



Memorandum: Supporting Indigenous Artists in Schools

Purpose

Prologue Performing Arts is committed to fostering respectful, meaningful engagement with Indigenous artists in schools across Ontario. As part of our reconciliation work, it is essential that schools provide a welcoming and supportive environment for Indigenous artists.

For generations, Indigenous peoples have been systemically excluded from shaping how their histories, cultures, and identities are represented in classrooms. Curriculum, textbooks, and mainstream narratives have often spoken about Indigenous peoples without their input. We are now in an era where Indigenous knowledge keepers, Elders, and artists are finally leading the way in writing those stories, shaping curriculum, and representing their own images and voices.

The responsibility now rests with non-Indigenous educators, administrators, and institutions to recognize that historic gap — and to actively create space for Indigenous voices to be heard directly, authentically, and respectfully in the places where learning happens. Hosting Indigenous artists is one meaningful way to participate in that ongoing work.

This memorandum outlines some guidelines to help staff and students prepare for presentations, and welcome Indigenous artists into your school or community.

Welcoming Indigenous Artists

1. Welcoming and Greeting Artists

- Ensure a designated staff member is available to welcome the artist upon arrival.
- Begin with a warm greeting and acknowledgement of their presence in your school.
- Acknowledge the importance of their contribution to reconciliation and student learning.

2. Support with Load-In and Set-Up

- Assign staff to assist with unloading, carrying, and setting up equipment or materials.
- Provide clear directions to performance spaces, storage areas, or classrooms.
- Ensure technical or logistical needs (chairs, tables, microphones, etc.) are prepared in advance.

3. Preparing Students

- Review the study guide and any artist-provided materials ahead of time with students.
- Discuss the importance of Indigenous voices and perspectives in shaping Canada's present and future.
- Encourage respectful listening, curiosity, and engagement as part of reconciliation in action.

4. Educating Staff

- Make certain all staff understand the gravity and responsibility of reconciliation work.
- Share background information provided about the artist and their practice to help staff approach the visit with cultural awareness and respect.
- Reinforce that hosting Indigenous artists is not only an educational opportunity but also a step toward building respectful relationships.

5. Creating a Welcoming Environment

- Ensure the performance or workshop space is clean, organized, and ready.
- Display openness and curiosity; avoid placing the burden of explanation solely on the artist.
- Recognize and value the time, energy, and cultural knowledge that artists bring.

A Shared Responsibility

Welcoming Indigenous artists into your school is an act of reconciliation and responsibility. By creating an environment where Indigenous voices are heard, respected, and valued, we help bridge the historic gap in representation and contribute to a future where Indigenous peoples are authors of their own stories.

Together, we can ensure that schools become places where Indigenous knowledge is not just acknowledged but celebrated — and where students learn that reconciliation is something we all have a part in.