

BATC Education

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Newsletter #1

This newsletter is part of our communications strategy to keep you informed of what is happening with Battlefords Agency Tribal Chiefs Education (BATC Education). We will keep the newsletters to one, double-sided page in length and publish them four times a year. In addition, we do have a website in development (<http://www.batc.ca>) and will post jobs, BATC Education Board minutes and detailed information up-dates under the education tab.

BATC Education:

BATC Education is comprised of five First Nations: Ahtahkakoop, Moosomin, Red Pheasant, Saulteaux and Sweetgrass. We officially came into existence with the signing of the *Educational Agreement* by our Chiefs on February 9, 2010. We established an Education Board and had our first meeting on April 27, 2010. BATC Education provides second level services, that is, services of a Director of Education, Speech and Language Pathologist, and Education Psychologist, to our five First Nation's schools. We also coordinate applications for educational project funding such as Student Success and New Paths (see related up-dates).

Education Board Members:

We have one Elder who provides guidance but who is a non-voting member of the Education Board. Currently Senator Don Pooyak has kindly fulfilled that role.

We have six appointed Education Board members as follows:

Ahtahkakoop: Fletcher Greyeyes
Moosomin: Lillian Blackstar (Chair)
Red Pheasant: Rene Wuttunee (Vice-Chair)
Saulteaux: Bernadette Gopher- Thomas
Sweetgrass: Gordon Whitecalf
BATC Chiefs: Chief Stewart Baptiste

These board members are responsible for providing the overall guidance and direction for BATC Education.

BATC Education Staff:

We have the following staff at BATC Education:

Director of Education: Stuart Keys (part-time now and moving to full-time on August 16);
Superintendent and Project Manager: Barry Werth (part-time);
Educational Consultant: Marvin Jimmy (full-time, temporary);
Education Consultant: Glenn Wouters (part-time, temporary);
Educational Psychologist: currently advertized;
Speech and Language Pathologist: Skye Angus (contracted service);
Systems Administrator: Dan Garvey (full-time) (computers);
Executive Assistant: Tammy Skilliter (full-time).

In addition, we have shared staff with BATC that include:

Director of Finance: Lori Whitecalf (full-time);
Receptionist: Virginia Nicotine (full-time);
Accounts Clerk: Brenda Wuttunee (full-time).

School Year Calendar:

All BATC schools will have the same school year calendar that was approved on April 27 by the BATC Education Board. This calendar has 197 school days that maximizes the time students have in school. Principals will provide notification to parents prior to the end of school. The calendar will also be posted on our website.

Student Success Project:

With ACTC as our partner we have been approved for a three year project of which we are in our first year. This year our joint budget is 2.5 million dollars with BATC Education receiving 1.22 million dollars in funding. We have the following projects underway:

- 1) Language Arts: (Approximate combined budget \$300,000)
 - a) Hire a Literacy Consultant (to provide teacher training and support);
 - b) Strengthen Animated Literacy (N, K and 1);
 - c) Implement Repeated Readings (Grades 1 and 2);
 - d) Implement Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM) (K-6);
 - e) Hire 10 school based literacy/math mentors (assistants).

- 2) Mathematics: (Approximate combined budget \$200,000)
 - a) Materials Acquisition (*Math Makes Sense*, Grades K to 9);
 - b) Materials Acquisition (New Grade 10 Math courses at Ahtahkakoop).

- 3) Counseling: (Approximate combined budget \$232,750)
 - a) Hire 3 trained counselors for career/personal counseling (1 position shared between Moosomin and Saulteaux; one position shared between Red Pheasant and Sweetgrass; and one position for Ahtahkakoop) (distribution based roughly on student enrolment numbers).

- 4) Information Technology (Approximate combined budget \$225,000):
 - a) Hire a Systems Administrator.
 - b) Establish and maintain student data systems (*Open Admin*);
 - c) Establish and maintain school and BATC Education servers;
 - d) Provide additional computers and software at each school.

New Paths (Project submission pending approval):

We have applied for a total of \$278,653 in funding for the following two proposals:

- 1) BATC Cree Language and Culture Support (\$222,261):
 - a) Hire a Culture Support Coordinator (at BATC Education);
 - b) Provide materials and support in all schools for the Virtues Program;
 - c) Provide for Elders and Community Resource Support in all schools;
 - d) Provide a BATC wide Cultural Camp for students;
 - e) Provide Cree Language instruction support in all schools.

- 2) BATC Administrator Professional Development and Teacher Professional Support (\$56,392):
 - a) Administrator Professional Development:
This professional development will train our principals and administrators how to do staff supervision.
 - b) Enhancement Coach:
To help do staff supervision and evaluation and work with teachers improving their professional practices.

School Reviews:

All of our schools have had a school review completed by Glenn Wouters and Tom Heidt. The results of each review have been shared with the school staff and representatives of the school committee/authority. More copies of the reviews will be made available at the schools and at the band offices after our BATC Education Strategic planning sessions (see below). The schools will be using their own school review information to make individual school plans this fall. These plans will allow the schools to focus their attention on areas of need as identified by the review.

Strategic Planning:

On June 7th and 8th representatives of our schools, school councils/authority, bands and Education Board will gather at the Western Development Museum to make a strategic plan that will outline what BATC Education will do in the next three years. This planning process will use combined data from all the individual school reviews. We will keep you informed about that plan in the next BATC Education newsletter and on our website.

End Note:

As a new educational organization we will continue to grow and expand our services over time. We recognize that we will not be able to meet all the needs that exist currently but we will address the most important in a planned manner. We need your help as parents, grandparents, community members and students to assist us in strengthening our schools. Together we can make a difference in the education of our children.

Stuart Keys, Director of Education