



THOMPSON OKANAGAN BRANCH BCSTA MEETING
March 1 – 5, 2022
Via Zoom

Tuesday, March 1, 2022

7:00pm Indigenous Education Meeting, Chairperson: Donna Aljam, School District No. 74 (Gold Trail)

1. Recognition of Traditional Indigenous Territory
2. Welcome and Introductions
3. Round Table discussion
4. Other business

Friday, March 4, 2022

6:30 pm Welcome Ceremony – Hosted by Gold-Trail School District 74

Co-Chairs Valerie Adrian and Nancy Rempel, SD74 welcome

Traditional Indigenous welcome by Julie Antoine, Linda Redan, Freda Laurie

7:00 pm UNDRIP – speaker Denise Augustine, Superintendent of Indigenous Education of BC Ministry of Education

What is the UNDRIP?

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is an international instrument adopted by the United Nations on September 13, 2007, to enshrine (according to Article 43) the rights that “constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world.” The UNDRIP protects collective rights that may not be addressed in other human rights charters that emphasize individual rights, and it also safeguards the individual rights of Indigenous people.



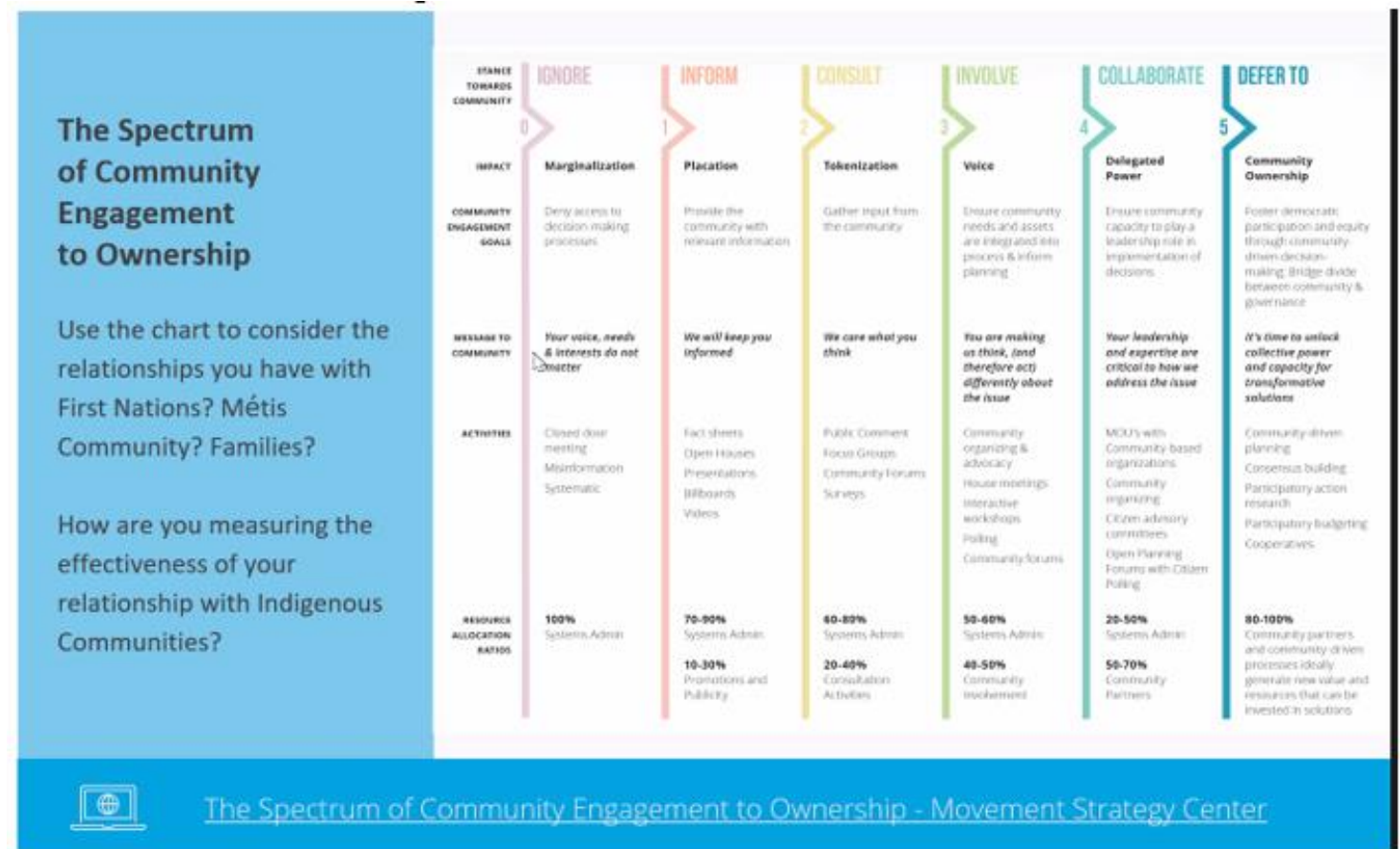
Telling the truth

- First Nations are another level of government in British Columbia
- Policies and practices continue to marginalize Indigenous peoples
- The gap in educational outcomes between Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students is a persisting legacy of colonialism, and concerted efforts and proactive measures are required to eliminate this gap

- **21% gap** between Indigenous and non-Indigenous student 6-year completion rates (72% vs 93%)
- The gap grows an additional **10%** between First Nation on-reserve students and non-Indigenous (62% vs 93%)

If we know this data, and we don't take action – we are entrenching these non-conductive ideas.

Breakout rooms to discuss the following:



Finding the path forward

DRIPA: Education Related Actions

- Legislation requiring **Local Education Agreements**
- **Anti-Indigenous racism strategy**
- **Mandatory course or bundle of credits** related to First Peoples
- **Indigenous-specific racism** and discrimination
- Increase literacy and numeracy **achievement** levels
- Increase the number of Indigenous teachers
- **Indigenous Education Councils**
- Ensure Indigenous students have **equitable** access to education
- Indigenous **languages**: preservation and revitalization, full-course offerings, policy and associated implementation



Comments from Denise Augustine:

- The intent of the local education agreements is a way to begin to come to the same table and have the necessary rich conversations. What process do you have to revisit the LEAs?
