



**To:** Planning Committee **Date:** November 26, 2014  
**From:** Cathryn Volkering Carlile **File:** 07-3000-00/Vol 01  
 General Manager, Community Services  
**Re:** **Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee and Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee Report regarding Settlement Services Funding Changes**

**Staff Recommendation**

That:

1. the Provincial Government be requested to continue funding the provision of settlement services to immigrant categories no longer eligible for CIC funding as of April 2015;
2. the Federal Government be requested to adopt a funding formula reflective of and responsive to community need, and enter into stable funding arrangements with community service providers; and
3. the report from the General Manager titled “Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee and Richmond Intercultural Advisory Report regarding Settlement Services Funding Changes”, dated November 26, 2014, be distributed to Provincial and Federal Ministers responsible, Richmond MPs and MLAs, Kwantlen Polytechnic University and the Richmond School Board.

Cathryn Volkering Carlile  
General Manager, Community Services

Att. 1

<b>REPORT CONCURRENCE</b>	
<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b> 	
<b>REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE</b>	<b>INITIALS:</b> 
<b>APPROVED BY CAO</b> 	

## Staff Report

### Origin

In March and June of 2014, the Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee (RCSAC) and the Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee (RIAC) received referrals from Council requesting information on recent changes to Canada's Immigration policy with respect to English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and the Settlement Workers in Schools (S.W.I.S) program.

On March 10, 2014, Council resolved:

That the Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee (RCSAC) and the Intercultural Advisory Committee be requested to provide Council with:

- (1) background information of the proposed changes to the Federal Government's immigration policy;
- (2) information regarding the proposed changes to federal funding for English as a Second Language programs; and
- (3) how the proposed changes could impact the community.

On June 10, 2014, the Council/School Board Liaison Committee resolved:

That the Settlement Workers in Schools (S.W.I.S) Contract with Citizen [sic] and Immigration Canada be referred to:

- (i) The Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee and the Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee for monitoring and input; and
- (ii) To the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Committee and Social Planning staff for information and input.

This report presents a combined response to both requests.

This report supports Council's Term Goal #2 Community Social Services:

*2.4. Initiation of a strategic discussion and ongoing dialogue with the City's MLAs and MPs to ensure better representation of Richmond's needs in Victoria and Ottawa for social services issues and the related effects of downloading.*

This report also supports the Social Development Strategy:

*Action 21 – In conjunction with community agencies and other partners, continue to advocate to senior governments on such matters as:*

*21.1 Funding levels for settlement services and English language training.*

## Findings of Fact

On April 12, 2012, the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, Jason Kenney, announced that the Federal Government would be resuming management of settlement programs in British Columbia (BC) and Manitoba. Minister Kenney stated that this change would allow immigrants to have access to a consistent level of services regardless of where they choose to live in Canada and would bring Manitoba and BC programs in line with every other province and territory in Canada (with the exception of Québec).

Previous to this, both BC and Manitoba had immigration agreements with the Federal government which allowed the provinces to administer their settlement programs to best address provincially-specified needs. *The Canada-British Columbia Immigration Agreement (CBCIA)* (2010) recognized that;

*1.9(b) British Columbia has particular needs and circumstances and that these can be accomplished insofar as they are not incompatible with national immigration policy and legislation.*

Further, the agreement states that;

*5.2.1 Canada and British Columbia agree that Local Governments play an important role in attracting and retaining newcomers, in supporting the successful settlement and integration of immigrants in British Columbia and in ensuring that communities are welcoming and inclusive.*

Minister Kenney's announcement signalled the end of the CBCIA. As settlement programs are now managed by the Federal government, the Provincial government no longer has the authority to administer settlement programs as it sees fit. This is of particular concern to community service agencies, the S.W.I.S program (outlined below), BC post-secondary institutions offering academic ESL classes, and those requiring services. Federal regulations state that only immigrants with permanent resident (PR) status and government assisted refugees are eligible.

