



FNESC | FNSEA  
**2019/20**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

SUPPORTING FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA



**OUTSIDE COVER IMAGE**

Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Parents Club

**PAGE BORDER GRAPHIC ELEMENTS**

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## FNESC | FNSA 2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT

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# MESSAGE FROM

## FNSA President Clayton Grice and FNEESC President Tyrone McNeil

On behalf of the BC First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) and BC First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNEESC), we are extremely pleased to present our Annual Report for 2019/20. Our organizations have expanded our efforts to support positive improvements in First Nations education, and we are excited by some of the important milestones achieved in the past year.

On November 26, 2019, the Government of British Columbia passed legislation to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, making BC the first jurisdiction in Canada to do so. The new legislation provides a legislative framework for recognizing the constitutional and human rights of Indigenous peoples and aligning BC's laws with the internationally-recognized standards of the UN Declaration, as well as the legal rights of Indigenous peoples. This represents an invaluable opportunity to continue our work toward meaningful systemic change for the benefit of all Indigenous learners in BC, including those in public and First Nations schools, from our earliest learners to those enrolled in post-secondary and adult education.

We are also looking forward to building on the May 26, 2020 First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol. Signed by the First Nations Leadership Council (BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, and Union of BC Indian Chiefs), FNEESC, and the Province of British Columbia (represented by the Minister of Education, the Minister of Children and Family Development, and the Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training), we welcome this joint commitment to ensuring that all First Nations children and youth have every chance to reach their full potential.



FNESC and FNSA also have continued to work closely with First Nations leadership, our community and school members, as well as a range of other education partners – especially important during the recent times of such unprecedented change. The circumstances arising as a result of COVID-19 reiterated the strength we achieve when we work together to address our individual and collective challenges. We were pleased to be involved in numerous committees that were created to respond to the pandemic, which helped us plan and communicate information to assist First Nations as they made difficult decisions for the benefit of their citizens. We were also inspired by the stories we heard from First Nation community and school representatives who worked so tirelessly to meet the needs of their students and families, ensuring continued access to meal programs, resources, relevant equipment, and new learning opportunities – not an easy task given the great uncertainties and complications we all faced.

This year, perhaps more than any other, we are thankful for everyone who makes our organizations' success possible – First Nations leadership, our members, the communities and schools we serve, our staff, and our partners. These past months have reinforced to us all the value of collaboration and the positive difference we can make when we work as a team to promote improved educational outcomes for all of our learners. Reflecting that understanding, the FNESC Executive and FNSA Board have publicly confirmed our intention to continue building a close, positive working relationship, and we have been meeting regularly to jointly plan our way ahead.

We hope this report captures some of the exciting work being done in BC, and we look forward to reporting more in the months ahead.

# WHO WE ARE



**The BC First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNEESC)** is a policy and advocacy organization that represents and works on behalf of First Nations in BC. FNEESC has a mandate to support First Nations in their efforts to improve the success of all First Nations students and advance First Nations education in BC by disseminating information, undertaking research, administering programs and services, and advocating and negotiating with the provincial and federal governments and other key stakeholders at the direction of First Nations.

**The BC First Nations Schools Association (FNSA)** was created to promote improved educational outcomes for students attending First Nation schools by supporting the development and implementation of appropriate, meaningful and quality education programs and providing a forum for networking and information sharing amongst schools and other education partners. The FNSA is committed to designing programs to assist First Nation schools in creating effective, nurturing, and linguistically and culturally appropriate education environments that provide students with a positive foundation in all academic areas.

## FNEESC Mandate

“To facilitate discussion about education matters affecting First Nations in BC by disseminating information and soliciting input from First Nations.”

## FNSA Mission

“The First Nations Schools Association will collaborate with First Nations schools to create nurturing environments that will develop learners’ pride and competence in their First Nations language and heritage and will equip them to realize their full potential, within self-governing First Nations communities.”

56

voting Board members were in attendance at the July 2019 FNEESC Annual General Meeting

67

FNSA Authorized Representatives attended the 2019 FNSA Annual General Meeting

129

First Nations had appointed members to the FNEESC Board as of March 31, 2019

123

First Nation schools were FNSA Members in good standing as of March 31, 2020

## WE SUPPORT

**203**

First Nations

OVER **130**

First Nation schools

ALMOST **8,000**

First Nation students enrolled in BC public and Independent schools

APPROX. **6,000**

students enrolled in First Nation schools in BC, including about 1,200 students funded through Reciprocal Tuition

OVER **67,000**

self-identified Indigenous students enrolled in BC public schools



## OUR PARTNERS

### BC First Nations Leadership

FNEC and FNSA continually report to and seek direction from First Nations leadership in BC regarding all significant issues effecting First Nations education. Specifically, FNEC and FNSA appreciate the ongoing guidance and support provided by the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, the First Nations Summit, the BC Assembly of First Nations, and the First Nations Leadership Council. The activities of FNEC in particular are undertaken according to a formal agreement signed in 2015 that confirms the close working relationship between FNEC and First Nations leadership in BC, and their mutual commitment to a continued positive relationship.

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**“We commit to engage in an ongoing, cooperative dialogue to achieve the purposes of this Protocol.”** From the Declaration and Protocol of Recognition, Support, Cooperation and Coordination Between the First Nations Leadership Council (BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs) and the First Nations Education Steering Committee

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Arden Elementary School

### The Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association

The Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) was created in 2002 to support and represent Indigenous-controlled adult and post-secondary education institutes in BC. Although IAHLA is facing funding uncertainties, it continues to advocate for its member institutes, and FNEC and IAHLA are resolved to work together on a number of key issues, resulting in efficient engagement with government and other partners related to First Nations education and Indigenous post-secondary institutes.

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**“Our mission is to support quality post-secondary educational institutes that leverage Indigenous language, culture and knowledge to create adaptable, competent, skilled citizens who are able to contribute to local, provincial, and national advancement.”** IAHLA Mission

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FNEC and IAHLA have agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which formalizes their existing relationship and acknowledges the respective roles of each organization in advancing an evolving BC Tripartite PSE Model – described further in this report. IAHLA and FNEC also have received funding to develop a costing model for First Nations-mandated institutes, which will inform the development of a provincial treasury board submission to support those institutes. More information is available at [www.iahla.ca](http://www.iahla.ca).

## The K-12 Aboriginal Education Partners

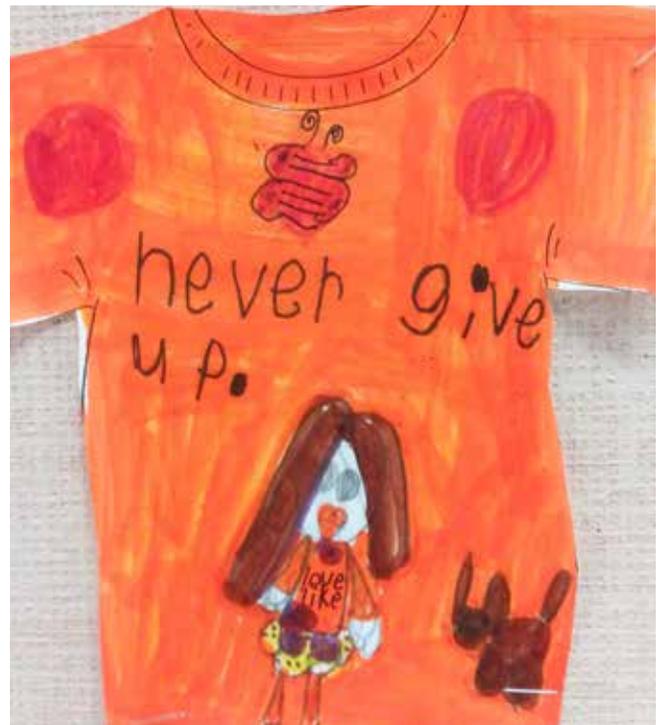
First established in 1998, the BC Indigenous Education Partners Group has grown to include some of the most significant stakeholders in the BC education system, including FNESC, the FNSA, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) BC Region, the BC Ministry of Education, including BC Teacher Regulation Services, the BC Teachers' Federation, the BC School Trustees Association, the BC Superintendents Association, the BC Confederation of Parents Advisory Councils, the BC Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association, United Native Nations, and the BC Métis Nation. In 1999, the organizations signed a Memorandum of Understanding to formalize their relationship and shared aims for Indigenous learning, and they continue to work together to achieve the following goals: increase collaboration among the partners; increase the number of qualified Indigenous educators; increase understanding and respect for First Peoples' knowledge, cultures and histories; and incorporate Indigenous perspectives into all education decision-making.

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**"We, the undersigned, acknowledge that Aboriginal learners are not experiencing school success in British Columbia. We state our intention to work together within the mandates of our respective organizations to improve school success for Aboriginal learners in British Columbia."** 1999 Memorandum of Understanding

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The Partners Group has facilitated critical dialogue in recent years, leading to agreement about important policy changes related to the Evergreen certificate and also advancing considerations of other important objectives, such as a mandatory First Nations course for the BC Ministry of Education graduation program and improved First Nations teacher recruitment and retention rates.



Christine Morrison Elementary School



AD Rundle Middle School



Gitwangak Elementary School

## The Indigenous Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners

The BC Indigenous Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners (PSE Partners) was formed in March 2005 to facilitate collaboration and joint action to improve access and success for Indigenous post-secondary students in BC, reflected in the PSE Partners' Memorandum of Understanding, which states:

**"We, the undersigned, acknowledge, that although there has been some progress in recent years there is a need for improved levels of participation and success for Aboriginal learners in post-secondary education and training in British Columbia. We state our intention to work collectively toward this goal within the mandates of our respective organizations and to bring in other partners as appropriate. This will be accomplished by building on our successes to date, collectively identifying needs, and implementing strategies to improve the success of Aboriginal post-secondary learners in British Columbia."** 2005 Memorandum of Understanding

Members of the PSE Partners include FNEESC, IAHLA, the First Nations Summit, Métis Nation BC, BC Assembly of First Nations, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), the BC Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED), the Research Universities Council of BC, the BC Association of Institutes and Universities, the Association of BC Deans of Education, the BC College Presidents, the BC Aboriginal Training Employment Alliance Members, the BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, the BC Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, Service Canada, and the BC Ministry of Education.

In 2019/20, the PSE Partners Terms of Reference was updated to reflect the commitment of the federal and provincial governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and to reinvigorate the objectives of the Partners. That work helped to advance discussion of a number of key priorities, including: a refresh of the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan: 2020 Vision for the Future; funding for First Nations-mandated institutes; Indigenous skills training; the Indigenous Language Fluency Degree; supports for Indigenous board members; Indigenous student housing; and changes to the Tuition Waiver Program for former Indigenous children and youth in care.



Kinnikinnick Elementary School ►

## National Partnerships for First Nations Education

BC First Nations representatives contributed significant input to support the co-development of a new First Nations education policy framework by the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Chiefs Committee on Education (CCoE) and the Government of Canada. The resulting policy framework for enhancing First Nations elementary and secondary education, which builds on an extensive engagement process and new investments by Canada, is intended to respect the diversity of First Nations through regional education agreements that will form the basis of new partnerships for First Nations education. The policy framework was ratified by the AFN Chiefs in Assembly in December 2017, and BC First Nations negotiated the first regional education agreement under this new approach – i.e. the BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA), described in detail further in this report. Since then, the policy framework has continued to serve as a platform for important work by the AFN, including its regional representatives, related to national First Nations education developments.

FNESC representatives have also been actively involved in national discussions of First Nations PSE. Canada's Budget 2017 included a funding increase of \$90 million

over two years, beginning 2017/18, for the Post-Secondary Student Support Program, as well as a commitment to undertake a comprehensive and collaborative review of PSE supports. The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) implemented that review with a PSE Review Working Group, which included representation by the Chair of the IAHLA Board, the Chair of the FNESC Post-Secondary Subcommittee, and FNESC staff. FNESC remains actively involved with the AFN's follow-up to this review and Canada's PSE commitments, as described further in this report.

## Memoranda of Understanding

In addition to the many partnerships described above, FNESC and FNSA have established important formal relationships with the following organizations, among many others: the First Nations Health Authority; the Association of BC Deans of Education; the Representative for Children and Youth; and the First Nations Technology Council.

# OUR AGREEMENTS

## The BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA)

Throughout 2017 and 2018, following the expiration of the 2012 Tripartite Education Framework Agreement (TEFA), the TEFA signatories undertook significant efforts to negotiate a second, complementary agreement: the June 2018 BC Tripartite Education Agreement: Supporting First Nation Student Success (BCTEA), which was signed by FNE SC, Canada, and British Columbia, and witnessed by the FN SA.

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**“Making systemic shifts to support successful educational outcomes of all First Nation students, regardless of where they live or are enrolled in school in BC.” 2018 BCTEA Purpose**

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BCTEA represents a cooperative commitment that formally recognizes the capacity of BC First Nation communities and schools to build and implement a relevant and research-based First Nations Education System, and maintains a flexible funding model for First Nation schools based upon the BC public education funding formula, with adaptations to reflect First Nation schools’ unique characteristics. BCTEA also provides funding for a comprehensive collection of second and third level services, as described throughout the remainder of this report.

BCTEA also commits the partners to ongoing collaboration that will benefit all students in BC wherever they attend school.

For example, FNE SC, the Ministry of Education, and ISC worked cooperatively to address the unique and evolving

needs of First Nation students in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on ensuring equitable outcomes and learning opportunities through collaboration with First Nations and the delivery of enhanced language and culture programs.

The Parties also meet frequently to advance BCTEA initiatives, and to discuss education transformation opportunities presented by the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. In the spirit of partnership and respecting the government-to-government relationship between the Province and First Nations, the BCTEA partners are working to significantly improve outcomes for First Nation students, and FNE SC is promoting efforts such as:

- recognizing and honouring traditional territories and incorporating First Nations culture into school ceremonies in partnership with local First Nations;
- establishing structures and processes for shared-decision making and maintaining an active Indigenous Education Council;
- signing and implementing effective Local Education Agreements (LEAs);
- implementing Language Programs in partnership with First Nations; and
- creating locally-developed Board Authority Authorized (BAA) courses in partnership with First Nations.

Additionally, as outlined in BCTEA, beginning in the 2019/20 school year and continuing each year up to 2022/23, BC school districts are required to provide an Indigenous-focused professional learning day to all teachers in public schools. The purpose of this day is to prioritize Indigenous student achievement and to further integrate Indigenous worldviews and perspectives into public education learning environments. The importance of this professional development initiative also is closely related to the recently adopted ninth Professional Standard for BC Educators.

