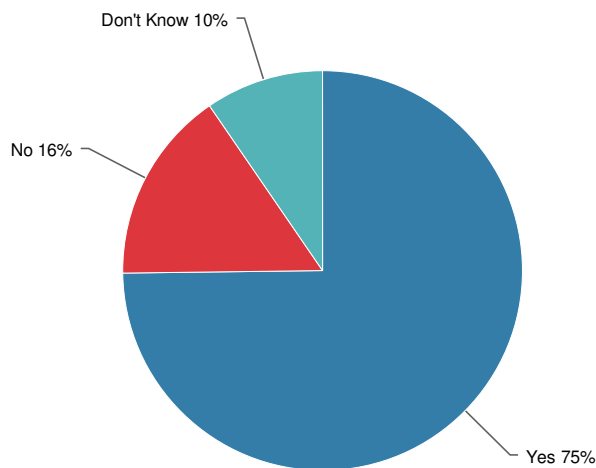




## CTF Survey on Teachers' Perspectives on Aboriginal Education in Public Schools in Canada Summary Report

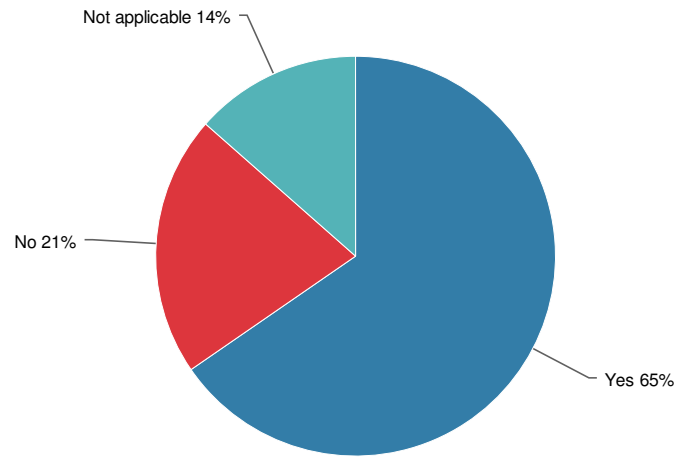
### Status of Aboriginal Education in your School/Curriculum

Are you aware of any issues, content or perspectives being taught at your school that are related to Aboriginal people?



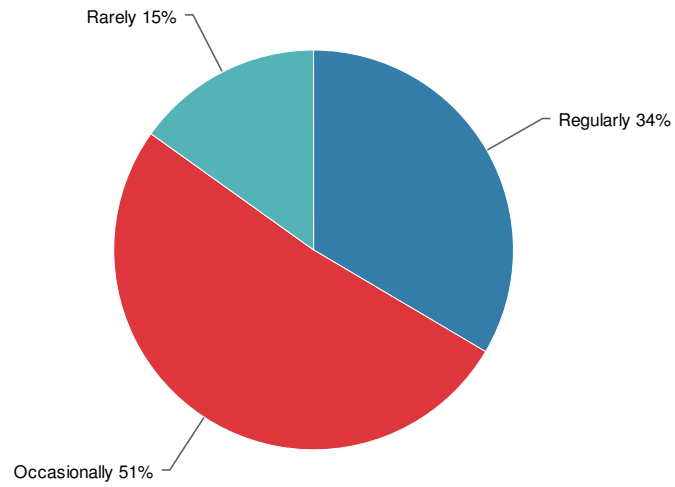
	Percent		Count
Yes	75%		1,407
No	16%		294
Don't Know	10%		180
Total			1,881

In your current teaching practice, do you incorporate any issues, content or perspectives that are related to Aboriginal people?



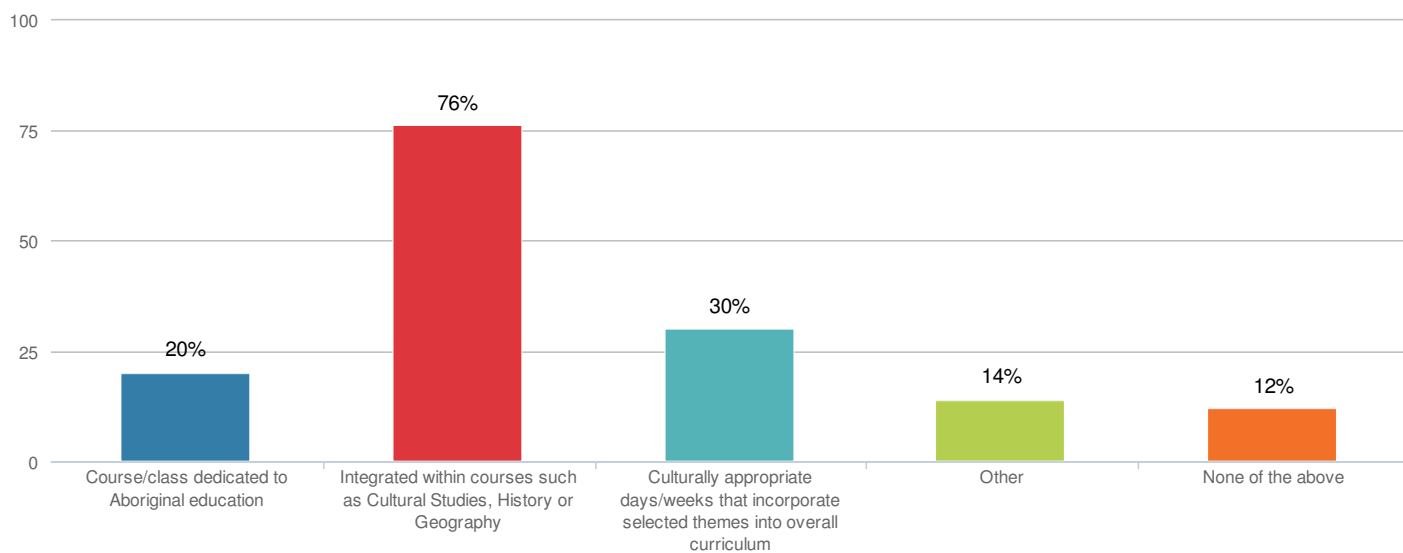
	Percent		Count
Yes	65%		1,230
No	21%		397
Not applicable	14%		254
Total			1,881

## How frequently do you teach them?



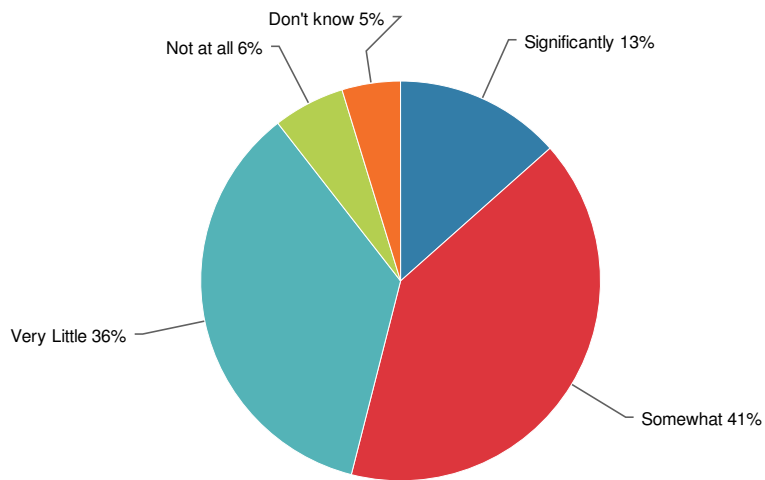
	Percent		Count
Regularly	34%		412
Occasionally	51%		632
Rarely	15%		186
		Total	1,230

Which of the following approaches are currently being used to introduce Aboriginal education into the curriculum in your school? (check all that apply)



	Percent		Count
Course/class dedicated to Aboriginal education	20%		381
Integrated within courses such as Cultural Studies, History or Geography	76%		1,422
Culturally appropriate days/weeks that incorporate selected themes into overall curriculum	30%		572
Other	14%		257
None of the above	12%		221
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1,881</b>

Indicate the extent to which you feel Aboriginal culture is represented in your school curriculum.



