



Canadian School Boards Association
L'Association canadienne des commissions/conseils scolaires

** The national voice of school boards * Le porte-parole national des commissions/conseils scolaires **

National Reconciliation Partnership Award

March 2024

The Canadian School Boards Association is very pleased to establish a National Reconciliation Partnership Award that will recognize meaningful partnerships between Indigenous communities and publicly funded school boards from coast to coast to coast, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit school boards and educational authorities.

Rooted in the spirit of genuine reconciliation, this award is focused on recognizing excellence, demonstrated evidence of the principles of innovation, authenticity, relationship, capacity-building, and good stewardship and supporting the achievement of the Calls to Action issued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in 2015.

Moving beyond basic classroom projects centered on “beads and bannock, drums and dreamcatchers”, the National Reconciliation Partnership Awards will focus on demonstration of significant and sustained commitment by both a publicly funded school board(s) and local Indigenous community(ies) to the promotion of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.

The award was launched at the National Trustees Gathering on Indigenous Education and CSBA Congress in Saskatoon in July 2022. The first annual award will be presented at the National Trustees Gathering on Indigenous Education and CSBA Congress in Toronto July 3 to 5, 2024.

CSBA is honoured that through its role as a member of the CSBA Board of Directors, the Assembly of First Nations is assisting with the development of the scope and criteria for the award and participating in the selection of recipients.

We trust that, given the calibre of the initiatives and practices that will be deemed worthy of receiving this award, it will in time come to represent a truly distinguished honour for those who qualify to receive it.



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**NATIONAL RECONCILIATION PARTNERSHIP AWARD
APPLICATION**

Introduction

In 2015, following the conclusion of its historic process to record evidence and gather testimony regarding the Residential School experience throughout Canada, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada issued a total of 94 Calls to Action designed to achieve greater reconciliation among and between the peoples of our nation.

Several of these Calls to Action speak to the particular importance of education as a way forward for healing and reconciliation. Other Calls to Action speak to the realization of broader social commitments that are equally as important. For a comprehensive list of the Calls to Action in both English and French, please visit: <https://nctr.ca/records/reports/>

With this ongoing spirit of reconciliation in view, the Canadian School Boards Association (CSBA) with assistance from the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) has collaborated for the establishment of a National Reconciliation Partnership Award that will be conferred upon a Canadian publicly funded school board and a partner Indigenous organization(s).

The nominees must clearly demonstrate evidence of a significant and sustained commitment to achieving reconciliation for the benefit of their local communities. The behaviours, models or actions demonstrated by the collaborators will reflect great merit not only upon their own achievements but shall constitute a leading standard worthy of national emulation and admiration.

Eligibility

Nominations for consideration by the award selection committee can be submitted by either a publicly funded public school board¹ (i.e.: self-nomination); a peer from among the publicly funded school board community in Canada (third-party nomination); a school board association, or a national, provincial, territorial, or community-based Indigenous organization (self- or third-party nomination).

To be considered, the nomination must be signed by at least two nominators:

- 1) a member or trustee of a local school board (inclusive of a Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of a school board or a formal school boards association) or a senior

¹ Which throughout this document shall be interpreted to include First Nations school boards and educational authorities.

educational officer (Superintendent, Director-General or Chief Executive Officer) or a school system employee of the nominating publicly funded school board; and

2) a senior governing officer (e.g. Chief, Chief Executive Officer or Superintendent) or an employee of the nominating Indigenous organization (such as a Band Council, provincial or territorial Indigenous representative or political organization, a community-based entity, or an educational authority).

In addition, both nominators must provide concrete evidence of how the partnership has served to advance reconciliation for the benefit of their local communities. While not necessary, nominators may accompany their application with culturally appropriate photographic, video-recorded or other material evidence to help showcase why the nominee is deserving of consideration for the award.

All publicly funded public school boards in Canada are eligible for consideration under this award, even if the publicly funded school board does not belong to an association that is a member of the Canadian School Boards Association.

