
BC Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners

February 23, 2017

Meeting Notes

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1138 Melville St. Vancouver, BC

PARTICIPANTS:

First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC)

- Thane Bonar, Director of Communications & Policy

Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA)

- Robert Schuster, Secretary

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada

- Jody Kaden, Director, Programs and Partnerships
- Milica Nauman, Manager, IGR Education
- Susan Klinkhamer, Education Advisor, Programs and Partnerships

Ministry of Advanced Education

- Deb Hull, Executive Director, Teaching Universities, Institutes and Aboriginal Programs
- Eugene Johnson, Director, Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training

Ministry of Education

- Ted Cadwallader, Provincial Director/Aboriginal Education

Research Universities Council of BC

- Ken Armour, Directory, Policy & Research

FACILITATION:

- Don Avison, Chair
Nicolas Mejia, Post-Secondary Program Analyst

1. Welcome and Review of Draft Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 AM. The draft agenda was amended to include an update from the Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED) on the call for proposals (CFP) for research on student financial assistance (SFA) accessed by Aboriginal students.

2. Review of Draft Meeting Notes – September 28, 2016

The draft meeting notes from September 28, 2016 were approved with no further changes.

3. Aboriginal Student Data Report

Eugene Johnson provided a summary of the *Aboriginal Student Data Report*. Partners raised several issues, and identified a number of clarifications that could be included in the report, or future iterations. These included the need to disaggregate the data for on/off-reserve students (when possible); providing a greater degree of context on five-year transition rates; removing students who have not made the complete transition to post-secondary (i.e. students in developmental and dual credit programs) from the transitions data; provide a rationale for the current definitions of low, medium and high grade point average; account for population growth in the enrollment data; identify areas where including international students would be relevant; and explore reasons behind the drop in Aboriginal learners eligible to apply for teacher certification.

Deb Hull indicated that more work will be done with the Policy Working Group on incorporating new data sets, adding additional context and refining the conclusion. No date is set for the release of this next draft.

Action Item: AVED to explore the possibility of disaggregating domestic full-time equivalents at UBCO from UBC.

Action Item: Don Avison to invite the Chair of the Association of BC Deans of Education (ABCDE) to attend a future meeting.

4. Draft Report on Aboriginal Male Participation and Success

Eugene Johnson provided a summary of the draft report on Aboriginal male participation and success in BC public post-secondary institutions. The draft report highlights the general disparity between Aboriginal males and other segments of the BC student population. Based on cross-jurisdictional research on other underrepresented populations, it also provides several potential explanations for the disparity, such as the racism of low expectations and socio-economic disparities which lead to negative experiences in post-secondary education (PSE).

5. Leading Practices in Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education

Deb Hull provided an update on the leading practices in Aboriginal PSE document. A revised draft will go to Policy Working Group on February 24, 2017 and then to the Partners for further revision.

6. Discussion on Federal Support for Post-Secondary Education Participation

Jody Kaden informed the table that INAC headquarters is organizing a series of leadership gatherings, two of which are to take place in BC. Milica Nauman informed the table that the next federal budget is expected to address PSE funding and that there will not be a renewed call for proposals for the PSPP.

Thane Bonar updated the table on the work being conducted by the Post-Secondary Education Joint Task Team. The Task Team is working on changes to the Post-Secondary Student Support Program's (PSSSP) National Program Guidelines to better serve the needs First Nations communities and students. The Task Team is also working on two research projects aimed at measuring demand for PSE funding and identifying potential models for funding Aboriginal-controlled institutes.

7. Aboriginal Service Plan Evaluation

Eugene Johnson provided an update on the Aboriginal Service Plan (ASP) Evaluation. The *Draft Performance Measurement Framework* is nearly finalized. The overall evaluation of the ASP will be complete in August, 2017. Partners discussed how First Nations concerns about specific institutions can be addressed.

8. Research on Student Financial Assistance and Aboriginal Learners

Deb Hull provided an update on research into SFA accessed by Aboriginal Learners. AVED has submitted a CFP and is partnering with the province of Ontario to conduct this research.

FNESC reiterated their disappointment at having not been involved in earlier discussions or the development of the CFP. FNESC indicated that it is critical that the work not support the direction that INAC appears to be taking on the matter of federal PSE funding, which is to direct First Nation and Inuit students towards the Canada Student Loan Program.

9. Indigenous Language Fluency Degree

Deb Hull and Thane Bonar provided an update on the language fluency degree proposal. Four PSE institutes have been selected to form a language fluency degree symposium and are currently partnering with local First Nations to develop a framework for the degree. Funding from AVED is supporting this work, including a First Nations Language Adult Educators Focus Group and symposium on February 17 and 18th at UBCO.

10. Follow-up on BC Public Post-Secondary Truth and Reconciliation Summit

Deb Hull updated the table on follow-up on BC Public Post-Secondary Truth and Reconciliation Summit. Dr. Verna Billy Minnabarriet, Chair of the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA), is working on a report on the Summit. Though the exposure of the Presidents of BC's colleges was a positive outcome of the Summit, Partners raised concerns around the lack of concrete commitments.

11. Changes to Grades 9-12 Curriculum and Aboriginal Student Transitions

Ted Cadwallader informed the table of changes to grades 9-12 curriculum being implemented. Don Avison provided an update on the *Aboriginal Education Strategic Plan*. Significant focus is being directed to the data report, culturally-relevant course content, improving literacy and numeracy at an early stage and the importance of cultural competency among teachers.

12. Other

Robert Schuster informed the table of the achievements of the Tszil Learning Centre in the delivery PSE programs and services to First Nation students, notwithstanding the difficulties in accessing operational and capital funding.

13. Future Meeting Dates

June 16, 2017