	Percent		Count
Significantly	13%		253
Somewhat	41%		762
Very Little	36%		668
Not at all	6%		109
Don't know	5%		89
		Total	1,881

Which of the following methods are used in your school to provide or include the following aspects of Aboriginal culture and knowledge? (check all that apply)

	Aboriginal speakers	Knowledge keepers/Storytellers	Displaying Aboriginal Art	Library materials	Other	None	Responses
<b>Indigenous cultural activities</b>	720 38%	544 29%	821 44%	1,193 63%	237 13%	351 19%	1,881
<b>Indigenous languages</b>	344 18%	253 13%	265 14%	584 31%	192 10%	975 52%	1,881
<b>Indigenous education</b>	513 27%	431 23%	448 24%	925 49%	237 13%	624 33%	1,881
<b>Indigenous spirituality</b>	461 25%	425 23%	421 22%	796 42%	267 14%	599 32%	1,881
<b>Indigenous kinship/social organization</b>	349 19%	308 16%	243 13%	704 37%	267 14%	771 41%	1,881
<b>Indigenous lands</b>	336 18%	260 14%	212 11%	867 46%	294 16%	699 37%	1,881
<b>Indigenous governance structures</b>	236 13%	193 10%	116 6%	689 37%	269 14%	898 48%	1,881
<b>Indigenous economic systems</b>	173 9%	144 8%	92 5%	581 31%	231 12%	1,042 55%	1,881

## Resources Available for Aboriginal Education

Please indicate how sufficient you believe each of the following resources in your school is as it pertains to integrating Aboriginal content and perspectives into the curriculum:

	<b>Entirely sufficient</b>	<b>Barely sufficient</b>	<b>Insufficient</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Responses</b>
<b>Funding allocated to Aboriginal education</b>	337 18%	302 16%	420 22%	101 5%	721 38%	1,881
<b>Resource and reading materials and books</b>	417 22%	476 25%	511 27%	49 3%	428 23%	1,881
<b>Professional development and training</b>	338 18%	376 20%	713 38%	76 4%	378 20%	1,881
<b>Support provided by Aboriginal teachers/elders</b>	281 15%	331 18%	671 36%	134 7%	464 25%	1,881

## Knowledge of Aboriginal People

Rate your level of knowledge with respect to the history, local culture and communities, and current issues, of each of the following Aboriginal groups:

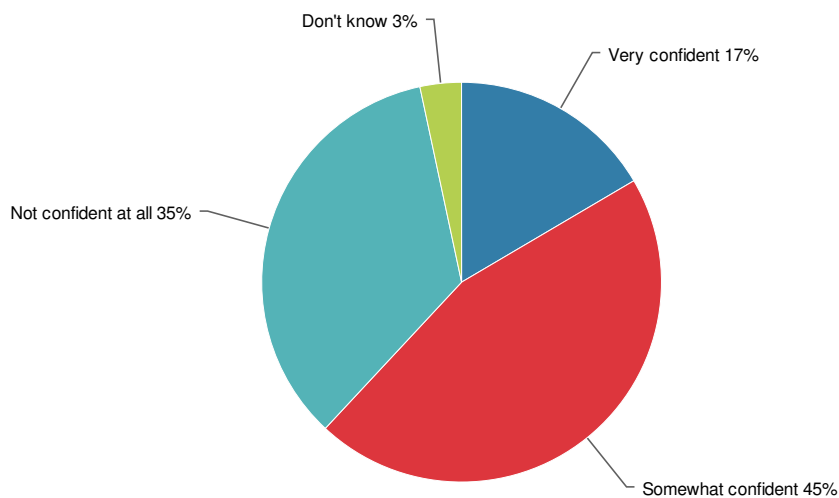
	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Limited</b>	<b>No knowledge at all</b>	<b>Responses</b>
<b>First Nations</b>	318 17%	756 40%	746 40%	61 3%	1,881
<b>Métis</b>	213 11%	632 34%	896 48%	140 7%	1,881
<b>Inuit</b>	115 6%	466 25%	1,119 59%	181 10%	1,881



Indicate the extent of your knowledge about the following issues as they pertain to Aboriginal people, and report whether you have any personal interest or work related need for more knowledge on these issues. (check all that apply)

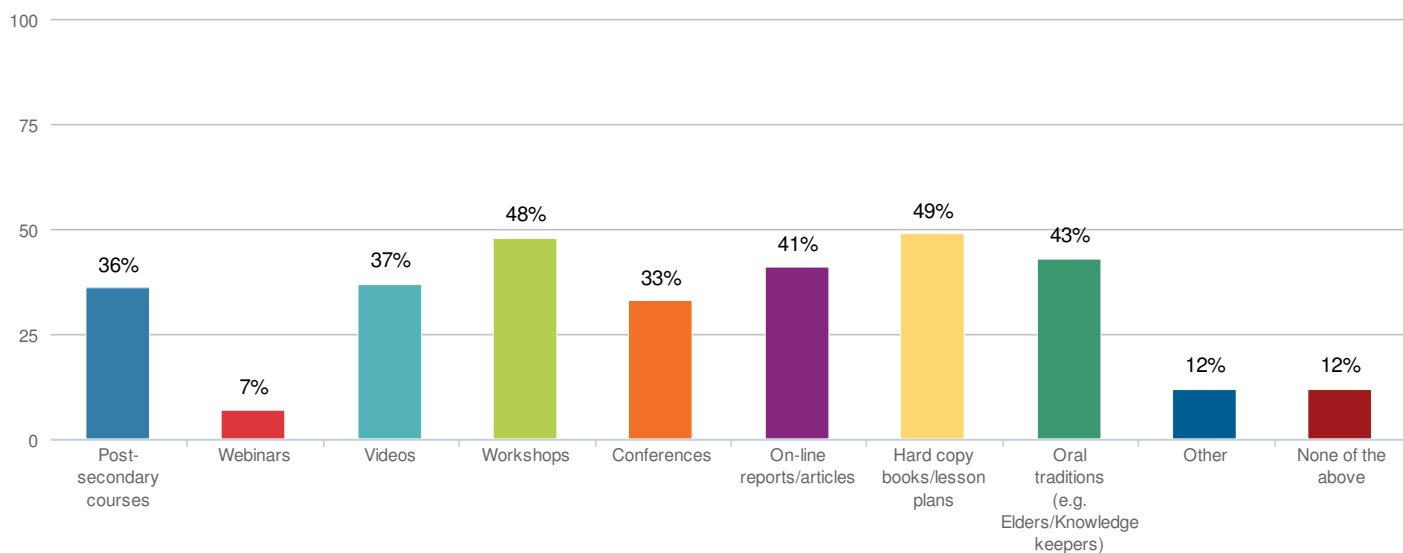
	<b>Confident in my knowledge</b>	<b>Would like more personal knowledge</b>	<b>Need more knowledge as it applies to my teaching</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>	<b>Responses</b>
<b>Treaties and land claims</b>	342 18%	862 46%	575 31%	293 16%	1,881
<b>Residential schools</b>	740 39%	606 32%	413 22%	262 14%	1,881
<b>Funding allocated to Aboriginal education resources in your school</b>	297 16%	629 33%	658 35%	407 22%	1,881
<b>Access to basic resources (health, food, housing)</b>	454 24%	745 40%	544 29%	308 16%	1,881
<b>Human rights</b>	625 33%	731 39%	509 27%	198 11%	1,881
<b>Incorporating Aboriginal content and perspectives into the curriculum</b>	459 24%	664 35%	710 38%	222 12%	1,881
<b>Instructional approaches</b>	389 21%	704 37%	708 38%	242 13%	1,881
<b>Strategies for addressing students' concerns related to challenges faced by Aboriginal Peoples</b>	349 19%	762 41%	730 39%	247 13%	1,881