- Anti-Indigenous racism strategy – it's worth noting that we need to hear in our BC context that there is something specific on which we need to focus.
- Mandatory course or bundle of credits. Also note today's announcement regarding new grad requirements: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022EDUC0007-000297>
- Increasing literacy & numeracy achievement levels – should be a given.
- Increasing number of Indigenous teachers – this is an ongoing challenge.
- Indigenous Education Councils – how do we bring Indigenous leaders together? We need to empower our IECs which should have mainly Indigenous participants.
- Check ministry data on equitable access to education for Indigenous students. Would be different from district to district.
- The importance of Indigenous languages and the importance of preserving these languages, which are sacred. The Declaration Act says that Indigenous People have the right to receive their education in their Indigenous language.

(Breakout rooms to discuss the above...)

Saturday, March 5, 2022

8:30 – 8:45 a.m. Welcome, Vicky Trill, President

What starts us off in a good way? Breakout rooms. Reflection: Think about how students/staff can start their school day in a good way? How can we support staff/students to reach this goal?

8:45 – 10:00 a.m. Keynote Speaker: Laura Grizzlypaws, Gold-Trail School District 74: Indigenous Forms of Governance

Laura Grizzlypaws was born and raised in Lillooet, British Columbia in the Interior Plateau region, she is of St'át'imc descent. Her St'át'imc name is "Stálhalmcen – Grizzly Paws," She belongs to the people of Xwisten the Bear Clan. Laura is also an educator at Thompson Rivers University.

Testimonials

Laura Grizzly Paws, visited Shuswap Middle School, for our day of Indigenous Learning and Winter Wellness event, held February 8, 2018. One of the most noted moments was in the morning, during the keynote address. She connected with students and staff in a powerful way, by sharing her education and life journey. By honestly sharing the obstacles that impacted her life, Laura demonstrated how education, culture and identity can help one to overcome adversity. She shared how the empathy of one teacher, made a difference and helped turn her life around. When culture and identity are woven together it brings balance to our inner medicine wheel. In addition to a powerful keynote address, Laura did an amazing interactive workshop that included drumming, singing, dancing and storytelling. She encouraged students to respect Indigenous culture and find one's own cultural identity as part of healthy cultural sharing and balance with education. In the words of our Principal, Wendy Woodhurst: "Laura Grizzly Paws is one of the most inspiring speakers I have seen in my 30 year career".

