

First Nations Schools Association

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Description of Services Available for First Nations Schools in BC August 2016

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Meet the Core Service Delivery Staff

Sue Gower, the Specialist of Instructional Services, leads the instructional services support team, which provides direct support to First Nation schools. Sue brings to her position over thirty-seven years of experience, both as a teacher and as an administrator. Sue is responsible for overseeing a range of projects for First Nation schools. ***Sue can be reached at 1-604-785-0895, or by email at sueg@fnesc.ca***

Marie Matthew is the Director of First Nation Schools Initiatives. Marie brings her long experience working with First Nation schools to fulfill her responsibility for overseeing a range of projects for First Nation schools. Marie provides direct support related to a range of issues, including sharing information about funding and program questions and the relationship between First Nation schools and other agencies. Marie is available to provide general input and support to schools. ***Marie can be reached at 1-604-838-3132, or by email at mariem@fnesc.ca.***

Charleen Lariviere is the Senior Administrative Assistant, and she is available to support schools with general information requests and with registration at specific events. ***Charleen can be reached toll free at 1-877-422-3672, or by email at charleenl@fnesc.ca***

1. Tripartite Education Framework Agreement (TEFA) Funded Services

The following services are available to all First Nations schools that are participating in the Tripartite Education Framework Agreement (TEFA).¹

If you're not sure if your school is participating, we recommend you check with your Band Council or call Marie Matthew, Director, First Nations Schools Initiatives.

1.1 Professional Growth Process

Building upon collaboratively developed standards for teachers and standards for principals in First Nations schools, the Professional Growth Process (PGP) involves Regional Principals mentoring school principals in leadership and supervision for learning, and facilitating ongoing principal and teacher growth. Specifically, the Regional Principals and school-based principals collaboratively strive to strengthen leadership practices in a way that is consistent with each principal's and school's unique needs and circumstances. The Regional Principals assist school principals by sharing supervisory tools, demonstrating specific techniques, recommending professional readings, and helping to facilitate networking and appropriate professional development opportunities. Regional Principals strive to visit participating schools according to a six-week cycle, with regular email and telephone contact on an ongoing basis.

Meet the Regional Principals

The Regional Principals include Darryl Ashdown, Karen Linkert, Keri Blacker, Kirsten Baker Williams and Michelle Canaday. Marie Matthew, Director, First Nations Schools Initiatives, also acts in this capacity. Regional Principals bring their personal experiences to their efforts to support First Nation schools.

Who can I contact for more information about the PGP and Regional Principals?

Sue Gower, sueg@fnesc.ca, is responsible for leading the PGP and responding to inquiries from interested schools. The Regional Principals are assigned to participating schools.

1.2 First Nations Schools Assessment and Certification Project

The collectively managed, community-based First Nations Schools Assessment and Certification Process involves a review of school programming in order to develop a Growth Plan, with the schools ultimately visited by an External Review Team. Interested schools also may request "certification" from the FNSEA, requiring that they meet a set of standards established collectively by First Nations schools in BC. Schools are also provided a School Growth Plan Grant in the year following their assessment completion, and Coaches assist schools in pursuing their School Growth Plan goals. Almost all First Nations schools in BC have participated in the project at least

¹ The services are also available on a cost-recovery basis to schools that are not participating in the TEFA.

once, and have indicated that the process helped them to identify strengths and challenges, plan for growth, and maintain accountability. 67 schools have been certified by the FNSA.

Meet the School Assessment Project Coaches

Five part-time Assessment Coaches work with First Nations schools that are engaged in the First Nations Schools Assessment and School Growth Plan follow-up processes: Russ Chambers, Bill Dietrich, Brenda Humchitt, Andy Karassowitsch, and Dawn McGuire Reeves. These coaches provide guidance to First Nations schools as they complete their School Assessment documents and follow up on the improvement activities identified in their School Growth Plans. The Assessment Coaches have extensive experience working in and with First Nations schools, and are able to recommend supports available from other departments, as appropriate.

