



# KEE TAS KEE NOW TRIBAL COUNCIL EDUCATION AUTHORITY

## Regular Board Meeting

Thursday, November 4, 2021, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Meeting Platform: ZOOM (V)

### Attendees:

<p><b>Board Members:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Chief Ivan Sawan, Chair, Loon River First Nation</li> <li>2. Councilor Tyler Letendre, Loon River First Nation</li> <li>3. Councilor Shayne Letendre, Loon River First Nation</li> <li>4. Chief Billy Joe Laboucan, Lubicon Lake Band</li> <li>5. Councilor Timothy Sawan, Vice Chair, Lubicon Lake Band</li> <li>6. Chief Gladys Okemow, Peerless Trout First Nation</li> <li>7. Councilor Corrine Alook, Peerless Trout First Nation</li> <li>8. Councilor Judy Sinclair, Peerless Trout First Nation</li> <li>9. Chief Albert Thunder, Whitefish Lake First Nation</li> <li>10. Councilor Hughie Tallman, Whitefish Lake First Nation</li> <li>11. Councilor Derek Auger, Woodland Cree First Nation</li> <li>12. Councilor Frank Whitehead., Woodland Cree First Nation</li> </ol>	<p><b>KTCEA Staff:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dr. Daphne Mai'Stoina, Superintendent</li> <li>2. Pearl Calahasen, Deputy Superintendent</li> <li>3. Gord Atkinson, Director of Capital Services</li> <li>4. Carmen Parent, Strategic Projects Specialist</li> <li>5. Gabrielle Christopherson, Communications Manager</li> <li>6. Melbourne Disbrowe, Communications Coordinator</li> <li>7. Melvina Thunder, Director of Human Resources</li> <li>8. Yvonne Noskey, Director of Finance</li> <li>9. Lorraine Cardinal -Roy, Cree Language Specialist</li> <li>10. Gilbert Okemow, Community Engagement Coordinator</li> <li>11. Theresa Brown, Director of Student Services</li> <li>12. Terry Lynn Cook, Director of Curriculum &amp; Instruction</li> <li>13. Colin Kelly, Board Mentor</li> <li>14. Allan Langevin, Principal Mentor</li> <li>15. Heather L'Hirondelle, Executive Assistant</li> </ol>
<p><b>Absent / Regrets:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Councilor Jason Laboucan, Lubicon Lake Band</li> <li>2. Councilor James Nahachick, Whitefish Lake First Nation</li> <li>3. Chief Isaac Laboucan Avirom, Woodland Cree First Nation</li> <li>4. Kimberly Carifelle, Project Coordinator</li> </ol>	<p><b>KTC Leadership, Admin Staff &amp; Other Guests:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Councilor Cody Letendre, Loon River First Nation</li> <li>2. Councilor Mark Cardinal, Peerless Trout First Nation</li> <li>3. Councilor Joseph Whitehead Jr. Woodland Cree First Nation</li> </ol>

## Regular Board Meeting Minutes

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|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Meeting Called to Order              | 9:15 am Chair, Chief Ivan Sawan |
| 2. Opening Prayer                       | 9:18 am Chief, Albert Thunder   |
| 3. Introductions / Roll Call            | Board Chair                     |
| 4. Approval of November 4, 2021 Agenda: | Board Chair                     |



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- **2021-11-04 #1:** Motion to approve the November 4, 2021 Agenda with the following additions:
  1. Chief Billy Joe Laboucan requested discussion on the Mihkowapikwaniy Cultural Camp and the Land Based Learning. (#11)
  2. Superintendent added the Finance update after the report. (#7)
  3. Councilor Shayne Letendre requested further discussion on the Vaccine Mandate (#7)
  4. Councilor Timothy Sawan requested a discussion on food services preparation at Little Buffalo School (#11)
- Moved by Chief Billy Joe Laboucan. Seconded by Councilor Corrine Alook. All in favor, motion carried.

### 5. Reading of the Minutes:

**Yvonne Noskey, Director of Finance**

- Motion 2021-10-08-#5 is not required in the October 8 meeting minutes; and corrected as a note in the minutes.

- **2021-11-04 # 2:** Motion to accept the Minutes of October 8, 2021 as read by Yvonne Noskey.
- Moved by Councilor Frank Whitehead. Seconded by Councilor Timothy Sawan. All in favor, motion carried.