"Kukstemc Laura, for coming to our school and sharing your journey and cultural teachings in a humble, respectful and powerful way." Tara Willard, Indigenous Education Worker, Shuswap Middle School

Laura will discuss two topics: **Territorial Acknowledgements** and **Indigenization**.

1) Territorial acknowledgements

- A territorial acknowledgement is not by itself reconciliation, but without it, we cannot get to reconciliation.
- Needs to be built into all of our procedures.
- Supports decolonization
- We need to become more comfortable with the act of territory acknowledgements.
- Allows us to be mindful of local Indigenous Peoples, further enhancing the relationships with local bands.

Land Acknowledgments

Recognize Indigenous peoples as stewards of their traditional lands since time immemorial while acknowledging the ongoing impacts of colonization

What is Land Acknowledgment:

- Land Acknowledgment opens a space with gratefulness. It allows us to publicly recognize the Indigenous peoples whose traditional lands we stand upon. Land Acknowledgment honors past and present Indigenous stewardship of the natural world. It also offers respect and visibility for the histories, contributions, innovations and contemporary perspectives of Indigenous peoples. As we gather in our institutions, businesses and communities, we must realize that we all stand upon the work of Indigenous peoples in each and every place we move within.

What can Land Acknowledgement do:

- It can be a gesture respect and recognition of contemporary Indigenous peoples as well as their ancestors.
- It can begin to counter the colonial narratives of "discovery" and of a "wild" place.
- It can address the broader invisibility and socialized stereotypes that Indigenous peoples experience within colonized Western societies.
- It can spread public awareness of the histories, experiences and intergenerational resilience of Indigenous peoples.
- It can be a personal commitment to building relationships with Indigenous communities.
- It can support truth-telling and reconciliation efforts and actions.
- It can be a reminder that colonization is an ongoing process.
- It can be a start to becoming a good ally.

Why should I do a Land Acknowledgment:

It is a chance for us to look inward and reflect on reasons for recognizing the Indigenous people of a place.

It can be a way for us to check ourselves in our work, to think about our audience and listeners: What do they need to know about histories and current experiences of Indigenous peoples?

It is an opportunity to evaluate our power and privilege and to strategize ways in which we might share that or give that away.

It allows us to respect Indigenous protocols and values rooted in the public recognition of work, care and good intentions.

It is time to reflect on who we are and where we come from, and who are the Indigenous peoples of those places.

When writing a Land Acknowledgment ask yourself:

What do I know about the Indigenous people of the place I currently am?

What do the Indigenous people of this place, value and work towards in their community?

How do I personally and or professionally support Indigenous sovereignty?

What can Land Acknowledgment do for me, and how will this impact others with positivity?

What does Land Acknowledgement actually acknowledge?

How to Acknowledge:

1. First identify the original inhabitants of the lands you are on.
2. If multiple tribal groups have lived on the land in the past, consider deeper research.
3. Once you've identified the group or groups who should be recognized, begin writing your acknowledgement.
4. In writing your Land Acknowledgement also state your personal reason for acknowledging the Indigenous peoples of a place.
5. Learn how to say the Indigenous place names of the people properly.

Land Acknowledgement Examples:

- I [we] would like to respectfully acknowledge the territory in which we gather, as the ancestral unceded homelands of the _____ as the ancestral unceded homelands of the _____ and _____.
- I [we] would like to respectfully acknowledge the territory in which we gather, as the ancestral homelands of the _____ as the ancestral homelands of the _____ and _____. I (we) would also like to recognize the _____ of _____ and _____ and the _____ peoples and their ancestors, as the original people of _____. We strive for respectful partnerships with all the peoples of this province as we search for collective healing and true reconciliation and honour this beautiful land together.
- Simon Fraser University (Burnaby) – We [I] would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Coast Salish Peoples,[8] specifically the shared traditional territories of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), Tsleil-Waututh, and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) and Kwikwetlem First Nations.

