



Indigenous Adult &
Higher Learning Association
ANNUAL REPORT
2017/2018





Native Education College

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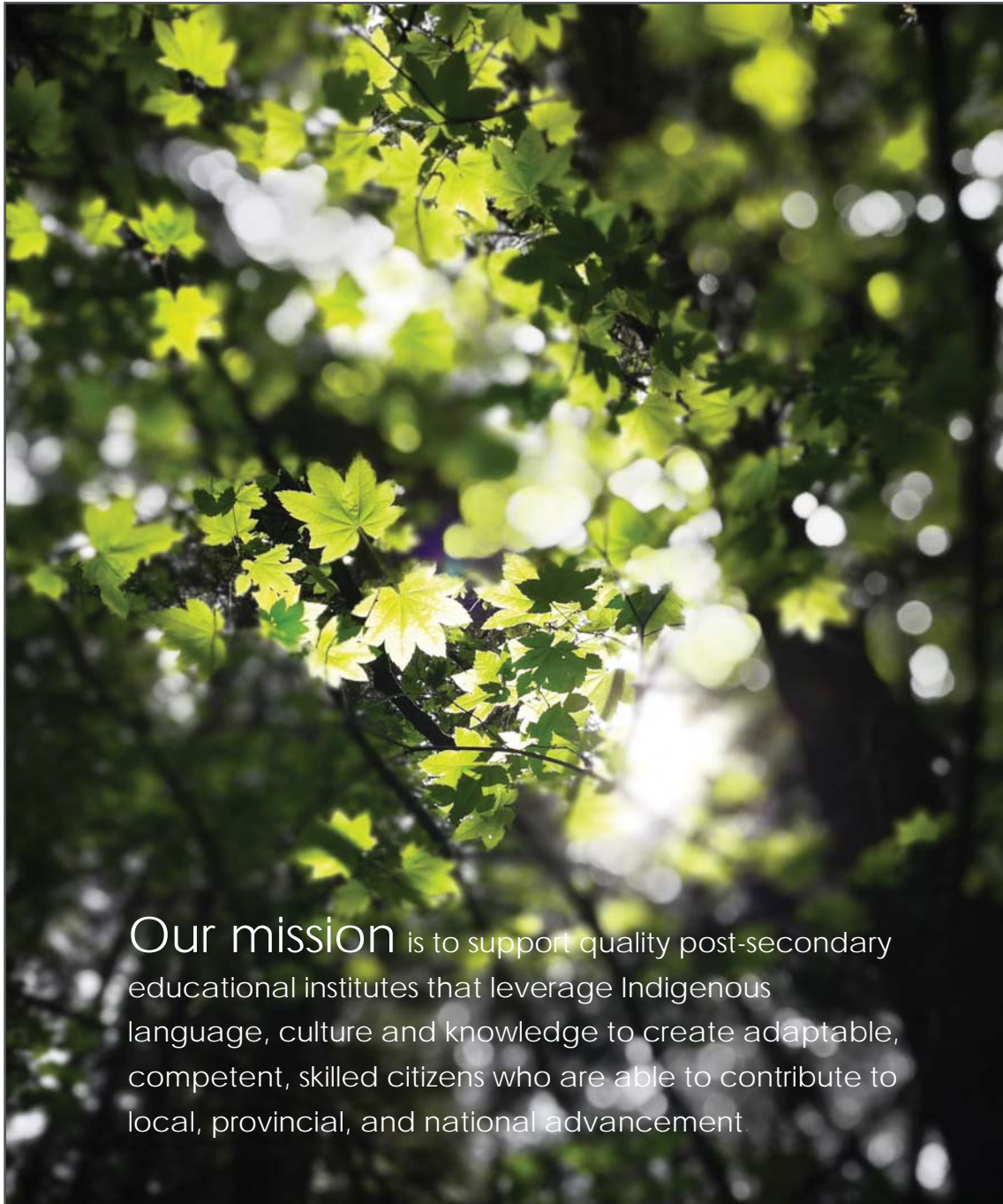
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Our mission is to support quality post-secondary educational institutes that leverage Indigenous language, culture and knowledge to create adaptable, competent, skilled citizens who are able to contribute to local, provincial, and national advancement.

