

Education Partners and Tripartite Group

Contacts

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Overview

Since 1994, FNESC has been meeting quarterly with representatives of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DIAND) and the Ministry of Education (MEd) on a tripartite basis to discuss strategies for working together to improve the success of First Nations learners in education. These discussions include updates regarding potential policy and legislative changes that could affect First Nations learners. Joint strategies are sought and implemented where possible.

In 1998, the Tripartite Education Committee founded the BC Aboriginal Education Partners Group. That group includes some of the most significant stakeholders in the BC education system, including the First Nations Education Steering Committee, the First Nations Schools Association, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the Ministry of Education, the BC Teachers' Federation, the BC College of Teachers, the BC School Trustees Association, the BC Superintendents Association, the BC Confederation of Parents Advisory Council, the BC Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association of BC, United Native Nations, and the BC Métis Nation. The cooperative efforts of the Education Partners Group have resulted in effective sharing of information, and ideas and initiatives that have been put into motion to enhance the success of First Nations learners.

Key Initiatives

The Education Partners have specifically focused their efforts on three main issues:

1. Aboriginal Teacher Retention and Recruitment, through the Aboriginal Teacher Education Consortium (ATEC)
2. Employment Equity
3. Anti-Racism

A working group consisting of members from the Education Partners supports each of those issues.

The Education Partners have also established a set of goals and key priorities that guide ongoing strategies, and an action plan that responds to current issues in Aboriginal education.

2008/2009

This past year the federal government has implemented a national program to support education partnerships, particularly between the provincial government and regional First Nation education organizations. This national initiative was based on the good relationships and education partnerships established in BC between FNEC and the Education Partners.

The Education Partner Initiatives that were funded this year through the new federal Education Partnership Program Are:

- Joint Curriculum Development with the Ministry of Education: ongoing promotion of English First Peoples 12, the development of English First Peoples 10 and 11 and the research and consultation on further courses to be jointly developed
- Distance Learning: working with the education partners on implementing effective distance learning delivery in First Nation schools, possibly partnering with local school districts on distance learning delivery.
- Rural Schools Initiative
- Anti-Racism

FNEC continues to work with several individual Education Partner organizations on specific initiatives outside the Partner table:

- The First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) continues to work closely with the BC College of Teachers (BCCT) on Teacher Certification for First Nation schools, which includes a standards and competencies component.
- Recently the FNSA and BCCT signed a Memorandum of Understanding. This agreement demonstrates that FNSA is supporting the identification of First Nation schools and their BCCT certified staff in the BCCT databank. This initiative provides the opportunity for schools to better track teachers, confirming their status.
- The Aboriginal Language Subcommittee continues work with the BCCT on the Developmental Standard Term Certificate Program, an education laddering program specific to Aboriginal Language teachers. DSTC has been fortunate to receive funding through the New Relationship Trust and MAVED Aboriginal Service Plans.
- The FNSA has engaged in a more formal relationship with the Ministry of Education Rural School Strategy in order to build strong education linkages in the rural areas of the province.

Future Directions

The Education Partners hope fulfill their regular meeting schedule this year, meeting quarterly and to revisit some important initiatives such as a review of the Ministry of Education How Are We Doing Report to see what each Partner organization is doing to increase the success of Aboriginal learners in the public school system.

Anti-Racism Program

Staff Contact

Jennifer White, Senior Communications Officer, jenniferw@fnesc.ca
Eric Wong, Anti-Racism Consultant, ericdwong@telus.net

Overview and Highlights of the Past Year

Racism continues to be a barrier that stands in the way of Aboriginal children and youth from achieving their learning potential. In our travels through the province, Aboriginal people have shared their stories of the everyday examples of overt racism and discrimination that is targeted towards them. In our work in schools and communities we hear stories about the systemic and subtle forms of racism that are deeply embedded within educational organizations, from preschool to postsecondary, and that cause lasting harm. We are also witnessed to stories about the impact of internalized racism and the lateral violence that is its legacy.

To combat the effects of these forms of racism and to provide opportunities to discuss strategies for prevention, FNEESC has an Anti-Racism Program that offers anti-racism and diversity workshops.

What's Upcoming?

The FNEESC Anti-Racism Consultant is mandated to create and conduct anti-racism and diversity workshops and presentations in BC schools and communities. Since FNEESC is a community-driven organization, it takes its lead from schools and communities. FNEESC will do its best to design workshops and training to meet the needs of individual schools and communities. While our current list of workshops has been popular, we are always open to creating workshops that address current issues faced by schools and communities. As an example, a workshop designed around "Restorative Justice" will be offered in 2009-2010. All of our workshops can be designed for elementary, secondary, post-secondary institutions, communities or workplaces. The FNEESC Anti-Racism and Diversity workshops for 2009-2010 are as follows;

1. Anti-Racism Toolkit Workshop
2. Bully-Proofing Your School
3. Creating a Safe and Positive Learning Environment

4. How to Make Your School Welcoming and Inclusive
5. More Than Putting Out the Welcome Mat; Addressing Racism in Post-Secondary Institutions
6. Restorative Justice
7. Welcoming and Valuing Differences
8. Why it is Important to Talk About Racism and Differences

In addition to these workshops, FNEESC is sponsoring the;

Erase Racism Youth Leadership Camp

FNEESC believes in the power of youth, that when equipped with the appropriate knowledge and skills youth can be an effective force in making positive change. The overall goal of the FNEESC Youth Leadership Camp is to provide opportunities for youth to create their own ways to combat and erase racism in their schools and communities. The camp is scheduled for October 13-16 and will take place at the North Vancouver Outdoor School in Squamish. For more information, contact Jennifer White, jeniiferw@fnesc.ca.

Your Feedback

1. What types of anti-racism workshops or training does your school or community need?
2. Are there other types of workshops that your school or community would like FNEESC to offer?
3. In what ways can FNEESC help your school or community improve education for your children and youth?

First Nations Early Childhood Development

Staff Contact:

Mary Sasakamoose, Executive Director

Overview and Highlights of the Past Year

For many years, First Nations representatives throughout the province have emphasized the importance of quality early childhood development (ECD) as a foundation for future learning. However, they have also expressed concern that provincial-level approaches to ECD programs and services were not well integrated and consistent, and they noted the need for greater coordination between funding agencies, First Nations organizations, and communities.

In response to those concerns, the BC First Nations Leadership Council directed FNEC to take an interim, coordinating role and bring together organizations, provincial ministries, and federal departments that provide or deliver ECD programs and services to First Nations in BC. Those meetings resulted in the preparation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on ECD and Terms of Reference for the BC First Nations Early Childhood Development Council.

The Council was initiated in March 2007 by representatives of provincial early childhood organizations, community early childhood programs, and related stakeholder provincial organizations. The Council also was endorsed by the First Nations Leadership Council.

The role of the Council is to advise and advocate for First Nations early childhood development in BC and to cooperate, coordinate and collaborate together to improve early childhood outcomes for First Nations children.

British Columbia is developing an Early Years Framework for all children in BC. The Council and supporting organizations have maintained that there must be a stand alone First Nations framework. The developing First Nations Early Childhood Development Framework is an enabling document intended to support the development of culturally appropriate and relevant programs and services, influence early childhood related legislation and policy, and strive for self-determination over early childhood programs and services. The framework includes the following outline of the First Nations ECD Council visions and beliefs.

OUR VISION

Healthy, culturally strong children. All First Nations children have optimal, culturally relevant opportunities that nurture social, emotional, physical, cognitive and cultural/spiritual development within their families and communities. These opportunities contribute to an improved quality of life and celebrate children's cultural identity and unique gifts with a safe, secure environment.

OUR MISSION

To develop a coordinated BC First Nations holistic early childhood system of programs, services and resources designed to support children, parents, families and communities by providing advice to First Nations leadership and advocating for First Nations early childhood programs and services beginning with the coordination of existing ones.

OUR VALUES AND BELIEFS

- First Nations children are sacred gifts from the creator.
- Each child is born with a gift.
- Children are the present and future of our families, communities and nations.
- Caring for children is a sacred and shared responsibility.
- Parents/service providers are recognized as the first teachers and caregivers of their children.

