

British Columbia Indigenous Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners

Terms of Reference

The following Terms of Reference may be amended by the Partners as required from time to time.

Context

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Indigenous post-secondary education and training was signed by the members on March 11, 2005. The MOU stated the signatories' intention to work together within the mandates of their respective organizations to build on the progress to date to improve success of Indigenous learners in British Columbia. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions as affirmed in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and as a fundamental aspect of their inherent right of self-government recognized by Canada and British Columbia pursuant to section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. In recognition of these rights, the signatories are committed to strengthening relationship-building as Indigenous education and training evolves in British Columbia.

Definition

The term "Indigenous" is used in this document and it is intended to be inclusive of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, status, non-status, reserve and off-reserve peoples and may be used to include their respective agencies and representative organizations.

Vision

The Partners will work collectively to achieve the systemic change required to improve participation and success for Indigenous learners in post-secondary education and training in British Columbia.

Mission

In order to improve Indigenous learner access and success in post-secondary education and training, the Partners will work together to:

- identify opportunities for information sharing
- identify and advance priority issues for action
- develop collaborative projects
- seek to evaluate progress on mutual goals

Purpose

The Partners Group was established to:

- Serve as a forum for shared learning and identification of common issues and opportunities for action, and where appropriate, to undertake collaborative

projects and initiatives to work toward Indigenous Post-Secondary Education and Training access and success.

- Facilitate information sharing and networking and provide a forum for creative, solution-oriented discussion.
- Share results, successes and challenges of each organization in order to learn from each other.
- Foster working relationships between participants to better facilitate understandings and promote effective and appropriate opportunities, action and practical outcomes.
- Provide recommendations and advice to their respective organizations, create strategies and inform decision-makers.

It is anticipated that this section will be expanded or further developed to over time.

Considerations

- The members agree that they are not playing a formal advisory role, or have program management responsibility or decision-making authority beyond the listed Scope of Activities in these Terms of Reference.
- Membership in this group does not create legal obligations on any individuals or organizations.
- The members will attempt to represent the views of their respective organizations.

Guiding Principles

The Partners will work together respecting the following guiding principles:

- Focusing on the success of Indigenous learners in British Columbia.
- Utilizing a collaborative team approach to their work through transparency and openness in their communications.
- Recognizing and respecting the diversity among Indigenous communities and organizations and the differing mandates and resources that individual members bring to the table.

Scope of Activities

To support Indigenous Post-Secondary education and training, the work will focus on:

- Information-sharing on events, policies, statistics, and activities of interest to the members;
- Discussion of key issues and identification of challenges;
- Discussion of potential resources, opportunities and solutions for addressing identified challenges;
- Each member is responsible for regular reporting out to member organizations and soliciting information to bring to the Partners Group;

- Promoting success stories and best practices; and
- Sharing information and/or working with the Education Partners and other relevant groups as appropriate.
- Undertaking collaborative projects and initiatives that contribute to the Key Priorities.
- Assigning the management of any resources received for collaborative projects and initiatives to one or more Partner organization(s) to manage, without an administration fee. An unaudited financial statement for these funds will be provided to the Partners Group at quarterly meetings.

Membership

- Association of BC Deans of Education (ABCDE)
- BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN)
- BC Colleges
- British Columbia Aboriginal Training Employment Alliance Members (BCATEAM)
- British Columbia Association of Institutes and Universities (BCAIU)
- Department of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)
- First Nations Public Service Secretariat (FNPSS)
- First Nations Summit (FNS)
- First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNEESC)
- Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA)
- Métis Nation BC (MNBC)
- Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR)
- Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training(AEST)
- Ministry of Education (MEd)
- Research Universities' Council of BC (RUCBC)
- Service Canada

From time to time, student/youth representatives may be invited to participate.

Other organizations may be invited to attend as observers if agreed upon by the Partners.

Members will be added as appropriate from time to time. Organizations wishing to become members are asked to submit a proposal outlining reasons for joining and contribution they intend to make, to the Partners Group for discussion and approval.

Members may decide to form Working Groups to focus on particular projects or issues.

Meetings

- The group will meet quarterly, or as required.
- Working Group meetings will be held as required.
- Meeting locations and chairing may rotate between members as agreed.
- First Nation Education Steering Committee (FNESC) is responsible for the overall meeting coordination and secretariat role.

Chair

The principal role and responsibilities of the Chair are to:

- Assist with the preparation of the agenda for Partners meetings;
- Attend and facilitate Partners meetings and working group meetings; and
- Identify, monitor, and support the advancement of the Partner's priorities in order to advance post-secondary education in BC.
- Attend working group meetings when required.

Vice Chair

The principal role and responsibilities of the Vice Chair are to:

- Attend and contribute to Partners meetings;
- Carry out other duties as agreed to by the Partners;
- Complete any of the Chair Duties when required; and
- Fill the role of the Chair until a new Chair is appointed, if the Chair steps down.

The Vice-Chair will be selected by recommendation of the Chair and upon agreement of the PSE Partners.

Resources

- There are no new financial resources for the Partners Group; activities will be supported through in-kind contributions. This does not restrict the ability of the Partners to collectively seek resources and/or apply for special project funding.
- Travel expenses to participate in meetings or events will be covered by the individual members.
- Student travel, where required, will be covered by the inviting Partner organization.
- Organizations attending as observers are responsible for their own travel expenses.

Evaluation of Outcomes

- The Partners will prepare a report on a regular basis as determined by the Partners outlining their accomplishments and outcomes.
- The Partners will periodically evaluate their collective effectiveness at identifying issues, addressing challenges and promoting action.

Conflict Resolution

- In the event of a conflict, the Partners will endeavor to seek a compromise that allows for consensus of action
- If no compromise can be reached, the Partners will postpone or cancel the proposed action.