



Treaty No. 8

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

December 2013

This Memorandum Of Understanding does Not derogate nor abrogate Treaties:

The MOU does not change the Treaties nor does it rescind the relationship First Nations have with the Crown. It is a guiding principle of the document, and the work that is done on behalf of First Nations is centered on Treaty.

Brief Background on the Memorandum Of Understanding:

On February 24, 2010 the government of Canada, the government of Alberta and the Assembly of Treaty Chiefs in Alberta (AoTC, Treaty No. 6, No. 7 & No. 8) signed an historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on First Nation Education. The Memorandum Of Understanding provides a Framework for change to guide restructuring First Nation Education in Alberta.



Memorandum Of Understanding for First Nations Education Keeps Moving Forward

The MOU continues to move forward through the Working Group, which represents all parties to the MOU and includes the Confederacy of Treaty No. 6 First Nations, Treaty 7 Management Corporation Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta, the Government of Alberta and Government of Canada. The Working Group is working tirelessly at providing a structure that will enable First Nations education in Alberta to address the unique needs of First Nations students in all schools in the province. The working group is currently implementing action items identified such as establish and begin operations of IKWC, develop an Opt-in framework mechanism for First Nation Education Authorities, establish First Nation Education Authorities, including Parent and Community Councils, develop standards for education services agreements, develop collaborative Frameworks between First Nation Education Authorities and Provincial School Boards, develop actions to further progress in commitment areas with consideration of Sub-Table Recommendations, ongoing analysis and comparison of Federal and Provincial K-12 funding methodologies, develop mechanisms to ensure stable and predictable funding for First Nation Elementary / Secondary Education, extend selected Provincial Initiatives to First Nation Education Authorities as well as communications and developing performance indicators and complete annual reporting to monitor progress.

Where the Long Term Strategic Plan is currently:

There have been many changes made by the working group from recommendations put forth by all parties at various stages to the LTSP. The LTSP and the establishment of the Indigenous Knowledge and Wisdom Centre as presented was approved “in principle” by the Grand Chiefs of Treaty 7 and 8. The Grand Chief of Treaty 6 abstained from voting at the time being, however encouraged that the LTSP and the establishment of the IKWC be pushed forward as they did not want to hinder the process.

Action Item	Participation from:					Timeframe (note: based on September 2013 approval)
	First Nations	IKWC	First Nation Education Authority	Canada	Alberta	
Establish and begin operations of IKWC.	✓			✓	✓	September – December 2013
Develop opt-in Framework Mechanism for FNEAs	✓	✓*		✓	✓	September 2013 – September 2014
Establish First Nation Education Authorities, including Parent and Community Councils	✓	✓				Ongoing
Develop standards for education services agreements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	September 2013 – March 2014
Develop collaborative Frameworks between First Nation Education Authorities and Provincial School Boards.			✓	✓	✓	Ongoing
Develop actions to further progress in commitment areas with consideration of sub-table recommendations.		✓		✓	✓	September 2013 – ongoing
Develop performance indicators and complete annual reporting to monitor progress.		✓		✓	✓	September 2013 – ongoing
Ongoing analysis and comparison of Federal and Provincial K-12 funding methodologies.	✓			✓	✓	September 2013 – ongoing
Develop mechanisms to ensure stable and predictable funding for First Nation Elementary/Secondary education.	✓			✓	✓	September 2014 – Ongoing
Extend selected provincial initiatives to FNEAs			✓		✓	Upon establishment of FNEAs and ongoing.

The diagram above is a joint action plan which is to be considered to be a living document of initial priority areas. Each action item will become its own project and may be further developed or refined by all parties as we implement.

Indigenous Knowledge and Wisdom Centre

The Chiefs of Treaty 6, 7 & 8 envision the creation of a culturally appropriate and responsive environment for First Nations students. This will be achieved through Indigenous-based pedagogies, curriculum, education policy, language programs, and research that reflects and incorporates Indigenous traditions and ways of knowing into a comprehensive education system.

The IKWC is scheduled to begin functioning as soon as a CEO and CFO is hired and a temporary board established, so keep an eye out for the employment postings. Going forward, the IKWC is expected to play a central role in engaging with Canada and Alberta on further actions implemented under the Memorandum Of Understanding.

All parties to the MOU hold a common vision for First Nation students in Alberta where First Nations students are achieving or exceeding the full educational outcomes, levels, and successes of all other students in Alberta.

The MOU Officer for Treaty 8 First Nations will be travelling throughout Treaty 8 Territory to provide communities with an update through invitation of a presentation. The MOU Officer will also be taking recommendations in reference to the establishment of the Indigenous Knowledge and Wisdom Centre and any concerns or questions having to do with the Long Term Strategic Plan.

