



Annual Meeting on Transportation to Public Schools

BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA):
Supporting First Nation Student Success

April 18, 2024 - 10:00 am -12:00 pm



Recognition of the Territory

Meeting Overview



BCTEA
BC TRIPARTITE
EDUCATION
AGREEMENT

1. Context
2. Funding for transportation
3. First Nation Student Transportation Research
4. Joint Transportation Plans 2024/25
5. Extracurricular
6. Legislative Amendments – School of Choice
7. Questions and Closing Remarks

Meeting Procedures and Resources



BCTEA
BC TRIPARTITE
EDUCATION
AGREEMENT

- Each participant received a Zoom participant guide and meeting material.
- Please display your full name and First Nation or school district number while participating in the meeting.
- Your microphone will be muted automatically to minimize background noise.
- We encourage questions at the end of each section of the presentation via the “Chat” function or, if you wish to ask your question verbally during the Q&A period, please use the “Raise Hand” function under Reactions and, if possible, turn on your camera (refer to the Zoom Participant Guide for more details).

Context



- Approximately 8,074 First Nation students living on reserve who attend BC public schools have often faced inadequate transportation services.
- This can impede their participation in the public education system and contribute to lower achievement outcomes.
- Given that the 5-year completion rate for on-reserve students in BC public schools is lower than other groups of students at 48.5% our collaborative efforts through BCTEA continue to be critical to support First Nation Students, including meeting their transportation needs.

