



Meeting Highlights

DATE: December 9, 2024

The mandate of the CASS First Nations, Métis & Inuit Education Action Committee is to collaboratively identify effective education practices for school authorities through engaging with representatives of First Nations, Métis, Public, Separate, Francophone, Charter, Independent authorities, and associations.

Committee Membership for 2024-2025

CASS Representatives:

David Keohane – CASS CEO

Jonathan Kaiswatum – Board Representative

Dr. Dianne Roulson - CASS Leadership Consultant (related to the annual Indigenous Education Gathering and grant deliverables)

Zone Representatives:

Roger Lauck – Director of Teaching & Learning, Grande Prairie Catholic (Zone 1)

Annalee Nutter – Superintendent, Fort McMurray Public (Zone 2/3)

Tim De Ruyck (Committee Chair) – Superintendent, Wolf Creek Public (Zone 4)

Dr. Ryan Sawula – Associate Superintendent - Curriculum and Inclusion, Red Deer Catholic (Zone 4)

Cindy Stefanato – Director of Indigenous Learning, Rocky View Schools (Zone 5)

Aaron Skretting – Director of Religious Education, Holy Spirit Catholic (Zone 6)

Treaty Representatives:

Tracy Swampy-Sylvester – Superintendent, Maskwacis Education Schools Commission (Treaty 6)

Staahtsisttayaaki - Genevieve Fox – Director of Education, Blackfoot Confederacy Tribal Council (Treaty 7)

Chester Auger – Director of Education, Bigstone Cree Nation Education (Treaty 8)

Métis Representatives:

Dianne Desjarlais – Director, Alberta Métis Settlements General Council

Lisa Cruickshank – Director, Métis Education and Lifelong Learning, Rupertsland Institute

Charter:

Chris Gilmour – Superintendent, Connect Charter

Francophone:

Dolorèse Nolette – Directrice Générale/Superintendent of Schools, Conseil scolaire Centre-Est

AISCA:

Erin Murphy – Senior ECS Manager

Alberta Education:

Carmen Parent – Executive Director of Rural and Métis, First Nations and Inuit Education

Ron Taylor – Director, Indigenous and North Services Branch

For more information, please contact:
Your representative and/or David Keohane
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Opening and Closing Prayers

Beautiful opening and closing prayers were offered by Staahtsisttayaaki, Dr. Genevieve Fox.

Land Acknowledgement

Tim De Ruyck (Committee Chair) opened the meeting with the land acknowledgement.

Introductions

Tim De Ruyck welcomed all the committee members to the first committee meeting of the year, followed by introductions from each committee member.

Review of Terms of Reference

Tim De Ruyck reviewed the committee [Terms of Reference](#). The mandate of the committee is to collaboratively identify effective education practices for school authorities through engaging with representatives of First Nations, Métis, Public, Separate, Francophone, Charter, Independent authorities, and associations. The primary focus of the committee is to contribute to the development and implementation of a comprehensive professional learning plan to support the implementation of the *Leadership Quality Standard* (LQS), including the competency, “Supporting the Application of Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit, and the *Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard* (SLQS), including the competency, “Ensuring First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education for All Students.”

Strategic Focus of the Committee

David Keohane (CASS CEO) outlined CASS's 3-level committee structure, governed by bylaws and board oversight. There are four *Standing Committees* (ongoing, high-level groups) which are the Executive, Governance and Nominating, Audit and Risk Management, and CASS Zone Committees (involving all regulated members). There are two *External Committees* (advisory groups with external members) like the Women in Leadership Committee and the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Action Committee. *Ad Hoc Committees* are formed temporarily when additional support is needed beyond standing committees.

2025 Indigenous Education Gathering Meeting

Dr. Dianne Roulson and Wapastim (Jason Bigcharles) provided an overview of the proposed program from the 2025 Indigenous Education Gathering. They drew inspiration from past gatherings and feedback found in three key documents: [2024 Gathering Learning Survey Report](#), [2024 Indigenous Education Gathering Program](#) (session descriptions), and [2024 Gathering Program at a Glance](#).

Feedback has underscored the need for balance, ensuring representation of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit knowledges, nations, treaty areas, and gender. Feedback indicated it is crucial to integrate Indigenous knowledges with respect, while uplifting Indigenous women's voices.

Previous participants have emphasized the importance of land-based learning — not just as a pre-session but woven into the core program through off-site experiences. Reflection time after keynotes is essential, allowing space to process deeply emotional topics. Hands-on cultural learning opportunities are in demand, as is the need for practical applications of knowledge.

Ceremonial teachings, particularly about the pipe ceremonies, are vital. Elder helpers play a sacred role and must be honoured accordingly. Central themes for 2025 gathering should include treaty education to foster respectful relationships, empowering youth voices, anti-racism education, and integrating Indigenous knowledges into curricula. This feedback offers a clear path: balance, respect, reflection, and action. By incorporating these elements, the gathering can honour tradition, amplify voices, and create meaningful steps toward inclusive education.

Committee members expressed their agreement with the proposed plan.

Next Meeting

The next meeting date is proposed to be at the end of January. The proposed agenda topics are the 2025 Indigenous Education Gathering Program and updates from the committee members.