

SCHOOL DISTRICT # 71

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION COUNCIL

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Amended and Ratified October 2006

NAME

Aboriginal Education Council (AEC)

PURPOSE

The Aboriginal Education Council will work in cooperative partnership with School District #71 to ensure the provision of ongoing comprehensive education and support services relevant to the needs of Aboriginal students, as well as to ensure sensitivity and respect to Aboriginal issues.

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES are recognized in the Canadian Constitution 1982 (Section 35), and includes Indian, Metis, and Inuit. Indians are as defined in the Indian Act 1876. Non-status Indians and all other people with Aboriginal ancestry are also recognized as Aboriginal peoples.

VALUES

We believe:

- in honouring the traditional territory of the Comox people and recognize the importance of their leadership role in Aboriginal Education
- by sharing our world view we take a leading role in education
- in exercising our right to participate in the decisions affecting Aboriginal children and their families
- there is a shared responsibility to provide quality education for our children and families
- in involving parents at all levels
- in respecting and honouring the cultural diversity within the Aboriginal community
- in continuous learning to improve the quality of life
- in the validity of Aboriginal (knowledge) ways of knowing
- in striving for unity of one voice as a Council
- in open and respectful communications at all levels
- in the permanence of Aboriginal culture and rights

RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS

The AEC will work in partnership with School District #71 regarding Aboriginal Education.

- 1. To influence policy that affects Aboriginal students and families**
- 2. To participate in the annual review of the goals of the Enhancement Agreement**
 - a. Assist in identifying Aboriginal education needs and gaps in services
- 3. To develop the annual budget in partnership with School District #71.**
 - a. chair to participate in development of budget
 - b. ensure the allocation of targeted funding for Aboriginal Education
 - c. assist in budget development for potential new monies
 - d. ensure the allocation of capacity building dollars on a yearly basis and develop a work plan
- 4. To participate in the hiring decisions for Aboriginal Education..**
 - a. ensure one AEC member sits on the SD 71 Interview Committee in addition to one Comox Band representative as per LEA requirements.
 - b. participate in the hiring of Aboriginal personnel

- c. develop and establish an orientation process for new members of the Aboriginal Education Council
- 5. To actively promote parental involvement in Aboriginal education**
 - a. assist SD 71 Aboriginal Education to create orientation guides for new students and families.
 - 6. To make recommendations regarding SD 71 curriculum and Aboriginal programs.**
 - a. ensure appropriate Aboriginal content is included in relevant subjects.
 - 7. To ensure implementation of a cultural component.**
 - a. promote awareness of the Comox territorial protocol.
 - b. review and monitor the Aboriginal Resource List.
 - c. review and monitor that Aboriginal cultural diversity is addressed in programs and services
 - 8. To monitor Ministry accountability measures for Aboriginal Education programs and services.**
 - a. Ensure Aboriginal parent participation in the District Review process
 - 9. To monitor implementation of anti-racism training.**
 - a. monitor ongoing anti-racism training for Aboriginal Education Services staff.
 - b. monitor that anti-racism training is being made available for administration, teaching, and teacher aide staff in SD#71.

STRUCTURE

The AEC will consist of one representative from each of the local Aboriginal organizations, a School District 71 administrator of Aboriginal Education, representatives from the Comox Band, parents /guardians of Aboriginal students and an Elder.

Organizations represented will send a letter to the Council each year to notify who the representative and their alternate will be.

Members

- SD #71 Administrator of Aboriginal Education or designated Senior Management Representative
- 2 Comox Indian Band members appointed by Chief and Council
- 1 representative of Comox Valley Aboriginal Head Start
- 1 representative of the MIKI'SIW Metis Association
- 1 representative of Upper Island Women of Native Ancestry
- 1 representative of the Wachiay Friendship Centre
- 4 parents, or legal guardians, of Aboriginal students elected for a 2 year term by parents at the AGM. (may not be employees of the school district)
- 1 parent or legal guardian of an Aboriginal child 0 –5 years
- 1 Aboriginal Elder by invitation
- 1 Aboriginal North Island College Representative

**Each organization/agency is encouraged to provide an alternate to attend AEC meetings if the designated rep is unable to attend.*

Outgoing Parent Reps can serve as Parent Rep Alternates.

QUORUM

Quorum for the AEC is 50% of the filled positions on Council including one Comox Indian Band Representative.

CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING

The AEC will strive for effective and efficient decision-making processes.

