

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

School Board: Peel District School Board _____

Contact Person and Email Address: Poleen Grewal - poleen.grewal@peelsb.com _____

Name of Program/Initiative/Strategy: Indigenous Education Strategic Action Plan _____

Description of Program/Initiative/Strategy (max 200 words)

The focus is on practices that excite, engage and increase student confidence, achievement and well-being. In the brief description please provide answers to the following questions: Where the program/initiative/strategy is delivered (school/board locations)? Who is responsible for delivering and monitoring the program/initiative/strategy? Who is the target audience? Are there any community partnerships involved? Are there any staffing or budget implications? Are there any special resources required? What are your indicators of success, etc.?

The Strategic Action Plan initiative began in Peel District School Board, during the 2016-2017 school year. For this initiative, fifteen schools – encompassing elementary, middle, and secondary schools – committed to becoming schools that are supporting an in-depth development of Indigenous education, to ultimately support all of Peel District School Board. The initial year began with professional learning about Indigenous histories, cultures, and contemporary contributions to Canada. Indigenous educators and organizations were invited to deliver workshops and other teacher-training activities. In short, the work focused on honouring the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action #62 and #63. The professional learning took place at the board office and schools across Peel District School Board. The Coordinating Principal of First Nations, Métis, Inuit & Equity, Harjit Aujla, and Coordinator of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education, Melissa Wilson were responsible for delivering the program, in consultation and collaboration with Indigenous community partners. Each of the 15 schools committed to having a lead teacher and a lead administrator attend each event. There was a budget dedicated to this work, as teacher-release, food, and funding for workshops was provided. Indicators of success include follow-up surveys and changes to instructional practice demonstrated through student work.

What has been the impact on Student Learning ? (max 200 words)

For the schools participating in the Strategic Action Plan, the teacher's pedagogy, literature & resource selection, and classroom environments include Indigenous perspectives. As a result, lessons, assessments and evaluations also include Indigenous narratives, voices, and

experiences. Students in these schools also had the opportunity to participate in Indigenous-themed activities, such as the Traditional Haudenosaunee Games, and some schools visited Indigenous-educational institutions, such as the Woodland Cultural Centre. Furthermore, many of the schools are incorporating courses into their course selection that are from the Native Studies curriculum, which further enhances student learning about Indigenous Peoples. Students have reported a sense of moral obligation and purpose in learning more about Canada's Indigenous History. Students have engaged in inquiry processes investigating the beginnings of residential schools, the concept of 'treaty-people' and integrating the many historical and contemporary contributions of Indigenous populations to Canada and the impact on Canadian society. Schools have reported a greater sense of proficiency and understanding with culturally responsive pedagogy as a result the intentional learning that has taken place through the professional development opportunities afforded to the 15 schools. This has resulted in an overall change in practice and a favourable impact on student learning outcomes.