

First Nations Summit

RESOLUTION #1022.05

SUBJECT: FIRST NATIONS EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE IN BC

WHEREAS:

- A. First Nations Peoples have always maintained jurisdiction over the care their children which includes the care, teachings and responsibility of children in early learning and childcare settings.
- B. By Resolution #1017.03, First Nations Summit (FNS) Chiefs in Assembly supported the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS) to develop a province-wide First Nation engagement process on a national Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care (IELCC) Framework, and to carry this framework through approval and implementation processes such that it will be a basis for First Nations and their communities to exercise their authority to determine the systems and structures, as well as the programs and services, that provide ELCC supports to them - in ways they develop and control, by way of capacities provided and developed for the purpose, and by Resolution #1020.07, the FNS Chiefs in Assembly reaffirmed continued support to the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS) as the regional lead agency in the ongoing development and implementation of a regional IELCC strategy.
- C. Canada and BC signed onto the *Canada-British Columbia Canada-Wide Early Learning and Childcare Agreement* on July 7, 2021, in which they commit to work collaboratively with Indigenous Governing Bodies and organizations to implement the agreement and to ensure support Indigenous-led, culturally safe and accessible Early Learning and Child Care programming in BC.
- D. On April 1, 2022, the Province's early learning and childcare programs, services, responsibilities and accountabilities transitioned from the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) to the newly created Ministry of Education and Child Care (MECC).
- E. As per item 4.19 in the *Declaration Act Action Plan*, the Province is committed to collaborate with First Nations to implement a distinctions-based approach to child care and to support and move forward jurisdiction over child care for First Nations who want and need it in BC.
- F. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration), which the government of Canada has adopted without qualification, and has, alongside the government of BC, committed to implement, affirms:

Article 13(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.

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Article 14(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.

(2): Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination.

(3): States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.

- G. The First Nations Summit, working alongside the BC Assembly of First Nations and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs as the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), has been directed by resolution from First Nations to support the full reform of the current Indigenous child welfare system in BC, including working with federal and provincial governments to develop First Nations-supported legislation, policies, and practices that recognize and affirm Indigenous child welfare systems.
- H. The First Nations Education Steering Committee has a mandate to facilitate discussion about education matters affecting First Nations in BC by disseminating information and soliciting input from First Nations. The primary goal is to promote and support the provision of quality education to First Nations learners in BC.
- I. BCACCS helps Indigenous communities develop high quality, culturally grounded, spiritually enriching, community childcare services that are based in the child's culture, language and history.
- J. Under the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CW-ELCC) agreement, \$30M is available in 2022-23 to provide funding for the creation of new distinctions-based child care spaces for First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban families, and the province is seeking input from First Nations Title and Rights holders regarding how this funding will be accessed.
- K. Similar resolutions were passed at the UBCIC and BCAFN Annual General Assemblies in September 2022.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the First Nations Summit (FNS) Chiefs in Assembly reaffirm that First Nations have an inherent right to self-determination and that the proper Rights and Title holders must be supported in resumption of jurisdiction over our children and families, including early learning and child care.
2. That the FNS Chiefs in Assembly direct the FNS Executive, working with the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC), together as the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), to continue engaging with the provincial and federal governments, the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS), as appropriate, on ways to best to support First Nations with early learning and child care in their communities and with regard to any implications for First Nations education.

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3. That the FNS Chiefs in Assembly call on the provincial and federal governments to work with the FNLC, supported by the FNESC and the BCACCS, to immediately create an interim framework to flow funding under the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CW-ELCC) to First Nations.

4. That the FNS Chiefs in Assembly call on the provincial and federal governments to engage in Government-to-Government dialogue with the proper Rights and Title holders regarding a permanent funding arrangement for early learning and child care dollars available under the CW-ELCC.


MOVED BY: Chief Maureen Chapman, Sq'ewa:lxw First Nation
SECONDED BY: Chief Hank Adam, Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation
DATED: October 20, 2022

Passed by consensus.

ENDORSED BY:



Cheryl Casimer



Robert Phillips



Hugh Braker