

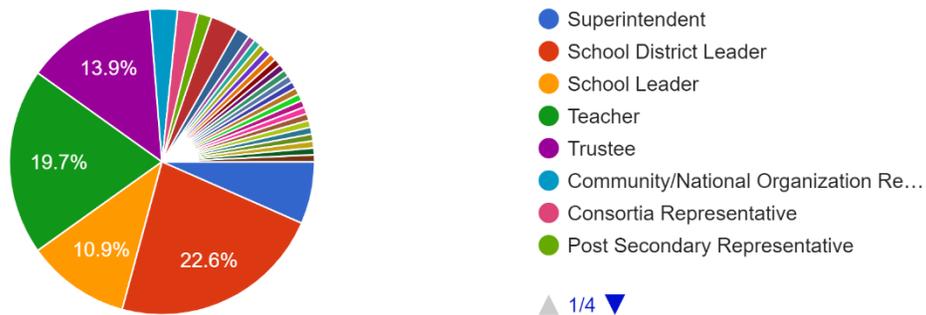
2022 Learning Survey for the CASS First Nations, Métis & Inuit Education Gathering Executive summary

The sixth Gathering, “Sharing Our Truth “successfully achieved its 4 goals and received a very high level of satisfaction from participants and recommendations to consider for the planning of upcoming Gatherings. Below are the highlights of the 2022 survey findings, which will inform the upcoming 2023 Gathering. Charlene Bearhead’s [witness to our learning statement](#) also provides a comprehensive summary of the learning.

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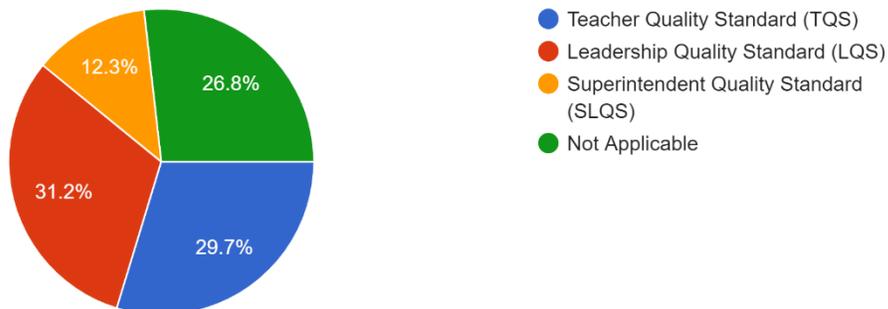
Please indicate your position.

137 responses



Which professional practice standard are you focused on addressing?

138 responses



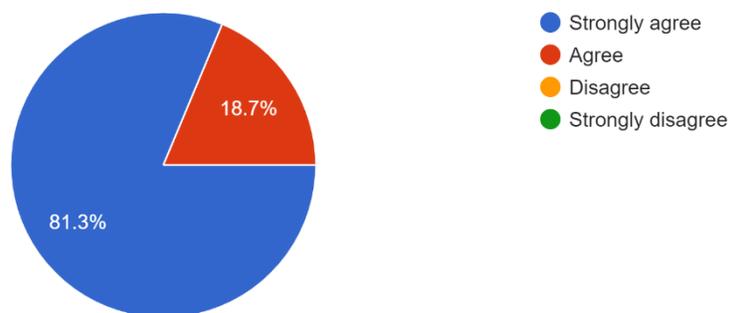
REFLECTIONS ON MY LEARNING:

- 1. The Alberta Professional Practice Standards: Teacher Quality Standard (TQS), Leadership Quality Standard (LQS), and the Superintendent Quality Standard (SLQS) include a focus on Indigenous Education. How did this learning opportunity contribute to your awareness/understanding of Indigenous Education?**

Many respondents felt inspired by their experience to return to their role with more knowledge, understanding and a path forward to action their learning. The highlight for most was the opportunity to learn by listening to Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Indigenous peoples, to learn from listening to their story. Many expressed the importance and value of experiencing the opportunity to learn the truth from Indigenous Peoples on a variety of topics, such as intergeneration trauma, relationship building, Inuit stories and overall foundational knowledge. They understood the vital connection of truth to reconciliation.

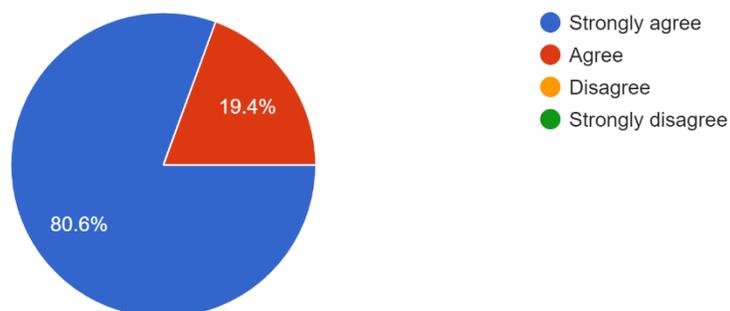
- 2. I plan to apply my learning (awareness and understanding) in my role/practice.**

139 responses



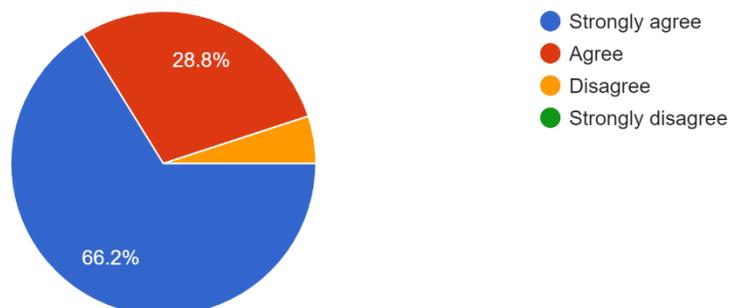
- 3. I plan to share my learning with my colleagues.**

139 responses



4. This professional learning opportunity provided ideas of how to lead and incorporate strategies into my work with my school authority.

