



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

June 7, 2022

The Honourable Jennifer Whiteside

Minister of Education and Child Care

PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt

Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E2

educ.minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Whiteside,

Subject: Traditional Territory Acknowledgment in the BC School Act

At the British Columbia School Trustees Association's most recent annual general meeting, our membership, representing all 60 boards of education in B.C., passed the following resolution:

"That BCSTA request that the Ministry of Education and Child Care organize and participate with sector partners in analyzing and making recommendations to revise the BC School Act regarding the acknowledgment of traditional territories."

Fully embracing the journey toward truth and reconciliation requires specific modelling of change that supports progress. For example, as stated in the *School Act*, "the Canadian flag and the BC flag shall be displayed at each school while in session." We desire to see this updated to reflect the importance of traditional territories.

Where possible and practicable, and when protocols that bar certain flags from being positioned next to others are absent, we ask that the flags of Indigenous nations be included alongside provincial and federal flags at schools while in session and during other relevant conditions.

This ask extends further as we also request that the acknowledgment of traditional territories be regularly incorporated into situations including, but not limited to, ceremonies, celebrations and other similar gatherings.

Ultimately, boards of education ask to see that updates are made throughout the *School Act* to reinforce these crucial protocols and acknowledgments. Copied to this letter are several K-12 partners who we call on to participate by providing feedback on these processes so we can thoroughly promote recognition and healing in classrooms throughout the province.



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Thank you for hearing the voice of boards of education and considering this request as we work toward truth and reconciliation together. I look forward to discussing this with you further as we explore the changes we can make to support this vital work that serves Indigenous peoples.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn Broady". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carolyn Broady

President

British Columbia School Trustees Association

Motion: A20222

Enclosure: Original motion rationale

CC: Christina Zacharuk, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education and Child Care
Tyrone McNeil, President, First Nations Education Steering Committee
Deborah Jeffrey, Executive Director, First Nations Education Steering Committee
Ray Velestuk, President, BC Association of School Business Officials
Allan Reed, Executive Director, BC Association of School Business Officials
Chris Schultz-Lorentzen, President, BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils
John Gaipman, CEO, BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils
Darren Danyluk, President, BC Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association
Kevin Reimer, Executive Director, BC Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association
Teresa Downs, President, BC School Superintendents Association
Claire Guy, Executive Director, BC School Superintendents Association
Teri Mooring, President, BC Teachers' Federation
BCSTA member boards of education
Suzanne Hoffman, CEO, BCSTA
BCSTA Board of Directors

2. Traditional Territory Acknowledgment in the BC School Act

Category: Other

Motion #:	2 : A20222	Sponsor:	Kootenay Boundary Branch
Meeting:	AGM 2022	Action:	<i>not specified</i>
Category:		Outcome:	<i>not specified</i>
Disposition:	Carried		

Motion as Adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That BCSTA request that the Ministry of Education and Child Care organize and participate with sector partners in analyzing and making recommendations to revise the BC *School Act* regarding the acknowledgment of traditional territories.

Motion as Presented:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That BCSTA request that the Ministry of Education and Child Care organize and participate with sector partners in analyzing and making recommendations to revise the BC *School Act* regarding the acknowledgment of traditional territories.

Rationale:

In order to proceed with the truth and reconciliation process, the BCSTA Kootenay Boundary Branch believes the flags of British Columbia, Canada, and Indigenous Nations, and the acknowledgment of traditional territories and the national anthem “O Canada” are important parts of the celebration of Canada as a country, British Columbia as a province, and the traditional territory of Indigenous Peoples upon which all Districts reside. It is important to update our *School Act* to ensure it reflects these critical acknowledgements.

School Regulation, 265/89, sections 5 (10) and 5 (11) of the School Act, specifically states: “ensures that the Canadian flag and the BC flag shall be displayed at each school while in session” and is mute about the importance of our traditional territories.

Reference(s):

[Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada - NCTR](#)

[BC Tripartite Education Agreement - FNSA](#)

[BC Declaration — BC Legislation on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(bcdripa.org\)](#)

[School Regulation, BC Reg 265/89, ss 5\(10-12\)](#)

This is an action motion and does not change or contradict any existing Foundational or Policy Statement.