

Post-Secondary Education Coordinator Workshops

Fall/Winter 2023-2024



Recognition of the Territory

Welcome

- We are pleased that you are joining for our Post-Secondary Education (PSE) Coordinator Workshop today.
- Your input informs all our work and our collective efforts. Thank you for participating!

Workshop Materials

- Sign-in Sheet: please sign in to ensure you will be reimbursed
- Binder: Agenda, Kit and Handouts, Event Evaluation Form, and Travel claim Form
- The E-Kit can be accessed through the link emailed to you, upon request.
- Feedback Workbook:
 - \$75 prize draw
 - Door Prizes
- Please note travel claims:
 - Claims must be returned by mail within 30 days to Cathy Zhang, Administrative Assistant (email pseadmin@fnesc.ca if you have questions).
 - One person per community can claim travel/accommodation expenses.

Health Protocols

- For the health and safety of participants and staff, a number of communicable disease prevention protocols are in place that we ask you to observe:
 - Participants who are feeling unwell should not attend the event.
 - Lunch will be served at noon. We ask that participants do their best to avoid over-crowding while lining up for lunch.
 - Unfortunately, friends and family cannot join the event at any time, including for meals.
- Personal protective equipment (mask, sanitizer, wipes) are available at the registration desk.
- On-site FNEESC staff can support you with any questions or concerns.

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Recent Developments in First Nations Post-Secondary Education
3. Student Data
4. Post Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) and University and College Entrance Partnership Program (UCEPP) Administration
5. Overview of Provincial Programs and Initiatives
6. Final Remarks/Next Steps

Are there any additions to the agenda?



FNESC Post-Secondary Education

About FNEESC

- FNEESC is committed to supporting First Nations in their efforts to improve the success of all First Nations students in BC. FNEESC currently has 130 Board members.
- FNEESC's PSE work is informed by the Post-Secondary Subcommittee (PSSC), and supported by FNEESC's partnerships with the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) and a range of other organizations

FNESC PSE Advocacy, Services and Supports

Current areas of focus for FNESC's PSE research and advocacy include:

- Development of a regional, BC First Nations Tripartite Post-Secondary Education Model.
- Advocacy for increased funding, reduced reporting, and greater First Nation control of student funding.
- Ongoing core-operational funding for First-Nations-mandated institutes.
- Equitable, First Nations-driven community-based delivery of PSE programming.
- Funding for BC First Nation post-secondary language programming, in particular the Indigenous Language Fluency/Proficiency Degree
- Mechanisms for supporting joint decision-making between public post-secondary institutes and First Nations.
- Full funding for former children and youth in care to access post-secondary.
- Indigenous teacher recruitment, retention, and deployment.

FNESC Post-Secondary Subcommittee Membership

- FNESC has a 5-member Post Secondary Committee (PSSC) appointed for a 2-year term by the FNESC Board.
- Current members of the PSSC are:
 - Paul Wick, Squamish Nation
 - Kendra Underwood, W̱SÁNEĆ School Board
 - Debbie Moore, Kitselas First Nation
 - Marcia Robinson, Gitxaala Nation
 - Rachel Lulua, Xeni Gwet'in First Nations Government

FNESC Post-Secondary Subcommittee Membership, cont'd

The work of the FNESC post-secondary subcommittee includes:

- Informing work on the development of BC First Nations Tripartite Post Secondary Education Model.
- Advising on FNESC's engagement with First Nations communities on matters related to the Model and other post-secondary education and training initiatives.
- Providing expertise and advise on FNESC's post-secondary resources and supports First Nations communities.
- Supporting the sharing of relevant information with First Nations communities on post-secondary education and training policies and programs.

The Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) Board

IAHLA supports and represents Aboriginal controlled adult and post secondary education institutes in British Columbia. The Board is made up of the following members:

- Tracey Kim Bonneau, Chair, Kootenay/Okanagan
- Cathy Warren, Vice-Chair, Kaska/Dene/Tahitian/Tagish/Inland Tlingit
- Priscilla Michell, Treasurer, Gitksan/Wet'suwet'en
- Dr. Louise Lacerte, Secretary, Tsilhqotin/Carrier/Tse'kene
- Kendra Underwood, Director at Large,
- Nancy Seward, Coast Salish/Island
- Nadine Pascal, Coast Salish/Mainland/Lower St'atl'imc
- Bonita Wallas, Kw'akwaka'wakw/Heiltsuk/Nuxalk/Owee keno
- Dr. John Chenowith, Secwepemc/St'at'imc/Nlaka-pamux
- Dr. Deanna Nyce, Haida/Tsimshian/Haisla/Nisga'a

Post-Secondary Support and Services

- FNEESC Post Secondary Education Resource Line provides information related to administering Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) and University and College Entrance Program (UCEPP) funding.
- Resource Line:
604 866-3409 ext. 198
Toll Free: 1 877 280 4151
pse@fnesc.ca

Aboriginal Learning Links

The Aboriginal Learning Links website provides resources and tools to help Indigenous post-secondary students with:

- Planning their Education
- Bursaries and Scholarships
- On Campus Services
- Housing
- Child Care
- Supports for Former Children and Youth in Care

See: www.aboriginallearning.ca





Context and Recent Developments in First Nations PSE



United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

- First Nations have unique, constitutionally recognized rights that include post-secondary education.
- Both Canada and BC have made a commitment to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration)
- Article 14 of the UN Declaration states:
 - 1) "Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning."
 - 2) "Indigenous individuals particularly children have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination."
 - 3) "States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language."



Federal UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act

- The federal government passed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (UNDA) in June 2021.
- This requires the development of an action plan to ensure that the objectives of the UN Declaration are met.
- The UNDA Action Plan was publicly released on June 22, 2023.
- FNEESC presented three recommendations for inclusion in the UNDA Action plan to the First Nations Leadership Council on January 20, 2023, which were formally submitted to the federal government.

UNDA Recommendation 1: Regionalization of Guidelines

- **FNESC Recommendation 1:** “All federal education programs, policies, guidelines, and funding must be regionalized, as set out in national First Nations Policy Proposals and reiterated through the development and implementation of regional First Nations education agreements. This is consistent with First Nations control of First Nations education.”
- This recommendation was not accepted by the federal government. Instead, the UNDA Action Plan includes “Regional Considerations” as a guiding principle, which states that “implementation of new First Nations education policy and funding approaches will take into account region-specific knowledge and realities, including consultation at the local and regional levels, to maximize action plan measures’ positive impact across the country.”
- FNESC is concerned that the existing language included in the UNDA Action Plan is vague. We will continue to advocate for the regionalization of federal education programs, policies, guidelines, and funding.

UNDA Recommendation 2: Post-Secondary Student Funding

- **FNESC Recommendation 2:** “Consistent with rights affirmed in articles 13, 14 and 21 of the UN Declaration, Indigenous Services Canada work on an urgent basis with First Nations in each region to determine funding needs and increase investment in the Post-Secondary Education Student Support Program and the University and College Entrance Preparation Program as well as to develop BC-specific policies and guidelines for the funding. At the recent March 10, 2023, provincial meeting of 120 First Nations representatives, 97% of participants indicated increased funding for post-secondary students was a high priority.”

UNDA Recommendation 2: Post-Secondary Student Funding, cont'd

- This recommendation was not accepted by the federal government, despite a goal of the action plan being to ensure that “Indigenous peoples enjoy the equal right to education, including post-secondary education, with necessary funding and supports and have access when possible, to education in Indigenous languages and cultures.”
- FNEESC will continue to advocate to implement this recommendation.

UNDA Recommendation 3: BC-Specific Capital Model for First Nations Schools

- **FNESC Recommendation 3:** “First Nations must be supported with the development of regional models and the identification of regional funding needs for First Nations school capital, and First Nations and Canada must co-develop a request for increased funding for First Nations school capital that reflects the unique regional needs and priorities of their learners and communities. BCAFN, First Nations Summit, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs have all passed resolutions supporting a BC-specific funding model for First Nations schools.”
- This recommendation was not adopted within the UNDA action plan.
- FNESC will continue to advocate for the development of a regional capital model to meet the unique needs of BC First Nations schools.



BC Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan

Declaration Act Action Plan

- On November 26, 2019, Bill 41 - Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act was passed unanimously in the BC Legislature.
- The legislation requires the alignment of BC's laws with the UN Declaration and an action plan prepared and implemented in consultation and cooperation with First Nations.
- On March 30, 2022, the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR) published the final Declaration Act Action Plan, which includes 9 actions specific for K-12 education and 5 actions specific for post-secondary education.

Declaration Act Action Plan – PSE

- The following are a list of actions pertaining to post-secondary education in the Action Plan:
 - Action 1.8: Recognize the integral role of Indigenous-led post-secondary institutes as a key pillar of B.C.'s post-secondary system through the provision of core funding, capacity funding and the development of legislation. This includes institutes mandated by First Nations, as well as a Métis post-secondary institute being developed by Métis Nation BC.

