

# FNSA News

The Newsletter of the First Nations Schools Association

Fall, 2005



## Also in this Issue

Changes to New Paths.....2

FNSA Website revisions.....3

Regional Sessions 2005.....3

Data Summary.....4

7th Generation Club News.....4

Contact Information.....4



## FNSA Board elected in April 2005

The new 2005/2006 First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) Board of Directors was elected at the Annual General Meeting in April.

FNSA welcomes all new and returning members and looks forward to the board's significant contribution to First Nations education.

Six Board Members were re-appointed by their regions.

Returning members include **President Greg Louie** (Nuu-chah-nulth/Coast Salish); **Vice President Ernie Hill** (Haida/Tsimshian/Haisla/Nisga'a); **Treasurer Len Merriman** (Kwakiutl/Heiltsuk/Nuxalk/Oweekeno); **Victor Jim** (Gitksan/Wet'suwet'en) as the new **Secretary**, with **Cliff Casper** (Secwepemc/Stl'atl'imc/Nlaka'pamux) and **Richard Elliot** (Tshiqot'in/Carrier/Sekani) also returning.

New Board members include: **Robert Matthew** (Secwepemc/Stl'atl'imc/Nlaka'pamux); **Lillian Morton** (Nuu-chah-nulth/Coast Salish); **Deavlan Bradley** (Kaska/Dene/Tahltan/Tagish/Inland Tlingit); and **Zoë Damant** (Kootenay/Okanagan).



**Front row:** R. Matthew; L. Merriman; R. Elliot; Z. Damant; D. Bradley; L. Morton; E. Hill; V. Jim  
**Back row:** Greg Louie

## FNSA Annual General Meeting & Conference

The First Nations School Association hosted its Annual General Meeting and Conference at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Vancouver, BC on April 22 and 23, 2005.

The conference theme was **First Nations Schools: Striving for Excellence**, which was intended to explore the many ways in which First Nations schools are working to create positive learning environments for First Nations students, and the efforts they are making to monitor their success.

The FNSA would like to thank all **288 participants** for another successful and productive conference. Feedback from the conference evaluations confirmed that participants found the workshops valuable for their professional development.

The conference Plenary Session included a report on Jurisdiction and the Data Collection and Measures Project. The FNSA Board has planned to make some changes for the next conference, in order to increase efficiency and reduce costs.

FNSA President Greg Louie says that he was pleased that the conference continues to grow with more support every year.

"The FNSA simply would not be achieving success without the commitment that has been made by communities represented here. Almost every school in BC is a member and that speaks to the commitment schools have to each other in building strong schools."

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## Changes to New Paths

The FNSA and the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) administer the New Paths for Education Program (NPEP - formerly know as Gathering Strength).

The three themes for the New Paths initiative for First Nations schools and communities are:

- ◆ **Capacity Building - Governance and Infrastructure**
- ◆ **Improving School Effectiveness**
- ◆ **School to Work Transition**

### What's New in 2005/2006?

- ◆ The New Paths funding is no longer split into categories. This gives schools and communities more flexibility.

- ◆ Deadlines for New Paths have been extended:

- Work plans are due on or before September 30, 2005 (Parental and Community Engagement Program same).

- Interim Reports are due on or before February 17, 2006

- Final reports are due on or before May 19, 2006 (Parental and Community Engagement Program final report due March 17, 2006).

- ◆ The New Paths funding now goes across the school year (September to June) and not the fiscal year (April to March). \* **for more info...see next article**

- ◆ The New Paths and Parental and Community Engagement Programs have separate work plans and reports.

- ◆ Appendix "A" in booklets provides a menu of activities to help complete work plans

- ◆ Sample work plans and reports are being provided to help schools and communities complete the forms.

- ◆ Variation Form - is provided in case a school or community wishes to make a change to their work plan during the year.

## Changes to New Paths 2005/2006 Funding Allocation

Historically, schools and communities have faced an issue with NPEP funding in that monies have had to be expended in the fiscal year , (April to March), rather than the school year (September - June). This has meant that schools have not been able to fund programs or initiatives which take place from April to June and schools have had to complete final reports at the end of March, with three months of the school year remaining.

Beginning this September, the NPEP funding will be allocated across the **school year - and not the fiscal year**. This transition results in additional funding for the 2005/2006 school year that will not be available in subsequent years.

