

THE PATH *Forward*



Fondation
Rideau Hall
Foundation

**20 ITE
25 SUMMIT**

WHAT WE HEARD REPORT

**THE PATH FORWARD:
NATIONAL SUMMIT ON INDIGENOUS
TEACHER EDUCATION 2025**

Rideau Hall Foundation

October 7-8, 2025 | Winnipeg, MB | Treaty 1 Territory



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Over two days,
we listened, learned,
and laughed **together**.



WELCOME ADDRESS

On October 7-8, 2025, the Rideau Hall Foundation (RHF) welcomed nearly 200 attendees for The Path Forward: The National Summit on Indigenous Teacher Education in Winnipeg, Manitoba, situated on Treaty 1 Territory, the homeland of the Red River Métis and the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe (Ojibwe), Ininew (Cree), and Dakota peoples.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who joined us, the teachers, students, Elders, administrators, and allies who shared their wisdom and their hopes.

The gathering reflected the power of what is possible when First Nations, Inuit, and Métis educators, leaders, institutions, policymakers, and community partners come together to co-create a shared vision for systemic change in teacher education. Guided by the themes **GROW**, **NURTURE**, and **BLOOM**, the Summit celebrated the brilliance, creativity, and determination of those who are building a future where Indigenous knowledge and leadership shape every level of the education system.

Over two days, we listened, learned, and laughed together.

We were moved by the powerful keynote reflections from Dr. Niigaan Sinclair, Dr. Keiki Kawai'ae'a, and Commissioner Dr. Ronald E. Ignace to remind us that language, land, and intergenerational leadership are central to our collective strength in creating education environments that are more welcoming and

representative of Indigenous peoples. We heard from educators, student teachers and Elders whose contributions, often undertaken quietly, are transforming classrooms and communities from the ground up. Their collective efforts remind us that for real transformation to happen, it must be inclusive of leadership at every level, rooted in relationships, sustained by community, and guided by the wisdom of those who have long nurtured learning through lived experience and cultural knowledge.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who joined us, the teachers, students, Elders, administrators, and allies who shared their wisdom and their hopes. The seeds planted in Winnipeg will continue to grow, nurtured by the collective strength, generosity, and vision of our communities. Together, we are shaping a future where Indigenous youth can learn from educators who see them, understand them, and lift them up.

DR. ANNETTE TRIMBEE, CO-CHAIR

National Advisory Committee on Indigenous Teacher Education (NACITE)





ABOUT THE SUMMIT

The 2025 National Summit on Indigenous Teacher Education brought nearly 200 participants together for two days of relationship-building, learning, and collective visioning. Grounded in ceremony and Indigenous worldviews, the agenda included opening and closing remarks, keynote addresses, youth-led conversations, and concurrent sessions exploring language revitalization, land-based learning, teacher pathways, policy and accreditation, and long-term supports for Indigenous educators.

A core feature of the Summit was the **Grow–Nurture–Bloom** framework:

Grow

Foundational learning through keynotes, panels, and sessions that uplifted Indigenous-led program models, language revitalization, land-based pedagogy, and Indigenous governance in teacher education.

Nurture

Relational spaces including Elder guidance, youth leadership, wellness programming, movement activities, and multiple opportunities for dialogue across Nations and regions.

Bloom

Forward-looking sessions such as action mapping, collective visioning, and partnership dialogues that supported momentum, relationship-building, and next steps beyond the gathering.

Across sessions, several priority areas consistently surfaced:

Indigenous language revitalization

Including the need for sustained pathways to grow more language teachers and embed languages across teacher preparation.

Land-based learning

Recognizing land, place, and cultural practice as essential to meaningful education and educator training.

Indigenous governance and self-determination in teacher education

Including Indigenous-led accreditation and policy frameworks that honour sovereignty.

Flexible pathways and supports for Indigenous teacher candidates

Spanning community-based delivery, mentorship, wellness supports, and culturally safe environments.

Collaboration and collective action

Emphasizing the importance of strengthened partnerships across Nations, institutions, and regions to move from conversation to coordinated action.

“The ITE National Summit was a powerful and affirming gathering. It created space for Indigenous educators to come together in a good way – sharing stories, challenges, and successes while strengthening relationships across Nations and institutions. I left feeling grounded, encouraged, and hopeful, with a renewed commitment to advancing Indigenous-led teacher education rooted in language, land, and community priorities.”

