

Information for First Nations Schools in BC on the New Indigenous-Focused Graduation Requirement

April 1, 2022

As jointly announced by the Ministry of Education and First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) on March 4, 2022, there will be a new Indigenous-focused graduation requirement for all secondary school students who are working toward the BC Certificate of Graduation (Dogwood Diploma). FNESC and the First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) are providing this information as the new requirement will be relevant for students in First Nations schools who access the BC Dogwood Diploma.

The First Nations Leadership Council, the FNESC Board of Directors, and a number of key education partners have expressed support for a new Indigenous-focused graduation requirement. BC is the first province in Canada to implement this type of requirement.

Proposed Model for an Indigenous-Focused Graduation Requirement

Implementation is expected to involve a phased-in approach, with the new graduation requirement taking full effect for students graduating in 2023/24. An online engagement process was launched on the govTogetherBC website on March 7, 2022 and the Ministry will consult with Indigenous communities and the K-12 sector in March and April to inform a finalized implementation plan for the new requirement.

The change to the BC Graduation Program would require that secondary students complete 4 credits of Indigenous-focused coursework as part of the total number of credits required to graduate (80) with the Dogwood Diploma. Students could earn these credits by successfully completing:

- One of the existing Indigenous-focused provincial courses; or
- A First Nations language course at the Grade 10 to Grade 12 level; or
- A locally-developed First Nations Authorized or Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) Course

No changes would be made to the total number of credits required to graduate (80), nor would there be any changes to the Adult Graduation Program.

In some instances, an Indigenous-focused course would also satisfy specific Language Arts, Social Studies, or elective course requirements of the graduation program in addition to the new requirement.

Proposed Course List

Provincial Courses

- BC First Peoples 12
- Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12
- English First Peoples – Literacy Studies 10*
- English First Peoples – New Media 10*
- English First Peoples – Spoken Language 10*
- English First Peoples – Writing 10*
- English First Peoples – Literary Studies + New Media 11
- English First Peoples – Literary Studies + Spoken Language 11
- English First Peoples – Literary Studies + Writing 11
- English First Peoples 12

* Indicates a 2 credit course (would meet half of the requirement)

First Nations Language Courses (Grade 10-12 level)

- Gitxsenimx ~ Gitxsanimax 5 to 12 and Introductory Gitxsenimx ~ Gitxsanimax 11
- Halq'eméylem 5 to 12 and Introductory Halq'eméylem 11
- Heiltsuk 5 to 12 and Introductory Heiltsuk 11
- Hul'q'umi'num' 5 to 12 and Introductory Hul'q'umi'num' 11
- Kwak'wala 5 to 12 and Introductory Kwak'wala 11
- Liqwala/Kwak'wala 5 to 12 and Introductory Liqwala/Kwak'wala 11
- nsíylxcən 5 to 12 and Introductory nsíylxcən 11
- Nte?kepmxcin 5 to 12 and Introductory Nte?kepmxcin 11
- Nuučaañuł 5 to 12 and Introductory Nuučaañuł 11
- Secwepemctsin (Shuswap Language) 5 to 12 and Introductory Secwepemctsin 11
- SENĆOŦEN 5 to 12 and Introductory SENĆOŦEN 11
- Shashishalhem (Sechelt Language) 5 to 12 and Introductory Shashishalhem 11
- Sim'algaxhl Nisga'a 5 to 12 and Introductory Sim'algaxhl Nisga'a 11
- Sm'algyax 5 to 12 and Introductory Sm'algyax 11
- Stát'yemcets 5 to 12 and Introductory Stát'yemcets 11
- Tsek'ene 5 to 12 and Introductory Tsek'ene 11
- Upper St'at'imcets 5 to 12 and Introductory Upper St'at'imcets 11
- Xaayda Kil / Xaad Kil Grades 5 to 12 and Introductory Xaayda Kil / Xaad Kil 11

First Nations Authorized Courses

First Nation Authorized Courses (FNA Courses) are courses designed and offered by First Nations to reflect the unique needs and circumstance of their communities and students, which have been approved by the School Governing Authority *and* by FNEESC/FNSA. Students may earn elective credits toward graduation by successfully completing FNA Courses. There is no limit to the number of FNA Courses which may be used to satisfy the 28 credits of electives required for graduation. More information about the development and approval process for FNA courses is available from FNEESC and FNSA. More details will also be forthcoming on the parameters for FNA and BAA courses being able to meet the new Indigenous-focused graduation requirement.

Supports for Educators

FNEESC and FNSA have developed teacher resource guides with information and suggestions to assist educators in delivering First Peoples courses. They are available at <https://www.fnsa.ca/resources/>. Professional learning opportunities are also being planned.

Next Steps

FNEESC will be sharing details and gathering feedback about the new graduation requirement with representatives of First Nations and First Nation schools at its Regional Sessions in April and May of 2022.

Contact

For more details, please visit <http://www.fnesc.ca/indigenous-focused-graduation-requirement/> or contact info@fnesc.ca.