

First Nations Summit

STATEMENT

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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First Nations Summit commends move to make Indigenous-focused coursework mandatory for BC secondary school students

(Xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, BC) – The First Nations Summit commends the work of the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and the Province of BC for expanding the BC secondary school graduation requirements to include mandatory Indigenous-focused coursework beginning in the 2023-24 school year.

This change in curriculum is consistent with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #62, the principles of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* which was passed into law in BC in October 2019.

This is a momentous step forward with the Province of British Columbia we continue to work together to turn the page in our collective history and embarking on a new era and path for building a respectful and modern relationship built on recognition, respect, cooperation and partnership. We commend the work of the Hon. Jennifer Whiteside for her role in championing this change.

FNESC, First Nations and many partner organizations have long lobbied the provincial government to make this change as a necessary and critical step in our collective path towards reconciliation. The change in curriculum requirements will in building a better knowledge and understanding of First Nations history, cultures, values and traditions which will ultimately foster greater understanding and more harmonious relations among Indigenous peoples and future generations of British Columbians.

Further information on the changes can be found [here](#).

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The First Nations Summit speaks on behalf of First Nations involved in treaty negotiations in British Columbia. The Summit is also a NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Further background information on the Summit may be found at www.fns.bc.ca.

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