



GENERAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

PROVINCIAL POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

We recently had the opportunity to meet with provincial MPs and present the FNEC's priority files. Our discussions with the co-spokesperson for Québec Solidaire, Manon Massé, and the Official Opposition Critic for education and higher education, Marwah Rizqy, helped us raise awareness of the institutional barriers faced by Indigenous students. Removing these systemic barriers will allow for the full implementation of the Regional Education Agreement and, consequently, the fulfilment of our mission. Meetings with Ministers Bernard Drainville and Pascale Dériy, as well as Federal Minister Pablo Rodriguez, will take place in the coming weeks.

REGIONAL COMMITTEE ON FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES

The Regional Committee on First Nations Languages continues its mandate to mobilize and inform communities, in addition to defending and promoting the ancestral languages of First Nations in Quebec and Labrador. The FNEC has agreed with the AFNQL Regional Chief to accommodate the Committee's secretariat. Chief of the Manawan community, Sipi Flamand, has also taken on management of the language file at the AFNQL and now sits on the Assembly of First Nations' Chiefs Committee on Languages.

The Committee is working to develop projects that will promote local capacity-building with respect to managing language and cultural projects within communities. Committee members also recently participated in a strategic reflection session to anticipate work in the coming years. In addition, a forum on First Nations language rights will also be held soon.

AFN CHIEFS' ASSEMBLY

From December 6–8, 2022, the FNEC participated in the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Chiefs Special Meeting in Ottawa. Most notably, the FNEC sat in regional caucuses and collaborated on the development and drafting of resolutions, in addition to supporting the Chief responsible for the education file. The FNEC team also took the opportunity to organize meetings with various federal departments and to provide support and advice to the members of the FNEC Chiefs Committee on the presentation of education files.

At the meeting of the AFN Chiefs Committee on Education, previously held on December 5th, the FNEC had provided strategic support to the director of the education file to ensure changes were made to Indigenous Services Canada's new *School Space Accommodation Standards* and to recommend additional funding for education adults.

The next AFN Chiefs special meeting is scheduled for April.

ADULT EDUCATION

On January 5, 2021, Indigenous Services Minister Patty Hajdu announced that the provinces and territories would receive additional funding of \$350 million over five years as part of the 2021 budget. This funding will be used to support the provision of services by training centres, as well as to increase student allowances.

While this was a much-awaited announcement, the figures announced differed fundamentally from the recommendation made by the AFN Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE). The committee supported an equitable distribution of funding based on nominative rolls by region and territory, while the ministry unilaterally adopted an alternative distribution methodology. First Nations regional training centres and organizations agreed, on a number of conditions, to a temporary approach.

There is a \$15-million gap over five years between the CCOE recommendation and the allocation arbitrarily established by ISC for regional adult education organizations. Funding for full-time adult students remains unchanged for the next five years.

That said, there is such a large difference between the method used by headquarters to allocate these new credits and the CCOE recommendation that it could not be accepted as it was. The FNEC has undertaken a review of this funding with ISC and the AFN, which is likely to have a significant impact on access to adult education in communities in the region.