

Southern First Nations Secretariat/
London District Education Council
Meeting Date: June 1, 2012

Meeting Notes

Present: Starr McGahey-Albert, Christy Bressette, Diane Aiken, Katherine Hopkins, Shirley Miller, Gaylene Stonefish, Kim Henry, Mary Elijah, Faye Ireland, Reno Lewis, Lisa Genyn, Vicki Ware, Leo Nicholas and Mike George.

Meeting called to order by Mike George at 10:30 a.m.

Welcome and opening comments by Mike George. Mike listed reasons of why the LDEC is being revived and what we hope to accomplish.

Welcome from Vicki Ware on behalf of Chief Plain.

Mike outlined the differences between the LDEC and IEC meetings. The LDEC is attempting to close the information sharing gap between the organizations, and to provide an opportunity to network where information is easily shared and exchanged by education professionals in attendance. More importantly to learn best practises from one another for the benefit of our students whether they are ECE pupils or post secondary students.

Mike went to describe how SFNS and the LDCC work together and how he will work to ensure that information from the LDEC is shared with the local Chiefs and Councils. Mike gave an update on the London District Chiefs Council and the many different task forces that are developing. Information from the PTO's will also be disseminated to the education directors/ as SFNS receives it.

After lunch, Shirley led the members into team group work. The tasks were to take a look at what is working and what doesn't work well. Each group recorded their findings on flip chart paper; to be analysed for later discussion.

How best can the LDEC serve the communities? We want to establish a regular meeting pattern – monthly, quarterly, bi-annual. To form working groups and information sharing sessions when it comes to educating First Nation children. We recognise that there is a lot of talent among our own education professionals and problem solving needs to come from within. The LDEC will provide a forum and place whereby we can help each other.

Another goal will be to invite Guest speakers to share new and current information. Some ideas of what can happen; to assist communities with their tuition agreements, provide presenters who specialize in learning disabilities related to FAS, to develop a FN education website – SFNS can provide the website as regional location and etc.,

Guest Speaker – Ron Plain provided an overview of his position at SFNS and gave a detailed account of the impacts of environmental poisoning. Land, water, air and people are all affected by hazardous waste. He also provided remedies we can all do now to provide a safer living environment.

Guest Speaker – Bruce Stonefish – provided an excellent overview of IEC and services IEC provide. A slide presentation on the newly built cultural education centre located at Delaware Nation. IEC is developing on many education levels and provides classroom curriculum for teachers and other education professionals.

Pamphlets and information packages were provided for all in attendance.

Next meeting date: Friday, September 28, 2012

Leo Nicholas from the Munsee Delaware Nation offered to host the next meeting.

LDEC

Break-out Group Findings

What works well:

- Oxford Learning Centre provides good academic support and supports for appropriate learning behaviours
- Ontario Early Learning Framework
- FFNEA – Four First Nations Education Association
- NAC – Native Advisory Council – (Sarnia, Kettle Point & Moraviantown) works well for networking with local school via Native Trustee
- Sarnia Reps meet regularly with principals.

Improvements Needed:

- funding on many levels
- sharing of resources
- speech and language – lack of support and long waiting lists
- professional development for education staff
- parental involvement in education
- parents need support
- First Nation Languages – disconnect between on-reserve and public school language instruction (not conclusive for language revitalization)
- Teachers need help in delivering appropriate programming (TA's ?)
- Special education – assessments, lack of human resources
- Communication strategy – provide website/portal for info sharing
- Get FN leadership more involved in lobbying efforts
- First Nations want parity with Provincial standards

