
FACTSHEET

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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Health
First Nations Leadership Council

PROGRESS MADE SINCE THE TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE ACCORD

Since the Province, the First Nations Leadership Council and the federal government signed the Transformative Change Accord in November 2005, progress has been made on the priorities outlined in the accord to close the social and economic gaps between First Nations people and other British Columbians. In addition, the Métis Nation Relationship Accord was signed with the Métis Nation British Columbia that focuses closing the social and economic gap for Métis people in B.C. Highlights of progress made in the last year include the following:

Closing the Health Gap

- In February 2006, government announced it would invest \$2.25 million to the Chair in Aboriginal Environmental Health at the University of Northern British Columbia through the Leading Edge Endowment Fund to help fund a research program that will link health and environmental data to identify potential health risks in the Aboriginal population.
- The Ministry of Health provided support to increase the number of Aboriginal nursing students and graduates in B.C. as a part of an investment of an additional \$26-million in 2006/07 in the BC Nursing Strategy.
- In 2005/06, health authorities invested approximately \$15 million in targeted Aboriginal health programs. An increase from approximately \$10-million in 2001.
- The Ministry of Health spends about \$230-million annually on Aboriginal health through publicly funded services in Acute, Home and Community Care, Mental and Public health, MSP, and PharmaCare.
- Projects funded by the Ministry of Advanced Education for 2005/06 include learning circles to support Aboriginal nursing to help recruit, retain and provide best practices for health care in Aboriginal communities.

Closing the Education Gap:

- On July 5th, 2006, representatives of First Nations and the federal and provincial governments signed an agreement in recognition of the right of First Nations peoples to make decisions about the education of their children. This will serve as an important stepping stone to achieving increased education success.
- A new updated version of the “Shared Learnings” learning resource guide was released. The guide helps bring Aboriginal history and cultures into the classroom and provides teachers with practical tools to integrate Aboriginal content in all subject areas from kindergarten through Grade 10. This is the first update since the guide was introduced eight years ago.

- A total of 29 Aboriginal education enhancement agreements with local Aboriginal leaders and school districts have been signed. These agreements set specific academic, cultural and social goals that include:
 - improving the performance of Aboriginal students in reading, writing and math;
 - increasing the number of Aboriginal students enrolled in the regular academic programs;
 - improving the school completion rate for Aboriginal students;
 - encouraging a broad understanding of Aboriginal history and culture through relevant curriculum;
 - growing appreciation for, and knowledge of, Aboriginal languages and cultures; and,
 - increasing Aboriginal students' sense of identity and belonging within the school community.
- The provincial high school completion rate for Aboriginal students continues to rise, reaching 48 per cent in 2004/05, up 6 per cent from 2000/01.
- The Province provides over \$47.5 million annually for Aboriginal education, above and beyond regular education funding. These Aboriginal education funds are for Aboriginal language and culture programs, Aboriginal support service programs, and other localized Aboriginal education programs.
- The Aboriginal special projects fund has been increased by almost \$200,000 for 2006/07, to \$2 million, its highest level ever. Included are 30 new and continuing projects at 20 public post-secondary institutions.

Closing the Housing Gap

- As part of the province's housing strategy, Housing Matters BC, is transferring the management of up to 2,600 housing units from the federal government to the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA).
- The Province has also provided \$800,000 to the Aboriginal Housing Management Association, including:
 - \$100,000 for staff training to increase the association's capacity to manage 189 social housing units to approximately 3,000 units.
 - \$200,000 to facilitate consultation and analysis of the housing demand. This analysis will be used to develop an allocation model for the \$50.9 million investment in housing and to identify capacity gaps and training needs for AHMA member organizations.
 - \$500,000 to train Aboriginal housing non-profit societies based on their needs as identified by the above-mentioned analysis.
- The Province is also working on a province-wide needs and a capacity assessment for Aboriginal housing both on and off-reserve, expected to be complete by March 31, 2007.

Closing the Economic Gap

- A proposed settlement with Canada, the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations was initialled that will resolve a reserve-based claim relating to a parcel of land in downtown Victoria.
- A Final Agreement with Canada and Lheidli T'enneh Band was initialled – the first comprehensive treaty initialled under the BC treaty process.
- Agreements-in-Principle (AIP) were signed with the In-SHUCK-ch Nation and with the Yale First Nation, bringing the total number of AIPs signed since 2003 to seven.

- The Province contributed \$4 million towards the Haida Heritage Centre at Qay'Innagaay to support research, design and construction of cultural exhibits at the estimated \$26-million centre.
- An economic benefits agreement was signed with Blueberry River First Nations to improve opportunities for Blueberry members to share in the benefits of resource activity in the northeast region.
- The Province provided \$2.25 million to the Malaspina University College Foundation to support a coastal aqua-business training program at the Centre for Shellfish Research. The funding will help create skills and training opportunities for First Nations to participate in the shellfish aquaculture industry.
- The Province provided \$1.3 million to the First Nations Mountain Pine Beetle Working Group (March 2006) to help set strategic planning priorities to respond to First Nation epidemic impacts, including economic, community or land and resource impacts.
- The \$100-million New Relationship Trust Act was enacted in March 2006 to help fund long-term capacity-building for First Nations so they can effectively participate in land and resource management and social programs for their communities.
- The Province is undertaking a digital divide project that will see broadband successfully brought to rural and remote communities throughout British Columbia by the end of 2006, including approximately one-half of the 203 First Nations communities in the province. To facilitate the remaining First Nations communities acquiring access to broadband, the province has committed \$10 million over two years to provide the infrastructure required and an additional \$5 million to provide First Nations with necessary capacity including training.
- The Ministry of Advanced Education provided \$1 million to support the University of Victoria's National Aboriginal Economic Development Chair.
- The Province provided \$40,000 to support the National Aboriginal Capital Corporation Association's 3rd annual Youth Entrepreneur Symposium (NACCA). The funding helped expose 250 young Aboriginal delegates to leadership, networking and finance opportunities at the NACCA Yes 2006 conference in Vancouver.
- The Province signed the 100th Forest Agreement with Leq'a:mel First Nation in January 2006. The agreement allows First Nations to develop their own forestry business and fulfils the Province's obligation to consult and accommodate First Nations on forest activity in their traditional territory. To date, the agreements have provided access to 17 million cubic metres of timber and shared forestry revenues of more than \$120.5 million.

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