

Quest 2019 Workshops

The Quest 2019 workshops have been selected to provide valuable learning to participants with a focus on Indigenous Education and Equity.

Additional workshops will be added to the schedule.

[Printable version](#)

Wednesday Morning Workshops

Digging Deeper with Gabrielle Scrimshaw

The Timberwoods - A Community Building Experience

Our workshop will centre on our learning journey at Maple High School as it relates to the development of our outdoor classroom. Our purposes include: demonstrating how a process might engage various student and community groups; highlighting a practical example of experiential and authentic learning experiences; and showcasing how our experience integrates Board priority areas including modern learning, mathematics, mental health, indigenous education and equity with a focus on leadership. Participants will benefit from learning about our experiences with: Relationships and Engagement - building community by creating and maintaining an outdoor space; promoting student leadership and aligning to our Board's vision: "to be a leader in public education by empowering all students to become engaged and caring citizens of the world;" and fostering collaboration Health and Mental Well-being - impact of the experience of designing and using an outdoor space; promotion of both quiet, individual learning and collaborative group work; a natural learning environment that has helped to alleviate stress; promotion of environmental awareness through education in the arts, social studies, science, mathematics, and technology Relevance and Mattering - ownership and a sense of belonging and mattering; individual and collective efforts resulting in a valuable outdoor leaning space for community members; furniture in the space was built by students; the artworks surrounding the space were created by students; the plants in the space were selected and tended to by our students; and the name of the space along with the slogan were coined by our students.

John Sebastiano, Principal, York Region District School Board Ann Jakopin-Vlahovic, Teacher, York Region District School Board
Repeated

Exploring the Inquiry Framework in Professional Learning Collaboratives with an Indigenous Perspective

In this session, we will explore how to apply YRDSB's Inquiry Framework within Professional Learning Collaboratives to integrate an Indigenous Perspective. We will reflect on Lakeside Public School's two-year journey with this knowledge building and culturally responsive process. We will examine how staff, students and families learned to together to better understand how to integrate an Indigenous worldview into their learning journey around Water into the curriculum in Year One, and Math on the Land in Year Two. You will actively participate in YRDSB's Inquiry Framework to integrate culturally responsive pedagogy and Indigenous Perspectives into your own Professional Learning Collaboratives.

Jennifer Baron, Teacher, York Region District School Board Towana Brooks, Education Consultant, York Region District School Board
Repeated

Equity and Innovation in Education through Human Centred Design

Everyone is talking about equity, but what does infusing equitable practices look like in the classroom? How might we teach students to be empathetic, critical thinkers who are creative, optimistic and resourceful in the face of an ever changing world? A world that calls them to take actionable steps in the face of injustice? In this session, participants will learn to use human centered design, or design thinking, for engaging students in project-based learning, empowering them to take action in their local, national and global communities. Participants in this action-oriented workshop will participate in a hands-on session reflecting on the students in their classrooms and how to deeply connect their needs with best practices in project-based learning while honouring the individual.

Rachel Franks, Education Lead, Future Design School Leslie McBeth, Director of Professional Development, Future Design School
Repeated

Listen Up! Student voice and your school

Student voice is a powerful source of insight and understanding into the lives of our learners. Students will be sharing their thoughts and wisdom in a series of slam poems and TED Style talks.

Will Gourley, Teacher, York Region District School Board Zack Teitel, Teacher, York Region District School Board
Repeated

Let's Break Out of the Gender Box – Learning to Be an Ally to Gender Diverse Students

Being able to learn in environments that are affirming and supportive is critical to the success and well-being of gender diverse students. This workshop will empower educators to become effective allies by deepening their understanding of gender diversity and by learning to develop a gender inclusive mindset.

Kevin Bray, Consultant - Gender and Sexual Diversity **Repeated**

The Playground

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The Backyard

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Traditional Teaching Space Sessions

Brian Charles – A member of the Chippewas of Georgina Island, Brian will be discussing the history of the original and early treaties of this territory through wampum belts. Brian's knowledge of the stories and creation of wampum belts in this area and others connects to the current relations that exist between First Nations themselves as well as the later arrival of European nations.

Alan Corbierre – Alan is an Anishinaabe from M'Chigeeng First Nation on Manitoulin Island. A fluent speaker of Anishinaabemowin, Alan will be speaking about the Anishinaabe names on the land of Ontario and their meanings.

George Couchie – George is a member of Nipissing First Nation and Cultural Teacher. In his session he will guide learners through a learning circle to will explore Indigenous ways of knowing, culture, histories and perspectives.

