide effective policy and program delivery for these populations.

CONCEPTUALIZING POLICY

An understanding of policy and its enactment within educational institutions requires that we conceptualize the policy process as a complex interplay between written policy text and various influences and contexts. Policy is described by Ball and colleagues (2012:4) as a process of becoming—changing from the outside in and inside out—and, as Figure 1 depicts, this process involves bi-directional flows between contexts of policy text production (e.g., factors influencing policy text such as other policies, personalities and backgrounds of policy actors), contexts of influence (e.g., other policies, resources, networks, community and place-specific factors) and contexts of practice/enactment (e.g., power dynamics among policy actors) (Bowe, Ball and Gold,1992). This visual tool reminds us that policy comes into being through a complex web of mechanisms and does not follow an ideal linear pathway that is easily followed. The contexts in which particular policies are created occur within particular historical contexts of influence and often reflect a particular political ideology. In this report, we consider the policies in Ontario from the early 1990s to 2014, spanning just over two decades of political and educational history in this province. Perhaps even more importantly, this time frame covers three very disparate ideological frameworks (NDP, Conservative and Liberal), which we expected to be reflected in the policies relevant to these eras.

Figure 1: The Policy Process
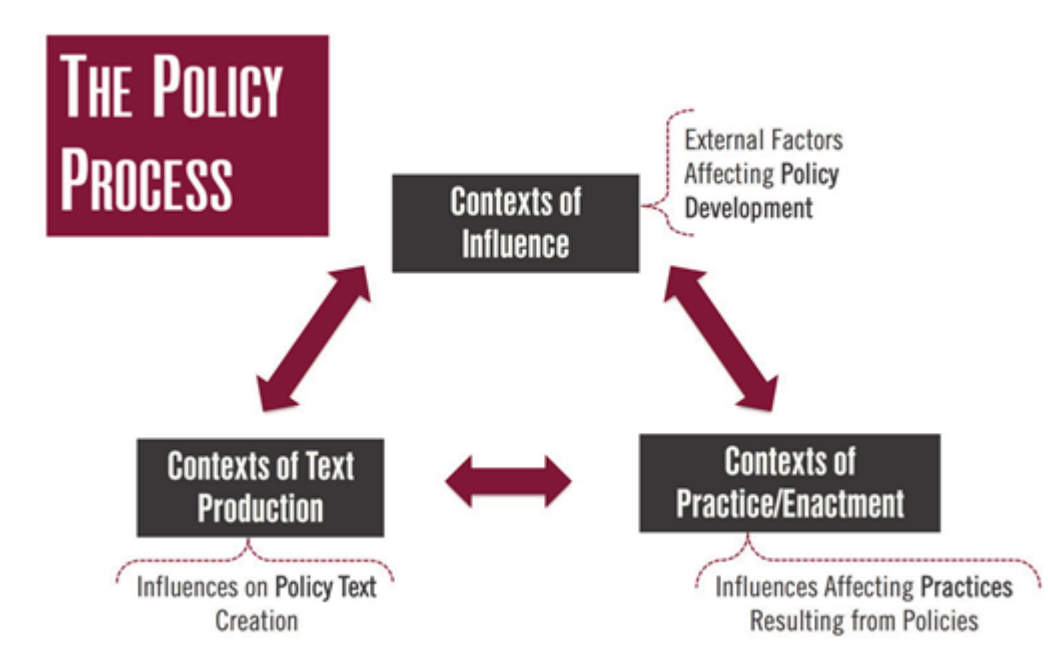
Source: Adapted from Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992.

POLICY CONTEXT IN ONTARIO

An uninterrupted 43-year rule of the Progressive Conservatives (PC) in Ontario provided a political environment for a smooth and accelerated expansion of PSE institutions (i.e., universities and colleges of applied arts and technology). Since 1985, government administration in Ontario has changed stripes frequently, starting with David Peterson's Liberal Party (1986–1990), then shifting to the New Democratic Party led by Bob Rae (1990–1995) and subsequently back to the PC under Mike Harris (1995–2002) and his successor Ernie Eves (2002–2003) (Anderson and Jaafar 2003). The tide then shifted back to the Liberal Party with Dalton McGuinty reigning as leader from 2003 to 2013. Presently, Kathleen Wynne is the Liberal Party premier of Ontario.

Notwithstanding differences in political ideologies of these governments, the evolution of education policy in Ontario has been consistent in direction in all but a few areas. All governments initiated and supported policies that have led to increased accountability through curriculum, assessment and reporting of student progress, provincial testing of student performance and regulation of the teaching profession. Indeed, these standardization and regulatory trends in educational practice have been the norm since the days of Egerton Ryerson

(Robson 2013). However, while the Progressive Conservatives enacted changes in governance, such as the creation of school councils and school board amalgamation, and in the financing of education to achieve more equitable student funding, prior Liberal and NDP governments actively considered these and several other foci of policy change (Anderson and Jaafar 2003). In some areas there has been significantly more variation in policy, including academic streaming in the secondary education program, race and gender equity, and provisions for early childhood education.

It should be noted that ideas for policy change introduced under the leadership of a controlling provincial government might take considerable time for enactment to take place, if at all. One key illustration relates to key recommendations made by George Radwanski, a former journalist who was commissioned in the late 1980s to prepare a report on education with particular emphasis on secondary school dropouts for the Liberal government. Although the report was extensive in its recommendations, the most controversial proposals and ensuing policy discussions centred on recommendations to completely destream the secondary school curriculum, to reduce the secondary program to four years with a common core curriculum for all, and to implement fully funded early childhood education programs across the province (Radwanski 1988). Radwanski argued that the relationship of streaming and dropouts was direct and obvious; only 12 per cent of those enrolled in advanced programs dropped out while figures for the general and basic streams were 62 and 79 per cent respectively (cited in Gidney 1999: 208). These ideas were not enacted into policy under the Liberals, but they had a significant influence on subsequent policy initiatives undertaken by the NDP and Progressive Conservatives.

In the section that follows, we provide a brief review of the political regimes in Ontario. We believe that the analysis of selected policy documents is assisted by positioning them in terms of the socio-political context of the times, as this enables the reader to interpret the content and meaning of educational policies considered in this report. Before we proceed, it is important that we provide definitions of policy and policy analysis insofar as our review of literature in this area reveals that the concepts are often either vaguely defined or not defined at all. In the analysis of policy documents, we adopt the perspective of Codd (1988), who articulated policy and policy analysis as follows:

> Policy here is taken to be any course of action (or inaction) relating to the selection of goals, the definition of values or the allocation of resources. Fundamentally, policy is about the exercise of political power and the language that is used to legitimate that process. Policy analysis is a form of enquiry which provides either the informational base upon which policy is constructed, or the critical examination of existing policies. The former has been called analysis for policy, whereas the latter has been called analysis of policy (Gordon, Lewis & Young,1977: 236).

Bob Rae (1990–1995)

In 1990, Bob Rae's New Democratic Party won 56.9 per cent of the legislature's 130 seats but only 37.6 per cent of the popular vote. His win came as a surprise to everyone, including Bob Rae and his NDP, who were used to being backbenchers (Lee 2005). In its first year and a half in

power, the NDP pursued economic policies similar to the previous Liberal Party, fighting a recession with increased government spending and generally spending more, not less money than its Liberal predecessor (Gidney 1999:168). Confronted by the worst recession since the Great Depression, the Rae government requested $2 billion in wage cuts within the civil service and requested that public service unions work with the government to implement this Social Contract. The Social Contract proved immensely unpopular among public service unions and contributed (along with other factors, such as Harris' campaign against the ballooning deficit) to the NDP's election loss in 1995 (Brennan 2009). In terms of educational directions taken up during the Rae years, it is important to discuss several themes and events. As mentioned previously, little action occurred after the Radwanski report was issued. However, with the election of the NDP, an effort was made to destream up to Grade 10, creating the unstreamed Transition Years of Grades 7-8-9. As stated by Clandfield, Curtis, Galabuzi, San Vincent, Livingstone & Smaller:

> Streaming happens in many different ways in schools. At the elementary level students are often placed in different classes, and in groups within classes, on the basis of their perceived capacities and/or interests. At the secondary level, students starting Grade 9 are placed in streamed courses and overwhelmingly remain in those streams for their entire secondary school career. (2014:4)

Subsequently, the Minister of Education, Tony Sillipo, prepared a Cabinet submission in which destreaming Grade 10 was proposed. In early 1993, however, Bob Rae abandoned the proposal—despite the NDP's long-standing opposition to the streaming of working-class children. Much of the opposition to destreaming came from the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTP), which opposed radical changes in the school system. The government soon began to lose its nerve as right-wing opinion that had previously favoured destreaming turned against it. In addition, George Radwanski, whose Commission on dropouts had recommended destreaming, intervened with the education minister to speak against reforms that did not include his notion of "back to basics" schooling (Martell 1995). Another important initiative was the development of a "common curriculum" that was implemented in 1993 and specified desired learning outcomes for students in mathematics, reading and writing, along with a number of assessment strategies for evaluating whether students were achieving expected outcomes (Manzer 1994). The implementation of a common curriculum along with outcomes assessment reflected the public demand for greater accountability, not only in the evaluation of students but in relation to the role of school boards, parental involvement, curriculum design and implementation, and to ensure that students have the knowledge and skills to succeed in a technological society (Manzer 1994).

Mike Harris (1995–2002)

By 1995, the governing New Democratic Party and incumbent Premier Bob Rae had become extremely unpopular with the electorate, partly due to the state of the Ontario economy and its record debt and deficit amidst a Canada-wide recession. The Harris government swept into office in June 1995 based on a populist platform that the Progressive Conservative Party called the "The Common Sense Revolution" (CSR), a 21-page campaign document that was both an

election strategy and a neo-conservative political strategy. The CSR[2] was crafted in such a way as to woo voters disenchanted by rising taxes, spiraling deficits and the incursion of big government in the lives of everyday people (Gidney 1999). Upon entering office, the Harris government acted quickly, cutting income taxes by 30% over three years, closing hospitals, shifting welfare responsibilities to local governments, cutting education spending, and repealing labour laws. Similar to conservative governments in other jurisdictions, the Harris Tories favoured a free-market economy over government involvement, and considered government's main role as establishing optimal conditions for the operation of free markets (Lee 2005). Public sector cuts introduced by the Harris government were also driven by the federal budget cuts of 1995 (Axelrod, Desai-Trilokekar, Shanahan & Weller,2011). Be that as it may, their policies, accompanied by the premier's blunt denunciation of his adversaries, created strong opposition, particularly in the fall 1997 teachers' strike, the largest in Canadian history.

On the educational front, the Tories moved quickly to equalize funding for schools province-wide, introduce a relevant curriculum and institute standardized tests (*Globe & Mail* 2001). Structural changes in governance, curriculum and evaluation procedures during the Harris years were designed to reduce "waste," while the evaluation and curriculum changes were adopted to increase accountability among teachers and to have more precise records of student achievement (Robson 2013). Also, under the PC's reign in office, the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) was set up in spring 1995, the Ontario College of Teachers was created in June 1996, and Grade 13 was finally phased out in 1998 (Gidney 1999). In 1998, the amalgamation of six Metropolitan Toronto municipalities into the City of Toronto also resulted in the merging of six school boards into one giant school board (the TDSB) serving around one quarter of a million students. Such measures were undertaken purportedly to reduce replication of administrative services within the boundaries of the new "mega city."

Finally (and particularly relevant to our analysis), while extensive resources focusing on anti-racist pedagogy were created under the previous NDP government, this changed when Harris came into office and re-focused attention on the "merit principle," believing as they did that positive social change comes from truly egalitarian approaches to governing (Robson 2013). Harris resigned in 2002 and was succeeded as Tory leader and premier by his long-time colleague and Minister of Finance, Ernie Eves; Eves served as Premier of Ontario until October 2003.

Dalton McGuinty (2003–2013)

In 1990, Dalton McGuinty entered politics, running successfully for the provincial Liberal Party in the riding previously held by his father. He was re-elected in 1995, and in 1996 was made leader of his party. Both before and after becoming leader he served as Opposition Critic for a variety of portfolios, including Energy, Science and Technology, and Intergovernmental Affairs.

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[2] The central foci of the CSR were tax reduction, balancing the budget, reducing the size and role of government and an emphasis on individual economic responsibility (often summarized by an opposition to government hand-outs). Among other things, Harris promised to reduce personal income tax rates by 30% and balance the provincial budget at the same time (which had reached a record $10 billion deficit under the NDP).

Dalton McGuinty's first election against Mike Harris's Progressive Conservative government was in 1999, at a time when the province was beginning to sour on the Tories' so-called "Common Sense Revolution," the Tories ran a campaign that focused on McGuinty's relative lack of experience, characterizing the Liberal leader as "Just Not Up For the Job." The Liberals came out of the election with 35 seats to the 59 taken by the Conservatives. During the next four years in opposition, McGuinty worked to shed the "nerd" image that the Conservatives had helped to foster and developed a program of ideas that challenged prevailing Tory policies. In the meantime, public support for the Tory rhetoric around tax and spending cuts was falling, and the Walkerton scandal of 2000 further eroded public trust in the government.[3] In April 2002, Harris stepped down and was replaced by his former finance minister, Ernie Eves. Over the next year, the Tory government was plagued by a series of issues, including recovery from the Walkerton tragedy, power shortages and an outbreak of the SARS virus.

Going into the fall 2003 election, the Liberals were leading in the polls. During this election, McGuinty pledged not to implement reductions in corporate and personal income taxes promised by the Conservatives (and to boost the tax on corporations to its former level of 14 percent from 12 percent), and to increase spending on health care and education. He also promised to rescind policies that favoured parents with children in private schools, cooperate more with teachers, and put money back into the educational system (Anderson and Jaafar 2003). On 2 October 2003, McGuinty led his party to a majority and was subsequently elected for a second term, from 2007 to 2011.

McGuinty's election as premier in 2003 marked a renewed commitment to public education. As Segeren and Kutsyuruba (2012) note, the McGuinty government set in motion a different approach to education policy and improvement that began with a reversal of the many policy initiatives tabled by the Conservative regime, including legislation related to school board governance, funding formulas, and labour disputes with teachers (p. 17). One such initiative was titled "Helping More Students Succeed," in which equity and inclusive education strategies were endorsed to help schools better address barriers related to sexism, racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination, all of which were thought to have a negative impact on student achievement (Segeren and Kutsyuruba 2012). As Anderson and Jaafar (2003:26) remark "More than anything, they promised to listen to what educators were saying and take action accordingly.". Pascal (2013:A15), in assessing the education legacy left by Dalton McGuinty (in comparison with Bill Davis), notes that his education accomplishments are different but no less outstanding with

> ...more than 90,000 additional students graduating from high school, over 125,000 more elementary students reading and writing at a higher level of proficiency and full-day kindergarten for 250,000 kids to boot . . . plus much more stemming from repairing what took place during the two terms of Mike Harris. As a result, achievement outcomes, along with the judgment of external experts and

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[3] For days the Walkerton Public Utilities Commission insisted the water supply was safe despite being in possession of laboratory tests that had found evidence of contamination, dramatically highlighting the risk of cuts to public welfare (Finlay 2013).

organizations about education reform, have placed Ontario at the top of the international heap with the likes of Finland and Singapore.

After the Rae Report was released in 2005, Dalton McGuinty released a plan for investment in PSE known as *Reaching Higher* which outlined a 6-year strategy for PSE to increase access, accountability and quality. One of the recommendations of this plan was to implement the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO), which is an independent arms-length advisory to PSE in Ontario. HECQO was established in 2005. As well as improvements to accountability, *Reaching Higher* also aimed to improve student financial assistance and to increase access to PSE underrepresented groups.

On 1 July 2010 the McGuinty government implemented an unpopular 13% Harmonized Sales Tax (HST), replacing the 5% federal Goods and Services Tax and the 8% Provincial Sales Tax (Finlay 2013). Though McGuinty was elected to a third term as premier in October 2011, his party was reduced to 53 out of 107 legislative seats and lost its majority status. In the months that followed, the Liberals faced increasing opposition as they introduced several unpopular measures such as Bill 115 (*Putting Students First Act*) that would limit public sector wages and bargaining power (particularly targeting Ontario teachers), and it also faced scrutiny over cancelled energy projects in Oakville and Mississauga. Bill 115 also resulted in tensions between the McGuinty government and teachers across the province, resulting in rotating one-day strikes and eventually a work-to-rule campaign that resulted in the cancelling of after-school activities during that year. McGuinty unexpectedly announced his resignation as party leader in October 2012, but chose to retain his seat in the legislature, representing Ottawa South. Kathleen Wynne was chosen as his successor on 11 February 2013 (Finlay 2013).

