

Indigenous Nations Education Council  
2019-2020 School Year Report  
Board Appointed Trustee: Diane McNally

The Council meets in the Board Room of the Victoria native Friendship Centre, and is chaired by Janice Simcoe, Director, Camosun College Centre for Indigenous Education & Community Connections.

The following individuals / agency representatives (and others) have usually / on occasion attended:

Shelly Niemi, District Administrator (IED)  
Sarah Rhude (IED Art & Culture Facilitator/Parent)  
Fern Perkins (Education Coordinator, MNGV)  
Rachel Perkins (Metis Nation FPP Cultural Counsel)  
Greg Kitchen (Associate Superintendent)  
Frank Conibear (GVTA Representative)  
Monique Gray Smith (Parent)  
Patrick Harriott (President MNGV)  
Paola Bell (IED)  
Paul Stevenson (SD61 Principal)  
Brenda Pohl (SD61 Teacher)  
Constance O'Leary (MNGV)  
Joanne Mitchell (SD61 Counsellor)  
Andrea Thibodeau (Hulitan Journeys of the Heart Program)  
Shauneen Peet (UVIC)  
Brandi Lancaster (Surrounded by Cedar, Cultural Support Teacher)  
Nadia Salmaniw (VNFC CEER)  
Robina Thomas (UVIC)

I am grateful to be included at the table.

Monday, October 21, 2019

- October 25th Metis Nation Greater Victoria tour/session at Ross Bay Cemetery. MNGV continues to teach beading, jigging and the Michif language. Christmas Potluck December 15th Victoria Native Friendship Centre; all invited.
- Request from Joan Morris, Songhees Nation to have two novels, Medicine Unbundled and Healing Histories in the schools: Action: Shelly look into purchasing the novels
- GVTA Representative GVTA Indigenous Committee: Need resource contact at each school for teachers so that work does not fall on Indigenous staff. Have done survey; have input re teachers' needs.
- Monique Gray Smith: My Heart Fills with Happiness distributed to all elementary schools. Written in English and Cree. Willing to visit schools and speak about book and/or sign copies.
- Janice Simcoe: Camosun College 1300 Indigenous students, big leap in enrolment. New health building Interurban campus. Pit cook at Lansdowne campus October 25th pro-d day. Camosun organizing conference in August 25-28, 2020 Where the Waters Meet. [DM: Unsure how COVID19 health protocols will impact this.]
- Shelly Niemi: Indigenous Education portfolio shared between Greg Kitchen and Colin Roberts, Associate Superintendents. Department name change from Aboriginal Nations Education Division (ANED) to Indigenous Education Department (IED). The Board going through Strategic Plan revisions; by end of June we should know what the goals are. Targeted funding was specific for culture and language and support, but no process on how funding used. Better training needed so all school clerical workers are clear on what needs to be input into the system re Indigenous identity. MOE Indigenous student funding increased this year to \$1,450/FTE. Committee TOR under development: This table should not be about policy and governance with the Board. Would like this table to become the voice of our urban Indigenous students. For broader policy and governance we look at the Indigenous Ad Hoc Committee.

December 16, 2019

- Janice Simcoe: Council needs to work on TOR so that we can report to the School District and Ministry of Education. Main topics of the TOR: Name, governance, acknowledge territory, identify our principles, who we are and who we represent, purpose (wolf, bear, raven, salmon model or not), membership (clear who the members are and the school district employees at this table) - SD employees should be non-voting members here to help support, membership should be representing different groups, responsibility to each other, good faith towards each other and groups.
- Shelly Niemi: MOE no longer has Enhancement Agreement Branch. BC school districts have a strategic plan goal for Indigenous Education. In process of consulting with Songhees and Esquimalt Nations in writing Local Education Agreements. They want UNDRIP in their process.

February 3/20

- Métis Nation GV getting more invitations and requests from schools.
- VNFC: CEER (Career, Employment & Education Resources) : Youth coming to program, many have come here for post-secondary, finding it difficult making new relationships. Camosun great job helping students but some still slipping through. CEER 60 students. Harbour Authority partnering; partnering with Songhees Innovation Centre in Spring.
- Shelly Niemi: Part of Greg Kitchen's portfolio is careers. Invite Nadia (VNFC) into that circle. Facilitator for SD61 strategic plan Julie MacRae retired superintendent; worked with Ministry; well respected in Education. Understands Indigenous Education.
- Monique: In schools to read her book My Heart Fills with Happiness. Little parking for visiting families. Suggested that there be a designated spot.
- Janice: Camosun College for a Day session May Lansdowne campus; Vivian Like organizer. Small group high school students and adults who want to come back to school. Introduce Indigenous Department, some faux classes demonstrate three different kinds of teachings, experiential Indigenous specific, lectures and hands on integrating a crafts training. Re SD61 strategic plan, do not talk about the Nations in the possessive form. Reconciliation should be a core value not a goal. Potential allies scared to be perceived as racist; don't know how to get out of the circle of fear. Bring in resources when they are available. Finding balance and dealing with the feelings when you have done it wrong. Ensure staff receive training.

April 23 / 20 (ZOOM)

- Shelly Niemi: In constant contact with SD61 IT department -what does Indigenous Education and technology look like across district. Some families did not want technology in their homes and no experience using it. Heard a level of privilege to get remote learning up and online. Need strategy to meet the needs right now and post-COVID. SD61 IT allocated person to take on the Indigenous portfolio. Learning what IT strategies other districts are using and building on that. Food distribution through Community Link; some deliveries, some families like coming to the school. Some families need support with challenging behaviour.
- Paul Thomas: Families getting support; good results.
- Janice Simcoe: Difficult time for urban students who are not connected. Majority of students urban; what is happening to students where internet not accessible?
- Robina Thomas: Some Uvic departments involved in online learning for years, some doing quite well, other areas not doing as well.
- Frank Conibear / Paul Thomas: Chrome books being signed out; many students unfamiliar with them and more aligned to paper.
- Shelly (re SD61 Strategic Plan): This year's revision, facilitator hired, Julie McCrae, to assist Board. Before Christmas they developed 4 Goals including Indigenous Education with many strategies attached, arrived at without conversations with our department. We voiced need to consult with Indigenous Community. We gathered critical constructive suggestions to take to

Board. Board and staff re-wrote goal and strategies due to this input. Non-Indigenous students in SD61 graduate 90%. Indigenous students graduate 40%. 50% inequity. On-reserve grad rate 21%. Conversations with the Nations are SD61 return on investment is not good. Past 15+ years GVSD/Indigenous Education followed a formula for targeted funding issued by Ministry of Education. SD61 Indigenous Education department decided not to follow formula for coming year - making significant changes. In discussions with school principals and district administrators around staffing allocations and explaining what targeted funding is and how it is to be used. Every school in coming year will develop a plan for Indigenous Education to be signed off by the principal and myself. That plan needs to be connected to the program dollars.

- (Several at the table): (Continued discussion on TOR, what this group is, who it represents).

A meeting was planned for May, but did not take place.

~DM