

LAMBTON COLLEGE COUNCIL ON INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

MINUTES of 2025-12-02

Lambton College – Boardroom (C1-211)

PRESENT

Phyllis George, Chair, General Manager, Tecumseh Community Development Corporation
Dave Machacek, Senior Vice President, Academic & Student Success, Lambton College
Jane Manning, Director, Indigenous Education, Lambton College
Kurtis Gray, Associate VP, Student Success, Lambton College
Laura Spero, Post Secondary Counsellor, Southern First Nations Secretariat
Debbie Dolson, Post Secondary Counsellor, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation
Jeffery Blackbird, Support Worker/Life Coach, Walpole Island Employment & Training
Andrea Auger, Indigenous Studies Professor, Lambton College
Ky Nahmabin, Indigenous Student Success Coordinator, Lambton College
Sierra Cottrelle, President, Indigenous Student Council, Lambton College
Holly Altman, Administrative Assistant, Indigenous Student Centre, Lambton College

ONLINE

Jarvis Nahdee, Lambton College Board of Governors and Community Member

RESOURCE

Andrea George, Indigenous Student Success Coordinator, Lambton College

REGRETS

Vicki Ware, Education Coordinator, Aamjiwnaang First Nation

COPIES TO

Janelle Nahmabin, Chief, Aamjiwnaang First Nation
Leela Thomas, Chief, Walpole Island First Nation
Kimberly Bressette, Chief, Chippewas of Kettle & Stony Point First Nation
Todd Cornelius, Chief, Oneida Nation of the Thames
Justin Logan, Chief, Delaware Nation
Joe Miskokomon, Chief, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation
Roger Thomas, Chief, Munsee-Delaware First Nation
Nikki Van Oirschot, Chief, Caldwell First Nation
Rob Kardas, President, Lambton College

Phyllis opened the meeting at 12:04 pm.

1. Welcome & Minute of Silence (Phyllis/all)

Phyllis welcomed everyone to the meeting followed by one minute of silence.

2. Land Acknowledgment (Dave)

Dave Mahachek provided the land acknowledgement that included his own personal reflection.

3. Approval of Agenda (all)

Note that the Indigenous Student Council Update has been moved closer to the beginning of the meeting as Item #7 to accommodate the Indigenous Student Council President having to leave the meeting early. Also, the Indigenous Studies Professor needs to leave early to teach class.

For standing agenda item #14, we removed the word Roundtable to ensure discussion is centered on community needs from voting members.

Under Item #15 – Other Business – request to add IEC Regional Retreat.

MOTION: To accept the Agenda of December 2, 2025, with noted changes.

Moved by: D. Dolson

Seconded by: J. Blackbird

CARRIED

At this point, introductions were made around the table.

Jarvis Nahdee announced that he has been appointed Chair of the Lambton College Board of Governors. His term will end August 31, 2026. Congratulations Jarvis.

Phyllis asked Andrea Auger to start off the meeting since she will be leaving early to teach class.

11. Indigenous Studies Professor Update (Andrea A.)

- 10 students in the Liberal Studies-Indigenous Studies (LIBI) program; four are in their 2nd year and should be graduating this spring; six are in their first year; one is non-Indigenous
- Fall courses include Indigenous Family Structure and Child Welfare with 25 students and Indigenous Wholistic Practices with 21 students
- Winter courses will include Impacts of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission, and First Nations, Metis and Inuit Perspectives
- Participated in recruitment opportunities at Aboriginal Post Secondary Information Program (APSIP), Open House, and will be at Application Night on Dec. 10
- Partnership with Liberal Studies (LIBS) Coordinator to engage our students in weekly conversations
- LIBI, LIBS and General Arts & Science (GASX) hosted a pizza party sponsored by Lambton College Students Administrative Council
- facilitated a two-day professional development session (4 Season of Reconciliation) for 20 staff from NOVA Chemicals; it was well received. Jane provided support.
- Participated in community panel for Orange Shirt Day speaking about education

Andrea A. then left the meeting at 12:20pm

7. Indigenous Student Council Update (Sierra, President)

- Hosted weekly meetings
- Welcome Lunch held September 11
- Other events include Bake Sale, Halloween Costume Contest, Boo Basket Fundraiser, trip to Reapers Realm, bowling and had a Drum-Making Workshop
- attended speaking events including Orange Shirt Day, APSIP and Lambton College's Tree Lighting
- Preparing for Round Dance happening on Saturday, December 6

Took a short break for lunch. Sierra left the meeting.

4. Approval of Minutes – June 26, 2025

Apologies for action item under Item #7 – Truth & Reconciliation Taskforce. The virtual meeting that was to be arranged did not happen due to vacation schedules.

MOTION: To accept the Minutes of June 26, 2025.

Moved by: D. Dolson

Seconded by: J. Blackbird

CARRIED

5. Vice-Chair Appointment

Vice-Chair position is vacant. An expression of interest by L. Spero.

MOTION: To appoint Laura Spero as the Vice Chair.