The BC First Nations ECD Council is also preparing a strategic plan and a community engagement strategy.

What's Upcoming?

In the upcoming year, the ECD Council will continue to investigate ways to advance their important partnership and will consult with First Nations communities to ensure that the established vision, goals, and strategies are relevant and appropriate to the needs of First Nations ECD in BC. It is hoped that the MOU will be formally signed by all partners in September 2009.

FNESC Aboriginal Languages Subcommittee

Staff Contact

Jan Haugen, Manager of Executive Services, janh@fnesc.ca

Derek Payne, Program Administrator (DSTC), derekp@fnesc.ca

Overview

The FNESC Aboriginal Language subcommittee is made up of language representatives from First Nation communities, and each language family is entitled to appoint a member to the subcommittee. The subcommittee is co-chaired by John Elliott and Deborah Jacobs and meet twice a year to discuss issues regarding Language and when required to make recommendations to the FNESC Board on language issues. The Aboriginal Language Subcommittee appoints a member to sit as a non-voting member of the FPHLCC, acting as a liaison between the two organizations.

The Aboriginal Language Subcommittee continues to support and advocate for Developmental Standard Term Certificate Program (DSTC) as a way of increasing certified Aboriginal Language teachers in BC school systems.

One of the most important functions carried out by the Aboriginal Language Subcommittee is the bi-annual BC First Nations Language Conference. This year the conference was held from July 5-6 in Vancouver and was co-hosted by the First People's Heritage Language and Culture Council. The theme that was chosen this year was Bringing Language to Life. The theme was chosen in response to feedback from communities regarding the challenges faced building sustained community interest and resources to support language revitalization. The conference provided an opportunity to bring together community language champions, share their successes and panel presentations and workshops focused on best practices for overcoming language revitalization challenges at the local and regional level.

Over 260 participants attended the conference and included a ceremony to recognize local language champions from around BC. The presentation included highlights of each champion's involvement in language in their communities. The conference was a huge success with lots of positive feedback on the workshops and theme.

Key Initiatives

Developmental Standard Term Certificate DSTC

In order to address the need to increase language teachers, essentially and to revitalize language, First Nations communities, the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and the BC College of Teachers (BCCT) developed a program framework that would enable students to earn a Developmental Standard Term Certificate in First Nations Language and Culture (DSTC). The DSTC comprises three full years, or 90 credit hours, of course work at post secondary institutions. The course work includes studies in an Aboriginal language indigenous to British Columbia, First Nations studies or culture, BCCT academic prerequisites and professional development in teaching. 22 of the credits must be under the auspices of an approved teacher education program.

Since its inception in 1999, eight First Nations organizations, beginning with Sto:lo Nation, have partnered with post-secondary institutions and implemented DSTC programs.

A review of the DSTC programs undertaken in 2006 concluded that funding constraints posed the largest threat to the sustainability of the DSTC programs. DSTC Support Program funding from the NRT is evidence of a strong commitment on the part of First Nations leadership to support preservation and revitalization of their languages, and commitment on the part of the communities to acknowledge and give voice to the people who are learning and teaching the indigenous languages of BC.

This year in addition to supporting individual First Nations in developing or offering the DSTC, FNESC would like to explore the possibility of developing provincial level activities or courses to better support First Nations in completing the DSTC program. Organizing provincial level delivery of core DSTC courses would create economies of scale and efficiencies in program completion for students as well as building a provincial network of Aboriginal Language teachers. A planning session with all existing DSTC programs as well as the FNESC Aboriginal Language Subcommittee and the BC College of Teachers is planned for fall 2009. A report on this planning session will be included in the 2010 FNESC New Relationship Trust Final Report.

The final report on DSTC programs funded through the New Relationship Trust will be on the FNESC website along with a list of funded programs for 2009-2010.

Aboriginal Language Coordinator

As part of a new federal program to promote Education Partnerships, FNESC received funding to hire a full time language coordinator. This new role within the organization will provide some long needed support to both the Aboriginal language subcommittee and the First Nations

Schools Association in all areas related to language: policy, advocacy, research and curriculum development.

First Nations SchoolNet Program

Staff Contact (interim)

Denise Williams, Youth Initiative Officer and BCeSIS Program Coordinator, denisew@fnesc.ca

Overview and Highlights of the Past Year

Since its launch in November of 2002, the BC SchoolNet Program Office has worked in support of BC First Nations schools and First Nations educators in their efforts to acquire and maintain essential ICT equipment, connectivity and other infrastructure components, and to provide ICT user-skills training to students, faculty, and administrative staff. Today, under the guidance of FNEsc and the FNsa, and now with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) as the principal partner, BC SchoolNet continues to provide connectivity support to 137 First Nations schools in British Columbia.

What's Upcoming?

This year, The First Nations SchoolNet program experienced another funding cut nationally. BC will be able to utilize only 400k in 2009/10 to continue paying connectivity charges for schools and to offer upgrades to school's current ICT infrastructure along with In-service support and training. The BC SchoolNet program continues to seek out other connectivity initiatives and opportunities to better support First Nations schools.

Key Points

- First Nations schools are welcome to continue sending in connectivity invoices.
- Support for infrastructure upgrades will be coming soon. Check in with: www.fnschools.ca

Your Feedback

1. What technology needs are not being met in your First Nations school?
2. What technology needs are not being met in your community?
3. What additional supports would help you?

FNESC Post-Secondary Subcommittee

Staff Contact:

Cici Sterritt, Post-Secondary Program Officer, cicis@fnesc.ca

Overview

The Post-Secondary Subcommittee (PSSC), a subcommittee of FNESC, was established to support First Nations communities in their efforts to address post-secondary education issues. The roles of the PSSC are to:

- seek community input to identify and prioritize post-secondary education and trades training issues;
- organize research, gather and share information to inform First Nations about relevant post-secondary education and trades training issues;
- inform and assist Bands with changes in post-secondary education and training policies;
- make recommendations to FNESC on post-secondary education and training issues

Highlights of the Past year

INAC Audit of the Post-Secondary Education Program

The recent *Audit of the Post-Secondary Education Program* (January 23, 2009) was conducted to provide assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the management control framework of the Post-Secondary Education Program and the regional controls for administering recipient contributions to ensure compliance with applicable authorities and policy frameworks.

In response to the audit, FNESC highlighted the following in the response letter sent to Minister Strahl on March 18, 2009:

- Post-secondary education is an Aboriginal right
- We support the audit recommendation that the federal government undertake a review of the sufficiency and appropriateness of funding requirements to ensure the department is able to meet the objectives of the program; the review will highlight the

need for additional funding to ensure all eligible post-secondary students receive adequate funding

- Its is critical to include First Nations in determining accountability mechanisms; these accountability mechanisms must be more holistic than simple financial accountability and reporting
- Revisions to INAC's PSE program funding methodologies and guidelines must be considered in consultation with First Nations.

First Nation communities were requested to submit Band Council Resolutions (BCR's) to reiterate FNEESC's position taken in response to INAC's national PSE Audit. To-date, we have received 42 BCR's which will be attached with a formal letter to Minister Strahl. Please continue to submit your BCR's as we will continue to forward all received to the Minister.

PSSSP Funding Gap Analysis: BC Region

The PSSC and INAC representatives continue to discuss the importance of collecting data on all funded students, completion rates and waitlists. It is critical to gather this data to demonstrate an accurate picture of the Aboriginal post-secondary situation in BC and to support the business case for increased Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) funding for the BC Region.

This year, Trillium Projects completed the *PSSSP Funding Gap Analysis: BC Region* report, which was accepted by the FNEESC Board in January, 2009. The report is compiled from the information received from 80 First Nation communities (41% response rate).

The PSSC will be utilizing this report and the data collected from the Post-Secondary Allocation Methodology process by INAC to form a business case plan to support the need for increased post-secondary funding in the BC region.

INAC Post-Secondary Education Allocation Methodology 2009/10

For 2009/10, INAC had changed the application process to include two different forms, a Form A and Form B. Form A – Initial Allocation, INAC is requesting First Nation communities to list the students they are 'tentatively' funding with their Initial Allocation, prior to accessing the Protected and/or General Pool funds. Form B – First Nation communities had to complete Form B to access the Protected and General Pool funds.

