

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
INFORMATION NOTE FOR DEPUTY MINISTER**

DATE: September 15, 2015

CLIFF:

PREPARED FOR: Dave Byng, Deputy Minister, for **Information** at the request of **Aboriginal education** for follow up on the **BC Cabinet and First Nations Leaders Gathering held September 8-10, 2015**

SUBJECT: K-12 Aboriginal Education actions to be taken

OVERVIEW:

The “all-Chiefs” meeting is a gathering co-hosted by the Province and the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC). Invitations were extended to 203 First Nations Chiefs, as well as Tribal Council leaders and delegates. Leaders and executive of the FNLC attended, as well as Provincial Cabinet Ministers and deputy ministers. The purpose of the gathering is to convene a meaningful dialogue between First Nations and Provincial leadership regarding key issues and priorities of mutual interest. The event also provides an opportunity for First Nations engagement with key decision makers and the demonstration of the Province’s commitment to working in partnership.

BACKGROUND:

The Canadian constitution made the provinces responsible for the education of their citizens except for that of Status First Nation students, which the federal government continues to fund. There are close to 15,000 school-aged First Nation youth living on reserve in British Columbia; in any given school year, almost 6,000 attend First Nation schools while the other nearly 9,000 commute to BC system schools.

The BC public school system is working hard to better serve Aboriginal students, which is an inclusive term spanning Status First Nation students, non-status First Nation students, Métis students, Inuit students, and students who are indigenous to other nations but now reside in British Columbia. In the 2014/15 school year, 61,811 students or 11.2 percent of B.C.’s public school student population self-identified as Aboriginal. This number includes the nearly 9,000 commuting from their homes on reserve lands.

The 6,000 who stay to study on reserve attend First Nation system schools that are funded by the federal government and operated by First Nation bands; in addition, many of those schools are supported by the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and the First Nations Schools Association (FNSA). There are approximately 140 First Nation schools in British Columbia: 28 of those have chosen to be current BC-certified independent schools; 62 have been certified by the FNSA. The Ministry of Education pays tuition to First Nations for students who are the funding responsibility of the Province but choose to commute to an on-reserve school. Last year, the Ministry paid almost \$14 million in this “reciprocal tuition”.

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The Ministry of Education monitors its success, and that of its education partners, with a six-year Dogwood completion rate, which is the percentage of students graduating within six years of first starting Grade 8. The completion rate for Aboriginal students attending public schools was almost 62 percent in 2013/14, 22 percent higher than in 1999/00, but still significantly lower than the non-Aboriginal-student completion rate of 86 percent. For First Nation on-reserve students attending public schools, the six-year Dogwood completion rate was 50 percent.

DISCUSSION:

The Minister and Deputy Minister met with 5 First Nations in one on one meetings and the Minister participated in a panel discussion that included the First Nations Steering Committee President and the Executive Director, Ministers of Advanced Education, and Technology, Innovation and Citizens Services.

From these meetings and panel discussion, the following action items were identified:

First Nations	Topic	Other Ministries	Actions
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Old Masset	Request for funding for band school gymnasium		Old Masset to send plans to DM. EDUC to review and discuss with DM. DM to discuss with Superintendent of SD50. DM to discuss with Minister and respond to Old Masset.

SUMMARY

- The Province has seen steady and significant improvements for Aboriginal learners, and while there is still more work to do, we are working to build on that success.
- First Nations are supportive of the work being undertaken by Ministry of Education

Contact Information	TC for JM	Approved	Approved
Aboriginal Education 250-356-1891 280-20/BN	ADM initial	Dave Byng Deputy Minister	Honourable Mike Bernier Minister
		Date signed:	Date signed:

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
BRIEFING NOTE**

DATE: November 12, 2015

CLIFF: 184865

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Mike Bernier, Minister, for **Information** at the request of **Planning and Major Projects Division**

SUBJECT: Feasibility Study – Gymnasium Additions Old Massett First Nations – Chief Matthews School

BACKGROUND:

In September 2015 at the All Chiefs meeting in Chilliwack, representatives of the Old Massett First Nations (OMFN) met with the Minister of Education and requested \$2M in funding support for a gymnasium / auditorium addition to their existing Band School, Chief Matthews Elementary. The OMFN also have a funding request with the Federal Government for a contribution of \$2M to expand classroom space.

Chief Matthews Elementary is an on-reserve Band school that enrolls kindergarten to grade 4 students. The OMFN believe investments in Chief Matthews Elementary would benefit both First Nation and non-First Nation students and the community at large. As such, they have approached both Federal and Provincial levels of government.

The Old Massett Indian Reserve is located two kilometres from Massett Village on Haida Gwaii.

The Ministry of Education provides capital funding to the off-reserve schools in Haida Gwaii. The Federal Government provides capital funding to the on-reserve schools in Haida Gwaii. As such, the Ministry has sought a legal opinion regarding the authority of the Ministry to expend capital funds on-reserve.

DISCUSSION:

There are three schools in the Massett Village and Old Massett area. One elementary and one secondary in Massett Village operated by School District 50, Haida Gwaii, and the on-reserve Band school in Old Massett.

Representatives of OMFN indicated parent and School District support for the expansion as well as the potential for broader community benefit to the Massett area. Representatives have also indicated support from the Federal government for a \$2M funding contribution.

School District representatives have indicated there has been very limited local discussion between the School District and OMFN. Additionally, the School District is uncertain if the

improvements would be utilized but is willing to participate in feasibility study. The Federal Government has indicated there has been preliminary discussion on the matter with the OMFN; with no funding commitment made to date.

Given the facts above, the Ministry of Education proposes to conduct a feasibility study valued at approximately \$150,000 to determine options for a gymnasium addition, define the project scope, schedule, budget, risks and potential funding sources. Providing the OMFN are supportive of this approach, the Terms of reference for the feasibility could be completed and posted prior to December 31, 2015.

Depending on the degree of engagement and required consultation with both the OMFN and School District, the feasibility study could be completed this spring with a funding decision advanced summer 2016. However, the time required to complete the study will be directly impacted by the pace of participation by the OMFN. The Ministry has yet to consult with the OMFN on the proposed project timeline and may require more time once consultation has occurred.

A proposed timeline for the project is outlined below:

Feasibility Study Timeline

Feasibility Study Tender	December 31, 2015
RFP Closing	January 30 th , 2016
RFP Evaluation and Award	February 28 th , 2016
Feasibility Study & Stakeholder Consultation	March – April 2016
Review Draft Report	May 2016
Advance for Funding Decision	June 2016

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Should the feasibility study determine the project is feasible, a decision on both the provision and source of funding will be required.

CONCLUSION:

A feasibility study will provide detail on educational needs of the area and the initial costs and benefits of the gymnasium/auditorium improvements requested for Chief Matthew School. This will enable government to make an informed decision on the request for \$2M in capital funding.

Attachment(s): Photo Chief Matthews Elementary

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<u>Contact Information</u> Renée Mounteney Planning and Major Projects Division 250-356-7814		Approved Shanna Mason	Approved
	ADM initial	Dave Byng Deputy Minister	Honourable Mike Bernier Minister
		Date signed:	Date signed:

Chief Matthews School



Old Masset – Haida Gwaii

