



INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL (IEC)

IEC Meeting

Thursday, September 7, 2023 – 1:30 pm
School Board Office – Board Room 1
 (1040 Hollywood Road S.)

MINUTES

Council Members:	Elder Wilfred Barnes Westbank First Nation Elder Chantelle Desrosiers Board of Education Allan Louis Okanagan Indian Band	Ann Bell Lake Country Native Association Julia Fraser Board of Education Nicole Werstuik Westbank First Nation	Jordan Coble Westbank First Nation Denise Clough Westbank First Nation
School District Staff:	Terry Beaudry Central Okanagan Public Schools April Strickland Central Okanagan Public Schools	Kevin Kaardal Central Okanagan Public Schools Christie Russell Central Okanagan Public Schools	Anne Tenning Central Okanagan Public Schools
Absent:	Barbara Jagodics Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society Jennifer Lewis Okanagan Nation Alliance	Brad Dahl Kelowna Métis Association Rachel Marchand Okanagan Indian Band	Kendra Langrish Kelowna Métis Association Edna Terbasket Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society

1. Opening Prayer

Elder Barnes led the Council in an opening prayer.

2. Welcome

Chair Jordan Coble welcomed everyone to the IEC meeting. Council members introduced themselves around the table.

Terry Beaudry, Deputy Superintendent of Schools, reviewed the configuration of the Indigenous Education administration team. Anne Tenning is the District's new Director of Instruction – Indigenous Education and Equity. Christie Russell is the new District Vice-Principal of Indigenous Education and will be overseeing elementary schools. April Strickland, District Vice-Principal – Indigenous Education will be overseeing middle and secondary schools.

FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION

3. Adoption of the September 7, 2023 Agenda

Add Prior to Agenda Item 6.1: Topics to Consider Adding to the IEC Agenda Template

MOVED by Ann Bell, SECONDED by Denise Clough

THAT: The agenda for September 7, 2023 be adopted as amended. CARRIED.

4. Review and Approval of Minutes

MOVED by Chantelle Desrosiers, SECONDED by Ann Bell
THAT: The Minutes for April 4, 2023 be adopted as presented. CARRIED

June 6, 2023 IEC Meeting Summary Notes - received as presented.
August 24, 2023 IEC Meeting Summary Notes - received as presented.

5. OLD BUSINESS

5.1 Indigenous "Kids in Care" in the School District, Tutors, and Wrap-Around Services of Support (Standing Item)

Council members discussed ways that can assist with addressing this topic, including exploring different ways to educate (i.e., the District's Land Based Love program and the Yukon's Junior Advocate Program), teaching the Okanagan language to students to promote self-recognition and healing, recruiting and training language teachers, hiring Indigenous employees using special dispensation from the BC Human Rights Tribunal, and developing stronger Indigenous communities through Bill C92.

5.2 Bursaries and Scholarships for Indigenous Grads (Standing Item)

Terry Beaudry shared that this agenda item will be deferred to the November IEC meeting.

5.3 Community Engagement (Standing Item)

Plan for Recruiting Parent Representatives

The IEC spoke about planning an event with parents, possibly in October, to connect with them and provide more information about the Land Based Love program, celebrate accomplishments, and promote involvement in the Indigenous Education Council.

Action Item: Ann Bell and Terry Beaudry will meet together to discuss a plan for recruiting parent representatives and then share their ideas with the IEC.

5.4 IEC Terms of Reference

The Deputy Superintendent of Schools advised that the IEC Terms of Reference (TOR), previously reviewed by the IEC, will be brought forward to the November IEC meeting for final amendments. The membership section of the IEC TOR still needs updating. Chair Coble will report to the IEC in November about the ONA's representation on the Council.

Future Agenda Item: Review Amendments to the IEC Terms of Reference - Add to the November IEC agenda.

6. NEW BUSINESS

Topics to Consider Adding to the IEC Agenda Template:

Anne Tenning requested adding the topics Community Updates and District Updates to the IEC agenda template as Standing Items. Council members that cannot attend the meeting in person could provide a written update about their community organization. The Superintendent of Schools/CEO or the Deputy Superintendent of Schools could provide the District Update. It was suggested to rename "Old Business" to "Standing Items".

