



What is the history of this issue and how does it impact First Nations?

K-12 Education

The Languages and Learning Sector (the Sector) continues to work towards implementing Assembly First Nations (AFN) Resolution 65/2017, *New Interim Funding Approach for First Nation Education* and AFN Resolution 35/2019, *Additional Funding for First Nations Elementary and Secondary Education* to support First Nations students, schools, and communities throughout Education Transformation. Education Transformation seeks to secure sustainable and predictable funding for education programs, which offers First Nations the option to establish Treaty-based, regional and/or local education agreements to meet the needs of students, schools, and First Nations.

Post-Secondary Education

First Nations have an inherent and Treaty right to education. Budget 2019 provided \$7.5 million over 3 years to support First Nations-led engagement for the development of regional post-secondary models. First Nations are currently in the final year of engagement towards developing their local, regional, and/or Treaty based post-secondary models. AFN Resolution 21/2020, *First Nations-led local, regional, and Treaty-based post-secondary education models*, provides the mandate for the Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE) and the National Indian Education Council (NIEC) to work collaboratively in partnership with the AFN and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to advance the co-development work necessary to obtain the policy authorities to negotiate and conclude First Nations-led, local, regional and Treaty-based post-secondary education models.

Education Infrastructure

AFN Resolution 34/2019, *First Nations Education Infrastructure Review*, supports the work of the CCOE, NIEC and AFN to engage in a federal education infrastructure policy and program review. The review will seek improvements that respect the inherent and Treaty right to education and advance First Nations control of First Nations education and regulation of First Nations education.

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How has the AFN's recent advocacy affected this area?

K-12 Education

The Sector continues to support Regional Education Agreements (REA) to create opportunities for First Nations children to receive a quality and culturally relevant education while respecting the principle of First Nations control of First Nations education. As part of Education Transformation, the Sector continues to advocate for regionalization and decentralization and the advancement of First Nations control of First Nations education.

Budget 2021 announced \$1.2 billion over 5 years for First Nations K-12 Education, with \$726 million for formula enhancements including transportation, and to negotiate and conclude Regional Education Agreements, and \$350 million over 5 years to support adult education.

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, \$112M was extended to the 2021-2022 fiscal year to support Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), online learning, and student and school safety.

The Sector continues to work diligently to advocate for changes to the Supplementary Target Programs including the High-Cost Special Education Program (HCSEP) and the Education Partnership Program (EPP). INDSight Consulting completed research and engagement with First Nations regions and has submitted the *High-Cost Special Education Review*. The final report presents the background and a landscape of the HCSEP delivery in most regions and elements that influence the HCSEP including its delivery and costing, as well as draft recommendations to begin improving the supplementary, targeted program.

Post-Secondary Education

Working towards fulfilling the mandate set out through AFN Resolution 21/2020, the Sector is currently working on seeking regional input and developing a policy proposal. The Sector is seeking feedback from First Nations on the required elements for the policy proposal that would best support First Nations control of First Nations education and implement their vision of post-secondary in their region.

Directions Evidence and Policy Research Group has begun preliminary outreach to First Nations institutions in order to provide a comprehensive, research-based report to assist in identifying the costs to establish, operate, maintain, and advance First Nations post-secondary institutions (FNIs). This research builds upon the First Nations Post-Secondary Education Review Costing Report (2018) and will support First Nations in their advocacy for sustainable and equitable

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funding by presenting key information on the costs associated with establishing new institutions and maintaining and advancing existing institutions. In response to COVID-19, Budget 2021 announced \$150.6M over two years for Indigenous students* and \$26.4M in 2021-2022 for Indigenous institutions.

Education Infrastructure

The Sector and the CCOE have co-developed improvements to ISC's *School Space Accommodation Standards* (SSAS) which increase First Nations school sizes beyond the national standard and add new school spaces for future builds including language and culture rooms, knowledge keeper offices, counselling spaces, outdoor classrooms and enhanced policy flexibility.

First Nations Engineering Services Ltd. was contracted to provide a 15-year capital needs assessment for First Nations schools and teacherages. It was determined by the report that the overall capital costs required for schools is \$5 billion and \$1.2 billion for teacherages over a 15-year period. In response to these numbers, budget advocacy continues to be a top priority for education infrastructure. To accompany the Capital Needs Assessment, the Sector is currently conducting research for operational and maintenance needs of First Nations educational infrastructure.

Budget 2021 allocated \$4.3B over four years for Indigenous Community Infrastructure fund to support immediate demands.

Where do we hope to go in the future?

K-12 Education

The Sector is committed to ensure the funding for First Nations education programs support the needs of all First Nations and continue to maintain First Nations control of First Nations education.

Throughout 2021-2022, the AFN will work with the NIEC, CCOE, First Nations to ensure that ISC's Supplementary Targeted Programs are responsive to the needs of First Nations and promote First Nations control of First Nations education. Given the new budget 2021 allocation for Adult Education, further work will be required on policy and spending authorities.

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Post-Secondary Education

The Sector has begun preliminary outreach and engagement sessions with First Nations, AFN regions and First Nations education organizations with the outline of a draft policy proposal that seeks the mandate to negotiate and conclude First Nations-led local, regional and Treaty-based post-secondary education models. Once a Policy Proposal is complete it will be presented to First Nations-in-Assembly for ratification December 2021.

In Spring 2021, the Sector will be launching a *Call for Stories*, seeking 10-15 stories from First Nations students, aspiring students, and graduates who have recently attended a First Nations post-secondary institution or mainstream institution. The Call for Stories will assist advocacy for supporting increased investments for First Nations students, including culturally and linguistically relevant and adequate and wraparound student support services and the establishment and advancement of First Nations post-secondary institutions.

Education Infrastructure

To further address the gaps in education infrastructure for First Nations, the Sector will continue their work on policy reform regarding operation and maintenance needs, transportation, teacherages, the School Priority Ranking Framework (SPRF), and long-term changes to the SSAS to ensure First Nations receive equitable and adequate funding, and that policies reflect First Nations control of First Nations education.