Who can I contact for more information about the School Assessment initiative?

For more information about participation in the project, contact Marie Matthew at mariem@fnesc.ca. Assessment Coaches are assigned to schools when they are involved in the initiative.

1.3 Literacy Coaching

Traditional forms of professional development are being enhanced through in-school coaching to provide direct assistance from individuals with expertise in educational areas identified as priorities for First Nations schools in BC, including literacy development. The coaches are available on a limited basis, depending upon funding availability, numbers of requests, and geographic location of site visits.

Meet the Literacy Coaches

Leah Asher, Teresa Blackstone, and Penny Fisher are Literacy Coaches, providing training and support to First Nation schools in BC to increase student achievement in literacy.

Leah Asher supports the use of Reading Mastery. Leah has had extensive teaching experience in First Nation schools and has used Reading Mastery with students from kindergarten through to grade 7. She recently attended the Direct Instruction Institute to ensure she is up to date with the most current support strategies. Leah can be contacted for school visits or for telephone/email support at leaha@fnesc.ca.

Teresa Blackstone's expertise relates to a balanced literacy approach. Teresa brings years of experience from her work with the Langley School District, where she supported instructional strategies focusing on vocabulary development, comprehension and guided reading. Teresa can be contacted for school visits or telephone/email support at teresab@fnesc.ca.

Penny Fisher's experience working with First Nations schools allows her to support literacy development in a variety of ways. Penny can support the Readwell program, dialogic reading and other support strategies. Penny is a full time literacy coach and can be contacted at pennyf@fnesc.ca

Who can I contact for more information about Literacy Coaching?

Sue Gower, at sueg@fnesc.ca, can answer questions about accessing literacy coaching support.

1.4 Professional Learning Communities

Recognizing the critical importance of in-school leadership, the research-based, internationally-recognized Professional Learning Communities (PLC) approach is being implemented to organize educators into collaborative teams that meet regularly to monitor student achievement data and focus on plans for improvement. The PLC model is being embraced in a comprehensive way, supporting schools in establishing PLCs within their own settings and also organizing provincial-level PLCs for principals and teachers.

Principals: The participants in the Principal PLC effort are working together to consider the role of the principal in achieving meaningful change, basing their collective work on a substantive review of student performance information to identify ways to assist students who are identified as being in particular need of supports in order to achieve grade level expectations.

Teachers: In the teacher PLC initiative, grade level groups of teachers are collaboratively considering what each student should learn, how to know when students are learning what is intended, and what to do if students are experiencing difficulty in learning the essential learning outcomes that are identified. This work represents a significant component of First Nations schools' efforts to use data in a meaningful way to guide practice and programming. The grade group teachers meet face-to-face twice each year, complemented by teleconferences every 4 – 6 weeks as well as webinars to reduce costs and the travel burden for participants.

Who can I contact for more information about PLCs?

Karen Linkert, Regional Principal, can be reached at karenl@fnesc.ca for more information about the PLC initiative. Participation in this initiative is limited, reflecting funding availability.

1.5 First Nations Languages Supports

The First Nations Languages Coach works with First Nation schools to support effective teaching and learning of First Nation languages. The Coach works with language teachers in First Nations schools to support effective planning, delivery and assessments, so that students will achieve the identified language learning outcomes. The First Nations Languages Coach provides support to schools that are piloting the language essentials materials, and facilitates collaborative discussions among schools for the sharing of strategies and resources.

Meet the First Nations Languages Coach

First Nations schools can access the services of the existing Languages Coach, **Lillian Gogag**, a Gitskan woman with a great deal of experience working in First Nations schools and in support

of First Nation languages. Lillian is able to support the use of the First Nations Schools Language Essential Learning Outcomes, including the use of the website and creating networking activities for language teachers.

In 2016/2017, services from an additional part-time Language Coach will make it possible to expand the Professional Language Learning Communities initiative to other language groups. This position will also make it possible to support more individual schools with their First Nations language program planning, delivery and assessment activities.

Who can I contact for more information about the First Nations Languages Coaching?