Education Coordinator Program

We are excited to announce that there are nine students who have completed the program! A luncheon was held in June 2009 to celebrate the completion of the final course. The 20 course,

accredited program was designed for Education workers and included topics such as understanding policy, governance, project management, financial planning, communication and community development. This accredited diploma program ladders into business administration and teacher education degree programs.

A major challenge for this year was enrolment; we will be conducting a survey jointly with NVIT to determine how to improve the delivery of this program and increase enrolment. We have outlined the course deliveries for this academic year to allow learners sufficient time to budget and plan for their participation.

Education Coordinator Workshops

In March of 2009, FNEESC offered five workshops throughout B.C. for Education workers, Band Administrators, Finance Managers and Chief and Councils to learn more about:

- INAC – PSE Allocation Methodology, Program (Compliance) Reviews, Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP), Post-Secondary Student Report (PSSR) and other education programs
- Finance – preparing for an Audit, eligible expenditures, understanding the difference between Contribution and Flexible Transfer Payments and review the 2009/10 INAC Program Guide
- Other topics – Career Cruising program and StudentAid BC (Canada Student Loan program)

Joint Post-Secondary Education (PSE) Meetings

The PSSC continues to participate in the Joint (PSE) group of IAHLA, ISSP and the FNEESC PSSC to discuss BC First Nations Post-Secondary Education vision, mission and goals and support the mandates of each organization.

The Joint PSE group discussed and agreed to work collectively to set-up a scholarship in honour of Barbara White.

What's New?

Post-Secondary Education Resource Line

New for this year, FNEESC and INAC collaborated in a joint initiative to offer a toll-free telephone number for education workers to call for support in post-secondary education. The purpose is to assist education workers in the following topic areas:

- INAC Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP);
- University College Entrance Program (UCEP) information;
- Post-Secondary Student Report forms;
- BC's Post-Secondary Education Allocation Methodology and application processes;
- Plus any other post-secondary education questions that arise

Post-Secondary Education Student Data Tracking System

The PSSC continues to work with the First Nations Technology Council (FNTC), First Nations Social Development Society (FNSDS) and INAC to identify a software program which can be utilized by First Nation communities in the area of Social Development and Post-Secondary Education. The purpose of the data system is to help with the administration of the post-secondary program and to assist with INAC reports and compliance components.

In the past year, FNTC conducted technical evaluations on the data systems across Canada and narrowed the list to three systems. The systems have been reviewed by social workers and education workers throughout B.C. and the evaluations will be one of the factors in determining which system will be best for B.C. The goal is to have INAC support the purchase of the system so that FNTC can make it available to any First Nation community interested and prepared to utilize the data system.

Key Points

- *Education Coordinator Program* – please review the course listing and register early
- *PSE Student Data Tracking System* – look for more information in the spring and if you are interested in piloting the data system, please let us know
- *PSE Resource Line* – please call with any questions 1.877.280.4151
- We would appreciate your feedback on any of the work the PSSC is doing - please be sure to complete the Education Coordinator Program survey if you have not already done so.

FNESC Post-Secondary Education Subcommittee Member	Organization	Email	Term Expires
Les Williams, Chair	Skwah Band	Leslie.Williams@stolonation.bc.ca	July 2010
Deborah Wilson-Green, Vice-Chair	Kitamaat Village Council	hcdsmanager@haisla.ca	July 2011
Rosalind Williams	Squamish Nation	rosalind_williams@squamish.net	July 2010
Ben Berland	Carrier Sekani Tribal Council	bberland@cstc.bc.ca	July 2011
Priscilla Michel	Kyah Wiget Education Society	priscilla.michell@moricetown.ca	July 2011

Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association

Staff Contact

Karen Bailey-Romanko, Director of Post-Secondary Education and Training,
karenbr@fnesc.bc.ca

Overview

The Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) is the recognized leadership body, voice and support for a growing system of sustainable and accountable Aboriginal controlled adult and higher learning institutes.

The IAHLA is an independent, non-profit society, representing 34 member and one associate member adult and post-secondary institutes. Further information is available on the FNESC website (<http://www.fnesc.bc.ca/iahla/>). At this time, the IAHLA has signed an agreement with FNESC for the provision of administrative support to their Association. Therefore, IAHLA can be contacted through the FNESC office.

The IAHLA was created as a service organization and as such IAHLA will:

- collect and disseminate relevant information to assist Indigenous adult and higher learning agencies in their provision of education services;
- undertake research that will benefit Indigenous adult and higher learning agencies throughout BC;
- facilitate networking and information sharing activities, such as conferences, meetings, and workshops;
- support collective professional development and training opportunities;
- undertake other support activities at the direction of Indigenous adult and higher learning agencies;
- advocate for First Nations post-secondary institutes/agencies;
- promote and collaborate at the provincial level; and

- solicit funding as necessary to undertake the activities listed above.

Highlights of the Past Year

IAHLA Data Collection – Year Four

The IAHLA Board is pleased to announce that this year is the highest return on the Data Collection Project ever – with 83% of the 30 eligible institutes responding and 405 adult students participating. Highlights of Year Four Data include:

- 68% of the responding institutes offer programs that ladder directly to a public post-secondary institution degree program;
- 22 of 25 responding institutes report total October enrolments of 1,353 learners;
- 36% of the institutes indicated they have experienced a decrease in funding;
- 64% of the institutes offer First Nations language courses and 68% are involved in language revitalization projects; and
- 86% of learners agree they are satisfied, overall with their institutes.

The IAHLA Board would like to thank the member institutes for making this year's data collection a success. The IAHLA member institutes will be contacted in late September regarding their voluntary participation in the 2009/10 Data Collection project. The Year Four Data report is available at (<http://www.fnesc.bc.ca/iahla/research.php>).

Aboriginal Service Plans – Education Agreement Best Practices

IAHLA is continuing to work collaboratively with the University of Victoria (UVic) and Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT) on the ASP Education Agreement models. The Year 1 Best Practices research is complete, and this year the group is developing an Education Agreement Tool Kit that will be released in May, 2010 and piloted the following year.

Using ASP funding, IAHLA, NVIT and UVic also hosted the first Successful Student Transition Forum in May at NVIT. The next forum is planned for May 2010 in Victoria.

IAHLA/University of Victoria Transition Research

IAHLA and the University of Victoria partnered on comprehensive, community-based transition focused research to describe the history and structures of Aboriginal controlled institutes, and to articulate their role in providing culturally distinct programming and in preparing Aboriginal

students to transition to the public post-secondary system. The full research paper is available on the FNEsc website.

Based upon the research findings, three separate pilot projects will now be funded. Those pilot projects, designed through roundtable discussions, are meant to enhance and support the work that is already being done at the IAHLA institutes. They include: Reciprocal Institutional Orientation Program; Post-Secondary Survival Skills Resources; and Experiential Learning projects at Aboriginal-controlled institutes.

Mapping Project

IAHLA, responding to the need to help stakeholders understand more about the unique work and program deliveries of their member institutes, have agreed to undertake the Mapping Project.

This project, in consultation with INAC and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development (ALMD) will provide a web-based accessible map to indicate the location of the institutes, program and services offered, First Nations communities served, demographic information, and FNSA school information. ALMD would like to include public post-secondary institution information, labour market statistics; and INAC is interested in adding PSE completion information.

The project is in the planning stages. At this time, IAHLA is exploring what other mapping projects are currently underway in the province, such as the AHRDA's project. The goal is to provide a comprehensive overview of Aboriginal adult and post-secondary education in the province

PSE Policy Background Paper

The *Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education in British Columbia: A Place for Aboriginal Institutes* policy background paper (2008) supports the *Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association Framework (2007)*, which outlines the current situation for IAHLA and Aboriginal institutes and proposes ways to work collaboratively to improve the educational and economic success of Aboriginal adult learners and their communities. The paper is available on the website at <http://www.fnesc.bc.ca/iahla/research.php>.

This year, IAHLA and FNEsc representatives are working with the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development (ALMD) to move the six recommendations forward.

