

Questions & Answers - May 31 Treaty Information Session

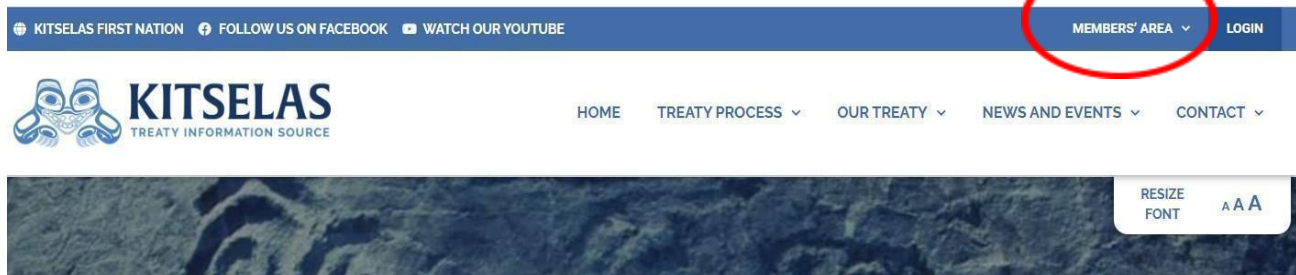
Thank you to the Kitselas Members who joined us in person and via Zoom for our 23rd Treaty Information Session community meeting on May 31, 2023.

Below, please find the Q&As from the meeting and the comments we received.

The next Treaty Information Session is on Wednesday, June 28, 2023, at the Administration Building in Gitau, with dinner at 6 p.m. and the meeting at 6:30 p.m. The Treaty Topic is the Final Land and Cash Offer. Everyone is welcome at Treaty Information Sessions.

The meeting recording and informational booklet from the May 31 meeting are available in the Members' Area of the www.kitselastreaty.ca website.

Please register to access this area:



***Comment (Geneva)** – It was great to hear the different ways that we are involved in having input in our children's education in the School District. I have been to the Education Department to advocate for members that they need to help children in the community get educated. This includes after-school programs to help them be successful.*

I did want to comment from the political side that we are invited to help and advocate for our people in the education process. And just to have our education meetings – there is a lot of information that is shared in this forum. We, as Kitselas People, really make an impact when we are available for the community to share our story. Having our Elders provide information and stories to our educators. I formally wanted to comment that being educated and involved with our principal and education process is important.

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Q – Private schools are options for some children but parents have to pay their own transportation costs (school bus). Are there options for children in Kulspai to go to a private school? Secondly, what about transportation for after-school programs? Some parents can't pick up their kids and this doesn't seem fair.

A – Using funding from the Government of Canada, Kitselas pays for a school bus with School District 82. Post-Treaty, this likely will remain the same for public school transportation. Private schools don't generally pick up kids, noting the exception of the Kalum school, which has a bus service. If we vote 'yes' to Treaty, this could be a good option to invest in - providing additional educational and transportation opportunities to our youth.

After Treaty, we will have the money to pay for bussing for kids living in the community to attend any local school and after-school program. The Treaty allows us to pursue options like this for our community and youth.

Q – There are things that happen in Gitaus that kids from Kulspai can't always participate in.

A – We should advocate for every child to have the same option to participate in every Kitselas education program to provide our children with every opportunity to learn. Kitselas has several buses that could be used to support this; the costs of a driver and gas would need to be considered in pursuing this option.

Q – That's important to me, too. You referred to Gitaus and Kulspai almost as separate communities. I think we should always just refer to Kitselas children, not by where they live.

A – Thank you. A Kitselas child is a Kitselas child. The only time we should refer to the community they live in for education is when we talk about the possibility of building a K-3 school. It would be in Gitaus, not Kulspai. While the school would be open to any Kitselas member, it is unlikely that many Terrace or Kulspai students would attend as that would require them to take the daily bus ride out and back. As well, a Gitaus school would welcome any nearby local children from the Gossin subdivision and others nearby.

Comment (David Wells) – Spoke about his personal educational history and how important education is for people and our community. He offered his general support for all education and the increased opportunities of Treaty in education.

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Q (Lloyd McDames) – If we vote for Treaty, will our education problems continue regardless of Treaty? And, the other question I have is should KitseLas be successful in having funding, I don't know if it's a side Treaty or not, to try and encourage the success of KitseLas students. Any study should be determined by someone who is not attached to KitseLas or the school board to look at the issues faced by our KitseLas children and to develop a plan moving forward because if it's not objective, then this would not be that useful. And to hear stories from students and their parents that there is bullying and racism (in remarks and activities and sometimes from teachers) and when the parents meet with the teacher and go to the principal, it shows that issues are not being dealt with.

Things within the district would need to improve because our students, and other Indigenous students, don't want to go because of these experiences. And it's hard for those who want to go through their schooling. And those who want to be in post-secondary need to get up to those levels. With that pressure, it is difficult to do without support to have them succeed. I think that we need that support from our Education Department, from our school advocate, I don't know who that is, but to have them involved to address the bullying and racism.

The other comment that you raised, and it leads back to Treaty, is a lot of our parents don't have an education. Some of them are descendants who went to residential school. Without that support, improving yourself is that much harder. And without our comprehensive plan, which includes mental health funding, this is a component that needs to be involved for all of our community departments to utilize. I hope this is something that is considered, and I know some departments would utilize this tool, but all of them should.

If the plan is to support all students, then we need to get experienced educators to meet the needs at all levels because, again you have those now who want to get into a school but cannot. I think a comprehensive community plan and all of the details need to be put together by someone.

A – Thank you, those are wise words. There will be no impact on education funding at any level, and through Treaty we will have the money to invest in the kids and to give students (of all ages) the resources leading to success.

It's not just the money to fund education; it is the benefits that education gives us to help us grow as a community. To be living in a better community, a healthier community. Education is the single best investment we can make.