



ISSUE INQUIRY

HOW CAN TEACHERS BEST SUPPORT INDIGENOUS STUDENTS IN RESERVE SCHOOLS?

By Abigail Martin

Related Questions

WHAT BARRIERS DO INDIGENOUS STUDENTS FACE?

Legacy of Residential schools

Federal Funding

IS INTEGRATION AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE?

Systemic Change

Teacher Change

HOW CAN WE TEACH EFFECTIVELY ON-RESERVE?

Opportunities of integration vs Treaty rights

Is integration assimilation?

What about inclusion?



WORDS TO PONDER

WHILE INDIGENOUS CHILDREN WERE
BEING MISTREATED IN RESIDENTIAL
SCHOOLS AND BEING TOLD THAT
THEY WERE HEATHENS, SAVAGES,
AND PEGANS AND INFERIOR PEOPLE-
THAT SAME MESSAGE WAS BEING
DELIVERED IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

JUSTICE MURRAY
SINCLAIR





WORDS TO PONDER

ONE OF THE MOST DEVASTATING
IMPACTS OF THE RESIDENTIAL
SCHOOL SYSTEM WAS THAT IT GAVE
MOST STUDENTS A POOR
EDUCATION. FOR MANY, THAT LED
TO CHRONIC UNEMPLOYMENT OR
UNDEREMPLOYMENT, POVERTY,
POOR HOUSING, SUBSTANCE ABUSE,
FAMILY VIOLENCE, AND ILL HEALTH.



TRUTH AND
RECONCILIATION
COMMISSION



74%

RESERVE SCHOOLS
THAT NEED
REPAIRS

18.3%

DECLINE IN
STUDENTS FUNDED
FOR POST-
SECONDARY

72%

RESERVE SCHOOLS
HAVE HEALTH
AND SAFETY
CONCERNS

32%

RESERVE SCHOOLS
LACK CLEAN
DRINKING WATER

There are obviously a lot of problems...

SO WHY ATTEND RESERVE SCHOOL?

Reserve schools are important because they provide a space for Indigenous control of Indigenous education. Students might also have to travel far distances to attend public schools. Some people do believe that reserve schools put students at a disadvantage and that they should be immersed into the mainstream.





INDIGENOUS CONTROL OF EDUCATION

WHY CREATE INDIGENOUS SCHOOL BOARDS?

Since the end of residential schools, Indigenous nations have been pushing for jurisdiction over on-reserve schools. One reason for this is that since Indigenous people bear a disproportionate portion of illness, revitalization of culture and language is a deterrent of improving health outcomes.

FIRST NATIONS STUDENTS ATTENDING OFF-RESERVE PROVINCIAL SCHOOLS

31%

IN 2012

These students have to travel away from their community which is a significant barrier to high school completion for First Nations students living on reserve. The other option is to attend on-reserve schools that are in desperate need of funding and have lower achievement outcomes.

ON-RESERVE SCHOOLS PROVIDE

91%

88%

CULTURAL
ACTIVITIES

LANGUAGE
PROGRAMMING

On-reserve schools benefit Indigenous students by offering immersion and other language programs, and cultural activities and programming. Indigenous culture and language in education is associated with developmental and academic outcomes for Indigenous students.

RESERVE SCHOOL FUNDING AND TEACHER SUPPORT

Reserve schools are in need of equitable funding as the services they provide to Indigenous students are so valuable.

INCLUSION IN PROVINCIAL SCHOOLS

Some believe that instead of reserve funding, Indigenous students should move into mainstream schooling and the focus should be on inclusion.



INTEGRATION

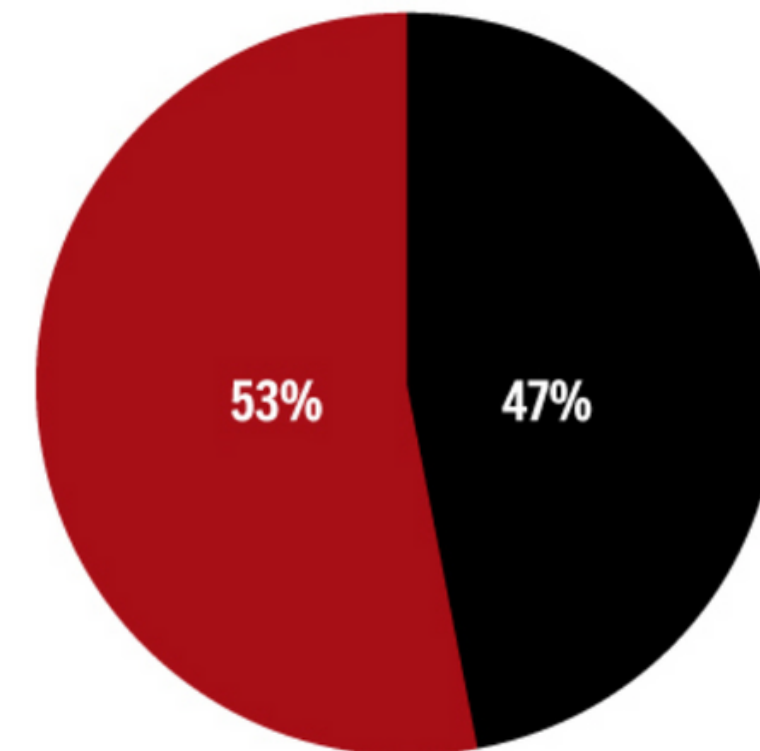
WHAT DO CANADIANS BELIEVE?