Isaac Crosby – Isaac is Anishinaabe and the lead gardener at Evergreen brickworks. He holds a wealth of traditional knowledge about planting and growing food learned from his grandfather and also his travels and experiences. Isaac will be talking about the methods he uses for growing food at Evergreen Brickworks and how they connect to traditional knowledge of First Nations.

Meghan Young – Meghan is Life Promotion Director with Feather Carriers at the Barrie Area Native Advisory Circle. She will be speaking about the ideas behind life promotion as a next step in helping people who are struggling with suicide ideation through the development of purpose in life and recognizing our gifts as people.

Microsoft – Reaching Every Learner: Tools to Empower your Students

We must recognize the global call for digital tools that adapt to the individual's needs, so that every student of every ability can learn and grow every day. Whether it's a student controlling a screen with their eyes, or creating a document with their voice, there's an inclusive form of learning possible for every student. This session will speak to different technology tools accessible to YRDSB educators to empower all learners. Educators will be able to experience technology that empowers students with mobility, hearing, vision, learning and language differences.

Wednesday Afternoon Workshops

Digging Deeper with Rene Mandhane & Maurice Switzer

Culture is Medicine

Since the release of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, school systems across Canada have been grappling with how best to embed Indigenous perspectives into all grade levels and aspects of schooling. However, schools are progressing at varying paces along their journey – while many educators are at the how-to stage and fearful of committing cultural appropriation in their teaching, numerous more are still asking “Where do I begin?” Based on insights from an independent report by the EdCan Network, this session will explore how the Academy of Indigenous Studies – a full-credit high school study track offering courses in Indigenous history, literature, leadership, culture, art, and Okanagan language – has fostered strong community relationships and leveraged existing provincial and school district policies to raise Indigenous graduation rates from 30% to nearly 100% over a ten-year period and beyond.

Kyla Winacott, Department Head, Mount Boucherie Secondary School
André Rebeiz, Research Manager, EdCan Network (Canadian Education Association) **Repeated**

Black Students Success & Excellence: Addressing Anti-Black Racism

This interactive session explores how we can utilize our sphere of influence for the success and well-being of Black students in Ontario schools. It is important to understand the historical context of Black students’ schooling experiences. This workshop aims to review Anti-Black Racism within the Ontario educational context and analyze current research related to school engagement and academic achievement for Black students. Through case studies, this session will explore implications for practice while providing practical strategies in addressing educational challenges that derive from engaging in this intentional work.

Karen Murray, Principal, Toronto District School Board **Repeated**

Ontario’s slow but steady growth in understanding and action on Indigenous Education

Since 2014, when we have been tracking Indigenous education opportunities in Ontario schools, principals have reported numerous changes to ensure Indigenous knowledge, experiences and perspectives are taught and acknowledged in their school environments. Changes are necessary to both ensure all students graduate with knowledge and experiences to support reconciliation, and to ensure that Indigenous students are achieving and graduating at the same rate as non-Indigenous students. This session explores where Ontario has made significant progress and where we have a continued need for resources and development.

Eloise Tan, Research Program Director, People for Education
Christine Schandl, Research Manager, People for Education

An Inclusive Approach to Family Engagement

In this interactive session, participants will learn about the difference between ‘parent involvement’ and ‘parent engagement’ to explore the relationship between school-family and school-community relationships. Using an antioppression framework, they will critically examine how power operates in existing models of parent and community engagement that asks us to consider: In whose interest, who benefits and who is marginalized through these structures? Participants will learn about an alternative model of family and community engagement (Gathering) that uses an inclusive design approach to engage families and communities in the decision making process, and make direct links to actions in the Indigenous Education and Equity strategy. Though this session, participants will begin to question and reframe the relationship between school-families and school-community as assets and true partners in education.

Sara Leung, Teacher Facilitator, York Region District School Board
Scott Milne, Manager, York Region District School Board **Repeated**

Our Journey to Learn and Teach Land Acknowledgments and Reconciliation

In order to support our student’s learning around Land Acknowledgements and Reconciliation we first recognized our need to build our own knowledge and capacity. In our session we will share our learning journey from beginning to present. We will share how we engaged families, guardians and community members to continue to build our knowledge and capacity, learning, teaching and assessment practices. We will share how our partnerships and resources helped to disrupt the way our students and staff understand First Nations, Metis, Inuit communities and their contributions to Canada. By sharing our connections we hope to build a greater network for collaboration. Our goal is to inspire participants to continue their own journey towards reconciliation.