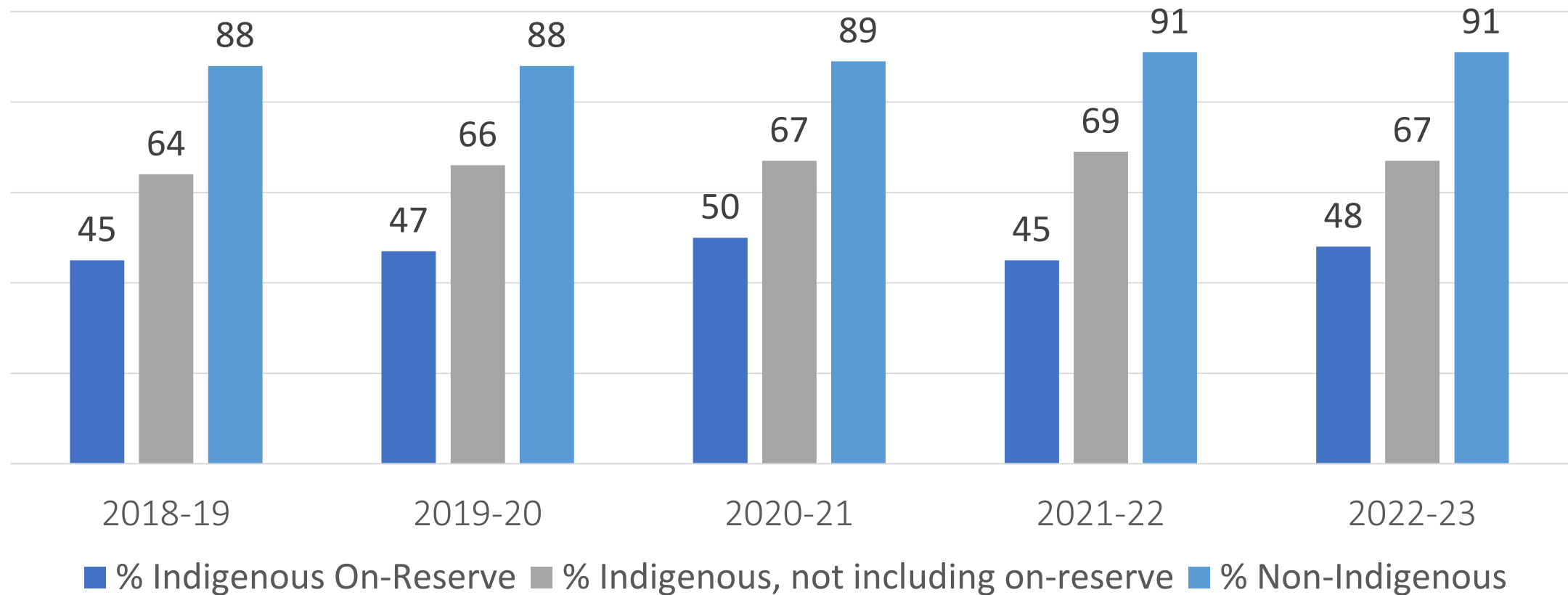
Number of Learners



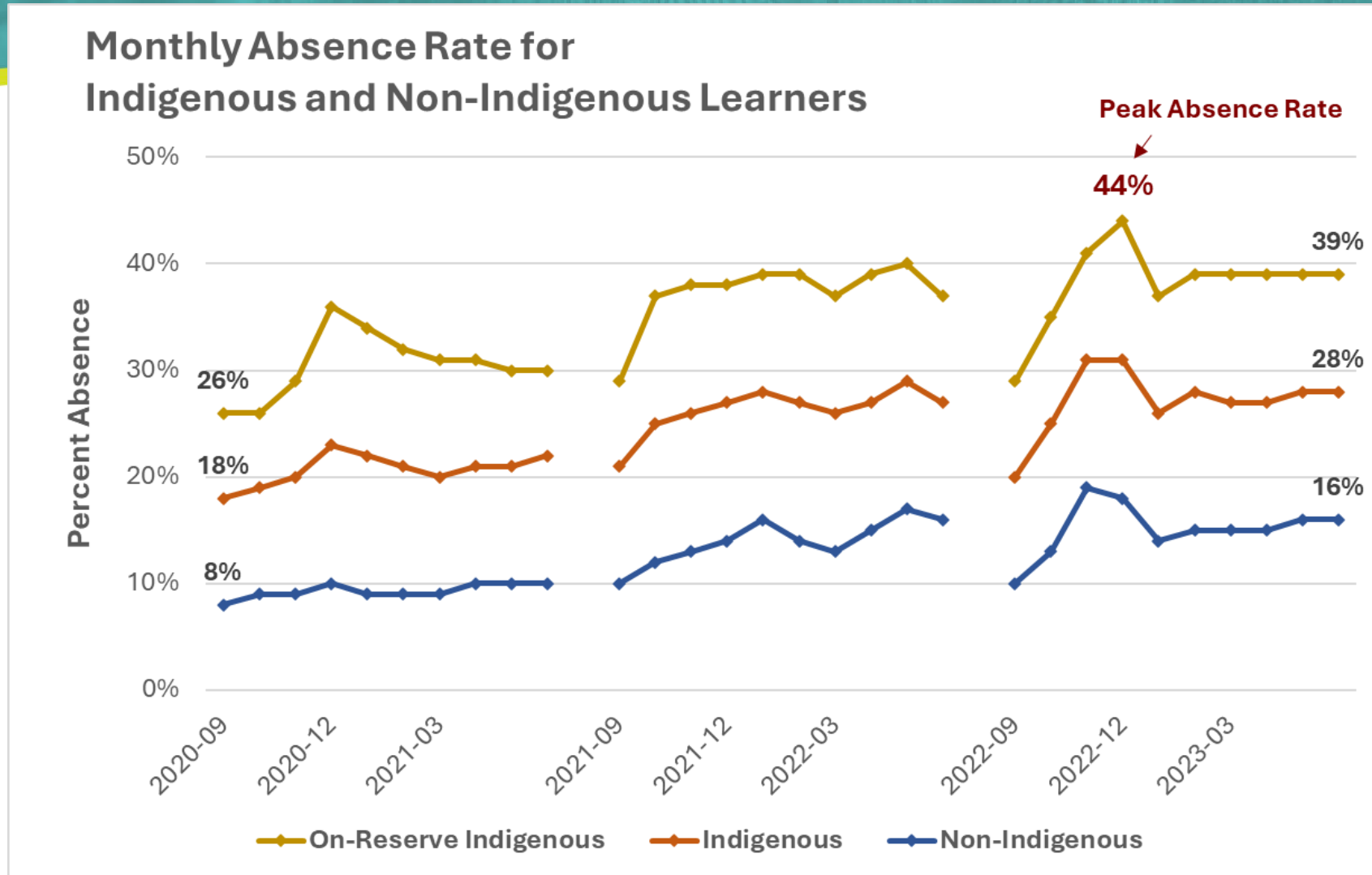
Slight decrease in Indigenous learners from last year (-1.5%), from 72,917 to 71,838.

