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# BC Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners

## March 6, 2019

### Meeting Notes

Department of Indigenous Services Canada, 1138 Melville St. Vancouver, BC

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#### **PARTICIPANTS:**

Association of British Columbia Deans of Education (ABCDE)

- Jan Hare, Associate Dean, Indigenous Education

BC Aboriginal Training Employment Alliance Member (BCATEAM)

- Deanne McLeod, Program Coordinator

BC Association of Institutes and Universities

- Ruth Wittenberg, President

BC Colleges

- Colin Ewart, President

Department of Indigenous Services Canada (DISC)

- Catherine Lappe, Regional Director General
- Milica Nauman, Manager, IGR Education
- Wendy Rogers, Director, Programs and Partnerships
- Laura Langs, Advisor

Service Canada

- Jeff Scott, Director, Indigenous Program Delivery

First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC)

- Debbie Jeffrey, Executive Director
- Thane Bonar, Director of Communications & Policy

Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA)

- Jason Wong, Treasurer

Métis Nation BC (MNBC)

- Colleen Hodgson, Director

Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (AEST)

- Jeff Vasey, Assistant Deputy Minister
- Catherine Poole, Executive Director, Design and Delivery Branch
- Jeanne Sedun, Executive Director, Sector Business Innovation
- Fiona Cubitt, Director, Policy and Planning
- Bryan Dreilich, Director, Post-Secondary Engagement & Partnerships

Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR)

- Stephanie Gabel, Senior Advisor, Socio-Economic Partnerships

Research Universities' Council of BC (RUCBC)

- Robin Ciceri, President
- Jim Martell, Director

#### **FACILITATION:**

- Judith Sayers, Chair
- Nicolas Mejia, FNESC Manager, Post-Secondary Education and Training

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## 1. Introduction of New Chair

FNESC introduced the new Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training (PSE) Partners Chair, Dr. Judith Sayers.

## 2. Welcome and Review of Draft Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am. The PSE Partners added a mandatory Indigenous course for K-12 to the agenda and the amended agenda was approved.

## 3. Review of Draft Meeting Notes

The draft meeting notes were reviewed and approved.

## 4. Review and Approval of Updated Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the PSE Partners Table have not been updated since 2015. FNESC presented a revised draft terms of reference for revision by the Partners.

**Action Item:** FNESC to integrate recommended edits to the Draft Terms of Reference.

**Action Item:** FNESC to add the selection of the Vice-Chair to the agenda for the next PSE Partners meeting.

## 5. Indigenous Language Revitalization in BC

### a) Indigenous Language Fluency/Proficiency Degree

The Indigenous Language Fluency/Proficiency Degree (ILFPD) Consortium and Partnership Table continues to meet regularly. This initiative has not received additional support beyond funding for the development of the ILFPD Framework. A teleconference was held on January 21, 2019 with Vice-President Academics (or equivalent) from the post-secondary institutions in the Indigenous Language Fluency/Proficiency Degree Consortium in order to confirm institutional support for the initiative. FNESC noted that the discussion seemed to be inconsistent with much of the conversation that has taken place in meetings with the Consortium, in that it was more focused on articulation, rather than the creation of a new degree, which was the intention of FNESC and IAHLA in initiating this project.

### b) Indigenous Languages Act

Representatives from Heritage Canada joined the PSE Partners meeting to discuss the Indigenous Languages Act. Bill C-91, An Act respecting Indigenous languages has gone through a first and second reading in Parliament. Partners noted a number of weaknesses within the legislation, in particular that the Act refers to rights related to languages, as opposed to language rights.

## 6. Addressing Racism in the Post-Secondary System

FNESC noted that racism in the post-secondary system continues to be a barrier to Indigenous learners succeeding in PSE. FNESC will be undertaking research on Indigenous PSE students experiences of racism. The purpose of this research is to gather data on the nature and extent of racism towards Indigenous learners in the public post-secondary system and to determine whether current mechanisms, policies, and programs within institutions are adequately addressing systemic and interpersonal racism.

**Action Item:** FNESC to provide an overview of existing research on racism in the public post-secondary system at the next Partners meeting.

## 7. Supports for Former Children and Youth in Care in PSE

FNESC noted that the criteria for the tuition waiver program must be revisited and wrap-around supports should be provided to former children and youth in care who are attending post-secondary. They also noted that there has been some inconsistency in the communication of the criteria and limits of the program. Supports for former children and youth in care is a key component of the student pillar of the BC Tripartite PSE Model.