Also later 2013, the MTCU released *the Differentiation Policy Framework*, which is a vision for PSE in Ontario that incorporates increased PSE access, accountability, and quality all within a context of limited economic resources. The goals for a differentiated system "are to build on and help focus the well-established strengths of institutions, enable them to operate together as complementary parts of a whole, and give students affordable access to the full continuum of vocational and academic educational opportunities that are required to prosper in our contemporary world" (MTCU, 2013:6). As the *Differentiation Policy Framework* is discussed at length later in this report, we only highlight here that the framework also includes significant accountability measures, particularly Strategic Mandate Agreements with PSE institutions that require Multi-Year Accountability Reports to be submitted by each institution to demonstrate their success at reaching specific MTCU targets, particularly as they relate to targeted access groups.

OBJECTIVES AND ANALYTIC STRATEGY

With the above discussion, we have argued that policy creation occurs within context—complex contexts. We have also discussed how our previous findings revealed that it is a series of fairly complex barriers based upon combinations of individual traits that increase or decrease the likelihood of a high school student transitioning to post-secondary education. Here, we aim to examine policies around marginalized students and how they speak about increasing access for

such groups, and if/how they employ the idea of multiple barriers that is implied within an intersectionality framework. As Black males and students with SEN were found to be disproportionately less likely to transition to PSE in our previous research, we will pay special attention to these groups as priority groups, given that our evidence suggests energies should be invested here. We do not explicitly expect historical documents to be utilizing this relatively recent and fashionable academic jargon, but we will examine documents for suggestions of their implication through the use of alternative language.

This analysis considers four sources of policy. The first two sources are official policy from both Ontario ministries tasked with the oversight of education in the province: Ministry of Education (EDU), and the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU). While the EDU is concerned with K–12 schooling, because transitioning to PSE is often considered as success marker of secondary school, it is expected that their policy documents would address this topic. We also believe that specific boards will have generated policy around the successful transition of marginalized secondary students and have thus selected the largest board in the province (and Canada) to examine—the TDSB. Finally, we look to what some post-secondary institutions— i.e., the universities and colleges in Ontario—are doing to attract and retain marginalized students groups. Our analysis occurs in two distinct stages: first our analysis of government and school board documents, then our analysis of post-secondary institutional policies and practices.

SECTION I: POLICY DOCUMENT ANALYSIS FROM TDSB, EDU AND MTCU

The first stage of the policy document analysis was to create the population of documents to study. The population of policy documents from the TDSB, EDU and MTCU was assembled primarily through online searches. Recommendations for additional sources were also collected from contacts at the TDSB, EDU and MTCU. Documents were deemed relevant if they pertained in some way to the inclusion of marginalized student populations (e.g., low income, SEN, recent immigrant, racial minority, Aboriginal) in PSE. The search of relevant documents was limited to the period of 1993 to the present. As mentioned above, this time span is distinguished by three significant phases related to the various provincial parties' terms in office.

Specifically, this twenty-year time span began with Bob Rae's introduction of the Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 (*Development and Implementation of School Board Policies on Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity*). This memorandum was created to address issues of racism and marginalization within the K–12 school system. From 1999 to 2002, the Harris government shifted the discourse around education policy to one focusing on "merit." Subsequently, a gradual ideological shift away from restructuring and accountability-focused policies occurred when McGuinty's Liberals took office in 2003 with a new set of priorities represented, for instance, by their equity and inclusive education strategy.

In total, there were 71 policy documents obtained from the three sources that were used at the start of the content analysis. This group of policy documents was selected based on selection criteria for post-secondary access, marginalized groups or equity. The breakdown is as follows:

- Ministry of Education, 30
- Toronto District School Board, 14
- Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities, 27

A list of terms and phrases were subsequently employed in implementing a content analysis of the assembled policy documents. The search terms and phrases were collaboratively agreed upon by members of the research team and derived from their knowledge and expertise regarding post-secondary access by marginalized student groups.

Three key themes were employed in narrowing down the pool of documents; these include inclusivity, maximizing the life chances of students, and successful completion of secondary school and transition to PSE. The nine key terms and phrases (and their variants) used in the content analysis include:

- post-secondary/PSE/college/university/higher learning/further learning/
- access/accessible
- equity/equitable/equality/equal
- groups/marginalized/underrepresented/minority/ discriminatory/discriminated/excluded/groups+low income groups/other groups/population groups/non-traditional groups
- barriers/factors/negative impacts
- racial/race/racialized
- special education needs/special needs/special education/special programs/disabilities
- intersect/intersecting/intersectionality/compounding/additive/multiple/overlapping
- pathway/pathways/transitions

Following the content analysis, using the terms listed above, the number of policies or policy documents that remained in our original population of documents decreased in number. After completion of the content analysis, if a policy document returned zero references to any of our key nine terms or phrases, it was not included in further phases of the analysis. After the content analysis was completed this resulted in the number of EDU policy documents decreasing from 30 to 20, as 10 policy documents were eliminated and returned zero references to at least one of our nine terms. Likewise, the population of TDSB policy documents decreased from 14 to 9. The minimal criterion for inclusion of a policy document was at least one reference to one of the nine key terms or phrases.

The content analysis of key terms and phrases was facilitated by combining the policy documents from each of the three sources into larger PDF documents. For example, all policy documents from the EDU were combined into one PDF document. And likewise, PDF documents were also created for the other two sources, that is, the TDSB and MTCU. Each of these larger PDF documents was then searched for the nine key terms and phrases listed above. A database was created with the nine key search terms and phrases as column headers. The content analysis database was subsequently employed to record the number of times that one of the search criteria terms or phrases was found in a policy document. If a policy document only contained one reference to one of the terms it was explored further to ensure that the phrase was used in the context of this project. The database also lists the names of each specific policy, the

year that the policy or document was created, the year it was revised (if applicable) and the online link to the policy document.

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF EDU, MTCU AND TDSB POLICY DOCUMENTS

The results of the content analysis are presented individually by ministry and school board (i.e., EDU, MTCU and TDSB) and the document findings are considered collectively.

Ministry of Education (EDU)

The Ministry of Education administers the system of publicly funded elementary and secondary school education in Ontario. Ontario's schools are administered by district school boards and school authorities. [4]

Table 1 presents a summary of the EDU policies that were retained for the analysis, organized by year, policy number, policy name, and the political party in power during its introduction. In the second column, there are two types of documents listed: policies and supporting documents. Supporting documents are distinct from policies insofar as they are not the policies themselves, but government-issued documents that explicate the detail around a certain policy. These two types of documents are analyzed separately below and further detail about supporting documents is also provided later in this report.

Table 1: Ministry of Education Policy Documents by Year

Year	Policy (PPM #) or Supporting Document (SD)	Policy Name	Ontario Political Party during the Year
1993	PPM 119 (see also PPM 119 from 2013)	Equity and Inclusive Education	NDP, Rae
1993	PPM 117	Access to Information (guidance)	NDP, Rae
1993	SD	Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity	NDP, Rae

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[4] School boards are divided as follows: 31 English Public, 29 English Catholic, 4 French Public, 8 French Catholic. As of 2013/14, there were 3,980 elementary and 917 secondary schools in Ontario. For 2013/14, the government's total investment excluding capital was projected to be $21 billion. For 2013/14, the government's total capital investment was projected to be $1.4 billion. In 2013/14, there were 114,983.39 full time equivalent (FTE) teachers, consisting of 73,674.33 elementary and 41,309.06 secondary teachers. The numbers exclude teachers on leave, long-term occasional teachers, and teachers in care, treatment and correctional facilities. In 2013/14, there were 7,320.17 FTE administrators (principals and vice-principals), consisting of 5,244.59 elementary and 2,075.58 secondary administrators. In 2013/14, there were 6,699.85 FTE early childhood educators (ECE), excluding long-term ECEs. As of 2013/14[4] the number of students in Ontario was 2,015,423.

Year	Policy (PPM #) or Supporting Document (SD)	Policy Name	Ontario Political Party during the Year
2000	SD	Individual Education Plans (IEPs)	PC, Harris
2000	SD	Cooperative Education Policies	PC, Harris
2007	SD	Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework	Liberal, McGuinty
2007	PPM 140	Transition Planning for Students with Autism	Liberal, McGuinty
2009	PPM 148	Policies Governing Admission to French-Language Schools	Liberal, McGuinty
2010	SD	Growing Success	Liberal, McGuinty
2011	SD	Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements	Liberal, McGuinty
2012	PPM 144	Bullying Prevention and Intervention	Liberal, McGuinty
2012	PPM 145	Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour	Liberal, McGuinty
2012	PPM 141	Programs for Students on Suspension	Liberal, McGuinty
2012	PPM 142	Programs for Expelled Students	Liberal, McGuinty
2013	PPM 119 (replaces PPM 119, 1993)	Equity and Inclusive Education Policies	Liberal, Wynne
2013	PPM 156	Transitions for Students with SEN	Liberal, Wynne
2013	PPM 155	Diagnostic Assessment	Liberal, Wynne
2013	SD	Learning for All	Liberal, Wynne
2013	SD	School Effectiveness Framework	Liberal, Wynne
2013	SD	Creating Pathways to Success	Liberal, Wynne
2013	SD	Dual Credit Policy	Liberal, Wynne
2014	SD	Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework	Liberal, Wynne

Results of EDU Analysis

Figure 2 shows the 12 EDU policies (labelled with PPM and a policy number) that were included in the content analysis. An abbreviated title or policy theme is included along the horizontal axis of the graph. The legend contains the nine key terms and/or phrases from this project's search criteria used for the policy documents.

In Figure 2, there are three policies PPM 119 (Equity 1993), PPM 144 (Bullying 2012), and PPM 145 (Discipline 2012) that have larger numbers of references to the terms equity, groups, supporting, and SEN, respectively. This is to be expected given the main focus of each of these documents and their policy theme. To view the overall content analysis results more effectively a second graph shows the content analysis results with these terms removed from their respective documents' results (see Figure 3)

Figure 2: EDU Policies, Content Analysis with 9 Key Search Terms

Legend: ■ PSE ■ Access ■ Equity ■ Groups ■ Barriers ■ Racial ■ SEN ■ Intersectionality ■ Pathway
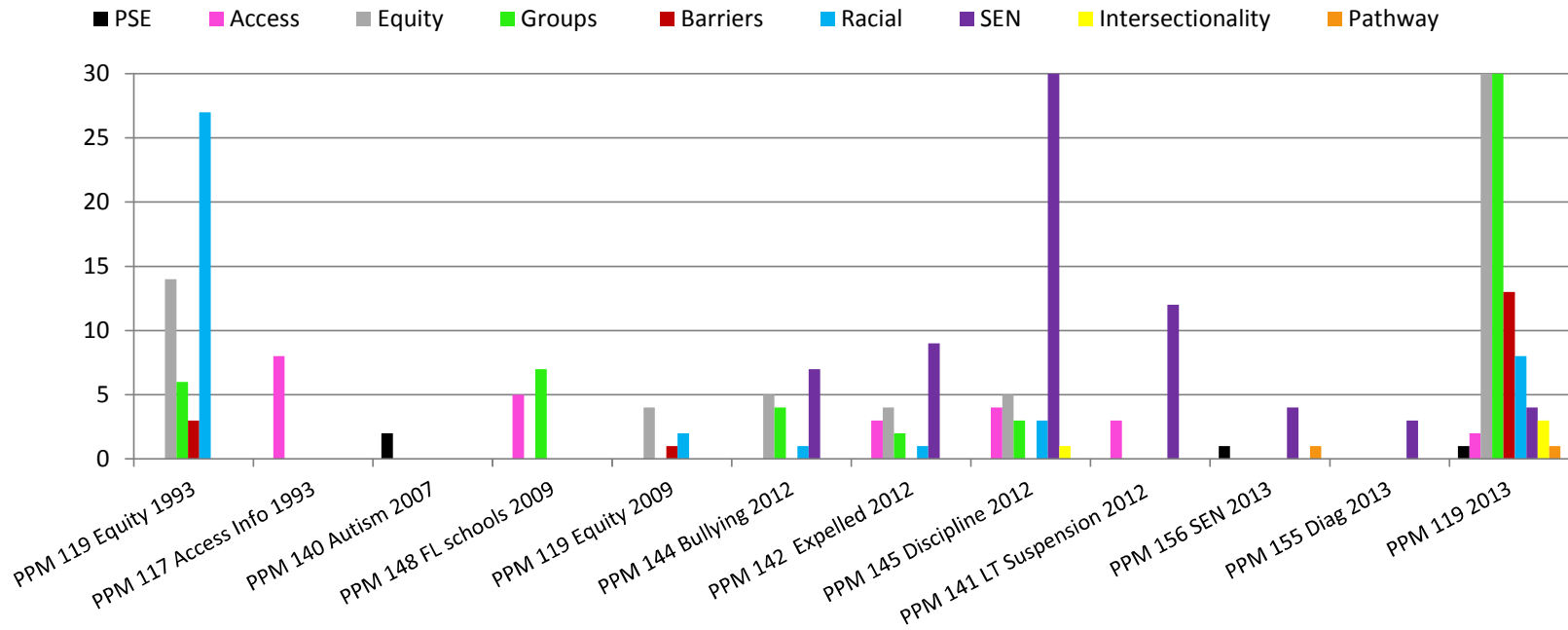
Figure 3: EDU Policy Documents, Content Analysis with 9 Key Search Terms and/or Phrase

Legend: PSE, Access, Equity, Groups, Barriers, Racial, SEN, Intersectionali...

X-axis categories: 119 Equity 1993, Access Info 1993, 140 Autism 2007, FL Schools 2009, 119 Equity 2009, 44 Bullying 2012, 42 Expelled 2012, 5 Discipline 2012, Suspension 2012, M 156 SEN 2013, M 155 Di...
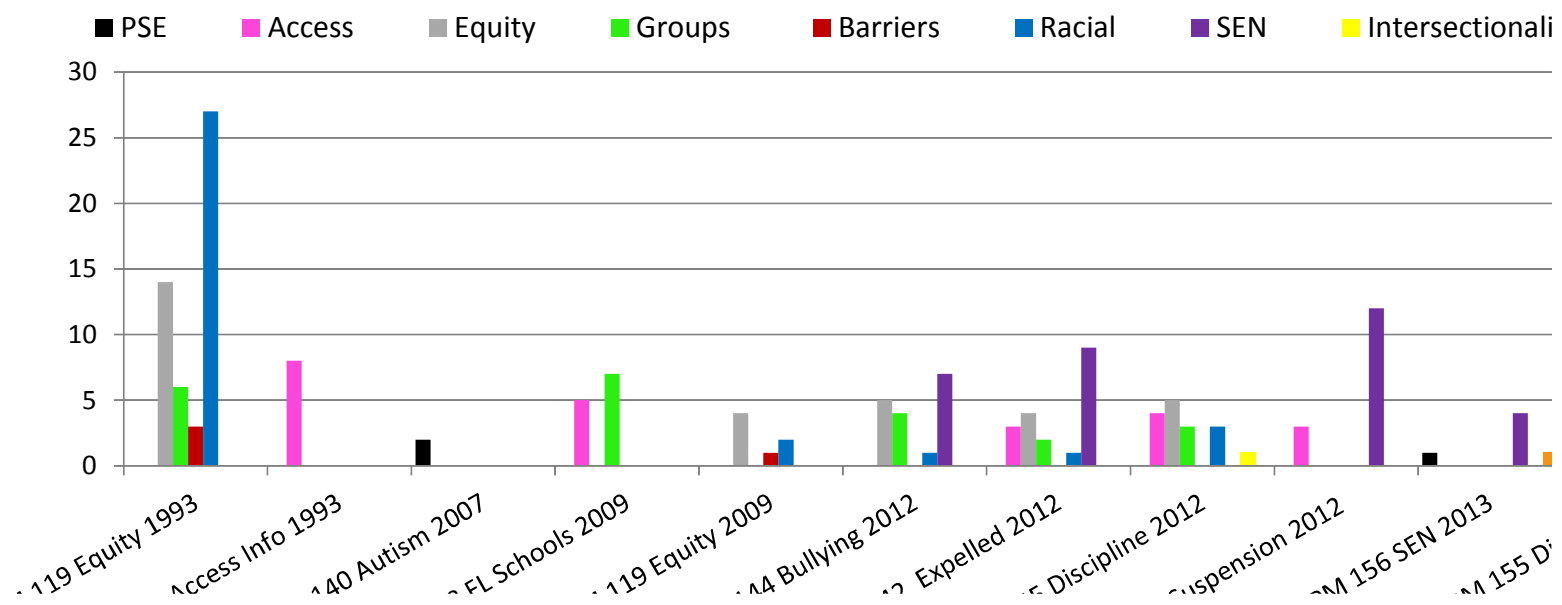
As shown in Figure 3, all the EDU policy documents made reference at least once to at least one of the nine key terms and/or phrases from our search criteria. Figure 3 shows that the EDU has three policies that reference our terms for PSE. Two of the policies speak to specific under-represented groups in PSE: PPM 140 for Students with Autism and PPM 156 for Students with SEN.