Declaration Act Action Plan – PSE, cont'd

- Action 1.9: Work with the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, and the Urban Native Youth Association to codevelop an urban Indigenous centre that supports the childcare, housing and post-secondary needs of Indigenous learners, and strengthen the capacity of the Native Education College to provide culturally relevant post-secondary opportunities for urban Indigenous learners.
- Action 4.2: Develop and implement an effective recruitment and retention strategy to increase the number of Indigenous teachers in the K-12 public education system.

Declaration Act Action Plan – PSE, cont'd

- Action 4.5: Co-develop a policy framework for Indigenous post-secondary education and skills training that includes:
 - supporting post-secondary institutions to be more culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners and communities;
 - expanding the Aboriginal Service Plan program to all 25 public post-secondary institutions;
ensuring that Indigenous learners have access to student housing that is safe, inclusive, and enables them to thrive personally, academically, and culturally;
 - developing mechanisms for First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners and communities to play an integral role in public post-secondary institutions' decision-making; and
 - identifying legislative amendments needed to ensure all public post-secondary institution boards include at least one Indigenous person.

Declaration Act Action Plan – PSE, cont'd

- Action 4.18: As committed to in the First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol, co-develop and implement measures to support improved education outcomes of current and former First Nation children and youth in care, including meaningful data collection to inform policy planning and service delivery.
- Action 4.29: Establish an Indigenous-led working group to develop a strategy for the revitalization of Indigenous languages in B.C., including potential legislative supports.

Declaration Act Action Plan – PSE, cont'd

- Action 4.30: Support Indigenous language revitalization through sustainable funding.
- Action: 4.41: Work with First Nations, Métis chartered communities and urban Indigenous organizations to provide funding for self-determined, community-led programs for Indigenous Peoples to upgrade skills, obtain credentials, secure employment, and develop and support community economies.

Core and Capacity Funding and Legislation for First Nations-Mandated Institutes

- For many years, IAHLA and FNEESC have advocated for the recognition of the critical role of First Nations-mandated institutes BC's post-secondary system through the development of legislation and provision of ongoing core and capacity funding for these institutes.
- The majority of these institutes rely on annual proposal-based funding to deliver programming, putting them in jeopardy of closure at any time.
- In March 2021, as part of year end funding, the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills provided \$4 million in one-time core-funding for 2021-22. In March 2022, the Ministry once again provided \$4 million in one-time core funding for 2022-23.
- FNEESC, working with IAHLA and the Ministry, administered this funding to institutes that met eligibility criteria.

Core and Capacity Funding and Legislation for First Nations-Mandated Institutes, cont'd

- Ongoing core and capacity funding under the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan for eligible First Nations-mandated institutes was secured.
- However, this funding is not adequate to supporting and expanding the First Nations institutes sector.
- FNEESC and IAHLA continue to work with the Ministry through a First Nations-specific Policy and Legislation Table to advance the legislation committed under Action 1.8.

Indigenous Language Fluency Degree

- For over a decade, FNEESC and IAHLA worked in partnership with a group of public post-secondary institutes, First Nations institutes and First Nations to develop a framework for a degree program in a First Nations language that would lead to the creation of fluent speakers.
- The Indigenous Language Fluency Degree Framework was completed in 2018.
- In keeping with DRIPA Action Plan, FNEESC has continued to advance this important work through the provision of funding to support the implementation of the framework.

Indigenous Language Fluency Degree

- In March 2019, FNEESC received \$2 million from the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills to support the implementation of the framework.
- In 2022, FNEESC received an additional \$1.5 million which was distributed to six First Nations and First Nations institutes developing and delivering programming aligning with the framework.
- An additional \$1 million per year over three years to support the implementation Indigenous Language Fluency Degree Framework was secured under the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan.
- FNEESC and IAHLA have raised that this falls significantly short of the funding required to support existing programs delivering the Framework and onboard other First Nations that may be interested in participating in this initiative continue to advocate for more resources to support its implementation.

Bachelor of Nsyilxcn Language Fluency

- In June 2023, first cohort to complete the Bachelor of Nsyilxcn Language Fluency had their graduation ceremony. They were also the first cohort of students to complete the full degree program under the framework.
- Two more language fluency degrees, the Bachelor of Nt̓eʔkepmx Language Fluency and the Bachelor of St'át'imc Language Fluency Degree, have received Ministerial approval. The final two years of the program commenced in the Fall of 2023 at UBC Okanagan.
- Other First Nations are interested in implementing this program.

External Review of Anti-Indigenous Racism in the PSE/K-12 System

- Public post-secondary campuses and BC public schools continue to fall short of providing First Nations students with safe, welcoming and nurturing learning environments.
- The racism of low expectations is evident in the data on Aboriginal learner outcomes in the *How are we Doing Report* and *Aboriginal Learners in BC Public Post-Secondary System Report* (included your kit).
- Action 3.3 under the Declaration Act Action Plan commits the province to “conduct an external review of Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination in the provincial public education system, and create a strategy, including resources and supports, to address findings.”
- Funding to support action 3.3 was secured by the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills under the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan.

Indigenous Teacher Recruitment and Retention

- Approximately 5,500 Indigenous teachers are needed to be proportional with the number of Indigenous students in BC public schools.
- Only about 500 Indigenous teachers are working in BC (BC Teachers' Federation estimate), and approximately 85 Indigenous students are completing BC teacher education programs each year, which is insufficient to meet the need.
- Barriers to Indigenous teacher recruitment and retention identified in research include: the need for Indigenous teachers in all subjects, not just First Nations Language and Culture positions; racism and discrimination during pre-service training and in the school system; and a lack of data on the percentage of teachers in BC who are Indigenous.

Indigenous Teacher Recruitment and Retention, cont'd

- Limited funding to support action 4.2 was secured under the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan. FNEESC is advocating that this funding be used to support community-based delivery of teacher education programs.
- FNEESC is working with the Ministries of Education and Child Care, and Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills to develop an Indigenous teacher recruitment and retention strategy.

First Nation former Children/Youth in Care

- In May 2020 the First Nations Children and Youth in Care (CYIC) Protocol was signed by FNEC, the First Nations Leadership Council, The Ministry of Education and Child Care (MECC), the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSFS), and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).
- This aligns with Action 4.18 of the DRIPA Action Plan which states that, “As committed to in the First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol, co-develop and implement measures to support improved education outcomes of current and former First Nation children and youth in care, including meaningful data collection to inform policy planning and service delivery.”

First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol Work Plan

- The Protocol commits the signed parties to work together in order to advance and improve the education experiences and outcomes for First Nations children and youth in care, or formerly in care.
- A technical working table has drafted a terms of reference and a work plan that includes clear timelines and processes for work under the Protocol.
- The draft terms of reference and work plan will be presented to the Oversight Committee, comprised of three ministers and the First Nations Leadership Council for review and approval.

Provincial Tuition Waiver Program

- The Provincial Tuition Waiver Program waives tuition fees for former children and youth in care students studying full- or part-time in an eligible undergraduate program at a B.C. public post-secondary institution.
- The draft First Nations CYIC Protocol Work Plan includes improved access for students to the Provincial Tuition Waiver program by expanding the eligibility criteria.

Provincial Tuition Waiver Program

- As part of the Future Ready Plan, the Province removed the requirement that eligible students must be between 19-26 years of age.
- Under the new criteria, students must
 - ✓ Be studying full or part time at an undergraduate level at a BC public post-secondary institution, Native Education College or one of 10 approved union-based trades-training providers;
 - ✓ Have been adopted through the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) or Indigenous Child and Family Service Agency (ICFSA); or
 - ✓ Be formerly in the BC Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction Child in Home of Relative Program (for any length of time); or
 - ✓ Be formerly in any B.C. MCFD or ICFSA Legal Status at the time they turn(ed) 19 or for at least 24 months (cumulative).

Provincial Tuition Waiver Program

- Eligible students must submit an application through the financial aid office of the post-secondary institution they are attending.
- The application can be found at <https://studentaidbc.ca/explore/grants-scholarships/provincial-tuition-waiver-program>
- FNEESC continues to advocate for more flexible eligibility requirements that better meet the needs of this population, including the removal of the time in care requirement, as well as full supports for former youth in care.

Post-Secondary Partnerships Program

- The Post-Secondary Partnerships Program (PSPP) supports First Nations and First Nations established post-secondary institutes in delivering community-based programming.
- FNEESC has received the following provincial and federal funding for PSPP:
 - 2020-21: \$5 million from the Ministry of Post Secondary Funding and Future Skills(PSFS) and \$2.2 million from ISC
 - 2021-22: \$2.3 million from ISC
 - 2022-23: \$3.5 million from PSFS and \$2.3 million from ISC
 - 2023-24: \$2.3 million(ISC PSPP) and \$1.3 million (ISC ABE)
- The administration of both provincial and federal funding through a BC-specific, First Nations-led approach aligns with the vision of the community-based program delivery pillar of the BC PSE Model.