	All Indigenous	Indigenous On-Reserve	Indigenous Off-Reserve
2018/19	74,335	7,993	66,342
2019/20	74,367	8,209	66,158
2020/21	72,309	7,752	64,557
2021/22	72,917	7,992	64,925
2022/23	71,838	8,074	63,764

Five-Year Completion Rate



Student Absence Rates



BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA) Schedule G - Transportation



BCTEA
BC TRIPARTITE
EDUCATION
AGREEMENT

- BCTEA, a five-year agreement that replaces the previous Tripartite Education Framework Agreement (TEFA, 2012-2018) was given a two-year extension to 2025 supported by the FNEESC Board, the FNSA Board, the First Nations Leadership Council, Indigenous Services Canada and the Ministry of Education and Child Care.
- In Schedule G, the BCTEA Parties committed to developing and implementing effective measures to address existing and future issues arising from the transportation of First Nation students [living on reserve] to BC public schools.
- In addition to existing funds, the Parties established a **First Nation Student Transportation Fund** that BC would receive from Canada and allocate to school districts by way of special purpose grant pursuant to Section 115 of the *School Act*.

BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA) Schedule G – Transportation, cont'd



- A tripartite First Nation Student Transportation Committee was established to review the Joint First Nation Student Transportation Plans (“Joint Plans”), develop policies and procedures for the administration of the Fund, and review the overall effectiveness of the strategy and of its implementation.
- Boards of education and First Nations have been encouraged to establish and maintain a collaborative process to develop Joint Plans, informed by guiding principles and criteria established by the BCTEA Parties.

Guiding Principles for Developing Joint First Nation Student Transportation Plans



1. The Board of Education and First Nation will identify transportation needs respecting parental choice.
2. Safety is paramount.
3. Transportation for extracurricular activities and sports.
4. No walk limits.
5. The shortest ride possible.
6. No highway pickups or drop-offs.
7. Communications protocols.
8. Professional development.
9. Criminal record checks.
10. Timely notice on any changes to the joint plan.

Source: <http://www.fnesc.ca/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Guiding-Principles-for-Transportation.pdf>

BCTEA First Nation Student Transportation



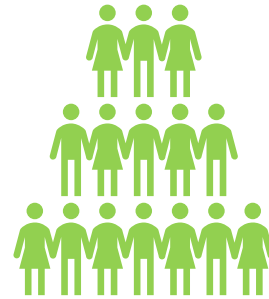
BCTEA
BC TRIPARTITE
EDUCATION
AGREEMENT



Every year approximately 150+ Joint Plans co-developed & reviewed



13 Province funded yellow buses



Over 6,200 First Nation Students included in a BCTEA Joint Plan



Students transported approximately 10,500 kms to school



Of the Joint Plans received: 16 new services funded



2019/20



2023/24

Available Transportation Funding Sources



- Provincial general operating grant funding.
- Student Location Factor (SLF), Supplemental Student Location Factor (SSLF) and Student Transportation Fund (STF) included in the First Nation Student Rate is the Proxy for Transportation funding.
- Provincial Student Transportation Fund (\$15.4M).
- Funding from BCTEA First Nation Student Transportation Fund by Canada allocated through the approval of Joint Plans (\$3.8M).

BCTEA Joint Plan transportation funding is intended to be supplemental to already available funding sources and to meet the additional services that have been identified by First Nations through co-development of the Joint Plan.

Transportation “Proxy”



- There is a portion of the First Nation Student Rate (FNSR) derived from the Student Location Factor (SLF), Supplementary Student Location Factor (SSLF) and Provincial Student Transportation Fund (STF) that is considered a “proxy” for funding First Nation Student transportation.
- This amount is the minimum of the FNSR that should be applied to the transportation of First Nations Students living on reserve. This proxy amount can be supplemented by other funding from the FNSR and/or from provincial operating funding and special grants.
- As per BCTEA Schedule G, this amount was meant to be removed from the FNSR when the BCTEA Student Transportation Fund was established, but the FNSR has not been impacted as the Proxy has not been removed.