Angela Veinot-Halverson, Teacher, York Region District School Board
Ryan Murtha, Teacher, York Region District School Board

Embedding Inuit Perspectives into Gr.10 History

Teachers from around the region were invited to participate in a series of collaborative workshops to embed Inuit perspectives into the grade ten History course. Teachers met initially to build knowledge of Inuit history and then met several times to create different lesson plans to span the grade ten History curriculum. A group of those teachers, will share what this group, led by Andrew McConnell and Dana Wallace from Curriculum services, has developed.

Natalie Tsui, Teacher, York Region District School Board
Sara Faulkner, Teacher, York Region District School Board **Repeated**

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How to Dive into Truth Towards Reconciliation - Alexander Mackenzie H.S.

This workshop will help all educators, in any subject, in all divisions, design a research framework for Indigenous studies that can promote deep learning in a kinesthetic way. The multi-step process includes: a) creating research questions, b) identifying themes, c) building movement phrases from these themes. The research aims to connect to the student on a physical/emotional/intellectual level. Also included is an art/music and drama extension for educators that are more comfortable in other art forms.

Thursday Morning Workshops

Digging Deeper on White Privilege

This workshop features panelists Pamala Agawa, Kike Ojo-Thompson, Dr. Debbie Donsky and Paul C. Gorski. Panelists will answer questions in this Q&A session on white privilege.

Kinoomaagewin

Reflecting on the urgent need to preserve Anishinaabemowin in the community, we embarked on the journey of using land-based learning to meet curriculum expectations. We are exploring the impact of decolonizing education on our students and teachers. Participants will be introduced to some of the lessons we used and our goals, learning outcomes, and reflections. We will invite participants to look at objects we have provided and ways to embrace kinoomaagewin – land based teaching.

Cathy Harley, SERT, Wikwemikong Board of Education Ann Assiniwe, Teacher, Wikwemikong Board of Education **Repeated**

Inclusion By Design P2

Innovation Design (ID) is founded on the principals of equitable practice and inclusion. ID is user-centred and places the voice and needs of the learner as the core of this iterative learning model. Indigeneity centers voice and honors the lived realities that learners bring to practice. ID is modelled on such beliefs. In follow up to last year's introductory session to Innovation Design for Inclusion this session allows participants to explore each phase of the design process to examine and understand how to apply each phase of equitable design thinking to address systemic problems in education.

Kimberley Tavares, Education Officer, Ministry of Education Lisa Cole, Education Officer, Ministry of Education **Repeated**

Responding to Hate: the 'pocket guide' as a tool to create safe and inclusive school environments

This session provides education on the hate that seeds the racism experienced by Indigenous and racialized students, and addresses the responsibility of educators and school leaders to ensure safe and inclusive learning and school environments for Indigenous and racialized students.

Donna Ford, Principal, York Region District School Board **Repeated**

Changing Perceptions: Using Art For Positive Change to Reclaim Our Culture and Spirit

Art can be a powerful tool in its ability to inspire, touch and motivate its viewers. Visual artist KC Adams reflects on how in the past, art was a spiritual and communication practice and how today artists use it to be subversive, liberating and empowering. She presents her Perception Photo Series and the art of Indigenous artists who are making positive impacts towards reconciliation. Adams offers educators advice on how to bring Indigenous content into the classroom through her new publication Perception Photo Series.

KC Adams, Artist/Educator, Brandon University

Creating Equal Opportunities by Acknowledging Differences for Students with DLD

We will provide detailed information on Developmental Language Disorder, let attendees experience DLD in a workshop, and we will explain in what way support is given to students (3-25y) with DLD in Dutch schools. DLD is often misdiagnosed; students are overlooked in the classroom. Because of their language disorder, students have difficulty communicating with peers and teachers. This can lead to socio-emotional problems and unnecessary low school results. VierTaal provides specialist schooling for these students but also supports many of them in their mainstream school setting. We will highlight the advantages of both options. Working closely together with parents, schools and other specialists, we are able to provide the students with skills to achieve their full (learning) potential. We give individual support to the students and we help them in the classroom setting. We also coach and support the classroom teachers and the school teams.

Mineke von der Thüsen, Teacher, VierTaal Foundation Audrey Franssen, Clinical Linguist, VierTaal Foundation **Repeated**

Addressing Inequities Among Staff to Support Staff Well-Being

This session will include a brief overview of the Staff Mental Health Strategy with a deeper dive as to how inequities need to be recognized and addressed among all staff groups in order to support the psychological health and safety of all employees. We will share and discuss some strategies about how we can work together to address issues like classism, discrimination, harassment, and bullying to promote staff health equity.