**“Educators respect and value the history of First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Canada and the impact of the past on the present and the future. Educators contribute towards truth, reconciliation and healing. Educators foster a deeper understanding of ways of knowing and being, histories, and cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis.”** Professional Standards for BC Educators, June 19 2019, BC Teachers’ Council

In October 2019, the Ministry of Education and FNESC co-hosted the inaugural Jointly Convened Annual Meeting (JCAM), which brought together Superintendents and Chairs of Indigenous Education Councils to discuss ways to support the success of First Nation students in BC public schools. Chief Dr. Robert Joseph delivered an inspiring keynote address at the event, and key agenda topics included the transportation needs of First Nation students living on reserve, LEAs, and the newly instituted sixth professional learning day. Planning for the 2020 JCAM is now underway

Further, under section 4.16 of BCTEA, BC committed to “undertake a program to build capacity to improve outcomes for First Nation Students within school districts, with a priority on those school districts having consistently low outcomes for First Nation Students.” Now, through a First Nations Educational Outcome Improvement Team (FNEOIT) effort, Outcome Teams comprised of Ministry of Education and FNESC representatives are engaging with specific school districts to develop plans to improve First Nation student outcomes.

The BCTEA partners also are responding to concerns regarding the transportation of First Nation students living on reserve who attend BC public schools, which too often impede the ability of First Nation students to

actively participate and flourish in public education. In 2018/19 and 2019/20, boards of education and First Nations were encouraged to work together to determine the transportation needs of First Nation students and to co-develop Joint First Nation Student Transportation Plans, and under an interim approach in 2019/20, approximately 160 Joint Transportation Plans were assessed.

**New One-Time Funding Commitments Through BCTEA**

**\$4.03 M** for First Nation school connectivity upgrades

**\$1.70 M** for First Nation school bus purchases

**\$11.49 M** (estimated maximum) for maintaining First Nation school connectivity from 2018-2023

**Ongoing Federal Funding Commitments Through BCTEA**

**\$20 M** (additional) annually for First Nations education in BC, with the following priorities affirmed by representatives at a provincial information session held on March 12, 2018:

- First Nations Language and Culture programs – approximately \$14 million
- Additional funding for First Nation schools’ transportation needs – approximately \$1.3 million
- Transportation capital (school buses) for First Nation schools – approximately \$1 million
- Increased funding for First Nations adult education – approximately \$900,000
- Expanded second and third level services – approximately \$2.7 million

The Special Education Program for First Nations schools was incorporated into BCTEA at the funding level and respecting the program model that existed in 2018.

## First Nations Education Jurisdiction Agreements

In 2006, FNEJC, Canada and British Columbia signed a set of Education Jurisdiction Agreements, with associated enabling legislation passed by Canada in 2006 and British Columbia in 2007. Implementation of those agreements was delayed for some time by an inability to finalize the associated financial arrangements, but key challenges were resolved in 2018 and advancement of the jurisdiction initiative has accelerated since that time.

Twelve Negotiating First Nations (NFNs) are now actively negotiating with Canada and BC to finalize updates to the suite of agreements originally signed in 2006, and FNEJC continues to support those First Nations to build local capacity and engage in community consultations through the development of a Jurisdiction Readiness Toolkit, templates, community presentations, and other materials to assist with the eventual implementation of education jurisdiction. Additional jurisdiction efforts in 2019/20 included the following activities.

- Finalizing, with Canada, proposed amendments to the Canada–First Nation Education Jurisdiction Agreement (CFNEJA) and the Canada–First Nation Education Jurisdiction Funding Agreement (CFNEFA).
- Advancing a process with the Ministry of Education for Teacher Certification specific to the jurisdiction context, based on a First Nation Schools Teacher Certification Process, as approved by the NFNs.
- Working with NFNs on the development of the First Nations Education Authority (FNEA), outlining its initial structure and potential duties with respect to a First Nations graduation certificate, First Nations authorized courses, school certification, and the certification of language teachers.
- Reviewing, with Canada and BC, the Education Jurisdiction Framework Agreement and drafting proposed amendments.
- Developing a range of agreements required to implement education Jurisdiction.

- Reviewing and revising, as needed, the BC First Nations Education Jurisdiction Initiative Terms of Reference.
- Helping NFNs prepare for initialing Jurisdiction Agreements.
- Updating communications, including a power point for NFNs and Interested First Nations (IFNs) to deliver in community presentations on education jurisdiction.

# 12

Negotiating First Nations (NFNs) receive ongoing support, including regular jurisdiction meetings

# 54

Interested First Nations (IFNs), receive ongoing support

# \$200 K

(approximate) allocated to NFNs to support local jurisdiction preparations



Lytton Elementary School



Lytton Elementary

## Indigenous Children and Youth In Care Protocol

Indigenous children and youth in government care and former youth in care are entitled to consistent and reliable support at school, home and in their communities, to ensure they get the most out of their school years and are fully prepared for lifelong success.

Accordingly, throughout 2019/20 FNESC worked with a number of education partners to advance a new First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol, which was signed on May 26, 2020. That Protocol commits the Province and First Nations to work together to engage in dialogue and joint action on specific issues and initiatives, seeking to improve the educational outcomes and well-being of Indigenous children and youth in care and former youth in care through legislative, policy and practice reform.

Work facilitated through this Protocol will include easing transitions into the school system, from grade to grade, and out of the school system to post-secondary or the workforce. The Protocol is also intended to ensure supports and services are tailored to the needs of each child and their specific circumstances, in a way that connects them to their language and culture.

**“This Protocol confirms and sets out a mutual commitment of the Parties to engage in dialogue and joint action on specific issues and initiatives to improve the education outcomes of all First Nations children and youth in care, and former youth in care, in British Columbia, including those First Nations children and youth who are or have been under temporary or continuing custody orders or youth agreements.”** Protocol Between the First Nations Leadership Council (BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, and Union of BC Indian Chiefs) and FNESC and the Province of British Columbia (represented by the Minister of Education, the Minister of Children and Family Development, and the Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training)

The new Protocol builds on broader government efforts to prioritize children and youth in care throughout their lives, including the post-secondary Tuition Waiver Program, a new K-12 education supplement, support for Indigenous communities to exercise jurisdiction over Indigenous child welfare, and an increase of \$5 million in funding to help children and youth in care connect to their culture and heritage.

The new Protocol commits all signatories to develop a strategic plan and meet twice each year to review progress toward the common goal of addressing systemic barriers facing Indigenous students who are either currently in care and or who have aged out of care.



## FNEC / BC Ministry of Education Protocol Agreement and Related Collaboration

In June 2015, the BC Ministry of Education and FNEC signed their first-ever protocol agreement to formalize their long-standing bilateral relationship and provide a clear framework for continued joint efforts. The Protocol Agreement, which now will be updated to reflect the provincial legislation related to the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, is being complemented by regular meetings of staff and quarterly meetings of FNEC and the Deputy Minister, as well as the development of a joint workplan.

**“This Protocol confirms the ongoing relationship between the Parties and formalizes an effective bilateral process to assist the Parties to improve the educational outcomes of First Nations through collaborative efforts.”** BC / FNEC Protocol Agreement

Associated with this Protocol, FNEC continues to be an active participant in provincial policy discussions, and FNEC and the Province of BC have worked together to share resources and expertise, and to extend relevant services between the First Nations and public education systems. For example, the following key partnership activities, among many others, represent important opportunities to better embed the First Nations voice in public education decision-making.

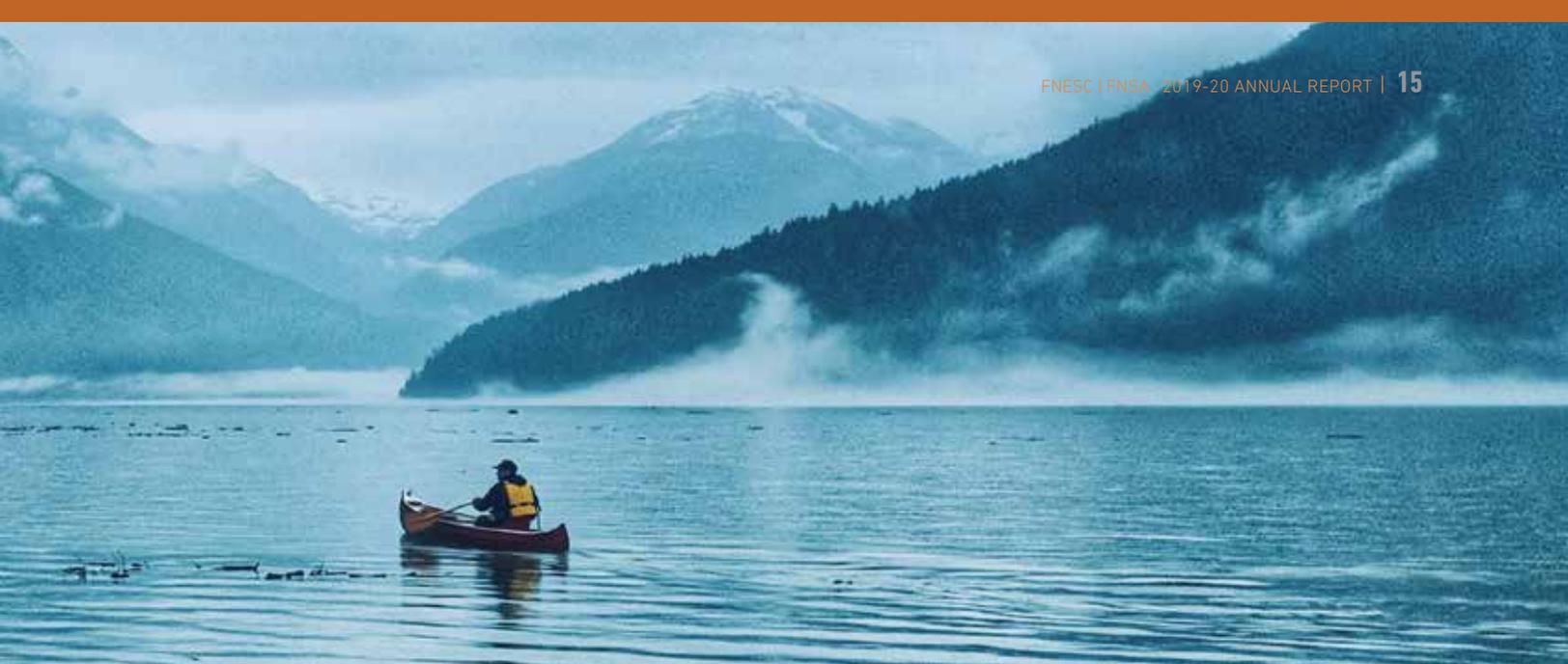
- FNEC is represented on the BC Teachers Council.

- FNEC, the FNSA and the Ministry of Education made it possible for First Nation schools to offer the BC Dogwood and Adult Dogwood Diploma to eligible students, affirmed in 2020 legislative amendments.

**“[School Act, section 168] provides express authority for the minister to issue a British Columbia Certificate of Graduation or a British Columbia Adult Graduation Diploma to a person attending an educational institution operated by a first nation (including a participating First Nation) or a Community Education Authority established under the First Nations Jurisdiction over Education in British Columbia Act (Canada);”**

Bill 8 – 2020: Education Statutes Amendment Act, 2020

- Due in part to FNEC’s long-term advocacy, and as formalized in TEFA and now BCTEA, the Ministry publishes data annually to monitor the achievement of Indigenous students in BC and provides access to community-specific data to inform First Nations about their students’ progress and assist with discussions between First Nations and School Boards about mechanisms for supporting First Nations learners.
- For many years, FNEC has been actively involved in the Ministry of Education’s efforts related to First Nations language education, and FNEC is now co-developing the Ministry’s Indigenous Languages Policy.



Lytton, BC

- The Ministry is regularly invited to facilitate workshops at FNESC's annual Indigenous Education Conference and to participate in the yearly series of Regional Sessions, enabling BC to share information and directly consult with First Nation and First Nation school representatives.
- FNESC was involved in the Ministry of Education's ongoing funding review and follow-up.

In response to COVID-19, FNESC was also invited to join all Ministry of Education-led groups working to address the delivery of education through the pandemic, including the Tripartite COVID-19 Group (BCTEA partners), the K-12 COVID-19 Technical Committee, and the Independent School Committee. Involvement in these committees supported FNESC and FNSA in sharing relevant information and responding to the needs of First Nation communities and schools as they planned supports for parents and students through the pandemic.

## Post-Secondary Education and Training Protocol Agreement

Signed by Advanced Education Minister Andrew Wilkinson, FNESC President Tyrone McNeil, and IAHLA Chair Verna Billy-Minnabarriet on July 8, 2016, a Post-Secondary Education and Training Protocol Agreement supports collaboration to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous post-secondary students in BC. This protocol, which will also be updated to reflect the new legislation related to the UN *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, recognizes that Indigenous-controlled post-secondary institutes are a critical part of BC's post-secondary system, acknowledging their work within communities to support learners in achieving their education goals. The protocol is also intended to contribute to improved collaboration between communities and the provincial government, and in turn between Indigenous institutes and the public post-secondary system, leading to increased participation and success for Indigenous learners in higher education.

*More details related to FNESC's post-secondary support activities are included further in this report.*

# OUR INFORMATION SHARING EFFORTS

## FNE SC Regional Sessions

FNE SC and its education partners annually report on their activities and important First Nations education issues at a series of workshops known as Regional Sessions. These sessions provide important opportunities to discuss emerging issues and get direction from First Nations, with the goal of increasing the capacity of First Nations and their partners to address critical education matters affecting their learners. The sessions also represent a fundamental component of FNE SC's efforts to maintain accountability to First Nations in BC.

### SAMPLE PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

*"I count on the workshops to learn best practices and to learn what has changed."*

*"I am grateful for all of the information provided at the regional sessions, and hearing from other First Nations."*

*"I had my LEA issue addressed and resolved!! Thank you."*

# 7

Regional Sessions

# 264

participants (approximate)

### OF THE PARTICIPANTS WHO RESPONDED TO A FEEDBACK SURVEY:

# 44%

found the sessions "EXCELLENT"

# 50%

found the sessions "VERY GOOD"

# 5%

found the sessions "SATISFACTORY"

# 93%

found the sessions "VERY VALUABLE"

# 7%

found the sessions "SOMEWHAT VALUABLE"



Kumsheen Secondary

## The FNSA 2019 Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The April 2019 FNSA Conference and AGM, focused on the theme Persistent and Resilient: Striving To Be the Best, facilitated valuable networking and information sharing for over 550 Conference participants.

In addition to presentations by student performers from Gitanyow Independent School, Stz'uminus Community School, and 'Na Aksa Gyilak'yoo School, as well as a range of workshops about relevant First Nations education topics, the Conference featured keynote speakers:

- **Zaretta Hammond**, educator and author of numerous books focused on cultural responsive teaching and authentic engagement.
- **Dr. Evan Tlesla II Adams** from the Tla'amin First Nation, actor and physician, first-ever Indigenous Health Physician Advisor in the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, and currently Chief Medical Officer of the First Nations Health Authority.
- **Dr. Anita Archer**, educational consultant on explicit instruction, behaviour management, and literacy instruction, and recipient of several awards honoring her contributions to the field of education.