To what extent do you feel confident that you would have the knowledge base to implement curriculum expectations regarding Aboriginal content if you were required to do so?



	Percent		Count
Very confident	17%		311
Somewhat confident	45%		854
Not confident at all	35%		653
Don't know	3%		63
	Total		1,881

Which of the following forms of learning or training have you used in the past to improve your knowledge of Aboriginal people? (check all that apply)



	Percent		Count
Post-secondary courses	36%		670
Webinars	7%		134
Videos	37%		697
Workshops	48%		898
Conferences	33%		629
On-line reports/articles	41%		771
Hard copy books/lesson plans	49%		916
Oral traditions (e.g. Elders/Knowledge keepers)	43%		808
Other	12%		217
None of the above	12%		222
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1,881</b>

Among the forms of learning or training that you indicated having used in the past, indicate how effective they were in improving your knowledge of Aboriginal People.

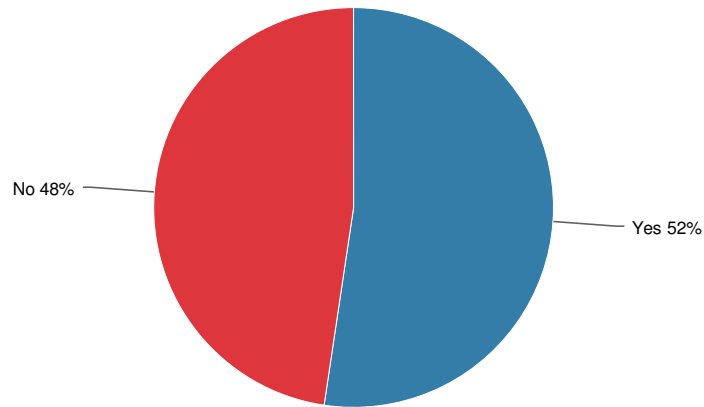
	Very effective		Somewhat effective		Not effective		Total	
Webinars	26	19%	95	71%	13	10%	134	100%
Videos	275	39%	407	58%	15	2%	697	100%
Workshops	459	51%	413	46%	26	3%	898	100%
Conferences	316	50%	289	46%	24	4%	629	100%
On-line reports/articles	242	31%	498	65%	31	4%	771	100%
Hard copy books/lesson plans	312	34%	571	62%	33	4%	916	100%
Other	164	76%	47	22%	6	3%	217	100%
Post-secondary courses	351	52%	281	42%	38	6%	670	100%
Oral traditions (e.g. Elders/Knowledge keepers)	587	73%	204	25%	17	2%	808	100%

Please indicate the extent to which each of the following have supported your knowledge of current issues pertaining to Aboriginal people.

	Significantly	Somewhat	Not at all/Not applicable	Responses
<b>Newspapers</b>	433 23%	1,081 57%	367 20%	1,881
<b>Websites</b>	460 24%	1,026 55%	395 21%	1,881
<b>Colleagues</b>	375 20%	847 45%	659 35%	1,881
<b>Personal contact (family, friends)</b>	489 26%	675 36%	717 38%	1,881
<b>Social media</b>	226 12%	846 45%	809 43%	1,881
<b>Other</b>	158 8%	262 14%	1,461 78%	1,881

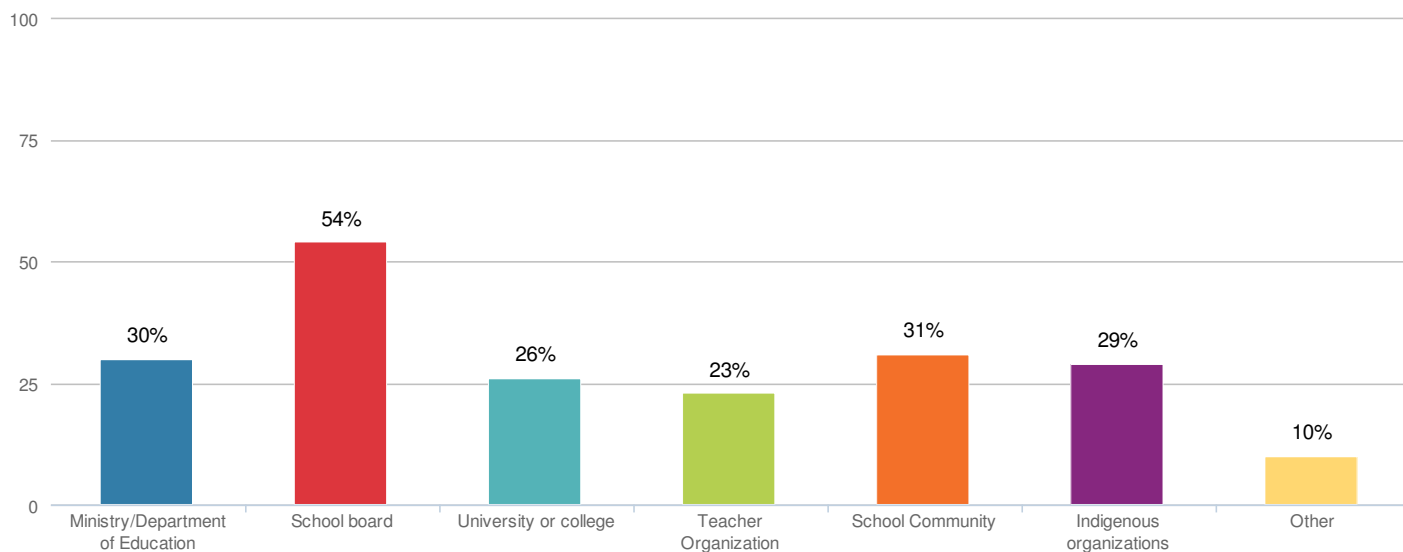
## Professional Development

Have you participated in any professional development activities to develop/enhance your knowledge and/or skills pertaining to First Nation, Métis, or Inuit history, cultural perspectives or contemporary issues?