MOVED by Ann Bell, SECONDED by Allan Louis
THAT: The proposed additional topics, Community Updates and District Updates, be added to the Indigenous Education Council agenda template as Standing Items;
AND THAT: "Old Business" be renamed "Standing Items". CARRIED.

District Updates (NEW Standing Item)

The Superintendent of Schools/CEO shared that recruiting District employees is a continual challenge. The District expects to have closer to 70 Indigenous Student Advocates; however, we currently have 57. There is great hope for the Indigenous Education administration team, and the leaders that are new to the team, as they continue the work. Language support is a priority in the District. We welcomed over 217 newcomers over the summer and the District now has over 2500 newcomers. We had a smooth start to the school year and children and youth are excited to see friends and have routine. Families have experienced trauma due to the wildfire and the Indigenous Education team is reaching out to Indigenous families in school communities to provide support. The District provided space for the Central Okanagan Emergency Operations Center during the summer wildfire and WFN is providing space for the new Emergency Services Resiliency Center. The District's Transportation Department is bussing Westside students, whose route to school has been cut off by the wildfire, through Vernon. School air filters are working to improve air quality in the classrooms, but the filters cannot remove the entire smell of fire.

There are emergency supports from the government for a wildfire event; however, there are no supports in place for emergencies such as the recent landslide on the highway that cut off Summerland from West Kelowna. As a result, a water taxi, provided by a tour company, is commuting people from Summerland to West Kelowna, and the District is paying the cost of this for District employees until the road re-opens.

The District's graduation rate and Indigenous graduation rate is well above the provincial average. We are growing in terms of staffing and the team is busy trying to hire high quality Indigenous Student Advocates. Graduation rates are affected by "life" and we continue to do District work with an eye to support those most impacted by natural emergencies and the issues we face around the world (i.e., refugees from Ukraine). The Central Okanagan School District is seen as a powerhouse district in the province. We have an abundance mentality and many community partnerships. If students are successful, it is due to our local communities and the community associations.

The District offers many programs, including Dual Credit and Land Based Learning, that are keeping students in school and thriving. The Feeding Futures program and the Student and Family Affordability Fund is still ongoing, ensuring students and families are fed and students are ready to learn.

Chair Coble reminded the IEC to please refer families in need to the Emergency Services Resiliency Centre at Westbank First Nation where an emergency services representative will provide support for any families impacted by the wildfire.

Community Updates (NEW Standing Item)

This topic will be added to the next IEC agenda. Chair Coble suggested that clarification is needed about who is reporting and what is expected in the report.

3:00 pm – The Superintendent of Schools/CEO left the meeting.

3:15 pm – Meeting reconvened.

6.1 Equity in Review (Annual Reports)

a. Ministry of Education and Child Care Equity in Action Implementation Review

Terry Beaudry, Deputy Superintendent of Schools, shared that the District is responsible to provide an annual update to the Ministry of Education and Child Care on the District's Equity In Action Plan. The Ministry provides their own template for the review, which is written in June and reflects on the work done on the various pillars during the school year. This review is a public document available on the Ministry website and informs the writing of the District's annual report to the Board of Education on the Equity in Action for Truth and Reconciliation Agreement.

b. Central Okanagan Public Schools Equity in Action for Truth and Reconciliation Agreement 2020-2025 – 3rd Annual Report 2022/2023

Terry Beaudry shared that the 3rd Annual Report – 2022/2023 is in final editing phase and will be available digitally after the Board of Education has reviewed the document. This report is co-written by school teams, Indigenous Education, and the voices of students and families.

6.2 Indigenous Education Program Updates

Anne Tenning, Director of Instruction – Indigenous Education and Equity, spoke of several recent highlights of the Indigenous Education Program:

- The Indigenous Education office has been moved to its temporary office space in the School Board Office during the renovation of Hollywood Road Education Services. It was a monumental task to move the office and the Indigenous Education team has done an amazing job.
- There have been changes to the Indigenous Education staff team:
 - Simone Gauthier, Indigenous Lead Advocate (newly created role)
 - Nadine Onespot, Indigenous Early Learning Teacher Consultant
 - Tiana Mager, Indigenous Wellness Worker
 - Christina Verhagen, Indigenous Cultural Program Coordinator
- Indigenous Wellness Workers now work 12 months of the year and provide support to students over the summer months. Summer Indigenous Wellness Check-ins were hosted in various parks and were well attended.
- The focus for September is staffing. We are starting with a high number of Indigenous advocate vacancies. However, schools without an advocate will still receive supports. Interviews for advocates have been done and the District hopes to hire from these interviews. We need to continue to recruit and hold our standards high.
- Another focus for September is to meet the 1701 requirements and ensure the District reaches the projected target for the number of students this year.
- Recruitment for the Elders in Residence program will begin again as we reach out to Indigenous community partners to potentially recruit at community gatherings, or by hosting an information tea for Elders.
- We have received confirmation from the Ministry of Education and Child Care that the Student and Family Affordability Fund will continue this year for students who need extra support.
- School visits with the Indigenous Education staff is a priority. It is important that the Indigenous Education administration team is in schools and the community, and we welcome any opportunity to be in local communities.

Budget Update

Terry Beaudry shared that the previous year's surplus included in the 2023-2024 Indigenous Education Program Budget increased by \$17,314 and has been added to the budget as follows:

- Cultural and Language Expenses – Add \$3,602
- General Staff Expenses – Add \$5,712
- Professional Development – Director – Add \$6,000
- Telephone – Add \$2,000

There remains several Indigenous Education staff vacancies which continues to increase the surplus budget.

6.3 New Public Admin Procedure – Jordan's Principle

The Deputy Superintendent of Schools shared that the District has co-developed a new Administrative Procedure for Jordan's Principle over the last year through collaboration between District senior staff, principals, Indigenous Education, Inclusive Education and Westbank First Nation. This living document is posted internally as well as publicly on the District website so parents and community members can access our process. School applications must flow through the Indigenous Education Department to enable the District to better understand the needs of Indigenous students and to collaborate and coordinate supports and services for each child.

6.4 **Hosting a Summer 2024 Event for Educators Prior to School Startup**

Chair Coble spoke of a summer professional development event that took place several years ago for teachers to engage in Indigenous Education topics and to learn more about the partnership aspect with Westbank First Nation. This event was voluntary and was offered multiple days prior to the start of the school year.

The IEC agreed that a similar Pro-D event in Summer 2024 prior to the start of the school year would be a good idea. Terry Beaudry suggested that the District approach the Central Okanagan Teachers' Association (COTA) about their summer pro-d days and Terry will provide an update at a future IEC meeting. Alternatively, the October Implementation Day could be considered as it has a focus on Indigeneity.

Action Item: Contact the COTA about hosting an event at their Summer 2024 Pro-D days. (Terry Beaudry)

6.5 **Tour Temporary Indigenous Education Office Space**

Terry Beaudry and Anne Tenning led the IEC on a tour of the Indigenous Education Department's temporary office space at the School Board Office.

7. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

There were no information items.

8. **REVIEW ACTION ITEMS**

Action Item: Westbank First Nation to arrange a meeting with Okanagan Nation Alliance to discuss ONA representation on the Indigenous Education Council (Jordan Coble)

9. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Indigenous Early Learning Initiatives Report (Presentation by the Early Learning Team)
- Foundation Skills Assessment – Deborah Jeffrey, FNESC Executive Director
- Review Amendments to the IEC Terms of Reference - Add to the November IEC agenda.

Next IEC Meeting – Tuesday, November 21, 2023 (1:30 pm to 4:00 pm)

Future 2023-2024 IEC Meetings:

(All meetings are 1:30 pm – 4:00 pm)

February 6, 2024 (Budget Meeting); April 9, 2024; June 4, 2024

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm.

<u>ACTION ITEMS – In Progress:</u>	<u>Person(s) Responsible</u>
Westbank First Nation to arrange a meeting with ONA to discuss ONA representation on the Indigenous Education Council.	Jordan Coble
Up-to-date appointment letters to be received from voting council members with expired terms.	Terry Beaudry/All
The IEC to explore ideas to form a sustainable Indigenous Parent and Family Education Council and forward their ideas to Terry Beaudry.	All
To send the most frequently asked questions re. Syilx cultural guidelines to Nicole.	April Strickland/ Jasmine Lemon
Contact the COTA about the IEC hosting an event at their Summer 2024 Pro-D days.	Terry Beaudry
Ann Bell and Terry Beaudry to meet together to discuss a plan for recruiting parent representatives and then share their ideas with the IEC.	Terry Beaudry/ Ann Bell