**550+** participants at the April 2019 FNSA Conference

### SAMPLE PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

*"Inspirational speakers and workshops. Starting the days off with the youth performances was amazing."*

*"I enjoyed networking and meeting other teachers. All the different ideas, perspectives, insights..."*

*"I thought the overall conference was excellent. I learned so much."*

*"Powerful and informative keynote speakers! Great performances by the students!"*



## The FNE SC Annual Indigenous Education Conference

In November 2019, approximately 800 people came together to enjoy FNE SC's 25th Annual Indigenous Education Conference, reaching maximum capacity – as it does each year. The Conference included a variety of workshops and keynote speakers who addressed issues such as meeting the needs of current and former children and youth in care, creating effective accountability tools, creating inclusive and responsive learning environments and curricula, and developing quality First Nations Language and culture programs.

The Conference began with an evening auction in support of the Seventh Generation Club, as well as performances by:

- Spakwus Slolem, which translates as Eagle Song Dancers, members of the Squamish Nation who present songs and dances of yesterday and today.
- Juno- award winner Murray Porter, Mohawk piano player from Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, who brings his culture and history to the masses through his music.

### Featured speakers at the Conference included:

- **Tyrone McNeil**, President of FNE SC, Vice-President of the Stó:lō Tribal Council, member of the Chiefs' Committee on Education of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), lead contributor to the 2010 AFN document First Nation Control of First Nation

Education, It's Our Vision, It's Our Time and to the 2007 AFN National First Nation Language Revitalization Strategy, Implementation Plan & Costing Model.

- **Lydia Hwitsum**, previous elected Chief of the Cowichan Tribes, presenter at the UN Permanent Forum on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, member of the Royal Roads University Board of Governors, former Chair of the First Nations Health Authority, and elected member of the First Nations Summit Political Executive.
- **Rob Fleming**, BC Minister of Education, elected to represent the riding of Victoria-Hillside in 2005, and re-elected to represent Victoria-Swan Lake in 2009, 2013, and 2017.
- **Mary Ellen Turpel Lafond**, senior associate counsel at Woodward and Company, tenured full Professor of Law at the University of British Columbia (UBC), Academic Director of UBC's Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre, a Saskatchewan Provincial Court judge for 20 years, BC's first Representative for Children and Youth (2006-2016), multiple award recipient for her contributions to the field of Aboriginal law, and author of more than fifty published works and reports.
- **Chief Dr. Robert Joseph**, Hereditary Chief of the Gwawaenuk First Nation, speaker of the Kwakwaka'wakw language, Ceremonial House



FNEESC Annual Indigenous Education Conference, 2019

Speaker who shares his knowledge and wisdom in the Big House and as a Language Instructor with UBC, internationally recognized art curator and co-author of *Down from the Shimmering Sky: Masks of the Northwest Coast*, recipient of an Honorary Doctorate of Law Degree from UBC, Ambassador for Reconciliation Canada and the Indian Residential School Survivors Society, Chairman of the National AFN Elders Council, and Special Advisor to Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

In addition to those presentations, the conference participants could choose from a range of workshops on topics including, among many others, strategic planning through an Indigenous worldview, accessing Indigenous Languages resources, reconciliation, math through cedar weaving, anti-racism, education for healing, and fostering a spiritual, traditional, and practical relationship to the land.

**800**

participants (approximate) at the 2019 FNEESC Annual Indigenous Education Conference

OF THE PEOPLE WHO PROVIDED FEEDBACK:

**94%**

were VERY SATISFIED or SATISFIED with the overall conference experience

**>90%**

were VERY SATISFIED or SATISFIED with the conference workshops

**>90%**

were VERY SATISFIED or SATISFIED with the networking opportunities

SAMPLE PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

*“Great job! I had a wonderful time and walked away with important learning.”*

*“Always a great experience. Thank you for the awesome work!”*

*“Thank you very much for a joyful gathering. I look forward to this space all year.”*

*“Keep up the good work. Stay on the path. Your work, your words will last beyond yourselves; it will impact the next seven generations.”*

*“Best part of our job is learning something new at every FNEESC Conference.”*

## Other Information Sharing and Consultation Efforts

FNEESC and the FNSA regularly organize a broad range of information sharing sessions, maintain websites, and provide regular communications to help representatives of First Nation communities and schools stay informed of relevant education issues as they arise. In particular, e-Bulletins provide updates about emerging topics, and the organizations implement media strategies as appropriate to promote more widespread awareness of the educational needs of First Nations.

Also, in response to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, FNEESC and FNSA created a range of resources to support schools and communities, which were informed by Joint FNEESC/FNSA meetings, regular regional conference calls with FNSA Authorized Representatives, and two environmental scans of First Nation schools to monitor their ongoing operations and needs.

- Suggestions for Continuous Learning Edition 1 and Edition 2
- Suggestions for Families: Supporting Learning at Home
- Health and Hygiene Considerations for First Nation Schools
- Supporting Mental Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Online Learning Resources and Privacy Considerations
- Considerations for Re-Opening BC First Nation Schools

COVID-19 pages were added to both the FNSA and FNEESC websites, with links on the home pages to help visitors quickly find and access all resources and communications related to the pandemic.



**Kumsheen Secondary**

# OUR FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES EFFORTS

The BC First Nations Education System is built on a recognition that their languages and cultures are central to First Nations' distinctive traditions and ways of life and are inherently derived. As such, First Nations view their Languages as constitutionally protected Indigenous rights under the Canadian Constitution. Further, under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons. Additionally, in 2015 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) identified 94 Calls to Action – including important measures focused on supporting First Nations to regain fluency in their languages and cultural revitalization.

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**“Based on the authority and direction of First Nations, FNESC and the FNSA have worked to establish an effective and relevant education system to support First Nation Students and First Nation Schools that ... is founded upon the priority of exercising and revitalizing First Nations’ languages and cultures, and reflects the cultures, values and traditions of the communities they serve ... .”**

2018 BCTEA

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Recognizing those important principles, FNESC and FNSA make every effort possible to implement a range of activities to assist First Nations with their Language-related educational activities.

## First Nation Languages Sub-Committee

Since its establishment, FNE SC has included a First Nations Languages Sub-Committee, which has continually directed the organization's efforts to promote and support a variety of First Nations language professional development opportunities, research projects, and services. The First Nations Languages Sub-Committee includes dedicated representatives of First Nation communities and schools, as well as partner organizations.

## First Nations Language Teacher Mentor Apprenticeship Program (FNLTMAP)

2019/20 represented the fourth year of a First Nations Language Teacher Mentor Apprenticeship program, which is intended to assist Language teachers in increasing their language fluency in order to enhance the quality of instruction and learning within First Nations language education programs, and to support the development of more immersion programming by interested First Nations. The program supports one-on-one teams that include a First Nation Language mentor and apprentice, who together complete 300 hours of Language immersion work over a one-year period. In 2019/20, a total of 14 teams participated.

## First Nations Languages Fluency/ Proficiency Degree

For the past several years, significant effort has been made to explore a possible First Nations Language Fluency / Proficiency Degree Program. An Indigenous Language Fluency Degree Consortium obtained funding to support the development of a degree framework and to jointly host a First Nations Language adult educators' focus group and a related symposium. FNE SC also received \$2 million from the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training to fund the delivery of the first two years of this Degree in communities, enabling students to enhance their fluency and prepare for the next stages of the Program or ladder into other post-secondary pathways. Piloting of the program began in the 2019/20 school year.

## Association of BC Deans of Education

Since 2011, FNE SC and IAHLA have had an MOU with the Association of BC Deans of Education (ABCDE), according to which the parties commit to collaboration and information sharing to address the following key priorities: promotion of effective and appropriate Language Teacher Education programs in BC; promotion of teacher education programs that effectively address Indigenous education; and advancement of the principles of First Nations ownership and control of Indigenous knowledge, resources and materials. FNE SC and IAHLA continue to meet regularly with ABCDE and look forward to more pro-active initiatives in the coming year.

## BCTEA Language and Culture Initiatives

BCTEA acknowledges that the revitalization, preservation and maintenance of First Nations Languages is integral to the well-being of First Nations people, and the agreement includes provisions for a comprehensive Language and Culture Program for First Nation schools, as well as policy and program efforts related to First Nations Language programming in the public education system.

Specifically, FNESC and the FNSA are now providing grants to First Nation schools totaling approximately \$14 million annually. FNESC and FNSA are also implementing a range of programs and services to provide collective supports to First Nation schools and communities, including: school visits from a Language Curriculum Manager and Language and Culture Coaches to support school staff and students; regional First Nations school information sessions; workshops on curriculum and resource development; and a range of professional development opportunities for Language teachers.

BCTEA also recognizes that all students should have the opportunity to learn an Indigenous language whenever possible and with the support of the Indigenous community. Therefore, the agreement includes mutual commitments related to the development of a collaborative, co-created process to support K-12 Indigenous language learning in public schools, including joint work on a Ministry of Education Indigenous Language Policy and implementation plan. BCTEA also provides for the collection and analysis of meaningful Language and Culture learning data, the advancement of full-course offerings in First Nation languages, and the inclusion of FNESC in any reviews of or changes to relevant Ministry of Education standards and policies.

**132**

First Nation schools received a First Nations Language grant in 2019/20

**7,179**

First Nation school students received Language instruction as a subject in 2019/20

**989**

First Nation school students received full-immersion Language instruction in 2019/20

**7,321**

First Nation school students received Culture instruction (outside of language time) in 2019/20

**5.16**

average number of hours per week of Language instruction (as a subject) provided by First Nation schools

**5.78**

average number of hours per week of culture instruction provided by First Nation schools

**89**

coaching visits in 2019/20

**61**

virtual coaching calls via Zoom with schools from March-June 2020, due to Covid-19

**5**

First Nations Language regional sessions

**127**

participating teachers in First Nations Language regional sessions

## OUR SUPPORTS FOR FIRST NATIONS PARENTS

The evidence is clear: when families are involved in education, students do better in school and schools improve. Parents who are engaged develop a greater appreciation of their role in their children's education, an improved sense of self-worth, stronger social networks, and often even the desire to continue their own education. When families are visible in the school and actively engaged in home learning activities, students understand that their parents value learning. This knowledge then encourages students to take school seriously. In addition to their contributions at home, families can also provide meaningful input into school decision-making, and they can improve school programs by contributing their invaluable knowledge and donating significant time and effort. Parental involvement and decision-making is also a fundamental aspect of the principles of First Nations control of First Nations education.

Based on these essential understandings, FNEC and FNSA are committed to supporting parental engagement using a variety of approaches.

## The 2020 First Nations Parents Conference

In February 2020, close to 150 dedicated parents and parent support staff from across BC came together in Richmond BC for the First Nations Parents Club Conference – an event dedicated to recognizing parents and the vital role they play as their child’s first and most important educators. The conference theme, Survival, Dignity and Well-Being of our Children and Communities, was in reference the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration).

The Conference included a keynote address from Chief Dr. Robert Joseph, as well as a range of workshops on topics such as parent advocacy, making math real and fun, keeping kids safe online, education and career planning, the importance of attendance, and skill-building in First Nations Language learning.

### SAMPLE PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

*“The workshops were great and I enjoyed meeting new people from different communities.”*

*“I loved learning new things.”*

*“The conference was amazing. I’m going home with a wealth of knowledge.”*

*“Very informative. Great tips, tricks and ideas.”*

*“Very informative. I will definitely use this information when I return home.”*

*“I can bring helpful information back to my community.”*

*“The information was helpful, not just for kids but for adults, as well.”*



**130**

participants at the February 2020 Parents Conference

### OF THE PARTICIPANTS WHO RESPONDED TO A FEEDBACK SURVEY:

**66%**

found the event “EXCELLENT”

**33%**

found the event “VERY GOOD”

**85%**

found the content “VERY VALUABLE”

**85%**

found the presenters informative and able to answer questions

**90%**

of conference participants found the conference workshops “EXCELLENT”

## Regional Parent Workshops: *Guiding Your Child's Educational Journey*

In February and March 2020, FNEC organized a series of regional workshops designed specifically for First Nation parents and family members to explain the BC graduation requirements / assist with graduation planning. The workshop participants explored a variety of topics, including how to connect with the school, making wise course choices in secondary school, Dogwood graduation requirements, planning the graduation year, choosing a post-secondary institute and program, exploring career and education options, and funding options for post-secondary. The participants received a copy of the recently-updated Career Journeys Guide for Parents and Students, which provides tools and information to help teens plan for secondary and post-secondary education so that they are ready to pursue their career goals.



Kinnikinnick Elementary

**68** family participants in the regional workshops

OF THE PARTICIPANTS WHO RESPONDED TO A FEEDBACK SURVEY:

**67%** found the event "EXCELLENT"

**29%** found the event "VERY GOOD"

**94%** found the content "VERY VALUABLE"

**96%** found the presenters informative and able to answer questions

**90%** of conference participants found the conference workshops "EXCELLENT"

### SAMPLE PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

*"I enjoyed learning new ways to support my grandchildren and enjoyed meeting the new people."*

*"Lots of useful information."*

*"Very informative and engaging. Answered questions I had and gave me information I didn't even know I needed."*

## The First Nations Parents Club

The First Nations Parents Club was designed to support the key role that parents play in the educational success of their children by sharing information, support, and encouragement for parents' efforts, including supporting locally-based clubs with parenting resources. Registered Parent Clubs regularly receive incentive materials, newsletters, calendars for participating parents, and Parent Kits that include meal-conversation starters, Aboriginal learning links magnets, the Parents Club Handbook, and other practical resources to support parental engagement and advocacy. In addition, funding grants are distributed each year to sponsor local Club activities such as luncheons, guest speakers, and other activities to encourage parental involvement and learning.

**64** Parents Clubs

**1,400** members in 2019/20

**23** Parent Club grants were awarded \*

\* While this initiative broadly supports First Nations parents in a variety of situations, grants are provided only to those clubs that can demonstrate direct affiliation with a First Nation.



Annual Parents Club wall calendar



Gitanyow Parents Club

# OUR ADDITIONAL WORK TO SUPPORT K4 - 12 FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION

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**“Canada and British Columbia recognize FNE SC, working with the FNSA, as having demonstrated the capacity to administer education programs and services on behalf of First Nations and First Nation Schools in British Columbia, to implement research-based and relevant programs to support First Nation Schools to deliver quality education and improve student outcomes, to provide Second and Third Level Services to First Nations and First Nation Schools, and to advocate for and advance the interests and needs of First Nation Students attending BC Schools.” 2018 BC TEA, 4.1**

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## First Nation Schools Assessment and Certification

The First Nation Schools Assessment and Certification Process is a five-year cycle of review and follow-up that was established almost two decades ago and is now a primary component of several key education agreements, including BC TEA, Reciprocal Tuition, First Nation schools' access to the Dogwood and Adult Dogwood Diploma, and Jurisdiction. The Assessment Process supports participating schools in reviewing all aspects of their operations, including student achievement data and input from students, parents, school staff, and other community members, with the goal of identifying their strengths and creating a plan for improvement.

Using BC TEA funding, schools are supported in this work through information-sharing meetings and funding grants to sponsor the assessment activities. Participating schools are also visited by an appointed team of individuals who review the findings and School

Growth Plan and provide suggestions and feedback. Schools are then supported in implementing their School Growth Plans through funding grants. Interested schools also may request “Certification,” which requires meeting a set of collectively established standards.