Moved by: J. Blackbird

Seconded by: D. Dolson

CARRIED

6. Lambton College Updates (Dave/Kurtis)

- College sector facing challenges; have met with the Ministry – recommendations coming
- Ontario, as a province, is \$7,000 less below national average, \$8000 less funding per domestic student.
- Colleges Ontario estimates that to sustain the colleges is 1.5 billion
- Implications are that we lost some programs; primarily, international programs
- Offering six new programs this fall in IT, business and PSW
- Will come back to this group with where we are going with programming.
- OCAS Indigenous applicants in 2015 totaled 220; this year there is 555 applicants.
- 120 new international students starting in January; have 300 total which is down from 1800
- The new residence has 311 beds and is scheduled to open in the fall of 2027.
- Still doing some catch up after the five-week support staff strike.
- Indigenous Education is underfunded; no increase since 2005; multi-year funding cycle is up in 2027
- Phyllis George was nominated for the Premier's Award
- Jarvis Nahdee is the first ever Indigenous Chair of the Lambton College Board of Governors

8. Indigenous Outdoor Space (Kurtis & Jane)

- The site is amazing. There were delays in finding the type of wood specified
- Steering committee recently visited the space to provide directions on design details
- Great to know that it is almost done

9. Truth & Reconciliation Taskforce (Kurtis & Jane)

- A handout of draft report was provided.
- Will be including the direction from council regarding footnote on acronyms, previous work done and that the report is a living document.
- Key section of document is the recommendations. Requesting approval.
- A lot of good work has been done since 2021.
- Next steps will be working groups

MOTION: To approve the Truth & Reconciliation Taskforce Phase One Report.

Moved by: D. Dolson

Seconded by: L. Spero

CARRIED

The report will be presented to the Board of Governors.

10. Indigenous Peoples Education Circle (IPEC) (Jane)

- IPEC meetings in July and October
- Ministry shared a new scholarship called "First Nations Resource Development Scholarship" for students in mining sector; mentioned engineering, welding, electrical, instrumentation

- IPEC members suggested programs in health, education, environmental, forestry, pollution prevention, remediation, wildlife, energy, climate change, sustainability sciences, social impacts
- Ministry identified that they will be meeting with chief & councils for input
- Discussion on IECs and they are the connection to community; more than an advisory committee, they are our Board of Governors; decision making body instead of only advisory body is important. Fraudulent Indigenous claims becoming sensitive; imperative that chair be Indigenous and sign off of the report
- Ministry identified changes to existing Indigenous Student Bursary (ISB).
- Due to low uptake on the Indigenous Travel Grant, the ISB now includes the grant, so students can claim for travel to their remote community when applying to ISB.

12. Indigenous Student Centre Update

- Support staff went on strike at the beginning of the term
- Held monthly student lunches and Elder visits
- Orientation included tours, academic advising, information sessions, financial literacy and bursaries
- Course management workshop - program maps, course outlines, all on an easy-to-read calendar
- Hosted bursary application support workshops for Indspire and others
- Math tutor is still available; now have an English tutor for drop-ins
- Working with Indigenous Student Council to plan upcoming events and socials
- Connected with students on Day 22 list to offer support and referrals
- Hosted APSIP tour – had 85 high school students attend
- Participated at Annual Aboriginal Youth Career Awareness Fair at Oneida Nation of the Thames
- Participated at Tecumseh Indigenous Business Showcase in London
- Working on recruitment plan
- Participating in Application Night at Lambton College on December 10
- Setting up at the Education Hub on Walpole and attending WDSS on December 11 for recruitment

13. Terms of Reference (Jane)

- A handout of current terms of reference was provided.
- Request to establish an adhoc to review and suggest changes
- Require two, two-hour meetings, once in January and once in February
- Will provide recommendations at IEC meeting in March
- Will be considering current alignments with taskforce recommendations and IPEC terms of reference
- Laura Spero volunteered to be a member of the adhoc; Phyllis George will consider

Action Item: Holly to send out invitation for further interest from members to participate.

Andrea G. left at 1:31

14. Community Needs Discussion (all)

- Initial inclusion of agenda item, Community Needs Discussion, was to give opportunity for voting members to share community needs
- The college wants to better understand how the college can respond, support, and collaborate; the college is looking for direction on how we can work together
- There is much experience on this Indigenous Education Council.
- Mental Health was mentioned and the need to talk requires openness
- Laura mentioned other colleges offering free tuition but only for students within their catchment area
- Does Lambton have designated seats for programs? Has Lambton discussed tuition free programs?

- It was identified that will take back to Task Force for the recommendation relating to access

Action Item: Laura offered to send student assistance policy to Holly to share with other members.

15. Other Business (all)

- IEC Regional Retreat – Jane met with St. Clair College and Fanshawe College representatives.
- discussed associated costs to do this again in the May/June period.
- discussed IEC appreciation and possible pontoon boat ride around Walpole Island
- discussed possibility of deeper conversations around community needs

Action Item: Jane to provide briefing note on the previous retreat.

16. Next Meeting (all)

To be determined, looking at the first or 2nd week of March. Holly to send email with request.

17. Adjournment (all)

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

Moved by: J. Nahdee

Seconded by: L. Spero

CARRIED