Therefore, Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW), Study Permit Holders and Refugee Claimants, previously supported under the CBCIA, will no longer be eligible for settlement services. Permanent residents achieving Canadian citizenship are also no longer eligible, although they may still be in need of such services.

### Non-profit Organizations (NPOs) offering Settlement Services

Community service agencies are subject to a two-fold impact of the repatriation of settlement services to CIC. Firstly, CIC has changed its funding formula for the allocation of settlement service funding to the provinces. The new national settlement finding formula is based on the intake of immigrants and refugees by each province or territory. As a result of a reduction in immigrants to BC, all NPOs with CIC contracts will see a 7% reduction in 2015 funding, resulting in reduced FTEs and clients served. Secondly, NPOs are now required to apply for CIC funding for services based on funding agreements signed for a maximum of two years, after which they may re-apply for

Federal funding. Thus, NPOs offering settlement services do not have long-term funding and are at risk of losing such in the next funding cycle.

#### Settlement Workers in Schools (S.W.I.S)

The S.W.I.S program is unique to BC in that it offers settlement services through school districts, whereas other provinces run all settlement services through non-profit organizations. The rationale is that schools are often the first services accessed by newcomers. Through contract negotiations with CIC, funding for S.W.I.S programs has also changed. Whereas the Provincial government had funded the S.W.I.S programs according to service levels, resulting in larger budgets from year to year as numbers increased, the CIC funding formula calculates S.W.I.S budgets based on an average from the previous three years' budgets. This calculation does not fully account for increased service levels and, as a result, S.W.I.S program funding was reduced. This, combined with CIC's regulations regarding who is eligible for settlement services, resulted in a loss of 2.8 FTE positions in the Richmond School District's S.W.I.S program and represents a loss of at least 25% of clients.

#### Academic English as a Second Language Classes (AESL)

With the transition to CIC administration of settlement services, AESL programs were cut. AESL classes are offered to immigrants to assist them with learning vocation-specific language. Previously, these programs received \$22 million in funding per year through the Federal government. With these cuts, many AESL instructors have lost their employment and many international students will no longer receive free AESL classes to prepare them for further post-secondary education and the Canadian workforce.

In response to this, the BC Provincial government has provided \$17.2 million in funding to assist educational institutions in transitioning colleges, instructors and students to this new model by 2015. No plans are currently in place for continued Provincial funding. Advanced Education Minister Amrik Virk has said that the Province will monitor the Federal program to determine the gaps that international students may fall through.

### **Analysis**

Minister Jason Kenney stated in 2012 that the repatriation of settlement services from BC and Manitoba to the Federal government was meant to bring the two provinces' settlement programs in line with all other provinces and territories in Canada. However, many are concerned that in doing this, the "particular needs and circumstances"<sup>1</sup> of immigrants to BC will not be recognized as well as they were with the CBCIA. In allowing the province to determine how settlement service funding was spent, educational institutions and NPOs were able to serve a wide range of clients and "ensure that [they were] able to contribute to [BC's] economy and succeed in Canada."<sup>2</sup>

Much of the success that immigrants experience in Canada is dependent upon the settlement services offered through NPOs, schools, and post-secondary institutions. With the repatriation of settlement services to CIC, many clients will no longer be eligible for services including Temporary Foreign Workers, Study Permit Holders, Refugee Claimants and Canadian citizens.