Consensus decision-making is defined as when the voting members of the group “can live with” the decision. All views are considered with an open mind. The Chair will monitor the group, and ask for consensus when no dissenting opinions are voiced. If no decision can be made efficiently, the Chair may task a sub-committee to research and make recommendations to the AEC for decision.

ROLE OF CHAIR

- Elected by AEC members at the first meeting after the AGM for a two year term.
- Attends and participates at quarterly SD 71 Management Meetings following AEC full member meetings as appropriate.
- The Chair will preside over meetings, maintain order and decorum, decide on speaking times, accord the right to speak in turn, and promote decision making by consensus. The Chair will decide on any questions of procedure arising during meetings.
- The Chair will ensure that the Code of Conduct is upheld.
- The Chair shall not be a School District 71 employee.

ROLE OF VICE-CHAIR

- Elected by AEC Voting Members (on alternate years from the Chair) at the first meeting after the AGM for a two-year term.
- The Vice-Chair will assume the duties of the Chair as required.

MEETINGS

- Monthly meetings.
- Meeting length maximum 3 hours
- As needed to address urgent matters or committee work.
- Minutes are to be recorded at every meeting by an appointed minute taker and kept at the School District office.
- Staff or student presentations will be made as requested.
- Additional events will be planned bi-annually to ensure parent/guardian awareness and to share relevant information.

COMMITMENT

- Maximum three hours per meeting.
- To be reviewed as needed.
- The Terms of Reference are to be reviewed each year.
- If more than 2 consecutive meetings are missed, the AEC Chair will contact the member to ensure an alternate attends in his/her place.

ROLE OF FOCUS GROUPS

- Established to address issues as needed
- Bring forward recommendations to the AEC in regular monthly meetings

CODE OF CONDUCT

Treat people with caring, sharing, strength, and kindness:

- Bring out concerns in a tactful way.
- Be considerate of others.
- Be respectful of others in the role of leadership.
- Leadership to be respectful of others.

Be respectful of all cultural beliefs and customs:

- Have respect and honour for all Aboriginal beliefs and customs.
- Act and speak with pride and dignity of Aboriginal peoples.
- Honour the belief of supporting unity amongst all Aboriginal people regardless of the legal definitions of status, non-status, Metis, Indian or Inuit.

Respect opposing points of view and work cooperatively towards a common goal:

- Be tolerant of diversity, honest with their opinion, and respectful of others even though they may disagree.

Provide support for one another:

- Work cooperatively with each other to solve problems and support mutual concerns.
- Honour and respect commitments to family, community and organizations.
- Support the work toward the ongoing development of the program.
- Recognize that all individuals bring benefits and insight to the circle from their diverse life experiences.
- Commit to information sharing, cultural reinforcement, life long learning and a holistic approach to child and family development.

Make decisions with a clear mind:

- Attend meetings on time, in a proper frame of mind.
- Welcome information and the best available advice, but reserve the right to arrive at a decision based upon own judgement.
- Accept that at times a decision may be made by the Council that is not one's own decision, but is a decision that one can live with.
- Critique when necessary in a constructive way and suggest an alternative course.
- Recognize that time and energy may be limited.
- Endeavour to keep disagreements and controversies impersonal and to promote unity.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The following are not within the mandate of the Aboriginal Education Council

- Personnel matters
- Personal and confidential information on students, parents, teachers, other employees and members of the school community
- Performance or conduct of individual employees, students, parents and members of the school community
- Terms and conditions of employment contract

Disclosure:

Every AEC member who is in any way directly or indirectly interested in any existing or proposed contract, transaction or arrangement with School District 71 and the AEC, or who otherwise has a conflict of interest, will declare the interest fully at AEC meetings and shall leave the meeting until such time as the conflict matter has been dealt with, and shall refrain from discussion and decision-making in this matter. The AEC reserves the right to recall the member to answer questions that would provide further clarification.

Time of Declaration:

A member will disclose any conflict of interest at the first possible meeting when the issue will be discussed.

Effect of Declaration:

If an AEC member has made a declaration of his or her conflict of interest and has refrained from discussion and decision-making, they are not accountable for the decision made by the AEC.

Non-Disclosure:

When a member has reason to believe that another member has failed to declare a conflict of interest, that member may request an agenda item to ask the member to declare the conflict. The AEC will decide whether the member is in conflict, and record its decision.

Nepotism:

A member who unjustifiably promotes a family member's interests over the interest of others is considered to be in a conflict of interest.

CONFIDENTIALITY

AEC members will sign Confidentiality Agreements each year.

Any member who breaks confidentiality shall be removed from the AEC.