Land Acknowledgement Examples:

- British Columbia Institute of Technology (Vancouver) – We [I] would like to begin by acknowledging that we are fortunate to be able to gather on the unceded territory of the Coast Salish People
- University of Regina – We [I] would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 territory and the traditional territory of the Cree and Saulteaux, Assiniboine and Métis.
- The University of Manitoba campuses are located on original lands of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation. We respect the Treaties that were made on these territories, we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and we dedicate ourselves to move forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

Land Acknowledgement Examples:

"Before beginning class, I would like to share some truths about myself and about the place that many of us call home:

I am not Indigenous, rather I am of ^Isettler-colonial ancestry. Although my heritage extends to _____ (England, France, Ireland, etc.) _____, I - like many other settler people - have benefited greatly from living on Turtle Island.

As a visitor on this land, I have an important responsibility to acknowledge the grounds on which we are privileged to gather in the pursuit of higher education:

2) Indigenization Effort

- Indigenous Peoples must be included in any effort towards indigenization.
- Collaboration at the BEGINNING of the project (curriculum, policy, processes, etc.) Therefore, engage them early.
- Opportunity to build relationships with Indigenous communities with which you will work.
- Ensure that everything is linked to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Be mindful of “Indigenous Knowledge” supporting both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners. Engage Knowledge Keepers to assist with this goal.
- Ensure that Indigenous participants also give feedback and measure the outcomes/criteria.

Three Approaches

Deconstruction: exposing political, moral and theoretical inadequacies of colonialism and culturalism in education.

Reconstruction: transforming education and unleashing the potential of students in a knowledge society

Indigenization: supports the Truth and Reconciliation it is based on intentionally, adding Indigenous ideas, concepts, and practices into curricula, when and where it is appropriate with respect and input with Indigenous peoples.

Decolonization

We must decolonize existing education laws, policy, and structures based on racial or cultural superiority.

This decolonized education is not just for Indigenous students, not just about Indigenous students, but for all students.

Education can either maintain domination or it can liberate. It can sustain colonization in neocolonial ways or it can decolonize. Every school is either a site of reproduction or a site of change.

Decolonization

Decolonizing education requires that we:

Become aware of the colonial bias and its values and its effects on everyone;

Develop educational systems based on Indigenous humanities, thought, knowledge, worldviews;

Generate reflective and meaningful transformations of theory and practice to heal present and past.

Understanding

- No person is privileged with the knowledge of how to achieve a decolonized education.!
- Every teacher has been a victim and beneficiary of the same educational system.
- We are in the same circle.
- We are all learners.
- We must become critical learners and healers within a wounded space.
- Decolonizing education must be for everyone in the system for diversity to survive.

The goal of Integrating Indigenous Knowledge for Indigenous learners are:

to provide historical and contemporary issues relating to their people with up-to-date content and data

increase the dimensions of indigenous art as a total cultural expression within the TRU community

to honor the importance of relationship between indigenous peoples and the natural world

to recognize the diversity and functioning of the social, economic, and political systems of indigenous peoples in traditional and contemporary contexts (historical and changing gender roles)

to increase and provide meaningful inclusion of Indigenous teaching and learning strategies that are relevant to their customs and traditions



The goal of Integrating Indigenous Knowledge for indigenous learners are:

to provide a positive self-identity through learning their own histories, cultures, traditional values, contemporary lifestyles, and indigenous knowledge

to participate in a learning environment that will equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to participate more fully in the civic, local, regional, and cultural realities of their communities



The goal of integrating Indigenous Knowledge for non-Indigenous learners are:



To develop an understanding and respect for the histories, cultures, traditional values, contemporary lifestyles of Indigenous peoples

To develop informed opinions on matters relating to Indigenous peoples.

To understand the evolution of human rights and freedoms as they pertain to Indigenous peoples.

To understand the unique Indigenous communications systems

Develop an appreciation of Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous peoples.