2009 AGM “Celebrating Our Strengths”

The sixth IAHLA AGM, held May 1 and 2 in Vancouver, marked the first time IAHLA expanded to a two day event. This year Dr. Iris Pretty Paint, a member of the Blackfeet Tribe in Montana shared her inspiring keynote address: *Finding Hope from the Inside Out*.

The seventh annual AGM and Conference is set for April 30 – May 1, 2010 in Vancouver, BC. Watch the IAHLA web link for Call for Presenters and registration information.

BC Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners Group

IAHLA is a member of the BC Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners group. The Partners group is working collectively to create a strategy for addressing Aboriginal post-secondary education and training issues, establishing working groups as required, and implementing activities as determined by the Partners group.

Since the signing of the MOU, the Partners Group has created a *Made in BC Strategy* that describes the wish list of all the stakeholders with respect to improving Aboriginal student success. The group understands that the resources are not currently available to support all of the activities listed but are committed to working towards securing the resources and implementing the strategy incrementally.

In October, the Partners Group held a Call to Action meeting with senior management of each Partner and sought direction. This fiscal year has seen stronger involvement by ALMD, with the commitment of the Deputy Minister Robin Ciceri to attend the PSE Partners’ quarterly meetings.

Aboriginal Learning Links Web Portal

To address the identified key priority of access to student funding, the Partners contracted the development of the Aboriginal Learning Links web portal, which is a ‘one-stop-shop’ for information on scholarships, bursaries, employment opportunities, child care, transportation and housing. Check out the site at www.aboriginallearning.ca

Joint Meeting of IAHLA, ISSP and FNEESC/PSSC

The area of post-secondary education and training is a rapidly changing and critically important facet of education and as a result there are several entities providing various support services to students, institutions, and communities. To ensure that there is no overlap or duplication of services, IAHLA, the Indian Studies Support Program (ISSP) and FNEESC Post-Secondary Sub-Committee have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (revised and approved November 20, 2007).

The MOU is a commitment of these three organizations to work together to identify common areas, avoid duplication of efforts and identify, and where appropriate jointly address gaps in First Nations post-secondary education and training.

The Joint members agreed to the following key steps:

- Articulate the role of the Joint Group, which will be aided by the determination of an identity (name) for this Group
- Inform and seek direction from First Nation Leadership
- Continue to work together and to speak as ‘one voice’
- IAHLA has received support from INAC to host two meetings of the Joint PSE group this fiscal year.

What’s Upcoming?

Millennium Scholarship Project

IAHLA, FNSA and FNESA are collaborating to deliver an initiative aimed at enhancing First Nations student participation rates in post-secondary education (PSE). This pilot project will be undertaken in partnership with the FNESC’s Parents’ Club to provide community-based sessions for youth, parents and Elders to discuss the opportunities and planning needed to access PSE.

Better Learner Assessment Research

Through the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills, IAHLA was funded for a two-year research project to examine current adult academic assessment tools, make culturally appropriate modifications to the text and delivery mechanism, and to pilot the modifications. IAHLA will be working in partnership with NVIT and UVic to link to current adult literacy initiatives.

The IAHLA Board of Directors:

IAHLA Board Member	Region	Institution	Email
Pauline Waterfall, Chair	Kwakiutl/Heiltsuk/Nuxalk/ Oweekeno	Heiltsuk College and Waglisla Integrated Studies Centre	hilistis@bellabella.net
Jeanette Armstrong, Vice Chair	Kootenay/Okanagan	En’owkin Centre	jca@vip.net
Joe Elliott, Treasurer	Nuu-chuh-nulth/Coast Salish	Native Education Centre	joe.elliott@cfnation.com

Jan Green, Secretary	Member at Large	a-m'aa sip Learning Centre	jangreen@nuuchahnu lth.org
Louise Lacerte Secretary	Tsilhq'atin/Carrier/Sekani	Ted Williams Memorial Learning Centre	llacerte@telus.net
Jacob McKay,	Haida/Tsimshian/Haisla/ Nisga'a	Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a	fishingeagle2005@yah oo.ca
Verna Billy- Minnabarriet Chair	Secwepemc/Stl'atl'imc/ Nlakapamux	Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	vbilly@nvit.bc.ca
Cathy Seymour	Kaska/Dene/Tahltan/Tagish/ Inland Tlingit	Kwadacha Dune Ty	cathy.seymour@ kwadacha.com
Tracey Woods	Gitksan/Wet'suwet'en	Gitksan/Wet'suwet'en Education Society	sheila@sik-e- dakh.com
Deborah Wilson Green	Member at Large	Kitamat Valley Institute	hcdsmanager@haisla. ca

Indian Studies Support Program

Staff Contact

Karen Bailey-Romanko at karenbr@fnesc.bc.ca or any ISSP Committee member.

Background

The Indian Studies Support Program (ISSP) provides funding for First Nations controlled adult and post-secondary programs that are accredited and transferable within the public post-secondary education system. First Nations adult and post-secondary institutes can offer these programs or First Nations that are operating through a brokering or affiliation agreement with a public post-secondary institutions can sponsor them.

ISSP proposal information is distributed annually to all First Nations and First Nations post-secondary institutes each fall. The new funding guidelines are now available, and the next funding application deadline is January 13, 2010.

A Committee that includes representatives of First Nations and First Nations post-secondary institutes located throughout the province manages the Indian Studies Support Program. The ISSP Committee works in cooperation with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).

For the past eight years, FNEC has provided services to the ISSP Committee through a fee-for-service agreement. Through that arrangement, FNEC staff members provide support such as the organization of committee meetings and activities, minute taking, correspondence preparation and the facilitation of the annual proposal call and review. Therefore, copies of the new proposal guidelines are available from the FNEC office.

Anyone interested can also contact an ISSP Committee member with any questions or concerns. The current list of ISSP Committee members is as follows:

Member	Organization	Email	Term Expires
Monty Palmantier - Chair	Lake Babine	palmantm@unbc.ca	Dec. 31, 2011
Cynthia McNeil Vice Chair	Seabird Island Indian Band	cynthiamcneil@seabirdisland.ca	Dec. 31, 2011
Henry Michel – Secretary/Treasurer	Penticton Indian Band Education Centre	hmichel@pib.ca	July 31, 2010
Deanna Nyce	Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a	dnyce@wwni.bc.ca	July 31, 2013
Sharon Wilson	Nuxalk	wilson.sharon3@gmail.com	July 31, 2013
Margery McRae	Gitskan Wet'suwet'en	marj.mcrae@ggc.gitxsan.com	July 31, 2010

	Education Society		
Barb Morin	Kamloops Indian Band	barbm@kib.ca	July 31, 2013
Lisa Wilson-Wells	Kwakiutl District Council	polikdc@oberon.ark.com	Dec. 31, 2011
Joe Elliott	Chemainus Native College	joe.elliott@cfnation.com	July 31, 2013

Highlights of the Past Year

2009/2010 Proposal Allocation Process

This year, the ISSP Committee reviewed 37 proposals totaling \$3.6 million in funding requests. Eleven Established proposals were funded totaling \$1,419,293.00, nine University/College Entrance Program (UCEP) proposals were funded totaling \$573,407.00 and five Developmental projects were funded totaling \$100,000. In all, 25 proposals were funded for a total of \$2,092,700.00. This year, the amount of available funding represents 58% of the total requested funding.

INAC Audit of the Post-Secondary Education Program

The recent *Audit of the Post-Secondary Education Program* (January 23, 2009) was conducted to provide assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the management control framework of the Post-Secondary Education Program and the regional controls for administering recipient contributions to ensure compliance with applicable authorities and policy frameworks.

Under the ISSP adherence to program terms and conditions and reporting requirements (section 7.4.2) the audit noted that only one region of the four visited was adhering to the Program Terms and Conditions and the *Recipient Reporting Guide* with respect to the proposal and annual reporting processes. BC INAC Regional office noted this is the BC region and noted all the work of the ISSP Committee to ensure an annual proposal driven funding process and reporting requirements.