– SUMMIT PARTICIPANT



“Getting to experience an environment where all of us can come together **made me feel safe and accepted; nowhere else has had evoked that feeling from me”**

– SUMMIT PARTICIPANT

WHAT WE HEARD: AREAS TO STRENGTHEN IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Participants offered thoughtful reflections on areas that require further attention as Indigenous teacher education continues to evolve. These perspectives were shared in a spirit of collective responsibility and a shared commitment to strengthening pathways, supports, and systems for future Indigenous educators. Participants emphasized the importance of working together to address gaps, deepen learning opportunities, and create the conditions where Indigenous educators, students, communities, and partners can thrive.

This report synthesizes insights shared during the Summit through participant discussions, plenary reflections, and breakout session notes; action mapping and collective visioning outputs; Elder teachings and cultural guidance; and post-event surveys (n=56 respondents). These findings reflect common patterns and sector-wide needs, rather than a full representation of all participant experiences.

The following points highlight the key areas participants identified as priorities for continued growth and strengthening:

Need for stronger Indigenous-led governance and accreditation

Participants emphasized the importance of Indigenous leadership and self-determination in shaping how teacher education is designed, delivered, and evaluated. Many highlighted the role of Indigenous-led accreditation processes such as National Indigenous Accreditation Board (NIAB)/World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC) and the need for governance structures that uphold sovereignty and Indigenous knowledge systems.

Supportive, culturally safe pathways into teacher education

Participants called for improved entry points into teacher education, including flexible admissions, Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), community-based cohorts, and culturally grounded supports. Culturally safe pathways were described as essential for Indigenous learners to feel welcomed, prepared, and supported.

Retention, mentorship, and workplace wellness

Sustaining Indigenous educators in the profession was a major theme. Participants highlighted the need for mentorship, mental-wellness supports, culturally safe work environments, and long-term retention strategies to ensure Indigenous educators thrive once in the classroom.

Increased land- and language-based learning

Participants expressed the importance of embedding local and regional land-based pedagogy and Indigenous languages throughout teacher education programs. Strengthening these approaches was viewed as foundational to meaningful, culturally relevant learning.

Strengthening partnerships across sectors

Participants emphasized the need for partnership models rooted in respect, reciprocity, and shared responsibility. Collaborative work between communities, K-12 systems, post-secondary institutions, Indigenous organizations, and governments was widely seen as necessary to carry this work forward, with support from charitable organizations and allies.



“This summit has such huge potential of **bringing big key parties together to create change in our education systems.** I feel like the excitement was there walking out of the summit, but **we need to keep that spark and passion alive** and continue this work together.”

– SUMMIT PARTICIPANT



“Attending the ITE National Summit was the most wonderful gathering of Indigenous educators from across Turtle Island. **Hearing the success stories of land-based programs, language revitalization and seeing youth engaged in their culture was inspiring and shows the resurgence of Indigenous peoples.**”

– SUMMIT PARTICIPANT



Participants described
the gathering as
**energizing and
deeply grounding**



GROWING TOGETHER

“Gathering together and sharing
space is so important to inspiring
shared action and commitment.”

– SUMMIT PARTICIPANT

The seeds planted at the Summit will continue to grow through collective effort and shared responsibility.

The 2025 Summit reaffirmed a powerful shared commitment to Indigenous-led teacher education—grounded in language, culture, land, and self-determination. Participants described the gathering as energizing and deeply grounding, reminding us that the future of education must be shaped by Indigenous knowledge and community leadership.

The conversations, relationships, and commitments formed throughout the 2025 Summit have continued to shape the collective work now underway. As we look ahead, the focus turns to carrying the Summit’s core themes of language, land, governance, pathways, and collaboration, into sustained action across communities, institutions, and regions. Building on the momentum

created in Winnipeg means strengthening the conditions that support more First Nations, Inuit, and Métis educators to enter, thrive, and lead within the teaching profession. Many participants shared that the Summit’s holistic approach rooted in community, culture, learning, and wellness, created a grounding and inspiring environment that reaffirmed why this work matters.

What emerged was a clear call for action: to carry forward the momentum sparked in Winnipeg; to nurture the relationships formed; and to grow the pathways, partnerships, and systems needed to support Indigenous educators across the country. The seeds planted at the Summit will continue to grow through collective effort and shared responsibility.