**21**

First Nation schools participated in the School Assessment and Certification Process in 2019/20

**37**

schools that previously completed the Assessment Process, including a School Growth Plan, received a School Growth Plan Grant in 2019/20

## Curriculum Resource Development and Promotion

High quality, relevant curriculum resource materials are critical for promoting a range of First Nations education goals, reflected in an ongoing commitment to create and share new materials with interested educators in public and First Nation schools, through workshops, partner group meetings, speaking events, and social media. For example:

- FNEC and FNSA have begun development of a BC First Peoples 12 Teacher Resource Guide to support the teaching of the new BC First Peoples 12 course in public and First Nation schools. This guide will be piloted in the 2020/21 school year, and is expected to be launched in the fall of 2021.
- The BC First Nations Land, Title and Governance Teacher Resource Guide is intended to help students learn about: First Nations' strong, unique and diverse systems of governance and nation-to-nation relationships before contact; historical and present day impacts of colonization on First Nations governance; how contemporary First Nations government systems operate; the reasons, goals and challenges of First Nations self-government; the people and operations involved in local First Nation governance bodies; the reasons for the BC Treaty Process; and the diverse perspectives of First Nations individuals and communities about treaties and their alternatives. The resource was launched in August 2019 and shared in seven workshops during the year.
- In the past year, FNEC and FNSA continued revising the Math First Peoples Resource Guide to reflect changes to the provincial Math curriculum, expand the resource for additional grade levels, and ensure respectful integration of First Nations knowledge. Following focus group feedback, the revised resource was piloted in 2019/20 and will be freely available on-line in the fall of 2020.
- In 2019/20, FNEC and FNSA began revising In Our Own Words, K-Gr. 3 Authentic Resources Guide to reflect changes in the BC curriculum in grades K-3. This guide will be made freely available on-line in early fall 2020.
- Two workshops were sponsored by FNEC and FNSA to support the use of First Peoples Principles of Learning and facilitate dialogue about infusing classrooms and schools with First Nations content and perspectives in respectful and thoughtful ways. Seven additional workshops were provided at public education events, and two were provided for BC post-secondary teacher education programs.
- In 2019/20, FNEC and the FNSA finalized development of a new resource to promote the integration of First Peoples (unappropriated) knowledge and perspectives into science courses at the grades 10 - 12 levels. Participants in focus groups responded to drafts of a Secondary Science First Peoples Teacher Resource Guide before the guide was piloted in First Nation and public schools. The resource was launched and made freely available online beginning in August 2019, and complements the Science First Peoples 5-9 Guide to help educators teach First Peoples science knowledge in thoughtful and respectful ways.
- Also in 2019/20, FNEC and FNSA updated the Career Journeys Parent and Student Handbook to incorporate changes to the BC graduation program. This resource is part of the Career Journeys First Nations Career Role Model Program, which aims to raise the awareness of First Nations youth and their families about career possibilities, and to show examples of how to navigate education and training pathways to a variety of careers. It features First Nations role models in a



Highlands Elementary



Silver Creek Elementary

variety of career fields in BC, and the resource includes video interviews, a teacher resource book, a parent and student guide, and classroom posters.

- English First Peoples (EFP) 10, 11, and 12 courses are a valuable addition to the high school curriculum, offering students of all backgrounds the opportunity to explore First Peoples' worldviews through oral, written and visual text. EFP 12 satisfies the grade 12 English Language Arts graduation requirement and the entrance requirements for a full range of post-secondary programs. An accompanying English First Peoples 10, 11, and 12 Teacher Resource Guide supports the study of written, oral and visual texts that represent authentic First Peoples' voices and perspectives, and emphasize the importance of culture in language and communication. In 2019/20 four workshops were organized to support implementation of the guide.
- Indian Residential School Resources for grades 5, 10, and 11/12 are being used by teachers across BC who are committed to respectfully and sensitively including Indian Residential Schools and Reconciliation in their teaching. Ongoing support was provided for implementation of these resources in 2019/20.

**72**

participants in the English First Peoples Workshops

**2,259**

participants in the Integrating First Peoples Content and Principles of Learning Workshops

**298**

participants in the BC First Nations Land, Title, and Governance Models Workshops

**214**

participants in the Science First Peoples (5-9 and Secondary) Workshops

**24**

participants in BC First Peoples Studies 12 Focus Groups

**26**

participants in Math First Peoples Revised Resource Focus Groups and Pilot

## Special Education Program

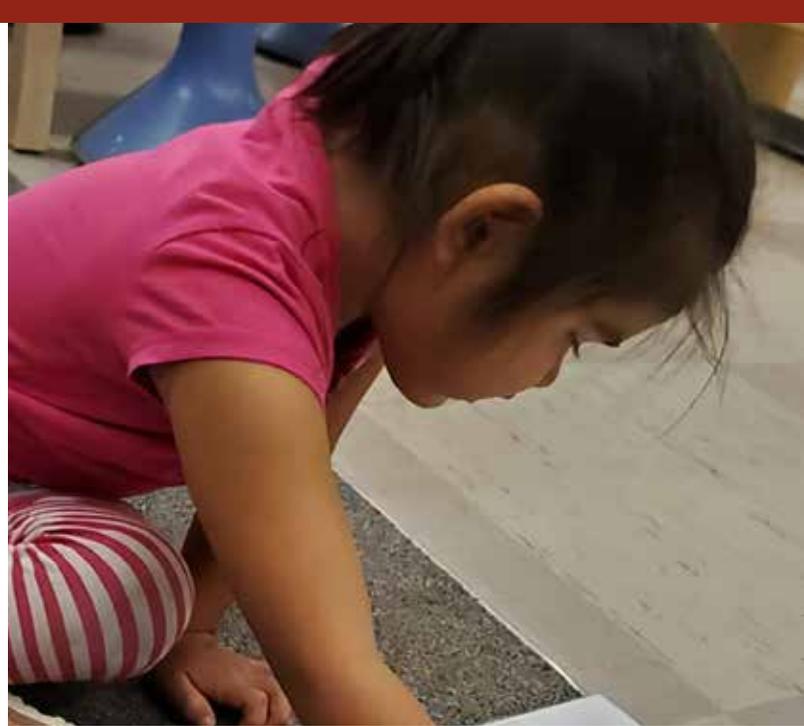
For almost two decades, a FNESC/FNSA Special Education Program (SEP) has supported First Nation schools in meeting the needs of their students with exceptionalities. Each year, the majority of the funding available for this program is allocated to all First Nation schools through grants to support their special education programming. A separate portion of the BC SEP funding is also available through a proposal process to address extraordinary needs that cannot be met using schools' annual grants.

BCTEA funding provided for school-based services is complemented by a range of collective initiatives to create economies-of-scale and increase access to necessary expertise and special education materials by all First Nation schools in BC, including the following.

- SEP staff share information with schools, answer questions, organize services, and provide overall management to ensure the effective operation of the program. The SEP staff also provide professional development through workshops and in-school support from SEP Coaches who have a range of specialized skills and can assist schools with completing strength-based Individual Education Plans for students with exceptionalities.
- To date, all schools that have requested support from a SEP staff member or Coach have received it before the end of the school year.
- SEP-sponsored Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs) provide teachers and education/learning assistants with information and language development strategies that are of benefit to all students, and assessment and intervention recommendations for specific students with exceptional language learning needs. A First Nations Speech and Language Assistants Program is also now near completion, with a cohort of 29 students in their last year, completing the required practicum hours in their own schools with supervision from the SLPs.
- Occupational Therapists (OTs) and Physical Therapists (PTs) provide families and school staff with relevant training and provide needed student assessments and follow up, including intervention recommendations and supports.
- BC First Nation schools are invited to participate in a provincial-level Coordinated Psycho-Educational Assessment initiative for students referred for potential learning and behavioural disabilities; individual psycho-educational assessments are sponsored to determine students' needs, establish follow-up procedures, recommend interventions, and provide direct supports for students, as appropriate.
- Services through the SLP, OT, PT and Coordinated Psycho-Educational Assessment initiatives are allocated through an application process. To date, all schools that have met the application criteria have been provided these types of supports.
- Additional specialists are providing autism-focused assistance for students identified through assessments and SEP staff visits to schools.
- Behaviour Coaching visits and phone calls are scheduled when requested, with first priority given to schools that enroll students with exceptional needs who do not have access to behaviour supports through school-based counselors.
- The BC SEP funding annually sponsors training for Education Assistants to help them with literacy and numeracy instruction, behaviour management, effective participation as a school team member, and work with students who have specific exceptionalities. In addition, seven Learning Assistance Teacher (LAT) Networks are now being facilitated, through which LATs meet regularly for networking and training.
- SEP involves professional development and pro-active, direct assistance to promote the use of student assessments to identify any students who may require specific interventions to ensure their long-term educational success.
- Finally, specialized supports and materials are provided for students who require specific assistive technologies in order to access the curriculum and demonstrate their progress in learning.



Kyah Wiget Education Society Adult Education



Pacheedaht First Nation

**124** schools were provided and reported on their 2019/20 SEP grants

**1,976** students were supported through SEP grants (regular and additional, proposal-based grants)

**124** different schools received second level SEP services

**69** student assessments were sponsored through the Coordinated Psycho-Educational Assessment initiative – fewer than scheduled but the number possible due to COVID-19 disruptions

**104** different schools were visited by Special Education Managers and Coaches, with a total of 261 school visits

**453** new Individual Education Plans (IEPs)/ SMART Goals were facilitated with school staff

**48** schools were visited by SLPs, with 288 school visits total by March 13, 2020 (prior to COVID-19 travel restrictions), facilitating 426 assessments and follow-up for new students, and 1,322 follow-ups on previously assessed students

**26** schools were supported by OTs, with 22 school visits total, 54 new students assessed, and 82 follow ups on previously assessed students

**18** schools were supported by the PT, with 22 school visits, 20 new students assessed, and 54 follow ups on previously assessed students

**212** workshops were provided by SEP Staff (Managers, Coaches, SLPs & OTs)

**11,136** SEP staff contacts with schools (including telephone calls, emails and video meetings)

### BCTEA Reporting for 2019/20

**1,972** SEP funded students have IEPs

**1,303** students had met one or more of the goals on their IEP prior to the suspension of in-person classes due to COVID-19 in March 2020, which impacted on this data significantly in comparison to 2018/19



Tatta Lake Elementary-Junior Secondary



Lytton Elementary

## Professional Development Supports

Research clearly shows that teachers and principals are primary factors in raising student achievement, and professional development is key for strengthening the skills of educators. Additionally, affirming other school staff by finding opportunities for them to grow professionally greatly affects student success. Accordingly, FNESC and FNSA invest significant resources in promoting learning opportunities for First Nation school leaders and employees.

### First Nation School Governing Authority Professional Development Supports:

While the specific structures and operations of First Nation School Governing Authorities differ, all are central to the creation of learning environments that respect and reflect the priorities and goals of their communities. FNESC and FNSA are therefore committed to assisting First Nations in developing the capacity of their School Governing Authorities so that they can continue to effectively lead their schools.

In 2020/21, FNESC and FNSA drafted a comprehensive Handbook For First Nation School Governing Authorities, which was reviewed in two Governance Advisory Team meetings in February and early March 2020. Unfortunately, COVID-19 interrupted plans to present the draft Handbook at a large provincial gathering of School Governing Authority members in late March 2020, but a broad review of the draft document will be facilitated in 2020/21 to finalize the new resource and use it as a foundation for ongoing workshops and professional development.

### First Nation Schools Principals' Short Course:

Each year, a Principals' Short Course includes presentations on topics of interest to principals and vice principals of First Nation schools, and facilitates networking amongst school leaders who might otherwise work in relative isolation – geographically and professionally. The 2019/20 event included a presentation on Project Based / 21st Century Learning and a session on Instructional Supervision and Evaluation by Piet Langstraat, a former Superintendent of Schools for the Greater Victoria School District. Diane Rideout, an employment lawyer for Harris & Company, also provided a half-day session on the topics of teacher contracts, employee management, as well as progressive discipline. Additionally, the 2019 Principals' Short Course included a second full day focused on the implementation of the new BCTEA.

# 87

First Nation school principals and vice principals attended the 2019 event

### The First Nation Schools Professional Growth Process (PGP):

Established almost two decades ago, the Professional Growth Process (PGP) is intended to ensure appropriate and consistent leadership within First Nation schools in BC. Schools that are participating in the PGP receive support from “Regional Principals,” who work with school-based principals to reflect upon and strengthen their practice. Regional Principals assist First Nation school principals through a combination of in-school visits, video coaching, and email/telephone support, helping principals fully understand the complexity of their roles, modeling supervision of instruction practice (including effective teacher observations and follow-up), demonstrating good instruction, assisting with scheduling / planning of school structures, guiding principals in accessing available services, facilitating professional development, and helping with the design and implementation of frameworks for monitoring and responding to student data.

**62**

First Nation schools were involved in the PGP process in 2019/20

**166**

school visits made by Regional Principals (spending 216 days providing in-school support), and provided approximately 1,534 support telephone calls, 2,645 emails, and 457 remote support sessions via Zoom

### Professional Learning Communities Initiative:

For almost a decade, staff of many First Nation schools in BC have been collectively involved in a Professional Learning Communities (PLC) model.

For example, participants in a Principal PLC effort have been working together to consider the role of the principal in achieving meaningful change, gathering together in two annual face-to-face meetings for networking, information sharing, and training, complemented by teleconferences of Principal PLC groups throughout the year.

**66**

principals were involved in the Principal PLC in 2019/20

Additionally, First Nation school teachers regularly come together as collaborative teams to monitor student achievement data and focus on plans for improvement. Cohort groups meet face-to-face twice each year, complemented by teleconferences and additional webinars, involving teachers of K4, K5/Grade 1, Grades 2/3, Grades 4/5, Grades 6/7, and high school and adult education levels.

**176**

teachers participated in the Teacher PLC initiative in 2019/20

**13**

Teacher PLC meetings were organized

**First Nation School Secretary / Administrative Staff Workshops:**

In February 2020, a series of regional workshops were offered for First Nation school secretaries and administrative staff, including a full day of training on how to use the Data and Records User Management System (DRUMS), as well as a day-long session focused on note and minute taking. Given the positive response to this initiative, more training for administrative support staff will be organized in the future.

**3** workshops for First Nation school secretaries / administrative staff

**38** participants (approximate). One final planned session was cancelled due to COVID-19 travel and meeting restrictions.

