

First Nations Education Steering Committee

- Mandate:** To facilitate discussion about education matters affecting First Nations in British Columbia by disseminating information and soliciting input from First Nations
- Vision:** To improve education for all First Nations learners in British Columbia
- Executive:** Tyrone McNeil, FNESC President, Stó:lō Tribal Council
Marlene Erickson, FNESC Vice-President, Carrier Sekani Tribal Council
Cynthia Bohn, FNESC Treasurer, Kitsumkalum Band Council
Diane Anthony, FNESC Secretary, Adams Lake Band
- Structure:** Established in 1992, the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) is a policy and advocacy organization that represents and works for First Nations in British Columbia to achieve quality education for First Nations learners and advance First Nations education in BC. One hundred and thirty First Nations have appointed members to the FNESC Board.
- FNESC advocates on education matters that affect First Nations learners, regardless of where they live or attend school, recognizing and supporting the diverse and unique nature of First Nations and striving to support all First Nations learners, schools and communities on an equitable basis. FNESC supports First Nations collectively, through policy and legislative development with government and by implementing programs and services that benefit all First Nations and First Nation schools.
- FNESC does not advocate in support of the financial or personal interests of individual First Nations, specific groups, or individuals. FNESC is not able to provide funding for individual students or staff. FNESC also respects and supports the inherent authority and decision-making of First Nations and cannot get involved in education or governance matters internal to First Nations.
- Key Achievements:** Provides a united voice on First Nations education in BC, as directed by First Nations leadership and through a formal protocol with the First Nations Leadership Council.
- Co-developed amendments to the BC School Act to improve First Nation student learning outcomes through relationships and processes that respect the inherent authority and role of First Nation governments, parents and communities in the education of their children and youth. The 2023 amendments address Local Education Agreements, Indigenous Education Councils, and First Nations Schools of Choice.
- Successfully advocated for an Indigenous-focused graduation requirement that requires all students to take four credits of Indigenous-focused coursework to graduate from secondary school with a Dogwood Diploma.
- Advanced First Nations control of First Nations education in BC by supporting First Nations to achieve jurisdiction agreements to exercise law-making authority over Kindergarten to Grade 12 education on their lands. Seven First Nations have signed formal education jurisdiction agreements.
- Worked with the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association for increased recognition and funding for First Nations mandated post-secondary institutes, including the recent enactment of legislation committing to ongoing funding for eligible First Nations mandated post-secondary institutes.



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Suite 113-100 Park Royal South, West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2

T: 604-925-6087 Toll-free in BC: 1-877-422-3672 F: 604-925-6097 www.fnesc.ca info@fnesc.ca

Negotiated the 2018 BC Tripartite Education Agreement: Supporting First Nations Student Success (BCTEA), as witnessed by the First Nations Schools Association, which supports all First Nations learners, regardless of where they live or attend school. BCTEA provides a flexible and effective funding model for First Nations schools and funding for a comprehensive collection of second and third level services to support the BC First Nations education system. The Agreement was extended to 2025.

Key Events:

Annual FNESC Education Conference
Regional Sessions community meetings
Provincial meetings of First Nations representatives

Affiliated Bodies:

First Nations Schools Association
Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association
First Nations Education Authority