

Spirit Horse Objectives

The Ministry of Education identified Aboriginal education as one of its key priorities in order to improve achievement among Aboriginal students and released the Ontario First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education (FNMI) Policy Framework in 2007. The 2009 *Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* built on those objectives by raising the bar for student achievement and reducing gaps in student achievement particularly among Aboriginal students, recent immigrants, boys, and students with special needs.

- Support professional development/learning regarding Aboriginal issues and perspectives that builds an understanding of Aboriginal (First Nation, Métis and Inuit) cultural, historical, urban, and rural issues and perspectives among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal elementary school communities through online and face-to-face professional learning;
- Generate discussion and reflection that comes from seeing the play, while developing a deeper understanding and sensitivity of the issues facing Aboriginal peoples for students in grades 4-8;
- Support the implementation of the revised Social Studies curriculum (2013), and assist teachers to achieve the goals of *Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy*.
- Provide a context for new Aboriginal classroom resources developed by ETFO and other educational partners by developing partnerships with First Nations communities and Faculties of Education to provide them with an opportunity to attend *Spirit Horse*.
- Provide educational research into the effectiveness of using a theatrical performance to stimulate interest and engagement around aboriginal history and current day issues.

Aboriginal Education Leaders

Twenty-three Spirit Horse Aboriginal education leaders attended a two-day FNMI training in Toronto. All Aboriginal Education Leaders were nominated by the local ETFO president and Director of Education from their board to oversee a full day workshop on FNMI in their local. Junior/Intermediate teachers from nominated schools and additional schools who have seen a performance of the play, "Spirit Horse" will be release for a full day to participate in professional learning. The Aboriginal Education Leaders' training included presentations from ETFO staff on teachable moments from the play, residential school impacts and addressing stereotypes. Aboriginal Education Leaders also shared FNMI education best practices and teaching strategies through learning carousels.

Spirit Horse Webinar

Unique to the 2015 tour, a webinar is planned for **Tuesday, March 24** in the evening so that educators attending a performance of the play are introduced to Aboriginal issues and presented with an overview of the online components on the Spirit Horse website. This ETFO webinar will be taped and posted on the website so that all educators can preview it before seeing a performance of *Spirit Horse*.

Impact Analysis

ETFO understands the importance of research and data so an impact analysis of the project will be conducted by a researcher (Dr. Larry Swartz) and research assistant (Bob Sleeper). A mixed-methods strategy for collecting data, such as focus groups (with teachers, students, school community members), interviews, feedback forms, and document examination has been planned. This research will gather data on teachers' attitudes, beliefs, experiences, and reactions to the project which will provide evidence of the project's effectiveness.



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