
Assembly of First Nations

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**SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
DECEMBER 4, 5, AND 6, 2018, OTTAWA, ON**

Resolution no. 59/2018

TITLE: First Nations Early Learning and Child Care Regional Funding Allocation Approach

SUBJECT: Early Learning and Child Care (Health, Social, Education)

MOVED BY: Chief David Crate, Fisher River Cree Nation, MB

SECONDED BY: Chief George Cote, Cote First Nation, SK

DECISION Carried; 2 abstentions

WHEREAS:

A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states:

- i. Article 2: Indigenous peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination, in the exercise of their rights, in particular that based on their indigenous origin or identity.
- ii. Article 14 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
- iii. Article 21 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, *inter alia*, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.
- iv. Article 23: Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions.

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- B. Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Resolution 39/2016, *First Nations National Working Group on Early Learning and Child Care*, established the National Expert Working Group on First Nations Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) (Working Group).
- C. The Working Group oversaw a community engagement process that identified and confirmed key principles, priorities and actions for First Nations ELCC. Based on this process, the Working Group produced the National First Nations ELCC Policy Framework in 2017, as part of the National Indigenous ELCC Framework.
- D. AFN Resolution 83/2017, *Support for the National First Nations Early Learning and Child Care Policy Framework*, endorsed the framework created by the Working Group, and further mandated this group to support the implementation of both the broader National Indigenous ELCC Framework and the First Nations ELCC Framework. This resolution further called on the AFN to work with Canada to secure additional investments for ELCC.
- E. Canada committed \$1.02 billion over 10 years for First Nations ELCC. The funding committed is broad and flexible, enabling First Nations determination of how the funds are spent. This includes determining the proportionate regional allocation of funding according to First Nations-determined priorities. For the first four fiscal years of the funding profile, 10% of the First Nations ELCC funding is dedicated to partnerships and governance, per the First Nations ELCC Frameworks capacity development provisions and strategic actions in all areas.
- F. The AFN, at the direction of the Working Group, and in partnership with Indigenous Services Canada and Employment and Social Development Canada, has co-developed options for regional allocation of funding that are as fair and equitable as possible using existing data, and see all regions benefitting from the new investments. The Working Group has provisionally recommended that for the first two funding years (2018-19 and 2019-20), a per capita funding approach, based on the Modified Berger Formula using the Indian Registration System population counts of on and off-reserve children aged 0-6, weighted for remoteness, be taken in order to initially enable all regions to implement the National Indigenous, and First Nations ELCC Frameworks, and to support service delivery to all First Nations children.
- G. Following the First Nations ELCC Frameworks funding of strategic actions at the structural level in the short term, the initial funding allocation for the first two funding years will be re-evaluated in 2019 to assess and implement a new allocation approach that accounts for factors that are not currently employed by existing data and approaches, including (but not limited to) remoteness, northern locale, small population, population growth, existing and needed infrastructure, capital, human resources, and costs of delivering language and cultural-based service delivery. This will also include examining a fixed or base proportion of funds, along with determining the best approach for calculating the First Nations child population, and the needs of First Nations.

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- H. The 10-year funding profile committed to First Nations ELCC is heavily back-ended beyond 2022-23, which falls after the current government's mandate and therefore presents a risk to be re-profiled should there be a change in government. These funds must be brought forward to ensure First Nations ELCC is well-funded, sustainable, and comparable to provincial and territorial rates of ELCC funding without any further delay.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chiefs-in-Assembly:

1. Endorse the per capita funding approach, based on the Modified Berger Formula using the Indian Registration System population counts of on and off-reserve children aged 0-6, weighted for remoteness, as provisionally recommended by a majority of the National Expert Working Group on First Nations Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) (Working Group) for the first two funding years.
2. Direct the Working Group to continue to support the implementation of both the National Indigenous ELCC Framework and the First Nations ELCC Framework, subject to continued First Nations direction and leadership at local, regional and national levels, including through linkages to related initiatives in child welfare, Jordan's Principle, education, housing and infrastructure, languages, and governance.
3. Direct the Working Group to strike a sub-working group, comprised of First Nations or of individuals identified by First Nations, with a clear mandate, terms of reference and timeline, to conduct the necessary research, engagement and consultation to develop an equitable and appropriate funding approach for First Nations ELCC investments that considers factors including those mentioned in this Resolution and in the First Nations ELCC Framework (see Section F). This sub-working group shall commence work in December 2018 or January 2019, and shall have a recommendation to bring forward for approval of the Chiefs-in-Assembly in place for fiscal year 2019-20.
4. Call upon the federal government to adequately resource the development of a new funding approach for First Nations ELCC, and ensure that this is sourced separately from service delivery, partnerships and governance funding.
5. Direct the Assembly of First Nations to urge the federal government to bring forward the currently back-ended funding for First Nations ELCC and guarantee from the federal government to ensure that funding for 2018-2019 be carried over to the next fiscal year in order to allow regions to develop their own funding formula and their governance.
6. Call upon the federal, provincial and territorial governments to work with First Nations communities, service providers and regional First Nations ELCC coordination structures to build and further develop strong partnerships at the local and regional levels to support First Nations ELCC.

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