Figure 3 also shows that EDU's policy on equity, PPM 119 (Equity 2013), only references PSE once, while this policy's second highest number of references (aside from the term equity) is the word "barriers" (see Figure 3). Upon further analysis, the barriers described in the EDU's PPM 119 equity policy do not specifically refer to PSE, but to barriers that "limit students' learning, growth, and contribution to society" (Equity Strategy 2013:2). It is common in the EDU policy documents for the phrase "student outcomes" to be used; whether this refers to high school graduation or PSE cannot be determined from an inspection of these documents. For example, the EDU's 2013 equity policy reads, "…in a truly equitable system, factors such as race, gender, and socio-economic status do not prevent students from achieving ambitious *outcomes*" (2013:2, *italics added*).

Six of the twelve policy documents reference students with SEN (PPM 119 Equity 2013, PPM 144 Bullying 2012, PPM 142 Expulsions 2012, PPM 156 SEN 2013, PPM 155 Diagnostics 2013, PPM 141 Suspensions 2012) and three of the policies (PPM 144 Bullying 2012, PPM 142 Expulsions 2012, and PPM 145 Discipline 2012) use the key term "equity." Upon further analysis, the PPM 144 policy on bullying uses the term in reference to Ontario's Equity Strategy, PPM142 on expulsions and PPM 145 on discipline both use the term when referring to gender equity while recommending that activities promoting gender equity will create a positive school climate which "prevents inappropriate behaviour" (PPM 145 2012:2). Therefore, the term "equity" is used in these policies in relation to promoting a positive school climate rather than programs, supports, or opportunities for marginalized groups (or in this case, "at-risk" students).

Summary of EDU policy documents

Only one EDU policy document makes reference to the specific term "intersectionality;" it does so on four occasions. Policy No. 119 *Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools* states the following:

> In addition, it is now recognized that such factors as race, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, gender, and class can intersect to create additional barriers for some students. Many organizations, including the United Nations, are recognizing the compounding impact of such intersections on discrimination. Ministry and board policies, therefore, should also take intersecting factors into account. (policy No. 119 2013:4)

The EDU explains the progression of their antiracial and ethnocultural policy development to expand and include a greater dimension of diversity, inclusivity, and equity:

> Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 (2009) broadened the scope of No. 119 (1993) to take into account a wide range of equity factors, as well as all of the

prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Ontario Human Rights Code and other similar considerations. No. 119 (2009) fully supported and expanded on the principles of antiracism and ethnocultural equity that were outlined in No. 119 (1993), and did not reflect a weakened or reduced commitment to antiracism or ethnocultural equity. By promoting a system-wide approach to identifying and removing discriminatory biases and systemic barriers, it has helped to ensure that all students feel welcomed and accepted in school life. This memorandum brings No. 119 (2009) up to date so that it is in accordance with amendments to the Education Act; that is, school boards are now required to develop and implement an equity and inclusive education policy. This memorandum also updates No. 119 (2009) to reflect the fact that gender identity and gender expression are dimensions of diversity under the Ontario Human Rights Code. (Policy No. 119 2013:3)

Another finding in this EDU equity policy is the use of the term intersection in this statement: "…boards will take steps to align all their other policies and procedures…with their equity and inclusive education policy. This process will help to ensure that the principles of equity and inclusive education are embedded in all aspects of board and school operations…Boards may also address related issues resulting from the *intersection* of the dimensions of diversity that can also act as a systemic barrier to student learning" (Policy No. 119 2013:4, *italics added*).

However, as stated earlier in this report, evidence of the practice of intersectionality can also be considered by examining how different equity groups are addressed within these documents. A notable gap in policy existed between 1993 and 2007, followed by a creation of many such policies in 2012 and 2013. It is interesting to note that "race" appeared to be an issue of great importance in 1993, but that the usage of this term dropped off in subsequent policies until PPM 119 2013. What we see instead is an increase in the discourse around SEN and "access," with much less attention given to race. "Barriers" as a topic is also somewhat usurped by discussion of "access," which is an interesting turn of phrase, highlighting the change in language around marginalized groups. The term "barriers" itself suggests structural issues that need to be addressed while attention to "access" does not implicitly suggest anything structural needs to change. We argue that subtle language changes like this can refocus attention on the issues surrounding the transition to PSE by focusing on *individual deficiencies* rather than *larger socio-structural problems*.

EDU Policy Supporting Documents

The content analysis included 11 policy-supporting documents (see Table 2, expanded from Table 1 to include more detail). This phrase, supporting documents, is used throughout the project report and refers to documents that were provided to school boards to assist or guide school boards in new policies being created or outdated policies being updated to reflect changes in the field of education. The policy supporting documents were also strategic plans or implementation guides to inform school boards how to best implement new policies in their schools. It is important to note that the policy-supporting documents usually spanned more pages

than the actual policy document it supports. Therefore the actual policies and the policy-supporting documents are presented in separate graphs, even though the content analysis was completed on each group in the same way. It is important to present them in separate data visualizations, given that our content analysis counts the *number of times* a document uses one of our search criteria terms. The use of a single graph would reflect document length and consequently not provide an adequate content analysis. Therefore, the actual policies (identified with a PPM number and name) are presented separate from the policy supporting documents (identified by their title and no PPM number). In some of the documents, the content analysis was only completed on a specific section or chapter of the document because other sections or chapters were not relevant to this project.

These 11 EDU policy-supporting documents were included in the content analysis because they were referenced in the actual policies that were analyzed. Some of the EDU policies (see Figure 2) used a policy-supporting document that followed the development of a new policy. The policy supporting documents were created at the EDU and then released to boards as a supporting document for implementation or a guideline for policy revisions or updating.

Table 2: Ministry of Education Policy Supporting Documents by Year

Year	Policy-Supporting Document	Supporting Document Based on or Revised From…	Policy Number Referenced	Led to or Did Not Lead to New Policy
1993	Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity	1992 Ed Act amendment –> every board to have a policy on antiracism –> PPM119, 1993	No. 119, 1993 p. 45	Implementation Guide (SD was pre-board policy; adopted by 1995 and a 5-yr plan; new policies to be created)
2000	Individual Education Plans: Standards for Development, Program Planning, and Implementation			
2000	Cooperative Education Policies and Procedures for Ontario Secondary Schools			
2007	Ontario First Nation Policy Framework	Ontario's New Approach to Aboriginal Affairs 2005		Strategic context for new policies at ministry (SD is pre-board policy-new policies advised)
2010	Growing Success (Assessment Policy p. 28 and Evaluation Policy p. 38)	Ont. Secondary Schools Grades 9–12 Policies, 1999 & others by category	PPM No. 11, 1982 & OSS: Grades 9-12 (1999), PPM 129 (2001), PPM 132 (2003), PPM 127 (2009)	Guide for board assessments and evaluations (to follow, no policy creation)
2011	Ont. Schools K–12 Policy and Program (OS)	Ont. Secondary Schools, Grades 9–12, 1999	PPM 127 (Literacy 2009), PPM 133 (Music 2004), PPM 134 (LD 2010), PPM 139 OSS 2006), PPM 146 (Credits 2010)	Guide for board (to follow, no policy creation)
2013	Learning for All	Based on 2005 SEN report *Education for All*	ELL policy, Full-day Kindergarten policy, Parent Engagement policy	Resource Guide based on strategy documents (p. 5) and three policies (p. 5) (to follow, no Board policy creation)
2013	School Effectiveness Framework	Update of School Effectiveness 2010 & based on Growing Success, 2010		Framework (school self-assessment tool for boards to follow, no policy creation)

Year	Policy-Supporting Document	Supporting Document Based on or Revised From…	Policy Number Referenced	Led to or Did Not Lead to New Policy
2013	Creating Pathways to Success (Chapter 4 Transition Planning, p. 20)	Policy based on Section 2.4 of Ontario Schools (OS) 2011 (guidance and counselling)	PPM 156 SEN Transitions 2013, PPM 140 Students with Autism 2007	Program document (developing guidance programs -no policy creation)
2013	Dual Credit Programs	Dual Credit Policy and Implementation, 2010		A document to provide guidance
2014	Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit	Education		Implementation plan (to support boards, no new policy)

Figure 4: EDU Policy-Supporting Documents, Content Analysis with 9 Key Search Terms and/or Phrases

Legend: PSE, Access, Equity, Groups, Barriers, Racial, SEN, Intersectionality, Pathway

Y-axis: Number Referenced (0–30)

X-axis: Policy Document

Policy Documents: Antiracism and Equity 1993, Individual Education Plans 2000, Coop Policies 2000, Ontario FN, M, I Framework 2007, Growing Success 2010, OS K-12 Policy 2011, Learning for All 2013, School Effectiveness 2013, Pathways to Success 2013, Dual Credit Policy 2013, Ontario FN, M, I Policy Plan 2014

Nine of the eleven EDU policy-supporting documents have multiple references to PSE and all but three documents (Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework, Individual Education Plans 2000 and Cooperative Education Policies 2000) have multiple references to the term "pathway." There were 19 references with the term "barrier" in an earlier document *Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity* (1993); of interest is that this document does not make reference to PSE. When viewing Figure 4, it is interesting to see that our different search criteria terms are used within the same documents indicating the use of intersectional thought or approaches to policy creation and implementation. Even though the term intersectionality was not located in these documents it is promising that these documents contain or make reference to multiple terms simultaneously that may have an impact on marginalized groups and PSE. For example, the document *School Effectiveness Framework* (2013) contains eight of the nine search criteria terms and because this document is used as a tool for school self-assessment by principals (at a school-site level) it is positive to see that a wide range of the terms from our project are contained in a document that is used within schools; not just at a board administrative or senior staff level.

Summary of Findings from EDU Supporting Documents

The findings from supporting documents suggest a movement toward differentiated groups in recent times. Both the policy and supporting documents demonstrate large policy gaps between 1993 and 2000 and then again between 2000 and 2010, with a clustering of documents around 2014. We see in the supporting documents again this replacement of a discussion of "barriers" with "access," a term that can transfer responsibility of marginalization to the marginalized group by removing the consideration of structural barriers. Access is a term that has been used in relation to participation rates for some time, with Anisef, Bertrand, Hortian and James (1985) distinguishing between Type I and Type II, the former term referencing participation rates for an overall population (e.g., Ontario), while the latter referencing participation rates by particular groupings, such as social and cultural groups. Seen this way, there can be a high Type 1 access, but correspondingly little Type II access. Discussion of "equity," however, is front and centre in many of the supporting documents after 2000, which suggests that attention is being given to "equity" rather than "equality"—in other words, giving people what they need to achieve instead of giving everyone the same thing. However, because race and SEN do not occupy much space (if any) in the documents heavy with "equity" usage, it is unclear what kinds of equity measures the policies imply. Thus analysis of the supporting documents suggests a language shift of sorts, but not one that implies an understanding of unique marginalized groupings.

Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU)

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) is the ministry responsible for the administration of laws governing post-secondary education and skills accreditation and training in Ontario. This ministry is complementary to the Ministry of Education, which is responsible for primary and secondary levels of education in Ontario.[5]

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[5] MTCU has gone through different ministerial nomenclatures. The first iteration was as the Ministry of University Affairs in 1971, thereafter, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities

The MTCU provides the following information on their roles and responsibilities: The *Constitution Act* gives exclusive authority to each province in Canada to make laws in relation to education. In Ontario, the Minister of Education and the MTCU are responsible for the administration of laws relating to education and skills training. The MTCU operates Employment Ontario, a one-stop source of information and services for students, job seekers and employers. More important to our project, in the area of PSE, the MTCU is responsible for:

- developing policy directions for universities and colleges of applied arts and technology
- planning and administering policies related to basic and applied research in this sector
- authorizing universities to grant degrees
- distributing funds allocated by the provincial legislature to colleges and universities
- providing financial-assistance programs for post-secondary school students
- registering private career colleges
  (retrieved March 25 (http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/role.html)

Table 3 summarizes the policy documents included in the content analysis for MTCU that were identified using the search terms articulated earlier in this report. There was a high number of hits for the term "PSE" (and associated search terms), which was of course anticipated when analyzing documents from the ministry responsible for PSE. As a consequence, this term was removed in presenting the following data visualizations and content analysis results. It should also be noted that MTCU (unlike EDU) documents do not contain policy numbers. A total of 28 documents were included in the forthcoming analyses. We did not experience a decrease in the number of documents after initial analyses (as we did with EDU documents) as all were at least somewhat relevant to our search terms.

Table 3: MTCU Policy Documents included in Content Analysis

Year	Policy Document	Ontario Political Party
1996	Future Goals for Ontario Universities and Colleges	PC, Harris
1998	Literacy for Adults with Developmental Disabilities	PC, Harris
2000	Literacy Profile of Ontario Immigrants	PC, Harris
2000	Setting the Agenda	PC, Harris
2000	Increasing Degree Opportunities for Ontarians	PC, Harris
2003	Access Plan	PC, Eves
2004	Access Plan	Liberal, McGuinty
2005	A Leader in Learning (Rae Report)	Liberal, McGuinty
2005	Access Plan	Liberal, McGuinty
2006	Reaching Higher in PSE	Liberal, McGuinty
2006	Published RBP	Liberal, McGuinty
2007	Access Plan	Liberal, McGuinty

between from 1971 to 1993, at which point the Ministry of Education and Training was created (uniting both ministries responsible for all aspects of education). However in 1999, ministries were again separated into EDU and MTCU. It should also be noted that the Ministry of Skills Development was a short-lived related ministry (1985–1993) closely tied to current goals of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Year	Policy Document	Ontario Political Party
2007	Public RBP	Liberal, McGuinty
2007	Plan Briefing Book	Liberal, McGuinty
2008	Plan Briefing Book	Liberal, McGuinty
2009	Business Plan	Liberal, McGuinty
2009	Published Results-Based Plan	Liberal, McGuinty
2010	Annual Report	Liberal, McGuinty
2010	Governance and Accountability Framework	Liberal, McGuinty
2010	Strategic Plan	Liberal, McGuinty
2010	Results-Based Plan Briefing Book	Liberal, McGuinty
2010	Speaking Notes John Milloy	Liberal, McGuinty
2010	Access Plan	Liberal, McGuinty
2011	Results-Based Plan Briefing Book	Liberal, McGuinty
2011	Policy Statement for Ontario Credit Transfer System	Liberal, McGuinty
2013	Results-Based Plan Briefing Book	Liberal, McGuinty
2013	Proposed Differentiation Policy Framework—draft	Liberal, McGuinty
2013	Ontario's Differentiation Policy Framework for PSE	Liberal, McGuinty

Results for MTCU Analysis

The MTCU data visualizations have been divided into two separate graphs. Figure 4 contains policy-supporting documents that met the search criteria for this project. Figure 5 contains MTCU policy documents that are Accessibility Plans (2003 to 2010), Published Results-Based Plans (2006 and 2009), and Results-Based Plan Briefing Books (2007, 2008, 2010 to 2013). The policy-supporting documents in Figure 5 are similar in purpose to the supporting documents analyzed in the previous section for EDU. These documents are meant to provide background to a policy issue, implementation of a new policy, or a strategic plan for implementing policy change. The second collection of MTCU documents used in Figure 5 are a presentation of MTCU's Results-Based Plan Briefing Book (by year), which is an accountability document that presents an overview of their vision, mandate and strategies. Also included in this group of documents for Figure 5 is a collection of MTCU documents labelled Accessibility Plans (by year).[67]

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[6] The MTCU explains their Accessibility Plan as follows:

> For over ten years, every ministry has set a course to prevent, identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. Ministries achieve this through the preparation of their annual Accessibility Plan (Plan) as required under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001. In 2010 the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities complied with the requirements of the first standard on customer service. The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will build on these laws and…it will outline how the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities will contribute to a barrier-free Ontario by 2025.

