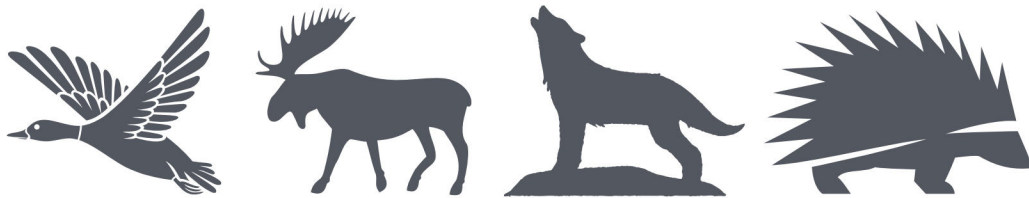


Community Climate Survey



2022 Results

Territorial Acknowledgement

This community climate survey and subsequent research report was conducted on the traditional and territorial lands of the Cree, Oji-Cree, Ojibway, and Algonquin homelands. We acknowledge these ancestral lands that we are gathered on, which continue to interconnect us all and remind us that we are all treaty people. First Nation communities now located on these lands include: Temagami, Timiskaming, Matachewan, Mattagami, Wahgoshig, Taykwa Tagamou, Beaverhouse, Flying Post, Moose Cree, Fort Albany, Kashechewan, Attawapiskat Weenusk, and Métis Peoples Region #3.

Note on Confidentiality and Presentation of Results

Participants were known to surveyors and survey interviews were conducted in-person, over the phone, or via video call. Therefore, anonymity is not expected by the participants. However, efforts to preserve confidentiality include the careful selection of quotations and occasional redaction of names or identifying information. Additionally, question scores are only displayed if there are at least five responses. Although some information may be screened out of the displays in this report, all the available data was included in the results analysis.

Overall Findings

This 2022 Community Climate Survey report presents the results of 110 survey interviews with community leaders conducted by Northern College administrators. Approximately 50 hours of conversation resulted; scores were calculated for each question and all participant comments were analyzed for themes. Overall, Northern College ('Northern') is perceived favourably among the communities it serves. Access to high-quality education that is aligned to the local labour market was a major theme for most participants. The one-on-one survey interview method was appreciated by participants, who perceived this method as an example of Northern College meeting its commitment to be open, consultative, and accountable:

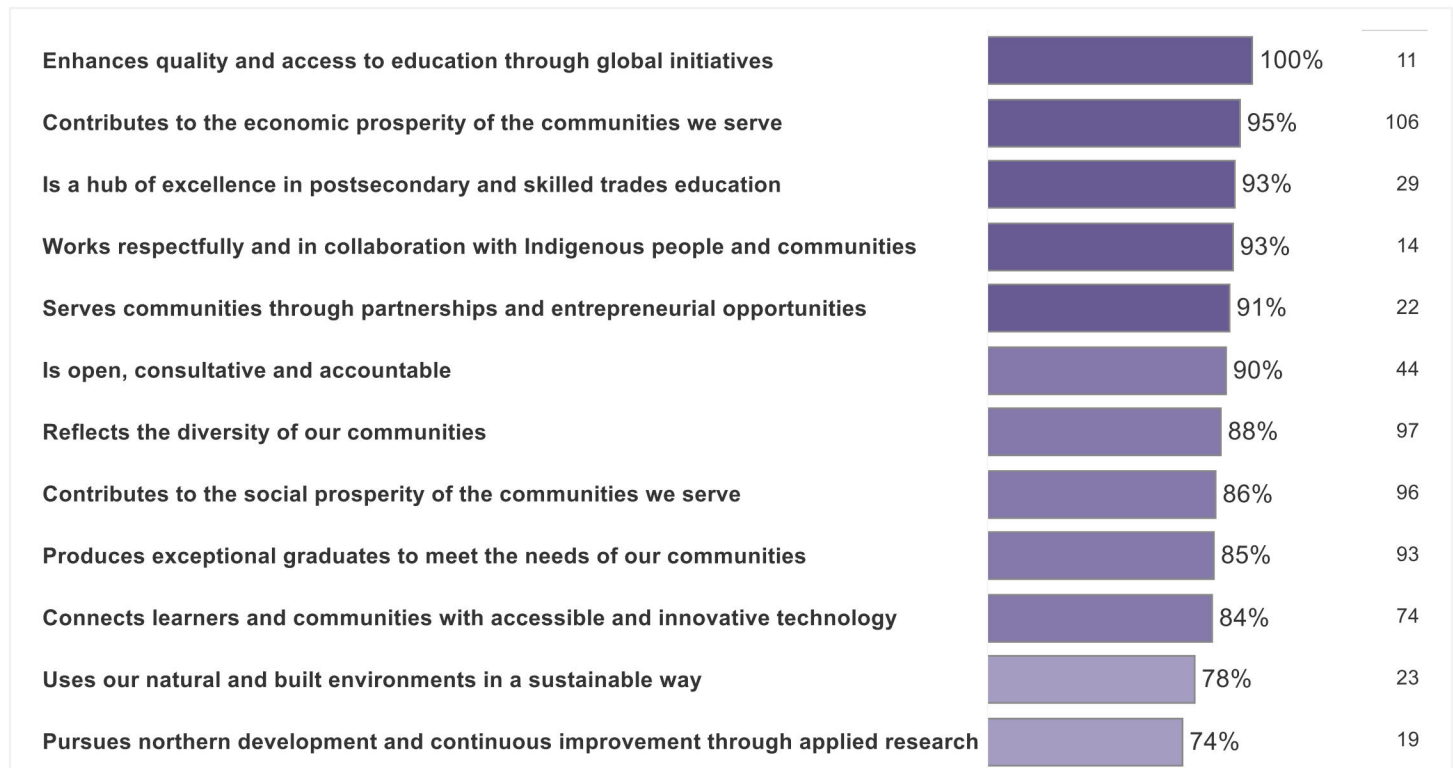
"Evidenced by the reach out for this climate survey... The personal nature of this type of reach out provides transparency and accountability. Good work Northern."-Partner from Timmins area

"Yes, based on the fact that we are having this conversation together. Aware of the fact that we have a very diverse and responsive Board of Directors. Northern has a good reputation."-Partner from Timmins area

Question Scores

The survey interviews included between seven and nine questions related to Northern's institutional commitments (questions were determined based on the category, and Indigenous participants were also asked about Northern's commitment to Indigenous people). The results were scored out of 100%; if all responses were the most positive option 'Definitely Yes', the score was 100%. The score does not include 'Not Sure/ Don't Know' responses. Overall question scores ranged from 74% to 100%. The highest score (with 11 responses, all 'Definitely Yes') was 'Do you think Northern College enhances quality and access to education through global initiatives?' (Figure 1). 'Does Northern College contribute to the economic prosperity of the communities we serve?' was scored at 95% 'Definitely Yes' by 106 participants.

FIGURE 1. OVERALL QUESTION SCORES



Themes

Access to high-quality programs that are aligned to the labour market was a central theme discussed by participants, who described cascading outcomes from graduate employment and retention in the north to industry growth and social and economic prosperity (Figure 2). This model was constructed from 22 themes that emerged from the analysis of all respondent comments. This model displays overall results; there were 96 individual themes identified in the data, demonstrating the wide diversity of experience and perspective of the survey participants. Northern graduates were described as well-educated and prepared for work. The need for graduates was highlighted, specifically for mining, welding, and healthcare. Areas for improvement included increased marketing and communication about the College (especially program options) to communities, more technology for online access, Indigenization (specifically, embedding Indigenous approaches to learning and teaching within programming and aligning program options to community needs), and developing more partnerships.

FIGURE 2. THEMES ARISING FROM RESPONDENT COMMENTS: ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND ASSOCIATED OUTCOMES



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Background and Purpose

The landscape for higher education in Northern Ontario has changed significantly over the last three years. Our region is experiencing record-low unemployment rates, a provincial election returned a new MPP in Timmins, many people have been working at home (and staying home when possible) for over two years, and inflation has reached rates not seen since the 1980s.¹ We will watch these and other signposts as we move forward into a within- and post-pandemic environment. Given so much change in such a short period of time, it has never been more important to make sure that we at Northern College are operating from a base of understanding the needs, desires, and concerns of the local communities we serve.

Northern College Board of Governors policy A-7 ‘Our Communities’ (‘Policy A-7’) requires that the President report on a Community Climate survey that is, “administered every year as a means of measuring the College’s commitment and achievements” related to the community engagement indicators listed in the policy. The engagement indicators are closely aligned with the institutional commitments outlined in our 2020-2024 Strategic Plan (‘Strategic Plan’) (Figure 3). The commitments are mapped to the survey questions in Appendix I. While the survey is usually administered via email, the institution re-invigorated community connections by asking the College leadership (all administrators) to have five conversations with local community contacts and record those survey interviews.

FIGURE 1. NORTHERN COLLEGE COMMITMENTS

BOARD OF GOVERNORS POLICY A-7 OUR COMUNITIES
Contribute to the economic and social prosperity of the communities we serve.
Develop and maintain partnerships with local businesses and organizations to ensure the right mix of training and labour force development strategies are in place.
Pursue and conduct an innovative research agenda that proactively responds to industry needs and provides experiential learning for our students.
Maintain a high profile locally, provincially and nationally.
Continue to promote itself as a postsecondary and skilled trades hub of excellence.
Support the demand for exceptional graduates to meet the strategic economic development agenda of northern communities.
STRATEGIC PLAN INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS
Support, nurture and celebrate the contributions and accomplishments of learners and employees.
Connect our learners and communities through the application of accessible and innovative technology.
Foster and encourage a friendly, caring and respectful organizational culture.
Establish an organizational culture that reflects the diversity of our communities.
Work respectfully, in collaboration with Indigenous peoples and communities.
Pursue partnerships and entrepreneurial opportunities to better serve community.
Enhance the quality and access to college education through global initiatives.
Engage in applied research in the pursuit of northern development and continuous improvement.
Use our natural and built environments observing conservation and sustainable practices.
Practice ethical decision making that engenders trust while safeguarding the College.
Be open, consultative and accountable.
Act with personal responsibility and integrity.
Exceed expectations.

¹ Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0380-01 Labour force characteristics, three-month moving average, seasonally adjusted. <https://doi.org/10.25318/1410038001-eng>. Retrieved March 7, 2022

Respondent Profile

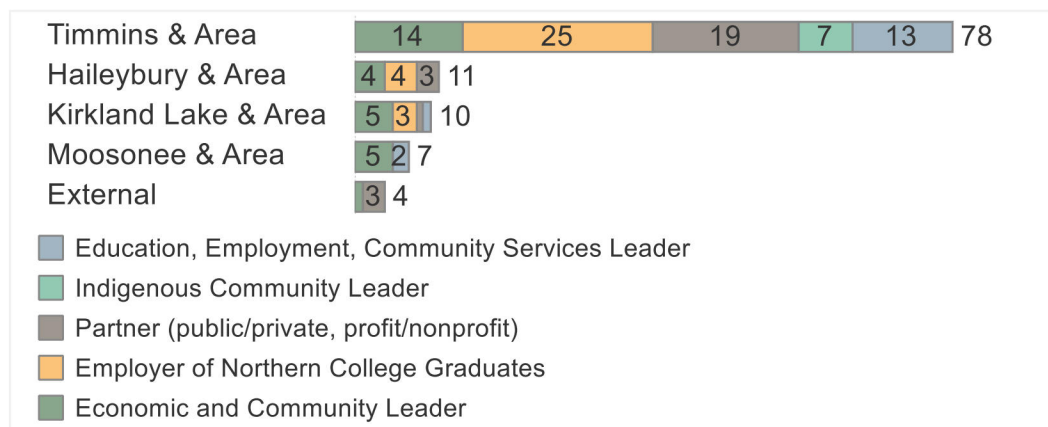
There were 110 individuals who participated in the survey interviews (Figure 4). The majority (78, or 71%) were from Timmins and the surrounding area. When compared to the student population at Northern College, the Timmins area and Moosonee areas were over-represented among participants, while the Haileybury area was under-represented.²

FIGURE 2. SAMPLE REPRESENTATION: LOCATION BY STUDENT POPULATION

	March 2022 Enrolment		Community Climate Survey Participants	
	N	%	N	%
Haileybury & Area	406	26%	11	10%
Moosonee & Area	20	1%	7	6%
Kirkland Lake & Area	190	12%	10	9%
Timmins & Area	963	61%	78	71%
External	-	-	4	4%
Total	1,566	100%	110	100%

Participants were assigned to categories which described their relationship to the college. The categories determined which survey questions they were asked. The largest group (32, or 29%) were employers of Northern College graduates, 25 of whom were located in Timmins and the surrounding area (Figure 5). There were 29 economic and community leaders (political or commercial organizations), 26 partners (public/private, profit/nonprofit who provide placements, research partnerships or entrepreneurial opportunities), 16 education, employment and community services leaders (community-based social services and economic development), and 7 Indigenous community leaders (leaders, chief, or council members of First Nation or Métis communities). There were 17 Indigenous participants (15% of all participants), including 7 from the Timmins area and 7 from Moosonee and surrounding communities.