The award may be considered for multilateral partnerships, where more than two entities are involved. However, at least one of these partners must be a publicly funded school board and one of these partners must be a national, provincial, territorial, or community-based Indigenous organization.

Selection Criteria

Four general categories have been established for the award², even while it is acknowledged that nominees may meet several of these categories. Nominees must clearly demonstrate how they have advanced one or more of the following:

- Indigenous language and culture
- Indigenous representation (in terms of governance, workforce, or community linkages)
- The practice of mutual accountability and responsibility (in terms of promoting excellence of outcomes and beneficial governing or administrative frameworks)
- Culturally appropriate learning and teaching practices (including emphasis on land and place-based learning).

In addition, each nomination can also indicate which Calls to Action issued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada correspond to the achievements of the nominated partners.

Without limitation, the selection committee has outlined some examples to help inform nominations and applications. It is important to note that these are only a few general ideas - the award is not restricted or limited to only applications that reflect these examples.

Example 1: A publicly funded school board and a local First Nation community have established an innovative tuition or local education/partnership agreement that has resulted in

² It should be clarified that while there may be multiple categories for purposes selection, only three awards will be given annually by CSBA, irrespective of the number of selection categories.

measurable and enhanced student success. Mutual trust exists between both partners in the delivery of education to First Nations students under this framework.

Example 2: In collaboration with local Indigenous communities, a publicly funded school board has taken proactive and progressive steps to implement culturally responsive classroom practices across their school district or division, resulting in all students arriving at a better understanding and appreciation for the traditions and practicality of Indigenous Knowledge.

Example 3: In partnership with an Indigenous health provider, a publicly funded school board has developed culturally sensitive mental health and wellness programming and supports for Indigenous students, helping students remain grounded in their traditions and culture while meeting with overall success.

Example 4: In partnership with a First Nations community, a publicly funded school board has developed community linkages across the Indigenous education authority, its own local schools, and post-secondary education providers, to promote greater integration, transitional pathways and mobility for Indigenous learners.

In addition to how well each application aligns with the four established categories and Calls to Action, the selection committee will review how the above achievements reflect the general principles of innovation, authenticity, relationship, capacity-building, and good stewardship. Ultimately, the committee shall also consider the overall benefit(s) that the partnership and its achievements have provided to the local community(ies).

What this means in practical terms is that the selection committee will study whether the submitted application demonstrates one or more of the following:

- Whether structures, policies and procedures have been developed in collaboration with local Indigenous Nations/communities.
- Sustained priority focused on inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in the work of the publicly funded school board (where we have come from, where we are, where we are going).
- Whether the applicant's work serves to achieving hopefulness and a sense of purpose among members of their communities.
- Whether there is evidence of applicants having sustained and meaningful collaboration and "walk the talk".
- Whether there is evidence that the inclusion of Indigenous people has been incorporated directly into a school division or district's strategic plan.
- Whether there is evidence of meaningful classroom practices that inculcate a genuine and authentic cultural learning experience – "beyond beads and bannock, drums and dreamcatchers" to land and place-based education that reflects the local Indigenous community.
- Whether there is evidence of professional development for educators to build capacity – beyond one day festivities to actual structural reforms.
- Whether there is evidence that a school system's practices have resulted in students and staff fostering deep appreciation of Indigenous culture.
- Whether the application reflects the reality that the practices described are not "one initiative" but a sustained commitment to fostering relationships. This includes long-term investment of time and resources.

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- Whether the application demonstrates that Indigenous Knowledge is alive and real in the classrooms of the school system, with curricula brought to life for the students without “teaching tools” that are static.
- Whether the actions of the partners, based on their partnership, represent communication of a strong and collective “voice” to institutions, through advocacy for meaningful reforms and inclusion, including initiation of programs and/or professional development throughout the system (e.g. for educational assistants, bus drivers, teachers, etc.)
- Whether the application supports language and cultural revitalization.
- Whether the application demonstrates commitment to alliance and being allied by promoting inclusion, bringing parents/caregivers and local Indigenous communities into public education.
- Whether there is evidence that the applicants demonstrate appropriate treaty and legal awareness.
- Whether the application demonstrates meaningful mentorship, where applicable.