Post-Secondary Partnerships Program, cont'd

- 2023-24 is the fourth year that FNEESC is administering the PSPP in BC.
- FNEESC launched its 2023-24 Call for Proposals in January 2023 for projects to be delivered from May 2023 to May 30, 2024. Proposals were due March 31, 2023.
- Initially, \$6.3 million was available through this Call, meaning there was not enough funding to support all proposals approved by the PSPP Review Committee.
- Adult education investments recently confirmed from ISC resulted in FNEESC now having the funding necessary to support all approved proposals.
- This is the first year that FNEESC has received more proposals than funding available.

Adult Education

- First Nations communities offer Adult Education through the adult nominal roll or adult basic education in partnership with a public post-secondary institution.
- In 2021, FNEESC worked with First Nations across Canada through the Assembly of First Nations, on a federal PSE Policy Proposal requesting funding and the necessary authorities to negotiate, conclude and fully implement First Nations led local, regional and Treaty-based post-secondary education models.
- This Policy Proposal included the following commitment for “**a regional allocation methodology, as determined by First Nations to meet the unique needs of adult learners in each region**”.

Adult Education, cont'd

ISC, however announced a different approach for this investment.

- \$40 million of the new investment has been allocated directly for First Nations that have a treaty or self-government agreement.
- Of the remaining \$310 million, approximately \$200 million will be used to expand Nominal Roll funding to regions that are not currently eligible for adult education funding through ISC's Elementary and Secondary Program
- The remaining \$110 million will be allocated regionally using a base-plus-per-capita allocation formula to support “expansion activities” in addition to Nominal Roll funding.

Adult Education, cont'd

- In response to concerns raised by First Nations, ISC has identified an additional \$35 million for BC and other regions that would have received drastically lower allocations under this approach.
- This results in BC receiving \$24.1 million over five years.
- FNEESC submitted a proposal to access BC's regional share of the Adult Education Investment funding, based on direction from the FNEESC Board.
- The proposal was not fully accepted.

Adult Education, cont'd

- This funding is to be expended as follows:
 - Funding to provide adult learners with the adaptations that are currently only available to school-aged students under BCTEA
 - Funding to be administered through the PSPP to support First Nations and their institutes in delivering adult basic education programs in partnership with public post-secondary institutes.



Student Data

Student Data Report

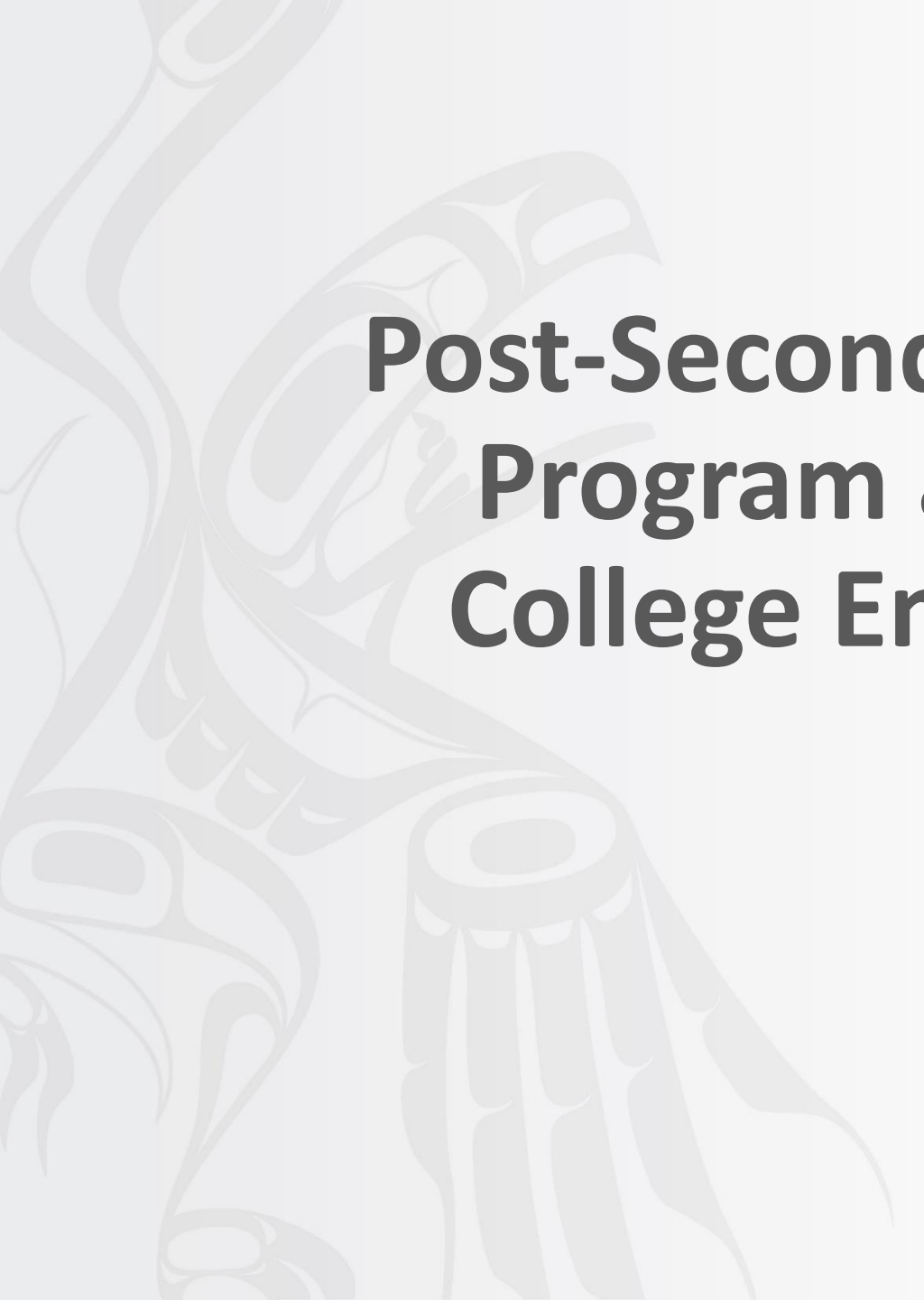
- FNEESC worked with the Ministry to jointly develop an annual baseline report on Aboriginal post-secondary education to have more regular reporting to inform policy and decision-making regarding Aboriginal students in the BC public post-secondary system. The first report was first released in 2018.
- The second Aboriginal Learners in British Columbia's Public Post-Secondary System Report was released in 2021.
- The 2021 Report includes:
 - Updated data on Indigenous learner outcomes;
 - Data intended to respond to calls from First Nations for data on Indigenous student retention and former children and youth in care in post-secondary;
 - Distinctions-based data; and
 - Analysis of the impact of Indigenous population growth on student enrollment.

Student Data Report, cont'd

- While there have been improvements in Indigenous post-secondary learner outcomes, significant work remains in order to close the educational achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners:
 - A significantly higher proportion of Aboriginal learners as compared to non-aboriginal learners (12.8% vs. 5.8%) are enrolled in the Developmental programs
 - Nearly 50% of credentials earned by Aboriginal learners are at the certificate and developmental level, compared to approximately 27% for non-Aboriginal learners.
 - Aboriginal learners are more likely than non-aboriginal learners (49.4% vs. 32%) to transition to colleges within five years of graduation and less likely to transition to research-intensive universities (15.1% vs. 33.8%).

Student Data Report, cont'd

- Aboriginal males continue to be underrepresented in the post-secondary system.
- First Nations learners as opposed to Metis and non-Aboriginal learners (66.8% vs. 57.6% vs. 54.9%) have a higher proportion of enrollment in colleges and teaching-intensive universities; however, Métis and non-Aboriginal learners (26.7%) vs. 25.9%) are more likely to attend research-intensive universities than First Nations learners (14.1%).
- These statistics underscore the need for shared-decision making with First Nations on programs and services for First Nations learners, First Nations-led community-based programming, and a more relevant, responsive and accountable public post-secondary system, as envisioned under the BC First Nations Tripartite PSE Model.



Post-Secondary Student Support Program and University and College Entrance Preparation Program

PSSSP and UCEPP Administration

1. Overview of the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) and University and College Entrance Partnership Program (UCEPP)
2. Tools and strategies for Implementing effective local operating guidelines
3. Key sections and changes to the PSSSP/UCEPP National Program Guidelines
4. Review of application and reporting process for PSSSP/UCEPP
5. New Fiscal Relationship/10-Year Grant
6. Other supports for students

Overview: PSSSP & UCEPP

The PSSSP and UCEPP are federal funding programs operated by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and administered by First Nations communities.

- PSSSP provides financial support for First Nations students to access education opportunities at the post secondary level.
- UCEPP provides financial support for First Nations students in university and college entrance preparation programs support them in obtaining academic level required for entrance into post secondary programs.

