



NEWS FROM THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

APPEARANCES BEFORE THE HOUSE OF COMMONS STANDING COMMITTEE ON INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS (INAN) AND THE SENATORIAL STANDING COMMITTEE ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES (APPA)

The FNEC and Kiuna Institution appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (INAN) on March 8 and April 17, 2023, to present on the topic “Improving Graduation Rates and Successful Outcomes for Indigenous Students.”

Represented by the Chief of Gesgapegiag and member of the FNEC Chiefs’ Committee, John Martin, and its Director of Education Services, Annie Gros-Louis, the appearance of the FNEC dealt with the role of the provincial and federal governments in the success of the regional education agreement of its signatory First Nations.

As per the Kiuna Institution, its testimony to INAN committee members focused on its curriculum and psychosocial services as being geared towards the needs of students and their families. Kiuna Institution also requested financial support from the federal government to meet its operational costs. Kiuna was represented by its clinical supervisor, José-Tomas Arriola, and by the FNEC’s Director General, Denis Gros-Louis.

Finally, on May 10, 2023, the FNEC Director General appeared before APPA to present on Bill C-29, *An Act to Provide for the Establishment of a National Council for Reconciliation*. The purpose of the presentation was to address the education provisions of the bill and to offer possible solutions, including the full participation of First Nations and their organizations in reporting on the educational performance of First Nations learners.

SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY OF THE ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

To support First Nations control of First Nations education, the FNEC attended the AFN Special Chiefs Assembly that took place in Ottawa from April 4 to 6, 2023. During the Assembly, the FNEC participated in the regional caucuses of the AFNQL, supported the chief portfolio holder of education, and participated in the drafting of a resolution related to digital connectivity and First Nations spectrum sovereignty.

As well, the FNEC team organized meetings with various federal departments staffers from various ministers’ offices to discuss relevant education files. Finally, the FNEC supported and advised the members of the FNEC Chiefs’ Committee during the AFNQL caucus meeting with the Minister of Aboriginal Services, Hon. Patty Hajdu.

The next AFN Chiefs Assembly will take place in July 11–13, 2023, in Halifax, NS.

SCHOOL SPACE ACCOMMODATION STANDARDS (SSAS)

During the past year, FNEC contributed, among other things, to the drafting of the new School Space Accommodation Standards (SSAS), a document meant to describe standards for the construction or major renovation of First Nations school infrastructure funded by the Government of Canada.

This new iteration of the SSAS offers vast improvements on student health, safety and well-being, provincial comparability, the specific needs of students and communities, as well as the culture and languages of First Nations communities.

Effective since April 1, 2023, the new School Space Accommodation Standards are expected to be published on the Indigenous Services Canada website on June 1, 2023.