The Award

The Award takes the form of a physical award that can be displayed in the offices of each of the publicly funded school board(s) and Indigenous organization(s) that have received the award.

CSBA is seeking partners to provide financial donations to be used to further the efforts of the partnership towards reconciliation and provide the award recipients with Indigenous Education resources.

Award recipients shall be recognized during the annual CSBA National Trustees Gathering on Indigenous Education and Congress.

Two award recipient representatives shall be invited to attend the annual CSBA National Trustees Gathering on Indigenous Education and Congress, to receive the award in person.

In the event that a representative cannot afford the expenses of travelling to the CSBA National Trustees Gathering on Indigenous Education and Congress, sponsorship may be provided.

Please note that CSBA cannot guarantee that sponsorship will be received, and this award package makes no claim that a cash award or funding for travel will be issued to selected recipients. In the event that a sponsorship is received, applicants shall accept such support without qualification or condition and with the understanding that the sponsor shall be publicly recognized for having provided support. The sponsor will be invited to present the award at the National Trustees Gathering on Indigenous Education and Congress.

In the event that a representative cannot receive the award in person, the award will be presented via videoconference and the physical and financial award will be mailed to the address(es) provided on the application form.

Selection Process / Deadlines

The final deadline to submit nominations for the award will be **April 30, 2024**.

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During the month of May, the selection committee, which is comprised of AFN and CSBA appointed representatives, will review the nominations.

Following consensus among the selection committee members, final recommendations will be submitted to the CSBA Board of Directors for ratification.

Award winners will be notified by May 31, 2024.

All applications will be acknowledged for receipt, but only final award recipients will be contacted by CSBA regarding the status of their award. Any nominator or nominee who wishes to obtain further information should consult the section below titled “For Further Information”.

How to Apply

All applications should be sent with the subject line **CSBA National Reconciliation Partnership Award**:

- 1) **Electronic submissions**– admin@saskschoolboards.ca

All electronic submissions must be received no later than **April 30, 2024**.

For Further Information

If you have any questions related to the award, please contact admin@saskschoolboards.ca



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Names of nominees: 1) _____
2) _____

Other nominees: _____

Please enter contact and address information for each of the above nominees
(nominations should include information for contact by telephone, email address for main contact, and postal or mailing address. Postal address will be used for mailing purposes if the nominee is not able to receive the award in person, so please ensure it is accurate and complete).

1. Telephone:
Email:
Mailing Address:

2. Telephone:
Email:
Postal Address:

Names of nominators: 1) _____
2) _____

Please describe how the partnership corresponds to specific Call(s) to Action issued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in 2015

(Please limit each description under each separate call to action to a maximum total of 250 words. Please include as many calls as necessary to describe the partnership. Three spaces have been provided in this template but there is no need to use all three nor to limit responses to only three).

Call # (insert number here) – Description of how nominated partnership corresponds to this call:

Call # (insert number here) – Description of how nominated partnership corresponds to this call:

Call # (insert number here) – Description of how nominated partnership corresponds to this call:

Letters of Support

Each nominator must attest that the description of the nominated partnership that has been provided is accurate and reflects the principles of innovation, authenticity, relationship, capacity-building, and good stewardship called for under this award.

Each nominator is therefore asked to attach a letter of support, independently prepared and written, on the official letterhead of their organization, in accompaniment of this application, outlining:

- 1) the reasons why you believe the nominees are deserving of this award, and
- 2) how you have personally seen clear evidence of innovation, authenticity, relationship, capacity-building, and/or good stewardship, each contributing to sustained community benefit based on the nominees' ongoing practices and partnership.