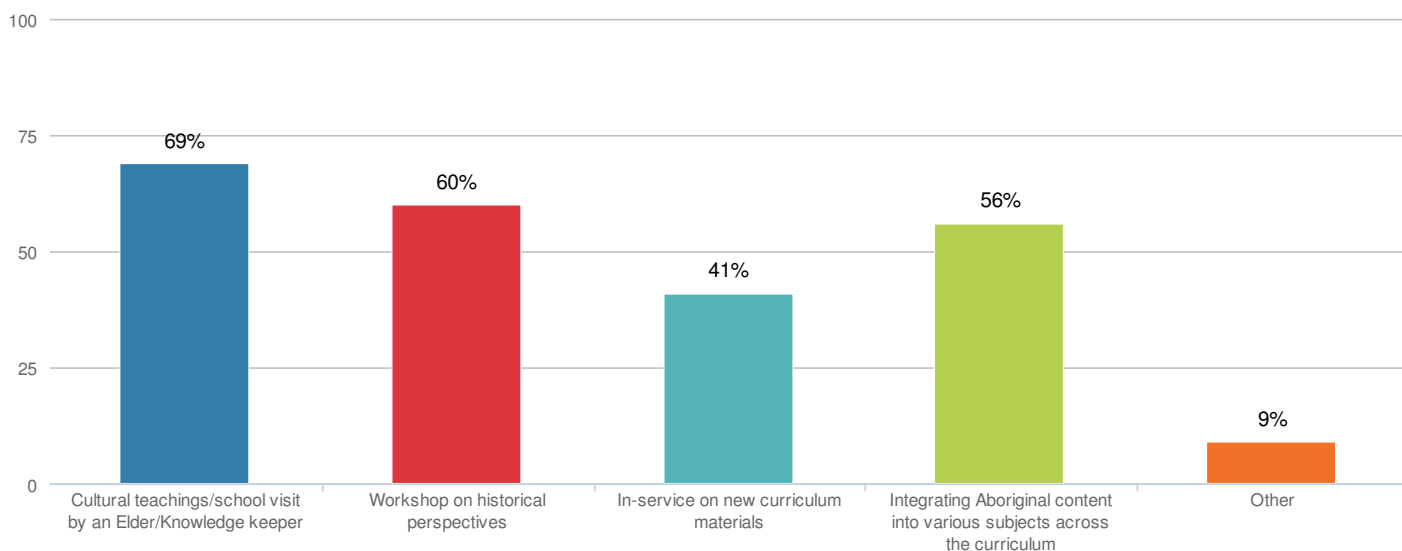
	Percent		Count
Yes	52%	<div style="display: inline-block; width: 50px; height: 15px; background-color: #1f77b4; border: 1px solid #ccc;"></div>	985
No	48%	<div style="display: inline-block; width: 50px; height: 15px; background-color: #d62728; border: 1px solid #ccc;"></div>	896
Total			1,881

Who provided the professional development you received? (check all that apply)



	Percent		Count
Ministry/Department of Education	30%		298
School board	54%		528
University or college	26%		252
Teacher Organization	23%		227
School Community	31%		304
Indigenous organizations	29%		283
Other	10%		97
		<b>Total</b>	<b>985</b>

What type(s) of professional development, related to Aboriginal people, have you participated in? (check all that apply)



	Percent		Count
Cultural teachings/school visit by an Elder/Knowledge keeper	69%		678
Workshop on historical perspectives	60%		590
In-service on new curriculum materials	41%		401
Integrating Aboriginal content into various subjects across the curriculum	56%		548
Other	9%		87
		Total	985

Please rate how satisfied you were that each type of professional development activity you indicated having participated in has met your needs.

	Very satisfied		Somewhat satisfied		Not satisfied at all		Total	
Cultural teachings/school visit by an Elder/Knowledge keeper	425	63%	219	32%	34	5%	678	100%
Workshop on historical perspectives	288	49%	281	48%	21	4%	590	100%
Integrating Aboriginal content into various subjects across the curriculum	196	36%	314	57%	38	7%	548	100%
In-service on new curriculum materials	146	36%	224	56%	31	8%	401	100%
Other	54	62%	27	31%	6	7%	87	100%

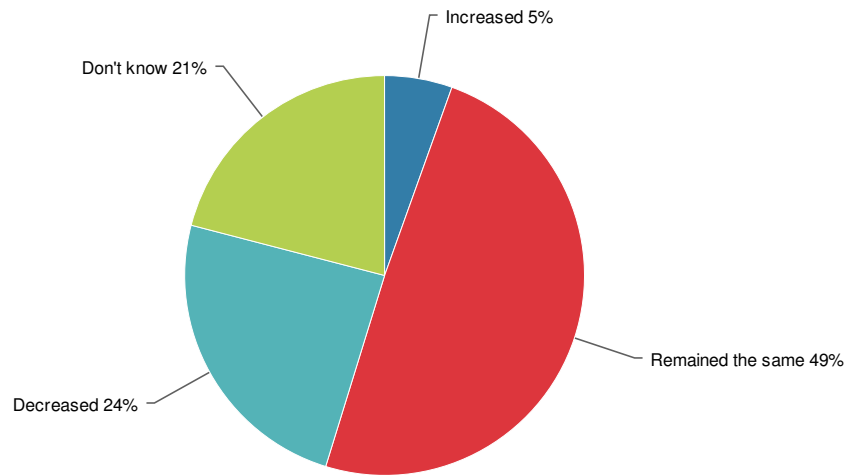
Please indicate how important it would be to you to acquire additional knowledge or skills training for each of the following issues related to Aboriginal people in Canada:

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important at all	Don't know	Responses
<b>Human rights</b>	882 47%	709 38%	169 9%	121 6%	1,881
<b>Treaties and land claims</b>	679 36%	768 41%	282 15%	152 8%	1,881
<b>Environmental stewardship</b>	786 42%	744 40%	207 11%	144 8%	1,881
<b>The legacy of residential schools</b>	739 39%	725 39%	264 14%	153 8%	1,881
<b>Incorporating Aboriginal content into the curriculum</b>	939 50%	665 35%	163 9%	114 6%	1,881
<b>Instructional approaches including age appropriate methods for teaching about Aboriginal history and other issues</b>	964 51%	623 33%	182 10%	112 6%	1,881
<b>Strategies for addressing student's concerns related to challenges faced by Aboriginal Peoples</b>	971 52%	618 33%	166 9%	126 7%	1,881