(retrieved from http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/accessibility/tcu/#_Toc337036619)

[7] The following documents were referred to after communicating with a staff member at MTCU. All were retrieved December, 2014.
http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/
http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/

In the MTCU policy documents, the focus on access was consistently located in most documents. Figure 5 shows the introduction of a focus on the term "pathway," stemming from the 2005 report called *A Leader in Learning* (the Rae Report). This term "pathway" also appears in the more recent Differentiation Policy Framework documents of 2013; five in the draft version and six in the final report. There is also a reference to terms and phrases with our term groups for nine of the fifteen documents analyzed. SEN appears in the literacy policy document in 1998, again once in 2000, and also in "the Rae Report" in 2005. In terms of equity groups, the discussion of equity within MTCU documents is nearly nonexistent, and discussion of race and SEN occur only in the Rae Report (2005). Discussion of barriers noticeably disappears after 2005, while discussions of "access" are moved to the forefront.

Figure 6 presents the content analysis results using the second group of documents from the MTCU. These included their accessibility plans (Acc Plan), results-based plans (RBP), and briefing books (BB). Note that the term "access" is not included in these analyses because the term "access plans" will turn up several non-relevant hits on "access," which would lead to misleading data.

Every Accessibility Plan document referenced the term "barriers" and an increase in the use of this terminology can be seen in Figure 6 in the years 2010–11. More frequent reference to the phrase SEN also appears in the Accessibility Plan documents from 2010–11. The most recent Briefing Book (2013–14), where the MTCU presents their operations and annual results, has three references to the word "pathway"—previously it was mentioned only once. The most recent Briefing Book did not make reference to SEN or use the term "groups," as it had in previous annual releases. In previous years, documents referenced the term "barriers," though no reference to this term was found in the 2013–14 documents. Race is not considered at all in these accessibility plans.

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http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/postsec.pdf
http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/adultedreview/
http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/accessibility/tcu/0607/
http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/accessibility/tcu/0708/tcu0708.pdf
http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/research.html
http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/futuree.html
http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/annualreport/0708/

Figure 5: MTCU Policy Documents, Content Analysis with 9 Key Search Terms and/or Phrases

Legend: PSE, Access, Equity, Groups, Barriers, Racial, SEN, Intersectionality, Pathway

Y-axis: Number of scores

X-axis: Policy Document — Future Goals 1996, Literacy -Adults (DD) 1998, Literacy - Immigrants 2000, Setting the Agenda 2000, Degree Opp's 2000, Leader in Learning (Rae) 2005, Reaching Higher PSE 2006, Business Plan 2009, Annual Report 2010, Gov. & Acc'bility 2010, Strategic Plan 2010, John Miloy 2010, Credit Transf Policy 2011, Diff. Policy DRAFT 2013, Diff. Policy 2013
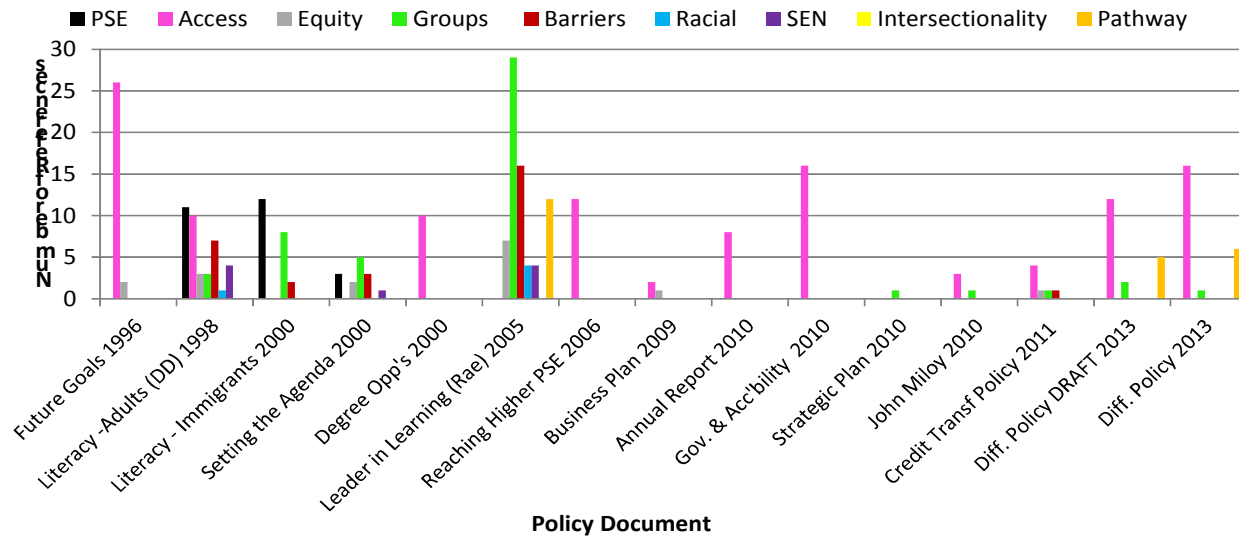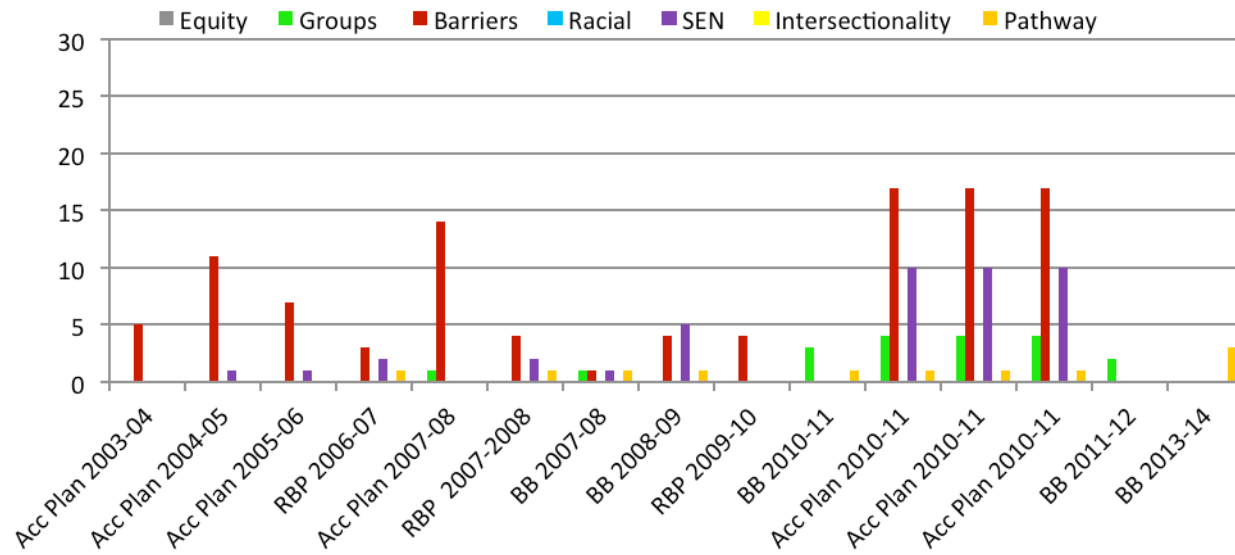
Figure 6: MTCU Policy Documents (only Accessibility Plans, Results Based Plans, and Briefing Books), Content Analysis Results with 7 of the 9 Key Terms

Summary of MTCU Findings

Overall, both sets of MTCU documents show a concentrated focus on "access" and "groups," with increasing attention to barriers (in the accessibility documents) and SEN (in the policy documents). There were, however, few to no references to the terms "racial" and "equity," particularly in the accessibility plans, which suggests that although MTCU remains focused on issues of access and acknowledges barriers heavily in the accessibility plans, SEN is a primary equity group, while racial category remains under-discussed. The 2005 report *A Leader in Learning* (the Rae Report) had the highest reference for the terms "race" or "racial" and "equity" but there were no references to these terms in later documents.

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB)

The TDSB is the largest school board in Canada and the fourth largest in North America, servicing around one quarter of a million students in around 600 schools. As mentioned previously, the TDSB was created in 1998 after the amalgamation of Metropolitan Toronto and six previously separate school boards. It should be noted that the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) includes suburbs around the city of Toronto. Amalgamation brought together the cities and boroughs within Metropolitan Toronto into one single municipal government. There are no TDSB policy documents prior to 1998; upon creation in 1998, the new board found itself in a position of needing to create policies. Table 4 summarizes the nine TDSB policy documents analyzed in this study.

Table 4: TDSB Policy Documents Included in the Analyses

Year	Policy Review Year	TDSB Policy #	TDSB Policy Name	Ontario Political Party (according to year)
1998		P002	Mission and Values	PC, Harris
1998		P003	Literacy Foundation	PC, Harris
1998		P004	Mathematics Foundation	PC, Harris
1998		P022	Child Care in Schools	PC, Harris
1999	2008	P019	Continuing Education	PC, Harris
1999		P037	Equity Foundation	PC, Harris
2000	2004	P031	Human Rights	PC, Harris
2013		P156	Transitions for Students with SEN	Liberals, Wynne
2014		SD Choices	Choices	Liberals, Wynne

For the nine TDSB policy documents (eight policies and one policy-supporting document) included in the content analysis, Table 4 shows when they were adopted by year and also provides a link to each policy. Two of the policies contain a date upon which they were reviewed. Upon completion of the content analysis, six TDSB policies were removed from the original collection of policy documents that began in the content analysis. These six policies did

not return any references to our nine key terms and/or phrases that were coded for use in the search criteria. To create effective data visualizations, the groups of key search terms and/or phrases have been shortened to a single shortened word or acronym. The following policy document analysis searched nine TDSB policy documents that contained one or more in-text reference(s) to one or more of our key search terms and/or phrases.

Results of the TDSB Analysis

Figure 7 shows the eight TDSB policies that were included in the content analysis by their Policy No. The theme that each policy represents is included on the horizontal axis of the graph. The legend contains the nine key terms that were located in the policy documents. The ninth policy document, called *Choices,* has not been included in Figure 6 or 7, but will be discussed.

Figure 7: TDSB Policies and Content Analysis Results with 9 Key Terms
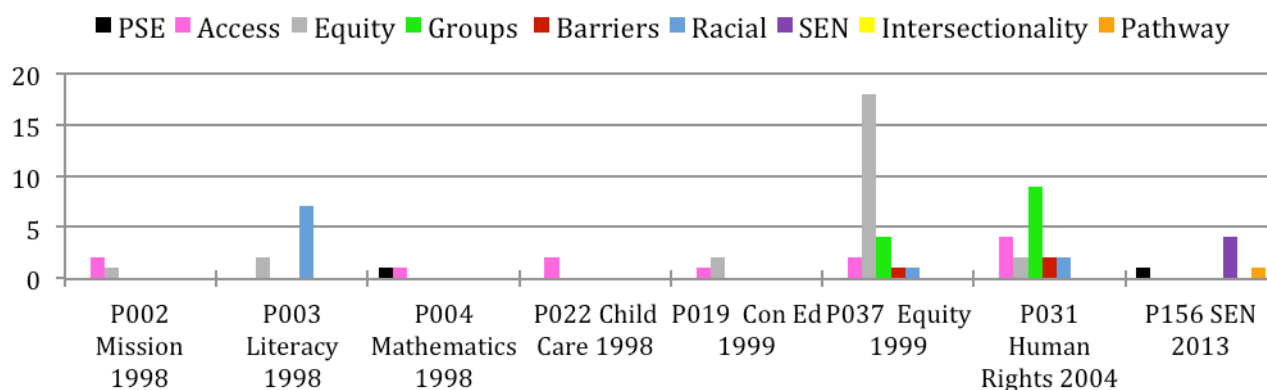

Figure 7 shows that the TDSB has only two policies that reference terms or phrases for PSE (P004 Mathematics from 1998 and P156 Special Education Needs from 2013). Many of the TDSB policies speak generally to student success and achievement but do not contain reference to PSE or to "further education."

One of the policies that make reference to PSE is the TDSB Policy P004 Mathematics. This policy states that Mathematics studies "…provide learners with the tools to…prepare for post-secondary studies" (Policy P004 1998:1). This policy has not been reviewed since its adoption in 1998. Policy P005, which represented secondary school studies in the arts, was removed from this project's content analysis; there was no reference for the arts preparing students for PSE. Instead, the policy states "…the Arts connect learning to the world of work…and workplace skills…to contribute to workplace success" (Policy P005 2000:1). As such, this policy was not included the analysis.

In terms of equity, The TDSB policy P003 for Literacy makes reference to equity (2), different culture and language groups (7) and also argues forcefully for the need to support students that do not speak English as a first language (7). However, there is no reference to PSE. The omission of PSE references within policies that cover the arts and literacy (while referring throughout the

text to different culture groups) cannot be ignored. The implications of only the mathematics policy speaking to a PSE pathway does not reflect current PSE learner pathways—which include the arts and reflects varied student strengths and interests. Also, the TDSB's policy P003 for literacy makes consistent inclusion of different culture and language groups, which is important to this research project, while the mathematics policy does not. Because P037 (1999) is a policy specifically for "equity," this search term is found repeatedly throughout the document, as shown in Figure 7.

Also shown in Figure 7 is that P156 Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs contains references to four of the nine key terms and/or phrases. This policy was adopted in 2013 and contains references to two of the search criteria terms (SEN and pathways) and also outlines the importance of transitioning to PSE: "The physical, emotional, and learning needs of the student are considered when developing a transition plan, to determine if the student requires support when making transitions. Students make transitions in a variety of contexts… from secondary school to the next appropriate pathway" (Policy No. 156 2013:2). It also states, "All transition plans must be developed in consultation with the…postsecondary institution" (2013:2).

A key finding of this analysis is that TDSB policies are outdated because they were created for a public school system that focused solely on high school graduation as a determinant of success. The educational outcomes and pathways of students have changed—83% of TDSB students graduate, as seen in the most recent TDSB 2008–13 Cohort. The percentage of students applying to PSE from this same cohort was nearly 75%—this figure is likely higher in real terms, as additional students will apply as indirect applicants or after 5 years of secondary school. PSE application rates have continued to steadily increase; however, this analysis shows that the TDSB does not have policies that reflect the its students pronounced focus on transitioning to PSE. The school board also does not consider "race" in their policy documents to any extent, although race (and income) differences in achievement (globally) are a key finding in much education research.

TDSB Supporting Documents included in the Content Analysis

Choices is an annual policy-supporting document created by the TDSB; the document is specially directed to students and provides them with a detailed planning guide for making post-secondary choices. The publication was created in connection with a Ministry of Education policy for pathways planning called *Creating Pathways to Success: An Education and Career/Life Planning Program for Ontario Schools, Policy and Program Requirements, Kindergarten to Grade 12* from 2013. This is, to date, the only specific policy connection found in the content analysis where it was clearly evident that a EDU policy led to the creation of a TDSB documented practice for PSE pathways planning or access. The 2014–15 *Choices* policy-supporting document content analysis results were as follows: PSE (3), access (19), and equity (7).

Summary of TDSB Findings

The findings discussed above for the two groups of TDSB documents reveal that updates to board policies have been rare since the board was founded. As such, terms like "intersectionality" do not appear in policies. Similar to the findings of the EDU and MTCU, there is reference to access, and little consideration of "barriers." SEN is an issue in more current TDSB policies, but reference to "race" was not found in the most current TDSB policy on SEN, nor the recent *Choices* document. Be that as it may, an examination of *Choices* reveals that the graphics shown in this guidebook are deliberately diverse. Also, there is an entire page about equity that talks about race without employing the specific word, employing such terms as diversity and background.

COMBINED ANALYSIS

The final step of the content analysis was to combine the various documents used in the previous sections and examine them together as a single body. Figure 8 shows the content analysis results by each of the nine search terms included in our search criteria between the years 1993 and 2013. The X-axis also indicates the number of documents that were included in the content analysis for that year. For example, 1993-3 means that the content analysis for the year included three documents.[8] Below the X-axis are the political regimes that were in power during the date of the specific documents being considered.

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[8] There were 141 references for the term "equity" and 218 references for the term "racial" in EDU's Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity policy document from 1993. Because the high number of references were a result of the main theme of this paper and for a better data visualisation without compromising the content analysis, these results were changed to 75. The 2005 single document Ontario Leader in Learning had 193 references to the term PSE; it is shown in Figure 11 as 120 for data visualisation purposes.

