

## Wâhkôhtowin: Decolonizing Teacher Education for Rural, Urban and First Nations Schools

**Wednesday 4 August 2021 - Parallel Session 3 - 11.30am to 12.30pm (GMT+1)**

**GRANT - Developing Cultural Responsiveness**

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This presentation describes the conceptualization and first-year outcomes of a four-year study that examines a Professional Development School (PDS) teacher education model conceptualized from a Nêhiyawak (Cree) worldview in Saskatchewan, Canada. The model is designed to decolonize teacher education in order to: (a) foster student learning and engagement; (b) develop Nêhiyaw teacher identity and proficiency, and; (c) support reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. The importance of the study lies in its potential to respond to the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action by: (a) mitigating the negative intergenerational effects of Canada's colonial policies on Indigenous peoples; (b) helping to increase educational and employment outcomes for Indigenous peoples; and (c) providing direction for successful partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations. The research addresses existing educational outcome gaps for Indigenous learners, and supports the recruitment of Indigenous teachers in rural, urban, and First Nations communities. The conceptualization of Wâhkôhtowin was informed by Indigenous community Elders in consultation and ceremony. It represents the sacred laws of kinship, with the attendant responsibility and reciprocity inherent in those relationships. It is represented holographically as a 3-dimensional tipi grounded in the culture, language and protocols of the territory in which it is situated. The research findings will impact teacher education programming and policy as they are decolonized through: the development of partnerships that support reconciliation; strengthening cultural identity; fostering teacher growth; improving student learning outcomes; and respecting place and territory.