



REGIONAL EDUCATION COUNCIL #4
FALL MEETING – DECEMBER 7, 2018
CASINO RAMA RESORT
RAMA FIRST NATION, ON

Contents

PARTICIPANTS4

SUMMARY OF EVENTS.....4

 Sharing Circle5

 Regional Priorities and First Nation Priorities.....5

 ESA Guidelines5

 Special Education Committee5

 Data, Research and Evaluation Committee5

 Transitions Working Group.....5

 Draft guidelines regarding agreements for accessing and sharing Anishinabek First Nations education resources.....6

 Cultural Competency Training Program and Criteria for selection of Anishinabek First Nations and School Boards to pilot the program6

 Regional Updates6

RECOMMENDATIONS.....6

CLOSING7

PARTICIPANTS

- Kelly Crawford (Chair, KEB Director of Education)
- Sara Jamieson (Co-Chair, KEB Regional Education Council Coordinator)
- Susan Copegog (Beausoleil FN – REC rep)
- Alison Bradshaw (Simcoe County DSB – Indigenous Lead)
- Stuart Finlayson (Simcoe County DSB – Superintendent)
- Linda McGregor (Simcoe Muskoka Catholic DSB – Indigenous Lead)
- Steve Charbonneau (Simcoe Muskoka Catholic DSB – Superintendent)
- Paul McKenzie (Thames Valley DSB – Superintendent)
- Helen Lane (Lambton-Kent DSB – Superintendent)
- Joanne Henry (Education Officer – EDU London Region)
- Starr McGahey-Albert (FNMI Education Advisor, Thames Valley DSB)
- Roger Thomas (Chief, Munsee-Delaware)
- Elizabeth Bigwin (EDU)
- Rosalind Ashe (EDU policy analyst)
- Erin Elmhurst (Indigenous Lead – Durham DSB)
- Mohamed Hamid (Superintendent – Durham DSB)
- Andrew McConnell (Indigenous Lead – York Region DSB)
- Cecil Roach (Superintendent – York Region DSB)
- Alayne Bigwin (Georgina Island – REC rep)
- Lauri Hoeg (Georgina Island – KEB)
- Erica Kelly – (student support – York Region DSB)
- Jennifer Brown (Education Officer – EDU Barrie Region)
- Cortnee Goure (Indigenous Lead – St. Clair Catholic DSB)
- Andrea Crawford (KEB Communications & Operations Manager)
- Janet Steadman (Aamjiwnaang – REC Rep)
- Vicki Ware (Aamjiwnaang – ED)
- Andrew Lockhart (EDU Barrie regional manager)
- Jeff Moser (EDU London regional manager)

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

The Kinoomaadziwin Education Body (KEB) hosts a series of fall meetings every year, which bring together Regional Education Councils (RECs) and Ontario District School Boards (ODSBs). The two-day meetings see Participating First Nations (PFNs) gather on the first day, while the second day invites ODSBs within the region to join in. The purpose of the meetings is to provide a networking platform and to foster relationship-building between the parties.

The annual fall meeting for Regional Education Council #4 (REC #4) for the PFNs and DSBs was held on December 7, 2018 at the Casino Rama Resort on Rama First Nation. The event was attended by several PFNs of REC #4, including Rama First Nation, Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Mississaugas of Scugog First Nation, Beausoleil First Nation, and Munsee-Delaware Nation.

Evelyn Ball, KEB board member, opened the first day of the meeting with a welcoming and smudge, and a sharing circle. Some of the agenda items reviewed included First Nation priorities, committee updates, and upcoming events and training. A full summary of the agenda items is provided below.

Sharing Circle

The PFNs of REC #4 determined that beginning the day with a traditional sharing circle would create a welcoming atmosphere and enable all participants to contribute to, and immerse themselves in the gathering. It was also agreed that the sharing circle would provide parity between the two groups, in order to enhance discussions throughout the day. The sharing circle was extremely well-received by all parties and set a constructive tone for the day.

Regional Priorities and First Nation Priorities

Following the sharing circle, participants from the PFNs gathered in small working groups with their local ODSB partners to discuss the regional and First Nation education priorities. The groups reflected on their existing efforts, practices, policies and work plans to identify opportunities for partnership, collaboration, and reconciliation. The overall goal of the small group work was to enhance relationships and understanding between the parties, and to set out courses of action that would address the established priorities.

