



## Indigenous Education Department

Greater Victoria School District No. 61  
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### URBAN PEOPLES' HOUSE INDIGENOUS ADVISORY (UPHIA)

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

## “Setting the Table”

**We work towards the day when all our children are able to shine with joy and confidence;  
when their beauty, brilliance and strength are seen and nurtured;  
when they are emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually nourished;  
when they hold knowledge and pride in who they are;  
when they are safe, intact, loved and protected.  
We are grateful for and responsible to all our children.  
We do this work for them.**

#### **Preamble:**

In 2015, the BC Ministry of Education mandated that local Indigenous knowledge, pedagogy, and worldviews be embedded across all subject areas and grade levels of the K-12 curricula. From 1995-2010, suggestions to introduce Indigenous knowledge in public education was more on a voluntary basis and less comprehensive. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Final Report and Calls to Action (2015) urges all Canadians to transform society by understanding historic and current issues relating to Indigenous Peoples and Cultures. Indigenous knowledge and ways of being can only be learned through authentic voices and the Greater Victoria School District is advised by Four Houses of authentic voices: The two local Nations, Songhees and Esquimalt; the Metis Nation of Greater Victoria; and the Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory (UPHIA).

This document outlines the terms of reference for UPHIA.

1. Acknowledgment
2. Who We Are: IED and UPHIA
3. The Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory's Purpose
4. The Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory's Vision
5. The Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory's Guiding Principles
6. Community – Voting Members and Roles
7. Governance and Meetings



## **The Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory (UPHIA)**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **1. Acknowledgement:**

We recognize and acknowledge the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations as the traditional Stewards of the lands on which our students live and are educated. We acknowledge all parents, families and communities as the first educators of their children. Indigenous people have a long tradition of teaching and learning through sharing their connections with the land and sea, and through their culture, stories and lived experiences that are passed from generation to generation. We recognize and value the learning that children bring with them from their homes and communities into the classroom.

#### **2. Who We Are:**

The Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory (UPHIA), alongside three other Indigenous Houses, supports the work of the Indigenous Education Department (IED). The IED provides supplementary supports to Indigenous learners that are culturally-specific and promotes Indigenous perspectives and Ways of Knowing in their schools. The IED provides leadership in our district to support the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge into curriculum, teaching practices and professional learning opportunities. Everyone in our school district has a role to play in ensuring the success of Indigenous students and in supporting all learners as they develop their understanding of Indigenous cultures and worldviews.

The IED enhances the educational experience of Indigenous students by developing and delivering programming that is culturally responsive: in alignment with the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada; and, is informed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The IED is supported by an Elders Advisory Council and four Indigenous Houses that advise, advocate, and guide our work. These Four Houses are:

- The Esquimalt Nation
- The Songhees Nation
- The Métis Nation of Greater Victoria
- The Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory (UPHIA)

The IED enhances the educational experience of Indigenous students by developing and delivering programming that is culturally responsive; in alignment with the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada; and, is informed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Each of the Four Houses provides culturally safe perspectives to guide and support the Greater Victoria School District to include authentic Indigenous perspectives in their schools, classrooms and curriculum. The Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory (UPHIA) represents urban Indigenous children and families of the Greater Victoria School District (GVSD61) and wholeheartedly respects the inherent rights of the two local Nations and the Métis to advise the school district on matters specific to their communities. These terms of reference are specific to the UPHIA and its relationship with the Board and community of SD61.

### **3. The Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory's Purpose:**

Our purpose is to provide community voice to the school district on behalf of urban Indigenous children and families and ensure that voice has adequate influence. This committee is comprised of Indigenous serving agencies, post-secondary institutions; and has seats for the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, the Métis; an Elder; student(s), and parent(s). Representatives of these groups are determined by the community.

### **4. The Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory's Vision:**

Our influential and impactful presence ensures that the Greater Victoria School District will uphold the respect and dignity of Indigenous students, families and communities and foster an environment of potential, dreams, joy and love of learning.

### **5. The Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory's Guiding Principles:**

Metaphorically, we “set the table.” We work in the background, alongside the teachers and service providers and school district leaders, to ensure that the food is good and nourishing, safety is observed, and the meal is served well. The children and Elders, or Old Ones, are cared for first. The community is fed. Relationships are supported. Within this context we:

- Do our work for our communities' children and youth and recognize that families are the first teachers.
- Know that learning occurs when identity is rooted in culture, connections and purpose, within the embrace of relationship.
- Know that learning environments must be safe and must invoke a sense of belonging for all students.
- Respect, value, and learn from the traditions, knowledges and languages shared with us by the Songhees and Esquimalt peoples on whose territories we do our work.
- Respect, honour, and learn from our own Ancestors, Knowledge Keepers, languages, families, and communities.
- Treasure the diversity of our cultures, traditions, and ways of being, and those of the students and families for whom we do our work.