In order for this to occur there will be two allocations in the 2005/2006 school year. 7/10's of the funding allocated must be spent by March 31st, 2006. There will then be a provision for an additional 3/10's of the funding for the months of April, May and June. The 3/10's will come from the next fiscal year's budget.

It is important to note that the monies available for the first 3 months of the 2006 fiscal year OR the last 3 months of the 2005/2006 school year will be contingent on treasury board approval of NPEP funding next year.

The program information package is posted and available through the FNESC website ([www.fnesc.ca](http://www.fnesc.ca)) under "Program Information" and the information, forms and templates can be downloaded seperately, or as a whole.

Work plans, interim and final reports can be faxed, emailed to [newpaths@fnesc.ca](mailto:newpaths@fnesc.ca) or mailed to the FNESC office:

**#113 - 100 Park Royal South  
West Vancouver, BC  
V7T 1A2**

**Contact:  
Derek Payne  
Program Administrator  
[derekp@fnesc.ca](mailto:derekp@fnesc.ca)  
toll-free: 1-877-422-3672  
tel: (604) 925-6087  
fax (604) 925-6097**

**or contact Adminstrative Assistant:  
Marlene Sobie at [marlenes@fnesc.ca](mailto:marlenes@fnesc.ca)**

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## 2005 Regional Sessions Update

Every year, FNEESC hosts a series of province-wide forums in First Nations communities.

These Regional Sessions constitute a core component of FNEESC's consultation process to First Nations communities by providing an opportunity to gather feedback from participants, regarding the past year's work and direction in setting priorities for the coming year.

The sessions enable FNEESC to remain responsive and accountable to First Nations communities on current and planned initiatives. The Regional Sessions will be conducted from **September 19 to December 2, 2005** throughout the province beginning in **Prince Rupert** September 19-20; **Kamloops** October 3-4; **Lillooet** October 5-6; **Port Alberni** October 17-18; **Campbell River** October 19-20; **Victoria** **October 25-26**; **Cranbrook** November 14-15; **Prince George** November 17-18; **Williams Lake** November 28-29; **Kelowna** November 28-29; and the **Lower Mainland** December 1 & 2.

All interested individuals are welcome to attend. This year, FNEESC would like to spend more time addressing local issues that are most relevant to your community. You can identify those issues on the **Regional Session Registration** form. The sessions are co-hosted by the BC Ministry of Education which will use the sessions to update participants about their initiatives and to summarize the annual 'How are we Doing?' report.

Additionally, due to the changes proposed by the federal government to the First Nations Post-Secondary Education funding allocation method and policy framework, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) will be present at the Regional Sessions to discuss the changes being proposed and to inform the consultation process. For additional information on the schedule go to: [www.fnesc.ca](http://www.fnesc.ca).



## FNSA Website Update

The First Nations Schools Association website at [www.fnsc.ca](http://www.fnsc.ca) is currently being reviewed for usability and usefulness.

The plan is to make the FNSA website easier to navigate and more interactive. This site will continue to provide all of the useful information it always has, but it will be reorganized into more efficient and convenient categories.

Once the recommendations for change are approved, the new site will be available to all First Nations Schools and interested visitors. Watch this space!

[www.fnsc.ca](http://www.fnsc.ca)

## Speaker's Series Format Change



### Now you can choose the Workshop Speakers

FNEESC and the FNSA are pleased to present the 2006 Speakers Series. The series is funded by the New Paths for Education Program (NPEP) and is designed to support the important work of educators, parents and school administrators. Themes explore a variety of education topics that help First Nations communities provide quality education.

Historically, FNEESC and FNSA have organized one-day workshops throughout BC on a variety of subjects related to education — such as Curriculum Development, Aboriginal Language Preservation, Behaviour Support and Board Governance.

This provincial level activity made it possible for many people from various First Nations Communities to attend professional development opportunities.

This year, FNEESC and the FNSA has changed Speakers Series the format to better address local capacity building by meeting the specific needs of each community.

In 2006, Speakers Series grants in the amount of **\$1500 dollars will be offered to 36 randomly communities**. In order to access these grants, communities must provide a brief letter of intent and a short final report. Each year FNEESC will endeavor to ensure that the grants are spread equitably around the communities in BC on a rotating basis.

The FNSA and FNEESC anticipate that through this process, First Nation communities will be able to offer one-day workshops or invite speakers on topics that are meaningful and useful to their local interests and issues in education.

Communities may use the Speakers Series Grant to organize a workshop or speaker to provide information on topics or issues related to education such as Anti-Racism, Parenting, Aboriginal Language or Special Education.

