

**Conference Report
National Trustees Gathering on Indigenous Education,
CSBA Congress & OPSBA AGM
July 2-6, 2019**

I attended this conference and participated in the following workshops:

Wednesday, July 3

Keynote Speaker – Kevin Lamoureux: ‘Healing the wound with the weapon: Reconciliation and Public Education’

This session discussed the role of public education in reconciliation especially dealing with trauma. Kevin discussed how education was used as a weapon on Indigenous people and how it will also be necessary to use education to heal the wounds.

Thursday, July 4

Dr. Paulette Tremblay, CEO, Assembly of First Nations provided the opening remarks.

Closing the Graduation Gap: The Indigenous Graduation Coach

Director of Education for Keewatin-Patricia DSB, along with two staff members provided an overview of how they have supported Indigenous students’ success and well-being. With the use of Graduation Coaches, staff have removed barriers to engagement and learning and are now seeing a 39% increase in graduation rates among Indigenous students.

Student Panel

Three Indigenous students answered questions and provided us with an insight into issues facing Indigenous students.

Decolonizing Our Schools: Susan Dion PhD

Susan explored the relationship between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous people and examined treaties, The Indian Act and Residential Schools and the way forward for all Canadians.

The Ojibwe Language Strategy

This session explained how the Ojibwe language is dying out and how a language strategy has been started by the Rainy River DSB. This partnership between the RRDSB and 10 First Nation Communities has been formed to employ Elders to teach the young how to speak the Ojibwe language.

Opening Ceremonies – 7:30 p.m.

Keynote: Valerie Chort – RBC Foundation

Valerie spoke to a study by RBC of the Canadian workforce. She noted that the jobs of today are changing and addressed how we can be prepared for the future and how can encourage our students to be prepared.

Friday, July 5 – Two sessions

Dr. Gabor Maté

Dr. Maté talked about how children no longer look to adults for emotional support and the teaching of values and modeling of behaviour. He noted that many of the problems we have with students today could be avoided with a caring and connected adult present in the lives of children or students.

In Dr. Maté's second session he challenged the way schools deal with bullying and the 'zero tolerance' policies. He spoke more about caring and connected adults and how we can connect with our children and increase their resilience and self-worth.

Saturday, July 6

OPSBA Regional Council Elections Meeting & AGM

As the voting delegate for OPSBA, I attended the meeting to cast votes on behalf of WRDSB Trustees.