

BCTEA Interim Approach for the 2026/27 School Year Frequently Asked Questions

The purpose of this Question-and-Answer document is to provide information on frequently asked questions from school districts and First Nations regarding the BCTEA First Nation Student Transportation Fund. If you have additional questions, please contact BCTEA@gov.bc.ca

1. Why is an interim approach being taken for the 2026/27 school year and what changes can I expect compared to the 2025/26 school year?

- As discussions for a renewed British Columbia Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA) are underway between the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), the Ministry of Education and Child Care (the Ministry), and Indigenous Services Canada (Canada), an interim approach is being implemented to ensure support for the transportation of First Nation Students attending BC Public Schools.
- For the 2026/27 school year, the \$3.8M BCTEA First Nation Student Transportation Fund (Transportation Fund) continues to be available to school districts and First Nations who had an approved Joint Transportation Plan (Joint Plan) in the 2025/26 school year to support costs related to transporting students To/From their community and school. The table below highlights key changes for the Transportation Fund between the 2025/26 and 2026/27 school years.

Category	2025/26 School Year	2026/27 School Year (Interim Approach)
Funding for Eligible Activities	The First Nation Student Transportation Fund was allocated to cover/supplement multiple transportation expense categories including: To/From school, special supports, extracurricular, and parental assistance.	- BCTEA Transportation Funding prioritizes transportation To/From school. Funding will be allocated based on 2025/26 Joint Plan approved amounts for To/From school. - School districts should review other available sources of funding (e.g. Provincial Operating Grant funding) to support transportation needs outside the scope of funding. - Parental (transportation) assistance requests and transportation to extracurricular may be funded by school districts through existing funding sources such as Operating Grants (e.g. Student Transportation Fund) or Other Grants (e.g. CommunityLINK). - If there is funding remaining after audited financial statements are submitted to the Ministry by school districts, additional carryover funds may become available in early fall.
Carryover Funds	To/From school, Special Supports and Parental Assistance: Funds that were not spent by the end of the 2024/25 school year could be used to offset the amount transferred in the 2025/26 school year. Extracurricular: Funds issued in previous years that have not been spent by the end of the 2024/25 school year may have been subject to repurposing for the 2025/26 school year.	All carryover funds at the end of the 2025/26 school year must not be used at this time.

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Submission Requirements	The Ministry required school districts and First Nations co-develop and submit a Joint Plan signed by both parties.	- The Ministry requires boards of education to annually co-develop a Joint First Nation Student Transportation Plan (Joint Plan) with First Nations to be jointly signed off with each First Nation needing transportation for their students attending a BC Public School. - The Joint Plan does not need to be submitted to the Ministry. - First Nations and school districts will retain a copy of their 2026/27 Joint Plan for implementation and future reference.
School District Reporting Requirements	In 2024/25, the BCTEA Revenue and Spending Report (joint sign-off required) was due May 16, 2025, and school district Financial Statements were due October 1, 2025.	- A simplified 2025/26 BCTEA Revenue and Spending Report must be completed by school districts, signed by all First Nations, and submitted to the Ministry (even if no Transportation Funds were requested in 2025/26) by October 1, 2026. - School district Financial Statements are due on October 1, 2026.

Funding

2. When will we know how much funding we are getting for the 2026/27 school year?

- We will communicate funding amounts in the Fall.

3. Will there be additional funding made available to account for increases in fuel and wage costs compared to last school year?

- No, there is no additional funding planned for the 2026/27 school year.

4. Will there be funding available for new or expanded transportation services for 2026/27 school year?

- No. Funding provided for 2026/27 is based on the amount approved in Joint Plans for 2025/26 To/From transportation. If a new service is required to replace/amend an existing service, the First Nation and school district can agree to use the available funding for that service (e.g. Student Transportation Fund, Student Location Factor, Supplementary Student Location Factor, other General Operating Grants).

Carryover Funding

5. What do we do if we have carryover funding at the end of the 2025/26 school year?

- See the table above.

6. Can we use existing carryover to cover increased costs incurred in the 2025/26 school year?

- Due to limited funding, carryover funds must be retained to offset the 2026/27 allocation of funding.

Joint Plan and Reporting Templates

7. How do we get a copy of the 2026/27 Joint Plan and 2025/26 Reporting templates?

- The templates can be found on the [Ministry](#) and [FNESC](#) websites.

8. Do the 2026/27 Joint Plans need to be submitted to the Ministry?

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- See table above.

9. Why do the school district and First Nation need to complete a Joint Plan if it is not being submitted to the Ministry or if we don't receive To/From funding?

- The Ministry requires boards of education to annually co-develop a Joint Plan with First Nations to be jointly signed off with each First Nation needing transportation for their students attending a BC Public School. Completing a Joint Plan provides an opportunity to document services that are agreed to by both the First Nation and the school district. It is important that both school districts and First Nations keep a record of the Joint Plan.

10. What are the reporting requirements for the 2025/26 school year?

- See table above.

Eligible To/From Expenses

11. What are considered eligible expenses for To/From transportation?

- Eligible To/From transportation expenses under the BCTEA Transportation Fund include buses, water taxis, and bus passes, and services provided by either the First Nation, school district, or through a contracted service.

Special Supports, Parental Assistance, and Extracurricular

12. Will there be funding available for Special Supports for the 2026/27 school year?

- See table above.

13. Will there be funding available for Parental Assistance and Extracurricular in the 2026/27 school year?

- See table above.