

The BC Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners continue to meet quarterly to work collaboratively on common issues concerning Aboriginal post-secondary learners. This Update issue highlights initiatives of the First Nations Education Steering Committee, Ministry of Advanced Education, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Service Canada.

Jurisdiction over Education

Bill C-34: First Nations Jurisdiction over Education in British Columbia Act has now been passed by both the House of Commons and the Senate, and received Royal Assent on December 12, 2006. Its primary purpose is to enable the package of Agreements signed in July 2006 to be brought into force.

This legislation will provide Indian control of Indian education in BC. Participating First Nations schools through the First Nations Education Authority (FNEA), will be able to set curriculum, certify teachers and grant graduation certificates. The next step will be preparation and introduction of provincial legislation, anticipated to take place later this spring. A further step is the negotiation of federal funding to support the implementation of Canada-First Nations Agreements and the First Nations Education Authority (FNEA). It is hoped that the budget for 2007-2008 will be finalized by the end of April.

The capacity building for interested First Nations

AVED Activities

Funding Aboriginal Education...

AVED contributed \$100,000 to the **Chief Joe Mathias BC Aboriginal Scholarship Fund** to help more students pursue education and training in the province. Since 2002, 46 scholarships from the fund have helped students from 31 First Nations study such things as commerce, law and medicine, as well as child and youth care, developmental programs, baking and Chinese medicine. Students have received up to \$15,000 each. AVED's contribution to the fund was announced as part of the celebration renaming the Squamish Nation's building after the late Chief Joe Mathias.

Collaboration for Success...

AVED has invited public institutions to submit an Expression of Interest to be considered for the Ministry's **Aboriginal Service Plan (ASP)**

continues with the preparation of a Governance Training Strategy, and the development of templates for the First Nations Education Law, Law-making Protocol, Education Co-Management Agreement and other relevant documents.

First People's English 12...

Development of **First People's English 12** curriculum and exam continues. An Advisory Group made up of Aboriginal educators, and representatives of the Ministry and BCTF meet approximately once a month. The course is scheduled for pilot implementation in First Nations schools September 2007 and full implementation September 2008. This course will be equivalent to English 12.

See <http://www.fnesc.ca/jurisdiction/index.php> for more information and current updates.

initiative. This plan enhances the opportunity for institutions and Aboriginal communities to collaborate in the development of three-year service plans that outline goals for Aboriginal learners in terms of access, participation, and success and identifies specific actions to be implemented to meet these goals. AVED will provide \$150,000 each for up to 10 public post-secondary institutions to develop ASPs.

Plan of Action...

AVED has developed a draft **Aboriginal Strategy/Action Plan.** The strategy outlines initiatives to advance Aboriginal post-secondary education based on province-wide consultation, with a goal to improve Aboriginal education outcomes to be comparable to those of non-Aboriginal learners. It is anticipated that the final draft of the Strategy/Action Plan will be released in the spring of 2007.

The Partners

MoU Signatories

First Nations Education Steering Committee
First Nations Summit
Strategic Action Committee
Métis Nation BC
United Native Nations Society
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)
Ministry of Advanced Education - Aboriginal Programs
University Presidents' Council of BC
University College Presidents
British Columbia College Presidents
Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association

Members

BC AHRDA Society
Ministry of Education – Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch
Ministry of Economic Development
Service Canada
Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

For information about the Partners, contact Karen Bailey-Romanko at karenbr@fnesc.ca



Update from INAC

INAC Post-Secondary Student Support Program...

Over 5,500 INAC-funded students have graduated from their program in BC since 1998, with over 1000 graduating in 2005-06. Most students complete certificates or diplomas but 31 students received graduate degrees in 2005-06 and 144 received undergraduate degrees. The areas of study with the most graduates in recent years include Business and Commerce, Social Sciences and Services, Engineering and Applied Science (which includes Trades) and Education.

Key Priorities (rev. June 9/06)

1. Support activities that reduce the barriers to and increase opportunities for Aboriginal students to access post-secondary education and training by promoting:

- student transitions from K-12 to post-secondary education and training;
- transitional programming required to support the Aboriginal students, including returning mature students;
- the delivery of Aboriginal bridging and ABE programs that are designed for Aboriginal learners;
- increased levels of funding to allow Aboriginal students access to post-secondary opportunities;
- greater access to post-secondary education through community based delivery and alternate delivery models;
- the availability of mentors and role models for Aboriginal students; and
- institutional support.

2. Increase the retention and graduation rates of Aboriginal post-secondary education learners by promoting:

- a reasonable level of funding for Aboriginal student support, including daycare, transport, tutoring, etc.;
- a greater level of funding for institutional support for Aboriginal learners;
- the availability of mentors and role models, including Elders in Residence;
- increased student support services for Aboriginal students;
- the hiring of Aboriginal individuals as faculty, staff; and other positions of influence within the system;



Service Canada and AHRDA

ACCESS to Apprenticeship for Aboriginal Women...

Sixteen women from both on- and off-reserve enrolled in this newly launched 13 week program in February 2007. ACCESS is partnering with the Construction Industry Training Institute (CITI) to offer Aboriginal women the opportunity to gain knowledge and experience in many aspects of the building construction trades (i.e. Trowel Trades, painting & decorating, heavy equipment operation, and metal trades).

For further information about this program contact: Helen Boyce at (604) 980-1455.

- the development of more Aboriginal-specific content for the Aboriginal post-secondary curriculum, including Métis content;

3. Increase the collection and use of data to guide improvements for Aboriginal learners in the post-secondary arena by:

- promoting the value of reliable data collection and usage in the post-secondary arena;
- identifying where data gaps exist; and
- recommending the improvement of data collection to support monitoring and planning efforts.

4. Encourage discussion and identification of the issues of racism at a macro level and identify best practice/initiatives to address the issues of racism within the post-secondary education institutions.

5. Foster the development of more equitable partnerships between public post secondary institutions and Aboriginal post-secondary institutions.

6. Promote career awareness and increase access to information for all fields of study and employment opportunities, including the trades.

The Partners commit to review and revise these Key Priorities on an ongoing basis.