

Joint BC Aboriginal K-12 and Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners Call to Action Meeting

May 1, 2015 Draft Meeting Minutes
BCIT Downtown Campus
555 Seymour Street, Vancouver

PARTICIPANTS:

Association of BC Deans of Education

- Kim Franklin, Chair ABCDE, Dean Trinity Western University
- Jo-Ann Archibald, Associate Dean, University of British Columbia

BC Association of Institutes and Universities

- Ruth Wittenberg, BCAIU President
- Ken Tourand, President of Nicola Valley Institute of Technology

BC Colleges

- Peter Nunoda, President, Vancouver Community
- Jim Reed, President of BC Colleges

BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils

- Darlene Campbell, Director BCCPAC

British Columbia Principals' and Vice Principals' Association

- DeDe DeRose, School District 73

BC Representative for Children and Youth

- Dawn Thomas-Wightman, Deputy BCRCY
- Shawn Daniels, Acting Director BCRCY

BC School Superintendents Association

- Tom Longridge, Superintendent of Schools, Campbell River School District

BC School Trustees Association

- Teresa Rezanoff, President BCSTA
- Mike Roberts, Executive Director
- Donna Sargent, Director BCSTA

BC Teachers Federation

- Christine Stewart, Director of Professional and Social Issues Division
- Moira McKenzie, Executive Director BCTF

First Nations Summit

- Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, Union of BC Indian Chiefs

First Nations Education Steering Committee

- Tyrone McNeil, President FNEESC
- Deborah Jeffrey, Executive Director FNEESC

First Nations Schools Association

- Pamela Lewis, Chair FNSA (by conference call)

Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association

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

Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

- Rachel Holmes, Executive Director

Ministry of Advanced Education

- Andrew Wilkinson, Minister
- Bobbi Plecas, Assistant Deputy Minister
- Deb Hull, Executive Director
- Fiona Cubitt, Strategic Lead
- Marissa Chan, Ministerial Assistant

Ministry of Children and Family Development

- Anne Clayton, Director

Ministry of Education

- Dave Byng, Deputy Minister
- Jennifer McCrea, Assistant Deputy Minister
- Ted Cadwallader, Director
- Laura Bickerton, Director
- Wilma Clark, Teacher Regulation Branch

Research Universities Council of BC

- Andrew Petter, Chair RUCBC, President of SFU
- Robin Ciceri, President RUCBC
- Lori McKenzie, Director RUCBC

GUESTS:

- Lisa McCullough, Superintendent of Schools, Sea to Sky School District
- Juanita Coleman, Principal Stawamus Elementary School

FACILITATION:

- Don Avison, Chair PSE Partners
- Glen Hansman, 1st Vice President BCTF, Interim Chair K-12 Partners
- Starleigh Grass, Senior Policy Analyst, FNEESC
- Naomi Adams, PSE Director, FNEESC/IAHLA

1. Welcome and Introductions

FNESC President Tyrone McNeil welcomed participants to the territory. Chairs Don Avison and Glen Hansman welcomed participants and discussed revisions to the agenda.

2. Opening Remarks

▪ **First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) President, Tyrone McNeil**

Mr. McNeil noted K-12 agreements such as the Tripartite Education Framework Agreement, and called for First Nations to be a greater part of the conversation in post-secondary education. Mr. McNeil also noted the absence of the Federal Government at the meeting.

▪ **Minister of Advanced Education, Andrew Wilkinson**

Minister Wilkinson recognized the territory, acknowledged the tenth anniversary of the Aboriginal PSE Partners Memorandum of Understanding, and gave update on implementation of the Aboriginal policy framework. He noted that despite progress, more is needed to reach targets and increase the success of Aboriginal learners.

▪ **Research Universities Council of BC Chair, Simon Fraser University President Andrew Petter**

President Petter highlighted progress that has been made, such as the LE, NONET project at the University of Victoria. He called for an expansion of the Aboriginal Service Plan initiative.