Carolyn Tong, Wellness Advisor, York Region District School Board Janet Hicks, Manager, York Region District School Board **Repeated**

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Traditional Teaching Space Sessions

Dan Shaule – Dan is a member of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation, and a “professional historian”. Working as an advisor for an Indigenous law firm, he is an expert in the treaties that Canada has signed with many of the First Nations in this territory. He will be discussing the Indigenous perspectives of the treaties upon which the country is founded.

Dianne Hill and Jordan Miller – Dianne and Jordan are Haudenosaunee from Six Nations. They will be presenting on the traditional use of tobacco from the Haudenosaunee perspective and provide a new perspective for learning and teaching from an Indigenous approach to education.

George Couchie – George is a member of Nipissing First Nation and Cultural Teacher. In his session he will guide learners through a learning circle to explore Indigenous ways of knowing, culture, histories and perspectives.

David Osawabine – David is Debajehmujig's Odawa Midewin Cultural Educator. He began intensive training with Eddie King in 2001, continuing in his mentorship until 2016. David's specialty at Debajehmujig is sharing the Odawa Foundation Teachings with learners of all ages and backgrounds.

Meeka Uniuqsaraq – Meeka hails from Iqaluit, Nunavut. She was raised in the Arctic and is a survivor of Residential School. Meeka will be speaking about Inuit perspectives and aspirations.

Avoiding Common Equity Detours, Embracing Crucial Equity Principles

In this workshop we will discuss common equity detours: the sorts of things individuals and schools do in the name of equity that slow the progress of equity. We will discuss the basic principles of equity literacy, a framework designed to help us focus centrally and intently on identifying and eliminating oppressive practices in classrooms and schools.

Thursday Afternoon Workshop

Digging Deeper with Dr. Niigaan Sinclair

Puppet & iPad: Measuring Early Literacy with Tech

Oral language lays the foundation for lifelong learning, but how can we assess early literacy skills without the bias of language and cultural barriers? Antle the Moose Puppet shows us how an iPad and real-time data have helped Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in Nova Scotia capture multiple perspectives of early literacy, while promoting English and Indigenous language learning in the home, school, and community. Presenters will provide a live demonstration of this oral language program that was developed in partnership between Sprig Learning and Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey in Nova Scotia. In 2019, the program will be available in schools across the country as it has been adapted to support more than 10 Indigenous languages.

Blaire Gould, Director of Instructional Programming, Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey Jarrett Laughlin, CEO, Sprig Learning **Repeated**

Rock the Number Talk in the Student Support Centre

Through collaborative inquiry, a team of Special Education Resource Teachers and a Performance Plus Teacher examined the impact of Number Talks in the Student Support Centres at Discovery Public School during the 2018-2019 school year. Join us as we describe our journey of discovery and the learning and surprises we encountered along the way. Tips for accommodations, modifications, inclusion, and communication will be shared. We will discuss how the Number Talks eliminated barriers to student learning. Participants will learn about: -What Number Talks are and why they are beneficial -How they can be implemented -Accommodations and modifications for students with special education needs

Elli Weisdorf, Teacher, York Region District School Board Jaimie Kochberg-Ziv, Teacher, York Region District School Board **Repeated**

Truth before Reconciliation

Educators will be taken through a process to support the implementation of the Truth & Reconciliation Calls to Action into classroom practice. We will share best practices to leverage Indigenous voices, resources, building relationships and what we have learned through our roles as First Nations, Metis and Inuit Education leads. Participants will learn about: -Developing confidence in those who don't know where to begin the learning -Sharing what we have learned through our own journey -Best practices -Example of how to elevate Indigenous voice

Colinda Clyne, Curriculum Lead, Upper Grand District School Board **Repeated**

A Teacher and An Ally

The goal of this session is to support participants in learning how and becoming more comfortable incorporating Indigenous content into various areas of the curriculum. We will provide participants with the opportunity to see how Indigenous content can be embedded into all subject areas rather than a themed unit. We will provide activities and lessons plans that are easy for teachers to implement and adjust to the needs of their classrooms

Julia Tsampalieros, Teacher, York Region District School Board Kelly Chatzinikolis, Teacher, York Region District School Board **Repeated**

Dismantling Toxic Masculinity in Schools

Participants will explore how to consider boys in conversations about equity, build school cultures that provide space for multiple understandings of masculinity, and dismantle toxic masculinity.

