
BC Indigenous Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners

December 16, 2020

Videoconference

PARTICIPANTS:

Association of BC Deans of Education (ABCDE)

- Jan Hare, Associate Dean, Indigenous Education

BC Aboriginal Training Employment Alliance Member (BCATEAM)

- Deanne McLeod, Executive Director, North East Native Advancing Society

Department of Indigenous Services Canada (DISC)

- Wendy Rogers, Director, Programs and Partnerships
- Alison Olney, Education Programs Manager
- Laura Langs, Education Programs Advisor

First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC)

- Deborah Jeffrey, Executive Director
- Thane Bonar, Director, Communications and Policy
- Jasper Cattell, Post-Secondary Education Policy Analyst

Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA)

- Dr. Verna Billy Minnabarriet, Chair

Metis Nation of BC

- Jason Chan, Senior Director, Ministry of Employment and Skills Training and Post-Secondary Education

Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (AEST)

- Nicola Lemmer, Assistant Deputy Minister, Post-Secondary Policy and Programs and Division Responsible for Learner Support
- Monica Cox, Executive Director, Indigenous Policy and Engagement Branch
- Fiona Cubitt, Director, Policy and Planning, Indigenous Policy and Engagement Branch
- Bryan Dreilich, Director, Post-Secondary Engagement and Partnerships, Indigenous Policy and Engagement Branch

- Naomi Adams, Senior Policy Analyst, Policy and Planning, Indigenous Policy and Engagement Branch
- Rochelle McLean, Policy Analyst, Indigenous Policy and Engagement Branch
- Nadaya Howells, Acting Manager, Indigenous Relations, Workforce Innovation and Division Responsible for Skills and Training
- Chelsea Chalifour, Executive Director, Governance, Accountability and Analytics Branch
- Leila Hazemi, Director, Research and Analytics, Governance, Accountability and Analytics Branch
- Kristina Breuer, Research Analyst, Research and Analytics, Governance, Accountability and Analytics Branch

Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR)

- Stephanie Gabel, Senior Advisor, Social/Economic Planning

Research Universities' Council of BC (RUCBC)

- Jim Martell, Director

Service Canada

- Melanie Rai, Manager

FACILITATION:

- Judith Sayers, Chair
- Nicolas Mejia, FNESC Manager, Post-Secondary Education and Training, IAHLA/FNESC

1. Welcome and Review of Draft Agenda

The Draft Agenda was reviewed and approved.

2. Review of Draft Meeting Notes—March 12, 2020

The Draft Meeting Notes for the September 16, 2020 PSE Partners meeting were reviewed. It was noted that Nicola Lemmer had been omitted from the list of participants. It was also noted that the action item from the previous meeting, adding the discussion of the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner's *Disaggregated Demographic Data in BC* report to the December 16, 2020 PSE Partners meeting agenda, had not been completed. The minutes were adopted with the addition of Nicola Lemmer to the list of participants and the plan to add the *Disaggregated Demographic Data in BC* report to the agenda for the March 9, 2021 PSE Partners meeting.

3. COVID-19 Impacts and Response Roundtable

The Partners discussed the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Indigenous students, communities, Indigenous-controlled institutes, and public post-secondary institutions. AEST updated the Partners on the work of the Continuity of Learning Working Group, as well as the \$15 million funding lift for Indigenous skills training programs rolled out as part of the Province's economic recovery plan. \$5 million of this funding has been allocated to FNEC to administer through the Post-Secondary Partnerships Program. ISC updated the Partners on emergency funding for Indigenous-controlled post-secondary institutions. BC's share for First Nations institutes is \$4.2 million and is being administered by FNEC, working with IAHLA

4. DRIPA Implementation

The Partners discussed ongoing work related to the implementation of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA). FNEC and IAHLA stressed the importance of the Province setting concrete deliverables around DRIPA implementation. FNEC and IAHLA raised the need for the Ministry to co-develop a bilateral process with FNEC and IAHLA to work on DRIPA implementation, similar to that undertaken by FNEC and the Ministry of Education. The Ministry communicated that it is considering how best to align the Comprehensive Strategy/Policy Framework with the Action Plan. It was also noted that legislation has been introduced into the Canadian Parliament to implement the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP).