The RCSAC and RIAC have collaborated on a report, including information provided by the School District (Attachment 1). In this report, background to the policy changes, funding implications and community impact to date is provided, although full implementation does not occur until April, 2015. Impacts include:

- Many post-secondary international students will no longer receive AESL classes which may result in their being unable to access other post-secondary programs, employment opportunities and/or upgrade their skills and education to Canadian standards.
- International students may access private colleges for more advanced ESL training; however, many do not have the means to do so. Further to this, local colleges offering AESL classes are losing funding, classes and instructors.
- Community agencies and the S.W.I.S. program are also experiencing the loss of clients and funding as, under CIC regulations, they can only serve permanent residents and government-assisted refugees.
- Furthermore, community agencies are now required to apply for CIC Settlement Service funding which, as experienced by CHIMO and S.W.I.S., may result in a loss of funding and programming.
- Contracts between community agencies and CIC are signed for two-year terms meaning that the funding is relatively unstable.
- Service providers are concerned that many needing settlement services will not receive them because they do not fit into the categories of permanent resident or government assisted refugees.
- While evidence indicates that early intervention with newcomers makes integration into communities and Canadian society easier, many will now have to wait to complete the immigration process before receiving services.
- Canadian citizens will no longer be eligible for settlement services despite the likelihood that they will continue to need assistance in settling and integrating in Canada.
- While CHIMO lost funding for settlement services under the new model, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. received increased funding so this transfer may not, in itself, represent a loss of service to the community. At present, Richmond Multicultural Services, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and the Immigration Services Society continue to provide settlement services in Richmond, as does the School District through the S.W.I.S. program.
- As indicated in the RCSAC/RIAC report, the impact of these cuts on organizational capacity and immigrants' ability to settle and integrate effectively are not yet known.

Some feel that the new regulations for settlement programs are not in line with CIC's mission statement, declaring that CIC and its partners will build a stronger Canada by "developing and implementing policies, programs and services that facilitate the arrival of people and their integration into Canada in a way that maximizes their contribution to the country while protecting the health, safety and security of Canadians." As a result, community organizations, including the RCSAC and RIAC, are calling for attention and advocacy for better and more holistic approaches to settlement and immigration.

<sup>1</sup>Canada-British Columbia Immigration Agreement, 1.9(b)

<sup>2</sup>BC Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development News Release 2010ALMD0012-000401, *Canada and British Columbia Sign New Immigration Agreement*

Based on these changes, RCSAC/RIAC have proposed three actions.

- 1) Educational institutions and community organizations work together to ensure client needs are met. This includes increased communication and partnership between agencies and institutions to create more of a wrap-around service.

The need for collaboration among community partners is most important in ensuring that Richmond residents' settlement and integration needs are met to the fullest extent possible. For this to occur, educational institutions such as Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) and the School District need to be fully aware of community-based settlement services, and community organizations also need to be aware of services offered by the institutions and their client needs with respect to settlement and integration. Staff recommend that the RCSAC/RIAC report be shared with KPU and the School District, and that the RCSAC/RIAC continue to support such collaboration, with updates provided in annual reports to Council.

- 2) The City of Richmond's Mayor and Council advocate for the Province to continue to provide funding to both educational institutions and community agencies to support clients that no longer fit funding criteria under CIC. The sub-committee strongly believes that settlement is an ongoing process that does not stop at citizenship.

Many of those still in need of settlement funding will no longer be eligible for funding under the CIC model, namely, citizens, refugees, international students and temporary foreign workers. Richmond Multicultural Community Services estimates that this constitutes approximately 20% of those currently served under the CBCIA. As BC is the last province to be transitioned into the current CIC funding model, RCSAC/RIAC did not prioritize advocating to the federal government, as eligibility changes at this stage of repatriation are extremely unlikely. Staff support the RCSAC recommendation, and propose that such a resolution be forwarded to Provincial as well as Federal representatives.

- 3) The City of Richmond's Mayor and Council stay apprised of how changes in funding impact the community and report that impact to provincial and federal representatives. One way to do this is through the RCSAC annual Community Social Services Survey.

Through annual work programs, reports, RCSAC surveys and "Communication Tools" to Council, the RCSAC and RIAC will keep Council informed about the impact of funding changes on the community.

### **Financial Impact**

There is no financial impact.

## **Conclusion**

The successful settlement and integration of immigrants and refugees is vital to the social and economic health of our society. Funding changes that will render categories of immigrants ineligible for settlement services, introduce province-wide reductions in funding, and de-stabilize the provision of services through short-term contracts with service agencies, will negatively impact individuals, families and communities.