For availability, please contact Lillian Gogag (lilliang@fnesc.ca) or Kirsten Baker-Williams (kbaker@fnesc.ca).

1.6 Data Records and User Management System

Since 2010, First Nations schools have been developing the Data Records and User Management System (DRUMS) – a system for managing student information at the school level and for analyzing and reporting aggregate data at the provincial level. Significant progress has been achieved in advancing DRUMS, with ongoing training provided as quickly as possible for the increasing number of schools that continue to take advantage of this important new system.

Meet the DRUMS Contact Person

Alan Khara leads the data and technology initiatives. He has extensive background in the development and implementation of data management systems.

Who can I contact for more information about DRUMS?

Alan Khara can be reached at alank@fnesc.ca.

1.7 Technology and Learning Support

A new toll-free technology support line is available to support First Nations school staff requiring assistance in the area of information and communications technology (ICT). Schools can call about ...

- Hardware – trouble with your computer (including Macs) / Smart Boards / PanaBoards / Tanbergs / SonicWalls / routers / videoconferencing, etc.
- Software - including upgrades, licensing, warranties, product suggestions and questions about using your software
- Connectivity – such as trouble connecting to the Internet, connectivity speed, etc.
- Funding and Purchases - Tips for accessing funding, estimating costs, and accessing bulk purchasing opportunities to save money
- DRUMS - the First Nations schools student information system

Meet the Technology Toll-Free Support Line Coordinator

Brian Howard is available Monday to Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

How can I contact the line?

Anyone interested can contact Brian toll-free at 1-855-260-8539

1.8 Connected Classrooms Initiative

The Connected Classrooms initiative is designed to facilitate joint offerings of specific grade 8 through 12 courses by a number of First Nations schools through strategically placed information and communications technologies (ICTs). A teacher using “real time” technology offers upper level courses (for example, Biology 12, Science 10) to students in other First Nations schools. This project differs from other Distance Learning initiatives because the students are participating in a real time virtual classroom.

Meet the Connected Classrooms Coordinator

Dawn McGuire Reeves is supporting schools in the Connected Classrooms initiative. Dawn has worked in and with First Nations schools for many years, and understands their unique needs and circumstances.

Who can I contact for more information about Connected Classrooms?

Dawn McGuire Reeves, dawnm@fnesc.ca, can answer questions about possibilities for joining Connected Classrooms.

1.9 Professional Development Events

A broad range of professional development events are designed to reflect the realities of First Nations schools, including an annual Principals Short Course, provincial conferences, and workshops on a range of topics arising.

Who can I contact for more information about upcoming events?

Charleen Lariviere (charleenl@fnesc.ca) is available to share information about upcoming events, or updates are provided on the FNSA web site at www.fnsc.ca.

1.10 School Bulk Purchasing

Through the TEFA, First Nation Schools will now have reasonable cost access to provincial learning resources and supports. As this new initiative develops, schools will be able to bulk purchase. An example of this is the opportunity to purchase school buses at a much lower cost. This opportunity is being offered by the Ministry of Education, working with the Association of School Transportation Services of BC (ASTSBC).

Who can I contact for more information about purchasing opportunities?

For more information about school bulk purchasing, contact Marie Matthew at mariem@fnesc.ca.

General questions related to TEFA second level services can be directed to Sue Gower. Specific questions related to each school's TEFA funding should be directed to Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).

2. Special Education Program Funded Services

The following services are available through the Special Education Program (SEP) second-level services funding.

Meet the Core SEP Service Delivery Staff

Holly Smith is the Senior Manager, Special Education, who is responsible for implementing the overall SEP program and supporting schools with SEP questions. She is also available to visit schools to offer direct support. **Holly can be reached toll free at 1-855-250-5083, or by email at hollys@fnesc.ca.**

Barb O'Neil is the Senior Administrative Assistant for SEP programming, and she is available to support schools with general information requests and with registration at specific events. **Barb can be reached toll free at 1-877-422-3672, or by email at barbo@fnesc.ca.**

2.1 Special Education Managers

As part of the special education team, a Special Education Manager provides coaching and training to First Nations schools to support the development, delivery, implementation and evaluation of strategies and programs aimed at supporting high levels of learning for all students. Specifically, the SEP Manager...