5. Anti-Racism Roundtable

FNEC opened the roundtable by drawing attention to the *In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care* report. AEST is involved in a Cross-Ministry Anti-Racism Working Group. FNEC requested further information on this working group and called for further discussion of the recommendations included in *In Plain Sight* at the next Partners meeting. FNEC also noted the need for the meeting of an Indigenous-specific anti-racism table, attended by AEST, the Ministry of Education, FNEC, IAHLA and the First Nations Schools Association, to develop concrete steps for addressing Indigenous-specific racism in education in BC.

6. Former Children and Youth in Care

During the 2020 Provincial election, the New Democratic Party committed to expanding the tuition waiver program for former children and youth in care. FNEC noted that moving forward with this commitment is an important step in supporting former children and youth in care in the post-secondary system. FNEC also expressed the need for the Province to provide comprehensive wraparound supports for former children and youth in care. FNEC and the Ministry noted that the working group established by the Children and Youth in Care Protocol, signed by FNEC, the First Nations Leadership Council, AEST, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Children and Family Development, will be meeting in 2021 to discuss next steps on expanding the tuition waiver program and developing a children and youth in care strategy.

7. Provincial Programs and Initiatives Updates

a) Aboriginal Policy Framework Refresh

AEST provided an update on progress achieved in updating the 2012 Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Framework and Action Plan (Aboriginal Policy Framework). The Ministry is working with Indigenous Policy Working Group to ensure the Aboriginal Policy Framework accurately reflects all of AEST's programming and services and prioritizes actions within the document, given the cost implications. The Ministry also noted that it is

looking into the possibility of implementing the recommendations from the *In Plain Sight* report in the new Aboriginal Policy Framework.

b) Indigenous Skills Training

AEST provided an update on the delivery of its \$15 million of emergency Indigenous skills training funding. The Ministry reported that the funding is now serving 68% of Indigenous communities in BC and is expected to reach 77% by the end of the fiscal year. The Ministry agreed to look into providing a distinctions-based version of these statistics at FNEC's request.

c) Aboriginal Student Data Report

AEST presented a draft of the next iteration of the *Aboriginal Learners in BC's Public Post-Secondary System* report. The Ministry reviewed key findings and highlighted new data included in the report, including specific data on former children and youth in care. The report will be revised and reviewed again at the Indigenous Policy Working Group in January, before a final draft is presented to the Partners and the FNEC Board.

FNEC and IAHLA expressed appreciation for the improvements made in this iteration of the report. FNEC and IAHLA also emphasized the importance of collaboration to ensure that improvements continue to be made in alignment with the BC Human Rights Commissioner's report *Disaggregated Demographic Data Collection in British Columbia: The Grandmother Perspective*.

d) Student Housing Framework

A number of new beds for students have been created thanks to provincial government and post-secondary institution investments. The Ministry had no updates to report, as the working group had not met since the last Partners meeting due to the interregnum.

e) Indigenous Board Member Gathering

The second gathering of Indigenous public post-secondary board members was scheduled to be held on Monday, September 28, 2020 but was postponed due the interregnum. The Ministry reported that the working group will convene in 2021 to resume planning for the gathering.

8. Other

AEST opened discussion on the Sustainable Teacher Workforce Labour Market Project Report, noting that it had now been shared with FNEC but has not been released publicly. Part of the challenge in releasing the report is that though the project was advanced through support from AEST, the BC Public School Employers' Association (BCSPEA) is the proprietor of the report. FNEC requested that the report either be made publicly available or that the Ministry provide a written rationale explaining why it cannot be released. The Ministry committed to further engagement with the BCSPEA on its release.

9. Future Meeting Dates

The Partners decided to schedule meetings on March 9, June 9, September 8 and December 14, 2021. The Partners also decided to plan that the March 9 meeting will be held virtually. The Meeting was adjourned at 12:30pm.

10. Adjournment and Closing