

Indigenous Education Council Meeting

November 8, 2023 - 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Brockville Campus, Teams

Meeting Minutes

ATTENDING:	<p>Amanda Cook (co-chair) Shannon Hall (co-chair) Glenn Vollebregt Shelley Aylesworth-Spink Ross McMillan Mary Ann Lyons Shirley Chaisson Holly Brant Harley Foster Bradley Box Kayleigh Jordan-MacGregor Mary Gauthier</p>	<p>Iohahi:IO Akwasasne Education and Training Institute St. Lawrence College St. Lawrence College St. Lawrence College St. Lawrence College St. Lawrence College St. Lawrence College St. Lawrence College St. Lawrence College (student) St. Lawrence College (student) Downie-Wenjack Foundation St. Lawrence College (recording)</p>
ABSENT:	<p>Liv Rondeau Lindsay Rogers Becky Smoke Nathan Sunday Lacey Maracle King Brandon Sofea Amanda Tarbell</p>	<p>Limestone District School Board Women’s Representative, Highland Waters Metis Council SRMT – Education Division Akwasasne Training Program Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte St. Lawrence College Iohahi:IO Akwasasne Education and Training Institute</p>

DISCUSSION

The meeting started at 10:11 AM.

1. Welcoming in a good way

Mary Ann welcomed all attendees to the meeting by honouring National Indigenous Veterans Day. She shared some history and named some local individuals who exemplified the significant role that Indigenous soldiers played in wartime efforts. She ended with a Haudenosaunee prayer that brought people together in the spirit of gratitude and collaboration.

ACTION

DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p>2. Introductions</p> <p>A roundtable of introductions was completed. Amanda Cook is now back from maternity leave.</p>	
<p>3. Review IEC Minutes of June 14, 2023</p> <p>The minutes of the IEC Meeting of June 14, 2023 were reviewed. It was moved that the minutes of the Indigenous Education Council of June 14, 2023 be accepted as presented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOVED: Amanda Cook • SECONDED: Shirley Chaisson 	
<p>4. Indigenous Services Update</p> <p>a) Mary Ann reported on Kingston services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach to Indigenous students was conducted during the summer. • Indigenous Services participated in Smart Start and orientation. • Day-to-day service is being provided in the form of providing support and referrals. The number of students accessing the service is increasing. • The Centre is getting more use, especially as previous barriers (construction and pandemic lockdowns) are no longer an issue. • The Tipi is being used – for example, Community and Justice classes have used it, with a heightened awareness of the importance of students cultural understanding. <p>b) Shirley reported on Cornwall and Brockville services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a new centre in Cornwall and there are plans for a Centre in Brockville. An external construction group was consulted, and we are moving forward. • Shirley attended SNAP to support students. • Shirley facilitated crafts and teachings with students in a couple of CICE classrooms in Cornwall and Brockville. It was a different, and at times challenging, experience with these students with high needs. • Cornwall Centre redesign - There is currently a good opportunity to change the space in Cornwall. Budget money is to be allocated by the end of March 2024. Consultants are coming next week. There is a 2-week timeline to receive feedback and input into the plans. One objective of the space is to create a centre of belonging for everyone. Input should consider the desired emotional effect of walking into the Centre. Shirley sought feedback from the Council about what should be in the space for students, how it should be structured, and what elements should be included. The discussion included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There should be a space for collective gathering, another for smudging, 1 office space, 1 landing space 	

DISCUSSION	ACTION
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- The counselling room should be soundproof, with closed cabinets/low stimulation, and a window.
 - The students on the Council suggested that the space be similar to that of Kingston, with an open area and the use of large glass walls.
 - Shirley connected with CCVS students at the recent Open House.
- c) The following tri-campus initiatives were also discussed:
- Ribbon skirts project. There has been no time to work on the skirts. Material has been purchased and is being offered to graduates to make on their own. Instructions are provided, as is access to equipment.
 - Is there an option for men? – Ribbon shirts are to be tackled next, but they are harder to make. Ribbons to be put on already-made shirts can be considered.
 - Orange shirt day / Honor walk events were held with high turnouts.
 - The Downie-Wenjak day was a success.
 - Indigenous services are attending in classrooms to engage in topics about wellness through the medicine wheel. 41 hours have been logged towards these classroom services, reaching more than 400 students. It was noted that an effective pathway to students is through the classroom.

