



EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

School Board_Simcoe County District School Board_

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Name of Program/Initiative/Strategy_First Nation/Métis/Inuit Collaborative Inquiry-Truth & ReconciliAction

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 goal of this Collaborative Inquiry was to acknowledge Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission "Calls to Action" in relation to Canada's Indigenous people and to build a solid and mutually respectful relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous people. The focus of this collaborative inquiry was for teachers and students to gain a better understanding of the inter-generational effects of Canada's residential school system and learn of the impacts of other issues affecting First Nation, Métis and Inuit people today. Participants developed a theory of action which led to student inquiry on the following topics; residential schools, the Sixties Scoop and Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women (secondary only). Inquiries were supported by resource staff who are First Nation people, as well as community partners from Rama First Nation. Funding sources included board budget and focused Ministry of Education Collaborative Inquiry money. The project produced incredible results in many schools, with 2 examples being the Steele St Residential Schools art installation, and another stunning art installation at Innisdale SS, both in Barrie.

A final sharing of the work is planned at the Education Centre in early June. Teachers involved have shared "this is the most impactful PD I have ever done!"

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

The impact of this work on students has been multifaceted. The students directly involved with the respective projects have learned a tremendous amount about Canadian history and current realities for First Nation people in Canada, as well as the important part they have to play in reconciliation, along with the inherent curriculum based learning. The work has had a powerful emotional impact on them, and served to turn these students into allies, who are able to speak knowledgeably to others about a subject which has touched them deeply. Elders have often told us that relationships are critical in success for First Nation students, and this project has allowed relationships to be built between First Nation and non-First Nation students, another important step in reconciliation. Finally, the increased awareness of the issue and presence of these works in the schools have created a more welcoming environment for FN/M/I students, and their wellbeing.