SCcyber is pleased to make a submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance's Pre-Budget Consultations for 2016.

SCcyber E-learning is a non-profit charitable organization that provides high school and adult education to Indigenous communities using a mixture of internet-based and live teacher interaction, along with onsite Indigenous mentors, to achieve high levels of academic success. Unlike more conventional approaches to education, SCcyber sees far higher course completion and graduation rates. Approximately 75% of students enrolled in the SCcyber model complete their courses and graduate, versus 20% using more conventional approaches.

As a result of these successes, the SCcyber model has been recognized among the top 40 educational programs in the world by Oxford and Cambridge Universities and was described by TIME Magazine as an "innovator" in education, "bringing energy and excitement to education." A properly designed online education program is an essential part of Indigenous educational success and the SCcyber model is supported by Indigenous leaders in various communities.

In 2015, the implementation of Bill C-33 (Federal Funding for Indigenous Education) did not proceed. As a result, SCcyber has had to seek new funding opportunities and are facing the prospect of reducing the number of courses it offers. In addition, with an increase in the number of Indigenous peoples moving off reserve – approximately 60 percent – there are inadequate education models in urban centres.

SCcyber is asking the following of the Canadian government:

1) Restore funding to all Alberta on-reserve students to avoid the prospect of cutting funds;
2) Extend the SCcyber pilot model to other provinces and territories;
3) Provide funding for 300 courses for Indigenous students in Alberta's major urban centres.

The SCcyber approach to delivering education is notable because it is extremely cost-effective, educating a student for less than $6,000 per year. In a traditional public school system, that cost is closer to $10,000 to $14,000. A properly designed online education program is an essential part of Indigenous educational success which SCcyber has demonstrated for well over a decade. The SCcyber model can be used across Canada and successfully meets the shared objective of the Federal government and that of Indigenous people to improve overall educational outcomes.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide our submission to you.

Sincerely,

Mavis Sacher
Principal
SCcyber E-learning