



COLLEGE OF
THE ROCKIES

Building Belonging

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
& PATHWAYS FORWARD



Message from the President

At College of the Rockies, we are committed to creating an environment where every student and employee feels welcome, supported, and valued. The work of the Equity, Diversity, Indigenization, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIIB) Task Force represents an important step in that journey.

The priorities outlined here reflect the insights and experiences of our community and provide a clear framework for meaningful, lasting change. Building belonging is a shared responsibility—one that strengthens our College and the communities we serve.

As we move forward, we will continue to learn from one another and act with intention, ensuring that equity, diversity, indigenization, inclusion, and belonging remain at the heart of who we are.



Michael Crowe

President and CEO

EDIIB Task Force

- **Livia Lara**, Past CUPE Representative
- **Becky Pelkonen**, Past CORFA Representative
- **Morgan Gauthier**, Member at Large
- **Rhonda Sheridan**, Current CUPE Representative
- **Mike Vallee**, Current CORFA Representative
- **Ariane Tennant**, Human Resources Representative
- **Dana Wesley**, Co-Chair
- **Shaun Longstreet**, Co-Chair

Message from the EDIIB Task Force Co-Chairs

As Co-Chairs of the Equity, Diversity, Indigenization, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIIB) Task Force, we are honoured to have undertaken this important work, which reflects the College's commitment to a more inclusive and equitable future. At College of the Rockies, our goal is to be a place where everyone, students, employees, and community members feel safe, valued, and free to be their authentic selves.

In 2022, President Paul Vogt tasked this group with identifying how to embed EDIIB principles into the College's foundations so that being "Small College Proud" also means being proud of how we serve and reflect diverse communities. Our mandate was clear: map out the College's strengths and gaps, build a long-term plan, and provide direction to help drive structural change.

We would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to the many individuals who supported this work through their time, insight, and commitment. To the Task Force members, we are deeply grateful for your leadership, integrity, and unwavering dedication. We also acknowledge past President Paul Vogt for initiating this important work, and President Michael Crowe for ensuring its completion. Your belief in the transformative power of education has helped lay a foundation for a more inclusive and equitable College of the Rockies. Special thanks to the team at Inclusivity for their partnership and support in administering the EDIIB survey and providing valuable insight to help guide this work.

As our work as Co-Chairs of the EDIIB Task Force ends, we reflect with gratitude and conviction on what has been achieved—and what remains ahead. The priorities we present here are not meant to sit on a shelf. They are meant to be implemented, evaluated, and adapted as the College continues to grow in its EDIIB journey. This document marks the conclusion of the Task Force's work, but it is just the beginning of a broader, long-term process of embedding equity, diversity, indigenization, inclusion, and belonging into the heart of our institution.

We sincerely hope that future structures, whether an ongoing council or embedded roles, carry this work forward with the same care and commitment with which it was created. Thank you for the opportunity to lead this important initiative.

Dana Wesley
Executive Director of
Indigenous Strategy
and Reconciliation

Shaun Longstreet
Dean of Innovation,
Teaching, and Learning

Introduction

The strategic priorities developed have been informed by feedback, guided by the Strategic Plan, and aligned with the values of Student Success, Respect, and Innovation. **Each priority has been designed to align with one or more peaks of the Strategic Plan*: Student Experience, Employee Experience, and Community Engagement.** To encourage accountability and progress, each goal is supported by timelines and measurable indicators. Together, these priorities and goals form an integrated action plan to ensure that EDIIB becomes a living, evolving part of the College environment. These priorities offer a strong and achievable path forward, reflecting the insights and lived experiences of students and employees across the College. They are designed to sustain momentum, foster accountability, and build on the strengths already present within our community. **Through this work, College of the Rockies reaffirms its commitment to creating a more equitable, inclusive, and responsive institution where everyone feels they belong.**

***Our Peaks** | *COTR Strategic Plan*

1 | PEAK ONE: STUDENT EXPERIENCE

We are student ready. We meet every student where they are on their personal learning journey, allowing them to grow and excel.

2 | PEAK TWO: EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

We are committed to being an employer of choice within our region and our sector, with a strong focus on health, safety, and wellbeing at work.

3 | PEAK THREE: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We are responding to the educational needs of our communities and futureproofing our regional workforce.

Strategic Priorities & Goals

1. FOSTER A CULTURE OF EDIIB THROUGH EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Peak One | Peak Two | Peak Three

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) will take on the responsibility to lead the development and resourcing of a culture of equity, diversity, inclusion, indigenization, and belonging across the College. This includes embedding EDIIB principles in strategic and operational decision-making, modeling inclusive leadership, and ensuring alignment across all departments.