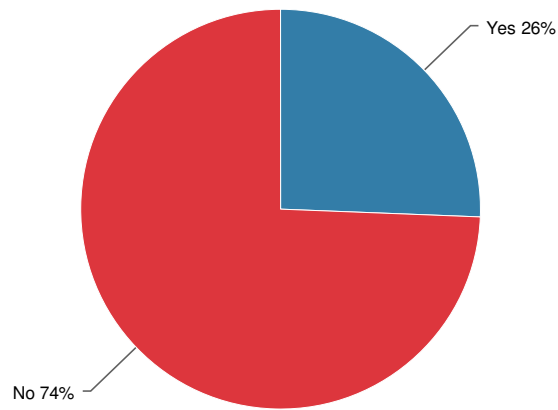
## Racism towards Aboriginal People

In general, over the last 5 years, do you believe that the level of racial prejudice in your community toward Aboriginal people has:



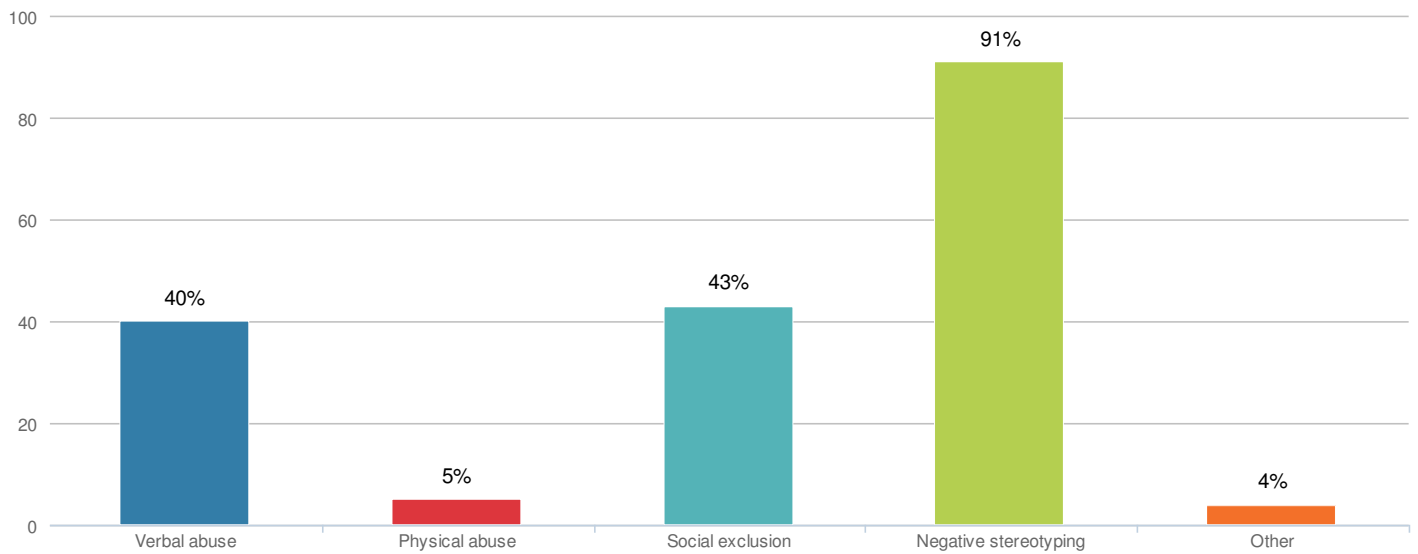
	Percent		Count
Increased	5%		103
Remained the same	49%		927
Decreased	24%		457
Don't know	21%		394
	Total		1,881

Over the last 5 years, have you ever witnessed what you consider to be an example of racism against an Aboriginal person in your class or school?



	Percent		Count
Yes	26%		482
No	74%		1,399
		Total	1,881

What form(s) of racism did you witness? (check all that apply)



	Percent		Count
Verbal abuse	40%		195
Physical abuse	5%		25
Social exclusion	43%		209
Negative stereotyping	91%		441
Other	4%		18
		<b>Total</b>	<b>482</b>

## Preparing to Teach Aboriginal Education

***Please describe what you feel you would require to adequately prepare yourself to integrate Aboriginal content and perspectives into your teaching.***

Responses to the open ended questions were limited to 30 words in an effort to encourage respondents to focus on one or two key ideas. The following sample comments from teacher respondents illustrate key themes and issues emerging from an analysis of this qualitative data.

Please note that regarding the use of direct quotes from the survey respondents (which appear in italics), minor changes may have been made to spelling and grammar for the sake of clarity. Comments remain in their original language.

### **Access to Elders/Knowledge Keepers**

Many teacher respondents expressed an interest in having access to Aboriginal Elders and knowledge keepers to provide them with first-hand knowledge of Aboriginal cultures. Elders would act as resource people in supporting teachers in the classroom, in providing professional development, in assisting in the development of curriculum and other resources, etc. Respondents also suggested more direct contact with local Aboriginal communities and increasing the number of Aboriginal teachers/educators in the school system.

*I am confident with my knowledge of history, but would like to humanize the perspective of Aboriginal peoples more by having more first-hand information from Elders or knowledge keepers.*

*Access to Elders, as there is a very low Aboriginal population where I live.*

*J'aimerais avoir de la formation donnée par des Autochtones ou encore des aînées ou aînés/gardiennes ou gardiens du savoir.*

*I would like to attend more PD sessions, taught by First Nations people.*

*Experiential education and time spent with Aboriginal leaders/teachers developing pedagogy for current topics in education would enable teachers to fully and appropriately bridge and interpret curriculum content and current issues.*

*Workshops and presentations and discussions with Elders/knowledge keepers.*

*Training about Aboriginal issues, traditions and history BY Aboriginal people.*

*More genuine contact with Elders or community members of the Aboriginal community along with workshops.*

*Inviter les Autochtones à une part plus active en salle de classe.*

*Scheduled visits every year with Aboriginal storykeepers that are knowledgeable about curriculum and elementary teaching.*

*One-on-one time with Elders and storytellers.*

*Des conférences et des ateliers avec des membres des différentes communautés des Premières Nations. Du matériel pédagogique élaboré en collaboration avec les Premières Nations.*

*Education directly from the Band/Aboriginal community on key issues.*

*Learning from and being with Aboriginal Elders. Experiencing education from an Aboriginal perspective myself.*

*Learning more about Indigenous practices and customs through Elder and knowledge keeper interactions.*

*More contact with Aboriginal Elders. More opportunities to visit art galleries, tour the residential school at Brantford Six Nations. Meet and work with more Aboriginal artists.*

*Access to Elders to act as mentors to the students and staff.*

*Curriculum created by Aboriginal educators and Elders.*

## **Teacher professional learning**

Another recurring theme was related to a lack of knowledge about Aboriginal content and perspectives and hence, a need for more professional learning in order to improve teacher knowledge and increase understanding. Respondents suggested professional development be provided on various topics and themes, both in-service and pre-service, through workshops and other formats.