Andrew Gazaneo, Vice-Principal, York Region District School Board James Hathaway, Teacher, York Region District School Board
Repeated

#Neverstoplearning with TVO

TVO is deeply committed to supporting Ontario's public education agenda with its focus on high levels of student achievement and well-being, excellence, and equity. Our resources represent all Ontarians, and are available free of charge across the province including in First Nations Schools and Communities. Many of our resources directly address the theme of Indigenous Education, such as the Indigenous Hub on TVO.org, or the Indigenous Resources and the Learning Circle group on TeachOntario. Raven's Quest on TVOkids showcases Indigenous children from across the province talking about their lives. In this hands-on session, educators will be introduced to TVO's many free K-12 digital resources, through which considerations of indigenous learning and equity embedded. Following the introduction, participants will have the opportunity to engage in a hands-on exploration of the tools of their choice.

Urs Bill, Manager Educational Outreach, TVO Jennifer Montgomery, Education Officer, TVO

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Friday Workshops

A Conversation with Dr. Avis Glaze - Educators as Advocates for Change

Schooling remains one of the few common experiences that we all share. Educators are in a strategic position to find common ground, nurture qualities such as respect and empathy and develop the global competencies necessary for future success and global leadership. Publicly-funded education has a responsibility to educate the mind as well as the heart and to prepare students to live effectively in an increasingly diverse and interdependent world.

Public education develops high expectations for learning and achievement, nurtures responsible and engaged citizenship and prepares students to be solution finders.

In this workshop, participants will discuss issues such as trends that will shape education in the future, indicators of equitable and inclusive schools, catalysts for change, research-informed strategies to achieve outcomes, key imperatives to create the future we envision, and how to prepare students to be nation builders and global citizens.

Ignite Talks - Turning Underperforming Students into Leaders

It all started with an idea to have staff and students view my special education students as leaders rather than underperforming students. We developed a class “Big Idea” which focussed on giving back to the Fossil Hill community. By tapping into my students’ strengths within the area of technology, we taught the staff at Fossil Hill how to use Google Read/Write using the Ignite Technology Grant. We further built their leadership skills by taking on a number of school initiatives such as the Food Drive, the Terry Fox Walk, and Valentines for Veterans. This year, we are continuing our leadership work with another Ignite Technology Grant, teaching technology using our SEA equipment to our parent community. We are continuing the process of building student leadership, capacity and confidence with our underperforming students.

Lisa Jeffries, Junior SERT/SSC Teacher, York Region District School Board Will Gourley, Teacher, York Region District School Board
York Region District School Board Students

Embedding First People’s Principles of Learning and Worldviews in the Mathematics Classroom

Session will explore how western world views can be easily shifted (and are already being shifted) to embed indigenous ways of knowing/world views. Furthermore, session participants will learn about the importance of students seeing other world views embedded within their learning spaces. Shifting foci from teacher-centred, criteria ranked groupings, linear learning, and hierarchies of knowledge to foci on collaboration, relationships, and student driven learning. These concepts will be explored in the context of the mathematics classroom.

Natalie Whitehouse, Teacher, York Region District School Board

Creating Equitable Environments for Learning

Using the Learning commons and Literacy teacher partnership to meet the needs of the school community. Our model will include a sharing of our learning journey and partnership. Participants will be given suggestions and insights into how to create space and time for coplanning partnerships. Participants will then have an opportunity to ask questions, comments and insights.

Ellen Viero, Teacher Librarian, York Region District School Board Anna Barnes, Literacy Lead, York Region District School Board

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Greer Atkinson - Greer is a member of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation and is the Education Program and Project Coordinator for Ogemawahj Tribal Council. Greer will be talking about community resource books created and developed by the Williams Treaty First Nations for students of all ages that give an intimate look at six of their First Nations neighbours in the Williams Treaty area.

Microsoft – Equitable opportunities for Computational Participation with the Micro:bit

When we think about technology that allows for equitable opportunities for students to explore computational thinking and STEM at various skill levels, the Micro:Bit empowers students and educators to bring these important future-ready topics into their classroom. In this workshop participants will be given an introduction to block-based coding and the Micro:bit and experience how the Micro:Bit can sparks students' emotional awareness and encourages mindfulness to help develop their socio-emotional skills through programming the Micro:bit to become a self-regulation tool. This interdisciplinary lesson teaches socio-emotional, health, computer science, and math skills. . Hands on learning and participants will require a laptop with USB port or Bluetooth.

Microsoft – Reaching Every Learner: Tools to Empower your Students

We must recognize the global call for digital tools that adapt to the individual's needs, so that every student of every ability can learn and grow every day. Whether it's a student controlling a screen with their eyes, or creating a document with their voice, there's an inclusive form of learning possible for every student. This session will speak to different technology tools accessible to YRDSB educators to empower all learners. Educators will be able to experience technology that empowers students with mobility, hearing, vision, learning and language differences.