



ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION #1

School Board- Durham District School Board

Contact Person and Email Address- Erin Elmhurst- erin.elmhurst@ddsb.ca

Name of Program/Initiative/Strategy- Land-Based Anishinaabemowin Language Class

Description of Program/Initiative/Strategy

The Elders tell us of the importance of speaking the Original Languages. They tell us the land, the air, and the water needs to hear these languages. We hear that cultural continuity is key for our children and youth. As a board in the beginning stages of bringing language to our urban Indigenous students and families and in an effort to support the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions Calls to Actions 13 and 14, highlighting the need to preserve, revitalize, and strengthen Aboriginal languages, the Durham District School Board Indigenous Education Department hosted a 7 week Anishinabemowin Land Based Language Program. This program is for Indigenous families and community members. It was is offered at Nonquon Outdoor Education Centre, one of our 3 Outdoor Education Centres in the DDSB, and allows students and families to learn the language together, in Mother Earth's classroom. The program is held from 4-6 pm and begins with an opportunities for families to share an Indigenous snack and gather around the fire before beginning the instruction on the land. This program is lead by Beedahbin Peltier, Indigenous Language Specialist and Elder, Shirley Williams.

Photographs, video footage and surveys are conducted weekly as we gather our collective narrative of the experience and measure program effectiveness and impact. CAREA Community Health Centre supports this initiative by providing transportation for families and engaging in the program.

What has been the impact on Student Learning?

We have completed 2 of the 7 weeks and have observed and documented students learning several new Anishinaabe vocabulary words. They are engaging in the instruction as a family and are learning together. We have had a higher enrollment in this program than our ongoing Indigenous Family Nights. Families have indicated feeling a sense of pride and accomplishment as they hear and learn the language of their ancestors. As this program continues, we will continue to further influence and support the well-being of our Indigenous students.

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION #2

School Board- Durham District School Board

Contact Person and Email Address- Erin Elmhurst- erin.elmhurst@ddsb.ca

Name of Program/Initiative/Strategy- Indigenous Connections Gatherings

Description of Program/Initiative/Strategy

Indigenous Connections Gatherings are held bi-weekly at three secondary schools in the Durham District School Board with the highest population of self-identified students. The Grade 9-12 students meet, share, eat and participate in culturally-oriented activities led by Indigenous community members and in partnership with CAREA Community Centre. Elders Bernard and Tammy Nelson provide monthly support to these gatherings. These gathering are organized and run by the DDSB Indigenous Education Re-engagement Teacher.

The objectives of the sessions are to:

- Support well-being, self-esteem, engagement , and student achievement
- Strengthen and expand partnerships with local First Nation, Métis and Inuit organizations, support services, and mentors/leaders
- Increase the number of self-identified First Nation, Métis and Inuit students
- Increase participants' knowledge of First Nation, Métis and Inuit culture, history and perspectives
- Assist with transitions to secondary, work and post-secondary education
- Develop leadership/mentoring skills of secondary students

Student surveys are conducted in September and January we gather our collective narrative of the experience and measure the program effectiveness and impact. We also monitor student achievement, attendance and de-enrollment data throughout the course of the year.

What has been the impact on Student Learning?

First Term data indicates:

- Grade 9- 95% of student gained the credits attempted in first term
- Grade 10- 96% of student gained the credits attempted in first term
- Grade 11- 92% of student gained the credits attempted in first term
- Grade 12- 94% of student gained the credits attempted in first term

Credit Accumulation

- Grade 9- 333 credits- 88 students
- Grade 10- 314 credits- 82 students
- Grade 11- 356 credits- 99 students
- Grade 12- 200 credits- 104 students

Although many factors have an impact on this data, we believe that the Indigenous Connections Gatherings are having some impact on well-being and student engagement which in the end, impacts achievement.

- 54% of students felt somewhat supported in their schools, 30% felt very supported and 0 felt not supported at all

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION #3

School Board- Durham District School Board

Contact Person and Email Address- Erin Elmhurst- erin.elmhurst@ddsb.ca

Name of Program/Initiative/Strategy- Indigenous Education Focused Teacher Learning and Leading Project

Description of Program/Initiative/Strategy

The First Nation, Métis & Inuit Education Department invited school teams of 2-4 teachers to apply for project support to implement an **Indigenous Education Teacher Learning and Leading Project (IE-TLLP)** in their school. Teachers with an interest in co-learning, deepening their knowledge and awareness of Indigenous cultures, histories, traditions and pedagogy, and leading their colleagues and school community to a deeper understanding applied for this 2 year project of learning and leading. Teams are provided professional development support through our Indigenous Education facilitator, access to Indigenous Elders and traditional knowledge keepers and team trips to our local First Nations for professional development.

The project goals are as follows:

- Provide teacher driven professional development that deepens teacher knowledge of Indigenous cultures, histories, traditions and perspectives. (*Advance Inspired Leadership*)
- Enhance teacher capacity to support Indigenous learners through the integration of FNMI content, resources and pedagogy. (*Increase Student Achievement and Well-Being*)
- Build internal leadership and program sustainability through collaboration and knowledge sharing. (*Advance Inspired Leadership*)
- Enhance the creation of an inclusive and safe school environment that is reflective of FNMI students' needs and experiences. (*Ensuring Equity*)

14 schools, 43 teachers, are participating in this years' IE-TLLP.

Survey are completed and feedback is collected after every session and the facilitator monitors teams progress over the course of the 2 years.

What has been the impact on Student Learning?

20 proposals were submitted, 14 proposals were accepted and 43 teachers are involved. 6 schools are hosting regular Lunch and Learn sessions for all staff and indicate that they are bringing the content into their classrooms and students are responding positively. 14 schools have embedded Indigenous content into staff meetings.

At this point we have not measured quantitatively, however, observations indicate that student engagement has definitely increased and students feel more confident when they see themselves reflected and represented in their schools and classroom. Teachers have indicated students are responding positively.

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION #4

School Board- Durham District School Board

Contact Person and Email Address- Erin Elmhurst- erin.elmhurst@ddsb.ca

Name of Program/Initiative/Strategy- CODE Summer Learning Program

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.?

In order to support sustained and continue learning over the summer, The First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Department hosts a 3 week **intervention/gap closing focused Summer Learning Program** for students in Year 2 of Kindergarten-Grade 5 who identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit.

The program is a gap closing program for Indigenous students in year 2 of Kindergarten- Grade 5. It focuses on further developing students literacy and numeracy skills in a fun and engaging manner. Indigenous content and cultural learning experiences are integrated throughout the course of the day. This program will be offered at Lakewoods Public School in Oshawa runs for 3 weeks (15 days) from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. It is staffed by DDSB teachers and Educational Assistants.

Pre and post assessments (STAR, LLI) are conducted to measure student progress, sending teacher send a student profile and at the completion of the Summer Learning Program the receiving teacher receives a report indicating student progress and achievement levels.

What has been the impact on Student Learning?

- Students demonstrated an increased pride and engagement through the integrated Indigenous content, thus impacting their well-being.
- Increased student achievement and a decrease in achievement gaps for participating students; all students maintained or increased in BAS levels, 52/92 students showed an increase in BAS levels
- Teachers gained expertise and experience in teaching literacy, numeracy and First Nation, Métis and Inuit expectations and outcomes