Figure 8: Search Criteria Terms from all Three Sources (EDU, MTCU, and TDSB) by Year
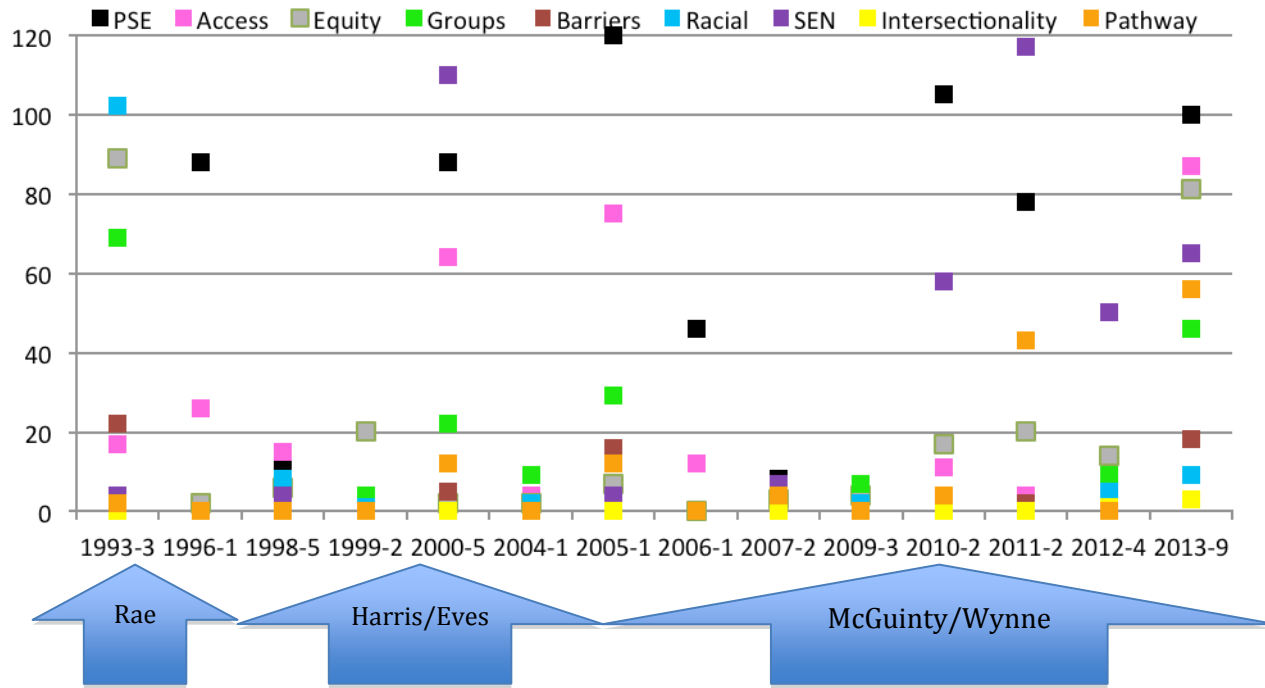
In terms of equity, the combined analysis demonstrates a peak in the use of the term in the Rae years, tapering off to non-use in the mid-2000s. The term reappears in 2010 and gains particular momentum after that, with considerable prevalence in 2013. While "barriers" outweight "access" in 1993, this shifted such that "access" was discussed almost exclusively, with little consideration of barriers. But in 2013, "barriers" is again found within the content of these merged documents. In terms of race, there are a decreased number of references to the term "racial" in the most recent group of policy documents. However, this may be due to an expanded understanding of the term "equity." Later documents that discuss equity on broader terms may not refer explicitly to race as frequently. Therefore we cannot imply that a decrease in the appearance of the term "racial" reflects a decrease in the overall discussion of equity.

SEN itself is very seldom mentioned until around 2010, when it becomes a main focus going forward. The high number of references in the year 2000 resulted from EDU's IEP and cooperative education policies. An increased reference to special education is from a combination of different documents and different sources. For example, the higher number of references in 2013 to the term "special education" in the overall content analysis was from seven of the nine policy documents, rather than resulting from any one document.

The term "pathway" showed results similar to special education. The first policy document that contained a reference to "pathway" was developed in 2000. Interestingly, it was the special education document from 2000 on IEPs that contained a multiple use of the terms pathway. The term pathway was also found in MTCU's Leader in Learning document (the Rae Report). This term was also employed in the 2007 EDU First Nation Policy Framework document the 2010 EDU Growing Success policy document) In 2011, the term "pathways" had a high number of references because it was included in the MTCU's focus on a new credit transfer system and also the EDU's K–12 Policy and Program Requirements document. As seen in the content analysis, similarly to the trend for the term special education, the term pathway was used in the year 2013 in seven of the nine policy documents by all three sources.

Summary of Findings from Combined Analysis

The combined results demonstrate a change in concern and a marked shift in language use from 1993 to 2013. The political eras noted below the horizontal axis help contextualize the findings to popular ideologies of the time, but these have limited utility given that it can often take several years before ideas are enacted into policy. Therefore, there can be "trickle" of policy from a previous government into the next one.

It is not surprising that the during the Rae years, the combined analysis reveals much use of the terms "equity," "barriers," and "racial groups." Policies such as the *Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity Policy,* which address the very topics of inequality and marginalized groups that we are examining in this study were developed during the Rae years. Movement to a PC government under Harris definitely shifted the foci of concern, with "race" being discussed infrequently in the documents under consideration, and the discussion of "access" begins to increase while talk of "barriers" decreases. As mentioned earlier in this report, *such language has the ability to shift foci away from circumstances and to opportunities afforded to an individual*. It is perhaps not surprising to see such a shift coincide with the days of the Common

Sense Revolution and a sharp shift toward merit-based systems and the idea of "equality" (treat everyone the same) rather than "equity" (focus on the same outcomes for everyone).

The McGuinty/Wynne years see a net surge in policy creation with increased attention to SEN and a small resurgence in discussions of "equity." We can also see "race" reappearing, suggesting that specific marginalized groups may be of increased concern, rather than simply being subsumed under an "equity" catchall.

Thus, these findings point to ebbs and flows in the language use, and presumably, political foci of the times. We find different concerns from the mid-1990s reappearing in current policy documents, which highlight equity, SEN, and race, but also consider "barriers" in tandem with "access."

Ministry-funded Bursaries

The analyses in this section have so far focused upon the extent to which policies mention marginalized groups. In this section we consider what groups the MTCU targets with respect to bursary programs, as a secondary type of MTCU policy analysis. We understand the bursary programs to be enacted policies and therefore analyze the policies to identify what marginalized student groups are targeted for financial assistance.

Table 5 displays the Ministry-funded bursaries and financial aid available to post-secondary students in the academic year 2014/15. Information on these programs was obtained from the MTCU website. Of particular interest here are the targeted groups of marginalization. Aboriginal students, first generation students, and Crown wards have specialized bursaries available to them. Those with financial hardship may be considered for the Student Access Guarantee. The Ontario Tuition Grant (popularly known as "30% Off Ontario Tuition) is available to all OSAP applicants. One of the criterion for grant eligibility is parental income of $160,000 or less. Thus, it is nearly a universal benefit for students, not targeting any particular group of marginalization, as $160, 000 is more than double the latest Census figures for the average household income in Ontario.

Table 5. Ministry-funded Bursaries and Financial Aid Available during the 2014/15 Academic Year

Title	Amount	Description
The Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Bursary	• $1000	• For Aboriginal students in full-time PSE
The Ontario First Generation Bursary	• $500	• Directed toward full-time students who are the first in their family to pursue PSE
The Ontario First Generation Apprenticeship Bursary	• $500	• Support to full-time apprentices who are the first in their family to pursue PSE
Ontario Access Grant for Crown Wards	• Up to $3000	• 50% to 100% of tuition up to a maximum of $3,000 per academic year for Crown wards
Ontario Textbook and Technology Grant	• $150	• Helps full-time PSE students pay for textbooks and computer costs.
Ontario Tuition Grant	• $1780 for university and college degree students • $820 for college diploma and certificate student	• "30% Off Ontario Tuition" • OSAP applicants automatically considered
Student Access Guarantee (SAG)	• varies	• Students with greater financial need than OSAP covers
Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)	• Loans/varies	• Student loans available to fund PSE costs and living expenses during study

SECTION II: ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES

In the second part of the analysis for this project, we are focused on the institutional policies and practices of universities and colleges in Ontario that target marginalized groups. We took a representative sample of institutions from which to analyze current, publicly available documents available online. In order to select our cases, we first created a sampling frame of all PSE institutions in the province. There are 20 public universities, 24 colleges and over 500 registered private career colleges in Ontario.[9] An analysis of all institutional policies and practices as they relate to successful transition to and integration within PSE was considered to be beyond the scope of the current project. Therefore, a sampling frame of all public PSE institutions funded by MCTU was developed. We then randomly sampled five universities and six colleges (a 25% sample) using a statistical software program.[10]

Overview of Institutions Included in Analysis

The six randomly selected colleges were Cambrian College (Sudbury), Centennial College (Toronto), George Brown College (Toronto), Lambton College (Sarnia), Mohawk College (Hamilton) and Niagara College (Niagara Falls). The five randomly sampled universities consisted of Algoma University (Sault Ste. Marie), University of Guelph, OCAD University (Toronto), McMaster University (Hamilton), and the University of Western Ontario (London). Figure 9 illustrates the geographic placement of these institutions in Ontario. Note that both Toronto and Hamilton are represented by multiple institutions, with a university in both cities as well as two colleges in Toronto and one in Hamilton.

The universities and colleges not only vary widely according to their geographic location, but also according to the size of their student body. Algoma has an enrolment of around 1300 students, followed by OCAD at around 5000. Guelph and Western are comparable at 23,000 and 24,000 students respectively, while McMaster has around 30,000 students. Note that these numbers include part-time and postgraduate students where applicable.

The colleges included in this analysis also vary considerably. Colleges typically service students in programs that prepare students for specific types of work; therefore program offerings can be widely disparate across colleges. The smallest of the colleges considered here is Lambton College, which has 3500 full-time students, and 6500 part-timers. Cambrian College in Sudbury has 4400 full-time students. Mohawk College reports having 18,000 full-time and apprenticeship students while Niagara College report having around 9,000 full-time enrollees plus more than 15,000 Continuing Education students. Centennial College has a full-time enrolment of 18,000

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[9] See http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/audiences/pcc/private.html?view=print?view=print

[10] We did not need to employ stratified sampling as the random sampling feature provided one university in Toronto and another major metropolitan area (Hamilton), as well as a broad representation of institutions from other parts of the province.

and George Brown has around 26,000 full-time students. The latter two colleges also have tens of thousands of part-timers and continuing education students.

Figure 9. Geographic location of sample of universities and colleges in Ontario
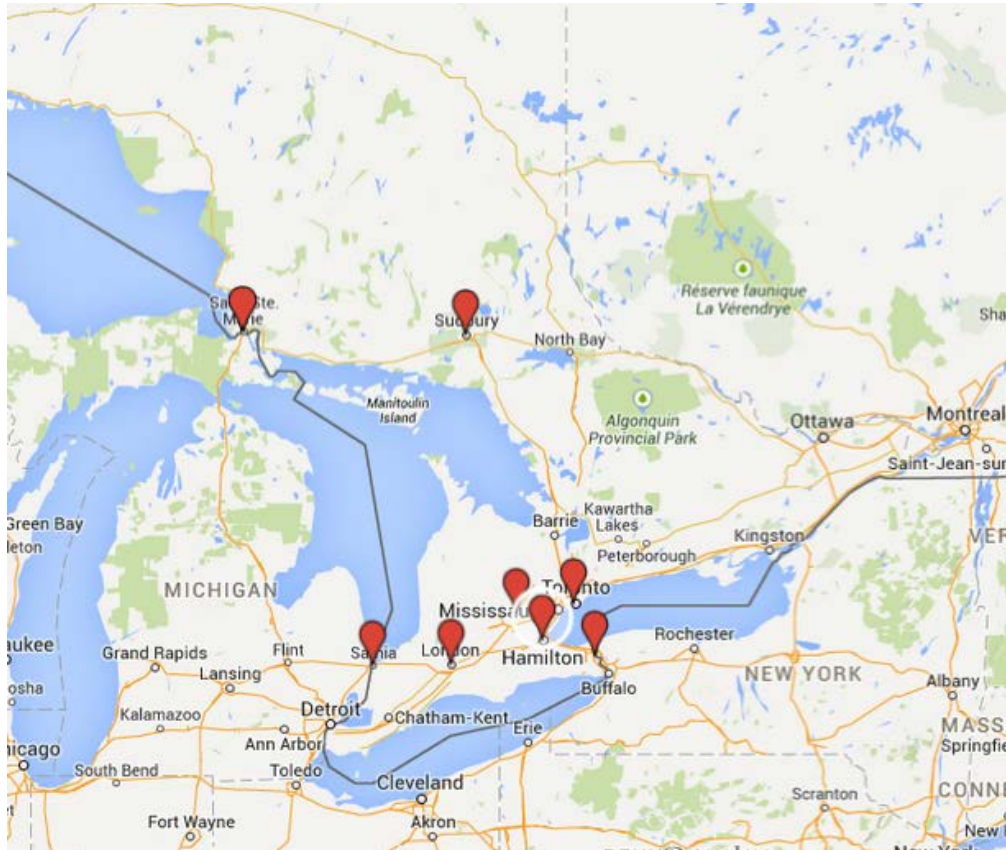
PSE Institutions and Marginalized Groups

In this section, we analyze documents relating to how institutions themselves are targeting marginalized groups. We examine two types of institutional documents here: those produced by the institutions for internal or student use, and those that the institutions were required to provide to MTCU to demonstrate accountability.

The Public Face of Colleges and Universities and Their Attention to Marginalized Groups

There are indeed many factors that lead to the student groups targeted at each institution.One common factor is the demographic makeup of the surrounding community that to the institution serves. In this section, we examine what each university and college displays as a service or program for marginalized student members on its publicly available web documents. This can also be understood as the "public face" that institutions are trying to create for themselves by way of branding and marketing.

Search strategy

The search methods utilized for identifying pertinent institutional documents consisted mainly of conducting website searches broadly at each PSE institution, then focusing more specifically on the Admissions, Future and Current Student sections of the main web pages at each of the 11 institutions. Directed searches of financial aid pages were especially useful in identifying programs and policies directed to specific student groups. When necessary (and feasible) key contacts within each institution were contacted (either by email or phone) inquiring about access programs targeting specific student groups. Financial aid, diversity and admissions officers are some examples of those staff members contacted during this research project.

Examples of search terms employed in searching the web pages of each PSE institution include: access, equity, marginalized groups, post-secondary accessibility, first generation students, students with disabilities, First Nation students, Aboriginal students, racialized students, bridging programs, transition programs, adult education and mature students. At times, certain pages were encountered that did not correspond to either a specific institutional PDF, policy or program document. In this case, screen captures of these pages were taken if they exemplified certain commitments of the institution toward promotion of diversity, equity and accessibility.

Results

Tables 6 and 7 outline the marginalized groups the colleges and universities in our sample (respectively) have targeted, as well as the programs implemented and designed to improve post-secondary access and retention of these groups.

Table 6: Programs and Services for Marginalized Students, Colleges		
Institution	Targeted Groups	Programs
Cambrian	Traditionally under-represented groups First-year student retention	• Develop a Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) Plan • Expand strategic recruitment initiatives regionally and targeting the general population from Central and South Western Ontario and the GTA • Pilot 2 new retention strategies at program level
Centennial	Marginalized youth and Minoritized peoples	• Access programming for under-represented learners and learners in non-traditional

	Single parent students Internationally trained immigrants Students from "at-risk" communities or low-income families	occupations Helping Youth Pursue Education Program (HYPE) • First Generation Student Project
George Brown College	Deaf students People with mental illness and/or addictions New Canadians/immigrants	• Diversity, Equity, Human Rights Services Office • Deaf Learn Now Program • English for Academic Purposes for ESL students, specialized language instruction for immigrants who are pursuing education in a range of areas including: nursing, business and construction
Lambton College	Young people who do not see a clear path or a place for them at college or university.	• Five-year Access Strategy (2011) • First Generation Services
Mohawk College	Young people from priority neighbourhoods throughout the Greater Hamilton Region Vulnerable youth from targeted communities	• "Motion outreach team School College Work Dual Credit • $40,000 in access bursaries (2013/14) • Mohawk-Hamilton Wentworth District School Board partnership leading to 100 students earning their OSSD at Mohawk"[a] • "Five-point Student Success Plan aimed at improving access, retention, student success, and graduation rates • Access Initiative promoting access to post-secondary education among vulnerable youth"[b] • A Sense of Belonging: Report on Social Inclusion
Niagara College	Academically unprepared students Non-traditional learners	• "The Career Planning and Academic Advising Centre launched in 2011/12, providing support to transfer students (from college to university and vice-versa) and especially to first generation students • Strategic recruitment focused on meeting the needs of mature and non-traditional learners"[c] • "A revamped academic schedule to enhance student retention • Online courses integrated into programs to increase student flexibility; and expanded vocational program offerings to those who are academically under-prepared • Increased number of campus-based hybrid courses, which blend distance and in-class elements."[d]

Notes to Table 6

[a] Mohawk Annual Report 2013-2014, p. 12 of 56:
http://www.mohawkcollege.ca/Assets/Documents/Reports/Annual+Report+2013-2014.pdf
[b] Mohawk SMA 2014-2017, p. 6 Mohawk Strategic Mandate Agreement 2014-2017
[c] Niagara SMA 2014-2017, p. 9:
http://www.niagaracollege.ca/content/Portals/3/NiagaraCollege/pdfs/corporate/reports/NIAG_MYAA_2011-2012.pdf
[d] Niagara SMA 2014-2017, p. 6:
http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/NiagaraSMA.pdf

The material from colleges (Table 6) demonstrates an overarching commitment to service under-presented groups, and the language used to describe such groups ranges from "minoritorized peoples" (Centennial), "young people from priority areas" (Mohawk), "academically unprepared" (Niagara) and "young people who do not see a clear path" (Lambton). The target groups are described as generally rather broad, although George Brown is quite specific about their programs for Deaf students, and Cambrian targets "first-year student retention." The college websites describe the programs these target groups can utilize if they choose to attend the college in question, like First Generation Services (Lambton), and the Academic Advising Centre (Niagara). To some extent, all the colleges describe retention and academic assistance programs that assist students from marginalized groups succeed.