“**Achieving our bold vision of reaching 10,000 Indigenous educators will require system-level shifts** that build stronger pathways and honour language, land-based ways of learning and Indigenous ways of knowing. This is a shared responsibility, one that depends on meaningful collaboration among educational institutions, governments, and communities.

Indigenous representation in education is powerful and impactful, a catalyst for economic reconciliation, opening minds, and creating opportunities. These system shifts elevate Indigenous ways of knowing and highlight the capacities and capabilities of indigenous students, moving from a deficit mindset to one of possibility. Only by working together can we move from intention to action and bring this vision to life.”

– DR. ANNETTE TRIMBEE, NACITE Co-Chair,

Gatherings like this Summit
create the space for us to
learn from one another

CLOSING MESSAGE

As an Indigenous learner and teacher, with family who continue to speak Anishinaabemowin and carry our land-based cultural teachings, this work is deeply personal to me. My journey as a teacher has always been guided by the belief that our languages, stories, and relationships with the land must be reflected in the education systems that shape our children's futures. It is our responsibility to ensure that the work we do is reflected by our communities and worldviews. Gatherings like this Summit create the space for us to learn from one another, build meaningful relationships, and strengthen the pathways that support First Nations, Inuit, and Métis educators. I am grateful for everyone who shared their knowledge and experiences, and I look forward to continuing this work together and to seeing you all again in 2027.

Miigwetch,
RACHEL MISHENENE
Director, Indigenous Teacher Education Initiative
Rideau Hall Foundation

APPENDIX



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About the Rideau Hall Foundation

The RHF is a nonpartisan national charitable organization established to amplify the impact of the office of the Governor General as a central institution of Canadian democracy, and to better serve Canadians through a range of initiatives linked to learning, leadership, giving and innovation.

Through the RHF's Indigenous Teacher Education (ITE) initiative, the RHF seeks to amplify the importance of having First Nations, Inuit and Métis educators in classrooms across the country who will positively impact the education landscape. Recruiting and supporting 10,000 First Nations, Inuit, and Métis educators with the resources they need to succeed and stay in their careers is a vital step in fostering a more inclusive and responsive learning environment for all students.

To learn more about the ITE initiative and funded projects, visit
rhf-frh.ca/programs/indigenous-teacher-education-initiative

National Advisory Committee

The National Advisory Committee on Indigenous Teacher Education (NACITE) serves as an Indigenous national committee focused on significantly growing the numbers of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis teachers in Canada. Its ground-breaking work to help support the excellence, self-determination, and representation of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples in education began in 2023.

DR. ANNETTE TRIMBEE – Co-Chair
President and Vice-Chancellor,
MacEwan University

DR. MARK DOCKSTATOR, LL. D.
Associate Professor, Chanie Wenjack
School for Indigenous Studies,
Trent University

ALUKI KOTIERK
Former President,
Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated

DR. DAVID PERLEY, C.M.
Co-Founder, Wolastoq Language
and Culture Center

CAMERON ADAMS
Consultant, Indigenous Languages,
Government of Manitoba

DR. LORNE GLADU
Founding CEO, Rupertsland Institute

DENISE BAXTER
Vice-Provost, Indigenous Initiatives,
Lakehead University

DR. EVELYN STEINHAUER
Professor & Director, Aboriginal Teacher
Education Program (ATEP),
University of Alberta

YVETTE ARCAND
Director, Indian Teacher Education
Program (ITEP),
University of Saskatchewan

LOIS PHILIPP
Founder, Northern Loco

Acknowledgements

The Rideau Hall Foundation extends heartfelt gratitude to the Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members who held this space with care, ceremony, and wisdom.

To the leaders and dignitaries who joined us, thank you for your words of welcome and for your continued support of Indigenous teacher education.

We are deeply grateful to the speakers, panelists, and youth leaders whose voices and teachings helped shape the Summit. To the student volunteers from Gabriel Dumont Institute, thank you for your warmth, energy, and support throughout the gathering.

We acknowledge the guidance of NACITE members, whose leadership continues to shape the future of Indigenous teacher education.

We are grateful to our partners and supporters, including the Mastercard Foundation, for walking alongside us.

This Summit reflects our shared commitment to Grow, Nurture, and Bloom — and we thank everyone who contributed to this meaningful journey.



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