**OF THE PARTICIPANTS WHO RESPONDED TO A FEEDBACK SURVEY:**

**100%** indicated that they would attend other workshops in the future.

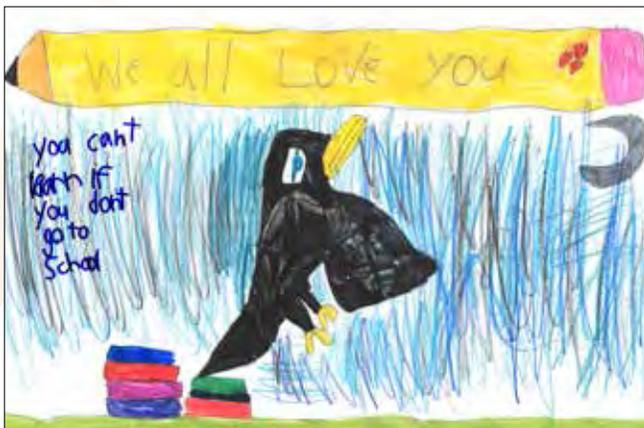
**SAMPLE PARTICIPANT COMMENTS**

*“It was great because I learned some new stuff / useful tools to do my job more effectively.”*

*“It was great! I’ve never done minute taking before so it was very useful information for me.”*

*“I have no experience in note taking. It was great getting a step by step guide to a meeting, definitions, and how to take notes to eventually turn them into minutes.”*

*“I am directed by a Board and am often tasked to do the minutes of their meetings ... so this training was awesome and really needed! Thank you! The presenter was a hoot!”*



**Attendance Counts!**

## New Strategy to Promote Improved Student Attendance

Research makes it clear that addressing student attendance challenges is extremely complicated, requiring multi-faceted, sustained, and well-planned efforts. But improving student attendance is also critical; in short, students who have the best chance to succeed in school are generally those who attend school on a consistent basis, and regular school attendance is an essential part of the learning process and crucial to graduating from school with a strong foundation for further studies and a successful career.

Recognizing the importance of this issue, the following activities were implemented through a 2019/20 comprehensive student attendance strategy, funded using a new federal First Nations Education Research program.

- A draft Toolkit For Raising the Attendance Rates of First Nations Students In British Columbia was created, including suggestions for local actions and reproducible resources (such as letters to parents, newsletter templates, template “attendance agreements,” etc.).
- An “Attendance Matters” poster contest for First Nation students raised awareness about this issue among students and within communities, and resulted in materials that will be used in ongoing promotional efforts.
- A Focus Group (including school and community representatives and staff) was brought together to review the draft Toolkit and plan an overall strategy to address attendance, followed by the creation of attendance posters, bookmarks, incentive prizes for students, and attendance promotional products for families and community members, such as sweatshirts, hats, postcards, and tote bags.

FNEC and FNSA look forward to continuing initiatives to address the issue of attendance in the future.

## Promoting Evidence-Based Decision Making

Recognizing the value of evidence-based decision-making using relevant student outcomes data, FNEC and FNSA continue to support First Nation schools with the collection and analysis of student performance information, including through the School Assessment Process and by sponsoring specific professional development and follow-up for the effective use of the Acadience and Canadian Achievement Test 4 (CAT4) tests. In 2019/20, ongoing support efforts were expanded to include regional CAT4 training workshops, intended to help First Nation school representatives implement and interpret individual and aggregate student test results for meaningful planning of school programs and necessary interventions to increase student success. Unfortunately, due to the suspension of in-class instruction due to COVID-19, First Nation schools were not able to implement CAT4 assessments in the spring of 2019/20.

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# 56

of the 70 schools that can be using Acadience did so in 2019/20 (i.e. schools that offer grades K5 – 6)

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# 40

First Nation school representatives participated in CAT4 training workshops

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No First Nation schools were supported with CAT4 scoring in 2019/20, due to COVID-19 suspension of in-person classes beginning in March 2020 – which was prior to the annual testing dates

## Information and Communications Technology Support Programs

First Nations are fully committed to ensuring that their students are able to learn modern skills and knowledge that are needed to access a full range of opportunities in today’s society, and FNESC and FNSA therefore recognize Information and communications technology (ICT) as a critical area for support programs and services.

### Data Records and User Management System (DRUMS):

First developed in 2010, the Data Records and User Management System (DRUMS) provides an integrated infrastructure for managing student information at the school level, and for reporting aggregate data at the provincial level. DRUMS allows First Nations school staff to manage student attendance and performance information, input course enrollments, and produce report cards. Training opportunities are available for schools that are using DRUMS, and FNESC and FNSA regularly communicate with the schools to ensure that the system remains relevant and effective.

**92** First Nation schools participated in the DRUMS initiative in 2019/20

**71** First Nation schools participated in DRUMS training in 2019/20

### Technology Support Line:

BCTEA funding sponsors a toll-free technology support line to answer questions from First Nation school staff who require assistance with issues related to hardware and software (such as upgrades, licensing, warranties, product suggestions and usage), connectivity challenges, possibilities for accessing funding and estimating costs, accessing bulk purchasing opportunities, and DRUMS.

**958** phone information requests were answered in 2019/20

**1,141** email information requests were answered in 2019/20.

### Connectivity Upgrades for First Nation Schools:

In a very exciting initiative, the transition to BCTEA included a commitment by ISC of over \$4 million for one-time First Nation school connectivity upgrades, as well as an estimated \$11.5 million for maintaining First Nation school connectivity from 2018 to 2023.

**67** schools and communities received connectivity upgrades in 2018/19

**8** additional schools had connectivity upgrades completed in 2019/20

### Regional ICT Support Technicians:

In 2018/19, FNESC and FNSA began sponsoring visits by ICT Technicians to assist First Nation schools’ access to and effective use of technological resources. The Technicians visited each school at least twice in the 2019/20 school year, with additional visits to remote / particularly under-served schools, and they were able to help with: technology and network supports; connectivity problem solving; server administration; computer, printer, and/or smart board set up and training; and mentoring community IT staff and capacity building within communities.

**453** school visits made by ICT Resource Technicians in 2019/20.

## Connected Classrooms Initiative

The Connected Classroom Program began over a decade ago to meet the unique needs and circumstances of students in First Nation schools, with the goal of helping schools that offer grades 10 - 12 share teachers for senior high school courses. The Program was created to address challenges related to recruiting and retaining secondary teachers with specialized content knowledge, and to accommodate very small cohorts of students enrolling in senior courses that can lead to graduation.

Connected Classrooms facilitates an innovative opportunity for collectives of First Nation schools to offer high school courses using a combination of technologies to create an integrated, interactive classroom environment for students in various locations. Connected Classrooms students participate in a real time virtual classroom with a qualified teacher who has the subject matter expertise needed to instruct the course, who co-teaches with a certified educator who supports students on-site.

The Connected Classrooms program has evolved from an initial pilot with 4 schools and 26 students using an audio earpiece only, to involve complex technological set-ups to engage increasing numbers of participants.

**21**

**schools participated in Connected Classrooms in 2019/20, and collectively offered 20 courses**

**208**

**course registrants (with some students taking more than one course) in 2019/20**

## Bus Capital Program

Consistent with BCTEA, and following direction from a Working Group comprised of representatives of First Nation communities and schools, FNE SC and FNSA manage funding for the purchase of school buses for First Nation schools, allocating funding based upon factors including bus age and mileage. The available grants allow for the purchase of a range of bus sizes depending on school needs, with ninety percent of the grants provided up-front and the remaining ten percent provided based upon proof of purchase.

**23**

**new buses were purchased in 2017/18, using \$1.61 million**

**18**

**new buses were purchased in 2018/19, costing \$1.588 million (reflecting the generally larger bus sizes needed in 2018/19)**

**15**

**bus purchases were approved in 2019/20, totaling \$1.33 million**

Brohm Lake, Squamish, BC

## Teacher Recruitment and Retention Activities

Recognizing that effective human resource practices are fundamental for operating strong schools, FNESC and FNSA are committed to providing supports related to this area of school operations. Accordingly, BCTEA funding is used to employ a Human Resources Coach to provide day to day advice through email and a telephone helpline, develop and share resources, and promote teaching opportunities of First Nations schools. Resources available from FNESC and FNSA include template Human Resource policies and procedures, letters, forms, and agreements, as well as toolkits related to: occupational health and safety; employee terminations; employee attraction, selection and retention; employee performance management; workplace relationships (harassment and bullying); and succession planning. FNESC and FNSA have also created the following resources for First Nations schools: Employment Handbook for First Nations Schools; Guide for Training Sessions for First Nations Schools: Employee Recruitment Practices; and Guide for Training Sessions for First Nations Schools: Employee Retention Practices.

Since 2012/13, FNESC and FNSA have facilitated First Nation schools' access to the web site and services provided by Make a Future, to promote the schools' employment opportunities to a broad audience and enhance recruitment efforts. See [www.makeafuture.ca](http://www.makeafuture.ca) for more information about this opportunity.

Finally, given the significant discrepancy between the proportion of First Nations students and First Nations

teachers represented in the BC public education system, pro-active efforts are being made to address this critical issue, such as the First Nations Teacher Recruitment and Retention Deployment Strategy being advanced by the K-12 and PSE Partner Groups.

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**191**

active First Nation school employer accounts on the Make a Future web site in 2019/20

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**215**

jobs posted on the Make a Future web site in 2019/20

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**24,266**

jobs viewed on the Make a Future web site in 2019/20

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**11,313**

employer profiles viewed on the Make a Future web site in 2019/20

---

**74**

First Nation schools received HR Coaching advice and resources, dealing with 321 issues

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## Local Education Agreement Supports

BC First Nations and the BCTEA partners support the effective negotiation and implementation of Local Education Agreements (LEAs) – i.e. arrangements between BC First Nations and School Boards that outline strategies that both parties agree will result in greater student success, and the mechanism through which federal funding for identified First Nations students is distributed to school districts and Independent schools through First Nations.

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**“The Parties recognize Local Education Agreements as an integral part of the delivery of education services to First Nation students attending BC Schools, as they are an important mechanism for building relationships between First Nation communities and boards of education and schools, or independent school authorities, to support improved First Nation student outcomes.” 2018 BCTEA 4.11**

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Accordingly, BCTEA includes important commitments to support the negotiation of effective LEAs wherever possible, recognizing their potential for transforming education systems for the benefit of First Nations learners. FNE SC has now drafted a Provincial LEA template that addresses best practices and common concerns related to First Nations education. Ultimately, as set out in BCTEA, the Provincial LEA will apply, at the request of a First Nation, where there is no existing LEA between a First Nation and School Board, or to have the Provincial LEA inform possible revisions to existing agreements that need to be updated.

An LEA Manager also provides direct support to First Nations, assisting with research and student data analysis, facilitating workshops, and traveling to communities to help First Nations identify priorities and develop strategies for LEA negotiations and implementation. Relevant materials are included on the FNE SC website ([www.fnesc.ca/lea](http://www.fnesc.ca/lea)), and an LEA Toolkit is updated regularly.



Silver Creek Elementary

### LEA Provincial Gathering:

First Nations with active LEAs were invited to attend a BCTEA-sponsored LEA Provincial Gathering on March 9, 2020 in Vancouver. In this session, a total of 86 participants representing 56 First Nations were able to share what is working with respect to school districts' accountability to First Nations, and current strategies to support improved student outcomes. First Nations explored examples of best practices and shared their experiences and LEA-related efforts at the event.

### LEA Grants:

With financial support of \$1.5 million from the Province of BC, all First Nations with students ordinarily living on reserve and attending public schools were offered a one-year funding grant in 2019/20 to support them in working with School Boards to negotiate, renew, or implement LEAs.

### Transportation to Public Schools:

Associated with LEAs, the BCTEA Parties (FNESC, BC and Canada) are committed to developing and implementing effective measures to address existing and future issues related to First Nation student transportation to BC public schools. Through an interim approach implemented in 2019/20, the BCTEA Parties were able to fund: the purchase of 73 new bus shelters or replacements and 12 new buses to provide routes for First Nations students; activities related to transportation safety and bullying concerns; and initiatives to improve participation in extracurricular activities and sporting events that will build student engagement and ultimately result in improved overall student outcomes. FNESC will continue to work with Canada and BC to meet the transportation needs of First Nation students attending BC public schools through the extension of the “interim” approach in the 2020/21 school year.

**16** site visits by the FNESC LEA Manager in 2019/20

**220** telephone and email contacts (approximate), providing support to 118 First Nations and Tribal Councils

**86** participants attended the LEA Provincial Gathering 2020

**56** First Nations represented at the LEA Provincial Gathering 2020

**189** BC First Nations were offered an LEA grant in 2019/20

### Accountability Strategy Workshops

In order to support the efforts of FNESC and the BC Ministry of Education to improve First Nation student outcomes in the BC public education system, BCTEA funding was used to organize regional workshops to support collaborative dialogue and strategy development by First Nations with the BC Ministry of Education, provincial school districts, and BC public schools.

The 2020 information sharing workshops included discussion of Joint First Nation Student Transportation Plans – an important and complicated new opportunity. Additionally, the workshops included discussion of issues such as LEA developments, data and information access and sharing, and Ministry changes related to inclusive education. It is expected that promoting awareness and facilitating input into these topics will ultimately support First Nations education improvements and better accountability for First Nations student outcomes.

**40** participants from 25 First Nations with no signed LEA participated in the 2019/20 Accountability Strategy workshops

## Education Partnership Program (EPP) Sponsored Research

In 2019/20, FNEC was pleased to access federal Education Partnership Program (EPP) funding to work with the BC Ministry of Education to explore in detail the identification of Indigenous students with exceptionalities within the BC public system. The preliminary analysis completed to date demonstrates that Indigenous students are over-represented in the Ministry's Diverse Abilities categories (or what have been otherwise referred to as "special education categories" or "exceptionalities").

While the disruptions caused by COVID-19 in early March 2020 interrupted the completion of this work, further efforts will be made in 2020/21 to better understand the needs of all Indigenous students and ensure that any barriers to their educational progress are identified and addressed. Therefore, the analyzed data will be shared for feedback and discussion, and further data will be collected and analyzed as appropriate.

## The Seventh Generation Club Stay in School Initiative

Since 1997, the Seventh Generation Club has worked to provide fun, age-appropriate and engaging opportunities for all First Nations students in BC to learn about the importance of healthy choices, participate in sports and community activities, and, most importantly, appreciate the importance of regular school attendance and staying in school. With support from the First Nations Health Authority, all Club members receive an annual Daytimer with information related to higher education, career planning, nutrition, wellness, and organization skills, and featuring pictures and photos contributed by schools and students. In addition to the Daytimers, the Seventh Generation Club sponsors regular newsletters, a sports day, and contests to promote the Club's goals.

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# 10,000

(approximate) Seventh Generation Club members in 2019/20

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# 125

different schools represented in the Seventh Generation Club in 2019/20

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AD Rundle Middle School



Tatla Lake Elementary-Junior Secondary



T'lisalagilakw School Parents Club

## First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy Initiative

The First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy is part of a broader federally funded Youth Employment Strategy, and it consists of two distinct programs: 1. the Summer Work Experience Program (SWEPE), which supports opportunities for summer work experience and training for in-school secondary and post-secondary First Nations students; and 2. the Skills Link Program, which supports youth participants in the following initiatives.

- The Career Promotion and Awareness Program, which sponsors career development activities such as career fairs and leadership projects.
- The Cooperative Work Placements Program, which funds First Nation schools' career readiness activities.
- The Science and Technology Program, which sponsors activities to promote science and technology as a career choice by providing first-hand experience in various science and technology disciplines.
- The Mentored Work Placement Program, providing work experience opportunities for out-of-school, unemployed, or under-employed First Nations youth.
- The Information Communication Technology (ICT) Work Placement Program, sponsoring ICT work experience opportunities for out-of-school, unemployed, or under-employed youth.

