

Statement of Principles

That the Federation adopt the following statement which encompasses principles for incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and being into the curriculum:

1. The following list of principles must be followed to ensure this endeavour is successful:

- a. Recommendations and Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission must guide the spirit of all educational initiatives.
- b. Recognition of intergenerational issues related to residential school experiences and other forms of colonization must be central to the curriculum.
- c. Teaching history from an Aboriginal perspective is an essential component of the curriculum.
- d. Teaching history must link the legacy of colonial injustice to contemporary intergenerational impacts by including the living component.
- e. Teachers must be supported by the Ministry of Education when dealing with systemic racism and other forms of discrimination.
- f. Educational leadership, in all areas, must include authentic Aboriginal voices.
- g. Initiatives must be built over time with trusted partners in Aboriginal education.
- h. Adequate in-service funding must be provided to enable teachers to work with Aboriginal content in all curricular areas.
- i. Teachers must be supported by the Ministry of Education and school districts in seeking appropriate resources and workshops. Efforts to identify teacher-led, teacher-created resources and workshops must be made, and those identified made widely available.
- j. In-service must include teacher-led and created practices and resources.
- k. Local knowledge and connections must be developed to support classroom teaching.
- l. Living links must be part of the process of infusion, including Elders and artists in the classroom, and current issues relating to the struggles of Aboriginal people in BC.

- m. Adequate funding must be provided to enable teachers' access to Elders, speakers, and cultural workers to provide authenticity in classrooms and for visits to local Aboriginal communities.
- n. Elders, spokespersons, and local First Nations community members must be fairly compensated for their contributions.
- o. Protocols built around acknowledgment of traditional territories must be part of the process.
- p. Success must be measured by the strength of the local relationships formed and the respect students develop for Aboriginal issues.

2. The following list of concerns must be addressed to ensure this endeavour is successful:

- a. Recognition that Aboriginal people have been silenced and left out of Canada's history; it must be acknowledged that this absence has contributed to the oppression of Canada's Aboriginal people.
- b. Recognition of the obligation for a nation-to-nation relationship guided by the spirit and intent of the original treaty relationship.
- c. Recognition of the historic and current forms of systemic racism experienced by Aboriginal people in schools and the obligation of school systems to address this.
- d. Recognition of Canada's attempted genocide of Aboriginal people.
- e. Any desire to bring redress must come from recognizing the role of colonization in the dispossession of Indigenous land and resources. An authentic education must first recognize this and build support for the many and varied struggles of Aboriginal people to achieve social justice.



Art: Carl Stromquist