



Ministry of Education Report  
on  
Actions Taken To Support  
Truth and Reconciliation  
Commission of Canada's  
Calls to Action



BRITISH  
COLUMBIA

Ministry of  
Education

# Background

In 2015, after holding national, regional and local hearings on the impact of Indian Residential School era on students, their families and all of Canadian society, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) released 94 Calls to Action to address the legacy of residential schools and advance Canadian reconciliation. These 94 Calls to Action are primarily focused on actions that can be taken by Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments but are also designed to provide direction to all sectors of society on actions that can be taken toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

The Calls to Action were themed into two overarching areas, Legacy and Reconciliation, with subcategories:

Legacy:

- Child Welfare
- Education
- Language and Culture
- Health
- Justice

Reconciliation:

- Canadian governments and United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Royal Proclamation and Covenant of Reconciliation
- Settlement Agreement Parties and the UNDRIP
- Equity for Aboriginal People in the Legal System
- National Council for Reconciliation
- Professional Development and Training for Public Servants
- Church Apologies and Reconciliation
- Education for Reconciliation
- Youth Programs
- Museums and Archives
- Missing Children and Burial Information
- National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation
- Commemoration
- Media and Reconciliation
- Sports and Reconciliation
- Business and Reconciliation
- Newcomers and Reconciliation

## Education Calls to Action

The Ministry of Education, with the overarching guidance of numerous Indigenous experts, organizations and Indigenous government representatives to build an education system that serves Indigenous students well.



Call to Action #62, with four subcomponents, and Call to Action #64 are related reconciliation for education.

### Call to Action #62:

1. Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada, a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade 12 students;
2. Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms;
3. Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms; and,
4. Establish senior-level positions in government at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in curriculum.

### Call to Action #64:

Asks all levels of government that provide public funds to denominational schools to require such schools to provide an education on comparative religious studies, which must include a segment on Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and practices developed in collaboration with Aboriginal Elders.

Prior to the release of the Calls to Action, the Ministry of Education had already begun work on the ones directly related to reconciliation for education and, all but one is complete.

### Status - Call to Action #62:

1. Curriculum:

Kindergarten to Grade 9 curriculum, through collaboration with Indigenous peoples, has been revised and implemented beginning in 2016-17. Grade 10 curriculum will be implemented as of September 2018 with grades 11 and 12 being implemented at the start of the September 2019/20 school year.

The curriculum contains age appropriate content related to Indigenous peoples' history, and includes the residential school era. To assist teachers to implement these aspects of the curriculum, the Ministry has also produced a teacher guide, *Aboriginal Worldviews and Perspectives in the Classroom: Moving Forward*, available for order or free download at

[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/aboriginal-education/awp\\_moving\\_forward.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/aboriginal-education/awp_moving_forward.pdf)

As well, the Minister in 2016 designated a non-instructional day solely focused on supporting teachers to implement Indigenous content and provided funding for professional development for teachers to become familiar with the new curriculum.



## 2. Teacher Education – Post-Secondary

As of September 2012, all teachers graduating from B.C. teacher education programs must complete three credits related to the historical context of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis learners.

## 3. Funding for Aboriginal Schools - Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms

While the funding responsibility for First Nations based-operated schools on reserve rests with the federal government, the Province is contributing in several ways:

- The Province, as of 2008/09, pays reciprocal tuition to these schools whenever they serve students otherwise eligible for a free B.C. public school education.
  - B.C., Canada, and First Nations, as represented by the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), are implementing the Tripartite Education Framework Agreement (TEFA), which has, as of 2012/13, provided First Nations on-reserve schools with federal funding comparable to what the Province provides public schools.
  - Moreover, through TEFA, B.C. is sharing expertise and learning resources with the federal government and First Nations to help build capacity in the First Nations education system.
  - The Ministry has implemented the Equity in Action project specifically to look at ways to improve Indigenous student results and combat the “racism of low expectations” faced by Indigenous students.
  -
- ## 4. Senior-level positions dedicated to Indigenous content in curriculum
- The Assistant Deputy Minister, Learning Division, and the Executive Lead, Learning Transformation Division, who is responsible for the learning modernization project, share the responsibility of ensuring that Aboriginal content is embedded in all curriculum.

### Status - Call to Action #64:

- Denominational Schools – curriculum  
All faith-based schools in B.C. follow the B.C. curriculum, which includes specific aspect and references to Indigenous cultures, languages, history, and spirituality.

## Conclusion

The Ministry understands that reconciliation goes beyond the Calls to Action and that all areas of the Ministry are responsible for moving the agenda forward. The involvement of Indigenous peoples in decisions that positively support Indigenous students is becoming a broad practice not only at the Ministry level but at the School District and school level and this has resulted in a continuous improvement in the Dogwood Completion rate over the past 10 years.



There is a lot to be proud of in the work we have done and are doing together but there is continued work in front of us. First Nations status students are not meeting with the same level of success, Métis students need to see their history and cultures reflected in our system and we need to address racism in our system more effectively. All of these are pieces of ensuring that our education system is a tool for reconciliation and serves Indigenous students, and all students, well.