COVID-19 PSSSP Funding

- For the last three years, the federal government has also provided emergency COVID 19 funding distributed through PSSSP/UCEPP to First Nations:
 - 2020/21: BC received \$9.8 million.
 - 2021/22: BC received \$10.2 million.
 - 2022/23: BC received \$10.1 million.
- ISC has confirmed that no additional federal COVID funding will be provided through the PSSSP/UCEPP.

Program Administration Requirement

- As set out in section 6.3 of the PSSSP/UCEPP 2023-24 National Guidelines, First Nations must meet the following minimum standards in administering PSSSP/UCEPP funding:
 - Provision, administration and distribution of funding, within the recipient's budgetary envelope, to eligible post-secondary education students as per the maximum amount payable.
 - Implementation and administration of a priority selection criteria that is publicly available.
 - Development and implementation of rules for deferring an application in situations where there are more eligible students than funds available.
 - Implementation and administration of an appeal process that is publicly available.



Tools and Strategies for Implementing Effective Local Operating Guidelines

Local Operating Guidelines

- In addition to the National Guidelines, First Nations may issue their own Local Operating Guidelines, provided that they are consistent with the terms and conditions of the PSSSP and UCEPP and the requirements set out in the national guidelines.
- The Local Operating Guidelines can be an effective tool for administering the PSSSP and UCEPP by supporting transparency and clear communication around your community's priorities, policies and processes related to funding for your students.
- Local Operating Guidelines can also support effective management of your budget and student expectations for funding, especially given that changes to the National Guidelines have resulted in more students becoming eligible.

Local Operating Guidelines, cont'd

- Wherever there is a maximum funding limit within the National Guidelines, that maximum funding limit cannot be exceeded in Local Operating Guidelines.
- Section 9 indicates that no student is automatically entitled to the maximum funding amount payable in the guidelines and the First Nation has the authority to determine which students are eligible and the amounts that will be provided to them.
- First Nations can choose to set, or to not set, their own maximums regarding any type of eligible expenses. They may even choose not to cover certain types of expenses or support certain categories of students (for example: students enrolled at private institutions).
- It is recommended that First Nations publicly inform all prospective students if funding is very limited or has already been allocated for the year.

Local Operating Guidelines, cont'd

- Recipients who choose not to issue local program guidelines must nonetheless deliver a clear application process for the students applying that includes determining their eligibility and prioritizing the allocation of the resources, as well as mentioned earlier.
- Where First Nations issue Local Operating Guidelines, it is recommended that they include the minimum program requirements under section 4 of the PSSSP/UCEPP National Guidelines.

Priority Selection Criteria: Section 8.1 of the National Guidelines

- Recognizing that many communities do not have the resources to support all students, priority selection criteria can help communities determine which applicants to fund.
- The National Guidelines include a list of potential priority selection criteria, but First Nations may develop their own.
- It is recommended that communities communicate to their students if funding is limited and that priority selection criteria will apply.

Priority Selection Criteria

- You may consider including in your Local Guidelines Operating that funding is limited and all students may not be funded:
 - *The [insert First Nation name] receives limited funding from ISC for the delivery of the PSSSP and UCEPP. In the event that there are more applications for funding than available money in the PSSSP and UCEPP budget, the selection of applicants will be based on the following priority selection criteria:*

Priority Selection Criteria, cont'd

Example of draft criteria for this section:

- Priority 1 Students who were attending PSE or high school in the most recent academic year, have successfully completed the year, and are continuing their studies.*
- Priority 2 Students who demonstrate clear academic achievement and readiness who have not previously received financial support from [insert First Nation name] for post-secondary programming.*
- Priority 3 Student who have previously completed a post-secondary credential and are returning to complete a credential at a higher level.*
- Priority 4 Students who were previously sponsored but either withdrew or were unsuccessful.*

Rules for Deferred Students

Section 8 of the National Guidelines

Your community may also consider including provisions in your Local Operating Guidelines for deferred students, such as the draft example below:

- *Deferred students are students who met all eligibility requirements for PSE support with [insert First Nation name] but were unable to be funded due to financial constraints. Deferred students will be placed on a waitlist in [the order of the priority selection criteria in section X/the order in which applications were received]. As additional funding becomes available, waitlisted students will be funded in the sequence in which they were waitlisted.*

Appeal Process

Section 8.1 of the National Guidelines

- The National Guidelines require that First Nations have a formal appeal process.
- The Appeal Process must be:
 - The appeal process must include the existence of an impartial appeal board; specific time frames for the appeal hearing to be set and for decisions to be made; and a governance process confirming that the recipient (First Nation) will abide by the appeal board's decision. It must be accessible, fair, and publicly available, and the appeal committee's ruling must be consistent with the intent of the National Guidelines.
 - There is no appeal against refusal of assistance because funds are not available.
 - The appeal committee's decision is final, and students cannot appeal to ISC if they do not agree with the committee's decision.

Appeal Process, cont'd

Example appeal process:

Where a student believes they have been unfairly denied access to post-secondary education funding opportunities by the First Nation and is convinced that the local or national guidelines are not being fairly applied to their situation, the student has the right of appeal in accordance with the following process:

- 1. The student must discuss the recommendation with the Education Department in an attempt to resolve any disagreement that may have arisen in respect of the recommendation, including disagreements regarding the application process or interpretation of a provision of the Guidelines;*

Appeal Process, cont'd

2. *Where the student and Education Department are unable to resolve the disagreement, the student may file a formal written Appeal Letter, including all relevant documents, with the [Education Committee] [Senior Administrator] of the First Nation within [20] days of the funding decision. The Appeal Letter must clearly state the reason for the appeal.*
3. *The [Education Committee] [Senior Administrator] will review and respond to the Appeal Letter within 10 business days.*
4. *If the [Education Committee] [Senior Administrator] rejects the Appeal, the student has the option of forwarding their Appeal letter to the Appeal Committee.*

Appeal Process, cont'd

5. *The Appeal Committee will review the Appeal and all related documents and information. The student will be notified in writing of the date and time of the Appeal Committee meeting at which the student's Appeal will be presented. The student will have the option of being present or having a representative there on their behalf. The student appellant should present their position directly to the Appeal Committee if attending the meeting in person. All attempts to accommodate the student to present their case will be made (i.e., an out of province student may request a conference call, or communication video conference or other electronic method compatible with the First Nation's available technology).*

Appeal Process, cont'd

6. *The appeal will then be reviewed by the Appeal Committee and a decision that is consistent with the 2023-2024 National Guidelines will be made. The decision will be final and carried out as soon as possible.*
7. *ISC will not accept appeals from students based on decisions made by [insert First Nation name].*



PSSSP/UCEPP National Guidelines: Key Sections and Changes

Changes to National Guidelines

- ISC has made some significant changes to the PSSSP/UCEPP National Guidelines over the past six years, some of which reflect changes FNEESC has advocated.
- We will be reviewing these changes in this section of the presentation.
- While the changes give communities increased flexibility in administering postsecondary funding, funding has not increased sufficiently to account for the number of students who have become eligible as result of these changes.
- Having up to date Local Operating Guidelines can be an effective tool for managing your budget and student expectations.



Eligible Students

- Overview
- Affiliated Members and the BC General List
- Considerations for Local Operating Guidelines

Eligible Students:

Section 5 of the National Guidelines

In order to be eligible for PSSSP/UCEPP, students must:

- be status First Nations (Registered Indians);
- maintain satisfactory academic standing, as determined by the recipient (the First Nation), within an eligible post-secondary institution.

Changes:

- “Satisfactory academic standing” is now defined by the First Nation (2020-21).
- The 12-month residency requirement was removed (2019-20).
- Students who had previously received support from their First Nation to complete a post-secondary-level program (certificate, diploma, degree) could not access UCEPP; this was removed (2018-19).

Eligible Students

Example of draft criteria for this section:

- *The [insert First Nation name] can only provide funding support for eligible students as described in these local operating guidelines.*
- *Eligible students are members of [insert First Nation name], who are enrolled in an eligible program offered at an eligible institution (as described in section 5 of the National Guidelines) and maintain satisfactory academic standing.*

Eligible Students: Satisfactory Academic Standing

Given that satisfactory academic standing is now determined by the First Nation rather than the student's post-secondary institution, you may consider specifying your First Nation's definition of satisfactory academic standing or simply stating that the student must be in satisfactory academic standing with their institution.

Draft examples of definitions of satisfactory academic standing:

- *Satisfactory academic standing means successful completion of courses leading towards a formal credential for each period of study. Students in their first period of study are considered to have satisfactory academic standing.*
- *Satisfactory academic standing is defined as per the institution's definition of satisfactory academic standing or the most equivalent term.*

Eligible Students:

Satisfactory Academic Standing, cont'd

- *Satisfactory academic standing means achievement of an average grade of [X] for each period of study. Students in their first period of study are considered to have satisfactory academic standing.*
- *Satisfactory academic standing means successful completion with a passing grade in [insert minimum number of courses passed] in each period of study. Students in their first period of study are considered to have satisfactory academic standing.*

Eligible Students: Affiliated Members and the BC General List

- The BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) administers PSSSP/UCEPP for BC First Nation students who are registered Status Indians and:
 - do not have band membership or an affiliation with a Band (BC General List); or
 - are Status Indian students who are affiliated with a BC First Nation as indicated on their status card but do not have membership.
- These are not students who are members of your band that you do not have enough funding to support.
- Such students should apply to the BCAAFC at: education@bcaafc.com or call 250-388-5522 ext. 216, Fax: (250) 388-5502.



