



TREATY 8 FIRST NATIONS OF ALBERTA

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Treaty 8 Education Commission

Terms of Reference

Approved
February 27th, 2014

Vision

Our people are proud, confident and successful in a holistic and excellent quality First Nations Education System.

Authority

The Education Commission operates under the authority of the Executive Board of Chiefs for Treaty 8 First Nations to fulfill its mandate as outlined below. The executed Motion of the Executive Board of Chiefs is attached as an inherent part of these Terms of Reference.

Accountability

The Education Commission for Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta will report to the Executive Board of Chiefs through the Education Portfolio Executive Chief.

Mandate

The Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta Education Commission, in conjunction and consultation with their respective communities, will establish an exceptional comprehensive education system, within the scope of our inherent, sovereign, and treaty rights to provide lifelong learning, First Nation language and culture programs, and an excellent quality academic curriculum. The Education Commission is mandated authority to approve regulations and to establish procedures to implement policies as passed by the Executive Board.

Political Scope

The Commission presently operates within the following political environment:

- a. The First Nations that the Education Commissioner represents.
- b. The Executive Board of Chiefs of Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta
- c. The twenty four sovereign First Nations in Treaty 8 territory in Alberta
- d. The Province of Alberta and the application of Provincial laws of general application (e.g. student transportation, Alberta program of studies, Provincial School Authorities)
- e. AANDC, Indian Act and its policies, and laws of general application. (e.g. the criminal code of Canada, etc.)

Cultural Scope

The Education Commission is required to achieve the goals and objectives set for them by these Terms of Reference in a very diversified cultural context. Some of the characteristics of the diversified cultural context are:

- a. Traditional Indigenous cultural values, beliefs and traditions.
- b. Citizens of all ages living with various levels of impacts of colonization, residential schools, and the resulting conflicting economic, political, social and spiritual interests;
- c. Citizens of all ages experiencing daily the influences of public media;
- d. The ever evolving cultures of the governments and their departments at Provincial and federal levels which demand conformity to their objectives in funding proposals, programs, and reporting

Financial Scope

The Education Commission works in the following financial environment

- a. T8FNA finance policies and procedures
- b. Proposal driven funding from a variety of funding sources.

Principles

- ⊕ **EDUCATION** is a lifelong process
- ⊕ **DEVELOPMENT** and Enhancement of Traditional Indigenous knowledge and language
- ⊕ **UNDERLYING** understanding is each First Nation is autonomous, and everyone involved will work together hand-in-hand, with each other as well as with other party players
- ⊕ **CAPACITY** to ensure success and communication to ensure all stakeholders are kept informed.
- ⊕ **ACCOUNTABILITY**, transparency and sustainability are integral
- ⊕ **TREATY NO. 8** is a living document, and is the foundation of all aspects of lifelong learning
- ⊕ **IMPLEMENTATION** is conducted professionally, respectfully, and with integrity
- ⊕ **OUR** First Nation education system will provide opportunities to improve the quality of life for all learners.
- ⊕ **NURTURING** environment to support discipline and respect towards all learners.

Goals and Objectives

- 1) A Treaty 8 comprehensive education system that will protect, promote, bring to life, implement and sustain the true spirit and intent of the Treaty No. 8 (1899) right to education.
- 2) To achieve the necessary status, whereby the education decisions that are made by the First Nations, Tribal Councils, and Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta are respected and honored by all levels of government. The following strategies are to be considered:
 - a) A review and implementation of successful education trends
 - b) Effective school management
 - c) Clarification of jurisdictional issues
 - d) The autonomy and authority of the First Nations
 - e) Implementation of culturally appropriate learning environments and teaching methods to enhance student sense of belonging and success

- 3) To ensure that the learning environment, of the overall Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta education programs and services, is culturally linked to First Nation cultural psyche so as to provide culturally appropriate education to Treaty 8 children including:
 - a) Indigenous educational philosophy is known and followed by teachers
 - b) Indigenous culturally appropriate teacher - student relationships in learning environments are practiced consistently in the delivery of services
 - c) Ongoing development and implementation of culturally linked curriculum of studies for both Western academic and traditional Indigenous knowledge is maintained
 - d) Cultural values of respect, of dignity of the person, and of mutual support are practiced by everyone in the learning environment, students, teachers, parents, administrators, and the members of the education governing bodies.

- 4) To develop and implement a comprehensive adult education strategy which includes Support for Post Secondary Students, Adult literacy, First Nation language revival by:
 - a) Planning and implementing public educational campaigns for Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta members on the importance and need of quality, culturally appropriate, education for all citizens, especially the children.
 - b) Assessing adult educational interests in Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta communities and delivering training to meet individual educational interests as they arise.
 - c) Providing greater education opportunities for adults in Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta communities.
 - d) Integrating need for support of families to ensure greater success for both adults and children in lifelong learning environments.
 - e) Identifying barriers and levers and to identify and implement strategies to ensure greater degree of success.
 - f) Integrating the objectives identified in #3 above into this process.

- 5) Develop and implement a comprehensive communication strategy, to ensure that all stakeholders in education are informed on a timely and ongoing basis.

- 6) To monitor internal and external initiatives and maintain ongoing strategies, plans and advocacy, to ensure that First Nations are adequately represented, and to strategize and implement necessary plans, policies, and actions to ensure that the education system meets student needs for success.

(Note: The external initiatives that the Education Commission may be involved with are as follows, but not limited to: Curriculum Development, Child Welfare, Head Start, Day Care and the MOU FNMI Table.)

- 7) Regularly monitoring financial operations, approving monthly financial reports and annual work plans.

Membership of Education Commission

The membership structure of the Education Commission will consist of:

Quantity	Title	Location
1	Appointed Chief as an Education Portfolio Holder	Treaty 8 (Alberta)
1	Director of Education	Athabasca Tribal Council (ATC)
1	Director of Education	Bigstone Cree Nation
1	Director of Education	North Peace Tribal Council (NPTC)
1	Director of Education	Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council (KTC)
1	Director of Education	Swan River First Nation
1	Director of Education	Sucker Creek First Nation
1	Director of Education	Driftpile Cree Nation
1	Director of Education	Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council
1	Director of Education	Western Cree Tribal Council (WCTC)
1	Director of Education	Little Red River Cree Nation (LRRCN)
1	Elder or Alternate	Appointed by Elder's Council

* Chief Operating Officer Treaty 8 (Alberta) (ex-officio)

* Director of Education Treaty 8 (Alberta) (ex-officio) Chair

- The Elders Council of Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta to appoint an Elder and/or Alternate to work with the Education Commission.
- Attendance at the Treaty 8 Education Commission meetings is open to Treaty 8 members or their representatives however only the duly appointed Education Commission members will have voting authority.
- Expenses are paid only for Education Commission Members
- Treaty 8 Education Commission may create sub-committees as required to facilitate business from time to time. Members of sub-committees must be sanctioned by the party that they represent.

Representation on Outside Agencies

The Education Commission will recommend people to represent T8FNA Education on outside committees or organizations to the Executive Board of Chiefs for approval.

Amendments

It is recognized that changes to these Terms of Reference may be required from time to time. Recommendations for change to the Education Commission Terms of Reference shall be submitted to the Treaty 8 Executive Board of Chiefs for ratification.

Ratification

TREATY 8 FIRST NATIONS OF ALBERTA
EXECUTIVE BOARD OF CHIEFS

Motion: 05-02-27-2014

Moved by Chief Laboucan

Second by Chief Testawich

To Adopt The Treaty 8 Education Commission Revised TOR's Inclusive of Executive Boards Amendments. **Carried**