

BRIEFING NOTE

AFN Draft Resolution 01 - 23 Unilateral Education Programming Decisions by Indigenous Services Canada

To: First Nation Leadership in Ontario
From: Education Sector, Chiefs of Ontario
Date: July 8, 2023
Purpose: Recommendation

ISSUE

The COO Education Sector is recommending that First Nations in Ontario oppose AFN Draft Resolution 01–23.

BACKGROUND

- In November 25, 2020, COO withdrew Ontario’s representatives from the AFN Chiefs Committee on Education (AFN CCOE) and the AFN National Indian Education Council (AFN NIEC) due to lack of consideration for the funding needs of First Nations in Ontario and a flawed process that pits Regions against one another.
- At the July 2022 AFN Annual General Assembly (AGA), the AFN CCOE introduced an emergency resolution titled *Unilateral Education Programming Decisions by Indigenous Services Canada* (ISC), however, the resolution was not considered at the 2022 AGA due to the focus on other national concerns.
 - At this time, COO technicians provided suggested revisions that would enable First Nation Leadership in Ontario to support the draft resolution
- At the December 2022 AFN Special Chiefs Assembly (SCA), the draft resolution resurfaced. At this time, after lengthy discussions between COO technicians and the AFN Resolutions Committee, we were informed that the movers would not accept suggested revisions from COO and that it would be discussed on the Assembly floor
 - Again, the draft resolution was not considered due to a lack of time at the December 2022 AFN SCA
- At the April 2023 AFN SCA the draft resolution was resubmitted without consideration for the suggested amendments provided in July 2022 or December 2022. The draft resolution was discussed on the Assembly floor:
 - At this time First Nation Leadership in Ontario stood in solidarity in opposition to specific content in the draft resolution

- A delegation of Chiefs and technicians from Ontario met with the movers of the draft resolution to discuss possible amendments to resolve differences. Unfortunately, agreement could not be achieved at that time
- The draft resolution was withdrawn for further discussion and revision to be reintroduced at the AFN AGA July 2023 in Halifax, N.S.
- The movers of the resolution did not reach out to COO (Chiefs or technicians) for input between April 2023 and July 2023, and the draft resolution has been submitted for consideration at the AFN AGA July 2023 with addition of the following clause:
 - Operative clause #6 - Direct the AFN to advocate for additional sources of funding in place of any funding loss to First Nations in the Ontario region related to the Education Partnerships Program (EPP)
- The AFN has provided the CCOE with a briefing note that includes points to support the base plus per capita funding model

ANALYSIS

The following issues were flagged at the July 2022 AFN AGA, the December 2022 AFN SCA, the April 2023 AFN SCA and are, once again, being flagged for the July 2023 AFN AGA:

1. AFN Draft Resolution 01 - 23 Unilateral Education Programming Decisions by Indigenous Services Canada calls for recognition of the AFN CCOE and NIEC as the sole voice of First Nations in Canada. Until unity is reestablished at the AFN national committees on education, First Nations in Ontario must not be included in the implications of CCOE & NIEC recommendations.
2. The draft resolution calls for decentralization (that each region receive a share of the national allocation) of all education funding. We agree on decentralization of any **new** investments and federal commitments, but not for existing funding that may jeopardize and reduce existing supports for our students.
3. The draft resolution preferences the use of a base plus per capita formula to distribute education program funding to each region. The base plus per capita formula does not adequately serve the diversity of needs¹ within the Ontario region – specifically the needs of remote and fly-in communities.
 - a. Ontario has the largest number of remote communities (no year-round road access) and therefore experiences much higher costs for delivery and services related to all levels of education.
 - i. 36 out of 105 in Canada, or 34%
 - b. The base plus per capita distribution formula may be appropriate for some funding allocations but not all. Different factors should be considered depending on the intended outcomes of the investment.

Regarding the additional Operative Clause #6:

¹ Other considerations could include, but not be limited to; language immersion programs, location of student enrolment (i.e. First Nation vs. Provincial schools).

1. We are seeking stable, predictable funding for the partnerships that have developed over decades for both K-12 (in reference to the Education Partnerships Program) and post-secondary (in reference to the Post-Secondary Student Support Program). We cannot rely on AFN advocacy efforts to top our funding allocations up on an annual basis.
2. AFN advocacy for new investments to support First Nations education has not achieved much success in recent pre-budget submissions to the federal government. Despite the inclusion of education funding in the AFN pre-budget submission for 2022, in 2023, there were no new investments provided other than funding to support the Regional Education Agreement in Quebec.
3. The AFN provided no advocacy when First Nation institutes in Ontario experienced a 31% funding reduction in 2020 due to the recommendation to ISC to decentralize and redistribute funding associated with the Post-Secondary Partnerships Program
 - a. We argue that First Nations in Ontario did not support that recommendation and were no longer participating in the national committees on education, therefore Ontario region should not have been subject to the reduction. Furthermore, it has been outlined in our PSE Engagement Report that the First Nations Institutes in Ontario should be treated the same way as the First Nations University of Canada in Saskatchewan, which receives \$7 million off the top of the national PSPP allocation before the regional calculations are made.

CURRENT STATUS

AFN Draft Resolution 01 - 23 Unilateral Education Programming Decisions will be the first of the submitted resolutions dealt with on the Assembly floor. Scheduled for Tuesday July 11, 2023 at 3:00 pm.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that First Nation Leadership in Ontario do not support AFN Draft Resolution 01 - 23 Unilateral Education Programming Decisions by Indigenous Services Canada due to the fact that COO does not participate at the AFN national committees on education and therefore cannot be subject to the recommendations they put forward.

ATTACHMENTS

- AFN Draft Resolution 01 - 23 Unilateral Education Programming Decisions by Indigenous Services Canada
- FACTS AND FIGURES – FEDERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS
- 23-07-10 DRAFT Statement re AFN AGA DR 01