FIGURE 3. RESPONDENT PROFILE – LOCATION AND CATEGORY



² Based on the assumption that the survey participants should be proportionate, by location, to the student population at each campus. $\chi^2(3, N = 106) = 50.076, p = <0.0001$.

Results – Individual Questions

Global Initiatives

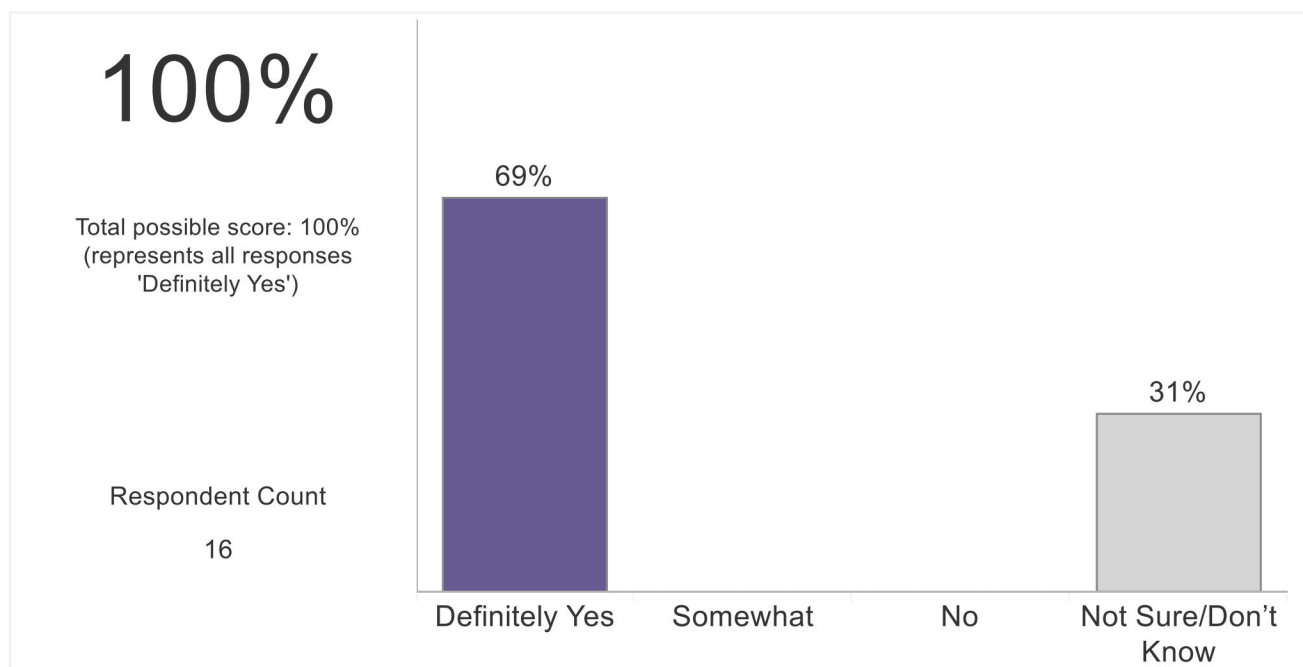
Enhancing quality and access to education through global initiatives is a commitment listed in the Strategic Plan. This commitment had the highest score (100% of those who responded chose 'Definitely Yes'); however, only 11 of 16 participants who were asked this question were able to provide a response (Figure 6). All participants were leaders in education, employment and community services. Themes about international student recruitment, the community diversity that results, and the contribution that international students make to local social and economic prosperity were present in participant comments.

*"<Northern College> meshes well with Federal initiatives like RNIP³ which help shore up **labour shortages** in Northern Ontario. (...). Helps fill gaps in **labour market**. Socializing people from other places in the world makes people less fearful of other places and increases **community welcoming**."
-Education, Employment and Community Services Leader*

*"Understanding the **global needs** and providing services and programs accordingly to respond to those needs. Training international students. That needs to be recognized and applauded. We are remote in the province and they've done really well **attracting international students** to respond to the **needs of our community**."
-Education, Employment and Community Services Leader (Secondary Education)*

*"College enhances the community, and the students are more **diverse** than the general community surrounding it. College is more reflective of diversity than the community, the community can learn from the college. The community can use Northern College as a resource."
-Partner*

FIGURE 4. DO YOU THINK NORTHERN COLLEGE ENHANCES QUALITY AND ACCESS TO EDUCATION THROUGH GLOBAL INITIATIVES?



³ Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot. An immigration program that provides a path to permanence residence for skilled foreign workers, including international students who graduate from a two-year-or-longer program in Timmins.

Economic Prosperity

All participants were asked whether Northern College contributes to the economic prosperity of the communities it serves. Almost all participants (95%, or 96 of 106 who responded) said 'Definitely Yes' (Figure 7). Economic prosperity was also an overarching outcome mentioned in participant comments. Economic prosperity was described in terms of the College as an employer, attracting students who live and work in these communities, enabling students to graduate and find work, and allowing industry growth by providing skilled graduates. The recruitment of international and Canadian students to the North and retention of local learners was strongly tied to economic prosperity.

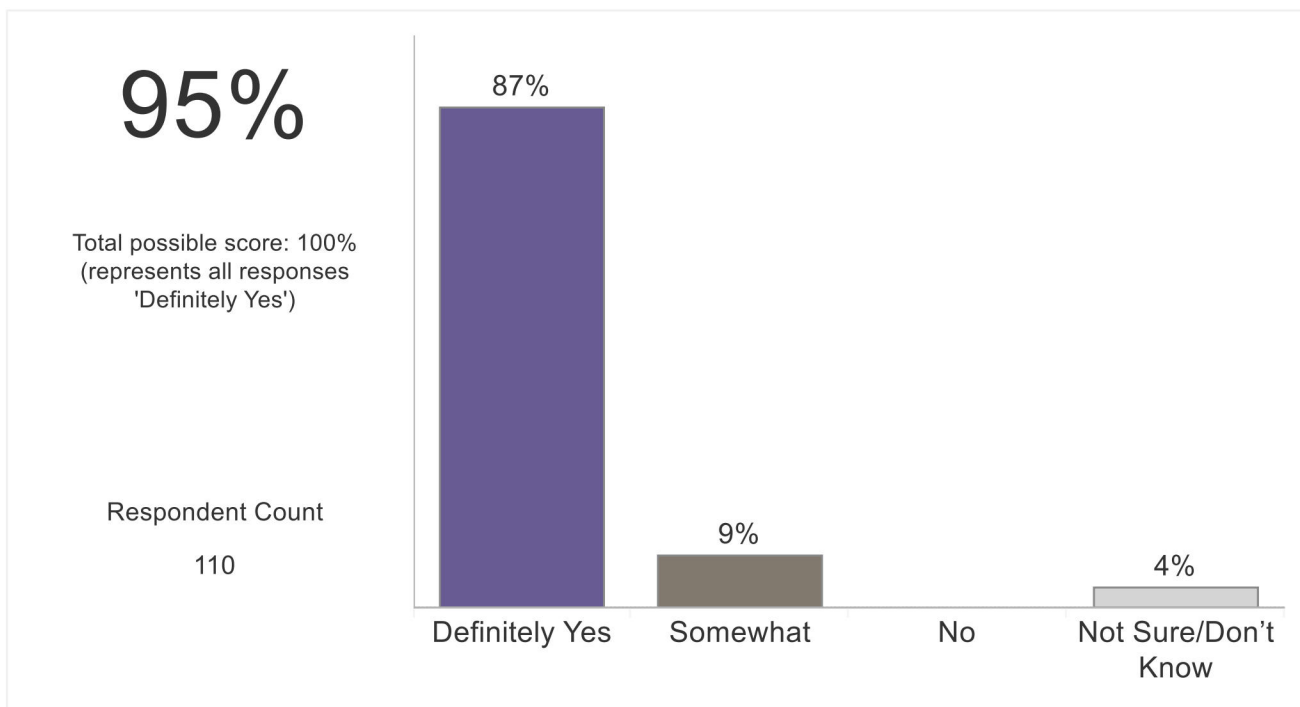
"Provides training and skilled trades in need in Northern Ontario. (...) I was speaking with Professor here in KL and they were saying welders get snatched up before grad. Northern fills needs for skilled labour." -Education, Employment and Community Services Leader

"We do have graduates that work for us welding and millwrighting. We've done some professional development for supervisors and managers to grow global competencies. (...) Virtual aspect provides easy access to schooling." -Employer of Northern College Graduates

"Through education, skills upgrading, partnerships with industry to develop specific training, collaboration on research with nonprofits and businesses, and direct staffing." -Economic and Community Leader from Timmins

"Bringing in younger families contributes to the liveliness of the community. (...) it is changing the fabric of the area. NC has jobs at the end. Help promote this to families from down south. Difficult environment to attract and retain trades people. (...) So NC could be part of a portal to help attract people." -Employer of Northern College Graduates (Mining)

FIGURE 5. DOES NORTHERN COLLEGE CONTRIBUTE TO THE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY OF THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE?



Hub of Excellence

Policy A-7 states that Northern College will, “Continue to promote itself as a postsecondary and skilled trades hub of excellence”. Two aspects were explored: the perception of Northern College as a hub of excellence and the efforts to promote that status. To measure the effectiveness of this promotion (and associated perceptions and experiences), employers of Northern College graduates were asked if they would consider Northern to be a hub of excellence. Most (93%, or 26 of 29 who responded) said, ‘Definitely Yes’ (Figure 8). There were areas for improvement around marketing and communications in terms of promoting initiatives and programming at the College. This concept was also tied to recruitment efforts and retaining youth in the North.

