

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

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UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS
CHIEFS COUNCIL

JUNE 10TH – 11TH, 2024

SHXWHÁ:Y VILLAGE COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTRE (STÓ:LŌ TERRITORY)

Resolution no. 2024-32

RE: Support for Tripartite MOU on First Nations Early Learning and Child Care

WHEREAS First Nations peoples have always maintained jurisdiction over the care of their children, which includes the care, teachings, and responsibility of children in early learning and child care settings;

WHEREAS on July 7, 2021, Canada and B.C. signed the Canada-British Columbia Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (Agreement), in which they commit to work collaboratively with Indigenous Governing Bodies and organizations to implement the Agreement and to support Indigenous-led, culturally safe and accessible Early Learning and Child Care programming in British Columbia (ELCC);

WHEREAS the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration), which the government of Canada has adopted without qualification, and has, alongside the government of B.C., passed legislation committing to implement, affirms:

Article 13(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.

Article 14(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.

(2): Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination.

(3): States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own

language;

WHEREAS through resolutions at the Chiefs' Assemblies, the Chiefs in B.C. directed UBCIC, the First Nations Summit (FNS), and the B.C. Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), working together as the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), to wholly reform the current Indigenous child welfare system in B.C. (UBCIC Resolution 2016-44, 2017-06, & 2022-52, FNS Resolution 1016.11, 0217.19, & 1022.04; BCAFN Resolution 22/2016, 06/2017, & 32-2022), which includes ELCC;

WHEREAS through resolutions at the Chiefs' Assemblies (UBCIC Resolution 2022-51, FNS Resolution 1022.05, & BCAFN Resolution 31/2022), the Chiefs in B.C. directed UBCIC, FNS, and the BCAFN, working as the FNLC, to continue engaging with the provincial and federal governments, along with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and the B.C. Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS), as appropriate, on ways to best support First Nations with ELCC in their communities and with regard to any implications for First Nations education;

WHEREAS the FNLC, the Government of Canada (represented by Employment and Social Development Canada), and the Government of British Columbia (represented by the Ministry of Education and Child Care) prepared a draft memorandum of understanding (MOU) in 2023 to establish a formalized process to engage in regular dialogue on ELCC for First Nations in B.C., and on related issues of mutual interest and concern;

WHEREAS through resolutions at the Chiefs' Assemblies (UBCIC Resolution 2023-27, FNS Resolution 1023.11, & BCAFN Resolution 20/2023), the Chiefs in B.C. :

- (1) supported-in-principle the draft Tripartite MOU;
- (2) directed the UBCIC, the FNS, and the BCAFN, working as the FNLC, to prepare a finalized Tripartite MOU, with Canada and B.C. on Indigenous ELCC, with the assistance of FNESC and BCACCS; and
- (3) directed the UBCIC, the FNS, and the BCAFN, to sign the finalized Tripartite MOU, if there are no significant changes to the principles or content of the draft Tripartite MOU, and to work together as the FNLC, with the assistance of FNESC and BCACCS, on an implementation work plan;

WHEREAS significant changes have been made to the content of the draft Tripartite MOU since the Chiefs in B.C. directed the UBCIC, the FNS and the BCAFN to finalize and sign it, through further dialogue with Canada and B.C.; and

WHEREAS a revised draft Tripartite MOU has been shared with the UBCIC Chiefs Council for their consideration which confirms and sets out a mutual commitment of the parties to collaborate, dialogue, and jointly take action on issues and initiatives related to ELCC as self-determined by First Nations in B.C. It acknowledges and is informed by First Nations inherent rights to self-determination including the right to control the design, delivery and administration of an ELCC system for First Nations that reflects their unique needs, priorities and aspirations.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council supports the revised draft Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on First Nations Early Learning and Child Care between the UBCIC, the First Nations Summit (FNS), and the B.C. Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), working together as the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), the Government of Canada (represented by the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development), and the Government of British Columbia (represented by the Ministry of Education and Child Care and the Minister of State for Child Care);

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council directs the UBCIC Executive to sign the revised draft tripartite MOU, and work with the FNS and BCAFN, as the FNLC, and with the assistance of First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and B.C. Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS), on its implementation;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council calls on the federal and provincial governments to provide permanent, reliable, and appropriate funding for the FNLC, FNESC, and BCACCS, to be full and equal partners in this MOU, and for funding to support First Nations for their participation in implementation; and

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council directs the UBCIC Executive to work with the FNS and BCAFN, as the FNLC, and with FNESC, and BCACCS to provide regular reports to the UBCIC Chiefs Council on implementation of the MOU.

Moved: Chief Don Tom, Tsartlip First Nation
Seconded: Katisha Paul, UBCIC Youth Representative
Disposition: Carried
Date: June 11, 2024