

CONNECTED NORTH ANNUAL REPORT

RIDEAU HALL FOUNDATION - 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR IN REVIEW



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Foundation



Connecting Communities, Inspiring Futures: Celebrating a Year of Impact

The 2024–2025 school year has been another growth period for Connected North, marked by remarkable network expansion, innovation, and deepening partnerships. As we reflect on our shared achievements, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to the **Rideau Hall Foundation**. Your commitment and collaboration has enabled us to deliver transformative educational experiences to students and teachers in 200 schools across First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities.



Your funding has supported many areas of the Connected North program during the 2024-2025 school year, including:

- A variety of Connected North sessions across subjects and grades
- In-person school visits - being present in the communities we serve is vital to program success - it allows us to build relationships, understand local priorities, and better support students and teachers.
- On-boarding new content providers, including Indigenous role models from our participating communities

Together, we are breaking down barriers, fostering understanding, amplifying Indigenous voices and empowering the next generation of leaders.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS & IMPACT

- **7,500+ Sessions Delivered (All-Time High)**

This year, Connected North reached a significant milestone in facilitating over 7,400 interactive learning sessions, bringing diverse educational opportunities directly into classrooms and communities. This is a record for the program in its 12 year history! This equals over **346,000 minutes** of learning this year.

- **200 Participating Schools:** We expanded to include 30 additional schools from last school year!

- **1,366 Unique Teachers Engaged:**

Our network continues to expand, with more than 1,300 unique teachers actively booking sessions —demonstrating the program’s growing reach and relevance.

- **95% Program Satisfaction:**

An overwhelming majority of teachers reported high satisfaction, underscoring the program’s positive impact on teaching and learning.

- **447 Active Content Providers:**

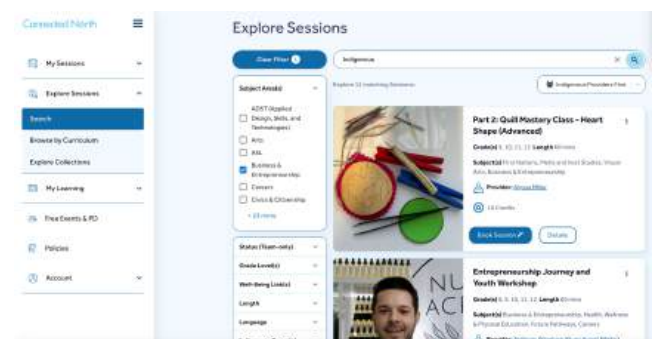
The heart of Connected North is our vibrant community of content providers. This year, 76 new organizations and individuals shared their expertise, creativity, and cultural knowledge.

- **56% Indigenous Providers:**

Over half of sessions were delivered by First Nations, Inuit and Métis providers, ensuring authentic voices are central to programming.

- **45% Digital Platform Requested Sessions:**

Nearly half of all sessions were requested through our digital platform, reflecting the growing ease and accessibility of our services.



SURVEY INSIGHTS

The Connected North program continues to bridge educational gaps by delivering live, interactive virtual learning experiences to remote and Indigenous classrooms across Canada. In Spring 2025, 236 teachers responded to our end-of-year survey to assess the program's impact. Their responses—both quantitative and qualitative—provide compelling evidence of Connected North's positive influence on student engagement, cultural affirmation, and future aspirations.



Key Findings

1. Exceptional Student Engagement and Attendance

- 95.7% of teachers agreed that Connected North sessions increased student engagement and contributed to improved attendance. This feedback has remained consistent over the years and is the strongest indicator of success for the program.
- Teachers consistently observed that students made a special effort to attend class on Connected North days. Many responses indicated that even previously disengaged learners showed renewed participation and excitement.
- Many educators strategically scheduled sessions after holidays or during challenging periods to boost attendance, reporting that hands-on and culturally enriching activities were especially effective in motivating students.



“We used the soapstone carving and quill work workshops to entice students back to school after the breaks. Knowing they were coming in to do something traditional and hands-on was motivating, far more than a regular first day back.”