### Business Arising:

- The Superintendent's Report reflects the additional information which was requested at the previous meeting by the Board.

### 6. Board Training and Survey:

- Colin Kelly provided the Board with an in-service on governance training relating to communication scenarios.
- The Board and First Nation leadership present requested more dialogue is needed from KTCEA and the KTC leadership. The leadership expressed more effective communication with parents and community is needed; with more involvement in the decisions that directly impact the Nations.
- The Board Chair noted the REA was now half way to completion of the ten years for which it had been signed; and recommended the KTCEA departments' be evaluated with the KTC leadership also invited to this meeting. The following comments were made on the discussion on the evaluation of KTCEA:
  - These is a need for more community focus and involvement, effective communication is a key component, and autonomy that supports each Nation.
  - All KTC Nations should be involved in the KTCEA Strategic Planning sessions.



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- Are we supporting the needs of each Nation? Where can we improve? What changes are needed? Are the internal mechanisms working well?
- Is KTCEA on track with the vision and what we originally set out to do as leaders for our community?
- The Board Chair recommended an in-person one full day session to be held together with the KTC leadership on education and goals and vision. On a side note: Although we have signed the REA with the Federal government and province for the 10 years, there are treaty based education agreements being signed in Ontario with the Anishinabek First Nations; this may lead to another level of discussion within the five KTC Nations.
- The Regional High School project was mentioned, this study has been currently shelved and with the University of Athabasca going virtual and selling their buildings, there maybe an opportunity for First Nations to take this project over and perhaps make its own University or Regional High School.
- The Superintendent noted there are mandates provided by both the Federal and Provincial levels which the KTCEA is required to follow; such hours of instruction, the hiring of certified teachers, to graduate students under the umbrella of Alberta Education.
- KTCEA also follows the mandates from the respective First Nations. These various layers affect how we do things; some concerns may require the HR aspect by law to maintain confidentiality. The KTCEA as an incorporation, we are sometimes limited in the sharing of certain information with the Board. With the comments expressed today, there is a need to relook and improve upon a system that works for the Nations and to have continued discussion.
- The option of having CASS to evaluate the organization with a report back to the Board was given; also the Board self-evaluation is scheduled in the Strategic plan for the December meeting as one of the key targets.

### 7. Superintendent's Report:

- School update:
  - The Atikameg, Kateri, and Little Buffalo Schools are currently open to staff and students, with school reopening's for Clarence Jaycox and Elizabeth Quintal scheduled for November 16. Cadotte Lake School will reopen November 9, 2021. All rapid testing has been scheduled will be conducted prior to the schools reopening.
- Student participation rates for September and October reflect increases and decreases due to closures affected by Covid; and the numbers reflect that more students are engaged to participate in the classroom setting. We expect participation to increase once the vaccination rates increase for all staff. Effective at home learning continues to be provided during the closures, and teachers remain in regular contact with parents as well. The staff have been directed to look at summer learning programs to address learning loss and we hop to coincide these with community events and the summer maintenance schedule; more information will be given at the next meeting.



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- Staff vaccination update:
  - Weekly Rapid Testing is taking place weekly until December 17, 2021. All staff are required to be tested in the event of a school closure.
  - Of the total 259 staff, 75 % are fully vaccinated, 12 % partially vaccinated with 13% unvaccinated.
  - On October 5 Alberta Education requested the school authorities' to develop mandatory proof of vaccination policies; *on October 8 the KTCEA Board motioned to require KTCEA employees be fully vaccinated by January 1, 2022. Staff who are not fully vaccinated are required to have a COVID- 19 rapid test every week until January 1, 2022. Staff who refuse to comply with these requirements would be placed on un-paid leave.*
  - Other school jurisdictions have begun to mandate vaccinations within their organizations and posting their Administrative Procedures on their website. Through the mandatory vaccination AP research and process we have defined the scope and timeline; while acknowledging the aspects of accommodating under Human Rights legislation, and adhering to the legal liability as COVID is considered a workplace hazard. The lack of a vaccine mandate would potentially decrease the credibility of the KTCEA with parents, staff and our funders.
  