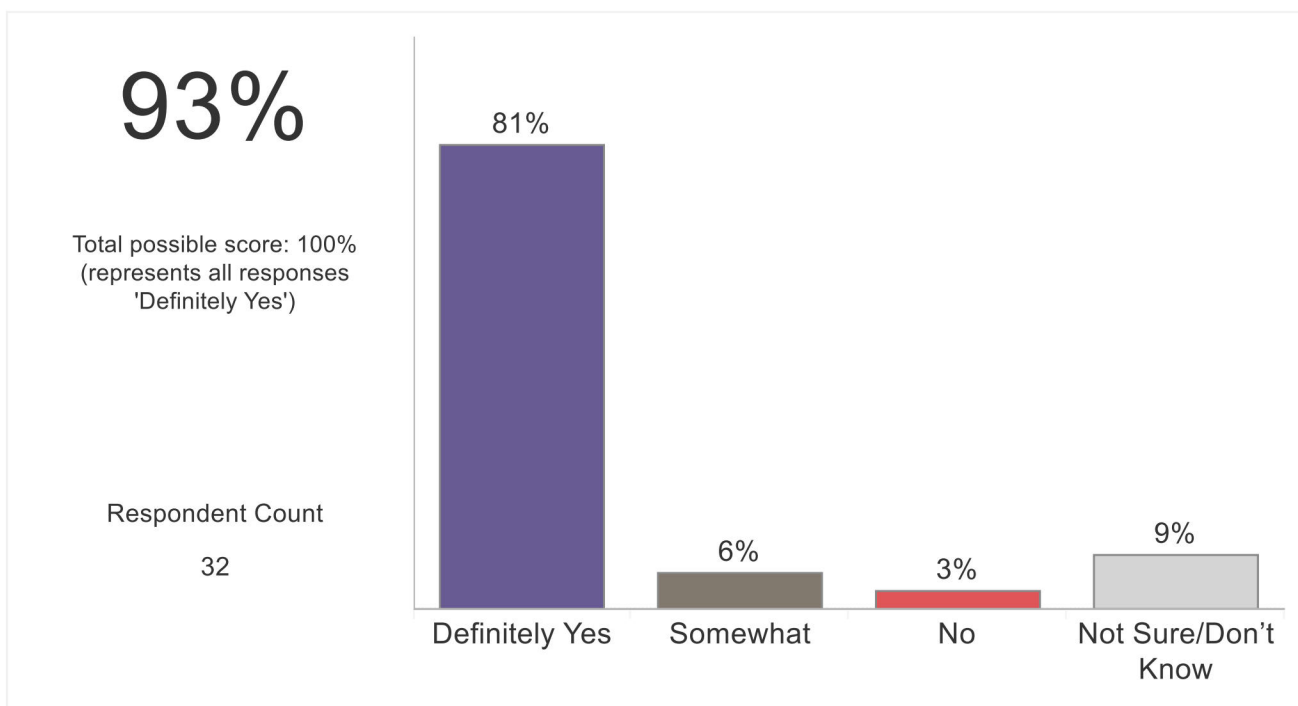
“Based on the graduates that they have had and the skill set they demonstrated. Placement students have been offered permanent employment with the Hospital in the past.”-Employer of Northern College Graduates (Healthcare)

“My brother-in-law <___> teaches; lots of experience. The few professors I’ve met have been very experienced in their industry. Hands-on in the industry. Known on the technical side.” -Employer of Northern College Graduates (Mining)

“We have identified Northern as a valuable partner because of our shared values, technical programs and ready to work graduates. We provide free access to our CAT systems, free training to the professors and we also fund bursaries and support the program.” -Employer of Northern College Graduates (Heavy Equipment)

“The community still does not know enough about the good things the college is doing (although more recently a friend in the south did comment on seeing a NC billboard in the south) i.e. Research and Development I only knew because of a tour I was a part of. Promotion is really recruiting. There is still an internal community perspective that doesn’t value enough the local college so expanding stories to better share groundbreaking initiatives will help get past the perspective that only the south has better educational opportunities.”- Education, Employment and Community Services Leader (Secondary Education)

FIGURE 6. WOULD YOU CONSIDER NORTHERN COLLEGE TO BE A HUB OF EXCELLENCE IN POSTSECONDARY AND SKILLED TRADES EDUCATION?



Partnerships and Entrepreneurial Opportunities

The Strategic Plan states that Northern will pursue partnerships and entrepreneurial opportunities to better serve the community. Partners (public, private, profit and non-profit) were asked whether the College is currently meeting this commitment. The 91% majority (18 out of 22 who responded) said 'Definitely Yes' (Figure 9). Partnerships emerged as an area of strength in participant comments, and also as an area for further development.

"Northern College contributes to the Town of Englehart's economic prosperity with graduates filling the vacancies in accounting, maintenance, and other administrative jobs. The Town of Englehart is looking to develop a relationship with Northern College to fill co-op and student placements within various businesses." -Town of Englehart

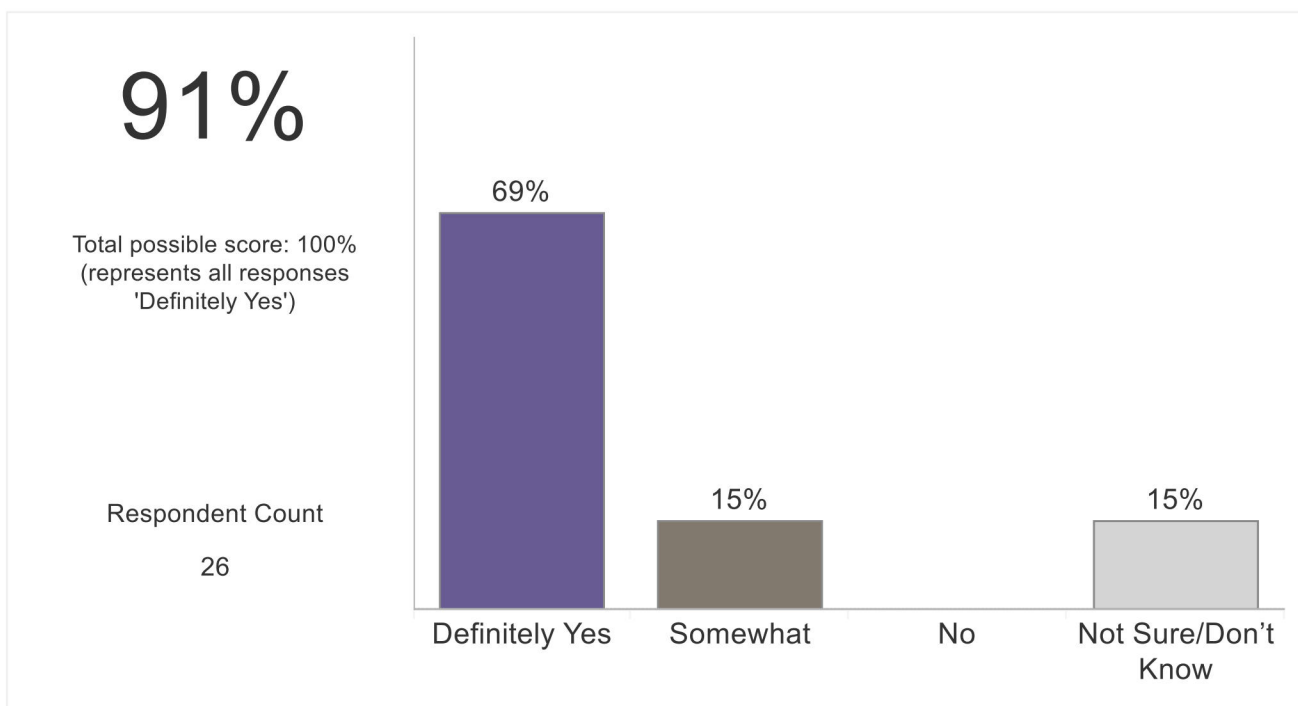
"Contributions and collaborations with many community initiatives, including chamber events and FNETB events. See NC reps on many regional and area committees and boards as well including working groups. NC is always willing, able and at the table. Further, NC actively supports efforts to evaluate local labour market needs and uses the FNETB labour market research to inform their proposals, programs and operations." -Far Northeast Training Board

"Evidence with the Consortium between the Hearing Society, March of Dimes and Employment Services." -March of Dimes

"We work together on the Kids in Care program. Northern College provides a lot of value-added to children in this care situation." -Northeastern Ontario Child and Family Services

"Have the greatest respect for our kindness in offering a free room to hold a free political debate for the community. Very impressed with this. <...> We cooperate with Indigenous people and will have Pow Wow at the College. Having it here is a perfect situation for that." -Retired Teachers of Ontario

FIGURE 7. DO YOU THINK NORTHERN COLLEGE IS CURRENTLY MEETING OUR COMMITMENT TO SERVE COMMUNITIES THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES?



Open, Consultative and Accountable

Being open, consultative and accountable is one of the commitments in the Strategic Plan. Partners and Indigenous community leaders were asked whether Northern College was meeting this commitment. Out of 44 responses, 37 (90%) said 'Definitely Yes' (Figure 10). Another 4 participants did not respond ('Not Sure/Don't Know'). The concept of what it means to be open, consultative, and accountable was further explored from the perspective of participants. Eight (8) of the participants pointed out the personal survey interview approach to this survey as an example of this concept.

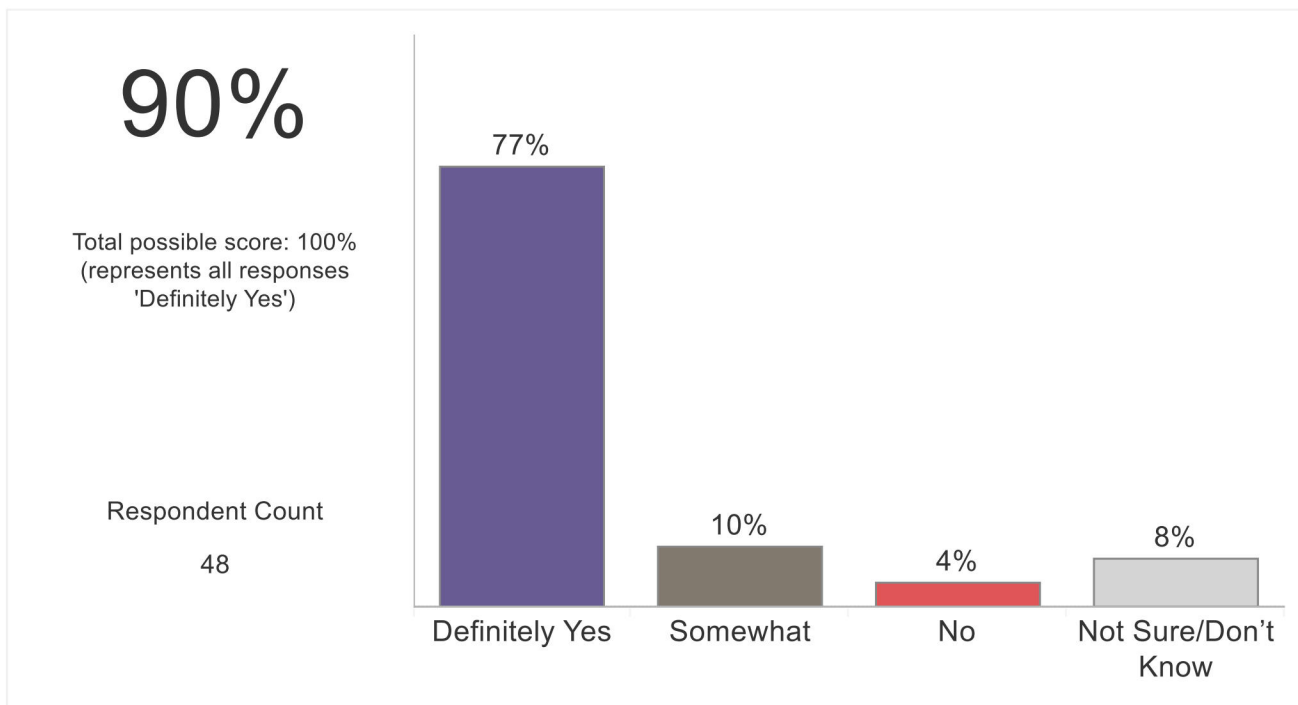
"Would say yes. The fact that our employers are happy with our graduates we hear so many positive comments about them and the fact that they contact the College when the employers need more workers, and the College sends the students and graduates to them with their resumes, and prepares them for the interviews, and then the College gets positive feedback from the employers is an example of that openness and accountability."-Partner

"This survey is an example. Being open to tailoring programs and services to meet the needs identified in the communities. Very present in the community, in communicating success and planned programs. Communicating, social media posts to keep people informed. I like when promoting successful groups of graduates in different programs... a good example of reporting back to the community and putting clients at the forefront."-Partner

"I think Dr. Penner has done an exceptional job of being visible and being involved. She wants to be involved with the community. That speaks volumes about what it means to be a community college. It has really become a respected institution. (...) That takes perseverance."-Education, Employment and Community Services Leader (Secondary Education)

"The Senior Management Team is accessible and open to discussions and partnering opportunities. Very helpful. Northern has a great reputation for partnering with businesses and organizations."-Partner

FIGURE 8. IS NORTHERN COLLEGE OPEN, CONSULTATIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE?



Diversity

All participants were asked whether Northern College reflects the diversity of the communities it serves. Of those who responded, 88% (76) said 'Definitely Yes' (Figure 11). Thirteen (13) did not provide a response. Some participants mentioned that Northern College is less diverse than the communities it serves; others said it was more diverse. Diversity was discussed in terms of cultural and national backgrounds as well as socio-economic status and life experience. Indigenization was also related to diversity. Comments encouraging more diversity focused on the recruitment of Indigenous students and staff and increased diversity in general among the faculty. Participants from Kirkland Lake were more likely to respond 'Not Sure', and participants in Haileybury and from regional organizations were more likely to choose 'Somewhat' instead of 'Definitely Yes'.

