



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD

Indigenous Board Representation

POSITION PAPER

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Prepared by:

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board

Prepared for:

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services

Brief

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) requests that the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) considers changes to Schedule 6 of O. Reg. 278/98 to the DSSAB Act to allow for Indigenous representation on the TBDSSAB Board.

Summary

A disproportionate number of the individuals and families that the TBDSSAB serve self-identify as Indigenous and living off-reserve. The TBDSSAB has worked with Indigenous partners in order to develop programs and services in a culturally appropriate manner. To further our work towards reconciliation, the TBDSSAB requests the ability to include Indigenous representation on our Board.

Background

The District of Thunder Bay has a higher Indigenous population per capita compared to the rest of Ontario, and a disproportionate number of the individuals and families that TBDSSAB serve self-identify as Indigenous and living off-reserve. A recent study from Our Health Counts estimates that the number of Indigenous adults in the city of Thunder Bay is 2-4 times higher than the census data for 2016¹, representing 40% of

¹ Our Health Counts Thunder Bay, Adult Demographics

the total population of the city². To better meet the local needs of our service area, the TBDSSAB has worked with Indigenous partners and organizations in order to develop programs and services in a culturally appropriate manner.

Under the District Social Services Administration Boards Act, R.S.O. 1990, the composition of each board and the qualifications and term of office of the members thereof are prescribed by the regulations. The number of members of each of the boards, the areas that those members represent, and the manner of their appointment are set out in Schedules to the O. Reg. 278/98. Under Schedule 6, the TBDSSAB is required to have 14 members with the areas they represent and the manner of their appointment mandated under that Schedule.

The TBDSSAB Board has included an objective in its 2020-2023 Strategic Plan to have Indigenous representation on the Board.

The TBDSSAB supports the goal of reconciliation with the Indigenous population. A significant step was taken in 2019, when the TBDSSAB signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Nishnawbe Aski Nation. This MOU sets the groundwork for increased collaboration on intersecting issues between the two organizations. Further, the TBDSSAB has begun a process to engage with Indigenous partner organizations to gather input and support for the Board's objective to have Indigenous representation. The information gathered will inform how Indigenous people should be represented on the TBDSSAB Board. The results of this engagement process and the subsequent recommendations will be shared with MCCSS.

The TBDSSAB requests the ability to achieve our strategic goal for inclusion and to continue on our path towards reconciliation by allowing for additional appointments to the Board that would be occupied by Indigenous representatives. Through this, the TBDSSAB expects to strengthen our understanding of Indigenous culture and increase our ability to develop culturally appropriate programs and services to meet the needs of our Indigenous clients and tenants.

² Statistics Canada. 2017. *Thunder Bay, [Census subdivision], Ontario and Thunder Bay District [Census division], Ontario (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001.*

Therefore, TBDSSAB requests that MCCSS considers changes to Schedule 6 to O. Reg. 278/98 the DSSAB Act to allow for Indigenous representation on the TBDSSAB Board.