

Indigenous Education Advisory Council

22 October 2025

Activity Report

The Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC) reconvened via Zoom on October 22, 2025, for its planned meeting ahead of the Provincial Council. The agenda encompassed professional learning updates for the Trustee Academy, AGM planning, and ongoing Truth and Reconciliation discussions as a standing agenda item.

The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) presented critical data on Indigenous student attendance patterns, revealing the pandemic's significant and lasting impact on attendance rates. Many Indigenous students have not returned to regular attendance post-pandemic, creating ongoing educational challenges.

The committee explored practical solutions including FNESC's attendance toolkit, considerations for cultural calendar dates and excused absences, and opportunities for land-based learning credits. Discussion emphasized avoiding student stigmatization while addressing attendance concerns through culturally responsive approaches.

Building on discussions tabled from the August meeting, the IEAC examined the intersection of Indigenous identity and neurodiversity, particularly focusing on teacher preparedness

to support Indigenous children with autism. The committee addressed varying levels of teacher training, budget impacts on specialized support services, and the vital connection between Truth and Reconciliation work and supporting Indigenous children with special needs.

Discussion continued addressing ableism within Indigenous educational contexts and legislative matters related to Indigenous Education rights. Examples were shared of innovative approaches to crediting cultural activities and land-based learning opportunities within formal education structures.

The committee received updates on the IEAC Knowledge Series, establishing priorities for upcoming publications addressing various aspects of Indigenous education. The Land-based Learning publication is nearing completion as the next series release. Following extensive discussion, Indigenous Student Voices was selected as the subsequent publication, emphasizing student leadership and governance.

Engage Sport North presented their Canadian Sport School program, addressing how talented Indigenous athletes often abandon sports due to systemic barriers requiring them to leave home communities for training. Their innovative model partners with local school districts like Prince George, enabling students to earn academic credit while accessing high-



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level athletic training close to home, thereby maintaining cultural safety and community connections.

Call Out Questions

We invite BCSTA Trustees to participate in a brief survey to gather insights on Indigenous Education initiatives.

Your responses will help guide the Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC) in better understanding and addressing the needs of Indigenous students and communities. Thank you for your valuable input.



Scan the code to begin the survey.

What is your district doing for Indigenous Education?

What would you like to learn about as a BCSTA Trustee regarding First Nations, Metis, and Inuit education?

Have you heard of the IEAC Knowledge Series?

What would you like to see put into the next IEAC Knowledge Series publications?

Share an example of something your district is doing for Reconciliation.

How can the Indigenous Education Advisory Council support you as a trustee?

Committee Members:

Diane Jules / Co-Chair (Kamloops-Thompson)

Vanessa Mitchell / Co-Chair (Vernon)

Joe Thorne / Knowledge Keeper (Cowichan Valley)

Erica McLean / BoD Liaison (Prince George)

Roxanne Gulick / BoD Liaison (Peace River South)

Dave Christie (Nechako Lakes)

Randy Cairns (Mission)

Larry Ransom (Pacific Rim)

Janice Gladish (Campbell River)

Winnie Morven-Hansen (Nisga'a)

