



PEARSON COLLEGE



**INDIGENOUS VISIONS:
FRAMEWORK FOR THE
RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN**

INDIGENOUS VISIONS: FRAMEWORK FOR THE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

January 2020

Background:

In 2015, Pearson College UWC began the journey to engage in a process to develop an

“Indigenous Visions” a framework designed to explore how the College can strengthen their relationship with Indigenous People and provide a culturally responsive education system for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. As part of this plan, the journey included beginning the process of exploring how the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action (TRC Calls to Action) can be implemented at the College.

- ✓ Pearson College UWC acknowledges the negative impact of historical and present-day colonization and assimilation policies on the Indigenous people in what is now known as Canada.
- ✓ The College agrees with the TRC findings that the legacy of the residential schools needs redress, and the College acknowledges the strength and resilience of Indigenous people and cultures.
- ✓ Pearson is committed to addressing the systemic changes required to transform the College through an “Indigenous Vision” that reflects the needs, aspirations, and goals of Indigenous people in education and life trajectory.
- ✓ The College recognizes that the journey to reconciliation is complex and must include Indigenous people and communities. The road is not a step-by-step path; there will be both inspirational and uncomfortable conversations taking place as part of the journey towards transformation and change.

“Indigenous Visions” includes the creation of a reconciliation action plan at Pearson College that will inform the larger organizational strategic plan. The plan outlines the commitments and key actions to support the journey towards systems change, increased awareness and acknowledgment of Indigenous history, strengthened education for Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students, and strengthened relationships with Indigenous people, communities and organizations.

Guiding Principles

The Indigenous Vision Advisory Committee, comprised of staff, faculty, leadership, Indigenous students, and Indigenous alumni, met to begin the process for the journey. The following principles were echoed as important for guiding the process for the development of the action plan:

- Truth before Reconciliation: Truth from an Indigenous Perspective
- Acknowledgment and respect for the territory on which the college sits

- Acknowledgment of the unique history and relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the Government of Canada
- An open and transparent approach throughout the process, making space for witnesses
- Nothing About Us Without Us – emphasis on community participation, consultation, and engagement
- Give priority to Indigenous voices and values
- Inclusive of all Indigenous perspectives throughout the entire process
- Strengths-based: Acknowledge and build on the strength of Indigenous people and knowledge systems. Encourage Indigenous ideas and insight throughout the process.
- Action-based: Reconciliation requires action and momentum. Alumni and students will be a big part of the process.
- Be capacity-driven: focus on building skills, knowledge, tools to help throughout the reconciliation journey.
- Genuinely and meaningfully commit, no tokenism or generalization
- Connect Heart with Head/ Open Mind: Embrace your heart, mind, and spirit
- Respect: land, people, history and other views, ways of knowing, being and doing
- Responsibility and Ownership: lead, advocate, have difficult conversations
- Create and prioritize time, space and resources
- Walk the Walk: truly invest in it with action, not just language
- Understand the impacts including the relationality and interconnectedness of systems and processes
- Understand the complexity. There is no one Indigenous approach or perspective so we must create space for common values while respecting differences
- Understand the connections between Indigenous students and their families and communities
- Reconciliation is ongoing, not a destination. PC will continue to grow, change and develop so the reconciliation plan must be a living document. It must be monitored, evaluated, used, and re-examined
- Give a direct and frank appraisal of what is and what is not working well. Say what needs to be said
- Objectively re-examine the current system
- Take an anti-racist approach: Move past post-colonial systems and approaches

- Congruent change
- Guided by Indigenous values of unity, and respect for relationships and people
- Guided by the desire and value to promote reconciliation in the broader educational context, to be a proactive leader and an example for other educational institutions
- Transparency and Accountability – a commitment to report back on the progress

About the Framework

In November 2019, the Indigenous Vision Advisory Committee (IVAC) met to create a framework to guide the journey for reconciliation. The IVAC is comprised of staff, faculty, house parents, Indigenous students, and Indigenous alumni.

The purpose of the framework is to provide the focus of the dialogue to hear from stakeholders and communities about key actions needed to create a culturally safe and culturally responsive educational journey for Indigenous students and the wider Pearson College community.

Several emerging, recent, and past policies are foundational to this work: the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP, 2007) and the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action (2015) as a mechanism for locating Indigenous students, people, community, culture, language and knowledge systems as drivers and partners for change.

The priorities are numbered for reference not in order of importance, all are equally important, and although listed separately, there is recognition of the interconnectedness of the priorities in the framework.

Framework

The following priorities will shape the change required for the success of the educational journey for Indigenous Students (present and future) and the broader Pearson Community.

1. Provide culturally responsive promotion, recruitment, retention, and systems for the success of Indigenous students.
2. Uphold the Pearson College and UWC movement founding vision and values through an Indigenous lens.
3. Establish genuine partnerships with Scia'new and other First Nations communities and Indigenous organizations.
4. Embed Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing throughout Pearson College life and experience.
5. Indigenize and where possible, decolonize the Lester B. Pearson College curricula, including all aspects of the educational experience.

6. Indigenize and where possible decolonize, the organizational culture, governance structure, and decision-making model at all levels, including the board, administration, volunteers, leaders, faculty and staff.
7. Respect and honor the Scia'new First Nation's rights to land, territory, and place.
8. Educate the Pearson College community about the larger context of reconciliation in British Columbia and Canada.

For information about the Indigenous Visions Reconciliation Action Plan please contact:

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Huy ch q'u, Gilakas'la, Kleco Kleco, Qujannamik, Miigwetch, Toyaxsiy'ism (Thank you)
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