



School District No. 57 (Prince George)
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NEWS

For Immediate Release

Takla Nation and School District No. 57 (Prince George) **Sign Local Education Agreement**

At the March 16th, Regular Public Board Meeting, School District No. 57 (Prince George) Board Chair, Trent Derrick, presented the negotiated Local Education Agreement (LEA) between Takla Nation and School District No. 57 to the Board of Education for approval. The five-year Local Education Agreement was passed unanimously.

"This is a joyous occasion," said Vice Chair Shuirose Valimohamed.

"The signing of the LEA with SD57 is something that has never been done before for our Nation. We have worked with the District for a few years in negotiation to make this agreement a possibility. It will give us a better understanding of what our Nation needs from the School District to support all our students, particularly those that are coming out of the reserve to attend schools in Prince George. The agreement will provide opportunities for the Nation to work together with the District on different areas of First Nations student success," said Takla's Education Councilor William Korolyk.

"The LEA with School District 57 is an important procedure to enhance the accountability to achieve a strong working relationship between the Nation and the School Board. Takla Nation worked hard to get this in place to better support the needs of our students that are living on reserve and attending public schools off-reserve. This agreement will help break down any barriers that may arise, have more opportunities for our students to receive an appropriate education and bring a brighter future for our students," said Takla's Education Coordinator Holly West.

Takla Nation and the School District have been in negotiations for two years. Representatives from Takla and SD57 staff met multiple times to develop the Local Education Agreement outlining the commitments and shared responsibility for First Nation student success, which includes academics, culture, language, emotional and physical learning.

On July 1, 2018, the Province of British Columbia, the Government of Canada and the First Nations Education Steering Committee entered into the BC Tripartite Education Agreement ("BCTEA"), agreeing to work together to make systemic shifts to support successful educational outcomes of all First Nation Students, regardless of where they live or are enrolled in school in British Columbia, through the provision of high quality and culturally relevant elementary and secondary educational programs and services, and supported by funding that is responsive to the unique needs of First Nation Students, First Nation schools and communities.

The agreement between Takla Nation and SD57 is the third Local Education Agreement for School District No. 57. In 2017, Lheidli T'enneh First Nation and McLeod Lake Indian Band signed agreements with the School District. New agreements will need to be re-negotiated in the upcoming school year.

Working in collaboration with Takla Nation toward improved student success is another step consistent with British Columbia's commitment to adopting and implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action for reconciliation and affirms the District's commitment to working together in a respectful partnership.

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