Letter from the Chair



I am delighted to write the opening letter for the 2017/2018 IAHLA Annual Report, outlining some of the activities we have undertaken this year to support and advance our 42 member institutes. As you know, IAHLA is a non-profit society that was registered in 2003 and has advocated for Aboriginal-controlled institutes in BC for more than 15 years. We have continued to assist IAHLA member institutes through our advocacy, information sharing, professional development, and the provision of resources.

IAHLA is still facing an uncertain financial future and continues to advocate for the reinstatement of our funding. We are hopeful for a positive outcome from our recent meeting with the Department of Indigenous Services Canada. We are also actively advocating for funding for our member institutes, recognizing that most of them lack the core, stable funding that would allow them to effectively meet community needs and provide programming in community on a predictable and ongoing basis.

IAHLA has an unprecedented opportunity to advance our member institutes, given the current alignment of provincial and federal policy with respect to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Truth and Reconciliation 94 Calls to Action. IAHLA also looks forward to continued collaboration with the Honourable Melanie Mark, Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training, herself a former student of an IAHLA member institute. She is committed to advancing self-determination for First Nations in BC and our institutes are central to that.

This year, IAHLA participated in the First Nations Post-Secondary Comprehensive Review of Federal Programming, and as such, had the opportunity to play a meaningful role in the development of policies, and network with institutes and communities from other jurisdictions. Other jurisdictions in Canada are developing innovative means of supporting Aboriginal-controlled institutes and we can draw inspiration from them in the development of our own BC-Specific Model, in order to address the unique needs of our institutes and communities in BC.

Thank you for your dedication in supporting the success of your students, and for your continued efforts to advance our collective work in this busy and important time.

Dr. Verna Billy-Minnabarriet
IAHLA Chair

Introduction



Native Education College

The Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) is an independent non-profit society responsible for supporting and representing 42 Aboriginal-controlled adult and post-secondary institutes in BC. IAHLA provides a unified voice and support for its members through policy, advocacy, research, professional development, and networking opportunities. IAHLA is also committed to building strategic partnerships to enhance the quality of education available for Aboriginal adult and post-secondary learners.

IAHLA members are legal organizations in BC that are governed by an Aboriginal board and offer one or more of the following:

- Educational opportunities for adults pursuing high school graduation
- Preparatory or prerequisite courses for postsecondary education

- Post-secondary education courses and programs

IAHLA is led by a ten-member Board of Directors that is appointed at its Annual General Meeting by the membership. The terms of the board are staggered to guarantee continuity.

The institutes are at the frontlines of community-based program delivery, and are therefore a vital component of BC's post-secondary system. Many were created by communities to address crisis-level drop out and unemployment rates on-reserve. IAHLA's institutes play a pivotal role in bringing adults back in to the education system to complete high school, post-secondary education or training programs and enabling participation in the labour force.

IAHLA's member institutes offer a broad spectrum of courses and programs that include: college and university programs leading to certificates, diplomas, and degrees; Adult Basic Education

leading to the Adult Dogwood Diploma for secondary school completion; language instruction; occupation-specific training and upgrading; and a broad spectrum of lifespan learning programs that support First Nations people, communities, languages, and cultures. IAHLA institutes also work in collaboration with many of BC's 25 public post-secondary colleges, institutes and universities to deliver programming to our learners.

Almost all IAHLA member institutes operate without core funding, which means relying on proposal driven funding and partnerships. Many of our institutes face challenges due to their small size and remoteness, making it more difficult to achieve economies of scale, build partnerships or access resources due to geography. Through the dedication and sustained efforts of individuals at the community level, Aboriginal-controlled institutes continue to provide integral services to First Nations communities in BC. IAHLA is a vital advocacy body in supporting their collective efforts to increase recognition, and therefore necessary funding for community-based, culturally relevant learning for First Nations learners in BC.