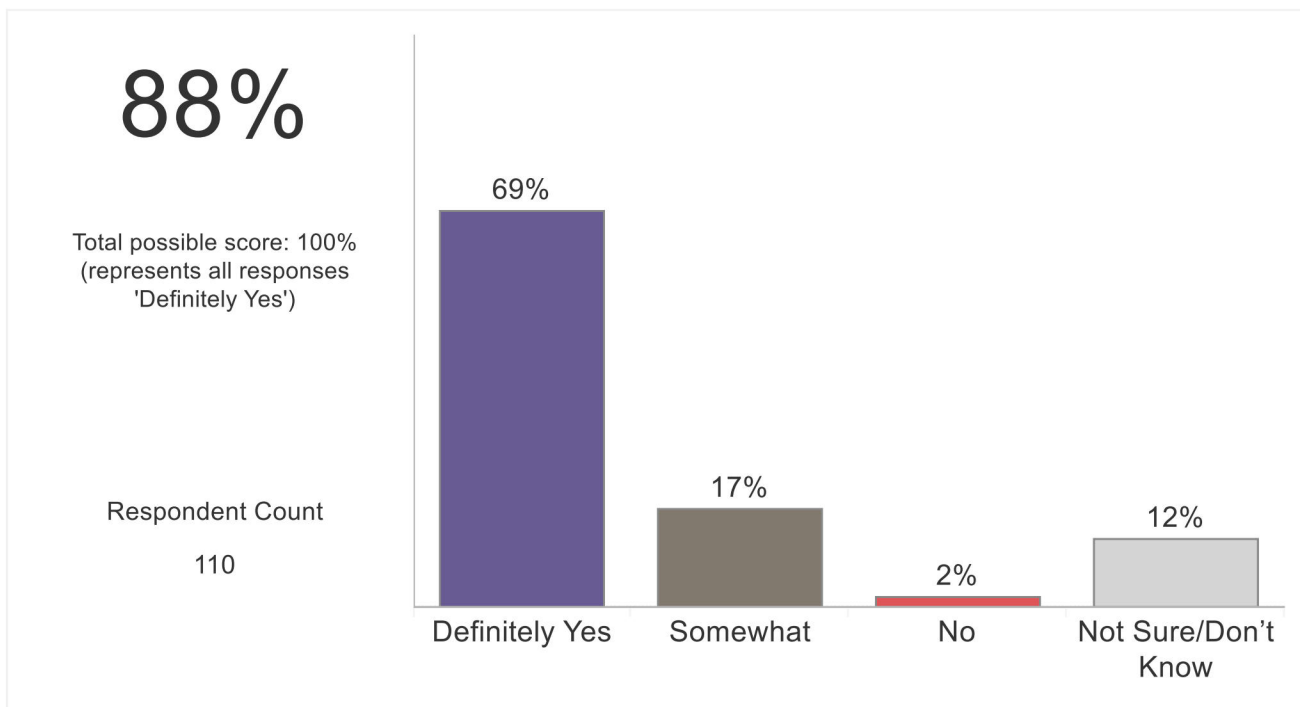
"International student recruitment leading the diversity of our communities." -Employer of Northern College Graduates

"Northern is far more diverse than our community is and Northern is helping is with the diversification. The college has brought about a great amount of diversity in our community that we have not had in the past. College is a great launching spot to immigration and students coming to our community to fill jobs that are needed." -Economic and Community Leader

"Northern is helping people stay in our community but we could do more to provide programming for Indigenous students (Indigenous based programming specifically)." -Education, Employment and Community Services Leader

"At the student level yes, but less so at the faculty level... Targeted hiring of more diversity could fix this but is understandably difficult in our region." -Partner

FIGURE 9. BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH OR KNOWLEDGE OF NORTHERN, DOES OUR ORGANIZATION REFLECT THE DIVERSITY OF OUR COMMUNITIES?



Social Prosperity

Social prosperity is included in one of the institutional commitments in Policy A-7. All participants were asked whether Northern College contributes to the social prosperity of the communities it serves. Participants were then asked what social prosperity means them and to provide examples or describe how Northern could better contribute to social prosperity. This question was one of the two with the highest percentage of 'Somewhat' responses (21% of all participants) (Figure 12). Of those who responded, 86% (71 of 96) said 'Definitely Yes'. While economic prosperity was strongly defined and recognized as a definite outcome, social prosperity was somewhat less defined. Housing, quality of life, general wellbeing, inclusion and diversity were all linked to social prosperity.

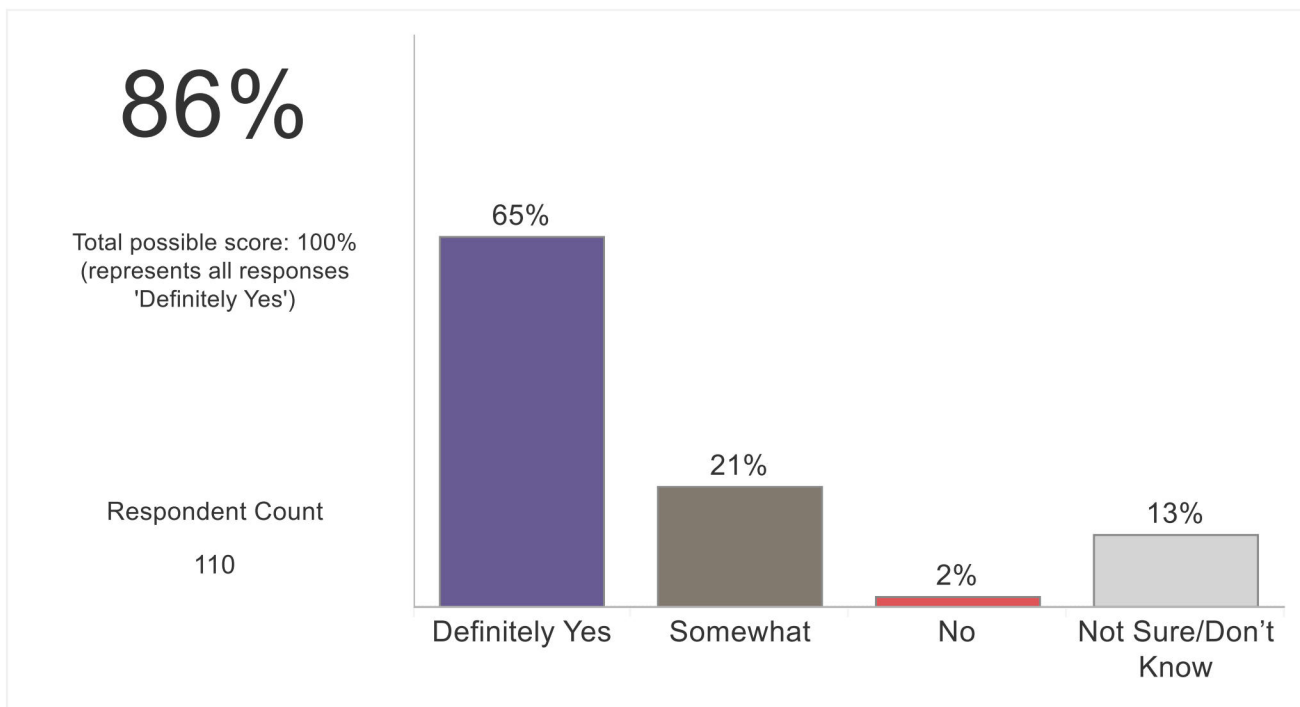
*“From my perspective and in my role, I’m looking at the Indigenous population and opportunities for those students to **access education** and this has significantly increased in the last few years... Northern has been very supportive of programming opportunities to aid in that population’s social prosperity. **Housing** is an issue; taking in large numbers of international students with housing being difficult to find- this needs to be addressed.” - Education, Employment and Community Services Leader (Secondary Education)*

*“Social prosperity evokes **general wellbeing** of the community, **improved quality of life**. I would say that Northern College could better contribute to social prosperity by being more **involved** in community partnerships, organizations, and events, whether that is through involvement on a committee or through donations.”-Community and Economic Leader, Timmins*

*“I believe Northern College does contribute to the social prosperity of the communities we serve because social prosperity to me means **diversity and respect for others and the way they live their lives**. The more people that move to Timmins, the more they will meet partners, grow as families and add to the prosperity of the North.” - Education, Employment and Community Services Leader (Secondary Education)*

*“Giving **equal opportunity** to anyone and everyone who can benefit from the training we offer. Comes with **diversity and inclusion** where Northern College contributes to ensure that everyone who needs to **access their services** can do that.” -Partner in Timmins Area*

FIGURE 10. DOES NORTHERN COLLEGE CONTRIBUTE TO THE SOCIAL PROSPERITY OF THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE?



Exceptional Graduates

Policy A-7 states that Northern will, “support the demand for exceptional graduates to meet the strategic economic development agenda of northern communities”. The survey asked all participants whether Northern College meets this commitment. Overall, this question had one of the two highest percentages of ‘Somewhat’ responses. Of those who answered the question, 85% (68 of 93) said ‘Definitely Yes’ (Figure 13). Another 17 were not sure and did not answer. Scores were higher for participants in the Moosonee and Haileybury campus areas, and employers were able to give direct feedback about graduates they had hired. Participants who answered ‘Somewhat’ mentioned opportunities to further promote the successes of Northern graduates and to align international-focused programs more closely to the labour market.

“Yes, absolutely. Has hired on at least two grads and is a grad himself, and also does placement programs so gets to see them before they are completed.” -Employer of Northern College Graduates (Mechanical)

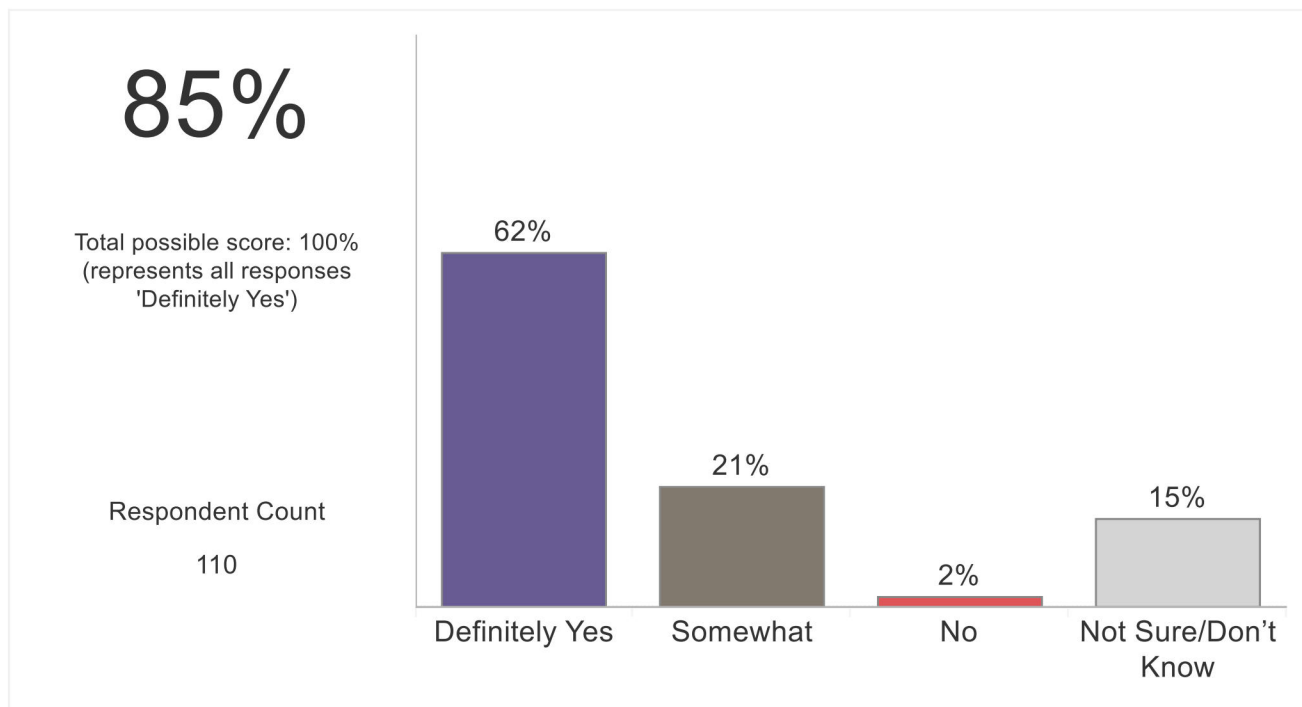
*“In my experience, the graduates are **average** (few are exceptional). Many lack insight on **time management and organizational skills.**” -Employer of Northern College Graduates (Healthcare)*

*“Important to **publicly amplify** your graduates. College itself can **highlight** their graduates a way to inform the community of the excellent graduates that we have.” -Partner*

*“There are some areas of improvement needed here. Specifically, through the international recruitment program. Through the program they are facilitating, there is a **disconnect** with what they are taking and what is needed in the labour market. Lots of business grads but need skilled trades. So need a more focused recruitment effort then. College needs to make money but need to have more of a directed into labour market match.” -Economic and Community Leader*

*Amazed **quality** of graduates in the Vet Tech program that have **stayed in the community** and have been able to obtain employment in the field. Affinity to their time at Northern.” -Economic and Community Leader*

FIGURE 11. DOES NORTHERN COLLEGE PRODUCE EXCEPTIONAL GRADUATES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR <YOUR> COMMUNITY?