Joint Post-Secondary Education Meetings

The ISSP Committee continues to participate in the Joint Post-Secondary Education (PSE) group. The Joint group has approved the revised Memorandum of Understanding and has finalized the draft BC Post-Secondary Education vision, mission and goals for the next 3-5 years.

The Joint PSE group discussed and agreed to work collectively to set-up a scholarship to honour Barbara White.

Final ISSP Reports

Again this fiscal year, the ISSP Committee will be circulating the ISSP Final Reports via CD rather than via hard copy. First Nations considering applying for ISSP funding are encouraged to review the Final Reports for previous ISSP projects to gain an insight into the types of projects funded through the ISSP funding. The 2007/08 Final Reports are also available at www.fnesc.ca/issp.

Dates to Remember

November 6, 2009 Final Reports for 2008/09 fiscal year programs are due

December 4, 2009 Progress Reports for 2008/09 fiscal year programs are due

January 13, 2010 Proposal deadline for 2010/11 programs

May 31, 2010 Interim Financial Statement for 2009/10 programs (Note - this is a new requirement)

New Paths for Education Program

Staff Contact

Derek Payne, Coordinator, Programs, derekp@fnesc.ca

Overview and Highlights of the Past Year

Since 1999, the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and the First Nations Schools Association (FNSEA) have been administering the New Paths for Education (NPE) formally known as “Gathering Strength” for Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) in the BC region. The NPE included funding for distribution to First Nations schools and communities to support activities related to three NPE theme areas:

- Capacity Building
- Improving School Effectiveness
- School to Work Transition

In the 2008-2009 year the NPE program supported locally developed school and community project activities such as teacher and retention programs, language and culture, attendance improvement, teaching materials and resources, tutoring programs, literacy, Board and Education Authority training, communication and information technology, and the development of culturally appropriate curricula. These types of school and community interventions resulted in greater education capacity, efficient service delivery, service integration, higher attendance, and retention and graduation rates.

A variety of capacity building collective activities was also supported to the First Nations schools and communities with a portion of the NPE funds dedicated to a number of collective programs and initiatives.

Each year, the level of funding retained for regional level efforts and specific activities to be undertaken was approved by First Nations representatives at the FNESC and FNSEA Annual General Meetings and Regional Sessions.

Since its establishment, one of the most successful and well-received components of the NPE program has been the allocation of funding directly to First Nations schools and communities for the implementation of local initiatives. The majority of the funding continues to be distributed to First Nations schools and communities in the form of a “base” plus “per capita” formula allocation to support local initiatives. The NPE funding was distributed as follows:

- \$2,462,616 NPE grants distributed to 127 First Nations schools;
- \$2,050,262 NPE grants distributed to 169 First Nations communities;
- Principal Support Resource Person provided support services to the FNSA Board of Directors and First Nations schools by sharing information relating to school assessments, staff evaluations, language curriculum development, policy preparation, parental involvement, and the enhancement of community capacity for effective school governance; and
- Additional training and resources provided based on input from participants of the 2006-2007 sessions. Workshop data was collected.

What's Upcoming

- The NPE program was approved for the 2009-2010 year
- NPE school and community work plans due September 25, 2009
- NPE school and community final reports due May 14, 2010

Key Points

- The NPE projects implemented with this funding continues to complement and enhance the provincial level activities
- Local developed projects resulted in greater educational capacity, higher retention rates, improved service integration and more efficient service delivery
- Support provided to School Principals resulting in higher retention rates for First Nations school administrators and increased consistency for students and communities
- The NPE program continues to be successful with well-received components of for First Nations schools and communities in the implementation of their local initiatives
- NPE program information is posted and available through the FNESC website www.fnesc.ca under "Programs" which can be downloaded separately, or as a whole.

Your Feedback

1. What impacts is the NPE program having in your First Nations schools and communities?

2. Do you experience difficulties or challenges in completing NPE work plans and final reports?
3. What successes or challenges do you see with the NPE program?

Parental & Community Engagement Program

Staff Contact

Derek Payne, Coordinator, Programs, derekp@fnesc.ca

Overview and Highlights of the Past Year

In 2008-2009 the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and the First Nations Schools Association (FNSEA) administered Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) Parental and Community Engagement (PCE) program for First Nations schools and communities.

The PCE program included grants for distribution to First Nations schools and communities that supported project activities related to raising the awareness of parent and community involvement in their valuable role in their children's education and to provide the support necessary to ensure their active participation in that role. The overall funding for PCE program was distributed as follows:

- \$240,000 in PCE grants distributed to 127 First Nations schools;
- \$282,972 in PCE grants distributed to 158 First Nations communities;

The PCEP grants supported the following:

- Increased knowledge for parents wanting to support their children's education;
- Increased self-confidence of parents, which inspired greater involvement in education programs;
- Increased parental involvement in First Nations school operations, which is a key component of student success;
- Stronger education programs resulted in parents sharing their experiences and skills;
- The creation of more supportive home-learning environments, resulted in increased student goal setting and achievement;
- Greater promotion of the importance of good nutrition and adequate physical activity for the health of First Nations students and families;

- A better understanding of ways that encouraged First Nations parental involvement by a provincial-level First Nations organization, and by local groups;
- A better understanding of the real perspectives of First Nations parents by mainstream educators and education decision-makers, including the dispelling of destructive myths about their disinterest in education; and
- More meaningful efforts that addressed the real, systemic barriers to First Nations parental involvement, as opposed to continued positions of blame and misperception.

The need for the encouragement of parental and community involvement in education programming continues. Parent and community contributions contributed to their children's higher attendance and retention rates, greater achievements and positive attitudes towards school. The PCE program initiatives contributed to the growth at the school and community levels. The students, parents and/or caregivers, and community members contributed to the promotion of quality education and life-long learning.

The financial support for these types of initiatives must continue, as parental and community engagement remains a crucial component to the success of First Nations students. The term "parental involvement" covers the responsibility of parents and/or caregivers, grandparents and family members through the raising of a child in the community. This needs to remain constant and supported through innovative projects that bring about success.

What's Upcoming

- The PCE program was approved for the 2009-2010 year
- PCE program school and community work plans due September 25, 2009
- PCE program school and community final reports due March 12, 2010
- PCE program information is posted and available through the FNESC website www.fnesc.ca under "Programs" which can be downloaded separately, or as a whole.

Your Feedback

1. What impacts is the PCE program having in your First Nations schools and communities?
2. Do you experience difficulties or challenges in completing PCE program work plans and final reports?
3. What successes or challenges do you see with the PCE program?

Teacher Recruitment and Retention: Professional Development Program

Staff Contact

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Overview and Highlights of the Past Year

In 2008-2009 the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and the First Nations Schools Association (FNSEA) administered Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) funding for the Teacher Recruitment and Retention: Professional Development (*TRR:PD*) program for BC First Nations schools.

The primary objective of this initiative was to assist band-operated schools in the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers and educators by funding professional development opportunities. The key secondary objectives were designed to:

- Provide educators/para-professionals in band-operated schools with access to professional development training;
- Reward teacher/school excellence; and
- Promote education as a career.

The overall funding for TRR: PD program was distributed as follows:

- \$303,030 grants distributed to 126 of 128 First Nations Schools;
- 1,942 school personnel participated in professional development training; and

Other sources of funding sought by the individual schools to meet their actual project costs.

The 2008-2009 TRR: PD program key activities facilitated the achievement of overall objectives that included:

- Training at an accredited post-secondary institution, which included accredited on-line training;

- Group workshops, training programs and courses organized by First Nations, delivered by specialists, and that were comparable to those provided by provincial school boards and the Ministry of Education;
- Group workshops, training programs and courses delivered by Aboriginal controlled post-secondary institutions, which were affiliated with a recognized institution;
- Promotion of education as a career; and
- Recognition of excellence in First Nations schools.

PROJECT ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS	PARTICIPATION PERCENTAGE
Training, including accredited on-line training, at an accredited post-secondary institution	198	10%
Group workshops, training programs and/or non-accredited courses organized by First Nations, delivered by specialists; and that are comparable to those provided provincial school boards and Ministries of Education	347	18%
Group workshops, training programs and/or non-accredited courses delivered by Aboriginal-controlled institution, which is affiliated with a recognized institution	133	7%
Networking opportunities including Internet-based communications, distance education opportunities and mentoring programs for first year teachers	288	15%
Recruitment workshop to promote education as a career	501	26%
Other PD training	452	24%
Totals:	1,942	100%

What's Upcoming?