The proposed IKWC governance structure :

1. Nine member Board
 - 3 board members from Treaty No. 6
 - 3 board members from Treaty No. 7
 - 3 board members from Treaty No. 8
2. Federally Incorporated Organization
 - All Treaties were signed between First Nations and the Crown in Right of Canada.
 - First Nation laws are paramount to provincial laws, and many First Nations do not welcome the application of provincial laws, on reserve.
 - First Nations have a special relationship with the Federal Government.
3. Elders SENATE:
 - 12 member Senate of Elders representing two seats for each language groups in Alberta
 - Advise Board on Academic matters
 - Approves Curricula

A formal decision has not been made on which proposed governance system is appropriate and which legal mechanism aligns with the Vision of IKWC.

*“The IKWC
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Proposed First Nation Education Act:

On October 22, 2013 the federal government has released a draft of the proposed Bill in a report titled *“Working Together for First Nation Students, a Proposal for a Bill on First Nation Education”*. The proposed Bill is entirely silent on the inequity of funding for First Nation schools. The legislation would define the federal funding responsibility to First Nations however, there is no indication that First Nation funding levels will be consistent with provincial funding levels. The specific funding formula has not been described in the draft legislation and is to be set out at a later date in regulations. The proposed Bill makes no mention as to any commitment to work with First Nation on the development of the regulations under the Act. The Treaty Chiefs of Alberta identified that the regional consultation meeting by AANDC regarding the federal First Nations Education Act was not an effective method of consultation, and further high-level meetings have been asked for. On November 13, 2013 an AoTC resolution was passed that “The Chiefs fully reject the Federal legislation on education for First Nations known as the “First Nations Education Act” as is”.

Bill C-428:

As of date Bill C-428 has already passed the second reading and will move onto its third reading. This is an Act to Amend the Indian Act, however to date there has been neither consultation nor discussions between the Federal government and First Nations regarding Bill C-428. It was understood by the Alberta Treaty Chiefs that the First Nations Education Act would be a new Act and not a “tinkering” or amending of the Indian Act.

Treaty No. 6, Treaty No. 7 & Treaty No. 8 Position:

It is our collective position that First Nations Education, as an entitlement arising out of Treaties 6, 7, & 8, will be affected and/or infringed upon by the proposed Indian Education Act. It is the position of We, the Chiefs of Treaties 6, 7, & 8, that negotiations involving Treaty matters should be dealt with on a Nation-to-Nation level. It is our collective position that the only true authority for the education of our people is the First Nations who entered into Treaty with the Crown. Legislation on the part of Canada to implement its Treaty obligations must reflect and respect this authority.

Your input is important, First Nations citizens and organizations are strongly encouraged to provide their input and opinions on the evolving Memorandum Of Understanding implementation process. If you have concerns about this process or about how we can work together to improve educational outcomes for First Nations children, you are encouraged to contact your Chief and Council or representatives from the three Treaty Organizations. If your community would like a community visit from the MOU team please do not hesitate to contact us.

Photograph by MorningStar Willier



To view the MOU or learn more, go to:

<http://www.treaty6.ca>

<http://www.treaty7.org>

<http://www.treaty8.ca>

<http://education.alberta.ca>

<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca>

**“Let’s put our minds together and see what we can do for our children”
-Chief Sitting Bull**



Tan’si, ni’sikason Candice Willier. I am from Sucker Creek First Nation, which is a signatory to Treaty 8. I have currently been hired on as the MOU Officer for Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta. I began to pursue my post-secondary studies at Northern Lakes College and continued on to the University of Alberta. Upon completion I will have a major in Native Studies and a minor in Political Science with a dual Aboriginal Governance certificate. I have an invested concern for our children’s education and learning. I believe through hard work and diligence we can offer and ensure that our children have a education system which allows for equality in an culturally enriched learning environment.

Hiy-Hiy.

Questions, suggestions or comments feel free to contact:

MOU Team Lead

Clayton Kootenay
Treaty 6, 7, & 8
(780)-444-9366 ext. 257
(780)- 916-4765 (cell)
(780)-444-9369 (fax)
Toll Free: 1-888-873-2898
ckootenay@treaty8.org

Treaty 8 MOU Officer

Candice Willier
Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta
18178-102 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5S 1S7
(780)-444-9366 ext. 214
(780)-504-8024 (cell)
(780)-444-9369 (fax)
Toll Free: 1-888-873-2898
cwillier@treaty8.org

Director of Education for Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta:

Dale Awasis
Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta
18178-102 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5S 1S7
(780)-444-9366 ext. 230
(587)-926-3533 (cell)
(780)-444-9369 (fax)
Toll Free: 1-888-873-2898
dawasis@treaty8.org