The \$1500 grant should cover all costs related to professional speaker or facilitator fees including travel, workshop materials, facility and catering costs. The deadline for submissions is October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

**Please contact FNEESC for information on suggested speakers and/or facilitators.**

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## School Assessment Certifications Update

16 First Nations schools have applied for the 2005/2006 school assessment certification program. The program helps schools by helping them to review the operation of the schools and plan for further growth.

Although applications have closed for 2005/2006, schools are encouraged to continue to submit applications for the 2006/2007 school year.

This process has received outstanding support from participants. The process has helped some schools "organize and narrow down areas in which they want to improve."

A certification component was added in 2004. To date, 21 schools have achieved FNSA Certification.

For more information on the school assessment certification program, visit [www.fnsa.ca](http://www.fnsa.ca), or email: Barbara Kavanagh at [barbk@fnesc.ca](mailto:barbk@fnesc.ca).

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## School Measures & Data Collection Project

The School Measures and Data Collection pilot project was a topic for the Plenary at the 2005 FNSA Conference. The project produced valuable information about school programs and the value placed on these programs by parents and students. The membership endorsed continuation of the project at the FNSA Annual General Meeting.

Subsequently, a focus group has reviewed and improved the Data Collection instrument. The FNSA Board has approved the revised instrument for distribution in 2005/2006. Findings of the project will be reported at the 2006 FNSA Annual General Meeting.

### Highlights

◆ 35 schools returned the Data Collection instrument representing 2448 Full-time Equivalent (FTE) students. This correlates to 27% of First Nations schools in BC and 41% of the FTE's.

◆ 50% of responding schools have distinct Language and Culture classes, with some First Nations content in other subject areas

◆ In the primary student survey (Grades 1-3) 73% of students said that other students were nice to them, 91% reported that they liked school and 92% of students stated that their teacher cares about them.

◆ At a secondary level, 84% of respondents stated that their school is a part of their community and that it was helping prepare them for post-secondary education.

◆ 92% of parents reported feeling welcome at their child's school.

◆ 84% of schools responded that they offer an opportunity for student leadership including student council and peer support.

◆ The average attendance at Parent/Teacher interviews was 71%.

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## "Connecting First Nations" 11th Annual Provincial Conference on Education

The First Nations Education Steering Committee and the BC Ministry of Education are set to host the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Provincial Conference on Aboriginal Education, November 5-7, 2005, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Vancouver.

Over 600 educator's province-wide will meet for the annual Aboriginal education conference to promote the efforts of the many people working to support Aboriginal learners.

The theme for this year's conference is, "**Connecting First Nations.**" Workshops, keynote presentations and panel discussions will be offered to explore the themes of e-learning, distance learning and the numerous uses of technology in a learning environment.

The sub-themes of the conference are: **Connectivity...Content...Capacity...**

The Conference information and registration kit will be available at: [www.fnesc.ca](http://www.fnesc.ca).

## Seventh Generation Club

The Seventh Generation Club now has close to 7000 young members with about 137 schools now registered.

The Canucks are back! The team sponsors and supports the club to encourage students to make healthy choices, participate in their community, and stay in school. Close to 500 students achieved 95% or higher in school attendance last school year.

Two new editions of the club's Junior and Senior Daytimers are printed, packed and ready for delivery to your school. There are 2700 Junior Daytimers and 4500 Senior Daytimers going out this year. And the first newsletter of the school year is almost ready to go to print so watch out for that.

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## First Nations Schools Association: Board of Directors

**Greg Louie - President**, Nuuchah-nulth/Coast Salish Region

**Ernie Hill - Vice-President**, Haida/Tsimshian/Haisla/Nisga'a Region

**Len Merriman - Treasurer**, Kwakiutl/Heiltsuk/Nuxalk/Oweekeno Region

**Victor Jim - Secretary**, Gitksan/Wet'suwet'en Region

## Regional Representatives

**Cliff Casper - Secpwepemc/St'at'imc/Nlaka'pamux Region**

**Richard Elliott - Tsihliqot'in/Carrier/Sekani Region**

**Robert Matthew - Secwepemc/St'at'imc/Nlaka'pamux Region**

**Lillian Morton - Nuuchah-nulth/Coast Salish Region**

**Deavlan Bradley - Kaska/Dene/Tahltan/Tagish/Inland Tlingit Region**

**Zoë Damant - Kootenay/Okanagan**

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## Contact

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