Table 7: Programs and Services for Marginalized Students, Universities

Institution	Targeted Groups	Programs
Algoma	Particular focus on *Anishinaabe* Indigenous people (15%) First generation students, and students from small communities. Remote and rural students Crown wards	• Deliberately liberal admission requirements are maintained to help encourage applications in a region with low rates of university attainment • Maintenance and support of Indigenous content across the curriculum, as well as a concentration in Indigenous Studies • Off-site offerings and other distance delivery methods to access remote populations • Development of inter-institutional partnerships that make possible brokered graduate degrees [a] • Grants offered by Algoma University and Sault College to Crown ward students to encourage attendance and completion of post-secondary education
Guelph	Women Visible minorities People with disabilities Economically disadvantaged Aboriginal peoples First generation	• Equitable admissions policy centred on recruitment and access • Active recruitment of students from designated and under-represented groups • Equitable admissions policy centred on recruitment and access • Financial aid program that is responsive to the needs of designated and under-represented groups • Needs-based awards provided to economically disadvantaged students and students from designated and under-represented groups • Pre-arrival transition and support programs to support first generation post-secondary students
McMaster	Indigenous students Crown ward and other at-risk groups First generation	• Partnerships assisting Indigenous students with transition to university• Increased curricular content and program offerings in Indigenous content Indigenous Studies• Indigenous Knowledge Centre and other resources directed towards Indigenous focused study • The Indigenous Education Council to advance Indigenous education at McMaster • Increased hiring of Indigenous tenure-track faculty • Development of Aboriginal health curriculum for use in all Canadian medical schools •High rate of graduation for Indigenous students from Medical Doctor program—58 in the last decade, the highest in the country • Aboriginal Students Health Sciences Office provides support to Indigenous students in health professional programs• Community partnerships to build pathways for Crown wards• Bursaries and special outreach programs for at-risk youth

OCAD	Students who face extreme financial hardship Aboriginal students	• Access Bursary Program • First Generation Student Success Program • Conducts admissions presentations with American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation and provide materials in alternate formats • Maintains a consistently high success rate for the First Generation program • Aboriginal student outreach and support, and the Indigenous Visual Culture program • Launch of new Bachelor of Fine Arts in Indigenous Visual Culture (INVC) • Institution-wide support mechanisms for mental health, focusing on curriculum and pedagogy, policies and procedures, and awareness and training throughout the University, in addition to treatment and accommodation. • Disability Advisor position • Health and wellness Services including Crisis Support and Group Counselling [b]
Western	First Generation Students High Achieving Students	First Year Resource Centre and Peer Mentoring program GPS: Guide to Professional Success Program LAMP (Leadership and Mentorship Program) One-on-one financial mentoring for FG students Western INTEL. Western Scholars Program

Notes to Table 7
[a] Algoma Strategic Mandate Agreement 2014-2017, p. 6 Retrieved on March 28, 2015 (http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/AlgomaAgreement.pdf)
[b] Cited from OCAD Strategic Mandate Agreement 2014-2017, p.7-8
http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/OCADAgreement.pdf

Turning to universities (Table 7), the foci of their messages is both more diverse and more specific. For example, Algoma is located in Sault Ste. Marie, and specifically targets Anishinaabe students, first generation students and students from small towns, as well as Crown wards. These groups speak to the demographic characteristics of the people in the surrounding communities. They also highlight programs that demonstrate their commitment to culturally relevant Indigenous course content.

In fact, four universities considered here target Aboriginal students and have extensive supports in place to help ensure their successful transition. McMaster is particularly strong in this area, advertising various programs and curricula that have been put in place to help Aboriginal students. Nearly all universities considered here also have measures in place to support first generation students, although this varies considerably from a website with peer mentoring (Western) to an "early warning system" flagging students who do poorly on their first midterms (Guelph). McMaster (like Algoma) also targets Crown wards. Students experiencing financial hardship are also targeted across the selected universities in some form, although it is sometimes absorbed under other labels. Interestingly, the University of Western Ontario actively promotes its target of attracting "high achieving students," a characteristic that is not particularly emphasized by the other universities considered in this sample.

Strategic Mandate Agreements and Post-secondary Institutions

In the 2005 Ontario Budget, the then McGuinty government enacted its "Reaching Higher: The McGuinty Government plan for Postsecondary Education," which promised investments of $6.2 billion in Ontario's post-secondary education system by the year 2010. The main policy points of this platform were designed to improve access, quality and accountability system-wide. This was in contrast to how the MTCU had traditionally dispensed funds. Previously, institutions were allocated funds and would report on achieved outcomes (from dispensed funding) on an annual basis. Alongside Reaching Higher as a policy, in 2005–2006 the provincial government introduced the Interim Accountability Agreement, which was a "one-year agreement which confirmed the commitments and results expected by government and each institution for the first year of the new Reaching Higher investments." The government built on the groundwork laid by the Interim Accountability Agreements by introducing the Multi-Year Agreements and subsequent funding allocations. The rationale, as provided by the government, was the recognition that "publicly-funded institutions will have a greater ability to develop plans that meet the government goals for the sector and achieve results if there is funding stability and predictability."

Stemming from the Reaching Higher (2005) policy, the government of Ontario has since emphasized *access* as an important issue. The government made concerted efforts to make certain that there was an increase in the number of Ontarians who had the opportunity and access to pursue "higher quality post-secondary education" that was affordable and accessible across the province. Special emphasis was placed on the barrier that distance plays in the accessing of post-secondary education faced by northern, remote and rural populations.

This Multi-Year Agreement (MYA) as it was first called, and now in its most current iteration, the Multi-Year Accountability Agreements (MYAA) is a document which acts as an accountability measure for institutions in Ontario but also as a measure of self-accountability for government. MYAAs lay out the government's goals for the post-secondary system and its own roles and responsibilities in meeting those system-wide goals. It then lays out commitments expected from each institution and the sector-wide indicators that will be used to report on results achieved. A form is provided as a template by MTCU containing definitions and formulas to track progress. According to government documents, since their inception, MYAAs serve as an "integral and central" component governing the relationship between publicly funded post-secondary institutions and government. As MYAAs are required of each institution and as they are made publicly available on institution's website, as stated in MTCU documents, they serve as a measure of overall performance and public accountability. MYAAs are not designed to supplant existing performance and accountability agreements, but rather supplement those associated with individual grants. MYAA's were designed as part of the MTCU's goal of streamlining through combining the accountability and reporting requirements of post secondary institutions while maintaining and further reinforcing high standards of accountability of public funds as expected by a myriad of stakeholders.

The MYAA mechanism's main function is to track access, retention and success with particular focus on increasing enrolment, as well as the increased participation of under-represented students. As outlined in Section 2.1 of the MYA (now MYAA), institutions report on

institutional enrolment growth in keeping with established protocols or as required by the ministry, thereby contributing to the sector targets established by government. The ministry uses these reports to ensure that the post-secondary system is moving toward meeting its commitments to increase college and university full-time enrolment. This Multi-Year Action Plan will be revised to incorporate this measure and the accountability mechanisms, which will be used to ensure that the system is increasing the participation of under-represented students and is affordable and accessible across Ontario, including northern and remote, rural and urban areas. In the MYAA document template there is space for institutions to document institution-specific methods used with under-represented students, particularly those students that are first in the family to attend post-secondary education and at-risk and low-income students.

Also in 2005, McGuinty's government passed the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) requiring that Ontario become an accessible province by 2025. This law allows the provincial government to "develop specific standards of access and to enforce them. The standards are made into laws called regulations, and they provide the details to help meet the goal of the AODA." The act sets specific accessibility standards (called regulations) in five areas: Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation, and the Built Environment. This act is buttressed by the already existing *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)* which is still in effect, and which requires both provincial and municipal governments, as well as broader public sector organizations (including post-secondary institutions), to develop annual accessibility plans.

As per ministry-directed initiatives, four marginalized student populations are mandated as necessary to be targeted for policy and program creation and must be reported upon in the MYAA reports. These student populations are: students with disabilities, francophone, first generation and Aboriginal students. Also specific to colleges, initiatives were directed toward mature students, as well as the Student Access Guarantee (SAG), which mandates that every college create programs and policies that provide financial support to students who are qualified for college and wish to attend, in effect breaking down financial barriers that may exist. It should be noted that while francophone students are one of the access groups identified by the government, we intentionally *do not* examine numbers for Francophone students in the analyses below. This is because francophone students have high PSE participation rates – their inclusion as an access group is about access to French-language programming more so than general access.

The content of Tables 8 and 9 come from the Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA) submission of each institution, for the years 2014–2017. Each institution was required to create these and submit them to MTCU to fulfill obligations around strategies implemented to improve access to targeted groups. There was an SMA template in which each institution had to populate areas titled "Mission/Vision" and "Institutional Strength," the latter of which contained information about how each institution targets "student populations." It is information on these populations that we have titled "Targeted Groups" in Tables 8 and 9. This chart represents the profile of each institution as they sought best to present themselves, (Mission/Vision) and the last column transfers information from "Student Population" information the institution included under "Institutional Strengths." In this way, the information in Tables 8 and 9 can be conceptualized as a report to the ministry about what the institutions did or what they did best—what they put into the SMA to showcase their "best."

In terms of Tables 8 and 9, it is immediately evident that the reporting here is far more detailed and targeted than what we observe in Tables 6 and 7. This is largely due to the reporting structure of the forms and the necessity of demonstrating that efforts have been made toward focusing on the MTCU *targeted groups* (in particular, Aboriginal students, students with disabilities, and first generation students). It is interesting to note the difference between the "public face" of the universities and their individual targeting efforts, and the ones reported here. For example, Lambton College (Table 8) largely targets students who have difficulty deciding upon a path (as indicated by its web presence) and Cambrian college targets traditionally under-represented groups, but the SMAs for both strongly highlights programs for Aboriginal students. In terms of the university reporting (Table 9), we see more diverse groups being discussed, but a strong emphasis on the target groups (as expected). We see only limited reporting outside these groups, such as with McMaster (Crown wards) and Western Ontario (High Achieving Students). Despite the ability of the universities to report outside of the predetermined target groups, there is little indication of doing so.

In the case of individual colleges and universities, the distinction between what they promote about themselves versus how they report their successes to MTCU may reflect efforts by PSE institutions to maintain autonomy and identity through their website presence. However, this is not reflected in the reporting exercise for the sample considered in this analysis.

Table 8: Outputs of Strategic Mandate Agreements for Increasing Access to Targeted Groups, Colleges

College	Vision [a]	Mission	Targeted Groups
Cambrian	Cambrian believes in the strength of community and proudly stands behind its role as an accessible college serving the needs of its constituents. As a community builder, Cambrian attains excellence by infusing creativity, cultural diversity, collaboration and an understanding of our learners needs in all that we do. Cambrian cares.	-We lead with our commitment to diverse learners. -We teach and learn through quality education that responds to the needs of the community. -We balance hands-on experience with the knowledge and skills essential for personal and professional success.	"Cambrian meets the needs of Northern communities by providing a comprehensive mix of programs using experiential learning, innovative teaching and learning practices, collaborative approaches, applied research opportunities, and cultural awareness. Cambrian is a leader in supporting 'at-risk' learners to succeed, as exemplified by its flagship Glenn Crombie Centre for Student Support."[b] • Wabnode Centre for Aboriginal Services delivers Aboriginal education • Transition supports for postsecondary 'at-risk' students through 'School within a College' initiative • Glenn Crombie Centre for Student Support provides learning opportunities and resources for students with disabilities
Centennial	Transforming lives and communities through learning.	To educate students for career success.	"Centennial College focuses on improving access and success for underrepresented groups in the areas of: • Centennial serves a diverse student population including underrepresented groups, university graduates, new Canadians, Second Career participants, and international students. • Centennial provides access and programs for students in Scarborough and East York, directly supporting 12 of Toronto's Neighbourhood Improvement Areas, and providing services and supports including: - Students with disabilities (The Smart Start Summer transition program, Academic improvement and monitoring services). - Targeted initiatives for first generation students through the Student Success Centre. - Robust programming for Dual Credit secondary school students and participants in the Specialist High Skills Major program (SHSMs), and for School within a College sites hosted with four different school boards on its campuses. - A number of initiatives to reach out to and support its Aboriginal community through the Aboriginal Steering Committee and Aboriginal Education Council. -Centennial plans to expand to include three more priority neighbourhoods with the development of the Centennial College Aerospace Campus at Downsview Park."[c]

George Brown	George Brown is committed to excellence in teaching, applied learning, and innovation. By understanding the path from education to employment, we will: • Set the benchmark to which all colleges will aspire and be recognized as a key resource in shaping the future of Toronto as a leading global city. • Build a seamless bridge between learners and employment as we develop dynamic programs and workplace-ready graduates who will be the candidates of choice for employers. • Create a community of lifelong learners, grounded in the principles of access, diversity, mutual respect, and accountability.	Vision is framed as Vision/Mission in George Brown College SMA.	• "Deaf students—through the Deaf Learn Now program. • People with mental illness and/or addictions through a partnership for programming and research with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. • Aboriginal students—supported by an Elder-in-Residence, designated student centres, Aboriginally-focused course content, Aboriginal counsellor and staff, tutoring, awards, bursaries, and cultural events. • First-generation students. • Immigrants—English for Academic Purposes for ESL students, specialized language instruction for immigrants who are pursuing education in a range of areas including: nursing, business and construction. • Dual credit with high schools and "School within a College." • Partnership with all Pathways to Education sites. • Academic upgrading programs."[d]
Lambton	Lambton College fosters innovation and entrepreneurship among our faculty, staff, and students, and in the local and global communities we serve. As the sole provider of higher education in our region, and as a mobile learning college, we are committed to providing teaching and learning excellence in a broad range of program offerings, and a full range of credentials in alignment with our areas of specialization. It should be noted that our Strategic Mandate was developed within the context of the Lambton College Strategic Plan, and was developed and received with and by the Lambton College of Applied Arts of Technology Board of Governors.	Vision is framed as Vision/Mission in Lambton SMA.	• "Lambton is focused on access for Aboriginal learners through several new program proposals in Technology and Trades, and Public Safety. • The College works with the Aboriginal Education Council to identify and implement strategies to improve access for Aboriginal students to Health and Community Service programs. • The Ministry acknowledges Lambton's focus on serving Aboriginal learners. • In 2012–13, Aboriginal learners represented 5.0% of the student population. Aboriginal enrolment at Lambton was above the sector average (4.2%). • Building on Lambton's strength in this area, the Ministry recently funded the College to deliver an innovative and comprehensive Trades and Technology sample program for Aboriginal learners. The Project will introduce students to multiple skilled trades and technology/engineering fields, and learners will benefit from partnerships with local industry. • The College plans to better inform Aboriginal learners about careers in Public Safety and Emergency Response, and to offer an Aboriginal Social Justice Certificate in partnership with municipal police and Aboriginal communities.

