

# **St'át'imc Education Authority**

## **Terms of Reference, Goals & Plan of Action**

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## **St'át'imc Education Authority**

### Historical Context of St'át'imc Education

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For generations, the St'át'imc lived as self-governing and self-sufficient people in harmony with an environment that met all of our needs. Education was a process of living according to values and beliefs and acquiring skills and knowledge that ensured the development of healthy, balanced individuals, secure with our place in the St'át'imc community.

A century of exclusion from decision-making about our own lives, through imposed legislation and policies from other governments, has left our communities in a state of cultural and social upheaval. We are determined to overcome these challenges and are involving our communities in social/emotional, cultural and economic processes which will lead to greater health and well-being for all.

We see the public system as having a role in the attainment of our goals. We know, through research undertaken in 1988 and discussions with the school district in recent years, that First Nations students are performing at levels significantly below the norm for the district. We also know that students graduating in the district are not adequately prepared for post-secondary institutions and generally need upgrading before they can succeed at this level.

We support the principles set down in Indian Control of Indian Education, the document created by the National Indian Brotherhood in 1973 and adopted as policy by Indian and Northern Affairs. We believe in the concepts of local control and parental responsibility described in this document and support the goal of our children obtaining an education which respects our cultures and traditions, while providing them with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to be successful in the modern world.

St'át'imc have exercised these beliefs in various ways. One of our bands/communities has created their own school, in their community. Bands/communities are working to develop Local Education Agreements, to have more influence within the public system. In 1990, the St'át'imc Education Advisory Committee to the school district was formed. The Upper St'át'imc Language and Culture Society has been established and the St'át'imc language is being taught in public schools. In 1991 the St'át'imc elected two trustees to the local school board. Although we have made some advances, we continue to be

unsatisfied with the degree of decision-making power we hold over our children's education.

In 1996 the St'át'imc Education Authority was established. In December 1996, School District #29 was expanded to include areas with First Nations students from other nations. The new School District #74, has an expanded number of trustees and a more complex task in recognizing and dealing with the needs of diverse First Nations.

In order to respond to historical and new challenges, the Lillooet Tribal Council Chiefs mandated representatives of their member bands/communities to act as an authority, speaking on behalf of all bands/communities, to the school district, on issues of common interest.

Accordingly, the St'át'imc Education Authority has laid down Terms of Reference which will describe how the St'át'imc will proceed in order to achieve their mission: to ensure the educational success of St'át'imc learners.

(Historical Context from *Summary Report: Presentation to the St'át'imc Education Advisory Committee*, June, 1996.)

