

Aboriginal Teachers Education Consortium

Jurisdiction: First Nations/INAC/BC

Contact: Aboriginal Teacher Education Consortium

Level: K-12

Theme: Teacher Training Programs

Description of Practice:

Establishment of the Aboriginal Teachers Education Consortium which brings together numerous First Nation, provincial, and federal stakeholders for the purpose of increasing the number of Aboriginal teachers in British Columbia (BC) schools.

Background:

On February 2, 1999, education and government bodies, through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding, agreed to work together to improve school success for Aboriginal learners in BC. The Education Partners include: First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), First Nations Schools Association (FNSEA), Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, BC Teachers' Federation, BC Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association, BC School Trustees Association, BC School Superintendents Association, BC College of teachers, and the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils.

The Education Partners and the Deans of the BC Teacher Education Programs agreed to form and support an Aboriginal Teacher Recruitment Strategy known as the Aboriginal Teachers Education Consortium (ATEC).

Development:

ATEC members devised a strategy that has four main components:

- Outreach to potential teachers, to foster an interest on the part of students and community members to pursue a career in teaching.
- To work with counsellors and advisors to develop effective strategies for ensuring First Nations students select courses that will enable them to access post-secondary opportunities, such as teacher education.
- Support for students to enter and successfully complete teacher education programs, including study skills, upgrading, bridging to education and financial support.
- Increase access to teacher education programs, through Satellite Teacher Education programs in consultation with First Nation communities and securing spaces in existing programs.

Evidence:

During the 2004-2005 fiscal year grants for pilot projects to increase the number of Aboriginal teachers in BC were awarded to the following teacher colleges: University College of the Cariboo (UCC), Malaspina University College, Okanagan University College (OUC), and University of Northern BC (UNBC).

In the 2005-2006 year, UNBC, Malaspina, and Thompson Rivers University (formerly UCC) have continued to offer bridging programs without further funding from ATEC and the University of Victoria was awarded a grant of \$80,000 for a bridging program.

ATEC also developed an updated brochure highlighting teacher programs in BC colleges and universities. The brochure is being distributed to all high schools and post-secondary institutes in BC.

Further information:

FNESC: <http://www.fnesc.ca/publications/pdf/2005%20ATEC%20Brochure.pdf>

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