Connection through Technology

All participants were asked whether Northern is succeeding in enabling connection for learners and communities with accessible and innovative technology. This question had the third-highest percentage of 'Not Sure/ Don't Know' responses (36, or 33% of all responses) (Figure 14). Of those who answered the question, 84% (54 out of 74) said 'Definitely Yes'. Participants from the Moosonee area had a higher score (90%) compared to other areas. Connecting learners and communities was related to recruiting students and the central theme of access to education.

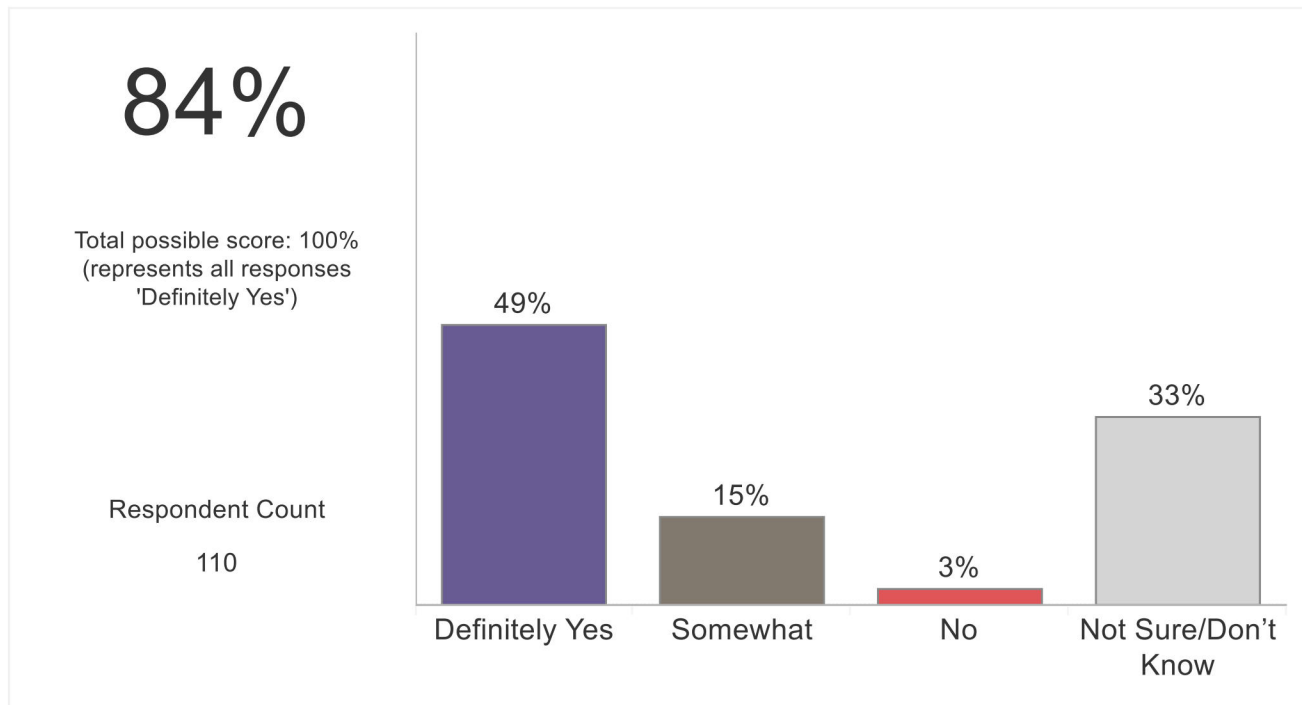
"You can do anything with technology. Accessible online. Grads are highly educated with new technology and accessibility. Very up to date." -Employer of Northern College Graduates (Healthcare)

"Students learn from their own communities and home from the technology the college provides." - Education, Employment and Community Services Leader

"Maybe for the Moosonee area but not in the <___> area. I see a lot of programs being offered on the James Bay side, but nothing over here. There's no connection from what I see here. (...) it would be great to have NC come down here and have programs." -Indigenous Community Leader

"Definitely. These online programs definitely help more people complete their education and provide access. This is a great option for people who are working and pursuing their education. They have a good platform, especially for the mining. What covid has taught us is that not all students are getting as good an education online. It's an avenue but not as good as being in the classroom. The online delivery removes the social aspect of the program in my view." -Partner

FIGURE 12. ONE OF OUR COMMITMENTS IS TO CONNECT LEARNERS AND COMMUNITIES WITH ACCESSIBLE AND INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY. WOULD YOU SAY THAT NORTHERN IS SUCCEEDING IN ENABLING THIS CONNECTION?



Environmental Sustainability

The Strategic Plan states that Northern College will, “use our natural and built environments observing conservation and sustainable practices”. The Community and Economic Leaders group were asked whether Northern College is seen to be using these environments in a sustainable way. Comments in this theme included several around the aesthetics of the physical campuses, as well as the connection that physical campus spaces enable with community members. Almost half (49%, or 22 participants) said they were not sure (Figure 15). Of those who responded, 78% (14) said ‘Definitely Yes’. Eight (8) respondents said ‘Somewhat’.

“Course content is well aligned with sustainable future. Forest fire prevention, mining, creating sustainable thoughts. How we teach fire fighting in the facility seems to be very sustainable.” -Education, Employment and Community Services Leader

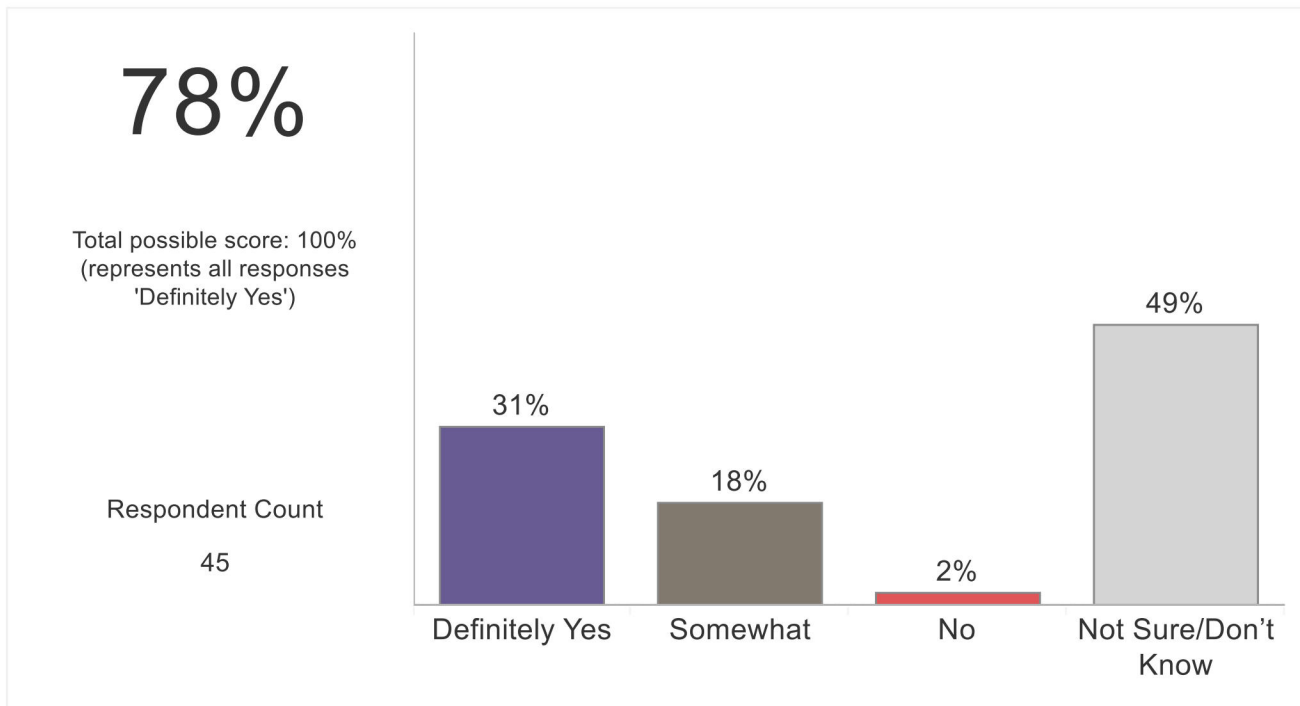
“Expand in the community offering community gardens, this promotes sustainability. working with the city in trying to improve different aspects of the city.” -Education, Employment and Community Services Leader

“I am not up to date on Northern’s activities regarding the sustainable use of its natural and built environments. There is a lack of communication of its efforts.” -Economic and Community Leader

“Do find KL campus is well situated. Nice greenery, looks to be harmonious. There are ways to improve, solar cells, reduce power draw, access to recycling and composting. Lot of roof so solar a quick win.” -Education, Employment and Community Services Leader

“Trees planted, facilities kept up to date in retrofitting buildings etc.” -Economic and Community Leader

FIGURE 13. DO YOU SEE NORTHERN COLLEGE USING OUR NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENTS IN A SUSTAINABLE WAY?



Applied Research

The topic of applied research received the lowest score from participants (74% overall) and the highest percentage of 'Not Sure/ Don't Know' responses (65%, or 35 participants) (Figure 16). This question was asked of Partners and Community and Economic Leaders. Of the 19 participants who answered the question, 74% (11) said 'Definitely Yes'. Most of the 'Definitely Yes' responses came from those in the Timmins area. Areas for improvement included publicising applied research and opportunities for specific partnerships.