Through the achievement of these goals, it is hoped that the following outcomes will be reached:

Improvement of academic performance of Indigenous learners

Elimination of stereotypes that exist in mainstream and non-mainstream cultures

Improvement of quality of life of Indigenous peoples

Increased representation of Indigenous peoples in Thompson Rivers University of faculty members and instructors and student representative and Elder/Knowledge Keepers

Increase representation of Indigenous peoples in all sectors of workforce

VISION

The Learning Community will be exposed to the various Indigenous perspectives, cultural items, and historical contributions made by Indigenous peoples. Instructors and staff will develop and understanding, appreciation and build confidence and competence to include Indigenous Knowledge into their planning, courses and curricula. As a result, students across the learning community will have a foundation for understanding the issues, challenges, and successes of Indigenous peoples.



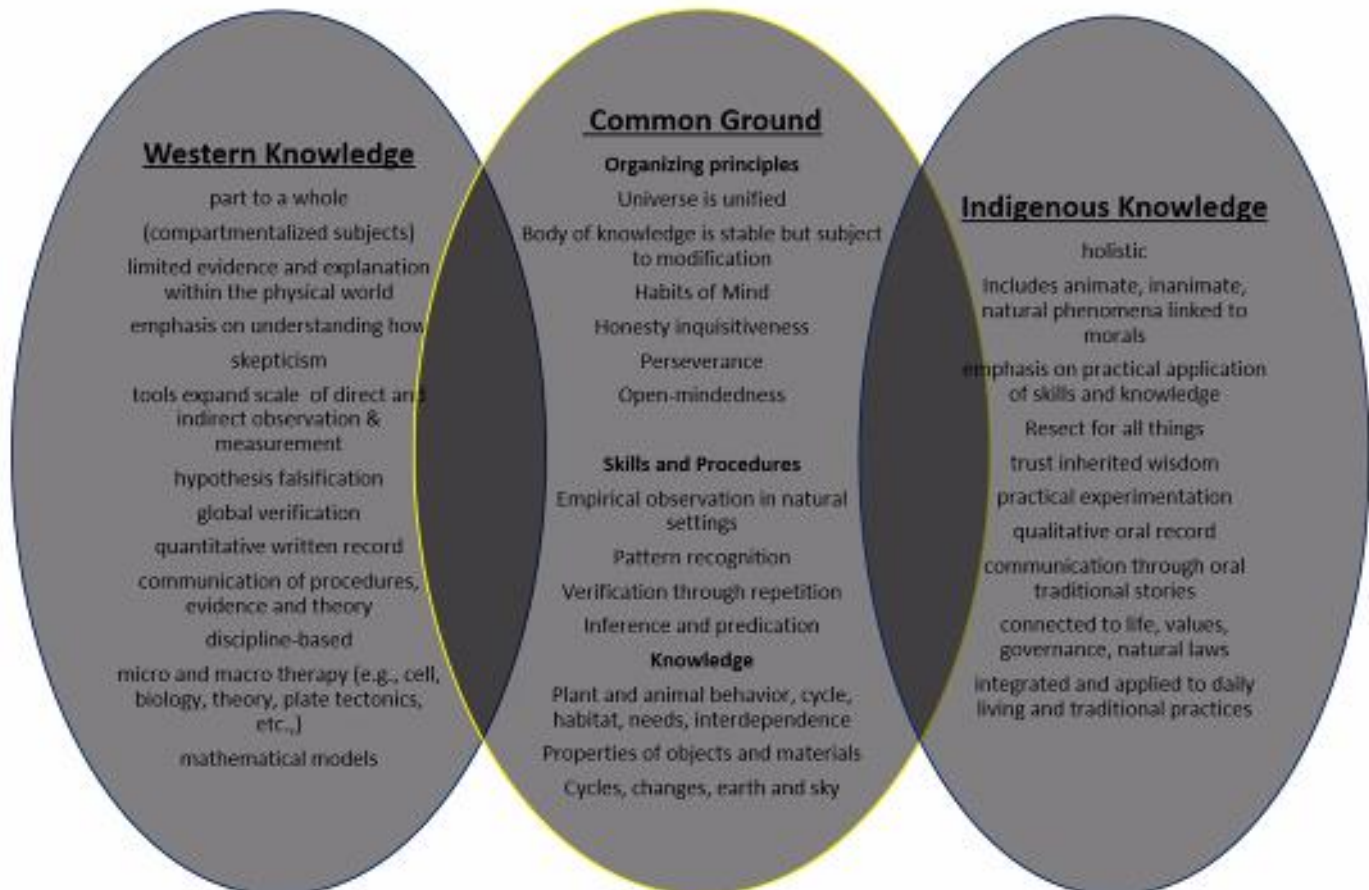
Indigenization

Indigenization benefits not only Indigenous students but all students, teachers, staff members, and community members involved or impacted by Indigenization.