53% of Canadians believe that Indigenous people should 'integrate' to improve their health, education, and access to resources.

THE CANADIAN PUBLIC SAID THAT:

Overall, Indigenous Canadians would be better off:

-  Integrating more into broader Canadian society, even if that means losing more of their own culture and traditions
-  Strengthening their own culture and traditions, even if that keeps them apart from the rest of Canada





IS INTEGRATION ASSIMILATION?

INTEGRATION

53% of Canadians believe that Indigenous people should 'integrate' into broader society EVEN IF they lose more of their culture.

THIS IS NOT INCLUSION

Integration at the risk of losing your own culture is assimilation. Leaving little to no space in 'broader society' to maintain and strengthen their own culture.

THE MAJORITY OF CANADIANS
BELIEVE IN ASSIMILATION MORE
THAN SEPERATION

ARE THERE BENEFITS TO 'INTEGRATION'?

IS THERE SPACE FOR INCLUSION?

URBAN INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Have increased educational opportunities

Can participate in inclusive classrooms working towards reconciliation
Allow for positive interactions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples

Still face systemic barriers, discrimination, racism, and are disadvantaged in the education system

ON-RESERVE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Have a treaty right to reserve land
Have a treaty right to on-reserve education

Are embedded in their Indigenous community

Have greater access to language programs

Face higher chances of limited success in education

Have lower health than urban populations



INCLUSION

BENEFITS

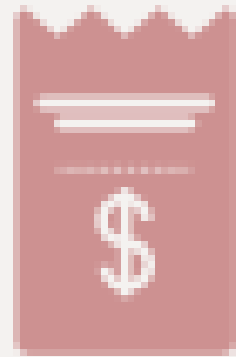
Inclusion is obviously an option for many urban schools serving Indigenous populations. As well as, TQS 5 incorporating Indigenous perspectives into mainstream education

AGONISTIC DIALOGUE

Agonistic dialogue where relationships are formed and then differing perspectives are provided as equally valid to be learnt from is one way to promote inclusion and diversity. In this way students are not asked to make a judgement as to which is better or true, but to accept both and to live without a perfect resolution.

TRC CALLS TO ACTION

SYSTEMIC CHANGES AT A FEDERAL LEVEL



Equitable Funding between Provincial
and Reserve Schools



Official Reports on Funding



Indigenous Consultation to Create
Culturally Appropriate Curriculum

HOW CAN TEACHERS SUPPORT INDIGENOUS STUDENTS?

ALONGSIDE INTEGRATION AND
INCLUSION IN MAIN-STREAM SCHOOLS

What can teachers do when teaching a class of Indigenous students or on-reserve?





HOW CAN EDUCATORS TEACH ON-RESERVE?

KNOWLEDGE

Understanding the language, culture, and history as well as the legacy of residential schools. Knowing how to connect with elders. Trying to learn the language of the nation.

COMPASSION

Indigenous communities have highlights one of the most important things is having compassionate and understanding teachers. Also being sensitive to intergenerational trauma

QUALIFICATIONS

Teachers that are qualified to teach their subject area and engage in lifelong training. Meeting the outcomes of the provincial board.

ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF KNOWING

HOW CAN TEACHERS SUPPORT THIS?

The first step is understanding the community, history, and culture to understand how your students learn.

Teaching for mastery- increased formative feedback

Oral storytelling as a way of delivering curriculum and facilitating learning

Assessment- time to process, question, and have multiple attempts (assessment as and of learning)





CONCLUSION


INTEGRATION, INCLUSION, OR ON-RESERVE?

Indigenous people have treaty rights to live on-reserve, as well as treaty rights to education. Indigenous people in signing treaties, never gave up their inherent right to educate their own children which residential schools violated.

Today, it is up to Indigenous people to choose whether their children attend on-reserve or provincial schools.

At a systemic level the calls to action are something that as teachers we should be advocates of.

Reserve schools can work in consultation with Indigenous communities, offer cultural and language programming, and transition programs for secondary or post secondary school. In the mean time, teachers on-reserve must widen their understanding, approach the context with compassion, and alter teaching and assessment strategies to fit this unique context.





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