Eligible Programs

- Overview
- Considerations for Local Operating Guidelines

Eligible Programs:

Section 6.1 of the National Guidelines

- Under PSSSP an eligible program of studies is a program:
 - for which the completion of secondary school studies, or the equivalent as recognized by the post-secondary institution or the provincial or territorial ministry of education, is required; and
 - delivered at an eligible institution.
- Delivery method may be in-classroom, e-learning, distance learning, or virtual learning as long as it meets all eligibility criteria.
- Although not clearly mentioned in national guidelines, UCEPP programs do not have to require the completion of secondary school.
- Previously, eligible programs for PSSSP and UCEPP funding had to be at least one academic year in duration. This restriction was removed in 2018-19.

Eligible Programs: Secondary School Completion or Equivalent

ISC BC Region has confirmed that the following requirements are acceptable:

- Completion of secondary studies - having completed Grade 12 or having a Grade 12 Graduation Certificate (BC Dogwood Graduation Certificate or BC Adult Dogwood Certificate)
- Equivalent – the institute includes any of the following in the program's entrance requirements:
 - the student is able to pass an entrance test administered by the institute;
 - the student is 19 years of age;
 - the student has mature student status; or,
 - completion of Grade 12 is preferred.

Eligible Programs: Secondary School Completion or Equivalent

- Recognizing that this requirement can be challenging for admission to certain programs, ISC BC Region has been flexible in interpreting it.
- If you are unsure if a student's program meets this requirement, please contact the PSE Resource Line.

Eligible Programs: UCEPP

- UCEPP programs must provide the student with the necessary courses to attain the academic level for post-secondary institution entrance.

Changes:

- Previously, students could only receive UCEPP funding for institutions in Canada. This restriction was removed in 2018-19 and students can now access funding under UCEPP for programs based outside of Canada.
- The requirement that students provide documentation demonstrating that their UCEPP program will provide them with the academic level required for entry into a post-secondary program was removed in 2019-20. You may still consider requiring this documentation to ensure the program is supporting the student in advancing and succeeding in their academic journey.

Eligible Programs: PSSSP & UCEPP, cont'd

Example of draft criteria for this section:

- *Eligible programs are described in section 6.1 of the National Guidelines. In general, to qualify for PSSSP funding, programs must have a Grade 12 entry-level requirement (or equivalent). For UCEPP funding, the program must provide the student with the necessary courses to attain the academic level for university or college entrance. Please review the National Guidelines and speak with the [insert First Nation name here] Education Department to determine if the program in which you are hoping to enroll meets the eligibility requirements as required by ISC.*



Eligible Institutions

- Overview
- Considerations for Local Operating Guidelines

Eligible Institutions:

Section 6.2 of the National Guidelines, cont'd

- Eligible post-secondary institutions are degree, diploma or certificate granting institutions that are recognized by a province or territory in Canada or abroad.
- They include educational institutions affiliated with, or those that deliver post-secondary programs by arrangement with, a post-secondary institution, as well as First Nations designated and directed institutions.

Eligible Institutions:

Section 6.2 of the National Guidelines

In previous guidelines, ISC maintained two lists of eligible Canadian and foreign institutions that First Nations could verify institution eligibility. However, these list have both been archived and are no longer in use.

Changes:

- Under the 2023-24 PSSSP and UCEPP National Guidelines, a list of Canadian educational institutions currently recognized, authorized, registered and licensed by competent authorities in the provinces and territories of Canada is available through the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials webpage at: [https://www.cicic.ca/868/search the directory of educational institutions in canada.canada](https://www.cicic.ca/868/search%20the%20directory%20of%20educational%20institutions%20in%20canada.canada)
- For foreign institutions, “the student needs to contact the admissions department at the institution to ensure the internationally earned credentials are recognized in Canada. The student will be required to provide this documentation.”

Eligible Institutions, cont'd

- Although not clearly stated in the 2023-24 PSSSP/UCEPP National Guidelines, ISC has confirmed that First Nations may now refer to Employment and Social Development Canada's (ESDC) List of Designated Institutions to verify institution eligibility. The ESDC list of foreign institutions can be found here: <https://tools.canlearn.ca/cslgs-scpse/cln-cln/reea-mdl/reea-mdl-1-eng.do?nom-name=inter>
- If you are unsure if an institute is eligible, please contact the PSE Resource Line.
- If you would like to have an institute added to ISC's Education Information System for the purpose of reporting, please contact Laura Langs at ISC (laura.langs@sac-isc.gc.ca).

Eligible Institutions, cont'd

Example of draft criteria for this section:

- *Eligible post-secondary institutions are described in Section 6.2 of the National Guidelines as degree, diploma, or certificate granting institutions which are:*
 - *Recognized by a government (in Canada or abroad); or*
 - *Educational institutions recognized to deliver post-secondary programs by arrangement with an eligible post-secondary institution.*
- *Before applying to a post-secondary institution, the student should check with the [insert First Nation name here] Education Department to determine if the institution is eligible according to the PSSSP/UCEPP National Guidelines and [insert First Nation name]'s local operating guidelines.*



Eligible Expenditure

- Overview of Eligible Expenditures
- Considerations for Local Operating Guidelines

Eligible Expenditures: Section 7 of the National Guidelines

- Eligible expenditures in the 2023-24 National Guidelines may include, **but are not limited** to the following:
 - Tuition and other student fees;
 - Initial professional certification and examination fees;
 - Books and supplies required by the student for their program of study;
 - Change: Official transcript fees (2018-19);
 - Change: Application fees (2018-19);

Eligible Expenditures:

Section 7 of the National Guidelines, cont'd

- Living expenses, including for dependents if applicable; Change: Part-time Students are now eligible for a living allowance and communities may exceed the maximums set by the Canada student loan program;
- Expenses associated with travel home, including for dependents if applicable; Change: The limit on number of return trips was removed and part-time students are eligible for travel expenses (2019-20);
- Supplemental tutorial, guidance and counseling services
- Change: Child Care, as needed (2019-20);
- Scholarships and incentives payments; and
- Administration costs (Change: cannot exceed 15% of the sub-total amount requested before administration costs).

Eligible Expenditures:

Tuition and Fees (Section 7.1.2)

- Tuition, including compulsory student fees, is an eligible expense for students attending eligible post-secondary institutions.
- Previous versions of the National Guidelines limited the amount of funding students could normally receive to the tuition rate for a similar program at the Canadian PSE institution nearest to the student's place of residence. This restriction was removed (2020-21).
- Previously, the Guidelines required students attending private or foreign PSE institutions to provide documentation identifying the most comparable program at the Canadian public institution nearest to their place of residence. This requirement was removed (2020-21).
- Tuition is typically paid to the post-secondary institution, but in exceptional circumstances it may be paid directly to the student.

Tuition and Fees, cont'd

Example of draft criteria under this section:

- *[insert First Nation name] will pay approved tuition amounts directly to the postsecondary institution upon receiving an invoice. In the case that a post-secondary institution does not bill the [insert First Nation name] directly, students are responsible for forwarding invoices directly from the institution to the [insert First Nation name] along with any necessary supporting documentation, information and deadlines.*
- *[insert First Nation name] will pay approved tuition amounts directly to the post-secondary institution upon receiving an invoice, up to \$[insert amount].*

Books and Supplies

- In addition to typical expenses like textbooks, any materials or equipment that are required for the program of study are eligible, such as specific software for a distance-learning course or steel-toe boots for a carpentry program. Sometimes this is listed in the course syllabus or calendar.
- Most programs require online research, electronic submission of assignments, etc., so if your First Nation has the resources, it may consider providing the student with support to purchase a computer.
- While there is no limit on the amount your community can spend on books and supplies you may choose to set a limit that a student can receive.
- First Nations may decide to have different amounts or rules for part-time students.

Books and Supplies, cont'd

Examples of draft criteria under this section:

- *Full-time and part-time students are eligible to receive assistance for books and supplies that are required for their program of study. Students must submit documentation demonstrating that these are required for the program of study.*
- *An allowance of \$[insert dollar amount] for books and supplies will be issued at the beginning of the school year after the course calendar and book list have been received.*
- *No book or supply expenses will be [covered] [reimbursed] without the original paid receipts. Arrangements may be made for payments to be made directly to the bookstore.*

Discussion Questions

Does your First Nation have any maximums for tuition and fees?

What maximum does your First Nation provide for students on books and supplies? How do you determine that maximum?