### Mission of the St'át'imc Education Authority

**The mission of the St'át'imc  
Education Authority is to  
ensure the educational  
success of St'át'imc learners.**

### Mandate of the St'át'imc Education Authority

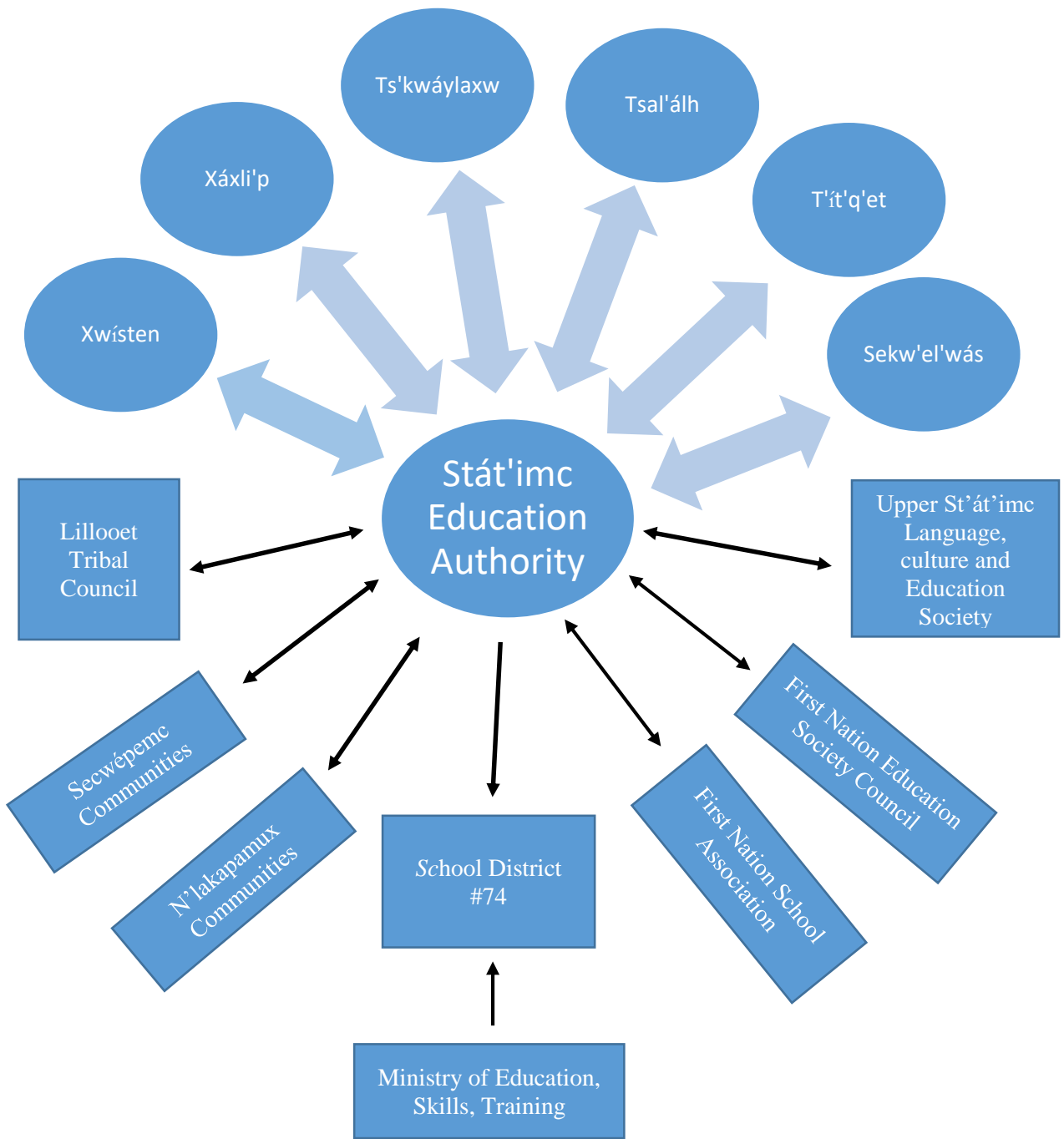
The St'át'imc Education Authority is empowered by its six member bands/communities to negotiate with the public school system on matters effecting the quality of education of St'át'imc learners.

### Guiding Principles of the St'át'imc Education Authority

- St'át'imc have the right, the responsibility and the knowledge to represent and articulate St'át'imc educational needs.
- Education which develops all aspects: social/emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual dimensions, best ensures the success of St'át'imc learners.
- Quality education for St'át'imc learners includes teachings about St'át'imc language and culture, at all levels of schooling.
- St'át'imc learners must have a strong sense of pride and identity to be successful.
- A respectful, pro-active and positive interaction between home and school is necessary to increase the educational success of St'át'imc learners.
- Increased educational success for St'át'imc learners in the public system can only be attained by dedicating human and financial resources to programs which focus on overcoming specific areas of need.
- Respectful, consistent and focused communication about the educational needs of St'át'imc learners between the St'át'imc Education Authority and the School District, the communities and other First Nations is the most effective way to achieve increased success for St'át'imc learners.
- The St'át'imc can best advocate on behalf of learners when they take a pro-active position which demonstrates clarity of purpose and a strong, unified will to achieve their goals.

(Principles from Feb. 1997 workshop, *Summary Report*, June 1996 and *Proposal to form a Stl'atl'imx Board*, Sept., 1990)

# St'át'imc Education Authority Organizational Chart



A. Selection of Representatives:

The St'át'imc Education Authority is comprised of representatives from six St'át'imc bands/communities. The representatives are selected, either through election or by appointment, by their bands/communities. The bands/communities inform the St'át'imc Education Authority of their selection, in writing, either with a Council Resolution or a letter.

Representation:

A. Bands/Communities

Sekw'el'wás

T'ít'q'et

Tsal'álh

Ts'kw'áylaxw

Xáxli'p

Xwísten

B. Term of Office:

- Representatives will maintain their role until such time as the band/community appoints a new representative.
- Representatives will be re-affirmed, in writing to the St'át'imc Education Authority, when a change in Band Council takes place.
- Alternates can be named at the discretion of Band Council, to ensure that the band's representative is continuous.

Chairperson: The chairperson will be selected by the St'át'imc Education Authority members, for a term of one year.

- Roles and responsibilities of the Chairperson are described below in section G below.

C. Meetings:

- The St'át'imc Education Authority will set meetings for the school year at the September meeting and as needed to achieve their goals.