			• The College will engage in a promotional campaign to ensure all students are aware of the breadth, depth, and means to access the range of services for students with disabilities."[e]
Mohawk	Prosperous communities and transformed lives.	Creating new realities by opening endless opportunities.	"The College's five-point Student Success Plan is aimed at improving access, retention, student success, and graduation rates. • The Access Initiative promotes access to postsecondary education among vulnerable youth through innovative collaboration with targeted communities and school board partners. • Aboriginal Recruitment and Project Pathfinder initiatives target college-age and secondary school Aboriginal learners. The Ministry notes that access is one of the top three priorities of the College, which has a well-developed strategy. • The College has received funding from the Ministry to support the Bundled Arrows Project, which aims to build a regional Indigenous Education Plan with educational partners and the Aboriginal community."[f]
Niagara	Enriching lives and fulfilling dreams.	Providing outstanding applied education and training for a changing world.	"Strategic recruitment focused on meeting the needs of mature and non-traditional learners. • College initiatives include: - A revamped academic schedule to enhance student retention; - Online courses integrated into programs to increase student flexibility; - Expanded vocational program offerings to those who are academically under-prepared. • Niagara College is planning expansion and changes to both the Niagara-on-the-Lake and Welland Campuses to support student life, engagement, and student success strategies." [g]

Notes to Table 8
[a] All Visions and Missions in Table 8 and Table 9 are quoted directly from respective institutional Strategic Mandate Agreements. These can be found in their entirety at MTCU's site. For universities:
http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/universities.html and For Colleges:
http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/colleges.html (Retrieved March 28, 2015).
[b] Cambrian Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA) 2014-2017, p. 3. Retrieved March 28, 2015
(http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/CambrianSMA.pdf)
[c] Centennial SMA 2014-2017, p. 9-10. Retrieved March 28, 2015
(http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/CentennialSMA.pdf)
[d] George Brown SMA 2014-2017, p. 7. Retrieved March 28, 2015
(http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/GeorgeBrownSMA.pdf)

[e] Lambton SMA 2014-2017, p. 7. Retrieved March 28, 2015 (http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/LambtonSMA.pdf)
[f] Mohawk SMA 2014-2017, p. 7. Retrieved March 28, 2015 (http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/MohawkSMA.pdf)
[g] Niagara SMA 2014-2017, p. 6. Retrieved March 28, 2015 (http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/NiagaraSMA.pdf)

Table 9: Outputs of Strategic Mandate Agreements for Increasing Access to Targeted Groups, Universities

University	Vision	Mission	Targeted Groups
Algoma	1. We are an institution that has been granted a Charter in order to serve the needs of the Algoma region and to some extent, Northern Ontario more broadly. We recognize that, in order to do so well, we must be an institution that welcomes students, staff, and faculty from all parts of the province and all parts of the planet. 2. Our Charter confers upon us a "special mission" to focus on teaching and learning, and to be especially dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in undergraduate education. 3. Because of our location on the site of a former Indian residential school, our Charter also confers upon us a special mission to engage in "cross-cultural learning" and to be a valuable resource for Anishinaabe people and peoples. 4. Our aspiration is to be an institution of approximately 3,000 students of whom a significant proportion will be Anishinaabe or international. Though focused primarily on excellence in undergraduate education, we aspire to offer a small selection of	Vision is framed as Vision/Mission in Algoma SMA.	Algoma directs resources and supports for postsecondary access toward: *Anishinaabe* students, first generation students, and students from small towns. "As university attainment rates in the region have traditionally been low, Algoma quite consciously takes a relatively liberal approach to admission standards. The policy is that admission requirements should be set at a point that welcomes students who have a good chance of benefitting from the education we offer and excludes only those who are unlikely to pass. As a small University in a small city, Algoma finds its natural market for students is in small-town Ontario (whether in the North or in the South) and that the student body is likely the most "small-town" of any university in the province. International students comprise a large proportion of the institution's student population and are concentrated in a small number of programs."[a]

	Master's level programs that are critical for the economic and social development of our region.		
Guelph	Guelph will be an institution recognized internationally for our emphasis on learner centredness, our blend of applied and relevant research, and our contributions to community. Commitments include: revolutionizing learning to produce students who understand and are engaged in critical issues that face humanity; research that is free from bias and serves society; openness and accountability; and an emphasis on developing students who will be the leaders of tomorrow with an ingrained sense of social justice and service.	Vision is framed as Vision/Mission in Guelph SMA.	"Guelph is committed to supporting students' successful transition from high school to first-year university. Guelph has worked to increase the recruitment, enrolment, and success of Aboriginal students. A series of workshops lead to a certificate in Aboriginal Affairs, which allows student leaders to supplement their academic programs with a foundational knowledge of Aboriginal cultures, traditions, and worldviews. The President's Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Initiatives works to identify ways to embed Aboriginal knowledge and culture in the curriculum and further expand Aboriginal research on campus. Guelph has established a range of pre-arrival transition and support programs to enhance and sustain a supportive learning environment for first generation post-secondary students. Guelph is operationalizing an early warning system for students who do poorly on their first midterms allowing Guelph to offer targeted and personalized support programs during the remainder of the critical first semester and well into the second. Guelph is focused on providing supports for students with learning disabilities and on enhancing support to students with mental health challenges."[b] "Guelph will continue to support students with both routine and exceptional needs, as the demographics of our student population continue to evolve towards greater proportions of commuters, Aboriginal, transfer, and international students—groups that benefit from targeted support programs as well as co-curricular engagement programs. Guelph is working to move away from a model that directs the majority of support resources to deal with students already in difficulty towards a "healthy campus" model—one that supports and promotes the health and wellness of all members of the University's community."[c]
McMaster	To achieve international distinction for creativity, innovation, and	At McMaster, our purpose is the discovery, communication, and	• "Strong partnership with Six Nations Polytechnic (SNP), which enables McMaster to assist students seeking university

excellence.	preservation of knowledge. In our teaching, research, and scholarship, we are committed to creativity, innovation, and excellence. We value integrity, quality, inclusiveness, and teamwork in everything we do. We inspire critical thinking, personal growth and a passion for lifelong learning. We serve the social, cultural and economic needs of our community and our society.	degrees to transition to university. • Development of a new Honours program in Indigenous Studies. • Support of an Indigenous Knowledge Centre that is becoming a regional hub for research. • The Indigenous Education Council advances Indigenous education at McMaster. • Focus on hiring Indigenous tenure-track faculty. • Leading the development of an Aboriginal health curriculum used at all Canadian medical schools. • The Medical Doctor program has graduated 58 Indigenous students in the last decade, the highest in the country. Support for Indigenous students applying for and attending health professional programs through the Aboriginal Students Health Sciences Office. • McMaster has worked with community partners to build pathways for Crown Wards. In 2013, 265 Crown Wards accessed this program, compared with just 35 in 2009. In 2012–13, 17% of McMaster students were first generation learners. McMaster offers bursaries and special outreach programs that support the participation of at-risk youth. The McMaster Venture Camps program provides engineering and science camps and workshops to primary and secondary school students".[d] Indigenous Student Center (Set to open in 2015)[e]

OCAD	OCAD University is Canada's "university of the imagination" engaged in transformative education, scholarship, research and innovation. OCAD University makes vital contributions to the fields of art, design, and media through local and global cultural initiatives, while providing knowledge and invention across a wide range of disciplines.	Vision is framed as Vision/Mission in OCAD SMA.	"OCAD University focuses on the following student populations: Aboriginal students, first generation students, and students with disabilities. Initiatives and successes include: • Conduct admissions presentations with ASL interpretation and provide materials in alternate formats. • Maintain a consistently high success rate for the first generation program. • Aboriginal student outreach and support, and the Indigenous Visual Culture program.OCAD University announced the launch of a new Bachelor of Fine Arts in Indigenous Visual Culture (INVC). • Institution-wide support mechanisms for mental health, focusing on curriculum and pedagogy, policies and procedures, and awareness and training throughout the University, in addition to treatment and accommodation • In recognition of the needs of students with disabilities attending OCAD University, the institution has added a permanent Disability Advisor position, and has restructured health and wellness services to support walk-in crisis support and group counseling specifically for students facing mental health challenges."[f]

Western Ontario	Our vision is an extension of our mission and mandate: to be one of Canada's leading universities known nationally and internationally for its commitment to the Best Student Experience, the outstanding caliber and contribution of its students, graduates and faculty, and the intensity and impact of its world-class research and service. Western will be a globally recognized destination for academic distinction delivering transformational learning and research with impact.	As the leading full-service, research-intensive, residential-university known for its commitment to the Best Student Experience, discovery research and innovation and transforming lives through knowledge mobilization across a broad array of disciplines, Western's mandate—derived from its Act and historical developments over more than 130 years—is to provide the highest quality learning environment to help students, staff and faculty achieve their full potential which, in turn will drive Ontario's competitiveness and prosperity and Ontario's contribution to our global society. The Western community aims to deliver an exemplary university experience by engaging the best and brightest people, attracting strategic resources, and by continuously elevating	"Western University's focus and outcomes in this area include: - Data indicates that 98.9% of Western's main campus entering class had admission averages over 80%, the highest in Ontario. - Western's graduate admission averages have remained constant even as enrolment has increased. - The average funding per domestic and international graduate student is above the average for Ontario universities and peer institutions across Canada. - In 2012–13, over 1,700 students required academic accommodation at Western, an increase of 35% in five years. In addition to outreach services to support disabled students' transition from high school to university, Western provides networking opportunities for students with disabilities and employers."[g]

ourselves to ever higher global standards.

Notes to Table 9

[a] Algoma SMA 2014-2017, p. 6. Retrieved March 28, 2015
(http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/AlgomaAgreement.pdf)
[b] Guelph SMA 2014-2017, p. 6. Retrieved March 28, 2015
(http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/GuelphAgreement.pdf)[c] Guelph SMA 2014-2017, p. 7. Retrieved March 28, 2015
(http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/GuelphAgreement.pdf)
[d] McMaster SMA 2014-2017, p. 6. Retrieved March 28, 2015
(http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/McMasterAgreement.pdf)
[e] McMaster SMA 2014-2017, p. 7. Retrieved March 28, 2015
(http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/McMasterAgreement.pdf)
[f] OCAD SMA 2014-2017, p. 7-8. Retrieved March 28, 2015
(http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/OCADAgreement.pdf)
[g] Western Ontario SMA 2014-2017, p. 6-7. Retrieved March 28, 2015
(http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/WesternAgreement.pdf)

MYAAs and Student Representation

In each MYAA, there is a section for 2012/13 targets detailing overall college enrolment growth, yield rate increase, and increase in each under-represented group. All targets in MYAA used September 2013 enrolment data. In the two figures below (Figure 10 and Figure 11) information on enrolment of targeted students was collected from the 2012/13 MYAA of each college and university in the project sample. The figures illustrate the percentage of the student population that members of each marginalized group comprise overall.

Figure 10: Percentage of Marginalized Students Groups to Total Population, Universities
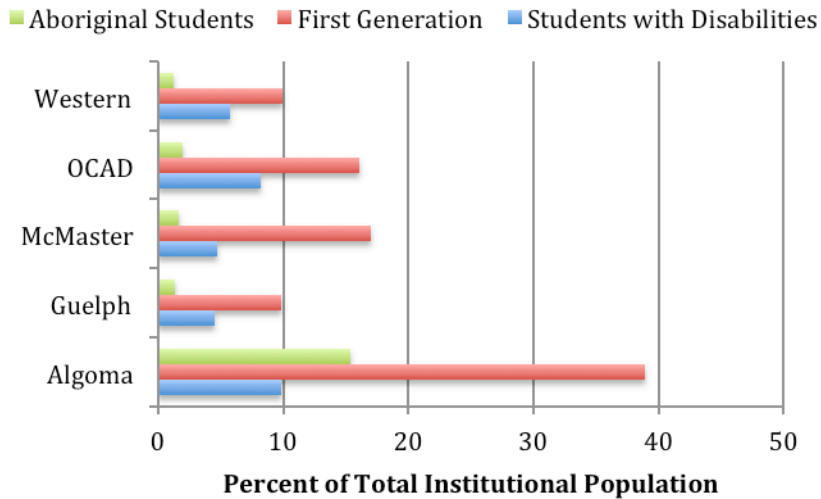

Colleges have a much higher percentage of students from the targeted groups than the universities considered here, demonstrating that, not surprisingly, colleges are more representative of the population than are universities (Dennison and Gallagher, 2011).

Figure 11: Percentage of Marginalized Students Groups to Total Population, Colleges
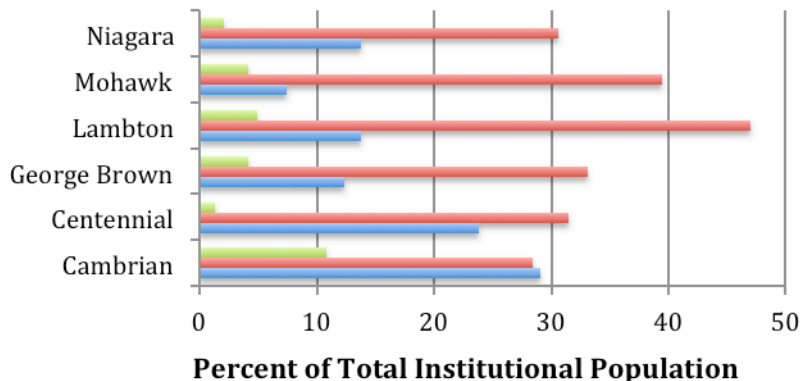
In order to assess whether "access" policies have increased the targeted groups in our sample, we conducted further analysis of the numbers of these targeted groups (as reported in the MYAA Report Backs) to see the shift in these numbers over time. The data for the colleges was insufficient for creating any sort of longitudinal picture of changes to enrolment, but the university data was fairly complete. Figures 12 to 14 illustrate the recent longitudinal enrolment trends of these targeted SMA groups in the universities under consideration from 2009/10 to 2012/13.

Figure 12: Enrolment of Students with Disabilities, 2009/10 to 2012/13, Universities
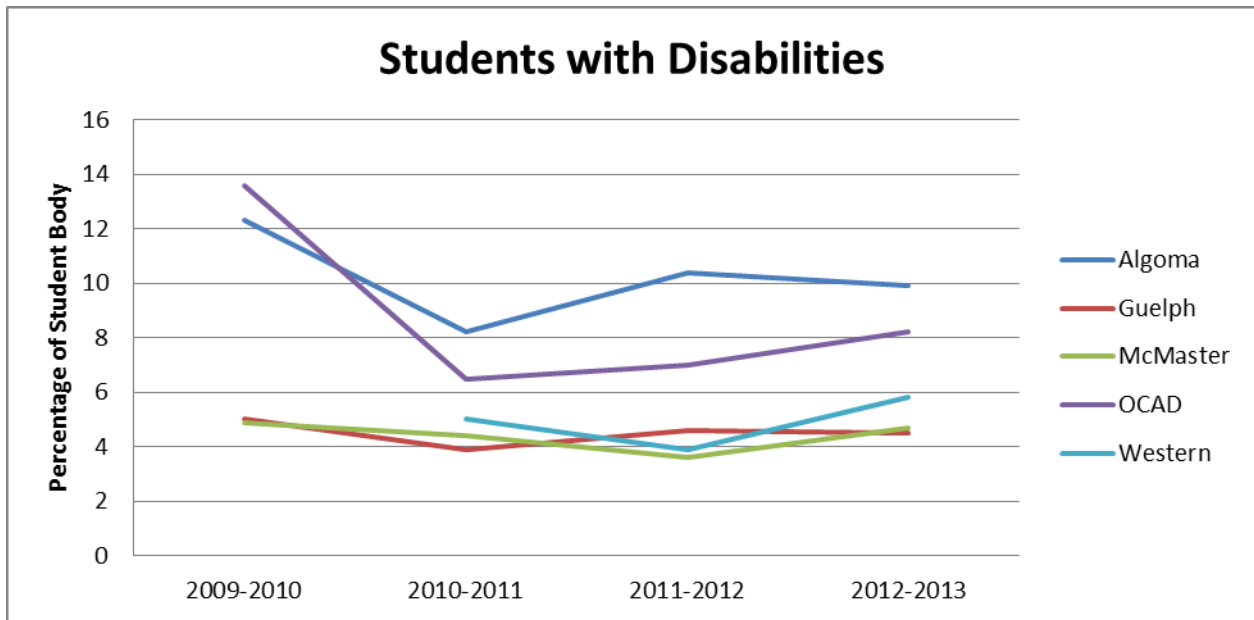
In terms of students with disabilities (Figure 12), there actually seems to be a decrease in enrolment rates of this target group in 2009/10, with some fluctuations and recovery by all in recent years. The smaller universities in our sample (OCADU and Algoma) have the greatest percentage of overall enrolment of students with SEN, but for reasons that are not entirely clear, had a significant drop in this student population after 2009/10.