Staff recommend that the Province be requested to continue supporting those clients no longer eligible for CIC funding, and that the Federal Government be requested to adopt a funding formula reflective of and responsive to community need, while ensuring stable funding arrangements with community service providers.



Lesley Sherlock  
Social Planner  
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Att. 1: Changes to Canada's Immigration Policy RCSAC/RIAC Sub-committee Final Report



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## Changes to Canada's Immigration Policy RCSAC/RIAC Sub-committee Final Report

### **(1) background information of the proposed changes to the Federal Government's immigration policy;**

British Columbia was one of two provinces that had an agreement to manage immigration services provincially through the Canada-B.C. Immigration Agreement. This Agreement was cancelled as of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014 with notice being provided to the province in 2012. A Federal Call for Proposals through CIC for future funding came in 2013. One area of change to be noted due to funding changes is eligibility requirements for settlement services. Provincial eligibility has included Canadian Citizens, however federal funding does not.

CIC (the new federal funding) is only for permanent residents and government assisted refugees. Citizens, refugee claimants, temporary foreign workers and international students are not covered in the CIC funding. Having said that, the provincial government provided transitional funding to settlement contracts to ensure Citizens and temporary foreign workers are still receiving service up until March 31, 2015.

Most community organizations will continue to offer settlement services, including RMCS, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and ISS of BC, however CHIMO lost settlement services. The SWIS program still continues to provide services as well. ELSA (English Language Skills Assessment) is now LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) and these services are provided by the S.U.C.C.E.S.S., ISS of BC, and the School District. In addition to this, Richmond Family Place maintained its Early Years Bridging Program.

There has been a province-wide cut in funding that correlates to the decrease in percentage of new immigrants coming to British Columbia, 11% this year and an additional 7% next year. The new funding model doesn't disclose regional distribution. Agencies have to prove what the needs are and how they will address them and the budget can be negotiated. Having said that, Richmond service providers who had funding renewed did not lose 11% of funding this year for settlement services but CIC has already built in the 7% reduction for next year into all of Richmond contracts.

The Province has historically contributed (topped off) funding for settlement/immigration services which has helped to provide services for citizens as well as new immigrants and refugees. The continuation of provincial funding to provide settlement services for citizens is unclear.



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The major difference between the provincial government and federal government is the implementation of settlement services. CIC defines settlement services as any service provided to newcomers settling in Canada. This includes settlement as we know it, LINC (formerly ELSA), volunteer services, parenting programs etc. The provincial government conducted the research and then created an RFP to determine the best service provider. In doing this, they researched the need, created a budget based on newcomers to a region and contracted an agency to provide the service.

The federal government expects applicants to prove the need, create the model and services and implement it. Their method for determining contracts is a negotiation process. You propose a budget and they negotiate the contract and the services to be delivered and reimburse your actual expenses up to a maximum of your contract.

**(2) information regarding the proposed changes to federal funding for English as a Second Language programs; and**

Under the Canada-B.C. Immigration Agreement, the federal government gave the province \$22-million per year for ESL training, \$17-million of which went to the Ministry of Advanced Education. These funds were not contingent upon proposals, but were allotted for post-secondary institutions to use for ESL programs. Due to the loss of this funding, the province has contributed \$10.5-million for transition funding of ESL programs in Post-Secondary Institutions.

The sub-committee is not aware of whether these institutions applied for funding through the CIC Call. There are media reports of teachers being laid off and students being turned away due to the cancellation of the provincial funding.