Programs & Initiatives

Aboriginal Community-Based Training Partnerships Program

IAHLA has worked with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training over the last several years on the development and implementation of the various iterations of the Aboriginal Community-Based Training Partnerships Program, as well as participating in the adjudication of proposals. IAHLA has consistently advocated for changes within this program, while assisting Aboriginal-controlled institutes and communities in navigating applications.

Last year, as a direct result of this advocacy, the Program was altered so that communities can directly receive funding, rather than funding going to the partner institution. The application also requires the applicant to describe the involvement of the local Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institute in developing the proposal and delivering the program, or to explain why this is not possible. This is consistent with the principle of First Nations control of First Nations education and will ensure that communities are in the driver's seat.

Adult Basic Education

Since the removal of tuition-free Adult Basic Education in 2015, IAHLA has advocated for its reinstatement. Since Aboriginal adult learners were disproportionately impacted, IAHLA was pleased when the provincial government announced they would provide tuition-free Adult Basic Education and English Language Learning Programs in August 2017.

Though these policy changes by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skill and Training will likely increase access to Adult Basic Education programming at post-secondary institutions and school districts, they do not address the need for increased and more effective delivery of adult basic education in community and at Aboriginal-controlled institutes. In November 2017, IAHLA provided formal feedback on the Adult Basic Education Tuition-Free Policy with concerns in the following areas:

- partnerships and community-based delivery
- wrap-around supports
- adult upgrading grant
- access to lower-level courses

Students who cannot access programming at the community level stand a lower chance of success by virtue of being removed from their immediate circle of support and being more likely to experience racism and isolation in the public system. It is important that Aboriginal-controlled institutes play an integral role in addressing gaps and services for First Nations learners, as these institutes are in the best position to serve them and meet their needs. Aboriginal-controlled institutes are an integral part of Adult Basic Education in BC.

In April 2018, the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training released the *Adult Education Policy Framework*. Some of IAHLA's main concerns with the *Adult Education Policy Framework* include: the lack of specific policies for Aboriginal learners, wrap-around supports, individual education plans, community and education system partnerships, and the Adult Upgrading Grant. IAHLA will continue to work with the Ministry to improve Adult Basic Education policy in BC, and to address gaps in current programming.

Aboriginal Service Plan Review

The Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training currently funds Aboriginal Service Plans at 11 public post-secondary institutions. An Aboriginal Service Plan is a three-year rolling strategic plan for enhancing the post-secondary education experiences and outcomes of Aboriginal learners.

In response to calls from IAHLA and FNEC for a review of the program to ensure it was meeting its goals, in March 2018, Directions: Evidence + Policy Group (Directions) was selected and began a review of the ASP Initiative. Directions will make an assessment of whether the Aboriginal Service Plan Initiative is achieving systemic change outlined in the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework (Aboriginal Policy Framework) and whether the Program aligns with British Columbia (BC) Commitments to United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission 94 Calls to Action, and current post-secondary climate. The review includes Aboriginal student engagement, Aboriginal community and institute engagement, Aboriginal organization engagement, and public post-secondary engagement through surveys, interviews, and focus group sessions.

As part of this review, IAHLA supported and participated in a community engagement session. The engagement session was an opportunity for communities to speak on their overall experience in working with Aboriginal Service Plan and non-Aboriginal Service Plan institutions. A community survey will be distributed to First Nations and Aboriginal-controlled institutes to provide feedback on Aboriginal student successes and public post-secondary institution partnerships with Aboriginal communities.

The final report will compile feedback from students, communities, and public post-secondary institutions and will be completed this summer.