- a. Establish formal commitments and governance structures to guide and communicate ELT's EDIIB leadership within the first 0-6 months.
- b. Integrate EDIIB into routine leadership discussions and performance planning within the first 0-6 months.
- c. Promote sustained engagement and accountability by embedding EDIIB reporting in leadership forums (i.e. Management Council) beginning within the first 6-18 months.
- d. Conduct policy reviews using a formal EDIIB framework to identify and remove systemic barriers and advance equity, reconciliation, and accessibility within 0-6 months.

2. CREATING PATHWAYS FOR SHARING CONCERNS AND FEEDBACK

Peak One | Peak Two

Implement accessible, mechanisms for sharing concerns and feedback and strengthen conflict resolution through restorative approaches and inclusive training.

- a. Integrate demographic data collection into annual employee and student experience surveys beginning within the first 6-18 months.
- b. Launch user-friendly tools to support equity-based issue resolution and feedback processes within the first 6-18 months.
- c. Provide training in restorative practices for all people leaders, with full implementation by 18-36 months.

3. EXPAND ACCESSIBILITY AND NEURODIVERSITY SUPPORTS

Peak One | Peak Two

Strengthen supports for students and employees through universal design, sensory-friendly environments, and flexible accommodations.

- a. Academic and operational departments collaborate to embed universal design and sensory-friendly practices in alignment with the Accessibility Plan's commitments, starting within 0-6 months.
- b. Develop and share neurodiversity resources to support students and employees within 6-18 months.
- c. Maintain momentum on implementing the Accessibility Plan starting 0-6 months.

Strategic Priorities & Goals

4. DELIVER TIERED EDIIB EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Peak One | Peak Two

Build a tiered EDIIB education program reflecting the Pathways into Indigenization that includes foundational, intermediate, and advanced EDIIB training for employees and learning opportunities for students.

- a. Finalize and implement a tiered EDIIB competency framework that aligns with the Pathways into Indigenization within the first 6–18 months.
- b. Launch foundational training and achieve strong institutional participation rates beginning within 6–18 months.
- c. Embed EDIIB education into student orientation and early learning experiences within 6–18 months.
- d. Ensure every student completes at least one EDIIB-designated course, activity, or program that reflects EDIIB principles during their time at the College by 18–36 months.

5. ADVANCE INCLUSIVE STUDENT SUPPORTS AND PROGRAMMING

Peak One

Ensure students see themselves reflected in curriculum, activities, and services by offering responsive supports and identity-affirming programs.

- a. Track student belonging and identity-based survey indicators, using the results to guide actions by 18–36 months.
- b. Develop and implement multiple and regularly scheduled EDIIB-focused student activities beginning within 18–36 months.

6. STRENGTHEN EDIIB COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPARENCY

Peak Two | Peak Three

Ensure internal and external communications reflect and advance EDIIB principles across all platforms.

- a. Develop and launch dedicated EDIIB outlets, which may include a microsite, storytelling platform, or other accessible formats, within 6–18 months.
- b. Apply an EDIIB lens to all public-facing communications within 6–18 months.
- c. Share progress on EDIIB activities, outcomes, and goals regularly through accessible updates beginning within 0–6 months.

7. EMBED EQUITY IN EMPLOYMENT

Peak Two

Promote equitable hiring, retention, and advancement through tools, training, and mentorship.

- a. Develop and implement equitable hiring guidelines and training within 6-12 months.
- b. Act on addressing the representation of equity deserving groups within the College workforce based on diversity data starting within 6-12 months.

8. STRENGTHEN RECONCILIATION AND INDIGENIZATION

Peak One | Peak Two | Peak Three

Advance reconciliation and indigenization to support transformative action across all areas of the College.

- a. Develop and launch a College-wide Indigenization Strategy within 0-6 months.
- b. Develop resources and workshops that reinforce and expand the Pathways into Indigenization for College employees and students within 6-12 months.

Implementation

At College of the Rockies, we believe that advancing equity, diversity, indigenization, inclusion, and belonging strengthens every part of who we are. The priorities outlined in this report provide a shared framework for accountability and progress—one that calls on all areas of the College to act with intention, compassion, and courage. As implementation begins, we remain committed to listening, learning, and growing together so that every person who studies, works, or partners with the College experiences a true sense of belonging.



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