ESA Guidelines

ODSB representatives were provided a copy of the ESA Guidelines. Many of the ODSBs and PFNs are now in the process of establishing their Education Services Agreements, and the document can be a useful tool for ensuring inclusivity and mutual benefit between the parties.

The KEB reminded PFNs and ODSBs that assistance can be provided throughout the agreement negotiations, as needed.

Special Education Committee

Priorities for the Special Education Committee were reviewed and feedback was collected from participants on best practices, recommendations, questions, concerns, etc. After reviewing and discussing priorities, the Ministry of Ontario provided a review of the Ontario special education scan. The special education scan of AES Participating First Nations is currently being conducted by the KEB.

Data, Research and Evaluation Committee

High-level Framework and Logic Model for MEA Evaluation and Research

With the recent completion of the High-level Framework and Logic Model for MEA Evaluation and Research, a summary of the document was reviewed with and provided to ODSBs and PFNs. Among other things, the logic model framework provides a basis for evaluating the growth and change in relationships throughout the implementation of the MEA. A sub-working group is currently developing a visual representation of the framework, which will be presented to participants at the 2019 February Forum, and subsequently released to PFNs.

Transitions Working Group

Feedback was collected from PFNs and ODSBs regarding priorities for student transitions. The input will be provided to the Transitions Working Group, for inclusion and consideration in their work plan activities. The working group will also share its draft guidelines for student transitions at the 2019 February Forum.

Draft guidelines regarding agreements for accessing and sharing Anishinabek First Nations education resources

Feedback has been collected from each of the four regions regarding processes and expectations for sharing AES education resources. Guidelines have been developed and will be adjusted to include the input of the four RECs, as each region has individual priorities and preferences.

The guidelines will provide recommended processes and best practices for the sharing and use of resources belonging to Participating First Nations. Resources include health and social services, Anishinaabe language and culture, as well as locally-developed courses.

A complete draft guideline document is scheduled to be provided to all PFNs and ODSBs at the 2019 February Forum.

Cultural Competency Training Program and Criteria for selection of Anishinabek First Nations and School Boards to pilot the program

Kelly Crawford reviewed plans for the Cultural Competency Training program with participants and collected feedback on the process of selecting pilot sites for training scheduled to occur in 2019. The Cultural Competency Training Program will be shared with PFNs and ODSBs in 2019.

Regional Updates

The following topics were reviewed:

2019 February Forum and Youth Forum

- The draft agenda was reviewed and information provided on the venue and planning process.

EDI Training

- With the assistance of the Offord Centre, training will be offered in the new year for Early Development Initiatives with AES Kindergarten teachers.

Distribution of Inventory of Health and Social Services, Anishinabek Culture and Language Resources, and Locally-Developed Courses

- The KEB will continue to expand its inventories of regional health and social services, culture and language resources and locally-developed courses in the coming months. Processes for sharing and accessing these inventories is also being developed and will be shared with PFNs and ODSBs upon completion.

Regional Fund Recipients

- The 2018-2019 Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund recipients have been selected and projects in each of the four RECs, are in progress. The projects funded in REC #4 were shared with participants and some PFNs provided updates on the status of their individual projects.
- Further updates on funded projects and information regarding the 2019-2020 fund will be provided at the 2019 February Forum.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to prioritize Indigenous language learning in both PFN schools and ODSBs, through teacher hiring, and curriculum resource development and sharing.

- Strengthen community connections by including Elders and knowledge-keepers and other cultural resources in schools, whenever possible.
- Provide student wellness programs, including transition programs (elementary to secondary, between systems) and student support workers in schools.
- Provide opportunities for students to connect with the land, language, culture, and community, as part of an approach to wellness and student achievement in schools.

CLOSING

The meeting for REC #4 ended with a sharing circle and closing prayer. Each participant was invited to share one word or thought to describe the meeting experience.

Some of the most salient comments included terms such as reconciliation, collaboration, optimism, opportunity, journey, reflection, honour, growth, partnership, connection, vision, excitement, support, and hopefulness.

The sharing circle brought an uplifting and energizing end to the event.