Aboriginal Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Deployment

There continues to be a shortfall of BC Aboriginal learners enrolled in teacher education programs and Aboriginal teachers employed in teaching positions, compared to the non-Aboriginal population. One of commitments that came out of the June 17, 2017 BC Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners (PSE Partners) meeting was to form a joint K-12-PSE Partners Aboriginal Teacher Recruitment and Retention Working Group in order to develop strategies for increasing the number of Aboriginal teachers. IAHLA Chair, Verna Billy-Minnabarriet represents the organization on this Working Group. This Working Group is working on the development of a plan by examining recommendations from past reports on Aboriginal teacher education programs and identifying lead organizations to carry out this work. Work also continues on the development of a comprehensive plan to address the need for Aboriginal teachers in BC. Community-based delivery of teaching programs is a fundamental component of the strategy to increase the number of Aboriginal people entering and graduating from teaching programs.

IAHLA continues to work with the Association of BC Deans of Education and FNEESC to address the specific barriers within post-secondary to Aboriginal recruitment into teacher education programs. The Association of BC Deans of Education-FNEESC-IAHLA Working Group contracted Dr. Jean-Paul Restoule, the

Activity Highlights

- Continued to ensure a voice for IAHLA member institutes with respect to Aboriginal post-secondary policy development and the BC post-secondary education system overall.
- Participated in the First Nations Post-Secondary Comprehensive Review of Federal Programming.
- Worked with partners to support the development of an Indigenous Language Proficiency Degree Framework.
- Contributed to the review of the Aboriginal Service Plan Initiative by supporting community engagement and by providing input at all stages of the Review.
- Supported communities and institutes in accessing the Aboriginal Community-Based Training Partnerships Program.
- Contributed to the development of a plan to improve Aboriginal teacher recruitment, retention, and deployment and supported the advancement of the Association of BC Deans-FNEESC-IAHLA Working Group on Indigenous Education.
- Contributed to the development of a BC-Specific Model for funding students, Aboriginal-controlled institutes, and community-based delivery for communities without an institute.
- Contributed to the development of a model policy regarding the respectful use of Traditional Knowledge and Indigenous Intellectual Property that can be adopted by post-secondary institutions in BC.

Indigenous Education Chair at the University of Victoria, to conduct research regarding strategies employed by different teacher education programs to recruit, retain, and support Indigenous teacher candidates and graduates.

First Nations Post-Secondary Comprehensive Review of Federal Programming

Federal budget 2017 included a commitment to: “undertake a comprehensive and collaborative review with Indigenous partners of all current federal programs that support Indigenous students who wish to pursue post-secondary education”. In response to calls from First Nations for a separate review for and led by First Nations, the Department of Indigenous Services provided funding for the Assembly of First Nations to lead the First Nations portion of the Review through a Post-Secondary Education Review Working Group. BC’s representation on this Working Group included: Dr. Verna Billy-Minnabarriet (Chair of IAHLA) and Jessie Williams (Chair of the FNEESC Post-Secondary Subcommittee).

Three rounds of meetings were held in Ottawa and discussions focused on development of policy and program delivery models, and developing costing frameworks. IAHLA is currently providing feedback on the Draft Report and will continue to be involved until it is finalized. Once the Final Report is completed, it will be presented at the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Annual General Assembly.

Draft BC-Specific Model Post-Secondary Education Funding Model

This year, IAHLA and FNEESC began work towards a BC-Specific Post-Secondary Model. The Model will consist of three pillars: student funding, core Aboriginal-controlled institute funding, and community-based program delivery funding. In this Draft BC-Specific Model, First Nations would have direct access to increased funding that allows them to support all students at the level required to remove financial barriers. Consistent with the 2012 Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework, under the proposed Draft BC-Specific Model, Federal and Provincial Governments would jointly support Aboriginal-controlled institutes through stable, core funding. Additionally, recognizing that some First Nations may not have their own institutes, Provincial and Federal governments would provide funding to bring post-secondary programming into communities. Future work and engagement with First Nations and Aboriginal-controlled institutes is needed to determine the details of the Model. This will also mean further research into the readiness and need for core funding for our institutes in BC.