- The Chairperson will contact the Lillooet Tribal Council Education Coordinator well in advance of each meeting date to discuss agenda items. Lillooet Tribal Council Education Coordinator will circulate the Notice of Meeting to all representatives from the Lillooet Tribal Council offices.
- Four voting members at a meeting represent a quorum for decision-making.
- Decisions will generally be made through consensus.
- In the absence of consensus, a vote may be held to facilitate decision making which is time sensitive e.g. meeting deadlines for funding.
- A recorder will be selected to keep minutes for each meeting. The Lillooet Tribal Council Education Coordinator, will distribute summarized minutes, which focus on decision made, to: The Lillooet Tribal Council Chiefs, six communities, Upper St'át'imc Language and Culture Society and the St'át'imc Language and Culture Authority.

D. Conflict of Interest:

- St'át'imc Education Authority representatives will identify and declare any interests they have which could have an influence on their objectivity when making decisions.
  - St'át'imc Education Authority representatives will withdraw from making decisions on matters which can benefit them or their immediate family members.
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E. Appeal Process:

1. Any individual or group dissatisfied with a decision made by the St'át'imc Education Authority may describe, in writing, the details of their complaint within 30 days of the complaint arising.
2. The St'át'imc Education Authority will respond, in writing, with a proposed resolution to the complaint, within 30 days of receiving it.
3. If the St'át'imc Education Authority response fails to resolve the matter, a 3 person committee will meet to resolve the complaint. The decision of this committee will be final. The decision will be delivered to the complainant within 30 days. of the joint meeting.
4. The 3 person committee will be comprised of:
  - 1 St'át'imc Education Authority member
  - 1 person selected by the complainant to speak on their behalf
  - 1 mutually agreed upon neutral third party with mediation skills

F. Resourcing of the St'át'imc Education Authority:

The St'át'imc Education Authority will be resourced by the Lillooet Tribal Council for:

- support personnel for coordination (Lillooet Tribal Council Education Coordinator),
- telephone/fax; mail-outs; meeting space; AGM financial support

The bands/communities will support the St'át'imc Education Authority by providing:

- telephone costs
- honoraria to replace lost wages for representatives to attend meetings
- travel costs for representatives to meetings

In the event that the St'át'imc Education Authority begins to handle monies, financial and personnel policies will be developed as needed.

G. Roles and Responsibilities:

Lillooet Tribal Council:

- Provide resourcing, as agreed upon, and to provide political support and advice as requested.

Member Bands/Communities:

- Provide support to representatives, as agreed upon.
- Provide their St'át'imc Education Authority member with input so that they can effectively represent their interests.

St'át'imc Education Authority Representatives will:

- Attend all meetings
- Follow-through with commitments and decisions made
- Communicate with band/community about activities of the SEA.
- Reflect the wishes and concerns of the bands/communities in the meetings.
- Act as advocates for St'át'imc learners in the public system.
- Conduct themselves in their activities in a manner consistent with the mission, principles and goals of the St'át'imc Education Authority.

St'át'imc Education Authority Chairperson will:

- Ensure members are notified about all meetings and developments which fall within the realm of SEA activities.
- Communicate with Lillooet Tribal Council Education Coordinator in advance of meetings to ensure that agendas are set and notices circulated.
- Get input from representatives about possible agenda items.

- Conduct the meetings in a manner consistent with the mission, principles and goals of the St'át'imc Education Authority.
- Ensure that minutes are circulated.
- Ensure that members follow through with commitments made at meetings.
- Report to the Lillooet Tribal Council Chiefs, as requested, about the progress of St'át'imc Education Authority initiatives.
- Represent the St'át'imc Education Authority to other organizations.
- Correspond on behalf of the St'át'imc Education Authority.

### **Plan of Action and Goals of the St'át'imc Education Authority**

The St'át'imc Education Authority has a range of short and long term goals that are encompassed under these broad headings:

#### **Plan for the disbursement of funds targeted for Aboriginal students**

- negotiate, plan, make recommendations, collect feedback, make proposals for disbursement of funds targeted for Aboriginal students & take part in evaluation of programs

#### **Support cultural curriculum**

- Upper St'át'imc Language, Culture and Education Society/Authority initiatives

#### **Advise and Consult with bands/communities**

- support communities in their initiatives - PACs, developing LEAs
- bands/communities who request assistance with in-school concerns e.g. discipline, academic performance, dropouts, suspensions
- advise and inform bands/communities about local and broad education issues

### **Network with other First Nations**

- network and, where appropriate, create protocols for working with other First Nations

### **Support students**

- become aware of and address general issues such as: drop-outs, graduation rates, discipline
- advocate for student' counselling services
- promote relevant curriculum development and cross-cultural education
- review School District policies

### **The St'át'imc Education Authority will focus on activities in four major goal areas:**

- St'át'imc Education Authority involvement in decision-making
- Strengthening St'át'imc identity
- Creating a balanced curriculum for St'át'imc learners.
- Maintaining high academic standards for St'át'imc learners.