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# BC Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners

March 11, 2016

## Meeting Notes

BCIT Downtown Campus, 515 Hastings Street Vancouver, BC

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### PARTICIPANTS:

BC Aboriginal Training Employment and Alliance Member

- John Webster

BC Association of Institutes and Universities

- Ruth Wittenberg, President

BC Colleges

- Colin Ewart, President

First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC)

- Deborah Jeffrey, Executive Director
- Sham Pendleton, Manager of Post-Secondary Education and Training

Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA)

- Verna Billy-Minnabarriet, Chair
- Lauren Terbasket, Vice-Chair

Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

- Monica Cox, Director, First Nations Social & Cultural Policy

- Rachel Holmes, Executive Director

Ministry of Advanced Education

- Fazil Mihlar, Assistant Deputy Minister, Institutions and Programs Division
- Deb Hull, Executive Director, Teaching Universities, Institutes and Aboriginal Programs
- Fiona Cubit, Strategic Lead, Teaching Universities, Institutes and Aboriginal Programs

Ministry of Education

- Sarah Cormode, Education Officer

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training

- Viki Anderson, Director Aboriginal Relationships

Research Universities Council of BC

- Lori MacKenzie, Director, Policy & Research

### FACILITATION:

- Don Avison, Chair
- Thane Bonar, Director of Communications and Policy

### 1. Welcome and Review of Draft Agenda

Don Avison, Chair, provided a brief background of the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners (PSE Partners) table and Aboriginal post-secondary education issues in BC for the new members of the PSE Partners table.

### 2. Policy Working Group Update

Deborah Hull provided an update.

### 3. Transitions Working Group Update

Don Avison provided an update on the Transitions Working Group. It was noted that Jo Ann Archibald should be invited as a regular participant in the Partners meetings. There was considerable discussion regarding the role of Faculties of Education in increasing the number of Aboriginal teachers in the system and therefore increasing Aboriginal student transitions. It was agreed that the Chair of the Association of BC Deans of Education would be invited to a future meeting of the Partners.

Deb Hull confirmed that all public post-secondary institutions in BC accept English First Peoples 12 as the equivalent to English 12 and that a letter would be sent to all Superintendents to that effect.

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Discussion as to whether institutions would state a preference for English First Peoples 12, and regarding a mandatory First Nations course, were deferred to the Transitions Working Group.

FNESC indicated that, resources permitting, it would engage in research into what has been done internationally to increase transitions for Indigenous males.

There was discussion of the impact of Post-Secondary Student Support Program underfunding on transitions. Fazil Mihlar committed to bringing this to the attention of Intergovernmental Relations.

#### **4. Aboriginal PSE & Training Policy Framework Implementation Update**

Deborah Hull provided an update on Policy Framework Implementation. She reported that there are Aboriginal board members on 22 of the 25 public post-secondary boards and that AVED would take the lead on bringing together these Aboriginal board members.

#### **5. Ministry of Education Evergreen Announcement**

Sarah Cormode provided an update on the recent policy change regarding Evergreen Certificates. Concern was raised regarding those students already on track to an Evergreen.

#### **6. Adult Education**

A number of the partners expressed serious concerns regarding changes to adult education funding policy in the K-12 and PSE system. It was suggested that the Adult Upgrading Grant, in its present form, does not address the issue.

#### **7. Institutional Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action Survey**

Deb Hull provided an overview of the responses to the TRC Calls to Action survey carried out by AVED on behalf of the Partners Table. Next steps identified were as follows:

- Vet the report through the Vice Presidents Academic
- Determine most effective way of summarizing the general questions
- For discussion at the next meeting of the Partners Table – should the report be provided to the secretariat of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission?

#### **8. Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Decision on Blackstock case**

Don Avison provided an overview of the Blackstock decision and its implications for the post-secondary sphere.

#### **9. Reengagement of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada**

The Partners were in agreement that reengagement of the Federal Government is critical to the work of the Table. Don Avison reported that a joint letter had been sent to Minister Bennett on behalf of the two partners tables but that no response had been received. Don committed to working with Glenn Hansman to follow up with Headquarters and regional officials

**Request from First Nations Health Authority to Attend Partners meeting** Thane Bonar relayed a request from the First Nations Health Authority to attend a meeting of the PSE Partners. It was agreed that they would be invited to a future meeting as an agenda item.