



# Connecting to the Land

## TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

October 24-25, 2024 | Kananaskis

*This program took place in Kananaskis, Mîni Thnî, Mîni Hrpa & Chuwapchipchiyan Kudi Bi; on land cared for by the First Nations of Treaty 7 and the Metis people of the Battle River Territory since time immemorial.*

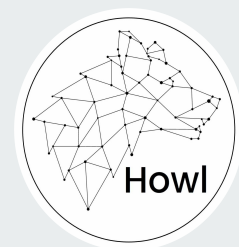
The discussions and activities throughout the program were led primarily by Indigenous community members from the Stoney Nakoda Nation - we extend our utmost gratitude to Margaret Rider, Daryl Kootenay, Brooklyn McWilliams - Fraser, Gage Beaver and Travis Rider who graciously share their time, experience and perspectives.

*In the spirit of reconciliation and with reciprocity for the traumas brought by the Indian Act and Residential Schools, Inside Education respectfully acknowledges Indigenous Peoples and their deep connections to the land. Inside Education strives to listen and learn from the Indigenous wisdom that is offered on our programs and to create a foundation of personal responsibility with learners for the careful stewardship of the environment.*

*This program was presented in partnership:*



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# Program Summary

This unique program brought the professional development expertise of **Inside Education** and the Indigenous network of **The HOWL Experience** to support teachers in bringing meaningful land-based learning experiences to their students.

25 educators from across Alberta joined together to share best practices for teaching and learning outdoors. We are proud to share the impact that this program had on these teachers, and how they will use their experience to enhance forest education.

The program was designed to offer insights and networks to enhance the integration of land-based learning and connectionst to Indigenous Ways of Knowing in classroom teaching and learning. We also highlighted how outdoor spaces can create opportunities to connect with key environmental topics including water, air and wildlife while building healthy relationships to the land and indigenous peoples.



## PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

**Thursday October 24, 2024**

### Opening Circle & Smudge with Elder Margaret Rider

Building connections and relationships to the land  
The role of Educators in meaningful land-based learning

**Friday October 25, 2024**

### Jumpingpound Demonstration Forest Field Tour - Inside Education

Connecting Curriculum to Outdoor Learning:  
Hands on Activities and Resources for the classroom

**Yamnuska Hike - HOWL Experience**  
Meaningful Land Acknowledgements and what it means to know a place

**Wise Teaching Practices** - Discussion on Indigenous Students in today's classrooms - Daryl Kootenay

**Closing Circle and Reflection**  
Taking it back to students and your classroom

*“Biggest Ah-Ha moment would probably be sitting at the Yamnuska bluffs and listening to Travis' thoughts on Land Acknowledgement and asking everyone if it is post colonial. With his explanation it really was an ah-ha moment and I am going to share this with my staff in our next meeting as we look to create our own schools land acknowledgement.” - Mike Cote, Calgary*

# Program Impact

*What was your biggest takeaway from the program?*

*“Being on the land is key. I realize now at its simplicity, its taking students outside to experience the land and hear stories about the land and those who have set foot on it”*

**Mike, Calgary**

*“I’ve always very strongly believed in the importance of connection as a pre-condition to learning, and that ideas was strengthened with this PD.”*

**Chrissie, Edmonton**

*“The amount of restoration it [being on the land] brought to me, is absolutely something I want to bring to my students.”*

**Melissa, Edmonton**

Post survey feedback demonstrated that the Connecting to the Land Program was a good networking opportunity that increased teacher confidence in using land-based learning approaches to support their lessons.

# Program Reach

- Katherine Campbell** | Wainwright High School, Wainwright
- Marta Carvalho** | Victoria School of the Arts, Edmonton
- Mike Cote** | Louise Dean School, Calgary
- Taryn Donald** | Curriculum Consultant, Elk Island Public Schools, Sherwood Park
- Chrissie Dowdell** | Argyle School, Edmonton
- Melissa Easton** | Calgary Board of Education
- Meredith Easton** | Ecole Lacombe Composite High School, Lacombe
- Brydie Fee** | Central Memorial High School, Calgary
- Brianna Jones** | Westminster School, Edmonton
- Morgan Mckinney** | University of Calgary
- Katie Nakaska** | Northern Lights School, Calgary
- Amanda Ohm** | Sturgeon Heights School, St. Albert
- Morgan Paul** | University of Lethbridge
- Mikaela Pittman** | Ecole Good Shepherd School, Okotoks
- Jessica Puurunen** | Our Lady of Snows, Canmore
- Lisa Ramlal** | James Fowler High School, Calgary
- Ellyn Schlegel** | Connect Charter School, Calgary
- Coralia Sevilla** | Nakoda Elementary School, Mîni Thnî
- Vyoma Vashi** | Northern Lights School, Calgary
- Runnie Visser** | Our Lady of Snows, Canmore
- Mark Westman** | Lloydminster Comprehensive High School, Lloydminster
- Patrick Wee** | James Fowler High School, Calgary
- Lisa Wyndham** | Ecole Lacombe Composite High School, Lacombe

**This program brought together 25 participants representing 21 different schools and 11 communities across Alberta**



# Summary

Inside Education is pleased with the outcomes of the 2024 Connecting to the Land Teacher Professional Development Program. The positive feedback received from program participants both during the program and in the post-program survey proved that the PD was a meaningful, inspirational and a valuable learning experience.

Inside Education will continue to build relationships with our Indigenous neighbours to provide quality hands-on education experiences and resources to support teachers in inspiring students to be engaged environmental stewards.



# Program Partners



Delivered in partnership



For More Information Contact:  
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