

Still waiting for Truth and Reconciliation

A progress report on Indigenous education in Ontario's publicly funded schools



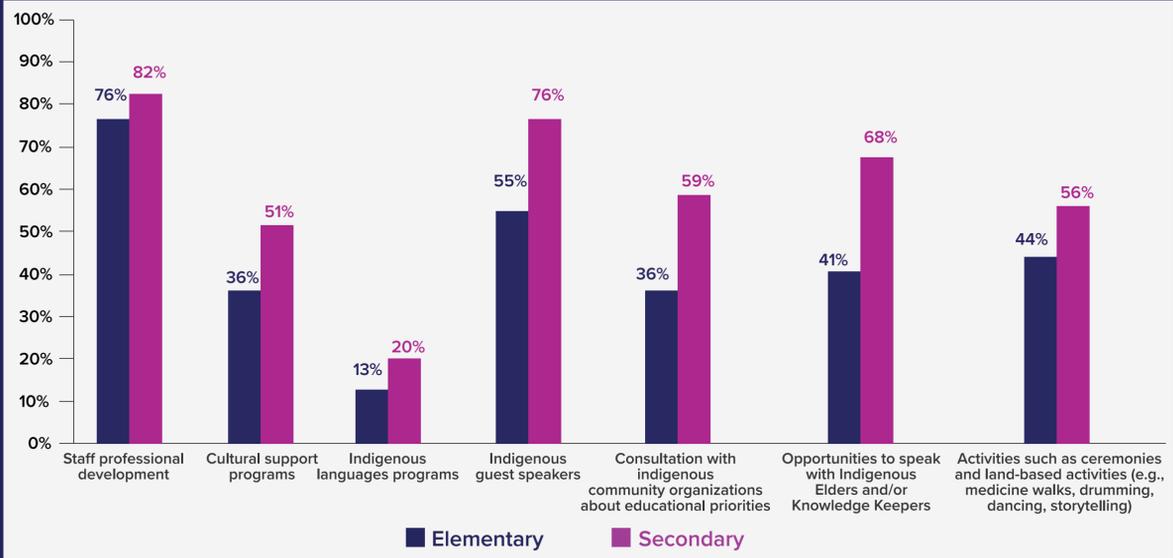
Overview

Publicly funded schools in Ontario have made significant progress on Indigenous education over the last decade, but many steps remain before the province can say that it has fully implemented all the education-related Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

“Time and priority. With so little staff meeting time, and focus for those being on math and literacy instruction, there is no time to run Staff PD for indigenous studies. We cannot have time [for Professional Learning Community work] as we are unable to get supply coverage.”

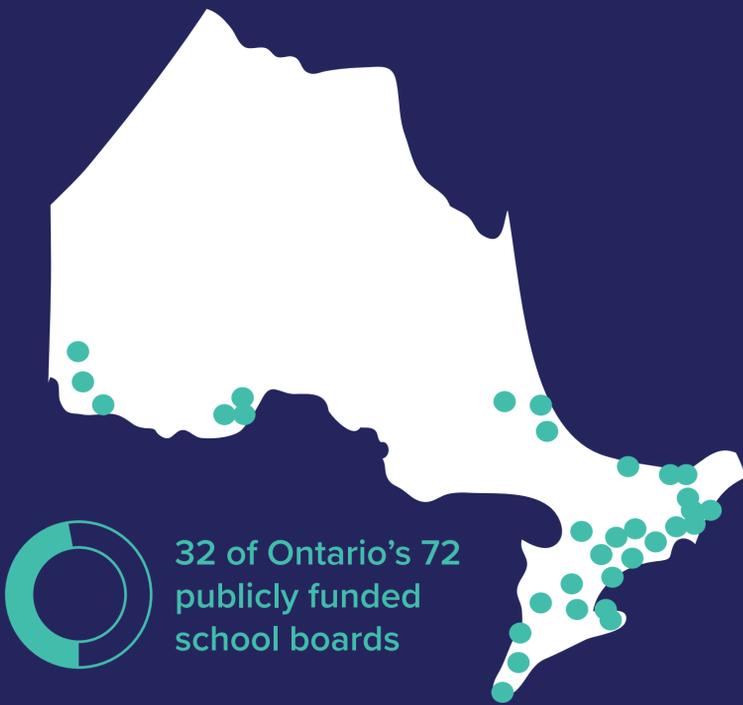
Elementary school principal, Eastern Ontario

Proportion of elementary and secondary schools in Ontario offering Indigenous education opportunities



