

Reflections on my Learning:

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.

1. How did this learning opportunity contribute to your personal and/or professional awareness/understanding of Indigenous Education?

Participants reported overwhelmingly that the learning opportunity **deepened their understanding** of Indigenous Education and **strengthened their commitment** to advancing Truth and Reconciliation in their personal and professional roles. Many described **gaining a deeper understanding** of Indigenous histories, treaties, the legacy of residential schools, language revitalization, cultural teachings, protocols, and contemporary Indigenous realities, noting that **each year of learning builds new perspectives and deepens understanding**.

The Gathering reinforced the importance of the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action** and participants' responsibilities in advancing reconciliation, with many expressing **renewed motivation** to support Indigenous students, families, and communities while **ensuring Indigenous Education remains a priority** in schools, school authorities, and strategic planning. Participants emphasized the importance of moving beyond symbolic or isolated initiatives toward **embedding Indigenous perspectives, protocols, and ways of knowing** into everyday educational practice, leadership, policy, and learning environments.

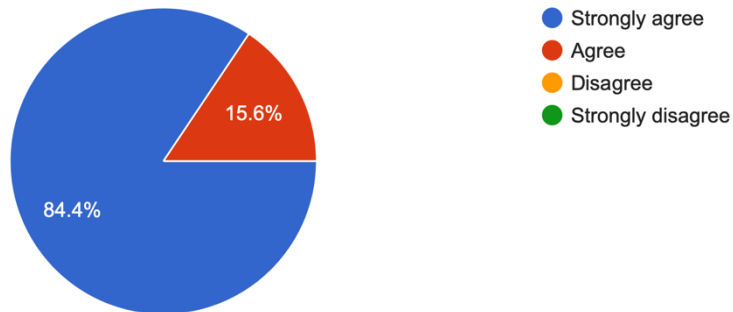
Attendees valued the opportunity to gather **practical resources, tools, contacts, and examples of promising practices** from across Alberta, many indicating they would bring new ideas and approaches back to their schools, divisions, boards, and organizations. The Gathering also provided **meaningful opportunities to connect** with Elders, Knowledge Carriers, Indigenous educators, colleagues, and community partners, with these **relationships seen as central** to ongoing learning and Indigenous Education work.

Many respondents described the experience as **personally transformative**, prompting reflection on their own reconciliation journeys and professional responsibilities, and increasing awareness of gaps in their knowledge and the need for continued learning.

Overall, participants reported **feeling better equipped** to support Indigenous students through culturally responsive practices, stronger relationships, and a **deeper understanding** of Indigenous knowledges, while also emphasizing the importance of **attending to local contexts** and **listening closely** to students and communities.

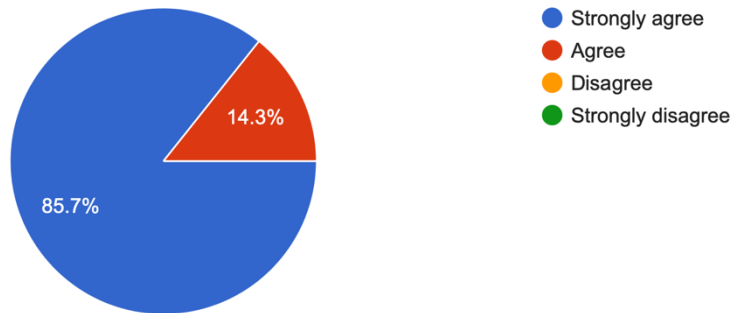
2. I commit to applying my learning (awareness and understanding) in my role/practice.

77 responses



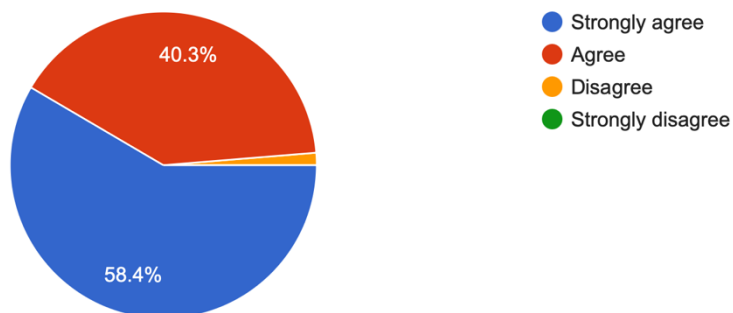
3. I commit to sharing my learning with colleagues and others.