**170**

communities were funded through SWEPE in 2019/20

**4,223**

youth were supported through the Career Promotion and Awareness Program in 2019/20

**28**

First Nation schools were provided a Cooperative Education Program grant in 2019/20

**970**

students were sponsored for Cooperative Work Placements in 2019/20

**3,170**

students participated in 2019/20 Science and Technology Programs

**110**

students were sponsored through the Mentored Work Placement Program



Skeetchestn Community School

## The Innovations In Education Program

In 2019/20, a new Innovations In Education Program was implemented with funding from ISC – designed to allow BC First Nations to: pilot new programs or adapt existing programs for new purposes or new audiences; assess and measure the impact of pilot programs; and share stories of successfully piloted innovations regionally and nationwide. The program funding sponsored a range of projects focused on topics such as attendance, parental engagement, cultural and on-the-land learning, appropriate discipline practices, and more.

# 25

Innovations in Education Program grants were provided in 2019/20

## First Nations Health and Science Promotion Initiative

For the past several years, the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) has provided funding to sponsor a First Nations Health and Science Career Promotion (FNHSCP) Program, which has enabled First Nations to offer their students health and science educational and career planning activities. The program is intended to encourage students to consider and prepare for health and science related careers by providing First Nations with grants for activities such as tutoring and homework clubs, parent information sessions, workshops to promote career planning, relevant field trips, student visits to post-secondary institutes, science camps, and student attendance at health career fairs. In the long-term, it is anticipated that these programs will enhance broader efforts to increase the participation of First Nations students in health and science post-secondary programs and careers.

# 44

First Nations were provided a grant

# 2,828

students participated in the 2019/20 program activities

## Circle of Well Being Challenge

The Circle of Well-Being Challenge (CWBC), sponsored by the FNHA, is intended to promote good health by encouraging students to be physically active, eat healthy foods, and focus on mental health. The project distributes grants to support school-level activities, and shares resources for student use.

**36** schools participated in the CWBC in 2019/20

**563** educators, volunteers, and community members were involved in the CWBC in 2019/20

**1,768** students participated in 2019/20 CWBC program activities

## Artists in Education Initiative

Since 2003, First Nation schools have been provided grants annually with a financial contribution from ArtStarts in Schools – a charitable organization that collaborates with educators, artists, families and communities to promote art as an essential part of learning and life. Artstarts grants are provided to First Nation schools on a rotating basis, allowing local BC First Nation artists to provide exciting art opportunities for students. The artists involved are recognized by their communities for their talents and gifts, and they usually teach their art in traditional ways that are embedded in their languages, cultures, stories, and/or teachings.

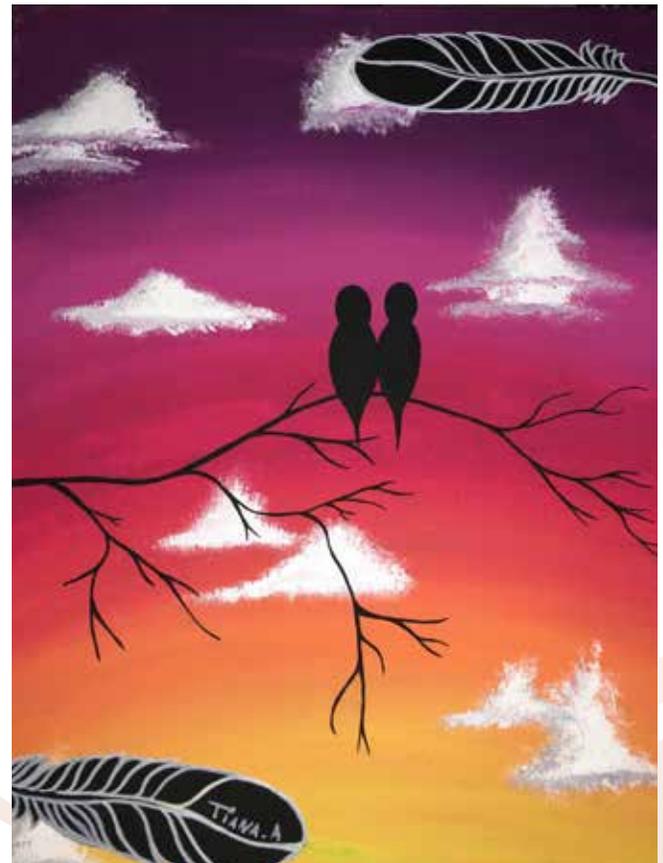
**20** schools were provided an Artstarts grant in 2019/20

## Mental Health Training

In 2019/20, FNESC and FNSEA used generous funding from the FNHA to offer Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators (EASE) sessions, which provided educators the opportunity to learn various strategies to assist students dealing with anxiety. Six regional EASE sessions were organized, and follow-up literacy packages were sent to each school that attended a session, including all of the recommended reading titles to accompany the class lessons.

**6** EASE sessions were organized

**12** different schools had staff participate in EASE sessions



## OUR FIRST NATIONS POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION WORK

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**"First Nations assert their right and responsibility to direct and make decisions regarding all matters relating to First Nations lifelong learning as an Inherent and Treaty Right and Post-Secondary Education is a fundamental element of this continuum."** Assembly of First Nations Policy Proposal: First Nations Post-Secondary Education

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In keeping with commitments of First Nations to lifelong learning, FNEC works to advance quality post-secondary education (PSE) opportunities for First Nations learners, including increasing transitions and supporting improved outcomes for learners in both public post-secondary institutions and Indigenous-controlled institutes.



Queneesh Elementary School

## BC Tripartite Post-Secondary Education Model

BC First Nations are developing a BC Tripartite PSE Model, which encompasses funding, policy, and program delivery for students, First Nations-mandated institutes, and community-based program delivery, as well as mechanisms to ensure the public post-secondary system is responsive to the needs of First Nations learners and communities. FNESC gathered direction on the Model through a number of engagement sessions with First Nations and First Nations institutes in 2019/20, including through regional PSE Coordinator Workshops, FNESC Regional Sessions, and IAHLA's Annual General Meeting and Conference. Feedback from the engagement undertaken to date suggests that First Nations support the proposed Model and believe a BC-specific approach is necessary to advance First Nations control of First Nations education.

FNESC worked with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) on the development of a federal PSE policy proposal appended to a Memorandum to Cabinet, which resulted in the federal government committing to provide \$7.5 million over 3 years for the development of regional post-secondary models in June 2019. FNESC received a portion of that funding to support research and other activities needed to develop and implement the BC Model. For example, research on Indigenous students' experiences

of racism in the public post-secondary system is expected to yield recommendations for ensuring that public post-secondary institutions create safe and welcoming spaces for Indigenous students and respond to their needs. FNESC and IAHLA also supported research for a proposal for core funding for First Nations-mandated institutes.

Additionally, as a result of advocacy by FNESC and First Nations across Canada, the Post-Secondary Partnerships Program (PSPP) is changing to become a First Nations-directed, regionally delivered program that supports First Nation-established post-secondary institutes and First Nation directed community-based programs. This change addresses long-standing concerns of BC First Nations by creating the space for BC to develop a regional approach and ensure that funding flows directly to First Nations and their designated organizations.

FNESC will continue to work with IAHLA to explore opportunities to support relevant activities and engage with First Nations and First Nations-mandated institutes to ensure that the ongoing development of the BC Tripartite PSE Model reflects the needs and aspirations of First Nations in BC.



Xpey' Elementary

## Post-Secondary Subcommittee

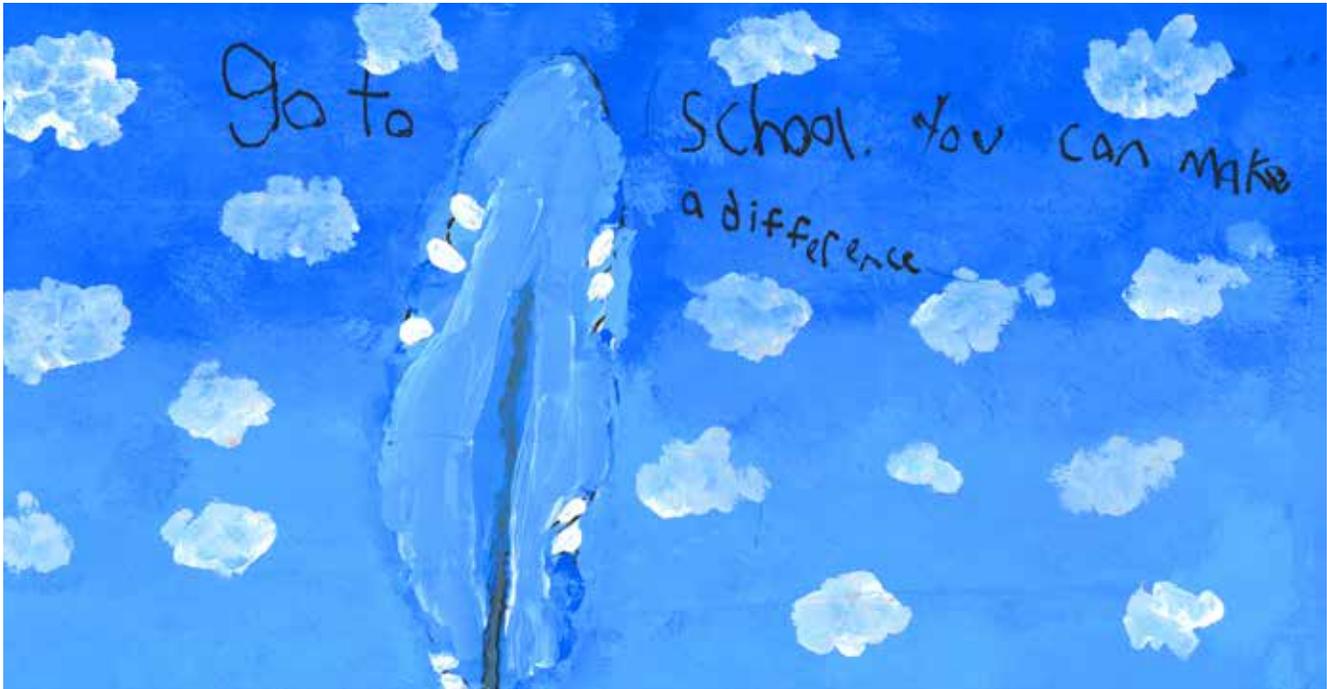
FNEC's work in PSE is guided by a Post-Secondary Subcommittee (PSSC), which advises, provides direction and makes recommendations related to provincial and federal PSE policies and programs. The PSSC plays a critical role in informing discussions related to the BC Tripartite PSE Model, identifying critical research and resources required to develop and implement the Model, and supporting engagement with First Nations communities in order to ensure it meets the needs of First Nations learners, communities and institutes. This Committee also ensures that FNEC's resources and services for communities in the area of post-secondary continue to be relevant, by overseeing the delivery of annual two-day PSE Coordinator Workshops and leading the development of other supports for communities.

## Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework Refresh

FNEC has been working with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (AEST) in order to update the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan: 2020 Vision for the Future (the Policy Framework) so that it aligns with the BC Tripartite PSE Model and key provincial commitments to First Nations, such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action, the Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples, and most recently the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. FNEC is advocating for a number of key changes to the Policy Framework including:

- commitments to ongoing core funding for First Nations–mandated institutes;
- an equitable, First Nations–driven approach to community–based programming;
- measures to address racism in the public post–secondary system;
- increased funding and support for First Nations Language programs, including implementing the Language Fluency Degree Framework;
- improved data on and accountability for First Nations learner outcomes, including changes to the Aboriginal Student Data Report;
- more robust measures for Indigenous teacher recruitment, retention, and deployment;
- ensuring that programming and services at public post–secondary institutes are driven by and responsive to the needs of BC First Nations;
- ensuring that housing is more accessible and meets the needs of First Nations students; and
- greater support for Indigenous public post–secondary board members and capacity–building for all board members.

Initial engagement with First Nations and First Nations–mandated institutes on the new Policy Framework took place at FNEC's 2019/20 PSE Coordinator Workshops and IAHLA's 2019 Conference. FNEC also will explore opportunities to engage with First Nations to gather input on issues, concerns and opportunities for strengthening and expanding the Province of BC's commitments in order to ensure that the updated Policy Framework aligns with the current PSE context.



Attendance Counts!

### Support for Community PSE Coordinators

Throughout 2019/20, FNESC continued to engage with PSE Coordinators and provided a number of services to help build community capacity to effectively serve the current and emerging needs of their students, supporting First Nations as they move toward assuming greater responsibility for administering post-secondary programs under the BC Tripartite PSE Model.

These efforts involved the PSE Coordinator Help Line, the PSE Coordinator Resource Page, Aboriginal Learning Links ([aboriginallearning.ca](http://aboriginallearning.ca)), updates to FNESC's Draft Local Operating Guidelines Toolkit, and communications related to post-secondary policies and programs.

For the third year, FNESC hosted five two-day PSE Coordinator Workshops, which had two primary purposes: providing information for communities to effectively address the substantial changes made to the federal PSE funding programs through their local operating guidelines; and obtaining guidance and direction for the BC Tripartite PSE Model. Information was also provided on other federal and provincial programs, policies and initiatives for First Nations learners, as well grants, bursaries, scholarships and tuition waivers available to their students.

**150** unique queries to the PSE Resource Line

**144** participants in the PSE Coordinators' Workshops

#### OF THE PSE COORDINATORS WHO PROVIDED FEEDBACK TO THE 2019/20 WORKSHOPS:

**97%** found the Workshops "EXCELLENT" or "VERY GOOD"

**97%** found the Workshop material to be "EXCELLENT" or "VERY GOOD"

**99%** found the content of the Workshops very relevant and valuable

**95%** found the presenters informative and able to answer questions



# CONCLUSIONS

BC First Nations remain committed to the principles of quality education and First Nations control of First Nations education, as reflected in their development of a comprehensive, community-driven and research-based BC First Nations Education System aimed at supporting lifelong learning for all First Nations learners.

Significant progress was made toward those goals in 2019/20, through new legislative changes, key policy developments, collaborative program and service delivery, the advancement of important protocols and agreements, and joint commitments by a range of First Nation and other education organizations and government agencies.

FNEESC and FNSA look forward to working with First Nations and First Nations school representatives, our memberships, and our education partners in the year ahead, to build upon our positive relationships and achieve systemic reforms that will benefit First Nations children, youth, adult learners, families and communities. We are more excited than ever to work with others to ensure that all First Nation learners have every opportunity possible to reach their full potential and achieve all of their goals.

All kids should go to school so they can learn about their culture and get an education so they can be a leader in their community.



## FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE

### Financial Statements – March 31, 2020

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Statement 2

Statement of Changes in Fund Balances

Statement 3

Statement of Cash Flows

Statement 4

Notes to the Financial Statements

*Note: Schedules of Program Operations Available on Request*

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**Independent Auditors' Report**

To the Board of directors of  
**First Nations Education Steering Committee Society**

*Opinion*

We have audited the financial statements of First Nations Education Steering Committee Society (the "Society"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2020, and the statements of operations, changes in fund balances and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Society as at March 31, 2020, and the results of its operations, its changes in fund balances, and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO).