Source: People for Education's 2022-23 Annual Ontario School Survey

School boards with a mandated Indigenous-focused grade 11 course

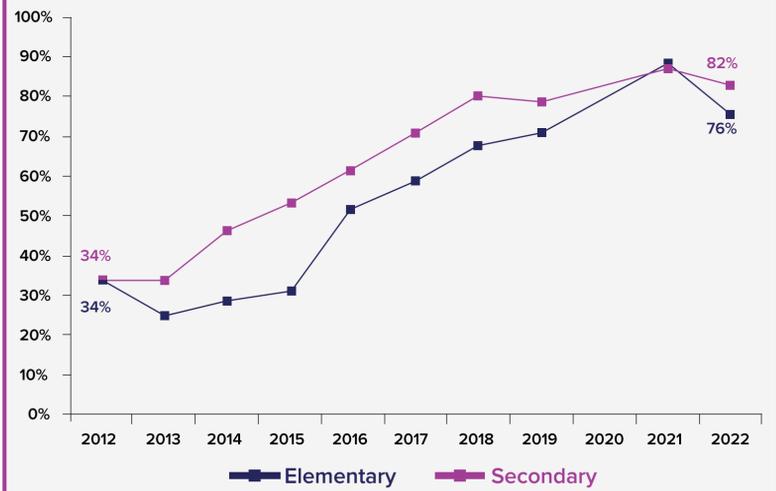


Source: People for Education's scan of Ontario's publicly funded school boards, March 2023

“We have a partnership with [an Indigenous community]. Their program lives in our school, with an Indigenous Youth Outreach Worker providing mentorship opportunities, in-school math and literacy supports, in-school and after school cultural programming and nutritional supports. We collaborate to celebrate an annual powwow, a true highlight at our school. Our Ojibwe Language program continues to grow with an increasing number of students opting to take Ojibwe instead of French as a Second Language each year.”

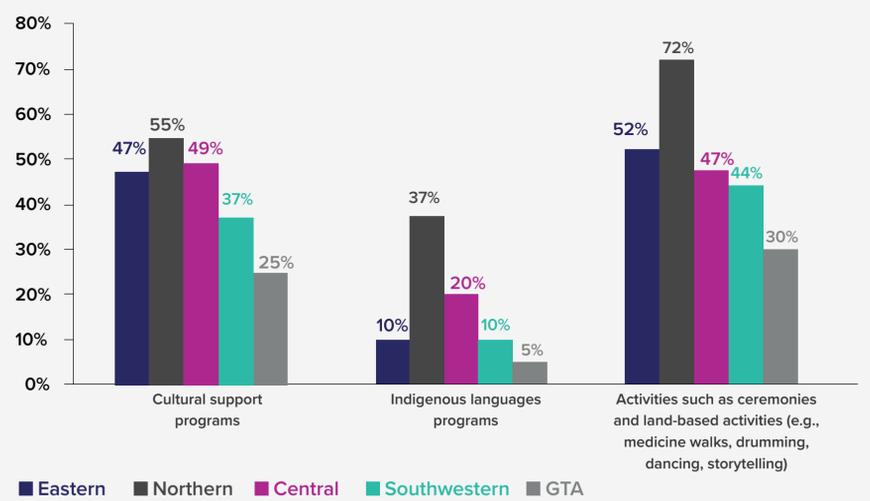
Elementary school principal, Northern Ontario

Proportion of elementary and secondary schools in Ontario offering staff professional development on Indigenous education



Source: People for Education's 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2021-22, 2022-23 Annual Ontario School Survey

Regional differences among Ontario schools offering Indigenous education opportunities



Source: People for Education's scan of Ontario's publicly funded school board websites, March 2023

“We have an Outdoor Education program for all primary students that focuses on looking at the land we live on through an Indigenous lens. One of the parents on our grounds & greening committee (which manages a teaching garden & works with the outdoor ed teacher) is Indigenous and helps us to reflect and question.”

Elementary school principal, GTA

Still waiting for truth and reconciliation

“Education got us into this mess, and education will get us out of it.”

The Honourable Murray Sinclair, Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Committee remind us of the importance of Indigenous education for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in Canada's journey to truth and reconciliation. While Ontario has made progress, we still have far to go in fulfilling all the education-related Calls to Action.



Recommendations to continue progress on Indigenous Education

1. Mandate the Indigenous studies course in place of Grade 11 English/French at the provincial level, and increase the number of elementary and secondary schools offering Indigenous languages and programs by increasing funding and resources.
2. Provide dedicated funding for positions in schools, boards, and government that are focused on promoting and supporting effective programs on Indigenous languages and ways of knowing from kindergarten to Grade 12.
3. Convene a taskforce of diverse and regionally reflective Indigenous educators, Elders, and students to support the Ministry of Education and the 72 publicly funded school boards across Ontario in responding to the Calls to Action regarding education.