

## **School of Education Mission Statement (August 2015)**

### **Mission**

The Mission of the School of Education at the University of Northern British Columbia is to educate teachers to the profession, and to further prepare professional educators at the Master's level who may wish to pursue advanced study at the doctoral level and/or advanced professional employment. The School of Education is committed to achieving excellence through supporting faculty professional growth and development, building partnerships and by being innovative, resourceful, and responsive to student and community needs in Northern BC and beyond.

### **Values**

The values of the School of Education are beliefs that we hold in the highest regard, which guide our actions and support each person affiliated with the School of Education in the fulfillment of their ambitions. We value a balance among human development, cultural context, and professional effectiveness, to be achieved through effective cooperation between and among UNBC, BCTF, TRB, school districts, ABCDE, Ministry of Advanced Education, Ministry of Education, and First Nations.

### **Learning**

Learning is a continuous lifelong process -- a necessary part of human development. The School of Education believes in a learner-centred, inquiry-oriented approach to teaching. As they begin their professional careers, teachers must have the theoretical knowledge, practical knowledge, cultural responsiveness, pedagogical skills, and confidence to adapt to the characteristics learners bring into their classrooms. Our aim, as a School of Education, is to provide both the beginning teacher and the returning professional opportunities to learn, and to assist them to achieve personal and professional enrichment through reflective practice and critical inquiry in community contexts.

### **Excellence**

The School of Education strives for excellence in the fundamental roles of teaching, research, and service to students and to the wider educational community. We recognize that the engaged educational enrichment of our students is the ultimate measure of excellence. The School of Education is committed to providing all students with a high standard of educational and organizational and, furthermore, services that are equivalent across each of our campuses to build success for diverse learners. An important condition for achieving excellence in our procedures and strategies is that their cultural dimension is understood and reconciled with our goals.

### **Diversity**

The School of Education is committed to eliminating barriers and encouraging the free flow of ideas from diverse cultures, disciplines, and fields of study. School Faculty also are committed

to ensuring fairness in matters relating to culture, gender, and social equity, particularly with respect to scaffolding academic opportunity. The School of Education celebrates diversity and recognizes the need to encourage historically under-represented groups, such as Aboriginal people, to enter the teaching profession. Both beginning teachers and returning professionals will build the confidence and expertise to develop curriculum and to adapt instruction to facilitate the needs of all learners in a rapidly-changing world.

## **Leadership**

Through its BEd and MEd programs, the School of Education intends to develop and foster leadership qualities in all of our students. This will be accomplished through the development of collegial and collaborative relationships both within our courses, and within our interactions with the communities we serve. Members of the School of Education will foster leadership and engagement by actively reflecting on their own practice and by teaching students the art and skill of reflective practice towards professional growth as defined in the BCTF Code of Ethics and the TRB Standards as well as any other documents that govern professional practice. Leadership involves the ability to make effective decisions, and this will be accomplished by teaching our students the critical thinking skills necessary for effective problem solving to build sustainable futures.

## **Theory, Research, and Practice**

The School of Education places a high value on research and the ability to translate research into theory, and theory into practice while maintaining a considered balance among the three.. As a professional, every educator is responsible for the advancement of the profession by adding new knowledge and skills to it. The School of Education endorses the concept of practitioner-researchers capable of continually learning and altering their teaching in line with developments in educational research and theory, as well as by reflecting on and inquiring into their classroom experience across diverse contexts.