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## The Values of Education in Ontario: For Whites and for Natives

### Abstract

This is much discourse these days concerning why Native students are not succeeding in the public school system in Ontario, as compared to their non-Native counterparts. This paper aims to rephrase this question, not by asking why Native students are not succeeding, but rather by questioning the school system itself. Why is it that the system can be referred to as “our school system” by the dominant White population, while it has been referred to as the “foreign system” by Native scholars? This suggests that the intrinsic values evident in the public school system today represent a White, Eurocentric pedagogy, which stands in stark contrast to traditional Native educational values. These inherent Eurocentric values are outlined and compared to traditional Native values. This paper also addresses the issue that arises when Native youth do succeed within this system, namely that one set of cultural values take precedence over the other. The conclusion argues that not only is there a desire for Native students to succeed, but there is also a necessity: faced with an impending ecological crisis, it may be that the dominant White culture needs to adopt some ecologically-focused Native values in order to sustain us all.