*Basis for Opinion*

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Society in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

*Other Matter*

The financial statements of the Society for the year ended March 31, 2019 were audited by another auditor who expressed an unqualified opinion on those financial statements on July 11, 2019.

*Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with ASNPO, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Society's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Society or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Society's financial reporting process.



*Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements*

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- ◆ Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- ◆ Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Society's internal control.
- ◆ Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- ◆ Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Society's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditors' report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditors' report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Society to cease to continue as a going concern.
- ◆ Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

*Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements*

As required by the Societies Act of British Columbia, we report that, in our opinion, the accounting policies applied in preparing and presenting financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations have been applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding period.

*Reid Hurst Nagy Inc.*

REID HURST NAGY INC.  
CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS

RICHMOND, B.C.  
NOVEMBER 2, 2020

## **FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE SOCIETY**

### **STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

<b>As at March 31</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Cash	\$ 16,565,316	\$ 13,104,426
Term deposits (Note 3)	4,106,000	2,080,796
Interest receivable	71,400	71,020
Accounts receivable	63,483	4,156,003
GST/HST receivable	122,883	133,611
Prepaid expenses	101,010	55,113
Due from First Nation Schools Association (Note 4)	99,982	13,572
	<b>21,130,074</b>	<b>19,614,541</b>
Term deposits - long term (Note 5)	3,131,918	7,063,000
Capital assets (Note 6)	267,697	426,411
	<b>\$ 24,529,689</b>	<b>\$ 27,103,952</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 3,983,841	\$ 9,279,977
Wages and benefits payable	73,964	54,561
Current portion of capital lease obligations (Note 7)	26,676	26,304
	<b>4,084,481</b>	<b>9,360,842</b>
Capital lease obligations (Note 7)	25,908	52,227
	<b>4,110,389</b>	<b>9,413,069</b>
<b>FUND BALANCES</b>		
INVESTED IN TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS	215,113	347,880
UNRESTRICTED FUND	4,979,238	3,724,101
INTERNALLY RESTRICTED FUND (Note 8)	3,641,000	3,570,000
RESTRICTED FUND	11,583,949	10,048,902
	<b>20,419,300</b>	<b>17,690,883</b>
	<b>\$ 24,529,689</b>	<b>\$ 27,103,952</b>

Commitments (Note 10)

**APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE SOCIETY**

 , President

 , Treasurer

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements

## **FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE SOCIETY**

### **STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS**

For the year ended March 31

	<b>2020 Budget</b>	<b>2020 Actual</b>	<b>2019 Actual</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Indigenous Services Canada	\$ 61,216,832	\$ 61,216,832	\$ 62,626,130
Province of BC	554,900	554,900	4,320,000
First Nations Health Authority	429,000	405,000	385,000
Interest income	500,000	822,822	500,651
Other	519,167	572,968	618,307
	<b>63,219,899</b>	<b>63,572,522</b>	68,450,088
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Unrestricted	85,200	68,370	144,742
Invested in tangible capital assets	-	283,968	128,324
Restricted	66,483,213	60,491,769	59,280,128
	<b>66,568,413</b>	<b>60,844,107</b>	59,553,194
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ (2,973,012)</b>	<b>\$ 2,728,417</b>	<b>\$ 8,805,211</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements

## FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE SOCIETY

### STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES

For the year ended March 31

	Unrestricted	Internally Restricted	Invested in tangible capital assets	Restricted	2020 Total	2019 Total
BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 3,724,101	\$ 3,570,000	\$ 347,880	\$ 10,048,902	\$ 17,690,883	\$ 8,885,672
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	1,291,700	71,000	(132,767)	1,498,484	2,728,417	8,805,211
INTERFUND TRANSFERS	(36,563)	-	-	36,563	-	-
<b>BALANCE, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 4,979,238</b>	<b>\$ 3,641,000</b>	<b>\$ 215,113</b>	<b>\$ 11,583,949</b>	<b>\$ 20,419,300</b>	<b>\$ 17,690,883</b>

## **FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE SOCIETY**

### **STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**

<b>For the year ended March 31, 2020</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$ 2,728,417	\$ 8,805,211
Items not involving cash		
Depreciation	283,968	128,324
Principal reduction on capital lease obligations	-	91,681
	<b>3,012,385</b>	<b>9,025,216</b>
Change in non-cash operating working capital		
Accounts receivable	4,092,520	(4,085,977)
GST/HST receivable	10,728	25,019
Due from First Nation Schools Association	(86,410)	160,528
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(5,296,145)	3,348,090
Wages and benefits payable	19,403	-
Prepaid expenses	(45,897)	19,842
	<b>1,706,584</b>	<b>8,492,718</b>
<b>FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Acquisition of capital assets	(125,254)	(154,756)
Increase in obligations under capital lease	(372)	-
Repayment of capital lease obligations	(25,947)	(30,726)
	<b>(151,573)</b>	<b>(185,482)</b>
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Purchases of term deposits	-	(4,105,796)
Proceeds from redemption of term deposits	1,905,879	1,019,500
	<b>1,905,879</b>	<b>(3,086,296)</b>
<b>INCREASE IN CASH</b>	<b>3,460,890</b>	<b>5,220,940</b>
<b>CASH, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	<b>13,104,426</b>	<b>7,883,486</b>
<b>CASH, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 16,565,316</b>	<b>\$ 13,104,426</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements

## **FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE SOCIETY**

### **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**March 31, 2020**

#### **1. OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE OF THE SOCIETY**

The First Nations Education Steering Committee Society (the "Society") was incorporated on April 20, 1999 under the Society Act of British Columbia.

The purpose of the Society is to facilitate discussions about education matters affecting First Nations in British Columbia by disseminating information and soliciting input from First Nations. The Society will work to provide a forum for networking, communication and liaison among First Nations schools, other educational institutes, and the federal, provincial and other governments.

#### **2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

##### **(a) Fund Accounting**

The Society follows the restricted fund method of accounting for contributions. The Society records accounting transactions using the fund accounting method generally in use for not-for-profit organizations. A fund is determined for the purpose of carrying on specific activities or attaining certain objectives in accordance with regulations, restrictions, or limitations. Each fund has its own statement of operations which presents the results of operations for the fund. To meet the objectives of financial reporting and stewardship over assets, certain interfund transfers are necessary to ensure the appropriate allocation of assets and liabilities to the respective funds. These interfund transfers are recorded in the statement of changes in fund balances.

The First Nations Education Steering Committee Society maintains the following funds and reserves as part of its operations:

- The Restricted Fund which reports activities pertaining to funds with a designated purpose.
- The Capital Fund which reports the capital assets and their associated activity.
- The Internally Designated Fund which reports the activity pertaining to the Contingency Reserve Fund to an internally set cap of \$3,641,000. Any amounts in excess of this cap are allocated to the Unrestricted Fund.
- The Unrestricted Fund which reports activities in the Core Projects Fund.

##### **(b) Revenue Recognition**

Restricted and unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the appropriate fund when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

##### **(c) Capital Assets**

Capital assets are recorded as expenditures in the appropriate fund and are also reported on the statement of financial position as capital assets at cost. Amortization is charged to the capital fund on a straight-line basis over the expected useful life of the assets as follows:

Assets under capital lease	5 years
Computer equipment	3 years
Furniture and equipment	5 years
Leasehold improvements	5 years

Capital assets are impaired when conditions indicate that they no longer contribute to First Nations Education Steering Committee Society's ability to provide goods and services, or when the value of future economic benefits associated with the tangible capital assets are less than their net book value. If such conditions exist, an impairment loss is accounted for as an expense on the statement of operations.

## **FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE SOCIETY**

### **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

March 31, 2020

#### **2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES, continued**

##### **(d) Financial Instruments**

###### **(i) Measurement of financial instruments**

The Society initially measures its financial assets and liabilities at fair value. Financial assets and liabilities are subsequently measured at cost or amortized cost. The Society has not designated any financial assets or financial liabilities to be measured at fair value.

Financial assets measured at cost include cash, term deposits, amounts due from the First Nations Schools Association, and accounts receivable.

Financial liabilities measured at cost include accounts payable and accrued liabilities, and long term debt.

###### **(ii) Impairment**

For financial assets measured at cost or amortized cost, the Society determined whether there are indications of possible impairment. When there is an indication of impairment, and the Society determines that a significant adverse change has occurred during the period in the expected timing or amount of future cash flows, a write-down is recognized on the statement of operations. A previously recognized impairment loss may be reversed to the extent of the improvement but cannot exceed the the carrying amount of the financial asset. Reversals of previously recognized impairment losses are recognized in net income.

###### **(iii) Transaction Cost**

Transaction costs related to financial instruments that will be subsequently measured at fair value are recognized in net income in the period incurred. Transaction costs related to financial instruments subsequently measured at amortized cost are included in the original cost of the asset or liability and recognized in net income over the life of the instrument using the straight-line method.

##### **(e) Measurement Uncertainty**

In preparing the financial statements for the Society, management is required to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities, at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the period. Items requiring the use of significant estimates include collectibility of accounts receivable, useful lives of capital assets, accounts payable and accrued liabilities, and wages and benefits payable. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

#### **3. TERM DEPOSITS - CURRENT**

	Maturity Date	Interest Rate	2020	2019
Blue Shore Financial, two-year term deposits	Oct 19, 2020	3.450%	\$ 4,106,000	\$ -
Blue Shore Financial, 36-month, non-redeemable term deposits	Nov 04, 2019	2.000%	-	1,040,800
Blue Shore Financial, 18-month term deposits	May 04, 2019	2.200%	-	1,040,396
			<b>\$ 4,106,000</b>	<b>\$ 2,081,196</b>

Term deposits are considered current if they have a maturity dates of less than one year from the fiscal year end.

## **FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE SOCIETY**

### **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

March 31, 2020

#### **4. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

The Society, the First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) and the Indigenous Adult Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) are separate organizations, each with their own Board of Directors. The Society is related to FNSA and IAHLA pursuant to an administrative arrangement whereby the Society provides administrative and financial support, including staffing and office premises to the related parties.

Unless otherwise noted, transactions with related parties, if any, are in the normal course of business, and are measured at the exchange amount which is the amount of consideration established and agreed to by the related parties.

#### **5. TERM DEPOSITS - LONG TERM**

	Maturity Date	Interest Rate	2020	2019
Blue Shore Financial, five-year term deposits	Feb 15, 2023	3.150%	\$ 3,131,918	\$ 3,063,000
Blue Shore Financial, five-year term deposits	Oct 19, 2020	3.450%	-	4,000,000
			<b>\$ 3,131,918</b>	<b>\$ 7,063,000</b>

Term deposits are considered long term if they have a maturity date of greater than one year from the fiscal year end. The balances of the term deposits are redeemable only on the anniversary date each year.

#### **6. CAPITAL ASSETS**

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2020 Net book value	2019 Net book value
Assets under capital lease	\$ 130,669	\$ 78,272	\$ 52,397	\$ 78,531
Computer equipment	358,429	322,239	36,190	153,269
Furniture and equipment	141,736	109,809	31,927	57,815
Leasehold improvements	357,355	210,172	147,183	136,796
	<b>\$ 988,189</b>	<b>\$ 720,492</b>	<b>\$ 267,697</b>	<b>\$ 426,411</b>

**FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE SOCIETY**

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

March 31, 2020

**7. CAPITAL LEASE OBLIGATIONS**

	2020	2019
Office equipment lease, repayable at \$673 per month at 0% interest per annum and due on May 1, 2023	\$ 26,123	\$ 44,885
Office equipment lease, repayable at \$1,580 per month at 2% interest per annum and due on August 6, 2021	26,461	33,646
Current portion	<b>(26,676)</b>	<b>(26,304)</b>
	<b>\$ 25,908</b>	<b>\$ 52,227</b>

Interest expensed in the statement of operations for the year relating to capital lease obligations was \$727 (2019: \$1,092)

Minimum lease payment required in the next five years are as follows:

2021	\$ 26,676
2022	15,936
2023	8,075
2024	1,897
	<b>\$ 52,584</b>

**8. INTERNALLY DESIGNATED AND UNRESTRICTED FUNDS**

The Society currently holds internally designated funds as a contingency reserve (see Schedule 2). The fund balance is capped at \$ 3,641,000 (2019 - \$ 3,570,000), which approximates six months of operation funding, and is to be used in the event that funding is delayed or drastically reduced by funding agencies. The balance of the contingency fund in excess of the cap is considered to be unrestricted, along with the Core Projects program (see Schedule 1). These unrestricted funds will be spent according to priorities set out in a plan approved by the Board.

## FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE SOCIETY

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2020

#### 9. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Transactions in financial instruments may result in an entity assuming or transferring to another party one or more of the financial risks described below. The required disclosures provide information that assist users of financial statements in assessing the extent of risk related to financial instruments.

##### (a) Fair Value

The fair value of the Society's cash, term deposits, accounts receivable and accounts payable and accrued liabilities are believed to equal their carrying amounts due to their short term to maturity. The fair value of the amount due from First Nations Schools Association is not readily obtainable.

##### (b) Credit Risk

The Society does have credit risk in accounts receivable of \$63,483 (2019 - \$4,156,003). Credit risk is the risk that one party to a transaction will fail to discharge an obligation and cause the other party to incur a financial loss. The Society reduces its exposure to credit risk by performing credit valuations on a regular basis and performing reviews of aged accounts receivable listings on a regular basis. In the opinion of management the credit risk exposure to the Society is low and is not material.

##### (c) Liquidity Risk

The Society does have liquidity risk in accounts payable and accrued liabilities of \$3,983,841 (2019 - \$9,279,977). Liquidity risk is the risk that the Society cannot repay its obligations when they become due to its creditors. The Society reduces its exposure to liquidity risk by ensuring that it documents when authorized payments become due. In the opinion of management the liquidity risk exposure to the Association is low and not material.

#### 10. COMMITMENTS

The Society has committed to leasing its current office premises. The Society is obligated to make the following minimum lease payments exclusive of common area maintenance charges in each of coming five fiscal years as follows:

	\$
2021	\$ 242,034
2022	248,705
2023	161,399
2024	28,006
2025	16,585
	<u>\$ 696,729</u>

#### 11. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

First Nations Education Steering Committee Society receives a significant portion of its revenue pursuant to a Comprehensive Funding Arrangement (CFA) with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). ISC provides annual funding under a 5 year commitment through BCTEA.

#### 12. SOCIETIES ACT DISCLOSURE

Pursuant to the Societies Act of British Columbia, the Society is required disclose the number of, and total remuneration paid to employees and subcontractors, who receive remuneration or payments for services rendered, in excess of \$75,000 in the fiscal year.

In the current year, the Society had 37 (2019 - 35) employees and subcontractors who received remuneration or payments in excess of \$75,000 and paid remuneration totalling \$4,277,683 (2019 - \$3,858,341) to these individuals and subcontractors.

During the year, the Society paid \$13,800 (2019 - \$22,800) to the First Nations Tribal Council as a reimbursement for services rendered by the president of the council.