139 responses



5. I plan to put into action my learning by...

There was a variety of responses to this open-ended question allowing for differences in learning, context and roles. Many respondents were excited to share their learning and resources with their colleagues, provide more leadership in their role to move the work forward, some felt strengthened and more confident to continue the difficult work of reconciliation, others expressed interest in starting an Indigenous student council and /or gathering place in their schools for students. Some spoke to the important connections that they had made and wanting to continue these beyond the Gathering while others felt encouraged to neighbouring Indigenous Peoples, communities, and organizations to ensure the inclusion of their voices in their work. Others mentioned re-examining their school and or district plans because of their learning.

6. What learning for “Sharing the Truth “made this Gathering meaningful?

Generally, respondents expressed that **all aspects** of the Gathering, keynotes, sessions, and ceremony made it meaningful. Many identified **listening to Elders and Indigenous Peoples** tell their real life stories as being particularly meaningful and made them feel safe to ask questions and share with others. Seeking **truth was described as a lifelong learning journey.**

7. An aspect of this learning opportunity that might be improved is:

Although most respondents indicated that they had nothing to suggest, those that did had recommendations related to the **facility, schedule, and program content.**

The feedback on the **Facility, Fantasyland Hotel**, was that the session rooms were small creating some crowding during sessions and opening and closing events each day.

The feedback on the **program schedule** was that the Gathering needed to be spread out over more days. Although the program was excellent, it was too jammed packed, starting early in the morning and ending later in the evening. There were also several suggestions for longer sessions to delve more deeply into topics.

The feedback on the **program content**, identified more time to be with Elders and Knowledge keepers , opportunities to learn about cultural protocols such as long skirts at pipe ceremonies, the significance of the Métis sash and the eagle feather, more learning about northern Alberta and the Inuit , and best practices for school districts , schools and classrooms for improving successes for Indigenous students , improved access to Francophone resources , and more engagement with educators from other districts rather than just from your own.

8. One thing I require to further support my professional learning is:

Most requests were for support for ongoing learning on how to **connect** and build relationships **with Elders** and Knowledge Keepers indicating a high regard and respect for learning by listening to Elders and Knowledge Keepers. This year there were 26 sponsored Elders registered for the Gathering, 20 of whom were sponsored by their district demonstrating a growing relationship between school districts and Elders/knowledge keepers over the past 5 Gatherings. With the growing presence of Elders at the Gatherings, it has provided more access for participants to listen and **connect with them**.

Another major theme was a request to **continue the connections** made at the Gathering throughout the year to share practices, support, professional learning opportunities among and between districts. Also, a suggestion for the Gathering to start a Facebook page for attendees to continue connecting and sharing post Gathering.

Other themes identified in the data were increasing access to **resources**, especially for the classroom, learning more about protocols, encouraging districts to send a team to allow for more shared learning experience, reflection, and action when back at work, more **professional learning opportunities** and continue the Gatherings.

9. Comments/suggestions regarding the structure of this learning opportunity. (e.g., facility, registration process, communication)

Overall, the feedback on the **structure** of the Gathering was very positive and supportive. Feedback described the gathering as very effective, well organized, well run, good balance of learning and participation in ceremony with many stating that they will continue to attend. There were several comments about the **facility** being too small causing sessions and keynote spaces to be crowded, the slowness and capacity of the elevators, long walks for Elders between the banquet room/elevators and session rooms and being indoors for long days. It was suggested that a larger facility be considered and perhaps one that is connected to a First Nation conference centre.

There were also suggestions for the **schedule**, such as considering spreading the Gathering over more days to allow for shorter days to create time for teams and individuals to debrief and reflect on what they had learned and to move away from having the Gathering back-to-back with the CASS Annual conference. Another suggestion was for CASS to be more active on social media.

10. Would you be willing to share more about how you and your school authority are positively impacting Indigenous education?

Overall, respondents indicated that they would be pleased to share how their school authority is impacting Indigenous Education. Some did share their thoughts in the survey while others were open to being contacted.

Some shared examples were **divisional strategies**, that had 1 teacher representative per school on a system Indigenous advisory committee sharing their learning and resources and engaging in novel studies, a few others mentioned the [Ambarrister First Nations Caring Society](#) program as being a catalyst for change .

Another school district offered to pay the tuition (\$61) for their teachers to take the University of Alberta's online [Indigenous Canada](#) course approximately (21 hr) and upon successful completion have a day in lieu to further their professional learning. These teachers would then be surveyed, and findings would be included in the districts educational plan. Alberta Mentorship Program was seen as a very successful strategy to support Indigenous learners. <https://albertamentors.ca/>

For those who were not yet ready to share, they felt their work was just beginning in their district and or school.