ACTIONABLE ITEMS	
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5. SLC Employees - onboarding, hiring, policies for ceremony
- The caucus meeting was held earlier this week and there was good conversation, and some loose decisions were made about how to advance some practices around:
- a) Benefits
 - b) Cultural training for people in HR
 - c) Taxes – It was suggested that a universal or standard document outlining the distinct options for various tax circumstances be developed and given to all employees during on-boarding. This would avoid the need to self-identify and would empower employees to understand the different tax implications associated with different situations (e.g., live on/don't live on reserve). This would influence hybrid working arrangements. Everyone gets the same information. There was agreement in the Council that this is a good idea. If incorporated, this would help with recruitment and retention.
 - d) Community involvement opportunities
 - Onboarding should include the promotion of Indigenous Education Council and other opportunities that foster inclusiveness and support the cultural value in the primacy of relationship and community. Important component of revitalization of culture. Consequences of not participating include a decreased sense of belonging and well-being.

Shelley and Glenn will take the challenges around community involvement opportunities to CET for a response and timeline, and report back to Council by/on March 26, 2024.

DISCUSSION**ACTION**

- A challenge is obtaining permission from managers to participate in these opportunities, e.g., SWIFT only available for faculty. It is inappropriate for employees to have to convince their boss of the importance of being involved in these opportunities. This speaks to a need for comprehensive cultural competency and standardizing awareness.
- A change in this practice that would result in new Indigenous employees anticipating being welcomed could be a real opportunity for SLC to stand out and differentiate ourselves from other institutions. This topic is very tangible and practical way to grow in Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being.

e) Ceremony Policies – staff and students

- There is legislation on the federal level that allows Indigenous people 5 days in ceremony.
- Participation in ceremony is important for the well-being of Indigenous staff and students. It plays a role in enabling individuals to be active in revitalizing connection with the culture. It plays a role in dealing with intergenerational trauma, which individuals experience to different degrees, but that are nonetheless are very real effects.
- Shannon shared that it is not a vacation; it is a lot of work. It is the foundation for her schooling and it compliments what she does for her job.
- Challenge: the approach to granting time off for ceremony has been piecemeal and is heavily dependent on the understanding of the manager/instructor. There should not be a penalty for participating in ceremony. How can we approach this policy different? How can we navigate this at the College?
- There is already a policy in place for students: Academic Accommodations for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances Policy. Council was not aware; the suggestion to improve communications was made.
- The idea of having freedom of choice for when to take holidays would respect diversity of faith/tradition backgrounds.
- Granting professional development for Indigenous staff who do not participate in ceremony should be considered.

Glenn and Shelley will take the issue surrounding Ceremony Policies back to CET and report back to Council by/at the next meeting on March 26, 2024.

Ross will bring forward communication about Academic Accommodations for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances Policy and report back to Council by/at the next meeting on March 26, 2024.

f) Hiring

- A commitment to the number of hires of Indigenous staff/faculty was requested.
- The following positions are currently in consideration:
 1. Elder/Knowledge Keeper – an Indigenous leadership position. Holly noted that Indigenous cultures approach leadership in a non-hierarchical way; decisions are made through ‘bottom-up’ collaboration, not ‘top-

Glenn and Shelley will have conversation with CET to get target numbers of hires of Indigenous staff – new and existing positions and report back to Council by/at the next meeting on March 26, 2024.

DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p>down' direction. For example, Ellen Gabriel exemplifies leadership by being a facilitator. The College operates on a more hierarchal structure. How can we bridge the two different approaches at SLC?</p> <p>2. Indigenous Recruiter</p> <p>g) The question was asked: How many Indigenous students are there at SLC? The number of Indigenous students tri-campus has been between 398 and 412, depending on the semester.</p>	
<p>6. Community - parameters of sponsorship</p> <p>a) Shelley provided an update from Kathy O'Brien.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The College is reaching out to Council to explore other opportunities, as there are some marketing funds allocated annually to sponsor events led by the Indigenous community. E.g., SLC was one of the sponsors of the Gemini Gala in Cornwall in June. Role of SLC: What can we do to enable/help in the community? A Sponsorship policy is to be developed. Communities: Akwesasne, Tyendinaga, Sharbot Lake (band office, but not reserve). There was discussion about different kinds of events – e.g., at pow-wows, there are often tables for sponsors. 	<p>Mary Ann and Shirley will help to consult and compile a list of events and report back to Council by/at the next meeting on March 26, 2024.</p> <p>IEC members will create a list of opportunities and report back to Council by/at the next meeting on March 26, 2024.</p> <p>Holly and Harley will get on Tyendinaga Council agenda to start to generate ideas for events/initiatives that SLC can sponsor and report back to Council by/at the next meeting on March 26, 2024.</p> <p>Mary Ann will reconnect with Sharbot Lake and find out about opportunities and report back to Council by/at the next meeting on March 26, 2024.</p>
<p>7. Welcome Event for Indigenous Students – update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLC used to do summer welcome sessions in July, but it is hard to get attendance. It is an ongoing challenge with students. The Welcome Event and Kairos Blanket Exercise is in the Viewbook. It is something we want to be consistent with. Partnering with community events is another concept that the College is considering. We get high participation with SLC graduation as staff and students are enabled to attend. 	<p>Ross will follow up about partnering with community regarding Welcome Event and report back to Council by/at the next meeting on March 26, 2024.</p> <p>Amanda will explore opportunity with Iohahi:IO; she will contact Ross.</p>

DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p>8. Scholarships for Indigenous Students</p> <p>A discussion exploring opportunities to provide scholarships to Indigenous students occurred.</p> <p>a) What are the parameters?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition amount? • Program focus? E.g., PSW Nursing? A long-term care bed is being constructed in Tyendinaga. • Other focus? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g., Language? Tyendinaga is lacking in speakers; they have to import speakers, but they have different dialects. ○ E.g., access to AEDA, a software program, offers CAN-8 Mohawk language program. It can be a supplement for someone learning Mohawk. Providing access can be another avenue for sponsorship. • Residence included? • Recipients? The recipient(s) should be students from the local territories. Student at Iohahi:IO? <p>b) Other suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mimic other scholarships, e.g., “Haudenosaunee Promise Scholarship” • It can be any financial aid vehicle – bursaries, scholarship, etc. • An advancement arm for alumni development? • Partner with existing community programs (e.g., language program – already connected to Queens), tied to college diploma. 	<p>Holly will connect with Kaleigh to further explore opportunities and report back to Council by/at the next meeting on March 26, 2024.</p> <p>Ross will work with Liz regarding parameters of scholarship and report back to IEC by March 1, 2024.</p>
NEW BUSINESS	
<p>9. IEC Workplan discussion</p> <p>a) A copy of the workplan was circulated to all members before the meeting. A few items were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership - Glenn attends all IEC meetings as a full participant and promotes the Council. E.g., he points to IEC during the listening tour. • Legacy spaces: the ceremony was excellent. It was a good start, and we have a ways to go, referring to Brockville and Cornwall. • Kairos Blanket Exercise was promoted at College Conversations. The facilitators – Holly, Shirley, and Stacy Gall – are pleased with the leadership team and their commitment. • The caucus meeting occurred earlier this week. • The elder parking spaces is an ongoing project, working with FMS to execute 	

DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p>before winter. They are to be painted purple in spring.</p> <p>b) It was agreed that IEC is to provide input on draft policies from CET. The following policies are on the workplan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bereavement leave policy – part of Future of Work • Ceremony Policy - part of Future of Work • Smudging policy • Indigenous feasting policy <p>b) Role of CET – Each member of CET has a part to play in the advancement of the workplan. CET can attend council meetings if IEC needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was agreed that all CET members be invited to attend the March 2024 meeting, and to physically meet once a year with IEC, with updates to be provided throughout the year. 	<p>Shelley will provide updates and drafts of polices from CET to IEC by March 1, 2024 for discussion at Caucus.</p> <p>Shelley and Glenn will forward request to CET for attendance at next IEC meeting on March 26, 2024, and to plan for their attendance yearly.</p>
<p>10. April 8th Eclipse event/Condolence Ceremony update</p>	
<p>a) Endorsement of Condolence Ceremony was sought from IEC.</p> <p>April 8th is the next solar eclipse. The condolence ceremony is intended to reflect the natural phenomenon of an eclipse, symbolizing the movement into light together after a time of darkness. Shannon reported that Patrick Hymus agreed to take on leadership of the Ceremony.</p> <p>Patrick wanted to make sure that there are no issues about the significance of eclipse, as it seems that some traditions that see the eclipse as having a negative energy. Shannon reported that it actually aligns with The Peacemaker story, where the acceptance of peace by the last leader, Tadodaho of the Onondaga nation, occurs at the last solar eclipse. He becomes the Peacemaker, and the Onondaga nation in the centre of the Five Nations is symbolized as the Tree of Peace. “Combing the snakes out of the hair” is a process, and anyone can reconcile with themselves, and move from a place of evilness to peace, through reason and choice. Through this Ceremony, the College would make room/space for condolence, reconciling/laying down the burden of guilt so that we can move forward. Condolence through ceremony results in educating our heart, as with Kairos Blanket Exercise.</p> <p>b) It was moved to support the Condolence Ceremony.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOVED: Shannon • SECONDED: Shirley <p>c) Further considerations were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was agreed that IEC members are to be present on this day and may be included in the ceremony and process. The same would be requested of CET. • The idea of including mini teachings in the weekly College newsletter, starting 7 to 8 weeks ahead, was shared. • What about students? Can we suspend classes? It was suggested that this be 	<p>Shannon will advance planning with Patrick and will update Council at the March 26, 2024 meeting.</p> <p>All IEC members who want to be involved are to contact Shannon.</p> <p>All IEC members will block off their calendars to be present for April 8th Ceremony.</p> <p>Glenn and Shelley will request CET presence at the April 8th Ceremony.</p>

DISCUSSION	ACTION	
<p>taken to Deans Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconciliation is the role of all of Canada. The idea of media coverage of the Condolence Ceremony when it's done (not during) was shared. Kaleigh has connections with APTN. It was suggested that the organizers consult with Julie Einerson. All members were supportive. How can Iohahi:IO participate? 		
11. Roundtable		
<p>a) Smudging in student resident rooms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mary Ann consulted with Barry Kennedy who was supportive. Barry was to talk to David Wright to figure out what kind of smoke alarms are in building to assess approach. <p>b) Expressions of Gratitude</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shirley commented that she has seen the furthest advances during the last couple of years. She can see and feel the growth. Shelley said that it is great to have executives on the committee, and that she is grateful to be here. "I feel better able to support because of your advice," she said. Glenn thanked the co-chairs and echoed Shelley's comments. He is grateful to be part of the council, to ground himself in the perspectives, and thanks everyone for being a part of it. Brad also shared that he appreciates being part of Council and sees its importance. "Indigenization is collaboration." 	<p>Shelley will take the conversation about smudging in student residence rooms back to the residence provider, now Campus Living Centres, and will update Council at the March 26, 2024 meeting.</p>	
12. Next Meeting Date		
<p>The next meeting is on March 26, 2024 at Cornwall campus.</p>		
13. Adjournment		
<p>Mary Ann closed the meeting with a reminder that it is Treaty Recognition Week, acknowledging that the work of the IEC brings Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in our communities together in collaborative and harmonious relationship.</p> <p>It was agreed that meeting minutes are to be distributed to all IEC members, at most, 2 weeks after meetings.</p> <p>The meeting adjourned at 1:35 PM.</p>		<p>Mary will send meeting minutes to IEC by November 22, 2023.</p>