Indigenous Language Fluency / Proficiency Degree

The language proficiency degree project is part of our longstanding efforts to support language revitalization and the creation of new language speakers, recognizing that language fluency among adults who are eligible to enter language teacher training programs is in decline.

In 2017, IAHLA signed a partnership agreement

with the Indigenous Language Proficiency Degree Consortium to design a framework and implement pilot projects for a First Nations language fluency degree (the degree). The consortium includes Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a, the University of Northern British Columbia, the University of British Columbia Okanagan, the University of British Columbia Vancouver, the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, the Okanagan Indian Education Resources Society (En'owkin Centre), the University of Victoria, and Simon Fraser University. Our partnership agreement sets the groundwork for our joint efforts through identification of our purpose, recognition of guiding principles, and describing how the partnership will function.

The Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training provided \$100,000 in funding which was used to complete the initial phases of the Framework. In Spring 2018, the *Proposal for an Indigenous Language Proficiency Degree Framework for the Province of British Columbia* was completed. The Framework sets out a common degree structure allowing for a straightforward transfer of students, courses, and credits across institutions. The content of the degree emphasizes instruction in and through language, and the delivery of the first two years of instruction should be undertaken in communities themselves (through community institutions in partnership with appropriate public post-secondary institutes, or through a direct relationship with a public post-secondary institute. The Framework contains a laddering component which would allow students to earn a Language Certificate, Language Diploma, or Bachelor Degree.

Partners to the Consortium are now seeking funding to support the local curriculum

development and piloting of the degree and following the pilot of the degree will require approval by each institution's senate and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training. IAHLA hopes that the work that it has undertaken in this area will provide increased opportunities to advance training and fluency in First Nations languages. Advancement of the Indigenous Language Proficiency Degree supports Goal 1 of the Aboriginal Policy Framework: "systematic change means that the public post-secondary education system is relevant, responsive, respectful and receptive to Aboriginal learners and communities and relationships between public post-secondary institutions and Aboriginal communities are based on mutual respect."

Tuition Waiver Program for Former Youth in Care

In 2017, the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training expanded the Tuition Waiver for former youth in care to all 25 public post-secondary institutions in BC. The program was previously only available at 11 public post-secondary institutions. In order to be eligible for a tuition waiver a student must:

- Be 19-26 years old (inclusive);
- Be a current resident of BC;
- Attending a BC public post-secondary institution; and
- Have received care from the Ministry of Children and Family Development or a Delegated Aboriginal Agency through the Child, Family and Community Service Act for a minimum of 24 months (consecutive or accumulated).

Aboriginal people make up a disproportionate number of former children and youth in care in BC; therefore, it is important for IAHLA to continually work with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training so that this program can be improved to better support Aboriginal former youth in care. IAHLA engaged with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training and provided suggestions for how the Program could better support Aboriginal former youth in care and students attending Aboriginal-controlled institutes, including developing wrap-around supports, removing the age restrictions, removing the minimum time in care requirement, removing the BC residency requirement, increasing flexibility of the program to allow for transfers between institutions, expanding the program to be inclusive of graduate and professional programs, and improving communications and promotion of the program.

- Jeannette Armstrong (En'owkin Centre)
- Verna Billy-Minnabarriet (IAHLA Chair)
- Pauline Waterfall (Heiltsuk Nation)
- Kendra Underwood (Saanich Adult Learning Centre)
- Louise Lacerte (Lake Babine Memorial Learning Centre)

The next phase of the Traditional Knowledge Project will be the development of a resource for Aboriginal-controlled institutes.