Eligible Expenditures: Living Allowances

Change:

- Under previous national guidelines only full-time students were eligible for a living allowance. This restriction was removed and part-time students are eligible for a living allowance (2019-20).

Given that part-time student eligibility for living allowances may increase pressures on your budget, you may consider specifying what levels of support for living allowances you are prepared to provide such students.

Your First Nation may determine whether it will offer a living allowance to part-time students.

Living Allowances, cont'd

While your First Nation may decide to use the living allowances maximums established by the Canada Student Loan Program, you may establish your own maximums living allowances for full-time and/or part-time students in accordance with your Nation's needs, priorities, and available budget.

Changes:

- The requirement that First Nations cannot exceed the Canada Student Loan Program living allowance maximums was removed (2019-20).
- The requirements on how to calculate living allowances for 2 students who are married to each was removed (2020-21).

Living Allowances, cont'd

Examples of draft criteria under this section:

- *Part-time students are eligible to receive a living allowance at an amount equal to half the living allowance they would receive as a full-time student.*
- *Part-time students are eligible to receive a living allowance at a pro-rated amount equal to the proportion of courses they are taking relative to a full-time student's. For example, if a full-time student is someone who takes four (4) courses, and the applicant is taking one (1) course, then the applicant would be eligible for a quarter of the living allowance of the full-time student.*
- *The [insert First Nation name here] is unable to provide part-time students a living allowance at this time.*

Discussion Question

Does your First Nation have maximum amounts for living allowances?

If so, how did your community determine these maximums?

Eligible Expenditures: Travel

- Travel to and from the student's ordinary place of residence is an eligible expense under the National Program Guidelines.
- Other options not requiring travel, such as taking the exam in the local school under the supervision of a teacher, may be explored to minimize travel costs.

Changes:

- Return travel by the most economical means for the student and each dependent, is no longer limited to twice per school year (2019-20). It is now up to communities to determine whether to place limits on the number of times a student can travel to and from home.
- Part-time students are now eligible to receive a travel allowance (2019-20).
- Previous versions of the Guidelines required that travel costs not exceed rates set in the National Joint Council Travel Directive. This requirement was removed (2020-21).

Travel: Considerations

- Your First Nation may determine whether it will provide funding for travel home.
- Your First Nation may decide if it will cover:
 - the actual cost of travel or up to a maximum amount;
 - the cost of travel for dependents; and
 - a maximum amount of trips per semester or academic year.
- Your First Nation may also determine what amount of travel allowance, if any, it will provide to part-time students. If your First Nations decides to provide part-time students with a travel allowance, you may determine how this amount will be calculated.

Travel, cont'd

Example of criteria under this section:

- *Full-time [and part-time] funded students who must travel from their place of ordinary residence to attend their Post-Secondary Institution are eligible to receive financial support for the cost of travel, up to a maximum of \$[insert dollar amount] per academic year. The student is also eligible to receive travel allowance for their dependents.*

Examples if you wish to have different rules for part-time students:

- *Part-time students are eligible to receive financial support for travel at a pro-rated amount equal to 50% of their travel costs if they must travel more than [X]km from their place of ordinary residence up to a maximum of \$[insert dollar amount] per academic year.*
- *The [insert First Nation name here] is unable to provide part-time students a travel allowance at this time.*

Eligible Expenditures: Child Care Services

Change: Child care services are now explicitly included under the list of potential expenditures in the National Guidelines (2019-20).

Your First Nation may determine whether or not funding will be provided for child care services and how this funding will be calculated.

As with all other eligible expenses, your First Nation is under no obligation to provide to provide funding or child care services if it does not align with your community's priorities or if you do not have enough funding.

Note: For many First Nations, amounts for childcare may already be calculated into the living allowance they provide for students with dependents.

Child Care Services, cont'd

Examples of draft criteria under this section:

- *Students are eligible to apply for financial assistance for child care, however funding for these services will only be provided depending on the [insert First Nation name]'s total post-secondary education budget for the fiscal year.*
- *Students are eligible to apply for financial assistance for child care up to a maximum of \$[dollar amount] per [semester/academic year].*

Eligible Expenditures: Scholarships and Incentives

- **Change:** Scholarships and incentives are eligible expenses under PSSSP and UCEPP, but the section on eligibility and requirements related to provision of scholarships and incentives was removed from 2019-20 National Guidelines.
- If you choose to provide scholarships or incentives, it is recommended that you:
 - Have a local process for determining who will receive scholarships and incentives.
 - Clearly explain who is eligible if scholarships are available.
 - Ensure the finance department has written documentation showing what the award was for and how that decision to allocate scholarships to students was made.

Eligible Expenditures: Maximum Amounts Payable to Students (Section 9.1)

- Section 9.1 of the National Guidelines provide overall annual maximums per student for all expenses associated with pursuing post-secondary.
- The maximum amount payable per student (see below) under PSSSP or UCEPP cannot be exceeded. Please note, you are NOT required to provide these maximums.
- **Change:** The maximums have increased to:
 - \$53,000 per year for undergraduate/certificate/diploma students
 - Previously, the maximum was \$35,000 (2017-18)
 - \$90,000 per year for students in advanced or professional programs (for example: dentistry, medicine, law, Masters or Doctoral program) on an extraordinary and justified basis. This award is granted by special request on a case-by-case basis only as determined by your First Nation.
 - Previously, the maximum was \$50,000 (2017-18)

Eligible Expenditures: Maximum Amounts Payable to Students (Section 9.1), cont'd

- **Change:** The National Guidelines previously required that funding exceeding \$50,000 (due to an extraordinary and justified basis) be reviewed by ISC BC region. This was removed(2018-19).
- Communities may set their own overall maximums in their Local Operating Guidelines, so long as they do not exceed those in the National Guidelines.

Discussion Question

Are there any expenses that your First Nation does not cover?

How does your First Nation address child care expenses?

Eligible Expenditures:

Administration Costs (Section 7.1.1)

Administrative costs associated with the administration of PSSSP/UCEPP funding under the National Guidelines are:

- salaries/benefits of personnel directly employed in the administration and delivery of funding
- materials and resources required for the management of funds
- rent and utilities
- printing and communication costs, including web presence
- data collection, maintenance, and reporting in accordance with program and financial reporting requirements
- costs associated with ensuring that personal information is appropriately managed and safeguarded
- Administration costs cannot exceed 15% of the sub-total amount requested before administration costs.

Change: The administration cap was raised from 10% to 15% (2019/20).



Limits of Assistance

- Overview of Limits of Assistance
- Considerations for Local Operating Guidelines

Limits of Assistance:

Previously 6.2.1 of the National Guidelines

The 2018-19 National Guidelines stated that:

- Assistance could be provided at four levels of post-secondary education and students could only be funded for each level once:
 - Level 1: Certificate or diploma
 - Level 2: Undergraduate degree program
 - Level 3: Graduate degree or advanced or professional degree
 - Level 4: Doctoral degrees
- If students changed programs, the years of funding they had already been funded for would count towards the total number of years they could be funded.
- UCEPP students could only be supported for up to 24 months.

Limits of Assistance:

Previously 6.2.1 of the National Guidelines, cont'd

Change: The limits of assistance section has been entirely removed (2019-20).

This means:

- There are no longer limits on the length of time for which students can receive assistance or on the number of credentials a student can pursue at each level.
- Students may change their existing program and receive support for the full duration of their new program.
- Students may be sponsored to complete a credential at a lower level than one they already have (e.g., going back to do a certificate after completing a degree).
- UCEPP students may receive assistance beyond 24 months.

Limits of Assistance:

Previously 6.2.1 of the National Guidelines, cont'd

While the different levels of assistance have been removed, communities must still report on which credentials their students are pursuing when completing the Annual Register of Post-Secondary Students.

Your First Nation may set its own limits of assistance.

Some examples of limits you may wish to continue to place are:

- Restrictions on program length or the number of credentials you will fund at each level.
- Restrictions on changing or pausing a program of studies.
- Capping expenses for high-cost programs.
- Restrictions on expenses that do not align with your community's priorities, or that are beyond your budget.

Placing Limits on Program Length and Level

Here are examples of how you wish to limit program length and/or the number of credentials you will fund at each level:

- *The duration of assistance may exceed the official length of the program as long as the student is in satisfactory academic standing at the institution.*
- *The [insert First Nation name] is only able to fund students for the number of credits required to complete their program of study.*

Placing Limits on Changing or Pausing a Program of Studies

Example of how you may wish to limit changing or pausing a program of studies:

- *While the [insert First Nations name] recognizes that students sometimes determine that the program in which they enrolled initially is no longer suitable for them and decide to change their program of studies, we are only able to provide PSSSP/UCEPP funding for the duration specified in Section [X].*
- *If a student changes programs within one of the levels, the number of academic years or semesters used at that level is still counted and will be considered when calculating the duration of financial assistance available to the student. Therefore, students must be aware that such changes may impact the overall funding available to them and their ability to complete their program.*

Placing Limits on Changing or Pausing a Program of Studies

- *Before making any changes to their program of study, students may wish to contact [Name of First Nation]’s Education Department to ensure they will still be eligible for PSE funding. Students who become eligible for assistance and have already completed a portion of their post-secondary studies without assistance may receive assistance for the balance of their program of studies but cannot be reimbursed for previous expenses in accordance with the National Program Guidelines.*

Discussion Question

Does your First Nation have limits of assistance?