Capital Funding for Buses & Bus Shelters



Funding for Bus Acquisition

- Requests for buses are processed through the established Ministry application-based [Bus Acquisition Program](#). This Program is for school district assets only and is restricted to “yellow fleet” buses (diesel and electric buses).
- Budget 2024 announced \$27 million in capital funding over the next three years to enable more school districts to buy electric school buses (increase in \$9 million a year).

Funding for Bus Shelters

- Funding for bus shelters was made available in 2019 and 2021.
- The BCTEA Transportation Fund currently does not provide funding for shelters.
- Funding options could include school district Local Capital; the Annual Facility Grant (AFG) and/or the use of other operating funds.



Questions?



FNESC

First Nation Student Transportation Research Summary



The purpose of the research was to inform on:

- Whether the transportation program is meeting its objectives
- How well the program is communicated and how well it is understood
- The effectiveness of the program administration and related training

The research has a particular focus on three key areas: transportation to/from school, extra-curricular, and water transportation

The research was informed by 2 surveys, 2 focus groups (school districts and First Nations), site visits and interviews

Recommendations - Working Relationships and Program Administration



- Proactive outreach to support the development of Joint Plans and a process for interventions where disagreements arise, provision for designate signature
- Develop a best practices guide, including: a communication protocol, communication process for parental consultation, provision of a designate signature
- Streamline the Revenue and Spending Report and Joint Plan templates
- Replace submission of Joint Plan with a document summarizing service/cost information and signoff for Status Quo plans and plans with no funding request
- Continue training and information sharing through the Annual Meeting on Transportation and drop-in training sessions and consider individualized training and online tutorials

Recommendations - Funding



- Encourage school districts to distribute BCTEA funding to First Nations who are providing transportation within 30 days of Ministry approval and to administer funding for and distribution of bus passes where applicable
- Assist with capacity building in First Nations with limited resources and supports to small school districts working with multiple First Nations
- Consider providing funding for school district staff to coordinate transportation with First Nations based on eligibility criteria through a funding allocation and/or application process
- Review the funding policy for the transportation of boarded students attending public school to ensure sufficient funds are available

Recommendations - Service Improvements



- Implement a process for Service Audits of selected School District/First Nations each year reviewing service levels (routing efficiency, ride times, pickup/drop-off) and costs, bus safety monitoring and recommended service improvements or changes
- Include declaration on Joint Plan that location of bus stops have been reviewed and there are no safety concerns
- Support funding for additional and replacement bus shelters as necessary to improve student safety
- Include a driver run sheet and passenger log to track the pick-up and drop off of students
- Encourage school districts to develop bus routes with direct pickup for students. Where not feasible and in extraordinary circumstances, provide parental assistance to parents transporting students to the closest bus stop.

Findings & Recommendations – Water Transportation



Summary of Student Water Transport to/from School

TYPE OF VESSEL	STUDENTS			SCHOOL DISTRICTS		
	Total Transported	On-Reserve FN Transported	% FN vs Total	Total with any Water Transport	Total with On-Reserve FN	% of SDs with FN Students vs Total
Personal Boat	13	0	0%	2	0	0%
Water Taxi*	213	99	46%	6	4	67%
BC Ferries	558	51	9%	12	1	8%
Inland Ferries	70	24	34%	3	2	67%
Total	854	174	20%	17	7	41%

* 111 (i.e., 50%) of all students transported by Water Taxi are in SD64; 3 are in SD68

Note: Total is lower as some SDs have more than one form of water transport

Recommendations - Transportation to Extracurricular Activities



- Consider providing Indigenous Education Councils responsibility to review extracurricular programming for First Nation students in public schools and work with school districts to increase opportunities and participation
- Consider creating a standard survey to poll First Nation students to ascertain interest in extracurricular activities and transportation needs to enable students to participate
- Review extracurricular allocation methodology
- School districts to establish a process to communicate in writing why requests have been denied