Traditional Knowledge Project

In recognition of the fact many public post-secondary institutes do not have appropriate policies in place for the protection of Indigenous knowledge and intellectual property, in 2017 the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training provided funding to develop draft policy template(s) as a resource for institutions. Dr. Kelly Bannister was contracted to develop these draft policy template(s) based on engagement with the Traditional Knowledge Project Steering Committee, which included representation from IAHLA.

Members of the Traditional Knowledge Project Steering Committee include:

Partnerships



IAHLA is committed to working in partnership with a range of partners in order to effectively share information and resources, collaborate on relevant projects, and promote a coordinated approach to Aboriginal adult and post-secondary education issues in BC.

FNESC & FNSA

Since its establishment, IAHLA has worked particularly closely with FNESC and the First Nations Schools Association (FNSA). FNESC is the provincial-level non-profit society that represents and supports First Nations in BC in their efforts to ensure quality educational opportunities for First Nations students. The FNSA is a provincial-level non-profit society with a mandate to work on the collective needs of First Nations schools in the province. FNESC has a long-standing Post-Secondary Subcommittee that reports to its full Board of Directors on First Nations post-secondary education issues. FNESC

and IAHLA generally collaborate in meetings with partners in post-secondary education to present a united voice for First Nations communities and Aboriginal institutes.

Government Agencies

IAHLA strives to maintain a positive and effective relationship with relevant government agencies in order to increase the recognition of and support for Aboriginal-controlled institutes in BC, and facilitate greater success for adult learners enrolled in public institutes.

As of July 2016, IAHLA has a protocol agreement that formalizes the relationship with both FNESC and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training. The protocol recognizes that Aboriginal-controlled institutes are a critical part of BC's post-secondary system, working within communities to support Aboriginal learners in achieving their education goals.

IAHLA is actively involved in ongoing discussions with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training, guided by the commitments in their Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework. This includes participation in a wide range of working groups and committees, such as the Aboriginal Policy Working Group, the Aboriginal Teacher Recruitment, Retention and Deployment Working Group, the Irving K. Barber Aboriginal Student Award Steering and Adjudication Committees, the Aboriginal Service Plan Steering Committee, and the Steering Committee and adjudication team for the Aboriginal Community-Based Training Partnerships Program. IAHLA also communicates regularly with the Department of Indigenous Services to promote the needs and priorities of Aboriginal-controlled institutes with the Federal government.

BC Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Partners Table

IAHLA is a founding member of the BC Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners Table. In March 2005, a number of post-secondary education stakeholders came together and committed to improving access and success for all Aboriginal post-secondary students. The group signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), formalizing their commitment. The MoU states:

We, the undersigned, acknowledge, that although there has been some progress in recent years, there is a need for improved levels of participation and success for Aboriginal learners in postsecondary education and training in British Columbia. We state our intention to work collectively toward this goal within the mandates of our respective organizations and to bring in other partners as appropriate. This

Partnership Highlights

- Collaborated with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training on the implementation of the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework, including the: Aboriginal Service Plan initiative, Irving K. Barber Aboriginal Awards, and the development of an annual report on Aboriginal post-secondary data.
- Continued as a key member of the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Partners Table, increasing IAHLA's profile and the profile of Aboriginal post-secondary education in general, including participating on its Policy Working Group, Transitions Working Group, Data Working Group, and Aboriginal Teacher Recruitment and Retention Working Group.
- Supported the advancement of initiatives falling under the Association of BC Deans of Education-FNESC-IAHLA Working Group on Indigenous Education, such the Indigenous Teacher Education Research Initiative.
- Acted as standing members of the BC Post-Secondary Institution First Nations Articulation Committee, ensuring that Aboriginal postsecondary education perspectives are integrated into provincial articulation.
- Represented IAHLA institutes at bilateral meetings with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training and FNESC.
- Collaborated with Indigenous Language Proficiency Degree Consortium in order to support the development of language programming that leads to fluency.
- Worked with the Assembly of First Nations through participating in the First Nations Post-Secondary Comprehensive Review of Federal Programming.

will be accomplished by building on our successes to date, collectively identifying needs, and implementing strategies to improve the success of Aboriginal post-secondary learners in British Columbia.

