



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

Laurie French

President
Canadian School Board Association
91 Sherwood Drive
Wolfville, N.S. B4P2K5
frenchl@limestone.on.ca

Dear Minister Whiteside and President French,

Subject: Advocacy on the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action #'s 7,10,11,12 & 57

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 urge the British Columbia Ministry of Education and Child Care and the Canadian School Board Association to call on the Federal Government to fund and implement the following Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action.

7. We call upon the federal government to develop with Aboriginal groups a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non- Aboriginal Canadians.

10. We call on the federal government 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. We call upon the federal government 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.”

Since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released its full set of recommendations, many have not been fully pursued. In some cases, work has begun but since lost momentum. Responding to COVID-19 drained many resources, but as we move out of the pandemic, our members desire to refocus on these essential recommendations.

As leaders in their communities, school trustees have a deep interest in seeing these recommendations through. Boards of education have worked diligently for many years with local Indigenous leaders to support the B.C. Tripartite Education Agreement and local Indigenous Education Enhancement Agreements. These relationships and efforts go far as we seek equity and improved life chances for disadvantaged and underserved students.

As an association, BCSTA represents these values and concerns in our intentions and actions at the provincial level, but efforts must take place on a grander scale as we seek the best possible outcomes.

On behalf of B.C.'s 60 boards of education, we ask that the Ministry of Education and Child Care and the Canadian School Boards Association leverage their influence to call on the federal government of Canada to fund and respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's calls to action outlined above.



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

Thank you for hearing this request from our members. Our association is willing to support this work to the best of our ability, and I invite you to further discuss this concern with us at your earliest convenience.

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: A20228

Enclosure: Original motion rationale

CC: Christina Zacharuk, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education and Child Care
Denise Augustine, Superintendent of Indigenous Education (Seconded), Ministry of Education and Child Care
Jennifer McCrea, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education and Child Care
Nancy Pynch-Worthylake, Executive Director, Canadian School Boards Association
Tyrone McNeil, President, First Nations Education Steering Committee
BCSTA member boards of education
Suzanne Hoffman, CEO, BCSTA
BCSTA Board of Directors

8. Advocacy on the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action #'s 7,10,11,12 & 57

Category: Students

Motion #:	8 : A20228	Sponsor:	Vancouver Island Branch
Meeting:	AGM 2022	Action:	<i>not specified</i>
Category:		Outcome:	Letter to be drafted (April 28)
Disposition:	Carried		

Motion as Adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That BCSTA urge the British Columbia Ministry of Education and Child Care and the Canadian School Board Association to call on the Federal Government to fund and implement the following Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action.

7. We call upon the federal government to develop with Aboriginal groups a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non- Aboriginal Canadians.
10. We call on the federal government 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. We call upon the federal government 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.

Motion as Presented:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That BCSTA urge the British Columbia Ministry of Education and Child Care and the Canadian School Board Association to call on the Federal Government to fund and implement the following Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action.

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Rationale:

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada made 94 Call to Action recommendations, including many directed specifically at Education practices. To date, very few have been actualized.

In 2018, the Canadian School Board Association published a report detailing the work they had done, which included writing letters the Prime Minister, the Federal Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, and provincial Ministers of Education, among others. This is the most recent report available and while it signals a good start, advocacy from BCSTA could revitalize these efforts.

At Academy 2021, the BCSTA Indigenous Education Committee presented the Trustee Knowledge Series. Series 5 includes the following: **“Thuy’she’num Tu Smun’eem – better prepare the children.** 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. Trustees can play a powerful role within their district by supporting initiatives addressing the Calls to Action. **-Joe Thorne, BCSTA Elder and Knowledge Keeper (Hul’q’umi’num).**” This motion is one way we can do that through our Association, as well as at a local level.

BC school trustees have been leaders in developing and implementing the BC Tripartite Education Agreement and Indigenous Education Enhancement Agreements for many years and are well positioned to support this work. We understand how important it is to nurture cooperative relationships across Turtle Island and will lead by example in many of the difficult conversations that this work necessitates.

BCSTA’s Strategic Directions for this year include:

“Advocacy: In the area of advocacy, BCSTA will work to:

1. Identify and advance the key advocacy themes and priorities of BCSTA, with a focus on co-governance, student learning and capital infrastructure.
2. Ensure BCSTA and our member boards are ‘central influencers’ in all significant provincial discussions regarding K-12 public education.”

This motion impacts co-governance, student learning and infrastructure and we have a unique opportunity to be ‘central influencers’ in these conversations moving forward.

Reference(s):

[BCSTA Trustee Knowledge Series *Truth to Reconciliation*](#)

[Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action](#)

[CSBA Update on Implementation of TRC Calls to Action](#)

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