▪ **BC Colleges Chair, Vancouver Community College President Peter Nunoda**

President Nunoda noted that colleges are an entry point for students into post-secondary, and on the frontlines of implementing BC's Skills for Jobs Blueprint. He reiterated calls for an expansion of the Ministry's Aboriginal Service Plan initiative.

▪ **BC Association of Institutes and Universities, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology President Ken Tourand**

President Tourand stated that post-secondary institutions need to take programs into First Nations communities, mentioning an NVIT program offered in community that transfers to the University of the Fraser Valley, and Vancouver Island University hosting a conference on Indigenous higher education in June.

▪ **Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association Vice Chair, En'owkin Centre Executive Director Lauren Terbasket**

Ms. Terbasket explained that IAHLA institutes are facing severe funding shortfalls due to changes to the federal Post-Secondary Partnerships Program, Nominal roll funding, and other program funding. En'owkin Centre has cut six positions, despite having partnerships with four public institutions and many different funders. She called for recognition of IAHLA institutes and increased access to funding.

▪ **First Nations Leadership Council, Union of BC Indian Chiefs Grand Chief Stewart Phillip**

Grand Chief Phillip stated Aboriginal people need to be included in all parts of the workforce, including engineers and business leaders. He also called for more rigorous standards in K-12.

▪ **First Nations Education Steering Committee Executive Director, Deborah Jeffrey**

Ms. Jeffrey observed that jurisdiction negotiations are stalled and negotiations to renew the Tripartite Education Framework Agreement have not started. She reiterated the importance of the Aboriginal PSE Policy Framework, and called for an inter-ministerial committee on Aboriginal education, referencing commitments in the New Relationship and Transformative Change Accord.

3. Presentation from Sea to Sky School District No. 48

Lisa McCullough, Superintendent of Schools and Juanita Coleman, Principal of Stawamus Elementary School in Sea to Sky School District No. 48 gave a presentation on the School District's initiatives to better serve Aboriginal students, which resulted in the graduation rate for Aboriginal students increasing from 35% to 81%. They investigated why students were not attending school, and came up with creative solutions such as an on reserve outreach program and educating every student in the school district on Aboriginal history and culture. The approach also tracks the progress of individual students and gathers feedback from groups of students.

4. Perspectives from Partners

- **Ministry of Education, Deputy Minister Byng**

Deputy Minister Byng joined the meeting in the afternoon. He expressed support for the ongoing work in Aboriginal education with the Partners and FNEESC.

- **Partner Discussion**

Facilitated by the Chairs, the Partners discussed issues and priorities for the year ahead, including:

- Consideration of a joint MOU of the K-12 and PSE Partners
- Engaging Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
- Need for strategy to combat racism against Aboriginal students in education systems
- Student transitions
- Increasing the number of Aboriginal teachers
- Funding for First Nations students and Aboriginal post-secondary institutes

During the meeting, FNEESC and IAHLA received news of funding cuts from AANDC for IAHLA, FNEESC Post-Secondary and the First Nations Early Childhood Development Council's budgets. It was agreed that FNEESC would provide briefing materials on these cuts for Partners.

5. Aboriginal Education Report from the Office of the Auditor General

This report has not yet been released, and is expected in the fall of 2015.

6. Shaping Priorities for the Year Ahead and Closing

The Partners discussed priorities for the year ahead. Suggestions included:

- Development of a strategy for engaging the Federal Government,
- Reinvigorating jurisdiction negotiations and preparing for TEFA negotiations
- Increasing accountability in K-12 system (school leaving certificates)
- Supporting transitions from K-12 into post-secondary
- Addressing funding cuts to FNEESC post-secondary and IAHLA
- Funding for Aboriginal institutes, including PSPP and community-based delivery of post-secondary education
- Accessing gap resulting from inadequate funding for First Nations post-secondary students
- Improving data
- Discussion regarding renewal of the MOUs
- Joint strategy on racism

It was agreed that a draft of the top priorities would be developed for discussion and input after the meeting.