77 responses



4. This professional learning opportunity provided ideas about how to lead and incorporate strategies/actions into my work.

77 responses



5. I commit to putting my learning into action by...

Participants identified a strong commitment to **translating their learning into meaningful action** across schools, divisions, and communities, with a focus on leadership, relationship-building, knowledge-sharing, and advancing Truth and Reconciliation through sustained, intentional efforts. The most common commitment was **sharing learning and resources with colleagues**, leadership teams, trustees, and school communities.

Many also emphasized **strengthening Indigenous Education practices** by including Indigenous perspectives, ways of knowing, and cultural teachings more intentionally into curriculum, professional development, strategic planning, and daily practice. Participants also emphasized moving beyond one-time or symbolic activities toward ongoing and **sustained practices and processes**.

A significant focus was placed on **building and strengthening relationships** with local Indigenous communities, Elders, Knowledge Carriers, students, and families. This included **improving engagement** and establishing advisory structures. Participants also expressed a commitment to **supporting Indigenous learners through holistic practices** that prioritize academic success, well-being, identity, and belonging, alongside efforts to reduce barriers and close gaps in practice and system structures (resulting in achievement gaps for young people). **Advancing Truth and Reconciliation** remained central, with many noting plans to advocate for systemic change, address racism, and promote meaningful **reconcili-action**.

In addition, respondents highlighted the **importance of leadership and strategic action**, using their learning to inform policy, planning, funding decisions, and school improvement efforts in collaboration with senior leadership and trustees. **Ongoing professional learning and capacity building** were also emphasized, both for themselves and others.

Finally, participants noted a commitment to **creating more inclusive and culturally responsive environments** by honouring local Indigenous knowledges and practices, supporting land-based learning, and ensuring resources and practices are respectful and culturally appropriate. Overall, responses reflect a **commitment to put learning into action**, grounded in sustained, systemic efforts to strengthen Indigenous Education and support meaningful change for students and communities.

6. Please identify one learning related to “Kwayask-wastâsowin for Student Success” that made the 2026 Gathering meaningful.

Participants identified a wide range of meaningful learnings related to Kwayask-wastâsowin for Student Success, with a **strong emphasis on the importance of relationships, reconciliation, language, culture, wellness, and belonging**. Many described relationships with Indigenous students, families, Elders, Knowledge Carriers, and communities as foundational to student success and meaningful Indigenous Education.

Dr. Marie Wilson’s keynote and reflections on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission were frequently cited as impactful, reinforcing the ongoing responsibility of educators and leaders to **advance reconciliation and respond to the Calls to Action**. Participants valued opportunities to

learn directly from Elders, Knowledge Carriers, Indigenous educators, students, and community members, noting that personal stories and lived experiences deepened understanding and inspired action.

Many respondents gained a greater appreciation for the **role of Indigenous languages** in preserving culture, identity, and belonging, as well as the importance of Indigenous worldviews, holistic approaches to learning, and land-based education. Sessions exploring **Indigenous and Western perspectives** provided valuable insights into supporting student learning and well-being.

Participants also highlighted the importance of understanding the impact of trauma, historical injustices, and systemic barriers for students, **emphasizing compassionate, relationship-centred approaches to supporting safety, wellness, and success**. Learning from **student voices and Indigenous leaders** reinforced the need to create inclusive environments where **students see themselves reflected and valued** and feel empowered.

Overall, participants described Kwayask-wastâsowin for Student Success as a meaningful learning experience that **deepened their understanding of Indigenous knowledges** and reinforced the **interconnected roles of relationships, culture, language, wellness, and community** in supporting student success.

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

Feedback on the Gathering was overwhelmingly positive, with many participants describing it as impactful, well organized, and one of the best professional learning experiences they had attended. While many indicated no changes were needed, several suggestions emerged to further strengthen future Gatherings.

The most common recommendation was to **increase opportunities for interaction, collaboration, and networking**. Participants requested **more discussion-based and hands-on learning**, dedicated time for dialogue with colleagues, and greater opportunities to connect across divisions and organizations.

