

# Our Commitment to Student Success

*Responding to the B.C. Tripartite Education Agreement*

**“Thuy’she’num Tu Smun’eem – better prepare the children.”**

**Joe Thorne, BCSTA Elder and Knowledge Keeper (Hul’q’umi’num)**

## TRUTH TO RECONCILIATION / ACTION

In June 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) released its 94 Calls to Action. This took place at the final of seven national events held across the country between 2010 and 2015 and marked the culmination of a process which saw the TRC hold 238 days of local hearings in 77 communities across the country. In all, the TRC collected 6,750 statements from survivors, their families and others directly affected by residential schools.

As the TRC commissioners made clear, the process of reconciliation would only be possible through meaningful action on the part of non-Indigenous people in Canada.

“A critical part of this process,” they argued, “involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change.”

The 94 Calls to Action represent these concrete actions. Key actions for education include:

7. ... to develop with Aboriginal groups a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.
10. ... to draft new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples. The new legislation would include a commitment to sufficient funding and would incorporate the following principles:
  - i. Providing sufficient funding to close identified educational achievement gaps within one generation.
  - ii. Improving education attainment levels and success rates.
  - iii. Developing culturally appropriate curricula.

- iv. Protecting the right to Aboriginal languages, including the teaching of Aboriginal languages as credit courses.
- v. Enabling parental and community responsibility, control, and accountability, similar to what parents enjoy in public school systems.
- vi. Enabling parents to fully participate in the education of their children.
- vii. Respecting and honouring Treaty relationships.
11. ... to provide adequate funding to end the backlog of First Nations students seeking a post-secondary education.
12. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families.
57. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

Trustees can play a powerful role within their district by supporting initiatives addressing the Calls to Action.

For an update on the status of the Calls to Action see **Yellowhead Institute**. ✎

Resources for those who want to learn more: Perceptions on Truth and Reconciliation Series, available at: **National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR)**. ✎

## BC TEACHER COUNCIL PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

On July 19, 2019 Indigenous students in B.C. were supported and connected in school with the addition of a new ✎ **professional standard** that requires teachers to commit to truth, reconciliation and healing.

Standard 9 states: “Educators respect and value the history of First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Canada and the impact of the past on the present and the future. Educators contribute towards truth, reconciliation and healing. Educators foster a deeper understanding of the ways of knowing and being, histories, and culture of First Nations, Inuit and Métis.”

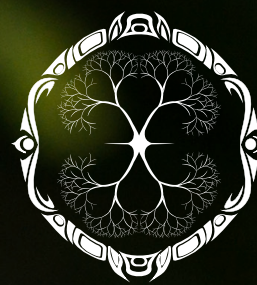
Standard 9 further requires that: “Educators critically examine their own biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices to facilitate change. Educators understand the power of focusing on connectedness and relationships to oneself, family, community and the natural world. Educators integrate First Nations, Inuit and Métis worldview and perspectives into learning environments.”

**INDIGENOUS PEOPLES INCLUDE THE INDIAN, INUIT AND MÉTIS PEOPLES OF CANADA.**

For more information contact Gordon Li, director, education services, gli@bcsta.org

## RESOURCES ✎

- BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA)
- B.C. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA)



**Indigenous Education Committee**