- TRR:PD program was approved for the 2009-2010 year

- TRR:PD program school work plans due September 25, 2009
- TRR:PD program school final reports due March 12, 2010
- TRR: PD program information is posted and available through the FNESC website www.fnesc.ca under “Programs” which can be downloaded separately, or as a whole.
- The TRR: PDP remains a crucial component to the maintenance of professional growth for First Nations school personnel that support the educational growth and success of First Nations students.

Your Feedback

1. What impacts is the TRR: PD program having in your First Nations schools?
2. Do you experience difficulties or challenges in completing TRR: PD program work plans and final reports?
3. What are your thoughts on having the 2010-2011 TRR: PD program coordinated at a provincial level by offering professional development for First Nations school personnel?

First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy Programs

Staff Contact

Denise Williams, Youth Program Officer, denisew@fnesc.ca

Overview and Highlights of the Past Year

The YES was launched in 1996, as part of the Government of Canada's commitment to help Canadian youth get the work experience, knowledge, skills and information they need to make a successful transition to the workplace. The First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy (FNIYES) is part of the Youth Employment Strategy (YES). The YES combines the efforts of 14 Government of Canada departments and agencies with service Canada assuming the lead role. The goals of FNIYES are to:

- Emphasize the importance of education for effective labour market participation, and;
- Provide opportunities for First Nations and Inuit youth (*ages 15 to 30, who ordinarily live on reserve or in recognized communities*) to improve their job skills.

In February 2002, as part of its Innovation Strategy, the Government of Canada released a document *Knowledge Matters: Skills and Learning for Canadians*, which committed the Government of Canada to examine ways to improve the YES to make it more responsive to:

- The knowledge-based economy;
- Changing labour market conditions;
- Labour market barriers;
- Helping youth develop their skills to make successful school to work transitions.

The renewed YES builds on successful activities, which includes new elements to address the gaps identified in past evaluations, such as the need for youth needs assessments, the need to promote employment and career awareness, and the need to ensure that youth have access to employment related information.

The policy framework has been refocused to emphasize the importance of education to effective labour market participation, and to enhance employability skills, which are the critical skills needed in the workplace such as communication, problem solving, and working with others. The main objective of YES is to assist youth in enhancing their employability skills, while increasing the number of skilled young Canadians in the workforce.

In 2008-2009, FNEC and the FNSA once again jointly administered the First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy (FNIYES) in the BC region.

The *Student Summer Employment Opportunities Program (SSEOP)* supported opportunities for summer work experience and training for in-school secondary and post secondary First Nations students. In 2008-2009, the \$881,414 available for the program was allocated through a base-plus-per-capita formula and 167 of the 194 eligible First Nations accessed their grants. The SSEOP for this year supported 531 participants with work experiences.

The *Science and Technology Program (STP)* promoted science and technology as a career choice by providing First Nations youth with first-hand experience in various science and technology disciplines. In 2008-2009, \$220,353 was provided with 47 of the 69 proposals approved for funding. The STP supported 1,319 participants with exciting science and technology opportunities.

The *Youth Work Experience Program (YWEP)* is a program that sponsors supervised work experience for out-of-school, unemployed, or under-employed youth. With the \$1,099,271 of available funding, 22 of the 55 applicants were approved for funding in 2007-2008. The YWEP supported 161 participants in a variety of community based projects.

Finally, the *Career Promotion and Awareness Program (CPAP)* makes Cooperative Education programs available to First Nations youth in First Nations schools. With the \$438,172 available in 2008-2009, 11 of the 20 submitted proposals were approved for funding. The CPAP supported 414 participants in on-reserve First Nations schools programs.

What's Upcoming?

The Government of Canada created the Youth Employment Strategy to help young Canadians between the ages of 15 -30 years to obtain career information, develop skills, find good jobs and stay employed. The First Nations and Inuit Employment Strategy (FNIYES) is part of the broader Youth Employment Strategy (YES) program.

Beginning April 1, 2009 the current programs:

- Student Summer Employment Opportunities

- Science and Technology
- Youth Work Experience
- Career Promotion and Awareness (Cooperative Education)

Will be integrated into two programs:

- Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP)
- Skills Link Program (SLP)

This is only an administrative change that will reduce the number of proposals and reports a First Nation community, school and/or organization are required to submit.

In the month of April 2009, a FNIYES program package was distributed that provide detailed program information. The handbook contains the program guidelines, templates and data collection tools.

The Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP) is meant for First Nations and Inuit secondary and post secondary students (ages 15-30). This program provides wage subsidies to support work experience opportunities from during the summer months.

The Skills Link Program (SLP) supports the following activities:

- Career Promotion and Awareness & Cooperative Education Work Placements (First Nations school only);
- Science and Technology
- Mentored Work Placement; and
- Information Technology Placements.

Both programs are intended for First Nation and Inuit Youth ordinarily resident on-reserve, or in recognized First Nations and Inuit communities.

Key Points

- 2009-2010 Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP) distributed \$870,125
- 2009-2010 Skills Link Program (SLP) distributed \$2,174,463

- You can find FNIYES program guidelines, reports and information posted on the FNEC website at www.fnesc.ca under “FNIYES Programs”

Your Feedback

1. What opportunities have your youth had because of FNIYES?
2. What are ways in which FNEC could better support you in delivering FNIYES programs?
3. Would you like to share best practices and success stories with other communities participating in FNIYES?

First Nations Parents Club

Staff Contact

Barb O'Neill, Senior Administrative Assistant, s_sec@fnesc.ca

Overview and Highlights of the Past Year

The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and the First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) focused considerable efforts on creating and building the success of the First Nations Parents Club initiative. The First Nations Parents Club involved the implementation of provincial-level activities to facilitate the formation of local parents groups in First Nations communities.

The 2008-2009 year reflects:

- 102 locally-based parent clubs registered with the FNSA;
- 2,392 and growing parent members actively involved in Parents Clubs;
- Distribution of 61 grants to supplement the activities of the Parents Clubs;

Community based Clubs organized parenting workshops, support groups, recruitment of volunteers in schools and the promotion of parental involvement in school decision-making and assessment processes;

Five (5) Parent Newsletters distributed to Parents Clubs;

Individual prizes were awarded to Parent Clubs for the submission of progress reports about their Club activities;

Parent calendars for 2009 were distributed to all Parent Club members in December 2008;

New Parent Clubs are supplied with a start-up kit with useful resource information on how to start a Club and copies of past parent newsletters;

Books, stainless steel water bottles, book bags, aprons, backpacks, games, mugs, baseball caps, t-shirts and picture frame magnets distributed to every Club as educational incentive prizes;

Parent Club certificates are distributed to parents at the end of the school year in recognition of their commitment to maintain the activities of their local Parent Club;

Sponsorship of 16 First Nations for parent attendance at the 2008-2009 BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Council (BCCPAC) Conference; and

What's Upcoming

- First Nations Parents Club website information is available through the FNSA website www.fnsa.ca;
- Other parent club information is available by contacting the FNEESC office; and
- FNSA Parent Conference scheduled for May 2010 for registered parent clubs.

Key Points

- The FNSA and FNEESC support the 2008-2009 year for the continuation and growth of Parent Club initiatives in BC;
- The need for the encouragement of parental and community involvement in education programming needs to continue;
- Parental and community contributions contribute to higher attendance and retention rates, greater academic achievement and positive attitudes towards school;
- First Nations Parents Club was created to acknowledge and support the key role parents in ensuring the educational success of their children;
- This initiative is instrumental in providing parents with information, support and rewards for their efforts;
- The continuation of the presence of First Nations parents at the BCCPAC conference has numerous benefits with parents feeling more confidence and comfortable in terms of participating in broader information sharing and decision-making structures;
- Attendance in large gatherings such as the BCCPAC conference has resulted in greater participation of First Nations parents in other public education processes, like the BC Ministry of Education initiated School Planning Councils and District Advisory Committees; and
- The continuation of parental involvement is crucial for the promotion of First Nations students' needs in the public education system.