- provides support to assist school personnel, families and communities in the development, implementation, and evaluation of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) within a collaborative team process.
- trains school personnel and community members on best practices in literacy, numeracy, behaviour, and other relevant special education programs and services. Individual training and/or group workshops and presentations are provided.
- provides support to help school staff manage classroom-based assessment and planning of programs for students, including post assessment follow-up.
- supports school personnel in effectively using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3 (ASQ-3) student assessment tools.

Meet the Special Education Manager

Madeline Price is the SEP Manager who regularly visits schools and provides support on an ongoing basis through emails, telephone and the use of technology, when appropriate.

Who can I call for more information about SEP Manager support?

Madeline can be reached at madelinep@fnesc.ca or 1-604-290-1282.

2.2 Special Education Coaches

Seven SEP Coaches work under the direction of the Special Education Managers. The SEP Coaches visit schools throughout the province to support school staff and students, depending on funding and time availability.

Meet the Special Education Coaches

Linda Newman, Andy Karassowitsch, Leah Asher, Dean Heald, Ernest (Ernie) Janzen, Carole Moore and Amanda Holland are now acting as SEP Coaches. These Coaches bring a wide variety of specific expertise to their role, which involves providing literacy, behaviour, and Individual Education Planning support to school personnel, parents, and community members. As well Jacquie Ledoux is our SEP coach dedicated to supporting “high cost” students, Individual Education Plans, SMART Goals, interventions and collaborative meetings with family, community and school personnel.

Who can I call for more information about Special Education Coaching support?

The Senior Manager, Special Education, Holly Smith (email hollys@fnesc.ca or call 1-855-250-5083), organizes school visits by the Coaches, and provides a structure and format for their work in schools.

2.3 Speech Language Pathology Services

Speech language services are available to First Nations schools through an application process, with service delivery prioritized based upon need and the availability of local services. The level of service possible varies, depending on location and travel costs. Currently, five part-time SLPs support schools and families in an effort to improve speech and language outcomes for students in First Nations schools. The services available include the following.

- Supporting school/caregiver use of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3 (ASQ-3) screening tool for children up to 60 months of age.
- Providing schools with a written report / consultation summary, including resources and recommendations to assist schools in meeting the needs of students.
- Providing “best practice” information / training about relevant topics / programs.
- Providing instruction and support regarding the use of augmentative communicative systems / specialized computer programs.

- Sharing information with parents, family members and school personnel regarding therapy strategies.
- Providing additional ongoing support to schools and communities through email, telephone, and the use of technology when clinicians are not available in person.

Meet the Speech Language Pathologists

Deanne Zeidler, Jackie Taylor, Kaali Kelso, Jessica Bandstra and Rhea Lazar are currently acting in the capacity of SLPs.

Who can I call for more information about SLP support?

Applications for SLP support are distributed annually. More information is available from the SEP Senior Manager, Holly Smith at hollys@fnesc.ca.

2.4 Education Psychology Services

Dr. Leonard Stanley leads a group of psychologists / assessment professionals who are available to support schools through a Coordinated Psycho-Educational Assessments initiative. Through this initiative, schools are invited to refer children for possible assessment by May of each year. The Special Education Director and Managers examine the referrals and determine a list of students to be assessed. Psychologists then travel to schools to conduct thorough psycho-educational assessments, usually including testing of cognitive abilities, academic achievement, adaptive functioning, executive functioning, social-emotional behaviour, and other skills and characteristics. The psychologists meet with staff and families to discuss the test results and their implications, and provide detailed written reports with specific recommendations for schools and families.

How can I get more information about student assessment support?

Information about the application process for this initiative is distributed annually. More information is available from the SEP Senior Manager, Holly Smith at hollys@fnesc.ca.