## **FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE SOCIETY**

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### **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

March 31, 2020

#### **13. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS**

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization categorized COVID-19 as a pandemic. The potential economic effects within the Society's environment and in the global markets due to the possible disruption in supply chains, and measure being introduced at various levels of government to curtail the spread of the virus (such as travel restrictions, closures of non-essential municipal and private operations, imposition of quarantines and social distancing) could have a material impact on the Society's operations

The extent of the impact of this outbreak and related containment measures on the Society's operations cannot be reliably estimated at this time.

#### **14. COMPARATIVE AMOUNTS**

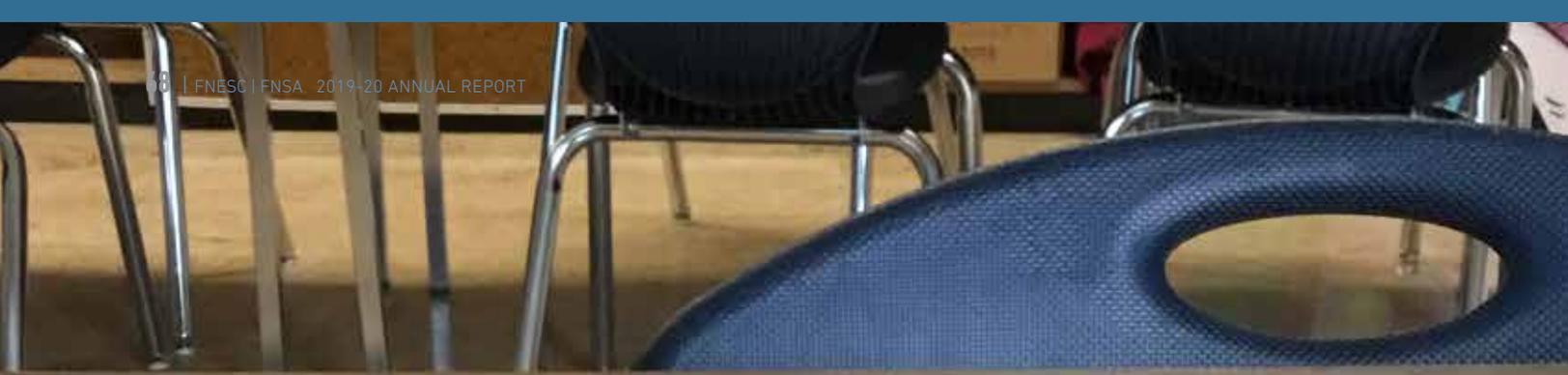
Certain of the comparative amounts have been reclassified to conform with the presentation adopted in the current period. The March 31, 2019 comparative amounts were reported on by another firm of Chartered Professional Accountants. The reclassifications did not have an effect on ending fund balances.



**FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE SOCIETY**

**SUMMARY SCHEDULE OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES BY PROGRAM, continued**

For the year ended March 31, 2020		Page	ISC Funds	Other Revenue	Total Revenue	Total Expenses	Surplus (Deficit)	Opening Fund Balance (Deficit)	Transfers	Closing Fund Balance (Deficit)
	PARTNERSHIP ADVANCEMENT - BCTEA NEGOTIATIONS	53	-	-	-	228,174	(228,174)	136,990	91,184	-
	TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (BLOCK FUNDED)	54	1,310,159	-	1,310,159	415,545	894,614	700,000	-	1,594,614
	CIRCLE OF WELL-BEING CHALLENGE	55	-	70,000	70,000	75,339	(5,339)	13,325	-	7,986
	STRUCTURAL READINESS - DATA AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PROJECT	56	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	STRUCTURAL READINESS - TEFA RENEWAL	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM	58	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	SCHOOL BUS REPLACEMENT PROGRAM	59	1,076,446	-	1,076,446	926,573	149,873	257,568	-	407,441
	INTERNET CAPABILITY UPGRADE	60	907,841	-	907,841	539,281	368,560	608,311	-	976,871
	STRUCTURAL READINESS - TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT	61	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	HEALTH AND SCIENCE CAREER PROMOTION	62	-	240,000	240,000	250,042	(10,042)	5,662	-	(4,380)
			61,216,832	1,330,581	62,547,413	61,048,930	1,498,483	10,048,902	36,563	11,583,948
<b>Totals</b>			<b>\$ 61,216,832 \$</b>	<b>2,912,852 \$</b>	<b>64,129,684 \$</b>	<b>61,401,267 \$</b>	<b>2,728,417 \$</b>	<b>17,690,863 \$</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$ 20,419,300</b>



## FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

### Financial Statements – March 31, 2020

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Statement 2

Statement of Changes in Fund Balances

Statement 3

Statement of Cash Flows

Statement 4

Notes to the Financial Statements

**ACCOUNTANTS AND BUSINESS ADVISORS**

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**Independent Auditors' Report**

To the Board of directors of  
**First Nations Schools Association**

*Opinion*

We have audited the financial statements of First Nations Schools Association, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2020, and the statements of operations, change in fund balances, and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Association as at March 31, 2020, and its results of operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian Accounting Standards for Not-For-Profit Organizations (ASNPO).

*Basis for Opinion*

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

*Other Matter*

The financial statements of the Association for the year ended March 31, 2019, were audited by another auditor who expressed an unqualified opinion on those statements on August 1, 2019.

*Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with ASNPO, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.



*Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements*

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- ◆ Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- ◆ Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal control.
- ◆ Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- ◆ Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditors' report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditors' report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- ◆ Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

*Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements*

As required by the Society Act of British Columbia, we report that, in our opinion, the accounting principles used in preparing and presenting the Association's financial statements are in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and have been applied on a consistent basis.

*Reid Hurst Nagy Inc.*

REID HURST NAGY INC.  
CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS

RICHMOND, B.C.  
NOVEMBER 11, 2020

# FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION As at March 31, 2020

	2020	2019
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Cash	\$ 636,495	\$ 492,527
Accounts receivable	-	1,700
GST/HST receivable	15,363	15,000
Prepaid expenses	23,943	14,954
	<b>\$ 675,801</b>	<b>\$ 524,181</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Unearned revenue	\$ -	\$ 74,820
Due to First Nation Education Steering Committee Society (Note 3)	99,983	13,573
	<b>99,983</b>	<b>88,393</b>
<b>FUND BALANCES</b>		
Restricted Fund (Schedule 1)	190,147	98,890
Unrestricted Fund (Schedule 2)	385,671	336,898
<b>FUND BALANCES</b>	<b>575,818</b>	<b>435,788</b>
	<b>\$ 675,801</b>	<b>\$ 524,181</b>

APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

 \_\_\_\_\_, President

 \_\_\_\_\_, Treasurer

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements

# FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS For the year ended March 31, 2020

	2020 Budget	2020 Actual	2019 Actual
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Indigenous Services Canada - BCTEA, transfer from First Nations Education Steering Committee Society	\$ 435,400	\$ 435,400	\$ 435,400
Conference registration fees	150,000	152,000	166,200
ArtStarts contributions	24,820	24,820	28,820
Membership fees	15,000	15,150	17,723
Annual general meeting vendors' table income	8,500	9,860	8,740
Interest income	9,000	12,640	8,655
Miscellaneous	15,000	20,303	16,502
	657,720	670,173	682,040
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Advisory services	15,000	8,202	18,767
Annual general meeting catering	200,000	184,623	189,925
Artists in education program	34,000	34,000	34,600
Bank charges and interest	-	-	160
Directors' costs	97,890	68,854	61,305
Insurance	2,500	2,275	2,275
Materials and supplies	25,500	19,629	25,539
Principals short courses	70,000	64,000	59,349
Professional fees	40,200	11,462	34,704
Representative travel	125,000	72,749	98,572
Research projects	73,200	19,451	-
Speakers	35,000	44,898	12,274
	718,290	530,143	537,470
<b>ANNUAL EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	\$ (60,570)	\$ 140,030	\$ 144,570

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements

## FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

### STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES For the year ended March 31, 2020

	Restricted	Unrestricted	2020 Total	2019 Total
<b>FUND BALANCES, BEGINNING OF THE YEAR</b>	\$ 98,890	\$ 336,898	\$ 435,788	\$ 291,218
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	91,257	48,773	140,030	144,570
<b>FUND BALANCES, END OF THE YEAR</b>	\$ 190,147	\$ 385,671	\$ 575,818	\$ 435,788

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements

# FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended March 31, 2020

	2020	2019
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
ANNUAL EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$ 140,030	\$ 144,570
Change in non-cash operating working capital		
Accounts receivable	1,700	(1,530)
Contributions receivable	-	3,000
GST/HST receivable	(363)	1,000
Prepaid expenses	(8,989)	(10,877)
Unearned revenue	(74,820)	69,420
	<b>57,558</b>	<b>205,583</b>
<b>FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Due to First Nations Education Steering Committee Society	<b>86,410</b>	<b>(160,528)</b>
<b>INCREASE IN CASH</b>	<b>143,968</b>	<b>45,055</b>
<b>CASH, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	<b>492,527</b>	<b>447,472</b>
<b>CASH, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 636,495</b>	<b>\$ 492,527</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements

# FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

## NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2020

### 1. STATUS AND PURPOSE OF THE ASSOCIATION

First Nations Schools Association (the "Association") was incorporated under the Society Act of British Columbia on December 18, 1996. The Association registered as a charity under the Canadian Income Tax Act, effective April 1, 1998.

The Association serves First Nations schools by promoting quality education and maximizing the available resources in order to improve the quality of education of First Nations students. The Association directs its energy and resources towards supporting the work of First Nations schools in developing and implementing culturally appropriate, meaningful and high quality educational programs. The Association will work to provide a forum for networking, communication and liaison amongst First Nations schools, other educational institutes, and federal, provincial and other governments.

### 2. BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO).

#### (a) Fund Accounting

These financial statements have been prepared following the restricted fund method of accounting, where revenues are recorded in the period in which they were assessed or earned and expenditures are recorded in the period in which they became an obligation.

The First Nations Schools Association ("FNSA") operations include program delivery and administrative activities. The Association maintains the following funds in its course of operations:

- Core Projects (unrestricted fund)
- BCTEA Core & Conference (restricted fund)

#### (b) Revenue Recognition

Restricted and unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the appropriate fund when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

#### (c) Unearned revenue

Unearned revenue consists of deposits made by registrants for future conference at the date of the financial statements, is recognized as revenue when the conference are held.

#### (d) Prepaid expenses

Prepaid expenses are primarily comprised of advance payments for goods and services to be received in the next fiscal year. Prepaid expenses are recognized as expenses in the period when the goods and services are received.

#### (e) Income tax status

For income tax purposes, the Association is a non-profit organization exempt from income taxes under Section 149(1)(l) of the Canadian Income Tax Act.

#### (f) Measurement Uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. By their nature, these estimates are subject to measurement uncertainty. The effect of changes in such estimates on the financial statements in future periods could be significant. Accounts specifically affected by estimates in these financial statements are collectability of accounts receivable, and GST/HST receivable. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

# FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

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## NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS March 31, 2020

### 2. BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES, continued

#### (g) Financial Instruments

##### (i) Measurement of financial instruments

The Association initially measures its financial assets and liabilities at fair value, subsequently measures all its financial assets and financial liabilities at cost or amortized cost. The Association has not designated any financial assets or financial liabilities to be measured at fair value.

Financial assets measured at cost includes cash accounts receivable and GST/HST receivable.

Financial liabilities measured at cost includes accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

##### (ii) Impairment

For financial assets measured at cost or amortized cost, the Association determines whether there are indications of possible impairment. When there is an indication of impairment, and the Association determines that a significant change has occurred during the period in the expected timing or amount of future cash flows, a write-down is recognized in the statement of operations. A previously recognized impairment loss may be reversed to the extent of the impairment. The carrying amount of the financial asset may not be greater than the amount that would have been reported at the date of the reversal had the impairment not been recognized previously. The amount of the reversal is recognized in the statement operations.

##### (iii) Transaction costs

Transaction costs related to financial instruments that will be subsequently measured at fair value are recognized in the statement of operations in the period incurred. Transaction costs related to the financial instruments subsequently measured at amortized cost are included in the original cost of the asset or liability and recognized in net income over the life of the financial instrument using the straight-line method.

### 3. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The Association and the First Nations Education Steering Committee Society ("FNESC") are separate organizations, each with their own Board of Directors. The Association is related to FNESC pursuant to an administrative agreement whereby the Association receives administrative and financial support, including staffing and office premises, from FNESC.

Unless otherwise noted, transactions with the related party are in the normal course of business, and are recorded at the exchange amount.

# FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

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## NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS March 31, 2020

### 4. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Transactions in financial instruments may result in an entity assuming or transferring to another party one or more of the financial risks described below. The required disclosures provide information that assist users of financial statements in assessing the extent of risk related to financial instruments.

#### (a) Fair value

The fair value of current financial assets and current financial liabilities approximates their carrying value due to their short-term maturity dates. The fair value of long-term financial liabilities approximates their carrying value based on the presumption that the Association is a going concern and thus expects to fully repay the outstanding amounts.

#### (b) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that one party to a transaction will fail to discharge an obligation and cause the other party to incur a financial loss. The Association reduces its exposure to credit risk by performing credit valuations on a regular basis. In the opinion of management the credit risk exposure to the Association is low and is not material.

### 5. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

First Nations Schools Association receives a significant portion of its revenue from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) transferred from the First Nations Education Steering Committee Society (FNE SC). In the current year, 64.9% of the Association's total revenue originated from ISC (2019 - 63.9%).

### 6. SOCIETIES ACT DISCLOSURE

On November 28, 2016 the new British Columbia Societies Act came into force. Included in the New Act is a requirement to disclose the remuneration paid to all directors, the ten highest paid employees and all contractors who are paid above \$75,000 annually.

In fiscal 2020, the association had no employees earning at least \$75,000 annually (2019:nil).

During the year, \$7,500 (2019:nil) was paid to a First Nation school as a reimbursement for time provided to the Association by an employee of that First Nation school.

### 7. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization categorized COVID-19 as a pandemic. The potential economic effects within the Association's environment and in the global markets due to the possible disruptions in supply chains, and measures being introduced at various levels of government to curtail the spread of the virus (such as travel restrictions, closures of non-essential municipal and private operations, imposition of quarantines and social distancing) could have a material impact on the Association's operations.

The extent of the impact of this outbreak and related containment measures on the Association's operations cannot be reliably estimated at this time.

# FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

## SUMMARY OF OPERATING PROGRAMS For the year ended March 31, 2020

	Page	Revenue	Expenses	Excess For The Year	Beginning Fund Balances	Ending Fund Balances
BCTEA Core and Conference	9	\$ 587,400	\$ 496,143	\$ 91,257	\$ 98,890	\$ 190,147
Core Projects	10	82,773	34,000	48,773	336,898	385,671
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$ 670,173</b>	<b>\$ 530,143</b>	<b>\$ 140,030</b>	<b>\$ 435,788</b>	<b>\$ 575,818</b>



FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE  
FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

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