



BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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BCAFN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
September 19-21, 2023
Hybrid - In person & online via Zoom

Resolution 15/2023

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY-BASED DELIVERY OF POST-SECONDARY
EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN FIRST NATION COMMUNITIES**

Moved BY: **CHIEF LYNDIA PRICE, ULKATCHO FIRST NATION**

SECONDED BY: **CHIEF STU JACKSON, LOWER NICOLA INDIAN BAND**

DECISION: **CARRIED**

WHEREAS:

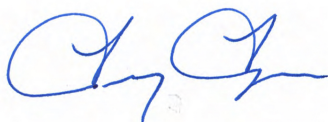
- A. First Nations have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions as an aspect of their inherent rights of self-determination and self-government, as affirmed in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration) and also as recognized and affirmed under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.
- B. The provincial *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and the federal *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* require British Columbia and Canada respectively, in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples, to take all measures necessary to ensure that the laws of British Columbia and Canada are consistent with the UN Declaration, and to develop and implement action plans to achieve the objectives of the UN Declaration.
- C. First Nations in British Columbia have worked for more than two decades to build the BC First Nations Education System, which is premised fundamentally on quality education for First Nation students and First Nations control of First Nations education.

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- D. BC First Nations have demonstrated their capacity to build effective, relevant, responsive, and BC-specific models for First Nations education through the development of the BC Tripartite Education Agreement signed in 2018 by Canada, British Columbia, and the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC).
- E. The Province of British Columbia (Province) committed in the *2022 Declaration Act Action Plan* to work with First Nations to “provide funding for self-determined, community-led programs to upgrade skills, obtain credentials, secure employment, and develop and support community economies (action 4.41).
- F. BC First Nations have demonstrated their capacity to effectively administer funding for community-based delivery of post-secondary programs, including the Post-Secondary Partnerships Program (PSPP), and while the Provincial Government provided one-time funding in 2020 and 2022 to support First Nations and First Nations-Mandated Post-Secondary institutes to deliver community-based programs funded through the PSPP, there is no commitment to provide ongoing funding.
- G. The Province of British Columbia committed in the *2022 Declaration Act Action Plan* to “support Indigenous language revitalization through sustainable funding” (action 4.30).
- H. First Nations-mandated post-secondary institutes, First Nations, the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) and FNESC have worked with public post-secondary institutions to develop a Language Fluency/Proficiency Degree framework as one avenue to meet the urgent need for language revitalization and language speakers, and while the Province provided one-time funding in 2019 and 2022 and has identified further funding to support the implementation of the framework, based on the needs identified by First Nations and the costs of program delivery, funding is insufficient to support existing programs and to support First Nations to implement additional programs.
- I. The Province has committed in the *2022 Declaration Act Action Plan* to “develop and implement an effective recruitment and retention strategy to increase the number of Indigenous teachers in the K-12 public education system” (action 4.2).
- J. The Provincial Government has identified funding for Indigenous teacher recruitment and retention, but funding is insufficient to meet the need to significantly increase the number of First Nations students completing teacher education programs, and First Nations have been clear that funding must be directed to community-based delivery of First Nations teacher education programs to be effective.
- K. FNESC and IAHLA, under the direction of First Nations in British Columbia, are developing a BC First Nations Tripartite PSE Model (“BC First Nations PSE Model”), which includes “four pillars”: First

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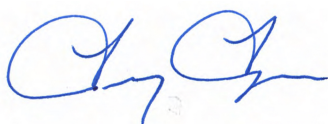
Nations Learners; First Nations-Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes; Community-Based Program Delivery; and a Respectful and Responsive Public Post-Secondary System.

- L. By BCAFN Resolution 23/2021, the BCAFN Chiefs in Assembly called on the provincial government to provide ongoing core and capacity funding to First Nations-mandated post-secondary institutes, and to work with FNEC and IAHLA to co-develop legislation recognizing the critical role of the institutes and committing to provide ongoing core funding, consistent with the First Nations-Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes pillar.
- M. By BCAFN Resolution 05/2022, the BCAFN Chiefs in Assembly affirmed their support for continued development of the BC First Nations PSE Model, recognizing that the BC First Nations PSE Model will evolve as further direction is received from First Nations, and their support for the four pillars, including the Community-Based Program Delivery pillar.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- 1. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call on the Province of British Columbia to commit stable and predictable multiyear funding that meets the need for community-based delivery of post-secondary programs in First Nations communities, to be administered through a First Nations-controlled process that is equitable, accountable and transparent;
- 2. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call on FNEC to develop regional policy and guidelines, under the direction of First Nations, for the administration of both federal and provincial funding for First Nations community-based delivery of post-secondary programs that will supersede existing policies and guidelines established by the federal and provincial governments;
- 3. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call on the Province of British Columbia to provide increased and ongoing funding for the Indigenous Language Fluency Degree to implement Action 4.30 of the *2022 Declaration Act Action Plan* and meet the urgent need to address language revitalization and the need for fluent language speakers; and
- 4. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call on the Provincial Government to provide increased and ongoing funding for teacher education programs, consistent with Action 4.2 of the *2022 Declaration Act Action Plan* to be delivered in First Nations communities to meet the immediate and urgent need for First Nations teachers and First Nations language teachers to be administered through a process jointly determined with First Nations.

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