*I find a lot of the PD I have attended has been geared towards “what is Aboriginal culture” rather than “this is how to teach in a culturally relevant way”.*

*Small group workshops with Elders and knowledge keepers, focusing on specific topics, with relevant readings/activities, e.g., the blanket exercise from KAIROS was excellent.*

*I would like to watch someone teach their class who is experienced at integrating Aboriginal content.*

*More PD time with experts in the area, time with other teachers who have integrated perspectives more fully into their practice.*

*Academic study on First Nations culture, history, etc. must come before it could be confidently integrated into my teaching.*

*PD sessions with some specific grade-appropriate strategies.*

*Our school board needs to put more of a focus on it and provide some board-wide PD.*

*Speaking to teachers who have experienced success in teaching Aboriginal content.*

*I think a workshop with other teachers to discuss ways in which they've integrated Aboriginal content would be a great start!*

*Une formation directement reliée avec les objectifs du curriculum.*

*I need more instruction on land claims and treaties in relation to resource development. Next steps for the Residential School issue – students are ready to move on.*

*I include Aboriginal content as part of the social studies curriculum. I would like more opportunity and instruction on Aboriginal content throughout the curriculum.*

*A deeper understanding of present day Aboriginal challenges related to the effects of residential schooling in the North.*

*J'ai besoin de l'opportunité d'avoir la formation envers les ressources autochtones disponibles.*

*I would like to hear personal stories about local people who went to residential schools.*

*Would love to learn some games that could be incorporated into Physical Education classes for cross curricular education.*

*More PD and education to support Aboriginal students. I teach in a fairly homogenous division ... with more and more Aboriginal foster children. I don't feel we are prepared.*

*A class on Aboriginal studies in university before receiving your education degree.*

*University undergraduate courses should be mandatory for all students.*

*Division-wide professional development support to infuse Indigenous knowledge into ALL the curriculum as mandated by the province.*

*Professional development opportunities related to the new curriculum outcomes related to treaty education.*

*Formation sur les enjeux dans les communautés autochtones.*

## **Resource issues**

Respondents told us they need resources that are age/grade-appropriate and curriculum-based. They also want up-to-date accurate accessible resources, resources on specific topics such as treaty rights and residential schools, resources focused on the local Aboriginal population and local issues, quality French resources, and more funding for resources.

*Training and materials to assist in teaching the curriculum to students. Which websites are relevant and accurate?*

*Up-to-date teaching units/modules on treaty rights, land claims, residential schools, etc.*

*Plus de ressources sur les Autochtones qui soient offertes en français.*

*Appropriate resources to be used in the classroom at each grade level would be great!*

*More resources related to the curriculum and written to the language level of the students.*

*Du matériel en français adapté à mon niveau scolaire en lien avec le contenu du curriculum; des personnes ressources en français qui connaissent bien les Premières Nations.*

*More age appropriate resources would be appreciated.*

*More access to literature / stories from Aboriginal authors.*

*More materials for the French immersion classroom.*

*Ressources afin de pouvoir bien enseigner la matière car les livres historiques présentent souvent un côté. Nous avons besoin de ressources que nous pouvons utiliser dans différents domaines : études sociales, maths, français.*

*More locally developed units on First Nations issues that relate to the curriculum.*

*Avoir des ressources adaptées au niveau de nos élèves.*

*Continued professional development opportunities, more and better teaching resources, easy access to Elders and other speakers, field trip opportunities that immerse our students in Aboriginal culture and language.*

*I am an English teacher and would happily consider using Aboriginal stories or writing in my class.*

*Matériel pédagogique facile à utiliser et complet (pas besoin de se procurer beaucoup de matériel supplémentaire) et budget pour des sorties ou des invités.*

## **Curriculum-related issues**

Teacher respondents expressed a need to connect Aboriginal content to curricular outcomes. They also want content relevant to their subject areas including math and science which were perceived by a number of respondents as posing particular integration challenges. In addition, respondents want information on residential schools, treaty rights/treaties and other topics; curriculum-specific resources; and lesson plans and other teaching material that reflect the local community and context.

*A consistent and clear direction of specific outcomes as they pertain to the current curriculum. The appropriate resources that should accompany these teachings.*

*A clear statement on what knowledge is expected from students and at what age. Explicit connection to curricular outcomes.*

*More locally developed units on First Nations issues that relate to the curriculum.*

*I teach math only so I'm not sure how to integrate an Aboriginal perspective.*

*Je suis enseignante en éducation physique alors cela ne fait pas partie de mon programme.*

*I teach technology courses so I am unsure if it is even possible to integrate Aboriginal content into my courses.*

*Des leçons déjà préparées et adaptées à la matière, l'année et le milieu (p. ex. petite ville du Nord). Celles-ci devraient être intégrées à une autre unité.*

*I would need to learn more of the history, etc. to be comfortable passing that information on. Science and Math are a little more difficult to make that connection.*

*Curriculum needs to incorporate many of the areas brought forth by this survey and then there needs to be the in-service and resources put in place to teach that curriculum.*

*A curriculum that explicitly infuses the Indigenous perspectives. It is not helpful to have separate documents. It minimizes the expectation. Makes it an afterthought.*

*Knowledge and training of Aboriginal curriculum and how to incorporate into the already overwhelming amount of curriculum that I am required to teach.*

*Would love to learn some games that could be incorporated into Physical Education classes for cross-curricular education.*

Several respondents stated they were currently integrating Aboriginal content and perspectives into their teaching.

*I already do this. All good teachers do.*

*I already do, daily, in each of my classes. Mostly what I believe is needed is the will to do so.*

*I already integrate Aboriginal content and perspectives into my teaching.*

*I already integrate it adequately and this group is one of many cultural groups in our school so I try to even it out amongst all groups.*

*I always integrate Aboriginal content into everything that I do as I strongly believe in it.*

*I integrate it into as many curricular areas as I can throughout the day. I'm confident after two years of various PD and university courses in my knowledge.*

*I am already doing this, but certainly could always know more, particularly from the perspective of Elders.*



*I feel that I have been very adequately prepared. I have received more PD on incorporating Aboriginal content and perspectives into my teaching than in any other pedagogical area.*

### **Time deficit/Workload issues**

Lack of time and demanding workload were cited by these respondents as challenges to properly integrating Aboriginal content and perspectives into their teaching.

*Time to familiarize myself with resources, time to identify connections to curriculum, time to plan instruction.*

*A curriculum alone is not enough. Teachers need time to read, review, plan and prepare for the curriculum. Obviously resources to support the curriculum are also necessary.*

*Time to meet with colleagues to share ideas for curriculum implementation.*

*De temps pour faire mes recherches et parler avec des personnes-ressources.*

*I would love release time to prepare lessons integrating Aboriginal perspectives into my teaching.*

*Je trouve que le curriculum est assez chargé et que d'intégrer un autre aspect est difficile compte tenu du temps que j'ai.*

*I am busy with demands of administration, parents, curriculum/common exam, etc. so I need something already researched, prepared, and corresponding to existing curriculum (already too full).*

### **Administrative support and leadership**

These respondents cited the support and leadership of school and district administrators as well as government as being important in assisting them to integrate Aboriginal content into the curriculum.

