

# 2024 Wetland Education Programs



*Inside Education's work brings us to all corners of the province, as such, we acknowledge the Indigenous Peoples in the area currently known as Alberta. The relationship the Peoples of Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8 and Alberta's Métis Peoples of have with the land is founded on a deep respect for the environment. This connection forms the foundation of our personal responsibility for stewardship of the environment, a connection Inside Education strives to foster among students and teachers through our diverse programming.*

# Overview

In 2024, Inside Education was pleased to once again provide water and wetland-themed programming as a part of our suite of natural resource programs. This we offered spring and fall wetland field trips, as well as a PD opportunity for teachers that outlined skills and resources to assist them in leading their own wetland explorations. It was once again a highly sought after program across the province and we are proud to have engaged students and teachers in experiential learning at their local wetland, stormwater pond, or reservoir. We had the opportunity to visit lots of new-to-us wetlands with dedicated weeks to rural wetland programs, and were thrilled to make it through a field season with minimal disruptions from wildfires and air quality issues.

## The Participants - Spring 2024

In Spring of 2024 Inside Education once again saw high interest for wetlands field trips, especially for the Grade 5 Wetlands Ecosystems program. Additionally we provided wetland education programming at the Spruce Meadows Leg Up Foundation School Tours.

In addition to the numbers below, Inside Education would also like to acknowledge and thank the **507** teachers, school staff, and parent volunteers that dedicated the time to planning, accompanying and supporting the students in our programs

Total # of classes- IE specific	Total # of classes- special events	Total # of students	# of students- elementary	# of students- junior high	# of students- special events
123	28	3,772	2376	699	697

Students from **24** communities attended wetland programs in spring 2024:

- |                    |                       |                             |                     |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Acme</b>        | <b>Edmonton</b>       | <b>Hillview Colony</b>      | <b>Spruce Grove</b> |
| <b>Bentley</b>     | <b>Erskine Colony</b> | <b>Hinton</b>               | <b>St. Albert</b>   |
| <b>Calgary</b>     | <b>Fort McMurray</b>  | <b>Lacombe</b>              | <b>Stony Plain</b>  |
| <b>Camrose</b>     | <b>Fox Creek</b>      | <b>Lamont</b>               | <b>Strathmore</b>   |
| <b>Chestermere</b> | <b>Gibbons</b>        | <b>Okotoks</b>              |                     |
| <b>Didsbury</b>    | <b>Grande Prairie</b> | <b>Red Deer</b>             |                     |
| <b>Drumheller</b>  |                       | <b>Rocky Mountain House</b> |                     |

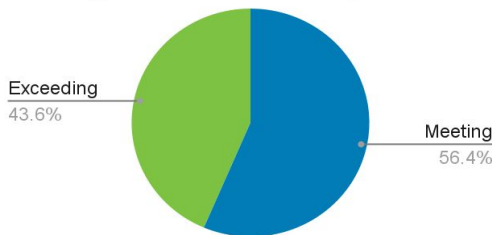
# The Participants - Fall 2024

The fall field season generally sees fewer requests, and with the change in the Alberta elementary curriculum only grade 8 and senior high programs were offered. Schools from three communities attended fall programs - **Calgary, Donnelly, and Edmonton.**

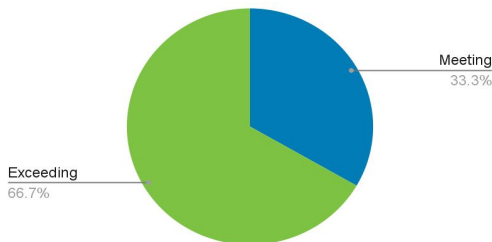
Total # of classes	Total # of students	# of students-junior high	# of students-senior high
14	414	103	311

## Program Impact and Feedback

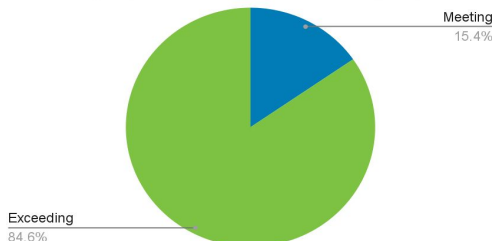
Linking to Curriculum Objectives



Exposing students to values of wetlands



Providing a professional outdoor ed program



Overall, the feedback received in the post-program survey indicates that our wetland field programs are achieving our organizational goals of providing cost-effective and curriculum connected programming. Teachers value the opportunity to bring their students outside and according to the survey, consider the wetland programs that Inside Education offer to be immersive, professional, well-organized, and connect extremely well to the curriculum. By using ponds and water bodies that are close to the school whenever possible, we inspire a feeling of connection to the community and the environment directly surrounding their school.

**“The kids had a great time and would have loved more time exploring the pond samples. The [invasive species] game was great and helped illustrate the impact a species can have on an ecosystem.”**

**-Kristyn McGregor, Teacher, Win Ferguson Community School**

# Walk in the Wetlands Teacher PD

In addition to our wetlands field trip programs, two one-day PD programs were offered to help support teachers who are interested in leading their own local wetland field trips.

The first PD was held in Edmonton on April 18th, and attended by **16** teachers from Edmonton, Edson, Goose Lake, Fort Saskatchewan, and Stony Plain.

The second was held in Calgary on April 23rd, and attended by **19** teachers from Calgary and Chestermere. At this program we welcomed guest speaker Renee Lazor, a member of the Living Lakes Canada team, to talk about their National Lake Blitz program.

Each program featured activities such as invertebrate dipping, water quality testing, and safety considerations such as what to look for in a good field site. After the program, teachers received a digital folder with a variety of resources that were discussed and used during the program to be able to use in their own excursions.

By having the tools to bring their students on a field trip, teachers feel more confident in connecting wetland education with their respective curriculums, recognizing some common wetland invertebrates, and the adaptations of wetland plants and animals.



# Summary and Futures

Inside Education is extremely pleased by the uptake and feedback we have received for all of our 2024 wetland programming. Looking forward, we hope to connect water and wetland content with the Earth systems units in grade 4 and 5 in the new curriculum and continue to provide classroom presentations, teacher professional development events, and environmental innovation days to support student and teacher wetland education.

No matter the format, water and wetland education remains a popular topic area in Inside Education’s suite of programming, and we look forward to continuing to teach and inspire the next generation of Alberta’s wetland stewards!

**Inside Education would like to extend our gratitude to our generous funders who make our programs possible!**



**Contact**  
 For More Information Contact:  
**Inside Education Society of Alberta**  
[www.INSIDEeducation.ca](http://www.INSIDEeducation.ca)

**Natalie Graveline**, Program Manager - Edmonton | [ngraveline@insideeducation.ca](mailto:ngraveline@insideeducation.ca)  
**Jayme Nelson**, Program Manager - Calgary | [jnelson@insideeducation.ca](mailto:jnelson@insideeducation.ca)

**“The program was fantastic. Linked perfectly to the program of studies and gave our students the opportunity to be out in nature and think about how nature is impacted by many different factors.”**

**-Magda Cheung, Archbishop O’Leary High School**