Your Feedback

1. How can we get more parents involved in First Nations Parents Clubs?
2. What kind of topics would you like to see in Parent Club newsletters?
3. What kind of educational incentives would your community like in parent clubs?

New Relationship Trust Program

Staff Contacts

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Derek Payne, Coordinator, Programs, derekp@fnesc.ca

Overview and Highlights of the Past Year

The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) in partnership with the New Relationship Trust (NRT) Society administered the 2008-2009 NRT funding for BC First Nations communities.

The NRT education initiatives consisted of funding allocations to First Nations communities for projects that addressed improving the student achievement in Language Arts and English, Mathematics, and/or Sciences.

NRT funding was distributed to First Nations communities using a “base” plus “per capita” formula. The community projects complemented and enhanced the provincial level activities undertaken with the NPE program funding.

The NRT dedicated \$693,000 for First Nations community projects to focus on three specific areas of interventions:

1. Language Arts and English achievements;
2. Activities that support improvement in Math achievements; and
3. Activities that support improvement in Science achievements.

Community Project Themes	Total Projects	Theme Percentage
Activities that support Language Arts and English Achievements	136	57%
Activities that support Math Achievements	57	24%
Activities that support Science Achievements	46	19%
Total:	239	100%

The 2008-2009 NRT initiative supported 173 First Nations communities with funding. First Nations communities accessed their funding allocations as part of their NPE application. A fourth theme was created under NPE titled New Relationship Trust (NRT) and the completion of work plans and final reports included in the NPE program.

What's Upcoming?

- NRT \$500,000 in community funding approved for the 2009-2010 year,
- NRT community work plans due September 25, 2009
- NRT community final reports due May 14, 2010
- NRT community program information is posted and available through the FNESC website www.fnesc.ca under "Programs" which can be downloaded separately, or as a whole.

Key Points

- NRT projects took place from July 2008 to June 30, 2009;
- NRT community project activities that supported Language Arts and English achievements in students revealed 136 projected projects that pertained to this category. This calculated to 57% of community NRT projects addressed this area of intervention;
- NRT community project activities that supported Math achievements in students revealed 57 projected projects that pertained to this category. This calculated to 24% of community NRT projects addressed this area of intervention;
- NRT community project activities that supported Science achievements in students revealed 46 projected projects that pertained to this category. This calculated to 19% of community NRT projects addressed this area of intervention; and
- NRT community projects resulted in significant benefits and achievements for students and their communities.

Your Feedback

1. What impacts is the NRT community initiative having with your First Nations students?

2. Do you experience difficulties or challenges in completing NRT work plans and final reports?
3. What successes or challenges do you see with the NRT community initiative?

New Relationship Trust Program: Developmental Standard Term Certificate

Overview and Highlights of the Past Year

The second component of the NRT initiatives consisted of funding support to seven (7) BC First Nations communities to support the implementation of the Developmental Standard Term Certificate (DSTC) in First Nations Language and Culture.

The NRT in keeping with priorities established through consultations with First Nations held in ten communities throughout BC between August 21st and September 26th 2006 dedicated \$543,750 to support First Nations in implementing the Developmental Standard Term Certificate (DSTC) in First Nations Language and Culture. The FNESC administered these funds.

The DSTC is a developmental certificate for teacher education issued by the BC College of Teachers (BCCT). It is designed to increase the number of qualified Aboriginal language and cultural teachers within First Nations communities and the education system, thus helping to preserve and revitalize the 35+ endangered languages that are indigenous to BC. Since its inception in 1999, six First Nations organizations have partnered with post-secondary institutions to implement DSTC programs.

Achievement of the DSTC certificate requires 90 credit hours of course work, made up of BCCT academic pre-requisites, academic course work in First Nations Language and First Nations Studies, and a teacher education component delivered by an approved teacher education program at a post secondary institution. This program framework is the product of a collaborative effort between First Nations communities, the FNESC, and the BCCT.

A review of the DSTC programs undertaken in 2006 concluded that funding constraints posed the largest threat to the sustainability of the DSTC programs. DSTC Support Program funding from the New Relationship Trust is evidence of a strong commitment on the part of First Nations leadership to support preservation and revitalization of their languages, and commitment on the part of the communities to acknowledge and give voice to the people who are learning and teaching the indigenous languages of BC.

A DSTC Support Program proposal call was distributed to assist eligible First Nations administrations to develop and implement DSTC programs that will increase the number of qualified Aboriginal language teachers within their communities and in the education system.

Any First Nation Band or Tribal Council that is committed to forming a partnership with:

- A First Nations Language Authority that will provide guidance and direction to the teaching of their language and culture;
- A university, university-college or other association that will deliver the academic portion of the DSTC program; and
- An approved teacher education program that will develop and or deliver the teacher education courses that make up 50% of the program.

Academic course must be delivered by accredited post secondary institutions and carry university transfer credit; all education seminars/courses must be approved by the BC College of Teachers before they will be accepted as part of the program.

The DSTC Support Program was available for three types of projects during each year of the program:

Developmental Projects

(One year only funding to undertake planning and development to bring a DSTC project to the approval stage. Although the program may take longer than one year to be approved, Development Project funding was only available for one year.)

One-Year Delivery

(One year only funding to support delivery of an approved DSTC program); and

DSTC Coordinator

(One year funding to support the salary and operating expenses for a part-time or full-time Coordinator for a DSTC project.)

The FNEESC distributed a 2008-2009 DSTC funding call for proposal. The amount for distribution was \$543,750 to support community projects.

Key Points

- The DSTC focused on supporting the development and implementation of DSTC programs that increases the number of qualified Aboriginal Language and Culture teachers within First Nations communities and the education system, thus helping to preserve and revitalize the 35+ endangered languages that are indigenous to British Columbia; and

- First Nations communities are actively implementing their community based projects through innovative strategies to bring about success and achievement for the DSTC and teacher education

Artist in Education (AIE)

Staff Contact

Derek Payne, Coordinator, Programs, derekp@fnesc.ca

Overview and Highlights of the Past Year

In 2003-2004 the First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) and the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) announced a new partnership with Art Starts in Schools, which provided a number of First Nations schools with an exciting new opportunity to bring artists into the schools for students.

For the past 25 years, Artists in Education (AIE) has supported the Arts in BC public and independent schools by providing matching funds for performances, workshops and residencies. The Vancouver Foundation and the BC Arts Council has sponsored this program.

Art Starts contributed \$17,500 specifically targeted for a First Nations schools AIE programs in British Columbia (BC). The FNSA matched the Art Starts grant with \$17,500 for a total allocation of \$35,000 available for distribution to First Nations Schools in BC.

Each year, twenty-four (24) First Nations schools were selected to receive a grant of \$1,450.00 accessed by a Letter of Intent. Funded schools receive 75% of their allotted funds upon receipt and approval of a Letter of Intent. Upon receipt of a Final Report, the final 25% allotted funds were released.

The FNESC and FNSA submit an AIE proposal application comprised of project information from selected schools. The proposal application is submitted to AIE in September of each year. This works well as the funding will be distributed during the school year.

What's Upcoming

This year, the dramatic economic downturn and on-going volatility of global markets have affected the ability of the AIE's partner, Vancouver Foundation, to fund the program at the same level as previous years. Though, these are challenging economic times for all organizations, the AIE are confident that the BC Arts Council funding will not change in 2009.

While the resources available to AIE have been reduced, they are still able to provide the FNSA with an allocation of \$16,000 for the 2009-2010 AIE program. This amount was determined through a formula based on the current number of schools, number of students and a distance code for each district and association.

The AIE grant of \$17,500 was reduced to \$16,000, reflecting a shortage of \$1,750 for the 2009-2010 year. This resulted in the 2009-2010 AIE grants to be reduced to funding 22 First Nations schools instead of 24 schools. The grant will be \$1,455 per school.