*A school climate led by administrators that supports and reinforces the importance of Aboriginal perspectives in the classroom.*

*Strong administrative leadership and initiatives supported by the Department of Education.*

*Further professional development and support from my school division are necessary for this development.*

*I would require an interest shown by the school district and provincial/federal government to take Aboriginal issues and education seriously by using non-biased curriculum and resources.*

*Continued support from the division making it a priority to increase collaboration and professional learning.*

This comment is from a school administrator:

*Je suis directrice d'école mais en tant qu'administratrice, j'aimerais que les enseignants(es) de notre école apprennent comment incorporer les points de vue autochtones dans toutes les matières.*

### **Other comments**

These are additional comments related to what teachers feel they would need to adequately prepare themselves to integrate Aboriginal content and perspectives into their teaching.

*As an Aboriginal myself, I don't believe that is it possible to do this as a band-aid solution. More relevant texts, EXTENSIVE training, and a fundamental understanding of the culture.*

*Every teacher should read the Truth and Reconciliation Document.*

*Empathy and how to teach that empathy to students without stereotypes. Aboriginal content and perspective is vague. Not sure what is wanted. A novel where the protagonist is Aboriginal? History of Native people locally? Role models? Cultural practices?*

### **What do you think is the greatest challenge facing the teaching of Aboriginal education in Canada?**

#### **Racist attitudes and stereotypes**

Several respondents told us they felt the greatest challenge to the teaching of Aboriginal education was racial prejudice and negative stereotypes and perceptions about Aboriginal peoples.

*Getting over society's notions that it's up to Aboriginal people to change their ways, and recognizing that this is every Canadian's responsibility.*

*The greatest challenge is getting beyond the racial stereotypes and prejudices surrounding First Nations issues.*

*To have educators in each school overcome their own biases regarding Aboriginal perspectives.*

*Vaincre les stéréotypes et les préjugés envers les thèmes autochtones.*

*Breaking through the prejudices of what is thought to be true; the stereotypes. Getting meaningful information to communities far from any Aboriginal issues.*

*Lingering racism and bias, misinformation, negative stereotypes, etc. held by the Caucasian majority.*

*Most people don't know enough to know how much they don't know. There is a tremendous amount of racism and ignorance by non-Aboriginal populations.*

*In other districts the public racism has been extreme. Yukon is remarkable – here, at least, people 'get it' and I haven't seen the racism here.*

*Nous devons travailler à effacer les préjugés des élèves face aux Autochtones.*

*Systemic racism that doesn't see itself as such because colonialism has done its work efficiently.*

*The inability to express anything critical without the word 'racism' being used.*

*The misconceptions of others. Some of our non-Aboriginal parents have asked why their children are learning the Aboriginal culture when they themselves are not Aboriginal.*

*Resistance from racist parents is a huge obstacle. Our community high school is fortunate because our climate of acceptance and appreciation trickles into the community.*

## **Lack of knowledge**

Several respondents expressed a lack of knowledge of Aboriginal issues, cultures and perspectives, including how to effectively incorporate this knowledge into the curriculum. Others expressed a lack of understanding of the current reality of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Some respondents noted what they felt was a general lack of awareness of the importance of teaching Aboriginal education among some teachers and the general public.

*Having a majority of non-Aboriginal teachers who a) are lacking knowledge, b) come with assumptions/prejudices, c) are afraid of teaching what they don't understand.*

*Knowledge and understanding of what and how to teach.*

*Le manque de connaissances des enseignants et de comment l'intégrer dans les cours au secondaire.*

*The "why do we need to know this?" attitude of many non-Aboriginal people.*

*Teachers are grasping a lot of the concepts we need to teach. However, I think we all need to focus on it more through deep, meaningful learning for teachers.*

*The greatest challenge is the Canadian public to be made more aware of their contributions to the country. Making all more aware of the rich background of the Native peoples.*

*The lack of education of the general public on why the struggles of Aboriginal people exist.*

*Relating past issues and history to today's reality.*

*J'ai une formation en anthropologie et donc je suis assez familière avec les cultures et questions autochtones. Par contre, je trouve qu'un grand nombre de collègues ont peu de connaissances.*

*Lack of knowledge in HOW to teach about someone else's culture. This holds true of any culture that is not my own.*

*We need to be better informed. To make this happen, we, as professionals, need to be intentional in seeking the knowledge we need.*

*Teachers who don't have sufficient knowledge of the First Nation culture.*

*Not everyone feels it is necessary – which is part of the problem.*

*Teachers currently in classrooms do not have a strong education about First Nation history or culture and are therefore underprepared to teach these things.*

## **Time and workload issues**

As in the previous question, time and workload pressures pose significant challenges for many teachers.

*Time required for professional staff to adequately research, prepare and integrate Aboriginal education into the classrooms.*

*Having enough flexibility within the current curriculum to allow time to teach Aboriginal education.*

*Time. All the other curricular outcomes to be taught at each grade level that we already don't often have sufficient time to cover.*

*Le temps! On manque de temps pour tout montrer aux élèves. Nous n'avons que le temps de leur donner un petit goûter.*

*Giving time during the instructional day for teachers to focus on some of the issues relevant to their grade level. Having resources to use to support the various Aboriginal teachings.*

*Not enough time in a day to teach what we already need to do, and more is constantly being added.*

*Teachers are already overwhelmed with current workloads. Adding new things without removing some of the workload will be ineffective.*

*In Nunavut, well-trained Inuit teachers are often drawn away from teaching by well paying, less stressful jobs.*

*Nous avons tellement de matériel et matière à enseigner dans notre programme pédagogique qu'il est presque impossible de rajouter autre chose...*

*The overload that is already upon teachers: Cross-over between subjects, the push to learn new technology, implement anti-bullying programs, and extra-curricular activities is overwhelming! Adding more will increase teacher burnout.*

*The academic and professional demands of our current educational environment don't allow time for me to develop or explore the variety of cultures represented in my school.*

*Manque de temps... Nos programmes cadres sont déjà surchargés.*

### **Professional development**

Again, as in the previous question, the need for quality professional development and training was cited by several respondents as a challenge.

*There is little PD in our province regarding Aboriginal education.*

*Strategies to teach Aboriginal issues to students who have no contact with Aboriginal groups.*

*Manques de ressources et de formation sur l'intégration.*

*Insufficient training and knowledge of many teachers who grew up with minimal exposure to the culture, language, and history of the Aboriginal peoples.*

*Il devrait y avoir un cours obligatoire sur la vie autochtone pour l'obtention du Baccalauréat.*

*There is a sincerely deplorable lack of training given to new teachers in working with students of Aboriginal cultures.*

### **Lack of funding**

A lack of funding was cited by several respondents as the biggest challenge to the teaching of Aboriginal education.

*Overcrowded classrooms, lack of funding—same issues that apply to teaching any issue. We cannot teach effectively when we are understaffed.*

*Schools lack the funding to purchase resources which support curriculum expectations—especially literature.*

*Funds to have speakers/Elders come to school.*

*Les fonds nécessaires pour faire venir un conférencier.*

*Adequate funding from the federal government.*

### **Lack of resources**

A lack of accurate up-to-date information and teaching resources was cited by several respondents.