If so, how did your First Nation determine these limits?



Summary of Key Changes to National Guidelines

Summary of Key Changes to National Guidelines (2017/18 to 2023/24)

- The requirement that First Nations develop and implement local operating guidelines was removed (2019-20).
- The requirement that students must have been a resident in Canada for 12 consecutive months prior to the date of their funding application was removed (2018-19).
- Satisfactory academic standing is now defined by the recipient (First Nation) rather than the post-secondary institution where the student is enrolled (2020-21).
- The restriction that UCEPP students could not have been previously financially supported by ISC for PSE programs was removed (2018-19).
- Students can access UCEPP for programs outside of Canada (2018-19).
- The restriction that eligible programs for PSSSP be at least one academic year in length was removed (2018-19).

Summary of Changes to National Guidelines, cont'd

- Under Section 6.2 of the 2023-24 PSSSP/UCEPP National Guidelines, the list of eligible domestic and foreign institutions has been removed. For domestic institutions, coordinators may now verify eligibility through the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials webpage.
- If the program is outside of Canada, the student needs to contact the admissions department at the institution to ensure the internationally earned credentials are recognized in Canada. The student will be required to provide this documentation.
- Eligible expenses now include expenses not explicitly listed in the National Guidelines (2019-20).

Summary of Key Changes to National Guidelines, cont'd

- The requirement that tuition support for students attending a private or foreign post-secondary institution be limited to the cost of tuition charged by the public or private Canadian institution nearest to the student's place of residence was removed (2020-21).
- Transcript fees and application fees added as an eligible expense (2018-19).
- Child care was added as an eligible expense (2019-20).
- Part-time students became eligible for travel and living expenses (2019-20).
- The two-trips per academic year restriction on travel support was removed (2019-20).
- The requirement that travel support be “restricted to the travel costs to the Canadian post-secondary institution nearest to the student's place of residence which offers the least expensive comparable program” was removed (2020-21).

Summary of Key Changes to National Guidelines, cont'd

- The requirement that travel costs not exceed rates set in the National Joint Council Travel Directive was removed (2020-21).
- The requirement that communities cannot exceed the Canada Student Loan Program living allowance maximums was removed (2019-20).
- The requirements for how to calculate living allowances for 2 students who are married to each was removed (2020-21).
- Section 6.4 Scholarships and Incentives, was removed (2019-20).
- The cap on administration costs was raised from 10% to 15% of the sub-total amount requested before administrative costs(2019-20).

Summary of Key Changes to National Guidelines, cont'd

- Maximum amount payable per year for a student has increased from \$35,000 (2017/18) to \$53,000 (2020-21).
- Maximum amount payable per year for a student, on an extraordinary and justified basis, has increased from \$50,000 (2017-18) to a maximum of \$90,000 (2020-21).
- Cases where recipients approve a grant of an amount more than \$50,000 no longer need to be reviewed by ISC BC (2018-19).
- Sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2, specifying the limits of assistance, were removed (2019-20), including the 2-year (24 month) time limit for UCEPP students (2020-21).



Review of Application and Reporting Process for PSSSP/UCEPP

Post-Secondary Education 2023-2024

Post-Secondary Student Support Program &
University and College Entrance Preparation Program



Indigenous Services
Canada

Services aux
Autochtones Canada

Canada 

TOPICS

01

Post-Secondary
Education Funding

02

Protected/General Pool
Application Process

03

Post-Secondary Education
Reporting

04

Education Information
System (EIS)

05

Indigenous Services
Canada Updates

TYPES OF FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

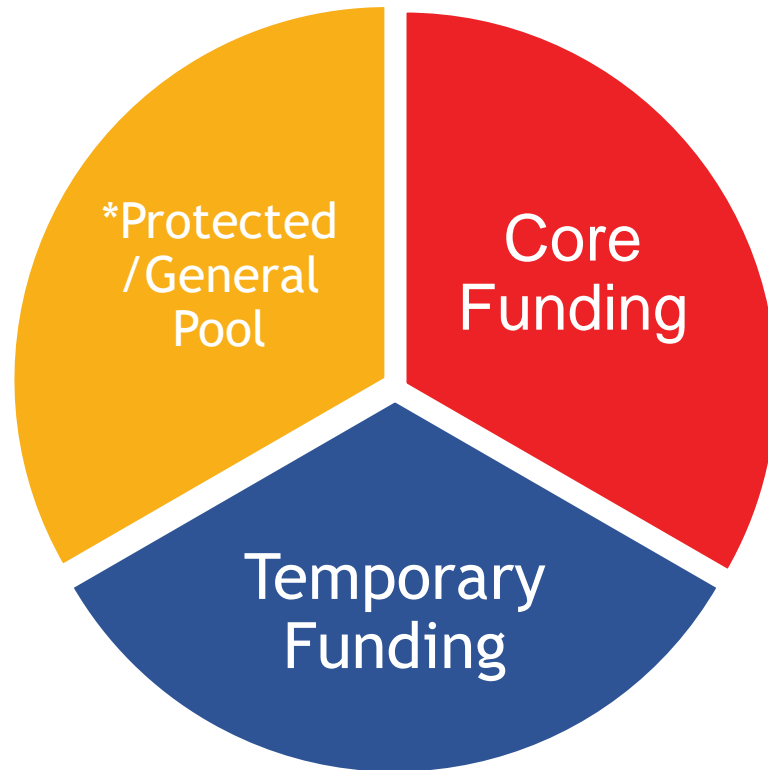
Contribution

Block

New Fiscal Relationship Grant

Self-Governing / Treaty

Post-Secondary Education Funding



- **Core funding (population based - total population on- and off-reserve)**
- **Temporary funding from federal budget commitments (also population-based)**
- **Protected/General Pool (application process)**
*Not applicable for all First Nations

PSE Protected/General Pool Application Process

- Provides First Nations in British Columbia with the opportunity to access PSE funding that has been held back (if applicable) and apply for additional funding (no guarantee - is subject to availability)
- If you do not submit an application, you will still receive your PSE initial allocation, but you will not receive funds from your protected pool or from the general pool
- A pre-populated PSE Form 1 Application Summary with the Nation's budget information will be emailed to eligible First Nations individually in the spring
- Deadline for the application TBD, but usually in May
- A confirmation of the total allocation that your First Nation will receive will be sent in early August

PSE Funding Methodology

Initial Allocation

Initial allocations for eligible First Nations are based on the lesser of:

1. reported audited annual expenditures; or
2. a per capita amount calculated using the regional budget and the total population as of December 31.

Protected Pool

If audited annual expenditures are lower than the calculated per capita amount, the difference is placed in the Protected Pool for each individual First Nation. First Nations must apply to access the funds in their Protected Pool.

General Pool

If a First Nation does not apply for some or all of their Protected Pool, the residual funds are placed in a General Pool accessible to other First Nations. First Nations that demonstrate the need for funds above their initial and Protected Pool budget can apply for additional funds from the General Pool.

This funding allocation methodology does not apply to Treaty or Self-Government Agreement First Nations or First Nations with block or 10-Year Grant funding arrangements with ISC.

Sample PSE Initial Allocation

2023-2024 Post Secondary Initial Allocation

Band #

529

Band Name:

ABC First Nation

Methodology:

Initial funding allocations are the lesser of the 2021/22 audited annual expenditures, or the First Nation's per capita amount, calculated using the regional allocation and the total population (as of December 31, 2022). This per capita amount is the maximum allocation and will be protected for a specific First Nation until the deadline for application has passed.

