

# First Nation Lifelong Learning Table

August 2021 | Grand Council Treaty #3 Education

## Education Update

### First Nation Lifelong Learning Table

### Reciprocal Education Approach (REA)

### Stakeholder and Community Surveys

**Protecting the future of our people by ensuring the protection, preservation, and enhancement of Inherent and Treaty rights.**

## What is the First Nation Lifelong Learning Table?

The First Nation Lifelong Learning Table ("FNLL Table") provides a forum for First Nation leadership and the Ontario government to identify, prioritize and work to address issues and opportunities related to First Nations Lifelong Learning in the provincial education and training sector. The FNLL Table is a joint initiative between First Nation Provincial-Territorial Organizations and the Ontario Ministry of Education.

The FNLL Table will build a stronger working relationship based on inclusion and mutual respect for each party's concerns and interests. It also aims to improve communication while increasing understanding, creating new opportunities for government and First Nations to work together to support student success and wellbeing.

### Why is this initiative important to Ontario First Nation students and their families?

In Ontario, the majority of First Nation students attend publicly funded schools, with estimates of approximately 82%. Some First Nations students who attend school within the provincial system live on-reserve but the majority live in urban areas and attend provincially funded schools. First Nations students continue to experience achievement gaps as compared to non-Indigenous students within the provincial system.

### What does this mean for students in Treaty #3 Territory?

There are four provincial school boards within our Territory. Our region has more rural First Nation communities and schools compared to some regions of Ontario. Sixty per cent of our students attend schools on-reserve and 40% attend provincial/private schools.

Treaty #3 is committed to working with First Nations leadership, provincial school boards and other education stakeholders in our territory. We will work to ensure that the objectives of the Lifelong Learning Table are supported within our communities.

### What work is being done in 2020-21?

The First Nation Lifelong Learning Table has identified four mutual priorities. For each of these priorities, there is a technical task team with representation from Grand Council, to guide the work of the FNLL Table.

The 2020-21 joint workplan includes the following mutual priorities and objectives:

### **1) Relationships**

- a) *School Boards/Institutions* - build capacity in First Nation communities to better understand, and implement, the Reciprocal Education Approach, tuition agreements, and local education-focused, student-centred policies and programs;
- b) *Community and Student Well-Being* - support First Nation student mental health through the development of sufficient technology, health and safety, and cultural supports which reflect current needs and priorities;
- c) *Information, Access and Accountability* - data sharing agreement between the Ministry of Education and Chiefs of Ontario.

### **2) Language and Culture**

*Languages Strategy* - addressing language and culture needs and aspirations for First Nations students in the provincial school system.

### **3) Curriculum**

*Development and Implementation* – plan a First Nations directed approach to curriculum and resource development and vetting.

### **4) Policy**

*Classification of First Nation Schools* - establish a First Nation school classification focus group with PTO/community technicians.

The overall goal of this bilateral process is increased success and well-being for First Nation learners, in both the provincially and federally funded education systems. It will be achieved through a balanced and respectful relationship whereby collaborative work is planned, designed, implemented and regularly evaluated.



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## Reciprocal Education Approach

The Reciprocal Education Approach came into effect on September 1, 2019 and is included in Ontario's Indigenous Education Strategy. It was developed in partnership with Ontario First Nations and provincial school boards. This Approach is an important part of the ongoing work of the Lifelong Learning Table **Relationships** priority.

There are a number of First Nations within Treaty 3 Territory who participate in the Reciprocal Education Approach. Communities and schools are listed on the Ministry of Education website. Please refer to their website for the most up to date information.

## Stakeholder and Community Surveys

Grand Council Treaty #3 Education is currently undertaking data collection and feedback from education stakeholders and community members. This work forms part of the mandate of the First Nation Lifelong Learning Table.

Surveys are in the final stages of development and will be distributed during the month of August. Data collection and community engagement will consist of qualitative interviews, email packages and an online survey option. A summary report of the aggregate findings and feedback will be completed.

In appreciation of the participation of community members and stakeholders, incentive draws will be held for completed surveys. More information will be posted to Grand Council's website and Facebook page.



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