



February 7, 2014

BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS) hopes new approach to First Nations Education will result in quality, culturally relevant education and care becoming accessible to every Aboriginal child in BC

WEST VANCOUVER, BC— BCACCS Executive Director, Karen Isaac was eagerly waiting for this morning's announcement of the beginning of a new approach to First Nations control of First Nations education. Despite not being able to attend the event at Kainai High School in the traditional territory of the Kainai Nation BCACCS recognizes the importance of the announcement.

"This day represents a new beginning and the possibility of hope and opportunity for First Nations children, youth and students," said Karen Isaac, BCACCS Executive Director. "Beginning to have control over our own education is the first step in elevating quality, harnessing potential, and ensuring culturally relevant education and care is accessible to every Aboriginal child in BC."

The new approach embraces the essential, linked components of First Nations control of First Nations education. It supports First Nations to build on their traditional ways of knowledge and values sharing. And is founded on our rights, jurisdiction and Treaties; secure, sustainable and fair funding is an essential step in supporting our students' success and strengthening their languages and cultures.

"The first step of achieving First Nations control of First Nations education will safeguard the nurturing of our children and enable them to achieve their goals through access to spiritually enriching, quality education," said Mary Teegee, BCACCS Board President.

The National Chief was at Kainai High School in the traditional territory of the Kainai Nation to make the announcement along with Prime Minister Stephen Harper, AFN Regional Chief and Chair of the Chiefs Committee on Education Morley Googoo, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Bernard Valcourt and First Nations leaders, Elders, students and citizens.

Though the original First Nations Education Act met with some controversy the New Approach allows the gap in funding to close between First Nations and non-Indigenous students, a welcome relief to the many Aboriginal organizations that have been pursuing need to invest in our children and our schools for many years. With the elimination of financial gaps such as the 2 percent cap and by establishing a reasonable, stable and fair rate of growth now and in the long-term there is considerable hope for the future of our children and the ability of their families and communities to thrive.

BCACCS supports First Nations education systems rooted in Indigenous languages and cultures and now there are investments to support the building of systems; a successful framework; meaningful dialogue; and schools. Finally, the call to invest in Canada's fastest growing population, First Nations children and youth, has been heard. "BCACCS is ready to support First Nations engaging in the work that has to be undertaken," Mary Teegee, BCACCS Board President, "we know that when we put children first we can transform communities and build resilient, self-determined nations."

More info about BCACCS:

BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS) is committed to nurturing excellence through community outreach, education, research and advocacy, to ensure every Aboriginal child in BC has access to spiritually enriching, culturally relevant, high quality early childhood development services.

Link to BCACCS [website](#)

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Media Contact:

Fionn Yaxley, Communications Officer

communications@acc-society.bc.ca

604-913-9128 ext. 223