"Implementing the new Agriculture/ Business program is showing vast improvement considering people travel down south (Guelph and Bridgetown) to attend a program similar to this one. Having this program in our community will help grow our farming sector." -Leader Community and Economic Leader (Agriculture)

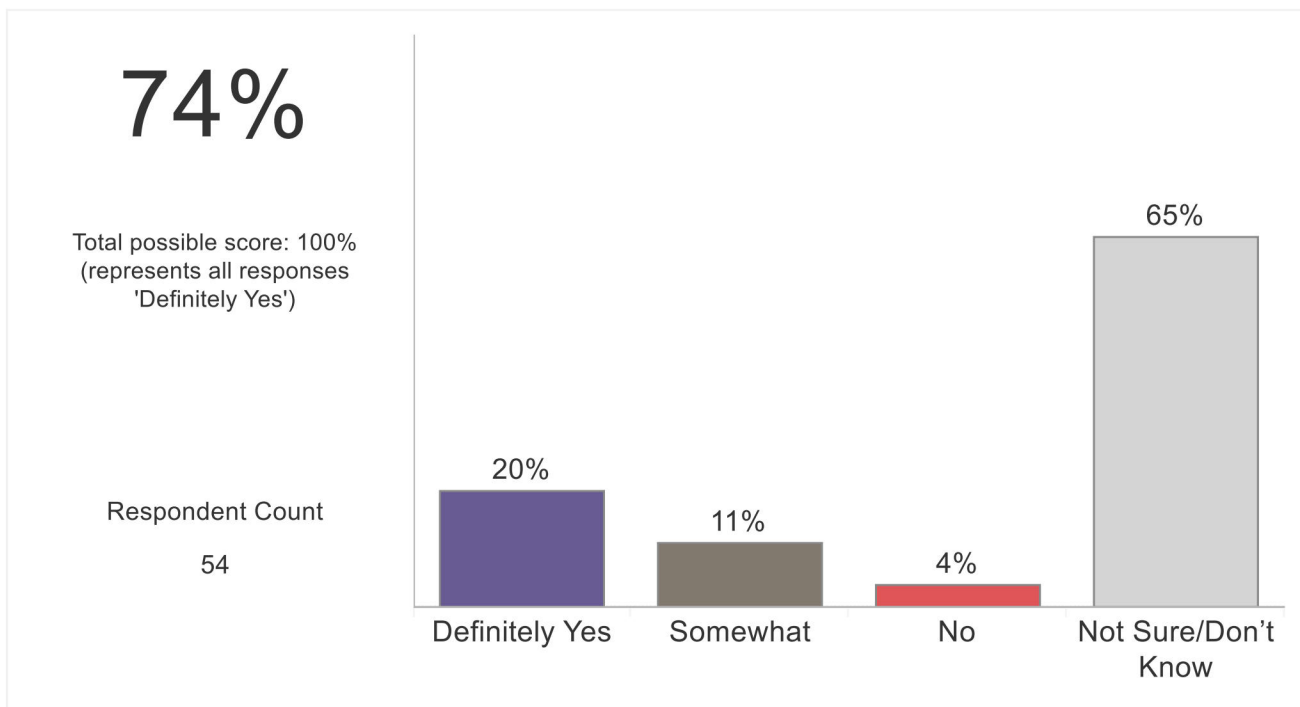
"Commitment in using technology in reaching the far north." -Economic and Community Leader

"Engaged the iHub and that was a really great experience. Not a lot of community partners know about as an option, but <respondent's> experience has been good. People at NC were eager to help out and help build capacity." -Economic and Community Leader

"Battery Materials refinery in our community. Only one in North America today. Great opportunity to strike up a partnership with them to produce students that could run a refinery such as that. We would be the college that would be able to fill those jobs as they come up here and in other places." -Economic and Community Leader

"Publicity of applied research would be beneficial to college. More of an outreach to general public- not fully aware of what we are doing at the college." -Partner

FIGURE 14. ONE OF OUR INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS IS TO PURSUE NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT. DOES NORTHERN COLLEGE ENGAGE IN APPLIED RESEARCH IN THAT PURSUIT?



Indigenous Voices

Overall Results

Participants: 17

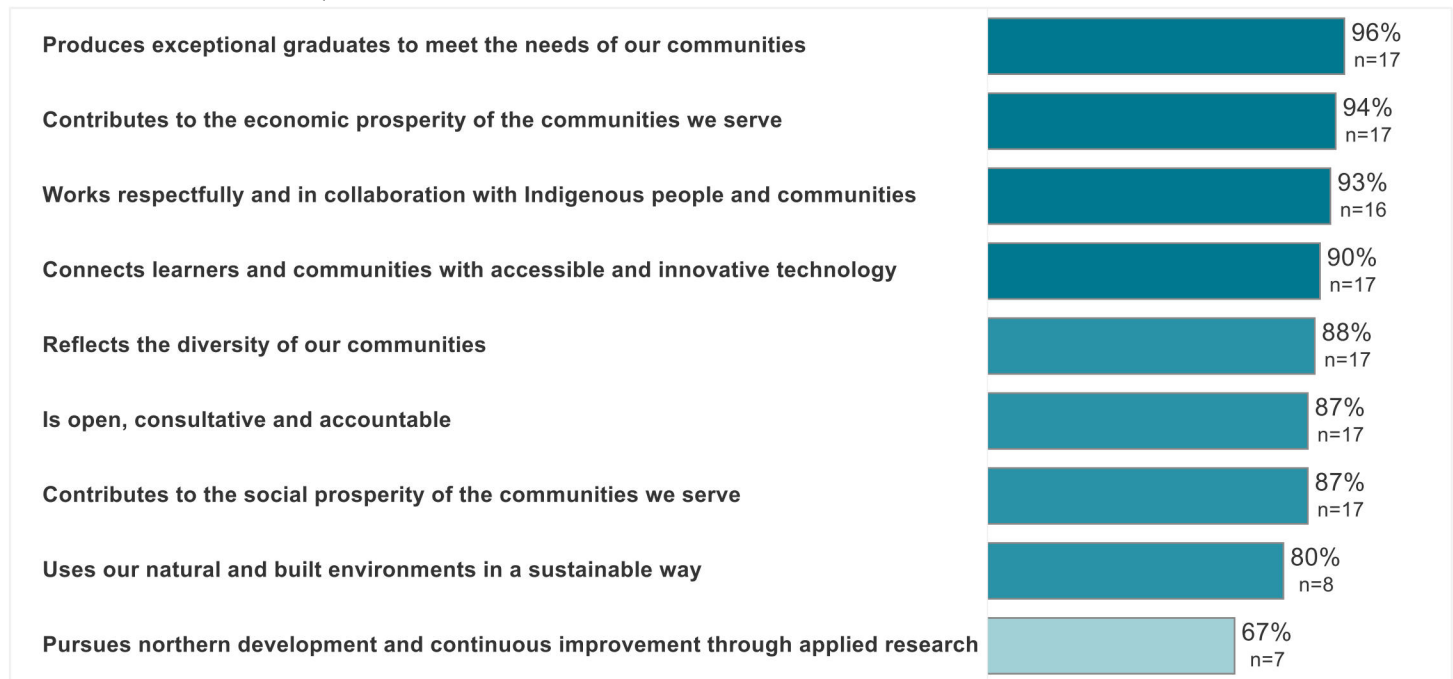
Surveyors: 9

Overall Score: 89%

There were 17 Indigenous participants in the community climate survey. Seven of those participants were from Timmins, six were from Moosonee and the surrounding area, four were from other communities. The overall score from Indigenous participants was similar to non-Indigenous participants (89% and 90%, respectively). Scores for each question ranged from 67% to 96% (Figure 17). Indigenous participants scored 'Connects learners and communities with accessible and innovative technology' and 'produces exceptional graduates to meet the needs of our communities' higher than non-Indigenous participants. 'Pursues northern development and continuous improvement through applied research' and 'Is open, consultative and accountable' were scored lower for Indigenous participants compared to non-Indigenous participants. Comments acknowledged the efforts currently underway and identified areas for improvement. The concept of Indigenization overall was differentiated from basic representation and inclusion.

"I think there is still a significant colonial overlay in how colleges operate. There is a risk of perception of progress which isn't real. Transformation runs deep and is not just about hosting events and having representation. Even indigenous hired staff still function in a colonial system. Decolonizing is difficult but diversity in approach, philosophy, policy, and teaching approaches are all needed. It is clear that there is an attempt to respond to TRC recommendations but there remain a lot of investment, resources, and focus needed to transform the system. Until that investment is made and a fearless dialogue, diversity will remain a struggle." -Indigenous Leader

FIGURE 15. OVERALL QUESTION SCORES – INDIGENOUS PARTICIPANTS



Note. Question must have received at least five responses to be shown in the figure above.

Working Respectfully and in Collaboration

The Strategic Plan includes a commitment to work respectfully in collaboration with Indigenous peoples and communities. Care was taken to ask for feedback on this commitment from Indigenous leaders only. Participants were either leaders of an Indigenous community or were Indigenous people in one of the other respondent categories. Of the 14 participants who gave an answer, 93% (12) said 'Definitely Yes' (Figure 18). Two participants were not able to answer ('Not Sure/ Don't Know').

"Broad question however, the <Keepers of the Circle> project with the College (NTD) was very respectful, with the College team endeavoring to adapt ways of doing things to reflect our needs and the unique needs of communities. A great example of how the college pivoted with the KOTC to meet the needs and exceed targets." -Indigenous Leader and Partner

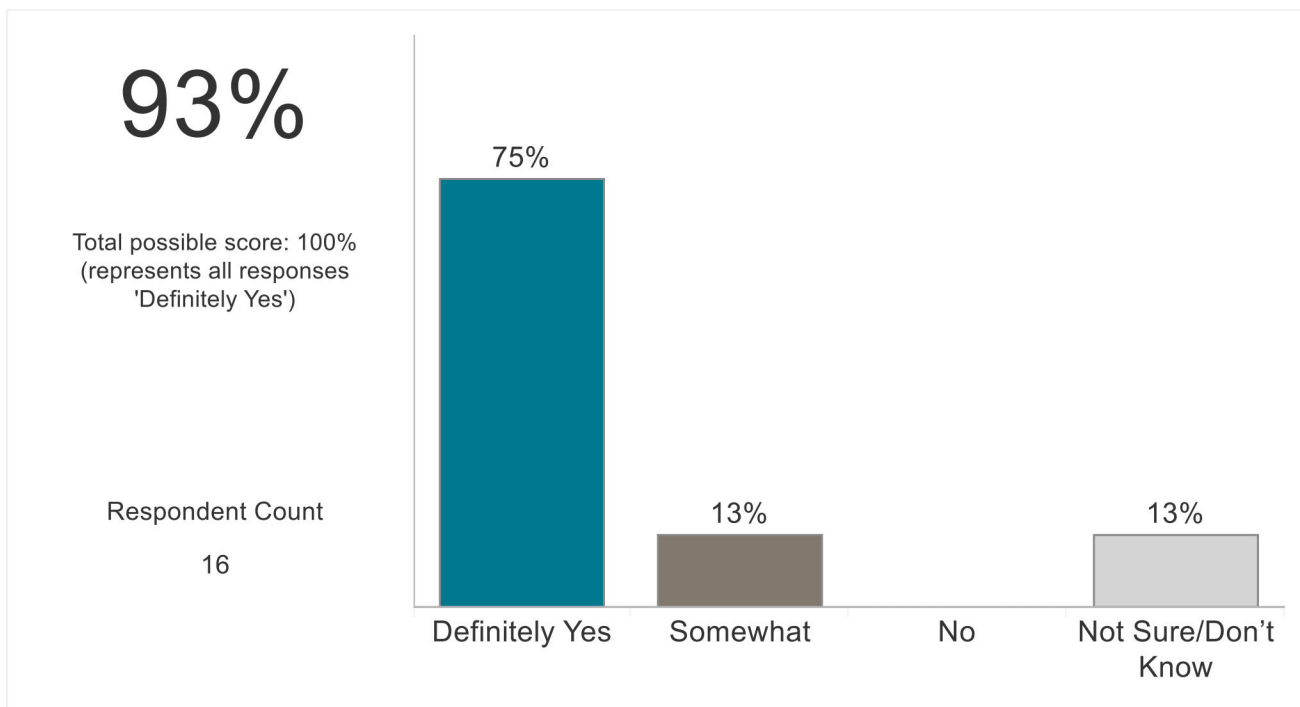
"Work and approach the communities, through meetings determine community needs. You include who needs to be involved and create partnerships." -Indigenous and Economic and Community Leader

"Always. As a partner who sponsors many students at Northern College, we've always had positive experiences and we work very well with all of our partnered initiatives and events." -Indigenous Community Leader

"Yes, we see Northern College present in our community and working with students and partners". -Indigenous and Education, Employment, Community Services Leader

"The Education Dept. will not go to Northern College, it's about truth and reconciliation. I would assume the Indigenous Dept., knows how we engage. How do we work together? A lot of students go to Canadore College." -Indigenous Community Leader

FIGURE 16. DOES NORTHERN COLLEGE WORK RESPECTFULLY AND IN COLLABORATION WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES?



Open, Consultative and Accountable

Indigenous participants were also asked whether Northern College is open, consultative, and accountable. This question was also asked of partners. Of the 15 Indigenous participants who gave an answer, 11 (87%) said 'Definitely Yes' (Figure 19). Two participants were not able to answer ('Not Sure/ Don't Know'). Responses to this question were tied to working respectfully and in collaboration with Indigenous people and communities. Communication styles, building relationships, culturally-sensitive messaging and presence in communities were themes in both topics.