Indigenization seeks not only relevant programs and support services, but also a fundamental shift in the ways that institutions:

- ✓ Include Indigenous perspectives, values, and cultural understandings in policies and daily practices.
- ✓ Position Indigenous ways of knowing at the heart of the institution, which then informs all the work that we do.
- ✓ Include cultural protocols and practices in the operations of our institutions.

Finding a balance... “This does not mean that Western and Indigenous Knowledge are so far apart – just find common ground.”



Exemplary practices for implementing this principle include:

Acknowledge the territory and land on which colleges and institutes are located and serve and integrate the use of Indigenous language at events, ceremonies and meetings.

Include Indigenous ways of doing and being in the processes associated with classroom, program development for functions. (e.g., Elder/Indigenous Knowledge keeper opening words/prayers, feasts, drum dancing, sharing circles, storytelling, land-based education, guest speakers).

Engage into staff and faculty training on Indigenous history, inter-cultural training including experiential, hands-on learning activities, and land and place-based learning.

Transition and upgrading programs:

01

Build linkages and partnerships between Indigenous communities and post-secondary education systems

02

Integrate Indigenous-focused upgrading programs or modules into standard provincial programs that utilize Indigenous Knowledge (PLARS assessments)

03

Offer flexibility in the delivery of transition programs to allow adult learners to pause and restart programs as required due to family, community or work obligations; and

04

Use culturally relevant assessment tools, which may differ for Indigenous learner *(do not single out Indigenous learners)*

Curricula

Capture and reflect

Capture and reflect history, including oral history, as understood by Indigenous peoples, across curriculum;

Promote and support

Promote and support the preservation of Indigenous languages;

Embed

Embed intellectual and cultural traditions of Indigenous peoples;

Combine

Combine Indigenous pedagogy and epistemology with supports from Elders and or Knowledge Keepers

Understand

Understand the impacts of residential schools, recognize the challenges of Indigenous learners without judgement and support healing and reconciliation; and

Recognize

Recognize that Indigenous knowledge can benefit all learners (e.g., environment, justice, land preservation) and have processes for two-way sharing (e.g., both Western and Indigenous Knowledge ways of learning).

THOMPSON OKANAGAN BRANCH

Business Meeting

Saturday, March 5, 2022 @ 10:30 a.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Recognition of the Traditional Indigenous Territory
3. Welcome and Introductions
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Approval of the Minutes

6. Reports

- a) President's Report
- b) BCSTA Report
- c) BCSTA Indigenous Education Report
- d) Financial Report
- i. February 8, 2022 Year to Date
- e) BCPSEA

7. Committee Updates

- a) Indigenous Education Committee
- b) Board Chairs Discussion
- c) Professional Learning Committee
- d) Resolution Committee

8. District Highlights

One trustee per district will share a highlight from their district. As there is limited time available, please keep the update to 1-2 items.

9. Strategic Plan

The President will provide highlights from the Strategic Plan.

10. Next Branch Meetings

Meeting Schedule:

No. 58 Nicola Similkameen October 2022

No. 23 Central Okanagan February 2023*

No. 19 Revelstoke October 2023*

No. 22 Vernon February 2024

No. 67 Okanagan Skaha October 2024

No. 73 Kamloops Thompson February 2025

No. 53 Okanagan Similkameen October 2025

Please note: BCSTA Branch meetings are also usually held at the BCSTA Trustee Academy in the fall and at the BCSTA Annual General Meeting in the spring.

11. Question and Answer Period

12. Adjournment

*SD 23 (Central Okanagan) and SD 19 (Revelstoke) have exchanged dates

12:00 p.m. Closing Remarks – Vicky Trill, President. Adjournment 12:15pm.