Focusing on the impact in Richmond, the sub-committee spoke with Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU). KPU offers a program that allows students to take the English Language Studies (ELST) Diploma which directly ladders into Post-Secondary courses. "KPU's approach to English language studies enables [students] to quickly develop university level skills. Towards the end of [the] Diploma in English Language Studies, KPU allows [students] to take one or two university courses alongside [their] English studies<sup>1</sup>." While the funding for KPU did decrease when funding transitioned federally, the Province did top off funds so that they could continue to operate through 2014 without cuts to ELST. During this funding transition KPU did research community social service ESL programs to know what else was available for their clients, but the University is unique in that their ESL program assists students in starting or continuing their post-secondary education.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.kpu.ca/aca/els>



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On Thursday, September 11, 2014 Rebecca Avendano and Dr. Monica Pamer presented at RCSAC about changes to the Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) Program as a result of funding moving to CIC, see attached report. Changes included criteria for eligible clients to access services, loss of staff and additional services now offered. Under the new funding, temporary foreign workers, study permit holders and refugee claimants are not eligible to receive funding, however the Province has stepped in temporarily to top off funding so those clients can continue to receive services. The change in funding did result in the loss of 2.8 FTE staff positions, although two other staff positions were able to be increased to 12 months out of the year to serve families during summer break. The SWIS Program has also added front desk services to the district office.

### **(3) how the proposed changes could impact the community**

Due to the Provincial top up of funds during this transition, full impact has yet to be seen. Without these extra funds, the largest impact to the community will be for those who are not eligible to receive services under the CIC model: citizens, refugees, international students and temporary foreign workers. The settlement process does not stop once a person officially becomes a citizen, language supports could be the necessary service that assists these newcomers in successfully finding employment or furthering their education. All Universities, including KPU will have the opportunity to apply for CIC funding, however if there are unsuccessful in their application the loss of the ELST Program would make it more difficult for students to enter University as there is a minimum English Language requirement prior to acceptance. While LINC may be an option, ELST is unique in that the format prepares students for University learning while also teaching language skills. At this time Canadian Residents are eligible for the ELST Program, however they are not eligible for LINC.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. Educational institutions and community organizations work together to ensure client needs are met. This includes increased communication and partnership between agencies and institutions to create more of a wrap-around service.
2. The City of Richmond's Mayor and Council advocate for the Province to continue to provide funding to both educational institutions and community agencies to support clients that no longer fit funding criteria under CIC. The sub-committee strongly believes that settlement is an ongoing process that does not stop at citizenship.
3. The City of Richmond's Mayor and Council stay apprised of how changes in funding impact the community and report that impact to provincial and federal representatives. One way to do this is through the RCSAC annual Community Social Services Survey.

## **School District 38 (Richmond)**

*Our focus is on the learner*

### **Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)**

*Serving newcomer families faster and better*

#### **Fall 2014 Update**

#### **What are Settlement Services?**

The federal government defines Settlement Services as “a service that aims to support newcomers by providing them with language assessment and training, orientation to help them adapt to life in Canada, support in developing social or work-related skills, etc.” <http://www.credentials.gc.ca/recognition/glossary.asp>

#### **What are SWIS?**

SWIS stands for Settlement Workers in Schools and is a comprehensive school-based settlement program funded through Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). It is not related to Education. A key principle behind the program is that schools are one of the first services newcomers access and thus it allows for settlement services to be introduced early on in the settlement process when it is most effective. Because service is offered at all local schools it is convenient and barrier-free. SWIS also provide an important link in helping newcomers navigate the school system.

The SWIS program in the Richmond school district has a team of 14.4 staff. This includes 11 Settlement Workers in Schools, 1 Administrative Assistant, 1 SWIS Supervisor, 1 CEDAR program Educator and 2 part-time Coordinators.

SWIS are stationed at all schools in Richmond serving each school a minimum of half a day per week and up to 2 days per week, depending on school needs and demographics. The administration offices for the SWIS program are at McKay Elementary and the CEDAR Program is at Palmer Secondary.

