

observations the criticism that the E-12 Guidelines were developed without proper consultation with the aboriginal community.⁶

In May of 1987, the then Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the Honourable William McKnight announced in a letter to Chiefs and councils that the post-secondary education assistance program as it existed under the E-12 Guidelines would be reviewed. This review took place between 1987 and 1989, and included, the Department says, a period of consultation with the aboriginal community over the last six months of 1988.

In the same letter announcing the policy review, the then Minister announced several interim changes to the E-12 Guidelines:

- eligibility for the program would in future require residency in Canada for the 12 months prior to application (previously, students need only have been resident in Canada at the time of application);
- deletion of the composite allowance for graduate students equal to half the salary of the previous year's employment;
- no appeal on the basis of refusal of assistance because of lack of program funds;
- once the program budget as allocated by the Main Estimates was exhausted, no supplementary funds would be sought for that fiscal year;
- given the possibility of deferrals, a system was introduced to prioritize the processing of applications; priority was to be given to deferred approvals and continuing students and assistance to other categories of applicants would be approved to the extent there were any remaining funds.

In March of 1988, the Honourable William McKnight announced his intention to circulate a consultation package consisting of a questionnaire and a proposed statement of policy to govern the program, that would be separate from operating guidelines (to be developed later by the Department and administering organizations). The consultation process originally scheduled to end in September of 1988 was extended to December of that year.

In a letter to Chiefs and Councils dated March 20, 1989, the current Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the Honourable Pierre