

Update on the BC Tripartite Education Agreement

First Nations Education Steering Committee

January 23, 2019 Joint Gathering



In June 2018, the BC First Nations Education Steering Committee, British Columbia (BC), and Canada, with the First Nations Schools Association as witness, signed the BC Tripartite Education Agreement: Supporting First Nation Student Success (BCTEA). BCTEA promotes systemic shifts and collective efforts to facilitate improved educational outcomes of First Nation students in BC, regardless of where they live or are enrolled in school. BCTEA updates and expands upon the 2012-2018 Tripartite Education Framework Agreement (TEFA).

Canada's New Commitments

- The signing of BCTEA provided one-time funding for the purchase of new computer equipment, enhanced school, and school bus purchases for First Nations schools.
- Canada will provide an additional \$20 million in annual funding for First Nations education in BC. Following direction from First Nations representatives who attended a March 2018 provincial information session, the \$20 million investment will annually support:
 - New funding grants to support First Nations Language and Culture programming in First Nations schools (approx. \$14 million, in addition to approx. \$5 million already provided through the BCTEA First Nations schools funding formula);
 - Increased funding for transportation costs of First Nations schools (approx. \$1.3 million);
 - Additional transportation capital (school buses) for First Nations schools (approx. \$1 million);
 - Increased funding for First Nations adult education in First Nations schools (approx. \$900,000);
 - Increased Second and Third Level Services for schools and communities (approx. \$2.7 million).
- The existing special education program for First Nations schools, which was not included as part of the first tripartite agreement, is incorporated into BCTEA at an annual funding level of \$24 million, based on the program model designed by and for First Nations schools in BC.
- BC First Nations will have access to any new federal investments in First Nations education, and a formal process will ensure that Canada's funding for First Nations schools reflects additional provincial investments into the public education system.
- There will be a BC-specific approach to compliance reviews for the nominal roll (student count), which will eliminate the attendance requirement that previously resulted in many students being removed from the nominal roll.
- Students will now be eligible for dual credit programs.
- Funding for First Nations to implement full-day Kindergarten 4 will commence in September 2019.

British Columbia's New Commitments

- First Nations without a Local Education Agreement (LEA) will now have the option of entering into a provincial LEA, through which Canada will provide funding directly to First Nations for their students who attend public schools. A provincial LEA Template is close to completion. First Nations that wish to enter LEAs with local boards of education will continue to be supported by FNESC. BC, Canada,

and FNEESC also will develop a mechanism to monitor the negotiation and implementation of LEAs throughout the Province.

- School Boards will be required to work with First Nations to create joint plans for the transportation of students who live on-reserve and attend public schools. The necessary transportation services will be funded through a First Nation Student Transportation Fund that Canada will pay to BC based on the existing amount of the Student Location Factors and Student Transportation Fund (approximately \$5.4M), to be allocated to school districts based on strict requirements. This process, to be implemented in 2019/2020, will be monitored by a tripartite committee (BC, Canada, and FNEESC) and reviewed after two years. More details about the fund will be shared widely in January 2019.
- First Nations Educational Outcomes Improvement Teams (FNEOIT) will be created to support school districts in improving the learning experiences and educational outcomes of First Nations students.
- BC and FNEESC will work together to jointly develop an Indigenous Language policy, to collect and analyze relevant data to inform further policy and program development, and to develop full-course offerings in First Nation languages.
- There will be improved accountability and reporting for students in public schools through the provision of First Nation community specific data, a second enrolment count, and annual student outcome reports to FNEESC.
- One of the province's six annual teacher professional development days for the next four years will focus on enhancing First Nations student learning outcomes, starting in the 2019/2020 school year.
- BC will invest in building the capacity of School Boards to negotiate and implement LEAs and will jointly convene, with FNEESC, an annual meeting with those Boards to share information about the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, and First Nations education issues more broadly.
- BC will work with FNEESC and Canada to set the First Nation student rate for First Nations students attending public schools.
- BC will provide funding to support FNEESC's participation in provincial processes, including engaging with the Ministry and supporting improved student outcomes in BC schools.

FNEESC's New Commitments

- BCTEA generally maintains the reporting requirements and accountability mechanisms that were included in TEFA, which are less extensive than those for First Nations nationally.
- BCTEA includes a commitment that FNEESC will be actively involved in Ministry of Education working groups, committees, and policy advisory groups to have a direct voice in provincial education developments.
- According to BCTEA, FNEESC will receive funding to deliver comprehensive second and third level services to First Nations schools and communities, working with the FNSA where relevant.
- FNEESC, with the FNSA, will continue to work with the Ministry to facilitate access to the Dogwood Diploma by First Nation schools, and to extend access to the Adult Dogwood by June 2019.
- FNEESC will be involved in the overall development of federal guidelines for First Nations education programs.
- FNEESC will work with BC and Canada to identify and develop effective policy and/or legislation to effectively implement the agreement.