#### **Background**

Funding for Settlement services was funneled through the Provincial Government in British Columbia (most recently the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training) since the 1990s until it was repatriated in April of 2014. While this change was announced with plenty of notice (June 2012) there was uncertainty about how the settlement services sector in BC would be impacted. Of particular interest are the Settlement Workers in Schools programs since BC was unique in piloting these through school districts, as opposed to through community not-for-profit organizations, as they are operated in other provinces. A major piece of this transition is how service providers will fare under CIC's reporting requirements and funding structure, and more focused accountability standards.

#### **Funding Changes to SD 38 SWIS**

- Contract negotiations with the new funder Citizenship and Immigration Canada took place from January 2014 through March 2014. The contract is in effect starting August 1, 2014 through March 31, 2016.
- Under the province SWIS at SD38 had been funded according to service levels and emerging needs. As a result, the province had increased funding for the program each year. These were annual increments and resulted in budgets that were larger from one year to the next.
- CIC calculated funding targets in a different and unexpected way. In calculating funding targets for 2014-15 and 2015-16, CIC took an *average* of the previous three years budgets. This resulted in less funding because it was

an average of the three previous years and not the figure that had been awarded by the province in 2013-14. Furthermore, for Year 2 of the contract, CIC implemented an 8% holdback based on decreased landing numbers.

- CIC's funding criteria is also different in terms of eligible clients. Under CIC, Temporary Foreign Workers, Study Permit Holders, Refugee Claimants, and others are not eligible for Settlement Services. These groups made up about 25% of SWIS clients previously.
- In addition, the Investor Category was eliminated from the immigration system in early 2014. This is on top of the 25% ineligible clients and is expected to affect client numbers.
- These factors resulted in a significant funding reduction for the SD 38 SWIS program and a needed reduction of 2.8 FTE positions.

### **Changes to Delivery of Service**

- The SWIS schedule was revised in order to continue to provide service across the district (50 sites) and staff the Immigrant Services Counter. The remaining staff team of 11 FTEs has been reallocated. These changes will allow children, parents and schools to continue to receive top quality and responsive service.
- A new addition will be a staffed Immigrant Services counter on the first floor of the school district administration offices. Students and parents will be able to walk in and receive service as needed without having to make an appointment, wait for ELL assessment or for an in-school referral.
- Another upgrade is the addition of two 12-month positions. While traditionally SWIS was staffed from September through June, the program will now serve clients over the summer months. Summer programming such as day activities for children and youth, as well as, workshops for adult clients are in the works for the summer of 2015.
- The new contract with CIC is an outcomes-based model and this will change how the program is managed. Reporting requirements include outputs, short-term and long-term outcomes and the tracking of performance metrics to ensure those outcomes are being achieved. There will be a greater degree of accountability throughout and an emphasis on tracking and ensuring client satisfaction.
- There will be no changes to the CEDAR Program for immigrant at-risk-youth. The program will continue to be housed out of Palmer Secondary School using the "holding class" model whereby students are assigned one or two CEDAR blocks along with regular courses. During CEDAR blocks students receive intensive settlement support in areas such as adjusting to the new school culture, school work and learning about and experiencing Canadian culture. The CEDAR teacher works closely with two SWIS to provide wrap-around support to the students as well as the parents. This approach helps students integrate in the mainstream population while receiving individualized support. There are 22 spaces available each year.

### **SWIS will continue to provide support in the following ways:**

- Meet with students and families on a one-to-one basis to provide support with settlement-related needs. This includes providing Needs Assessments, Settlement Action Plans and follow-up as needed.
- Deliver orientation and information sessions and workshops on settlement-related topics. This may include working with community partners in delivering activities on specialized content areas.
- SWIS may provide referrals and service-bridging to students and parents as needed to community or social service organizations.
- Newcomer-school liaison for students and parents with school staff, connect families to schools.
- Cross-cultural activities - Provide information to school staff on culture and to make schools more welcoming for newcomers. This may include delivering workshops to school staff or at staff meetings on settlement-related topics. This may also include community partnerships and activities for students and families.

### **For more information please contact:**

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Rebeca Avendano, SWIS Supervisor 604-668-6560