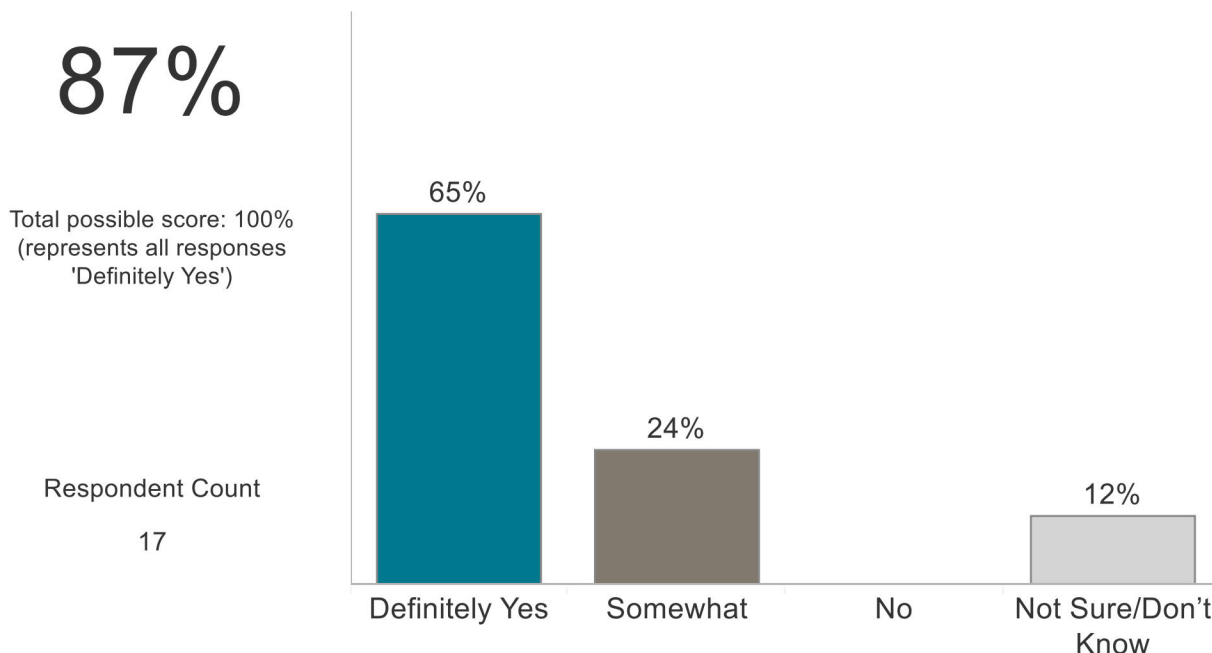
*"I think that creating a common language and a way of talking to community people about the work and approach of the college is a **learned practice**. Things have shifted through the years but there is still a long way to go. There is still a **disconnect** between college approaches and lived reality. Words and messages may be interpreted by communities differently from the intended message. **Feedback loops** need to be in place to ensure the message is understood. The college needs to remember that communities need to see a willingness for **flexibility in methods**." -Indigenous Community Leader*

*"This survey. Feel more **heard** than if it were just an email." -Indigenous Community Leader*

"The President has had a strong profile out in the community but am not aware of other staff and goings on, which maybe is telling." -Indigenous Community Leader

*"Northern is always **upfront, accountable** and has always **communicated openly** through our dealings. They always make sure to **include** the MNO whenever possible in their Indigenous events and initiatives." -Métis Nation of Ontario*

FIGURE 17. INDIGENOUS VOICES: IS NORTHERN COLLEGE OPEN, CONSULTATIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE?



Community Summaries

There was some variation in the average score according to participant location, although overall scores were closely clustered (from 83% from Kirkland Lake area participants to 89% from Timmins and Moosonee and area participants) (Figure 20). It is important to note that these scores are not campus ratings; rather, they are the assessment of the overall college by participants in those communities. The figure below does not display the scores for questions that had less than five responses at a given location, but the overall score includes all data.

FIGURE 18. RESULTS SUMMARY BY COMMUNITY

	Haileybury & Area	Kirkland Lake & Area	Moosonee & Area	Timmins & Area
Enhances quality and access to education through global initiatives				100%
Is a hub of excellence in postsecondary and skilled trades education				95%
Works respectfully and in collaboration with Indigenous people and communities			92%	93%
Serves communities through partnerships and entrepreneurial opportunities				91%
Is open, consultative and accountable			80%	94%
Uses our natural and built environments in a sustainable way		83%	75%	75%
Pursues northern development and continuous improvement through applied research			67%	75%
Reflects the diversity of our communities	82%	92%	92%	88%
Produces exceptional graduates to meet the needs of our communities	91%	78%	100%	84%
Contributes to the social prosperity of the communities we serve	82%	80%	83%	89%
Contributes to the economic prosperity of the communities we serve	100%	90%	100%	95%
Connects learners and communities with accessible and innovative technology	80%	88%	92%	84%
Overall	88%	83%	89%	89%

Note. Question must have received at least five responses to be shown in the figure above. All data is included in the Overall total row.



Haileybury and Area

Participants: 11

Surveyors: 6

Overall Score: 88%

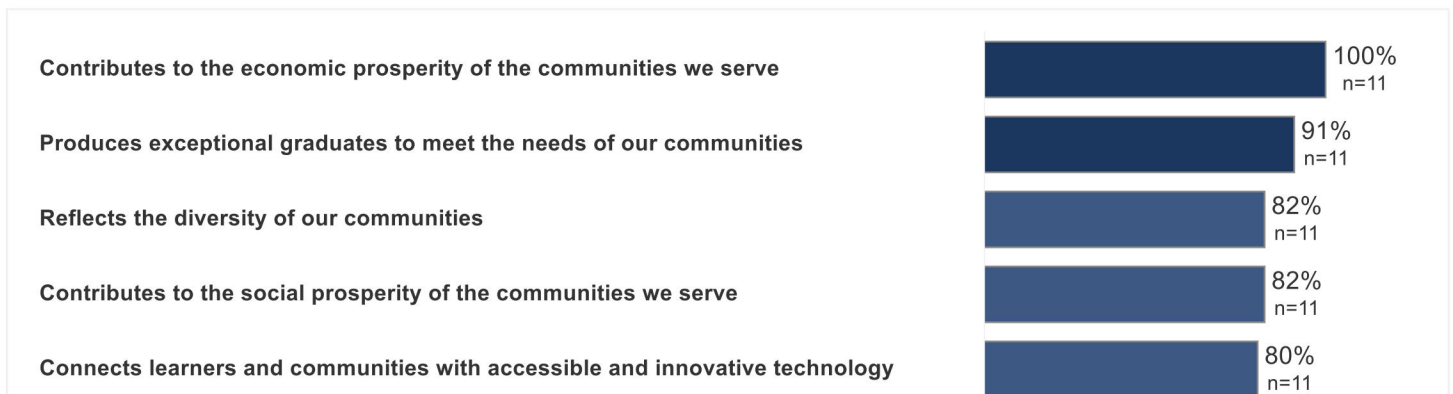
“Raises profile of any community to have postsecondary education in community. A college town: corporate sponsorship brings cache to community and desire to come to area to access postsecondary education in the community.” -Partner

“You don’t see Northern College participating in the community at all (Temiskaming Shores). Never hear anything on the radio or media or other. They don’t have a team at the curling rink for example or take part in community events so much. Would like to see them more involved and prominent in the community.” -Partner

“We are bringing students into the area that helps with ancillary things like grocery stores and accommodations; they’re buying things and working parttime. After grad seeing a plethora of students wanting to stay in the area.” -Employer of Northern College Graduates

“Northern is drawing students diverse cultures to various communities across the north and is helping Northern Ontario as a whole to become more diverse.” -Economic and Community Leader

FIGURE 19. OVERALL QUESTION SCORES - HAILEYBURY AND AREA



Note. Question must have received at least five responses to be shown in the figure above.

Kirkland Lake and Area

Participants: 10

Surveyors: 7

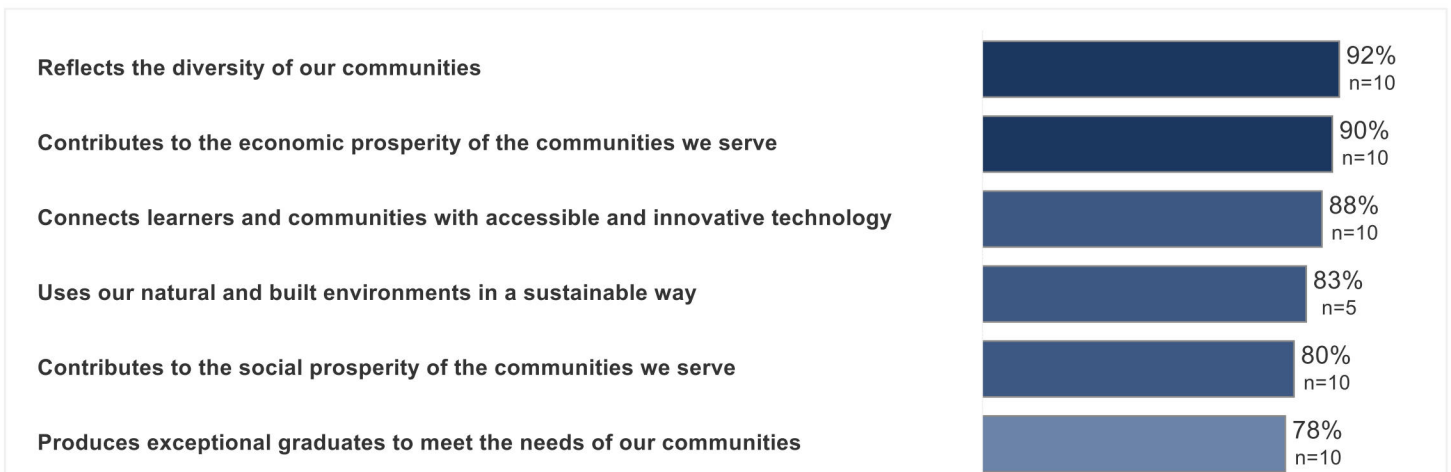
Overall Score: 83%

“Research indicates that individuals possessing post secondary educations tend to lead healthier, happier lives and are more engaged in their communities. Having the opportunity for post secondary education in our hometown can only increase the percent of residents who attend for either post secondary education or second career training.” -Economic and Community Leader

“Northern College does contribute to the economic prosperity of this community but not to the ability it can. The unfortunate part is watching all the upgrades and programs going to the Timmins campus when the KL campus was very active previously. We often do not see any potential staff come from the Timmins site. There should be so much more programs offered here in KL – especially for nursing in all areas. We need more programs geared for our population needs – geriatric courses, palliative care courses, phlebotomy, IV therapy, first aid/CPR, etc. (I see some of these continuing education programs are offered on the website, but when we’ve attempted to have staff apply, the course is often cancelled due to lack of registrants.” -Employer of Northern College Graduates

“Do find KL campus is well situated. Nice greenery and looks to be harmonious. There are ways to improve <sustainability>: solar cells, reduce power draw, access to recycling and composting. Lots of roof so solar a quick win.” - Education, Employment, Community Services Leader

FIGURE 20. OVERALL QUESTION SCORES – KIRKLAND LAKE AND AREA



Note. Question must have received at least five responses to be shown in the figure above.