A. Maximum Per Capita Calculation

Total Registered Population (as of Dec 31/22)

818

Regional Per Capita Amount

\$359.30

Total Maximum Per Capita

293,907

B *2021-2022 Audit Expenditures

247,548

C Lesser of Audited Expenditures or Per Capita

247,548

D 2023-2024 Initials

247,548

E Protected Pool Amount

46,359

Post-Secondary Education Reporting

Annual Register of Post-Secondary Education Students

- Mandatory annual reporting requirement (includes contribution agreements, block, grants)
- Provide information regarding students funded in previous fiscal year
- Due August 31st
- Department-wide clean up of overdue reports
- Outstanding reports for 2017-18 and earlier have been cancelled

Annual Register Student Data Fields

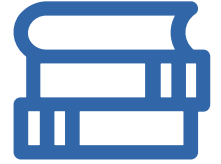
- Student's Name
- Date of Birth
- IRS #
- Semester (fall/winter)
- Full time/Part time
- Name of Institution
- Area of study/specialization (drop-down lists)
- Method of Delivery
- Program Start Date
- Level of Program (e.g. diploma, degree)
- Academic Program Length
- Number of dependents
- Program Start Date
- Level of Program (e.g. diploma, degree)
- Academic Program Length
- Number of dependents
- Marital Status
- Student Achievement (Outcome)
- Expenses

Education Information System

How to prepare:

- Check your ISC Services Portal - EIS Access early!
 - If you are a returning user and have forgotten your login credentials, email our IT service desk at sti-its@sac-isc.gc.ca
 - If you are accessing the system for the first time, email Agreement Services at bcfundingservices@sac-isc.gc.ca for an Information System Access Request form to complete
- Gather student data from your paper/electronic records
- No need to wait for audited financials to be finalized

PSE ISC Updates/Reminders



- ☐ Budget 2019 Enhancement (5-year increase from 2019-20 to 2023-24)
- ☐ New Fiscal Relationship (NFR)/10 year grant - not eligible to apply for General Pool effective 2024-25
- ☐ Foreign institutions - confirming eligibility
- ☐ EIS Support



ISC BC EDUCATION

KEY CONTACTS

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ISC BC AGREEMENT SERVICES

KEY CONTACTS

- Access to EIS / Log-in
- Support with PSE Annual Registry Entry and Verification

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New Fiscal Relationship (10-Year Grant)

New Fiscal Relationship (10-Year Grant)

- A 10-Year Grant is an agreement that allows First Nations to more flexibly allocate and administer funding from ISC, including education funding.
- First Nations under a 10-year grant receive their PSSSP/UCEPP allocation based on existing funding levels and benefit, like all First Nations, from changes to program funding levels (i.e., Budget 2019 Enhancements and COVID-19 emergency PSSSP funding).
- First Nations under the 10-year grant receive their full per capita allocation up front, so none of their funding is set aside in a protected pool.
- In previous years First Nations could apply for the general pool if they demonstrate a need above their full per capita amount.
- 2023-24 is the last year that 10-year grant First Nations have access to the general pool, as a funding escalator is now built into 10-year grants.



Other Supports

- Indigenous Assistance Emergency Assistance Fund
- Here2Talk Helpline

Indigenous Emergency Assistance Fund

- Public post-secondary institutes have an Indigenous Emergency Assistance Fund that provides up to \$900 in emergency support to Indigenous students who are experiencing an unexpected financial emergency that may affect their ability to finish their studies.
- Examples of such emergencies may include the following: emergency travel home; COVID-19 safety supplies; medical, dental, and optical costs; grocery costs; increase in living expenses due to inflation.
- Students attending public post-secondary institutions should contact their Indigenous student services for further information on accessing this funding.
- In April 2020, the ministry announced an additional \$1.5 million for emergency funding for Indigenous students in public post-secondary institutions, as well as Native Education College.

Indigenous Emergency Assistance Fund, cont'd

- IAHLA expressed concern that students at IAHLA institutes were not eligible other than the Native Education College and Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT).
- In response to IAHLA and FNEESC's advocacy, in March 2021 the ministry provided \$150,000 to FNEESC to administer to IAHLA institutes that met criteria jointly determined by FNEESC and IAHLA.
- The ministry has provided an additional \$135,000 to FNEESC which will be distributed to students who meet the criteria.

Here2Talk: BC Mental-Health Counselling and Referral Service for PSE Students

- In April 2020, the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training launched, Here2Talk, a free counselling and referral service for post-secondary students, including IAHLA students, who require mental-health support.
- The service offers confidential, free single-session services by app, phone or online chat, 24 hours a day, seven days a week with a professional counsellor, as well as a number of wellness resources and tips.
- Students can access this services by downloading the Here2Talk app on their mobile device or by visiting here2talk.ca.
- Students can also speak to a counsellor by phone, toll-free at 1-877-857-3397 or direct 604-642-5212.

Other Mental Health Supports

- The KUU-US Crisis Services is available 24/7 to support Indigenous people in BC
 - Toll-Free: 1-800-KUU-US17 (1-800-588-8717)
 - Adult/Elder: 1-250-723-4050
 - Child/Youth: 1-250-723-2040
- For information on other supports, please see the First Nations Health Authority's list of Mental Health and Cultural Supports here:
 - <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-mental-health-and-wellness-supports-for-indigenous-people.pdf>



Overview of Provincial Programs and Initiatives

StrongerBC: Future Ready Plan

- Released on May 2, 2023, the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan (Future Ready Action Plan) includes \$480 million in new spending for workforce development projects.
- Under the Future Ready Action Plan, \$101 million is designated to support initiatives that shift post-secondary education and training programs from being government-led to Indigenous-led and includes funding for initiatives identified under the Declaration Act Action Plan.
- We are working with the province to support better alignment between the DRIPA Action Plan and Future Ready.

StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan

The StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan includes the following investments related to First Nations post-secondary education:

- A review of racism in post-secondary education;
- Developing training, recruitment, and retention strategies for Indigenous teachers ;
- Providing ongoing core and capacity funding for First Nations-mandated institutes;
- Expanding First Nations skills training and education programming; and
- Expanding support for First Nations language revitalization

Re-conceptualized Aboriginal Service Plan

- The Aboriginal Service Plan (ASP) program was established in 2007 to provide targeted funding to 11 public post-secondary institutions to improve the post-secondary educational experiences and outcomes of indigenous learners.
- In 2021, despite the opposition of FNEESC and IAHLA, the ASP program was expanded prior to the provision of ongoing core funding for First Nations-mandated institutes.
- In January 2023, IAHLA and FNEESC sent a letter to the Ministry's new Deputy Minister expressing concerns that a unilateral decision taken by the Ministry have been inconsistent with the standards for shared-decision making set out in United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Interim Approach to Implementing the Requirements of Section 3 of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Interim Approach).
- FNEESC continues to advocate that the ASP program be brought into alignment with UNDRIP and the Interim Approach, as well as the BC First Nations Tripartite Post-Secondary Education Model.

Indigenous Skills Training and Education

- On July 31, 2023, the province sent notice to BC First Nations of available \$24M in funding for Indigenous communities and organizations to deliver community-based skills training and post-secondary education programming.
- Funding is available for community-based programming in the following areas:
 - Post-Secondary Education
 - Apprenticeship Training
 - Foundational Trades Training
 - Adult Basic Education (ABE)
 - Occupational Skills Training
 - Indigenous Language or Cultural Training
 - Short-Term training (first aid courses, food safety training, etc.)
- Please see tab 5 of your kit for the funding application and submit the application to the Ministry by Wednesday, October 18, 2023. Please contact the Ministry for further information at PSFS.IndigenousPrograms@gov.bc.ca.

Student Housing

- In 2018, BC released the *Homes for BC: A 30-Point Plan for Housing Affordability* in British Columbia, which included a commitment to create 8,000 new on-campus beds for post-secondary students by 2028.
- In April 2023, BC released the Homes or People plan which builds on the 2018 housing plan and increases the provincial commitment by 4,000 on-campus student housing beds, bringing the total commitment to 12,000 student housing beds.
- The 2023 BC Budget commits \$575 million in new provincial capital investments over the next three years for public post-secondary institutions to create on-campus student housing beds.

Student Housing

- First Nations have indicated that accessing appropriate, safe, and affordable housing is an ongoing challenge for their post-secondary students. Also, when students attend public post-secondary institutions, they often encounter racism – including in student housing or when trying to access off-campus housing.
- Action 4.5 of the Declaration Act Action Plan includes a commitment that “Indigenous learners have access to student housing that is safe, inclusive, and enables them to thrive personally, academically, and culturally.”

Student Housing (cont'd)


- Additionally, the draft First Nations CYIC Protocol Work Plan includes a section on prioritizing student housing beds for current and former youth in care.
- In alignment with the draft Work Plan, the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills has established new requirements that public post-secondary institutions receiving new provincial capital funding for student housing must prioritize beds for Indigenous learners and former youth in care learners.
- FNEESC will continue to advocate for more designated housing for First Nations



Next Steps

Provincial Post-Secondary Education Gathering

- On March 10, 2023, FNEESC hosted a Provincial Post-Secondary Education Gathering which was attended by 116 political and educational representatives.
- At the next Provincial Post-Secondary Education Gathering we will continue to advance the discussions related to the BC First Nations Tripartite PSE Model and discuss legislative, policy and funding considerations related to the Model.
- FNEESC will continue to work collaboratively with the province to implement commitments under the DRIPA Action Plan
- FNEESC will also continue to work with BC First Nations on the development and implementation of the BC PSE Model.
- Another PSE Gathering is planned.

A faint, stylized background graphic on the left side of the slide, depicting a First Nations figure in traditional regalia, possibly a dancer or warrior, with intricate patterns and colors.

**Thank you for your commitment to
First Nations education**

Contact

First Nations Education Steering Committee
113-100 Park Royal South, West Vancouver
info@fnesc.ca
1-877-422-3672 / 604-925-6087

Thank you for your commitment to
First Nations education.