Key Points

- The FNSA Board directive for 2009-2010 AIE grant funding will be distributed in the following way:
- Schools will be randomly selected for grant eligibility with the assurance that schools were equally represented throughout the FNSA regional structure;
- Schools will be selected for the 2009/2010 AIE grant (*not the same as those selected for 2008/2009*);
- AIE was a great benefit to both the participating artists and First Nations students;
- Continued partnership with Art start, the Vancouver Foundation and the BC Arts Council; and
- Final reports from previous years available on the FNESC website: www.fnesc.ca

Your Feedback

1. Has the AIE program had an impact on your students in First Nations schools and communities?
2. Do you experience difficulties or challenges with First Nations artists to deliver an art medium in your First Nation school?
3. Do you have any feedback on the AIE program from a community perspective?

Conferences and Communications

Staff Contact

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Kim Buksa, Manager of Communications, kimb@fnesc.ca

Overview

The activities of FNEsc and the FNSA continue to reflect the needs expressed by First Nations communities in BC. A variety of annual events including conferences, workshops and regional sessions are organized to promote information sharing, participation and accountability.

What's Upcoming?

15th Annual Provincial Conference on Aboriginal Education "Reconnecting the Generations," November 5-7, 2009 – The Westin Bayshore, Vancouver. For registration information, please visit the "Events" tab at www.fnesc.ca

First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) 14th Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting, Vancouver, Spring 2010 (date to be determined). For more information or to register, please visit <http://www.fnsa.ca/currentevents.htm> in January 2010.

7th Annual Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association Conference and Annual General Meeting, Vancouver, Spring 2010 (date to be determined). For more information or to register, please visit <http://www.fnesc.ca/iahla/> in January 2010

Anti-Racism Workshops

Working with the BC Aboriginal Education Partners, Anti-Racism Consultant Eric Wong, and the Anti-Racism Leadership Network, FNEsc provides a variety of anti-racism workshops and services. Visit http://www.fnesc.ca/about/about_anti_racism.php for information about workshops.

Past Events

14th Annual Provincial Conference on Aboriginal Education "Strengthening Connections: Investing in Aboriginal Students" November 27-29th 2008, Vancouver.

Annually, FNEsc and the BC Ministry of Education, along with partners the United Native Nations Society and the Métis BC Nation, host a provincial Aboriginal education conference that

showcases the effective and inspiring practices in Aboriginal education. 2008 was the fourteenth year of offering this well attended and expanding conference. With 830 registrants, the event is very popular and has a reputation for being a forum for networking and information sharing in the Aboriginal education field.

The resources of time, talent, funding and indigenous knowledge that is put into the education of Aboriginal learners have long-term benefits for those learners and for all of us. The conference theme, "Strengthening Connections: Investing in Aboriginal Students," was chosen to explore how strong relationships create the foundation for quality Aboriginal education while educators, schools, communities, and support organizations, strengthen relationships with one another and with students in order to benefit Aboriginal learners.

First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) 13th Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting "Realizing the Potential of Each Student, Approaches that Work," April 24-25 2009, Vancouver.

A key activity for FNSA is the annual FNSA Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM). With over 300 registered participants, this event provides an opportunity for teachers, school administrators, and other people involved in the First Nations education system to network and learn from each other and from other professionals. This year, over 20 different workshops on a variety of topics of interest to First Nations schools were offered. More details are provided in the FNSA update.

6th Annual Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association AGM & Conference "Celebrating our Differences," May 1-2, 2009, Vancouver.

Dedicated to addressing the mutual interests of all Indigenous adult and higher learning institutes in BC, this is an annual gathering of Indigenous post-secondary and adult education institutes, networking, sharing news and charting a collective course for the future!

First Nations Languages Conference "Bringing Language to Life" July 5-6, 2009, Vancouver.

This conference hosted every two years by FNEC in partnership with the First Peoples' Heritage, Language & Culture Council (FPHLCC). This conference ensures teachers, Elders, academics, linguists and others gather to learn from one another about promising practices in language education and revitalization.

First Nations Schools Teacher Certification Project

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Overview and Highlights of the Past Year

The First Nations Schools Teacher Certification process is one of the FNSA's most significant initiatives to support First Nations schools in BC. The focus of the FNSA Teacher Certification Process is the professional development and growth of teachers and principals. The process emphasizes the creation of professional growth plans by all teachers, as well as supportive and collaborative approaches to reflective learning and ongoing improvement.

The FNSA Teacher Certification model began with a set of First Nations Schools Teaching Standards and Competencies, which are attached in Appendix 1. Those Teaching Standards were identified by representatives of First Nations schools in consultation workshops that took place in 2006.

In addition, First Nations school representatives identified a number of Performance Indicators to complement each of the Teaching Standards. The performance indicators elaborate on the standards and competencies, outlining observable behaviours that can describe whether a teacher demonstrates the competencies.

The Teaching Standards, Competencies and Performance Indicators are intended to provide a picture of what teachers in First Nations schools would ideally be prepared and able to do in order to deliver quality education programs. They highlight best practices for teachers as they fulfill their teaching roles and responsibilities. The Teaching Standards represent a set of goals to which teachers can aspire, and it is intended that they be used as the basis for considering each teacher's professional growth plan.

In the FNSA Teacher Certification Process, principals, teacher certification principals (FNSA staff who support the process), and teachers will collaboratively explore the teacher's implementation of the Standards, Competencies, and Performance Indicators through thoughtful classroom observations by the principal and teacher certification principal, as well as self-reflection by the teacher. The goal of those efforts is to help teachers recognize their teaching strengths while also identifying areas for further improvement.

Once those areas are identified, principals, teachers and regional principals will work together to complete a Professional Growth Plan. That Plan will identify and prioritize improvement goals, strategies for growth, as well as a commitment to continued observations, feedback, reflection, mentoring and assessment.

In addition to professional growth, an ultimate goal of the FNSA's Teacher Certification process is to facilitate the issuing of a First Nations Schools Teaching License. The ability to grant a unique First Nations schools teaching license has been identified as an important goal for all First Nations schools in BC, and it is particularly critical for the implementation of the new First Nations Jurisdiction Over Education agreement and legislation.

According to the new jurisdiction agreement, First Nations now have a strong foundation that will enable them to govern their own education systems on-reserve and work with the BC public education system as a partner for learners who attend school off-reserve. As a component of that jurisdiction agreement, First Nations communities will write their own legislation to license teachers and administrators within the First Nations school system. The FNSA's Teacher Certification Process is intended to fulfill that legislative requirement.

In order to receive and maintain a First Nations Schools Teaching License from the FNSA, each teacher must annually submit to the FNSA his or her Professional Growth Plan, indicating whether his or her improvement goals have been met.

In addition to demonstrating professional growth, all educators in First Nations schools also must understand and meet a set of Standards of Fitness and Conduct. The Standards of Fitness and Conduct are intended to articulate the essential knowledge, attitudes and practices that are required by First Nations educators to keep learners physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe.

Together, these two sets of standards – competence and conduct - form the foundation for the FNSA Teacher Certification Process and for the issuing and continuation of a First Nations Schools Teaching License.

At the 2008 FNSA Annual General Meeting, the FNSA membership supported the implementation of pilot projects to explore the implementation of the First Nations Schools Teacher Certification Project. The first phase of those pilot projects is now complete. The FNSA is currently finalizing an evaluation of phase one, including feedback from the pilot project participants and from the FNSA staff involved in this project. The results of the pilot project evaluation will be used to consider the project's strengths and areas for improvement, and to prepare for a second phase of the pilot projects in the upcoming year.

What's Upcoming?

- The evaluation of phase one pilot projects will be finalized and used for considering enhancements to the Teacher Certification process.
- The pilot projects will continue in the 2009/2010 school year, with more in-depth practices and continued opportunities for feedback and sharing.
- The participating schools will be offered professional development that complements the Teacher Certification Process to enhance the effectiveness of the initiative.
- The FNSA will continue to ensure that the process is consistent with the evolving First Nations jurisdiction developments, including the work toward the First Nations Education Authority.

Key Points

The FNSA continues to welcome feedback about this initiative, and appreciates the patience of First Nations schools as the process is improved through the implementation and evaluation of thorough pilot projects.