**Action Item:** FNESC to provide an update regarding the development of the BC Tripartite PSE Model at the next PSE Partners

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meeting.

## **8. PSE Policy Proposal**

FNESC and IAHLA participated in the development of a draft policy proposal to be appended to a memorandum to cabinet. The Policy Proposal includes a request for the continuation of the federal government's \$45 million investment in the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) and updated terms and conditions for PSSSP and the Post-Secondary Partnerships Program, increased support for all current funded and unfunded students, governance funding for First Nations-mandated institutes, and authority to support First Nations and DISC to co-develop regional post-secondary models. This memorandum to cabinet has not yet been tabled and will likely not be before the release of the 2019 federal budget.

## **9. Provincial Program and Initiatives Updates**

### **a) Aboriginal PSE and Training Policy Framework Refresh**

The Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework (Aboriginal Policy Framework) is currently being updated in order to align with the provincial government's commitment to fully implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action, and ensure it reflects the current climate of the post-secondary system in BC. The Aboriginal Policy Working Groups continues to meet regularly.

### **b) Indigenous Board Member Representation/Forum**

FNESC and IAHLA have suggested that a gathering be held with the Indigenous board members from each of the public post-secondary institutions in BC. AEST has agreed to move forward with this project and is currently planning the forum. The forum is just one step towards greater capacity development for all board members in order to support systemic change in the public post-secondary system.

### **c) Aboriginal Student Data Report**

In June 2018, AEST released the Aboriginal Learners in British Columbia's Public Post-Secondary System report. This baseline report on Aboriginal PSE is expected to inform policy and decision-making regarding the enrolment, achievement, and transitions of Aboriginal students in public post-secondary institutions. AEST presented the Aboriginal Student Data Report to the FNESC Board on February 22, 2019 and is currently analyzing the impact of population growth on Indigenous student outcomes and developing a measure for retention for the next iteration of the Report.

### **d) Implementation of the TRC Calls to Action in Public Post-Secondary Institutions**

AEST has drafted a reporting form to send to public post-secondary institutions to track the implementation of relevant Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) Calls to Action within the PSE system.

### **e) Student Housing Framework**

AEST is currently developing a Student Housing Framework in order to increase the number of on-campus student housing beds. This work is being guided by a Student Housing Working Group. The Ministry has hired a company to develop a survey to refine the current estimate of unmet need, which includes questions related to the needs of Indigenous students.

### **f) Indigenous Skills Training Alignment Project**

AEST noted that they have completed the first phase of the Indigenous Skills Training Alignment project, which was to engage with various organizations in BC to discuss Indigenous skills training. They have compiled feedback from participating Indigenous organizations and have sent the summaries to each organization for review. The Ministry is looking to conduct more engagement for the second phase of this project in order to launch new Indigenous skills training programming in April 2020.

### **g) ILEAD/BCAPSC Participation at the PSE Partners Table**

The Partners discussed the possibility of ILEAD and BCAPSC attending future PSE Partners meetings as guests or observers.

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**Action Item:** FNEESC to bring forward options for the participation of ILEAD and BCAPSC in the work of the PSE Partners.

**Action Item:** FNEESC to send out the Memorandum of Understanding: Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training to the PSE Partners.

#### **10. Other**

First Nations, through the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNEESC), have consistently called on the Province to include a mandatory First Peoples course, or bundle of credits, as a requirement for any student graduating from the K-12 education system. These calls have been met with resistance and a mandatory course, or bundle of credits, has yet to be put in place. It was agreed that that the Partners would have further discussion around how each respective organization and the PSE Partners Table collectively could support the implementation of a mandatory First Peoples course in K-12.

**Action Item:** FNEESC to send a follow up email with information on the institution of a mandatory First Peoples course in K-12 to the PSE Partners.

#### **11. Future Meeting Dates**

The next PSE Partners meeting is June 12, 2019.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 pm.

#### **Summary of Action Items**

**Action Item:** FNEESC to integrate recommended edits to the Draft Terms of Reference.

**Action Item:** FNEESC to add the selection of the Vice-Chair to the agenda for the next PSE Partners meeting.

**Action Item:** FNEESC to provide an overview of existing research on racism in the public post-secondary system at the next Partners meeting.

**Action Item:** FNEESC to provide an update regarding the development of the BC Tripartite PSE Model at the next PSE Partners meeting.

**Action Item:** FNEESC to bring forward options for the participation of ILEAD and BCAPSC in the work of the PSE Partners.

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