Transportation to Extracurricular Activities, cont'



- The Ministry and/or tripartite Working Group should work with the school district to review specific challenges for participation in extracurricular
- Encourage school districts to advise First Nations and parents of extracurricular activities available
- Maintain current funding allocation for extracurricular activities and continue with school-based restrictions to build base-line data

Research Findings/Recommendations – Other



- Consider outreach to Transport Canada to review possible solutions/alternatives to identified concerns
- Establish a communication protocol with the Ministry of Education and Child Care, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) and FNEESC to identify road conditions affecting the safe transport of First Nation students to public school
- Encourage school districts to recruit First Nation members as bus drivers, wherever possible
- Work with the Association of School Transportation Services of BC (ASTSBC) to update the driver training program to include First Nation cultural safety/sensitivity in driver training curriculum and manuals



Questions?



2024/2025 Joint First Nation Student Transportation Plan Submissions

2024/2025 Joint Plan Categories



BCTEA
BC TRIPARTITE
EDUCATION
AGREEMENT

Boards of education and First Nations will be asked to co-develop and submit Joint Transportation Plans for the 2024-2025 school year by **May 31, 2024**.

Joint Plans may be submitted under one of the following three categories:

1. **Status Quo:** If the Joint Plan submitted in 2023/2024 is determined to meet the needs of the First Nation, resubmit details using a 2024/2025 Joint Plan Worksheet.
2. **Revision to Previous Joint Plan:** If the plan submitted in 2023/2024 is **not meeting the needs** of the First Nation and needs revision, the school district will then complete the BCTEA 2024/2025 Joint Plan Worksheet and describe in detail First Nation Students' present transportation needs.
3. **New Joint Plan:** For school districts or First Nations that did not submit Joint Plans for previous years (i.e., this is your first submission), complete and submit the BCTEA 2024/2025 Joint Plan Worksheet.

Regardless of the category, discussion and agreement with respective First Nations is required.

Status Quo Letter - NEW!



School districts and First Nations have the option of a streamlined submission if:

- They have a Status Quo plan;
- Their BCTEA Funding Request for Enhanced Service has an increase of no more than 15% from 2023/24; and
- They do not require funding for Special Supports or Parental Assistance.

A Status Quo letter may be used instead of the Joint Transportation template in these cases.

2024/2025 Joint Transportation Plan Updates



- The Ministry will provide last year's (2023/24) Joint Plan with the requests that were approved by the Joint Transportation Committee
- Pre-populating Joint Plans with data from 2023/24 requests that included Special Supports and/or Parental Assistance
- Additional Information Tab:
 - Bus Operations Cost
 - Parental Assistance details
 - Special Supports details



2023/2024 Revenue and Spending Report

2023/2024 Revenue and Spending Report



The Revenue and Spending Report is intended to help First Nations and BCTEA Parties understand:

- Board spending, including the transportation “Proxy” for First Nation Students living on reserve attending BC Public School,
- The use of approved BCTEA funding for to/from school and allocated funds for extracurricular activities.
- Understand the total cost of transportation for First Nation Students living on reserve attending public school.
- Used to inform the BCTEA transportation research to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy outlined in Schedule G and to assess whether it has resolved transportation issues.

2023/2024 Reporting Updates



- Report will auto populate with previous year's data as provided by the school district
- Data Collection removed for 2023/2024 Template:
 - Total students attending public school
 - Total KMs travelled by all students
 - Funding Assumptions Tab



Extracurricular

Extracurricular Activities and Sports in 2024/2025



- Extracurricular participation is critical to develop a sense of belonging to their school and to enhance overall student engagement.
- Extracurricular Transportation funding (estimated \$1 million) is allocated by district on a per capita basis and is handled separately from the Joint Plan process.
- The purpose of the funding is to enhance First Nations Students' participation in school organized extracurricular activities and sports. Examples of eligible activities include:
 - School organized extracurricular activities like athletics, homework and music clubs and school-based cultural activities.
 - School activities may be located off school property e.g., a different school gym or soccer field and/or be delivered by a private organization for cases where the school district works with an organization to deliver extracurricular activities.