Several respondents noted scheduling challenges, including **multiple sessions of interest occurring simultaneously**, cancelled presentations, and long conference days. Suggestions to adjust the **balance of conference days**, as Thursday (including the Banquet) felt particularly long.

Many participants wanted additional **sessions focussed on implementation and practice**, including: classroom resources and teachings strategies; examples of successful Indigenous Education initiatives; **practical approaches to Indigenous Education**, reconciliation, and land-based learning; and, strategies and approaches to **supporting student wellness and success**.

There was also strong interest in **expanding opportunities to learn directly from Elders, Knowledge Carriers, and Indigenous educators** through traditional teachings, ceremony, cultural knowledge, and informal conversations. Some participants requested **additional foundational learning** for those newer to Indigenous Education, particularly around protocols and cultural

practices. Participants consistently reported that **learning directly from Indigenous voices** was among the most meaningful aspects of the Gathering.

Additional suggestions included **increasing teacher-focused sessions**, incorporating **more youth voices**, offering **French-language learning opportunities**, providing **wellness supports** following emotionally difficult sessions, and enhancing opportunities for **reflection and personal connection**.

Overall, participants expressed deep appreciation for the Gathering and a desire to build on its strengths by enhancing engagement, practical learning, Indigenous-led content, networking, and participant supports.

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

Participants expressed a strong commitment to continuing their learning journey in Indigenous Education and identified several supports that would help deepen their understanding and strengthen their practice. The following themes were highlighted.

Continued Learning and Relationship Building

Participants emphasized the importance of ongoing professional learning, future Gatherings, and opportunities to learn from Elders, Knowledge Carriers, Indigenous educators, and communities. Many also highlighted the value of maintaining connections with colleagues across Alberta through networking, collaboration, and the sharing of resources and promising practices.

Community Connections and Cultural Learning

Respondents expressed a desire to strengthen relationships with local Elders, Knowledge Carriers, and Indigenous communities, while learning more about local protocols, Indigenous languages, cultural teachings, and community-specific knowledge.

Leadership and Organizational Support

Many identified the need for dedicated time, administrative support, funding, and organizational commitment to help translate learning into meaningful action and sustain Indigenous Education initiatives.

Access to Resources and Practical Application

Participants requested additional classroom resources, curriculum supports, and practical examples of successful Indigenous Education initiatives. Areas of interest included land-based learning, Indigenous curriculum and assessment, culturally responsive approaches to student support, and strategies for engaging staff in reconciliation work.

Inclusion and Diverse Perspectives

Some respondents requested more French-language resources, greater student involvement in future learning opportunities, and increased access to diverse Indigenous voices and perspectives.

Overall, participants emphasized that continued learning, strong relationships, practical resources, and sustained organizational support are essential to advancing Indigenous Education. Responses

reflected a desire to move beyond awareness toward meaningful action that supports students, schools, and communities.

9. Please share comments/suggestions regarding future CASS Gatherings.

- Ensure teachings, protocols, and presentations reflect local Indigenous contexts and treaty territories.
- Include teachings about the ceremonial and cultural dimensions of the Gathering.
- Balance ceremonies and cultural events to honour a diversity of Nations (e.g., Inuit, Denesuline, Tsuut'ina, Stoney Nakoda, Métis, Cree).
- Provide full or half-day land-based learning opportunities as part of the regular program, not only as part of pre-session offerings.
- Continue featuring cultural arts or participatory cultural events
- Shorten conference days (e.g., Thursday) and increase supports for Elders and participant well-being (i.e., opportunities for rest, reflection, and mobility supports).
- Increase learning opportunities led by Elders, Knowledge Carriers, and Indigenous educators.
- Include more student and youth voices through panels, presentations, and performances.
- Create additional opportunities for connection and cultural celebration.
- Provide more practical, classroom-focused examples and implementation strategies.
- Build in additional time for networking, collaboration, and relationship-building.
- Review food options, snacks, and meal formats (e.g., Friday lunch).
- Improve logistics related to accommodations (i.e., larger room block), technology, and participant communications re: session descriptions.

Overall, participants valued the Gathering highly and encouraged CASS to continue prioritizing Indigenous-centred learning, respectful relationships, and meaningful opportunities for reflection, reconciliation, and action.