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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Education  
First Nations Education Steering Committee

### **Legislative changes to support First Nations jurisdiction over education**

VICTORIA – First Nations participating in the education jurisdiction initiative in B.C. will soon be able to certify and regulate teachers who work in schools under their jurisdiction.

Legislative changes made Oct. 25, 2021, will make it possible for the Province to provide operational support for this new certification and regulation process.

“Education can and must play a key role in reconciliation and in creating a future of equity and justice for all,” said Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Education. “These legislative changes are a concrete step forward in implementing the Province’s reconciliation commitments as we commit to advance education outcomes for Indigenous students.”

Tyrone McNeil, president, First Nations Education Steering Committee, said: “We appreciate the opportunity to work with the Province of British Columbia on this groundbreaking initiative. Supporting First Nations in certifying and regulating teachers in their own schools is fundamental to their exercise of jurisdiction.”

First Nations in this province have been working to advance jurisdiction over education for more than 20 years. Teacher certification and regulation is one of the key components of jurisdiction. The legislative changes brought forward today have been co-developed with the First Nations Education Steering Committee, acting under the direction of the First Nations engaged in the initiative.

“The B.C. First Nations education jurisdiction initiative, including our ability to certify and regulate teachers who we know are the right fit for our schools and students, is a true reflection of First Nations control of First Nations education – which we have been advancing for decades,” said Hugh Braker of the Tseshaht First Nation, one of the negotiators for the initiative.

The legislation will also change the composition of the British Columbia Teachers’ Council, the provincial body whose responsibilities include establishing certification, conduct and competence standards for provincial teaching certificate holders. The changes will ensure representation on the council by the First Nations Education Authority, which is the body made up of individuals appointed by First Nations participating in jurisdiction.

Supporting First Nations control over First Nations education, including greater control over teacher certification and regulation, will lead to improved outcomes for students.

#### **Quick Facts:**

- The legislation changes announced will amend:

- the First Nations Education Act;
- the Teachers Act; and
- the Criminal Records Review Act.

**Learn More:**

For the legislative changes, visit:

<https://www.leg.bc.ca/parliamentary-business/legislation-debates-proceedings/42nd-parliament/2nd-session/bills/first-reading>

First Nations Education Steering Committee: <http://www.fnesc.ca/>

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