Figure 13: Enrolment of First Generation Students, 2009/10 to 2012/13, Universities
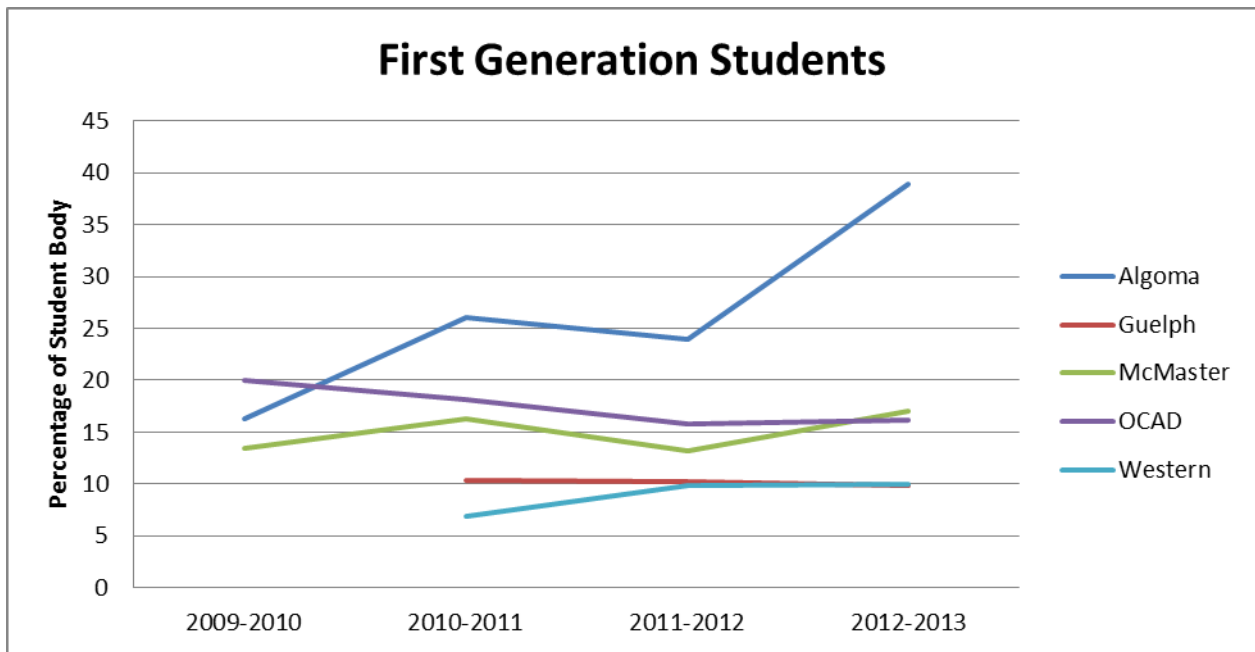
The presence of first generation students (Figure 13) as a percentage of overall enrolments has increased steadily at Algoma, where such students are nearly 40 percent of the student body. OCADU has seen a slight decrease while the remaining universities have a fairly flat trajectory (on average).

Figure 14: Enrolment of Aboriginal Students, 2009/10 to 2012/13, Universities
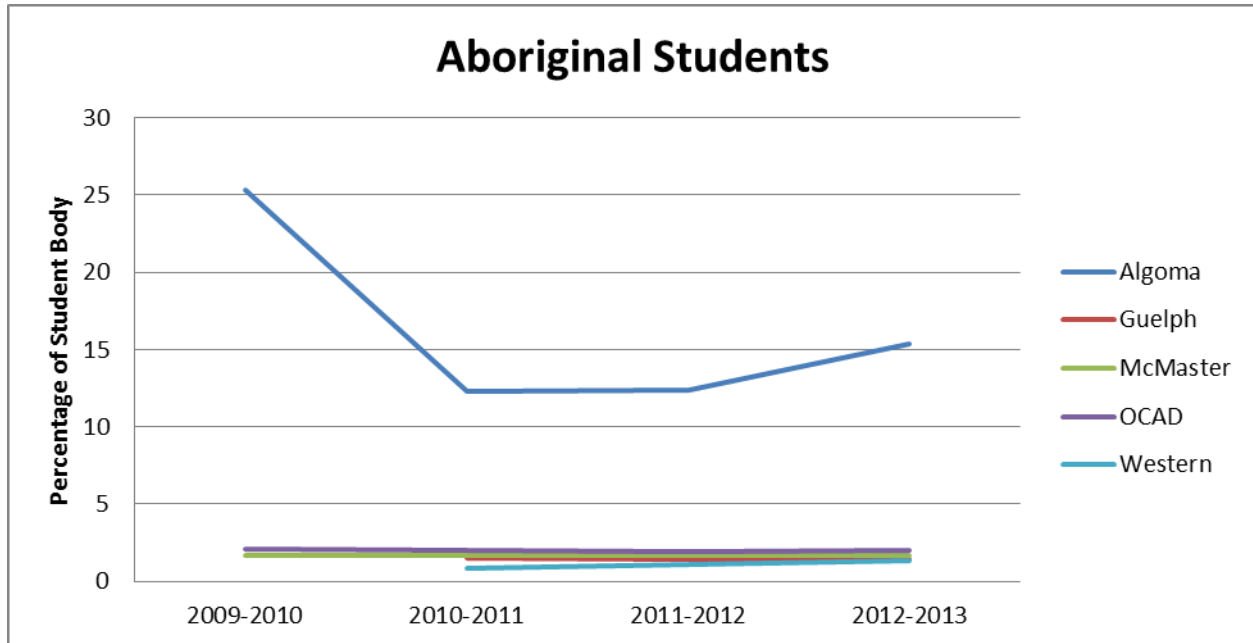

Figure 14 illustrates the very flat trajectory of Aboriginal student enrolments for four of the five universities considered here. No noticeable gains in Aboriginal enrolments have occurred. In terms of Algoma, this university actually reports a substantial loss of Aboriginal students as a percentage of overall student enrolment from 2009 to 2010, but the percentage has grown in more recent years.

Overall, these findings do not suggest tremendous headways have been made in improving access for the three targeted groups across the universities considered here. It is possible, however, that changes in definitions and measurements across institutions may have influenced the findings reported in the above figures.

To what extent do the PSE institutions employ an intersectionality perspective (or assumptions) in creating policies and practices?

In reviewing the source websites of all of the materials in this section, we find little evidence that a perspective incorporating intersectionality has been employed in the writing of policies or the design of programs. In virtually all of the programs and policies that were reviewed, there has been a heavy focus on **one axis of difference**, for example low-income students, aboriginal students, or first generation students. This was found to be the case across both colleges and universities. Rather that intersectionality, the approach utilized treats students' backgrounds and axes of identity/difference as silos. It should be noted, however, that the focus on first generation students may on the surface appear to be around one axis of difference, but like Crown wards, it is likely that these groups themselves are often intersectional. Crown wards and first generation

students, for example, are found in disproportionately high numbers among Aboriginal and low-income groups (Gough, Trocme, Brown, Knoke and Blackstock, 2005).

Discussion and Conclusions

The analyses in this report have been divided into two parts. In the first section, we analyzed the policies at EDU, MTCU, and TDSB to find evidence of targeted language about marginalized groups. Our overall findings suggested that discussion of "access" has increased as well as the overall concept of "equity," but apart from students with SEN, it is not clear which equity groups are being targeted. The overall discussion of "barriers" has ebbed and flowed, but still the trend is to favour discussion of "access," which suggests that opportunities are provided to potential students willing to take advantage of them, instead of an understanding of structural barriers preventing uptake among specific sub-groups (or intersectional groups). We also attributed shifts in language (e.g. "race" to "equity", for example) use to be at least partly due to ideological shifts in thinking about issues around social mobility.

In the second part of this report, we looked at institutional documents and materials that focus on marginalized groups, first focusing on the PSE institutions' foci of attention, and then to the ministry-reporting exercises in which they partook. Unsurprisingly, we find a concentration of focus on the SMA target areas of Aboriginal students, first generation students, and students with disabilities. Some evidence suggested that the institutions themselves maintained their identity and autonomy by targeting additional marginalized groups that are not specifically SMA targets.

The issue of "access"

SMAs are where institutions are directing equity-based policy/social justice initiatives to improve "access." Earlier in this report, the textual usage of policy language noted a shift over time from discussion of "barriers" to one of "access." Access as used in TCU documents can often refer to technology toward streamlining (i.e., improving student transfer of credits and mobility between colleges and universities) rather than increasing access for under-represented groups. The expansion of online course learning and implementing increased use of technology is highlighted and celebrated by the ministry as proliferating the choices available for students and this quite likely is viewed by institutions as a large step forward in both Type I (overall access) and Type II accessibility (access for marginalized groups). But these approaches do not directly apply intersectional approaches that specifically target at-risk students, particularly racialized students.

According to MTCU's Differentiation Framework, a "more accessible" post-secondary system is achieved by PSE institutions becoming more specialized.

> Institutional specialization will play a key role in increasing the post-secondary education participation and success of Aboriginal students, students with disabilities, first generation students, as well as expanding programming opportunities for francophone students. In addition, institutions will continue to offer a learning environment that supports and is enriched by a diverse profile of learners (MTCU 2013:10–11).

In addition, access is also understood to be increased by use of technology to extend and support

all aspects of education (summer sessions, entrepreneurial education and credit transfer and pathways) as well as more formal partnerships between universities and colleges to remove barriers to student mobility with direct entry, which accelerates the time to degree completion without reducing quality. A large focus of the SMA policy encourages increased partnerships across PSE institutions. In reviewing this policy closely alongside the concept of intersectionality as framed in the project, it becomes increasingly difficult to anticipate that such a policy will effectively tackle Type II access issues when the dominant discourse of "access" policy ignores systemic barriers that prevent many marginalized students from pursuing PSE in the first place.

Access and race

Access overall (Type 1) has been improved, at least if the considerable increase of over 170,000 students to Ontario PSE since 2003 is any indication. More and more young people are choosing PSE, but is this a function of access programs or a function of the increasing discourses around PSE being the only route to employability? And have increases in marginalized groups (Type II access) been observed in student populations outside of the three target groups identified in the Differentiation Framework? There are no publicly available documents to assess this—at least with any degree of ease. Moreover, what evidence led to the decision that only Aboriginal students, students with disabilities and first generation students (and to some extent, francophone students) would be the target groups? Certainly these *are* marginalized students—but why these groups and not others? Why, for example, did considerable findings that exist around the various disadvantages faced by many racialized students (from extensive evidence provided by the TDSB, among others) not factor into these choices? Moreover, when will they be factored in?

The authors of this paper could not find government documents that clearly articulated evidence-based policy creation that designated these target groups. However, in a report commissioned by HEQCO in 2011, Finnie, Childs and Wismer analyzed the Youth In Transition Study to examine correlates of PSE attendance across Canada, concluding that

> …for some of the under-represented groups, Ontario does not compare favourably to the rest of Canada. In particular, *Aboriginal* and *disabled* youth are less likely to attend university if they are from Ontario as compared to other provinces and regions. Conversely, family income seems to matter less in Ontario than in at least some other provinces and regions (Atlantic Canada and Quebec). Having *no family history of PSE matters substantially more in Ontario* than in the West, and in some cases, more than in Quebec and Atlantic Canada, depending on the particular specification. These different patterns may, in fact, be linked and there may be a relationship between the smaller effects of family income and the greater effects of some of the other factors on under-represented groups in Ontario. (2011:49, emphasis added)

Thus, the three SMA target categories identified here are identical to those found in the earlier Finnie, Childs and Wismer (2011) report, suggesting these findings informed the selection of these groups. Perhaps most profoundly, **race was not a variable that was included in the analysis**. Nor was consideration of marginalized groups by way of testing for statistical interactions, as we have argued for in our previous OHCRIF report (Robson, Anisef and Brown, 2013). The final sentence of the above summary suggests that interaction effects may, in fact, be at work.

Realizing that the data used in the Finnie, Childs and Wismer (2011) report come from the Youth in Transition Survey, we do not suggest that the authors intentionally excluded race from their analysis. An artifact of the data, like many federal and non-federal sources, is that race is simply not a variable that is included in such data sets. Statistics Canada has instead opted to provide information on "visible minority" status, which simply dichotomizes individuals into whether or not they are Caucasian. The term "visible minority" has not been without controversy. Researchers at York University revealed that racialized students found the term derogatory in the early 1990s (Grayson and Williams 1994). Indeed, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (2012) has described this terminology as racist and a recent report from the African Canadian Legal Clinic has called for a stop to this term being used because it "…obscures the differences in outcomes between different racialized groups that are important to the creation of effective and responsive policies" (p. 4). James and Lloyd (2006) echoed similar sentiments, arguing that the term visible minority does not recognize the intra-group and between-group differences of various racialized groups. Critics have also pointed out that in cities with large immigration trends, the term "visible minority" hardly makes sense, particularly when racialized persons make up the majority of the population. Using "White" as the unspoken benchmark of comparison is not useful, particularly in highly heterogeneous regions of the country (Bauder 2001).

It is well-established by decades of Canadian and international research on academic achievement that the ethnic and racial backgrounds of students matter. For the purposes of this report, by "race" we refer to phenotype (e.g., Black, White, Asian, etc.) and by ethnicity, we refer to cultural factors (e.g., Polish, Spanish, Jamaican, etc.). The mechanism for why race and ethnicity matter are debated, but the fact of the matter is that differences exist by these characteristics—large and inarguable differences. By way of example, our earlier OHCRIF report (Robson, Anisef and Brown 2014) re-articulated findings of many previous researchers that Asian and South Asian students, for example, have higher academic achievement than Black or Latino students. These findings remain even after important controls like income, family structure, grades, and parental education are included. If race is not included in an analysis used to determine priority areas for increasing access, important categories of marginalization among the most vulnerable will be missed. "Visible minority status" as offered by Statistics Canada data masks these differences as the heterogeneity in academic outcomes by "non-white" students is incredibly high. It is not a white/non-white issue. It is alarming that recent "significant" reports on reducing barriers to post-secondary access completely fail to mention anything about race outside of Aboriginal status (see, for example, HEQCO 2013; Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology 2011).

The process of policy creation

At the beginning of our report, we provided a conceptualization of policy that we adopted from Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992). We understand policy to be created in a non-linear fashion, replete with many associated social and political factors. On February 27, 2014 we conducted a workshop with staff from EDU, TDSB, MTCU and university researchers. After presenting our preliminary findings to participants, we invited discussion on the policy process and the potential

that the concept of "intersectionality" has for increasing participation of marginalized groups in PSE. One of the most salient themes to emerge from the workshop is that informal chitchat is important in arriving at decisions and these decisions lead to policy. The issue of different equity groups may not explicitly arise in policy documents but it is discussed at length among the different staff members of these agencies. Thus, there is some suggestion that the issues on the "radar" of the staff are not necessarily represented by the policies and that a lot of the content that we would need to fully understand the decisions is undocumented. This is not surprising, and indeed implicit in the Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) model. In this way, an analysis like ours can only demonstrate a very limited view of the process—one that is publicly available to scrutinize. And our creation of a comparative longitudinal data of SMA target groups as percentage of overall enrolments (Figures 13, 14 and 15) provide little evidence that the policies in place to aid these target groups are not producing any substantial gains—at least not yet.

While "access" has been at the forefront of many of the policies considered here, we also find that the targeted groups of MTCU/SMA policy ignore race (and ethnicity). The reason for this may be linked to our observation that previous reports on opening access by non-MTCU agencies have not considered race, possibly due to data limitations in our federal longitudinal data sources on youth in this country. We argue that our previous findings (Robson, Anisef, and Brown 2014)—and countless other research findings from across the globe—suggest that ignoring race in access policies does not directly address the groups who are most marginalized. While many racialized groups may also be found under umbrella terms like "low income" (a point also raised in our workshop), being at the intersection of low income and having SEN, or being a Black male, creates additional structural barriers for students (Robson, Anisef, Brown, and Parehk 2014).

Suggestions for further research

It is our contention that further work must be put into making race and the intersections of race a priority for policies targeted at improving PSE access in Ontario. A lack of recognition on the intersectional nature of structured inequality may be behind our findings that, even for target groups that are recognized as a priority (in our sample), little improvements have been observed to date. The challenge is to identify under-represented groups across the province using race and ethnicity as possible factors, something that is not possible with the Youth in Transition Survey (a study that is no longer collecting data). The absence of current province-wide representative demographic and longitudinal data on youth in this province (and others) points to a desperately needed source of valid evidence to make effective policy decisions to service the heterogeneous population of Ontario. Until then, some attempts to examine PSE and marginalized groups in Ontario by using an intersectional perspective can be undertaken with the 2011 TDSB Student Census, which carries information on ethnocultural group and can link information of youth characteristics to later applications to Ontario colleges and universities. These data will continue to allow us to develop a detailed portrait of Toronto public school students, but they will not permit us to comment on the situations of approximately 85% of secondary students in Ontario residing outside the GTA as well as those within the GTA who attend schools in the Catholic boards.

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