*Lack of resources, and funds to get resources.*

*Le plus grand défi est le manque de ressources et de formation.*

*Lack of resources and knowledgeable people to speak on the topic.*

*Age-appropriate resources for early years.*

*Lack of readily available resources and materials for teachers online.*

### **Shortage of Aboriginal teachers/educators**

Respondents recognize the critical need for more Aboriginal teachers and role models in public schools and education systems.

*That there are not enough Aboriginal teachers and role models in the school system.*

*We need some Aboriginal teachers, but the problem is that these students are the least likely to graduate! It's systemic.*

*Je trouve que les Autochtones sont les mieux placés pour transmettre leurs traditions, mais nous avons peu de ressources humaines qui sont autochtones.*

*Community separation from our FNMI peoples; lack of FNMI teachers in the system.*

### **Confidence/Comfort level**

A number of respondents commented on the low comfort level of non-Aboriginal teachers (either themselves or other teachers), who may have little knowledge about Indigenous education, teaching about these issues and perspectives. For some there is a fear of misrepresenting Aboriginal culture, of "doing it wrong" in the words of one respondent.

*Having teachers be confident to share their knowledge in respectful ways. Providing them with opportunities to dialogue with Elders and First Nation teachers and knowledge keepers.*

*Most teachers are afraid to tackle the issues due to a lack of knowledge and confidence in Indigenous issues.*

*Teacher confidence in understanding material, and comfort level in integrating that material.*

*Les critiques que nous recevons en étant non autochtones et voulant transmettre du contenu en lien avec les Autochtones... nous faire dire que nous ne respectons pas leur culture.*

*Fear of relaying information incorrectly. There are many cultures represented in my class. I am wanting to honour them all.*

*Lack of knowledge that teachers have and their own fear of doing it wrong because they are not Aboriginal.*

*J'aimerais savoir quoi dire/ne pas dire. Je ne veux pas faire de gaffe. Je suis renseignée à propos des pensionnats et des défis des Autochtones, mais comment l'aborder?*

*Teachers need to go out of their comfort zone to try to incorporate Aboriginal perspectives without fear of offending.*

*Do not feel confident in their understanding. Can feel unqualified and perhaps unsupported. Worry about doing wrong so they address curricular content but not deep and meaningful conversations and/or exploration.*

## **Curriculum issues**

The most common concern voiced by respondents was an increasingly 'crowded' curriculum in terms of coverage of numerous curriculum outcomes/expectations. Other concerns were related to integrating Aboriginal content into curriculum, improving the understanding and teaching of Aboriginal/First Nations history, and mandating the teaching of Aboriginal education in provincial curricula.

*Thorough integration, so that the 'Canadian' perspective in History and Social Studies classes automatically and naturally includes Aboriginal perspectives.*

*How to incorporate Aboriginal education in all areas of the curriculum.*

*A VERY full curriculum already and this is one more thing to add to the "to do" list. Suggestions on how to incorporate it into what we are already doing.*

*Incorporating culturally relevant and appropriate materials and lessons for students and learning how to present Aboriginal material clearly and sensitively to all students.*

*L'intégration avec les autres matières en classe. Le curriculum s'alourdit. Et l'école remplit des besoins tirillés de part et d'autres avec des milliers d'interruptions qui font un enseignement fracturé.*

*Time. All the other curricular outcomes to be taught at each grade level that we already don't often have sufficient time to cover.*

*Every division needs to be on the same page and be mandated to teach Aboriginal perspectives. This affects ALL of us—not just those in Northern or urban communities.*

*Competition for time with other subject areas—heavy focus on math and language. Also, lack of understanding of its importance at the administrative level.*

*A full understanding of the necessity of highlighting Aboriginal education within the existing curriculum.*

*Nous avons tellement de matériel et de matière à enseigner dans notre programme pédagogique qu'il est presque impossible de rajouter autre chose...*

*Ce n'est pas une matière du curriculum de l'Ontario à enseigner à l'élémentaire.*

*Adding it to an already packed curriculum. It needs to be there but not sure how to best incorporate it.*

*The fact that First Nations history is lost in current curricula.*

*Unachievable expectations in an education system that is struggling and barely funded.*

*Knowledge... presentation of that knowledge in a non-judgmental way [through] sharing circles, medicine wheels.*

*Programmes scolaires déjà chargés, donc pour ajouter un contenu autochtone, il faudrait couper un autre contenu.*

## **Cultural diversity**

A number of respondents expressed the need for a balance between teaching Aboriginal content and perspectives and teaching about other cultures in our multicultural society. Also, addressing the broad cultural diversity that exists within the Aboriginal/FNMI (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) community itself was identified as a particular challenge.

*Teaching Aboriginal education is important and yet it is equally important to address multicultural diversity, respect for all cultures.*

*The diversity of Aboriginal nations and practices is often overlooked. There are regional differences that are often lumped together without giving ownership to the nation where the practice came from.*

*It is difficult to teach the various cultures associated with all the different First Nations groups. Difficult to find time to fit this into the run of a day.*

*Comment faire vivre la culture autochtone en même temps qu'essayer de développer une identité culturelle francophone dans un milieu minoritaire ?*

*The greatest challenge would be working around different world views and value systems.*



## Other comments

These are additional comments related to what teachers perceive as the greatest challenges facing the teaching of Aboriginal education in Canada.

*In our community there is a limited number of Aboriginal people so it is not a priority in our school.*

*The Aboriginal population of our school is very low so I think the importance of the education is forgotten and sometimes overlooked.*

*Lack of representation in school community.*

*In a homogeneous community, some parents and students (and colleagues) don't see the relevance.*

*Students and teachers who are not in or near Aboriginal communities don't see this as a priority.*

*Rapprocher la réalité autochtone à celle des élèves. Les faire voir et vivre les différences culturelles et sociales pour qu'ils comprennent les défis.*

*Building trust back in the school system for FNMI families.*

*Resistance from people who say that non-Aboriginal people should not be teaching about Aboriginal issues.*

*It needs to be valued by communities and Canada as a whole—let's properly integrate and welcome the diversity Aboriginal education would provide our youngest citizens.*

*Disinterest among Canadians and indifference to the struggles that Native people continue to face.*

*Convincing Canadians that it is important and will benefit every single person living in Canada.*

*There's such a rich, vibrant history of the First Nation peoples that is missing from our collective. This history is a fundamental part of our Canadian identity.*

*Le plus grand défi est de revaloriser la grandeur des peuples autochtones.*

*Fear of having to admit that we have contributed to the marginalization of a culture.*

*Replacing a government that showed no empathy or concern, seemed like a good place to start.*

*I think it will be tough to overcome the preconceived notions our students' parents may have.*

*Les élèves ne manifestent pas d'intérêt à ce sujet. Les parents de nos élèves devraient parler positivement des Autochtones pour motiver leurs enfants à connaître l'histoire.*

*Colonization “efforts” have had pervasive effects in Aboriginal communities. Families are still in crisis, dealing with the trauma and dysfunction that is part of the IRS experiences. Healing is necessary.*

*Not compartmentalizing this... it is important that kids do not just see this as a topic rather than a relevant and ongoing extension of all our learning.*

*Getting over our worry about cultural sensitivity. I am not a member of First Nations, and sometimes I feel mine is not the right voice to be heard.*