Funding Carry Over including Extracurricular

- There is currently \$1.4M in transportation to extracurricular carry over.
- The significant carryover amounts in some areas of the province in addition to the reported student numbers have raised concerns that not enough students are being encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities.
- Funds issued in previous school years for all categories including “Extracurricular Transportation” that have not been spent by the end of the 2023/24 school year **may be subject to repurposing.**



Questions?



Legislative Amendments First Nations' School(s) of Choice

First Nations schools of Choice – Context



- Boards of Education set catchment areas for all schools in their school district
- First Nations were not considered when school districts were created nor when catchment areas were designated

First Nations schools of Choice – New Legislation



BCTEA
BC TRIPARTITE
EDUCATION
AGREEMENT

First Nations Schools of Choice provisions:

- Set out a process for First Nations to designate a school as their school of choice for those First Nation students who live on-reserve, self-governing First Nation lands, or Treaty lands
- Ensure that a First Nation can designate an elementary, middle school (where applicable), and secondary school for their students

First Nations will determine which schools to choose through their own internal processes with parents

The First Nation will not have to negotiate this with the Board of Education; the Board will accommodate the First Nation students

First Nations schools of Choice – New Legislation Cont.



- First Nation students who live on-reserve or on Treaty lands will have priority to attend the public school designated by their First Nation
- Designation of school of choice will happen by the earliest date of enrolment in the school district, and the school of choice will continue unless changed by the First Nation
- These provisions will also cover students who are ordinarily resident on-reserve, but are boarded in a school district

First Nations Schools of Choice – Individual First Nation Parent/Caregiver Choice



- Choice to designate a school rests with the First Nation
- If a First Nation parent/caregiver wishes to have their child enrolled at a different program or school than the school(s) of choice, the existing enrolment provisions apply
- Existing school district application process will still apply to Specialty Academies (Art, Soccer, Hockey, etc.)

First Nations schools of Choice – Considerations and Next Steps



- In some areas of the province, there may not be reasonable choice (e.g. only one middle school or high school)
- If there is not a date of enrolment in a district, the First Nation and Board should agree upon a date by which the First Nation will designate the school of choice
- This is an optional choice for First Nations. Other agreements between schools, First Nations, or parents/guardians of First Nations students respecting school choice are not affected by this amendment

First Nations Schools of Choice – Implementation Costs



- Implementing the First Nations School of Choice will require the use of existing funding sources:
 - Operating Grants
 - Student Transportation Fund (\$15.4M)
 - Transportation Proxy (included in the First Nations Student Rate)
 - BCTEA First Nation Student Transportation Fund (\$3.8M)

Important Dates



BCTEA
BC TRIPARTITE
EDUCATION
AGREEMENT

April 30

Transportation Joint Plan Drop-in Session #1

May 23

Transportation Joint Plan Drop-in Session #2

May 31

2024/2025 Joint Plan submission deadline (First Nations sign off required)

Prior to the beginning of
the school year

Approval letters shared (subject to timely submission)

September 30

School district financial statements due to the Ministry

Questions and Closing Remarks



BCTEA
BC TRIPARTITE
EDUCATION
AGREEMENT

For questions about First Nation Student Joint Transportation Plan requirements or related materials:

School Districts may contact:

Kristine Heaney, A/Project Director
Funding & Financial Accountability
Ministry of Education and Child Care
BCTEA@gov.bc.ca

First Nations may contact:

Christian González, Manager
Local Education Agreements
First Nations Education Steering Committee
christiang@fnesc.ca

OR

Indigenous Services Canada
BC Education Mailbox
bceducation@sac-isc.gc.ca

Thank you for your participation!



BCTEA
BC TRIPARTITE
EDUCATION
AGREEMENT

- The BCTEA Parties request your feedback to understand how we can best share the most relevant information with you.
- Participation is voluntary, and responses are anonymous. If personal information is inadvertently provided, it will be deleted.
- Please email bctea@gov.bc.ca if you would you like to schedule a 1:1 meeting with BCTEA Parties.