



ONTARIO PUBLIC  
SCHOOL BOARDS'  
ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

## EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

School Board: Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board

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Name of Program/Initiative/Strategy Collaborative Inquiry - Indigenous Pedagogy and Environmental Focus

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Hyperlinks to Documents or Website(s) Describing this Program/Initiative/Strategy

<http://bit.ly/IndigenousCI>

### Description of Program/Initiative/Strategy

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.?

Our board participated in the Collaborative Inquiry with an Indigenous Focus with a particular focus on the environment and water. We invited specific schools to participate in this collaborative inquiry based on: their proximity to the 3 First Nations we serve, as well as several teachers who approached their principals asking to be involved. The Superintendent of Student Achievement and First Nation, Metis and Inuit Education as well as the First Nation, Metis and Inuit Consultant were responsible for delivering the initial program through the guidance of ministry personnel. The target audience was primarily the junior Grades 4, 5, 6 although a grade 7/8 did end up participating also – however, this became more of a learning and awareness-raising around residential schools. Community partnerships: Elders and knowledge holders were instrumental and integral in helping to convey the importance of different ways of viewing the world, our interconnectedness, and importance of Indigenous languages to provide more insight and ideological understanding. Budget implications: trips to culturally appropriate sites, elder and knowledge holder visits, professional learning opportunities, resources to support integration of Indigenous ways of knowing in the classroom.

**What has been the impact on Student Learning?**

- Interconnectedness of the world and our place within the complex web of life;
- Students were more engaged and experienced a sense of pride when having the opportunity to share their stories about their connections and when they had a choice of what type of sharing they wanted to do – it could be done in ways that enhanced and demonstrated their perceived strengths;
- Teachers realizing they don't have to be the experts and hold all of the knowledge in order for subjects, issues to be in their classroom – that inquiries can evolve based on the curriculum expectations and the students' questions, concerns, and connections they bring to the classroom. Increased engagement overall was in evidence.