



# Cowichan Tribes

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## Cowichan Tribes Members Vote YES to Reclaim Right to Govern Education

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**Duncan, BC**

It was a historic vote that was over 15 years in the making. On January 8, Cowichan Tribes members voted to accept the education jurisdiction agreement and law-making protocol with the Government of Canada (74% of votes casted).

“This is an exciting first step as we reclaim our inherent right to educate our children,” explains Stephanie Atleo, Education Jurisdiction Negotiator. “Work will now begin on drafting education laws that will outline how we govern education for on-reserve schools. Once these are complete, community will then have an opportunity to review, provide input and approve these laws.”

Cowichan Tribes is one of 4 First Nations in BC that has accepted the education jurisdiction agreement and law-making protocol, with a 5<sup>th</sup> holding a vote this week. In total, 13 First Nations in BC have been negotiating with the Canadian Government since 2006 to return education authority to our nations

“This allows us to create our own curriculum – meaning more culture, land-based learning and Indigenous ways of knowing,” says Atleo. “Teaching our children has always been a part of our culture. The education jurisdiction agreement returns a key cultural piece to our community.”

Once signed by the Government of Canada, the agreement will transfer education to Cowichan Tribes for the 2022/2023 school year.

For more information visit [www.cowichantribes.ca](http://www.cowichantribes.ca).

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### **COWICHAN TRIBES CONTACT**

Contact: Stephanie Atleo

Phone: 250.732.1167

Email: [stephanie.atleo@cowichantribes.com](mailto:stephanie.atleo@cowichantribes.com)