Moosonee, Moose Factory and Area

Participants: 7

Surveyors: 3

Overall Score: 89%

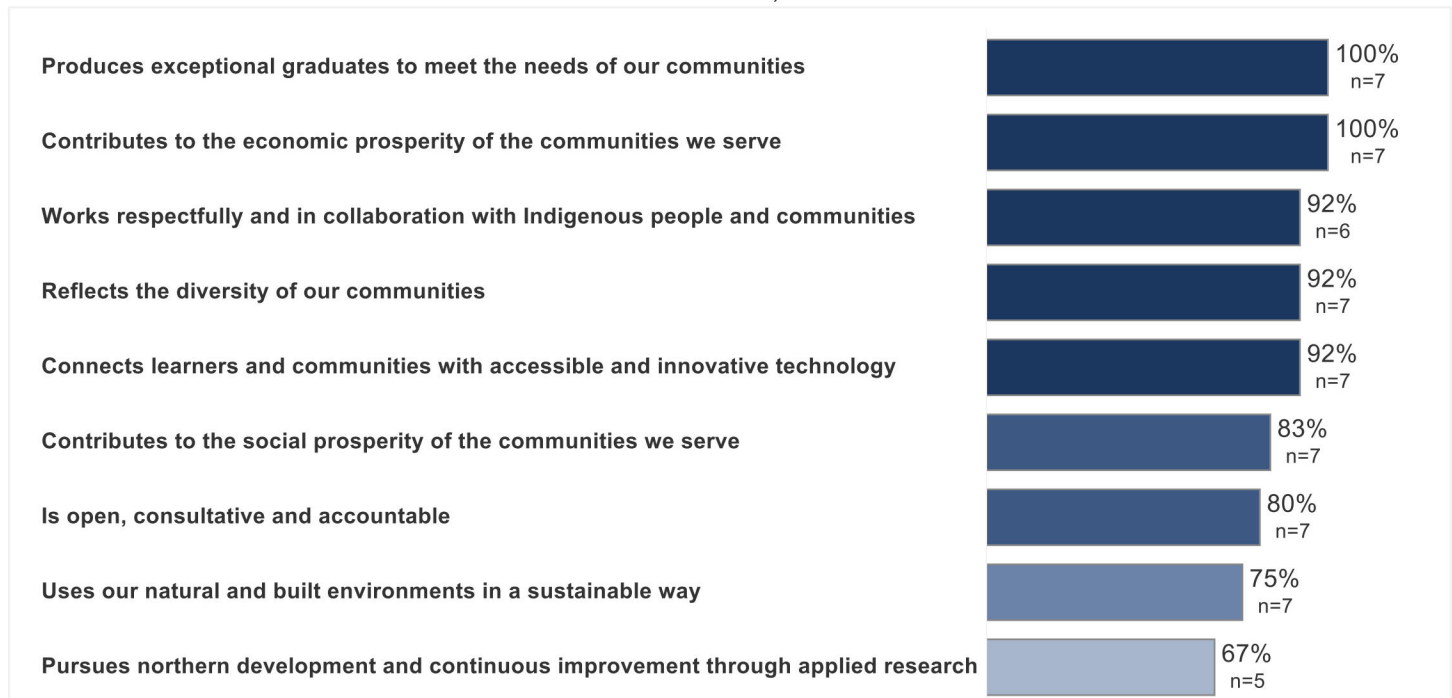
“Footprint in all communities, provides employment opportunities, individual they train provides employment opportunities. Catering, internet, cultural events.” -Economic and Community Leader & Indigenous Leader

“Active community organization, helps contribute to community events, economic contribution to area. Established centres in our communities along the coast. Skills development training.” -Economic and Community Leader & Indigenous Leader

We have paramedic graduates that work in community, carpentry programs where there are carpenters in community, social workers, nurses.” -Education, Employment and Community Services Leader & Indigenous Leader

“It’s time for a facelift of JBEC building. I see all the new extensions at the other campuses. Student housing in Moosonee Campus is a need.” -Economic and Community Leader & Indigenous Leader

FIGURE 21. OVERALL QUESTION SCORES – MOOSONEE, MOOSE FACTORY AND AREA



Timmins and Area

Participants: 78

Surveyors: 26

Overall Score: 89%

“Would say yes. In the past several years meeting graduates from the Business, Office Admin program and the jobs they are holding and what they are doing in the community. We have a city councilor who is a graduate, so yes. Grads go onto leadership positions within the community.” -Partner

“The local businesses could benefit from having a stronger partnership with the college. Training would be helpful to have a better understanding of the diverse needs of our community and when hiring students to work in the varied businesses.” -Partner

“Northern College is represented on a variety of Board; are leaders that are first to create partnerships both with businesses but truly support nonprofits and support the most vulnerable populations.” -Partner

FIGURE 22. OVERALL QUESTION SCORES – TIMMINS AND AREA



Administration & Methods

Survey Design

The survey was adapted from the institutional commitments included in BOG Policy A-7 Our Communities and as described in the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. The survey included 12 questions that were designed to measure perception of achievement of those commitments. In consideration of completion time, all participants were asked five core questions and between one to three additional questions. Questions were assigned based on the category of the participant. For example, employers of Northern College graduates were asked whether they would consider Northern College to be a hub of excellence in postsecondary and trades education, while partners were asked if Northern serves communities through partnerships and entrepreneurial opportunities

Administration

One-on-one survey interviews were conducted in the months of June and July of this year. A team of 32 Northern College administrators (including administrative assistants) conducted the interviews with one to seven community leaders. The contacts were chosen by the survey team or were assigned by the Institutional Research office. Contacts were selected to ensure representation from key community leaders, large employers and business, education services, employment services, community services, non-profit organizations and political leadership. A list of Northern College donors and employers of graduates was also consulted.

Surveyors were asked to connect with their contacts over the phone, via video call, or in person. An electronic survey (hosted on Survey Monkey) was filled out to record responses to both scale and open-ended responses. The surveys took an average of 30 minutes to complete, for an estimated 50 hours of conversation between surveyors and participants.

Analysis

Question Scores

Each survey question asked the participant to choose a level of agreement for each question: 'Definitely Yes', 'Somewhat', 'No', or 'Not Sure/Don't Know'. The response choices were scored out of 2 ('Definitely Yes' =2, 'Somewhat' =1, 'No'=0, 'Not Sure/Don't Know'= null. The scores were then converted to a percentage out of 2 as the highest possible score. These average percentages are the scores displayed throughout the report, with 100% being the all responses of 'Definitely Yes'.

Comment Themes

All comments resulting from the survey interviews were compiled and analyzed using a general inductive coding (also known as descriptive or thematic) approach, informed by grounded theory. This approach allows themes and theory to emerge from the qualitative data (in this case, participant comments) rather than approaching the analysis with a pre-defined theory or set of assumptions.⁴

There were 685 comments (26,000+ words) resulting from the 110 survey interviews. Those comments were divided into 937 individual quotations for analysis. Three rounds of analysis coding (approximately 80 hours)

⁴ Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*, 3rd ed. Sage Publications, Inc.
Kolb, S. (2012). Grounded theory and the constant comparative method: Valid research strategies for educators. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies*, 3, 83–86.
Thomas, D. R. (2006). A General Inductive Approach for Analyzing Qualitative Evaluation Data. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2), 237–246. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098214005283748>

resulted in 96 sub-themes and 22 overarching themes. Selective coding identified the core category and connections to other themes, which produced the ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND ASSOCIATED OUTCOMES model described in the Overall Findings: Themes section.

APPENDIX I: Institutional Commitments Mapped to Survey Questions

BOARD OF GOVERNORS POLICY A-7 OUR COMMUNITIES	Questions	Participant Group				
		1	2	3	4	5
Contribute to the economic and social prosperity of the communities we serve.	1, 2, 3, 4, 9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Develop and maintain partnerships with local businesses and organizations to ensure the right mix of training and labour force development strategies are in place.	4, 6, 11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pursue and conduct an innovative research agenda that proactively responds to industry needs and provides experiential learning for our students.	4, 6, 9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maintain a high profile locally, provincially and nationally.	4, 6, 7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Continue to promote itself as a postsecondary and skilled trades hub of excellence.	4, 6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Support the demand for exceptional graduates to meet the strategic economic development agenda of northern communities.	4, 6, 11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
STRATEGIC PLAN INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS						
Support, nurture and celebrate the contributions and accomplishments of learners and employees.	-					
Connect our learners and communities through the application of accessible and innovative technology.	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Foster and encourage a friendly, caring and respectful organizational culture.	-					
Establish an organizational culture that reflects the diversity of our communities.	5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Work respectfully, in collaboration with Indigenous peoples and communities.	12					✓
Pursue partnerships and entrepreneurial opportunities to better serve community.	10			✓		
Enhance the quality and access to college education through global initiatives.	7		✓			
Engage in applied research in the pursuit of northern development and continuous improvement.	9		✓		✓	
Use our natural and built environments observing conservation and sustainable practices.	8		✓		✓	
Practice ethical decision making that engenders trust while safeguarding the College.	-					
Be open, consultative and accountable.	11	✓		✓		✓
Act with personal responsibility and integrity.	-					
Exceed expectations.	-					

Participant Groups

1 Employers of Northern College Graduates

3 Partners (Private, Public, Profit & Nonprofit)

5 Indigenous Community Leaders

2 Education, Employment, Community Services Leaders

4 Community and Economic Leaders

APPENDIX II: Survey Instrument

Core Questions (All Participants)

1. Does Northern College contribute to the economic prosperity of the communities we serve?

<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>

<if definitely yes> Can you tell me more, or provide some examples?

<if not definitely yes> Can you tell me more about how Northern College could better contribute to economic prosperity?

2. Does Northern College contribute to the social prosperity of the communities we serve?

<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>

<if definitely yes> Can you tell me more about what social prosperity means to you, or provide some examples?

<if not definitely yes> Can you tell me more about what social prosperity means to you, and how Northern College could better contribute to social prosperity?

3. One of our commitments is to connect learners and communities with accessible and innovative technology. Would you say that Northern is succeeding in enabling this connection?

<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>

<if definitely yes> How is Northern providing this connection, and what makes that technology effective?

<if not definitely yes> Can you tell me more about how Northern College could better connect learners and communities with accessible and innovative technology?

4. Does Northern College produce exceptional graduates to meet the needs of our <your> community?

<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>

<if definitely yes> Can you describe some of your experiences with Northern College graduates?

<if not definitely yes> How could Northern College ensure that our graduates are both exceptional and meeting the needs of our community?

5. Based on your experience with or knowledge of Northern, does our organization reflect the diversity of our communities?

<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>

<if definitely yes> Can you tell me more about how Northern College reflects the diversity of our communities?

<if not definitely yes> How could Northern better ensure that our organization reflects the diversity of our communities?

Questions for Employers of Northern College Graduates

6. Would you consider Northern College to be a hub of excellence in postsecondary and skilled trades education?

<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>

<if definitely yes> What do you think makes Northern a hub of excellence in postsecondary and skilled trades education?

<if not definitely yes> How could Northern College improve the postsecondary and skills trades education that we provide?

Questions for Education, Employment, Community Services Leaders

7. Do you think Northern College enhances quality and access to education through global initiatives?

<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>

<if definitely yes> What global initiatives at Northern College enhance quality and access to education through global initiatives?

<if not definitely yes> How could Northern College better enhance quality and access to education through global initiatives?

8. Do you see Northern College using our natural and built environments in a sustainable way?

<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>

<if definitely yes> Can you give some examples of how we use our natural and build environments sustainably?

<if not definitely yes> How could Northern College use our natural and built environments more sustainably?

Questions for Partners (Private, Public, Profit & Nonprofit)

9. One of our institutional commitments is to pursue northern development and continuous improvement. Does Northern College engage in applied research in that pursuit?

<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>

<if definitely yes> Can you give some examples of applied research or its impact on our community?

<if not definitely yes> Do you have any specific or general recommendations on opportunities that we should pursue?

10. Do you think Northern College is currently meeting our commitment to serve communities through partnerships and entrepreneurial opportunities?

<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>

<if definitely yes> Can you give examples of partnerships or entrepreneurial initiatives that serve our community?

<if not definitely yes> Do you have any specific or general recommendations on opportunities that we should pursue?

11. Is Northern College open, consultative and accountable?

<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>

<if definitely yes> Can you tell me more about your response, or add any comments?

<if not definitely yes> Can you tell me more about your response, or add any comments?

Questions for Community and Economic Leaders

8. Do you see Northern College using our natural and built environments in a sustainable way?
<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>
<if definitely yes> Can you give some examples of how we use our natural and build environments sustainably?
<if not definitely yes> How could Northern College use our natural and built environments more sustainably?
9. One of our institutional commitments is to pursue northern development and continuous improvement. Does Northern College engage in applied research in that pursuit?
<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>
<if definitely yes> Can you give some examples of applied research or its impact on our community?
<if not definitely yes> Do you have any specific or general recommendations on opportunities that we should pursue?

Questions for Indigenous Community Leaders

11. Is Northern College open, consultative and accountable?
<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>
<if definitely yes> Can you tell me more about your response, or add any comments?
<if not definitely yes> Can you tell me more about your response, or add any comments?
12. Does Northern College work respectfully and in collaboration with Indigenous people and communities?
<definitely yes, somewhat, no, not sure/don't know>
<if definitely yes> What do we at Northern College show respect and collaboration?
<if not definitely yes> How can we at Northern College better show respect and work in collaboration?

Final Question (All Participants)

13. This brings us to the end of our questions for you. Do you have any other comments you would like to share?