- The Chair opened the floor to hold further discussion on the vaccination mandate with the Board.
  - Feedback from the community to the leadership include concerns of staff transitioning and shortage, discontinuing employment without being able to access the benefits, and will quality education be provided. A recommendation of extending the rapid testing until the end of the school year was mentioned as it is now deemed safe.
  - The Superintendent noted that these are uncharted waters and it has been challenging with the rapid testing; to administer the test until June will be costly and staff are complaining about the weekly testing. We will continue to research and gather current health information and legal recommendations on the vaccine mandate.
  - Board members recommended a meeting be held with the full KTC leadership to discuss the decision of the mandatory vaccinations with current information on staffing statistics and cost of the testing until June 2022.
  - Board members recommended other funding to be researched to pay for cost; this cost was not the fault of KTCEA, and funds should remain within the agreement. We will have a need for tutors and/or for one on one learning to address knowledge loss.
  - The question of the outsourcing of the testing arose; with clarification requested on type of training needed; there are local medic services and nurses in our communities that would be able to assist. Carmen Parent provided the cost of rapid testing until June 2022, to be an estimated cost of \$4000 per week for all 6 schools, with 30 weeks left of school and having testing twice a week to cost \$ 240,000. KTC Health cannot help in this area as they are mandated to only to do the provincial testing and not the rapid testing. We will be looking further into costs and training for testers at the local level in November as a possible option.



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- The leadership mentioned some communities are not familiar with the processes of how the Board system works; and when we redirect the public to the proper channel, communication is lost with no response and frustrations increase. There is a need to an improve communication with the Nation level leadership. KTCEA was developed to employee own our people and build capacity within the five nations. With this mandate we will be losing our invested training of our educators and trust we have in our teachers; with having to reinvest and start from the beginning.

### 8. Early Childhood Research:

- Tibetha Kemble presented her research on Indigenous Early Childhood Education (December 2018) to the Board. A motion was made by the Board in December 13, 2018 that approved and welcomed the work in research of the Early Childhood Development needs of the KTC Nations. A series of interviews were conducted in summer and spring 2019.
- The Board recommended Tibetha contact and share the report with KTC Health.

### 7. Superintendent's Update continued.

- The Chair noted a meeting will be set with all KTC leadership as expressed to discuss the mandatory vaccination and testing, versus outsourcing and to utilize our communities and lessen the cost.
- The 2020-2021 KTCEA Community Report was presented in summary to the Board. A copy has been emailed to all. It reflects the progress in the past school year and follows the strategic priorities. Copies will be sent out with a survey and virtual community meetings to follow in November. The funders will receive the report by the November 30 deadline as part of the reporting requirements.

- **2021-11-04 # 3: The Board approves the 2020-2021 Community Report as presented at the meeting.**
- **Moved by Councilor Tyler Letendre. Seconded by Councilor Hughie Tallman. All in favor, motion carried.**

- The presentation was shortened as some members had community commitments. The full report was emailed to the Board.

- **2021-11-04 # 4: Motion to approve the Superintendent's Report as presented.**
- **Moved by Councilor Frank Whitehead. Seconded by Chief Gladys Okemow. All in favor, motion carried.**

- Board member requested a conversation on the possibility of formalizing a relationship with KTCEA with having a contractual obligation in the use of the camp. This would ensure consistent funding to assist in the operations or maintenance of the area.



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- The REA allows for funding of the land based learning camp, the administrative agreement might be suited to address this relationship with more discussion with the KTC CEO to assist in the development. The Chair agreed the KTCEA should facilitate this project in either an MOU or letter of commitment as we have identified this area as the Land Based Learning training ground.

- **2021-11-04 # 5:** The Board provides direction to meet with Lubicon Lake Band to discuss an arrangement and/ or agreement on the Mihkowapikwaniy Cultural Camp.
- Moved by Councilor Frank Whitehead. Seconded by Chief Billy Joe Laboucan.

- **Questions and Concerns:**

- The Food services manager will be contacted to issue address the issues brought forth by the Board Member.
- The rapid testing schedule was requested to be sent to the Board.

- **Adjournment:**

- **2021-11-04 # 6:** Motion to adjourn the meeting of November 4, 2021.
- Moved by Chief Gladys Okemow. Seconded by Councilor Derek Auger. All in favor, motion carried.

**Closing Prayer:** Chief Gladys Okemow