

“It’s my opinion that all learning begins looking inwardly. So... having enough self-awareness and time to reflect, to think about who am I today, and who do I want to be, and what do I need to do to get there. Through the Indigenous lens, part of what we’re looking at is, how do we make sure that we’re including all of our learners? And so as an educator, I need to continue to ask myself, what do I need to do differently, what do I need to do more of, less of, what knowledge do I need to empower myself, to better include... the folks that I’m working alongside and the folks that I’m working with.”

Denise Augustine

“It’s really important to keep an open heart. We don’t know what we don’t know. And so, for next steps we need to keep inviting ourselves to be curious. And that’s probably the most important thing.”

Denise Augustine

“The work that we’re doing around transforming education so that it meets the needs of our learners today, so that it is inclusive all of, all learners, is uncomfortable work. When we challenge our assumptions, when we have to look at an uncomfortable history of Canada, when we have to look at systemic structures that promote, or help us maintain, poverty and racism, those are uncomfortable things to look at. We’re kidding ourselves if we think we’re going to get to a place of that being comfortable. If it’s comfortable, we’re not actually doing the work. What we need to do is make sure we’re nurturing our heart, that we’re nurturing our spirits, that we’re nurturing our relationships, that we’re spending time outside, so that when we step into those places of discomfort, we have the resources, the energy, the good-will that we need in order to continue to do that work. So that we can persevere in stepping into that discomfort.”

Denise Augustine

“I believe it was Chief Dan George, talked of a time when our people could go into the forest, and find the absolute right, large, straight, clean tree from what, which to carve, a massive ocean-going canoe that would carry our people on the journey. He went on to say those trees don’t exist anymore, we’ve cut them all down. Now we’re in a time where we need to find two trees that are straight and clean and fit seamlessly together, so that we can build a canoe that will carry us all to do the work. And he was talking about a time in history when Indigenous and non-Indigenous people need to work side by side, paddling in the same canoe to move our future generations forward.”

Denise Augustine

“I’m also reminded of the words Rob George, and he talks about how for generations it’s been foretold that a time would come when the white raven would speak. And we’ve seen the white raven, on Vancouver Island. And the symbol of that white raven was, again, we’re at a time in history where Indigenous and non-Indigenous people need to no longer be working in opposition, but in fact we need to be working alongside each other for the benefit of our children today, but also for the benefit of the children yet to come. And doing this is the... In working side by side, we need to be creating something that has never been created before and that we cannot create without each other.”

Denise Augustine

“I spent about eight years working with the Squamish elders and knowledge keepers, teachers, and really found that I had to take the time to learn and to listen and not rush into my work.”

Lynne Tomlinson

“Just start. Just do something. If we keep avoiding the learning ourselves, that in and of itself is a privilege. If we’re going to continue to live amongst our privileges, then we’re never going to get to the history and to the truth around indigenous histories in Canada... You have to start somewhere. Find that access point. Find something that makes you curious and start to learn...”

Heidi Wood

“I think it’s about the kids and I think the kids are speaking up. I think our students are saying they want more. I think it’s our students, our youth, that are teaching us about how do we make this better, how do we move forward?”

Heidi Wood

“I hope there is never a need for an Aboriginal learning or an Indigenous learning helping teacher. I want it to be something that we all automatically do. I want it to be a curriculum that honours and respects all of our kids, but at the same time highlights and acknowledges and embraces the incredible contributions of our Indigenous communities. I want my kids to be proud to say that they’re First Nations.”

Heidi Wood

“I think a huge key to our success or our progress so far in British Columbia is that if you’re looking at the world from an inquiry stance, you really do get permission to ask questions and to be where you’re at. As long as we keep asking those questions, then we keep moving forward.”

Brooke Moore

“The success now is that people are recognizing that this really, truly matters and that it’s everybody’s responsibility. We have a moral imperative to make sure that we’re meeting the needs of all learners, and that we are addressing the horrors of the past in a way that will allow us to move forward as a broad community. We want to see the success of all learners but recognize the importance of celebrating the Indigenous learners.”

Andrea Davidson

“What do the students need? Finding out where they’re at, what is their sense of belonging like, how are they learning, and what are they learning, and do they find value in it? It has actually been quite interesting. The students wanted their learning to be relevant, so how do we address that? How do we address that as a staff for our entire school?”

Jana Fox

“If you’re too comfortable then something is not moving forward, right? I think it’s good to feel a little bit of discomfort. For me this links back to just taking the action and being willing to or just knowing that yeah you probably, you could fail, and you might, but be ready to learn from your failures.”

Jana Fox

“If we want to really truly connect with the place outdoors, we need to be open to the possibilities of that place and what it has to teach us.”

Naomi Radawiec

“Debbie also taught us if you’re not squirming, you’re not learning. So, I think that was fantastic advice, because to acquire a different world view, there is discomfort, especially if you’re part of the group of people who are the newcomers and settlers.”

Dr. Linda Kaser

“...take a next step. Get a community or get into a network. Some of the most powerful work has happened in networks of two or three people or two or three schools coming together and creating a safe space for themselves to do that learning, to put out the genuine conceptions, misconceptions, assumptions, and biases. This is difficult work, decolonization.”

Dr. Linda Kaser

Re: Networks of Inquiry and Indigenous Education (NOIIE)

“Our goal is that we will be the first jurisdiction in the world where every learner crosses the stage with dignity, purpose and options, where everyone leaves more curious than when they arrived, and where all of us develop and understand and respect Indigenous ways of knowing, and that together we eliminate racism in our schools.”

Dr. Judy Halbert