Acknowledge the historical context and work to undo the harmful consequences of the colonial education imposed on Indigenous Peoples.

### **6. Membership and Roles**

UPHIA's good work is assured by community and school district members maintaining and nourishing good relationships.

#### **Community Indigenous Membership – Voting Members**

1. At least one Elder or Old One
2. 1-2 Indigenous Youth, preferably high school students or youth recently enrolled in SD61.
3. 1-2 Indigenous parents or caregivers of SD61 urban Indigenous students or recent students of SD61.
4. Métis Nation of Greater Victoria
5. Victoria Native Friendship Centre
6. Surrounded by Cedar Child & Family Services

7. Hulitian Family & Community Services Society
8. Eyē? Sqâ'lewen: the Centre for Indigenous Education and Community Connections at Camosun College.
9. Office of Indigenous Academics & Community Engagement at the University of Victoria.
10. Indigenous early childhood education practitioner or educator.

### **School District Membership – Non-Voting Members**

1. Superintendent, Greater Victoria School District No.61
2. Director of Indigenous Education Greater Victoria School District No.61

### **Please Note:**

Board of Education Trustees, Senior Leadership and other GVSD Staff may be called upon to attend meetings of UPHIA at different times to support specific topics being discussed as they relate to UPHIA.

### **Roles:**

**Community Members:** The responsibility of the community members is to provide advice and guidance to Indigenous Education (IED), GVSD61 through its Director, on the planning, development, budgeting, and delivery of services, programs, and activities for Indigenous students. Community members also provide advice and guidance to other GVSD61 leaders and Trustees on issues that impact urban Indigenous students and their families, including services, programming, activities, and budget concerns.

UPHIA may arrange to speak to GVSD61 leaders and/or the Board of Trustees when it deems it necessary to do so and this will be organized through the Chair and the Director of Indigenous Education or the Superintendent of GVSD61.

**School District Members:** Through the IED Director, the school district can seek advice and guidance from the UPHIA council on the planning, development, budgeting and delivery of services, programs, and activities that serve or impact urban Indigenous students and their families. As an act of community accountability, GVSD61 leaders, educators and/or the Board of Trustees will reach out through the Director of Indigenous Education through to the Chair of UPHIA on these requests and any arrangements will be made through the Chair of UPHIA and the Director of Indigenous Education or the Superintendent of GVSD61.

## **7. Governance and Meetings:**

### **Governance:**

- Quorum is five community members,
- Decisions are made by consensus when possible. When not possible UPHIA may choose to bring the topic forward at the next meeting for discussion or the Chair may call a majority vote.
- Only community members may vote when a vote is held, with the below exceptions regarding the voting in of Chair and Associate Chair.
- The Director, Indigenous Education and the Superintendent (or designate) will sit as ex officio members of UPHIA
- The UPHIA Chair is nominated and elected from and by community members.
- The UPHIA Associate Chair is nominated and elected from and by community members and serves as the Chair when the Chair is unavailable.

- Elections for the Chair and Associate Chair will occur every 2 years.
- Subcommittees may be established from time to time. The Chairs of such committees will report to the UPHIA Chair.
- The UPHIA Chair may communicate on behalf of UPHIA, at the request or with the permission of UPHIA community members or UPHIA as a whole.

**Meetings:**

- School district members are responsible to organize and host regular meetings.
- The frequency of such meetings will be determined by the UPHIA Chair and Director of Indigenous Education, but will occur at least 4-5 times throughout the school year.
- If quorum is not met, conversations and discussion may continue but formal decisions will not be made.
- When necessary, decisions may be made electronically.
- In-camera sessions may be held.

*UPHIA members may be invited to attend meetings or committees of the Board of Education from time to time and/or may be called upon to speak at a Public Board of Education Meeting for topics related to the UPHIA.*



This Terms of Reference shall be effective from 25<sup>th</sup> April of 2022

Between

**The Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory  
(hereafter called UPHIA)**

**And**

**The Board of Education School District No.61  
(hereafter called the Board)**

**SIGNED on behalf of UPHIA:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Chair**

**SIGNED on behalf of the BOARD OF EDUCATION Greater Victoria School District #61**

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**Chairperson – Board of Education**

*This Terms of Reference Shall be reviewed annually.*

**Hay'sxw'qa – Klecko Klecko - Gilakas'la – All My Relations**