

Premier's Board of Education Award for Excellence in Education



Nominated Division: Regina Public School Division #4

Chairperson: Mrs. Katherine Gagne

Director of Education: Ms. Julie MacRae

Program: Aboriginal Education, Treaty Training

Program Goal: Provide all Regina Public Schools staff with Treaty Training—Historical Overview

One of the Regina Public Schools' priority strategies is the *Development of a First Nations, Métis and Inuit Achievement Initiative*. Understanding Treaties with First Nations people and, particularly, Treaty Four, is an important component of how educators learn and teach about our collective history.

Understanding and learning from this history will also contribute to successful educational outcomes for not only First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, but all Regina Public Schools students.

Innovative Nature of the Program: Historically, since 2005, Treaty training was delivered in the traditional model of presenters delivering content to participants, through a pull out professional development session. In this format, approximately 250 teachers had received training. Progress was slow and often required creative measures in attaining “time” to offer professional development throughout the school year.

In June 2014, it was approved by Student Achievement to allocate one full day of Division-wide Treaty training for all Regina Public Schools staff. The scheduled professional development day was held on August 27, 2014. Internal information regarding the session was conveyed to all staff via principals' meetings and electronic means.

The format of the professional development Treaty training session incorporated the use of technology while maintaining the critical aspect of the historical content of Treaties in Saskatchewan. The mandated professional development session was delivered live via the e-cast studio at the University of Regina. Staff from Gladys McDonald School and Scott Collegiate were selected to participate in the live e-cast. The remainder of the 54 schools participated in an “all staff in-school session.” The live e-cast was broadcast to each elementary school, high school and the three associate schools.

To ensure the e-cast was interactive, the formerly-trained Treaty teachers were given the role of in-school facilitators. This included teachers, teacher-librarians, superintendents and supervisors. Each facilitator

How engaging was the video broadcast?

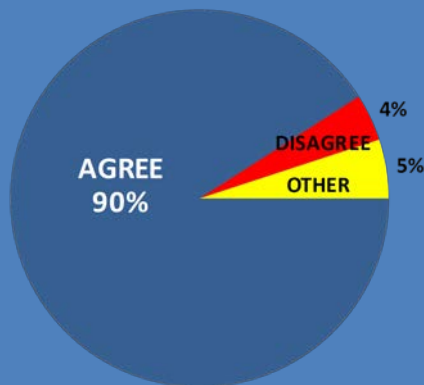
Very engaging	42% (282)
Engaging	48% (320)
Somewhat	8% (56)
Not engaging	1% (9)

How engaging were the group activities?

Very engaging	32% (218)
Engaging	48% (325)
Somewhat engaging	17% (111)
Not engaging	1% (10)

I would like to attend more PD opportunities of this format (mix of video, activities, technology):

Agree	90% (607)
Disagree	4% (29)
Other	5% (35)



After today's Treaty training, I feel better prepared to integrate First Nations/Métis content?

Strongly agree	19% (125)
Agree	69% (462)
Disagree	11% (77)
Strongly disagree	1% (7)

was involved in organizing materials and focussing the dialogue as presented by the Aboriginal consultants who were conducting the live e-cast.

The Treaty training session covered the following topics: the importance of tobacco, the importance of Treaties, the importance of First Nations and Métis content in schools, Treaty trivia, Worldview, history of Treaties, and use of primary source documents. The session ended with Elder Noel Starblanket sharing his experience and insights. As Elder Noel shared, "Today we are ethically engaged citizens."

The incorporation of technology was innovative and essential in the delivery of the Treaty session. Previously, staffs have frequently shared apprehensiveness in openly inquiring about culture. Many felt uncomfortable because of the uncertainty of the appropriateness of questions. Technology eliminated the apprehensiveness and allowed all staff the opportunity to openly ask questions while remaining anonymous. Technology inclusion included the use of Twitter, chat rooms and a live call-in line.

Staff embraced the professional development session, the content and the format. Evidence of this is their participation on Twitter, commenting about the day-long event with #rpstreaties. In fact, so much activity and interest was created on Twitter that the hashtag #rpstreaties was trending (most popular topic) in the top three across Canada for most of the day. The majority of the comments can be seen at: <https://tagboard.com/rpstreaties>.

Sustainability of the Innovation

Regina Public Schools' senior administration are engaged in Treaty training. The August 27th session illustrates the high level of engagement in the content of the session as well as in the format of the Treaty training.

The content of the full Treaty session is available online at www.rbe.sk.ca/rpstreaties.

#rpstreaties

“Don't forget to add Treaty Education to your year plans! [#rpstreaties](#)”

“I have to say today was very moving and Proud to be working for RPS [#rpstreaties](#)”

“I felt inspired by the [#rpstreaties](#) PD today and made a Chief Piapot inspired bracelet. He signed treaty for my band.”

“You know you have had something moved within yourself when you feel energized by an entire of day of PD [#rpstreaties](#)”

“Grateful to be surrounded by forward thinking leaders and colleagues. This WILL be a great year for ALL students in#rps [#rpstreaties](#)”

Cost of Innovation

The overall cost of this innovative professional development session was significantly low. The Treaty session, which trained 1,600 Regina Public Schools employees, cost approximately \$2,000. The cost includes use of the e-cast facility, staff parking at the University of Regina, refreshments, and an Elder honourarium.

Evidence of Improved Student Achievement

The high level of engagement for teachers was evident by the participants' response in the evaluation, with 88% of participants responding they feel better prepared to integrate First Nations and Métis content.

Direct evidence on our learners has not been collected yet but will be gathered throughout the school year.