The Post-Secondary Education Partners continue to be active and engaged, meeting on a regular basis to share information and implement joint strategies.

Audited financial statements will be added upon approval.

Board Members

Dr. Verna Billy-Minnabarriet, Chair
Secwepemc / St'át'imc / Nlakaamux Region
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology

Lauren Terbasket, Vice-Chair
Kootenay / Okanagan Region
En'owkin Centre

Louise Lacerte, Treasurer
Tsilhqot'in / Carrier / Sekani Region
Lake Babine Nation

Robert Schuster, Secretary
Member at Large
Lil'wat Nation / Mount Currie Band

Ashley Joe
Member at Large
Sechelt Indian Band Education Centre

Cathy Warren
Kaska / Dene / Tahltan / Tagish / Inland Tlingit Region
Kwadacha Dune Ty

Deanna Nyce
Haida / Tsimshian / Haisla / Nisga'a Region
Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a

Nancy Seward
Nuu-chah-nulth / Coast Salish Region
Snuneymuxw House of Learning

Tracey Woods
Gitksan / Wet'suwet'en Region
Gitksan / Wet'suwet'en Education Society

Bonita Wallas
Kwakiutl / Heiltsuk / Nuxalk / Oweekeno Region
Kwakiutl / Heiltsuk / Nuxalk / Oweekeno

Member Institutes

Ahousaht Education Authority	Ahousaht
Blueberry River First Nation Adult Centre	Buick Creek
CFDC of Central Interior First Nations	Kamloops
Chemainus Native College	Ladysmith
Coastal Training Centre	Prince Rupert
Cowichan Tribes - Quw'utsun Syuw'entst Lelum	Duncan
En'owkin Centre (Okanagan Indian Educational Resources Society)	Penticton
Fort Nelson First Nation Community Education Authority (Chalo School)	Fort Nelson
Gitksan Wet'suwet'en Education Society	Hazelton
Gitwangak Education Society	Kitwanga
Heiltsuk College	Bella Bella
Ittatsoo Learning Centre	Ucluelet
Jean Marie Joseph Adult School	Prince George
K'ak'ot'lats'i School	Coal Harbour
Kitamaat Valley Institute	Kitimat
Kwadacha Dune Tiiy - Aatse Davie School	Fort Ware
Kyah Wiget Education Society	Smithers
Lip'alhayc Learning Centre	Bella Coola
Muskoti Learning Centre - Saulneau First Nations	Chetwynd
NEC Native Education College	Vancouver
Neskonlith Education Center	Chase
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT)	Merritt
Northern Shuswap Tribal Council	Williams Lake
NTC Nuw-chah-nulth Tribal Council NETP	Port Alberni
Office of Indigenous Affairs, University of Victoria (<i>Associate Member</i>)	Victoria
Pacheedaht First Nation	Port Renfrew
Penelakut Island Learning Centre	Chemainus
Penticton Indian Band Adult Education	Penticton
Prince George Nechako Aboriginal Employment & Training Association	Prince George
Saanich Adult Education Centre	Brentwood Bay
Seabird College	Agassiz
Sechelt Indian Band Education Centre	Sechelt
Secwepemc Cultural Education Society	Kamloops

Skeetchestn Band Education	Savona
Snuneymuxw First Nation/House of Learning	Nanaimo
Sto:lo Nation	Chilliwack
Ted Williams Memorial Learning Centre	Burns Lake
Tl'azt'en Adult Learning Centre	Fort St. James
Tsay Keh Dene	Prince George
Ts'zil Learning Centre (Lil'wat Nation)	Mount Currie
Wabsuwilaks'm Gitselasu	Terrace
Wahmeesh Learning Centre	Gold River
Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a	Gitwinksihlkw



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