– Teacher, Northwest Territories

2. Increased Interest and Motivation to Learn

- 96% of teachers reported that Connected North sessions sparked greater curiosity and interest in learning among students.
- 65.6% of teachers specifically noted increased curiosity about new topics, with students often continuing to discuss and explore session content long after the activity.
- Teachers described heightened enthusiasm, with some classes literally cheering when a session was announced, reflecting a significant boost in motivation and classroom energy.



3. Enhanced Cultural Representation and Identity Affirmation

- 92.7% of teachers agreed that the program affirms students' identities and pride in their cultures.
- More than half (57%) of teachers observed a greater interest in learning from Indigenous role models, and 43.8% saw a stronger sense of cultural pride among students.
- Teachers highlighted the unique value of Indigenous presenters and knowledge keepers, noting that these sessions fostered a sense of belonging and confidence, especially for Indigenous students.



4. Inspiration for Future Careers and Goals

- Teachers shared numerous stories of students discovering new passions and career aspirations as a direct result of Connected North sessions.
- Students expressed ambitions to become artists, scientists, or teachers after meeting role models through the program.
- Virtual career fairs and mentoring sessions introduced students to a wide range of professions, broadening their horizons and inspiring them to dream big.



“The students are learning about new career opportunities. My students are saying things like ‘I can teach art’ or ‘I want to be an artist. I want to study the ocean...’”

– Teacher, Yukon

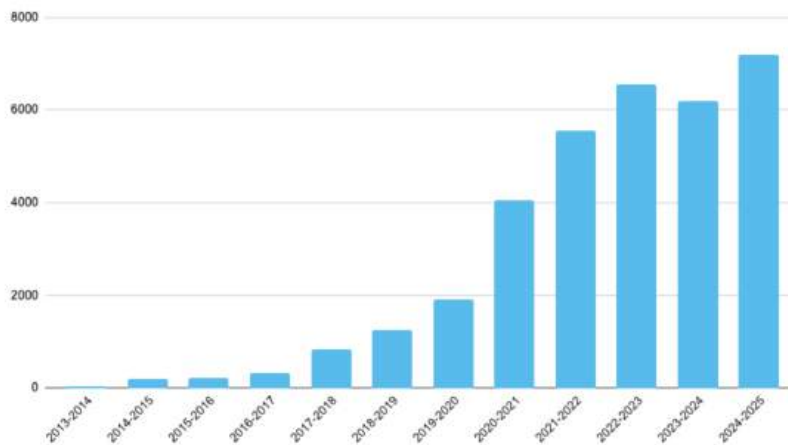
5. Teacher Satisfaction and Advocacy

- The program earned a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of +86, which is considered exceptionally high in program evaluation standards, with 93.6% of teachers rating their likelihood to recommend Connected North at 9 or 10 out of 10.
- Many educators actively advocate for Connected North programming among colleagues.
- Teachers praised the program's ease of use, relevance, and the profound impact on both students and their own teaching practices.

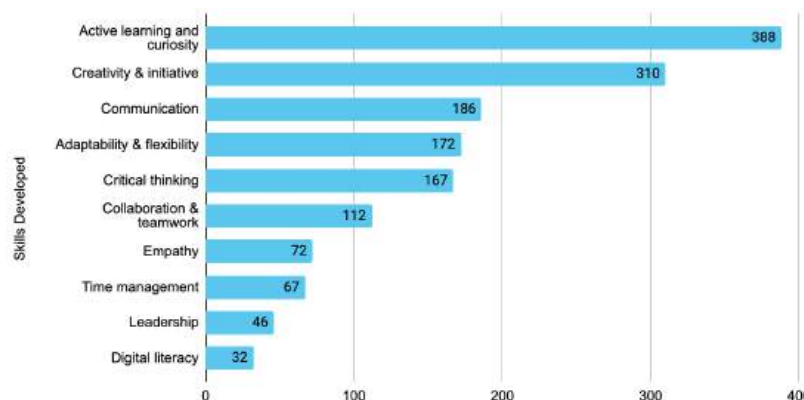


PROGRAM DELIVERY SUMMARY

This school year marked a milestone for Connected North, with **over 7,500+ sessions delivered—the highest in the program's history.**

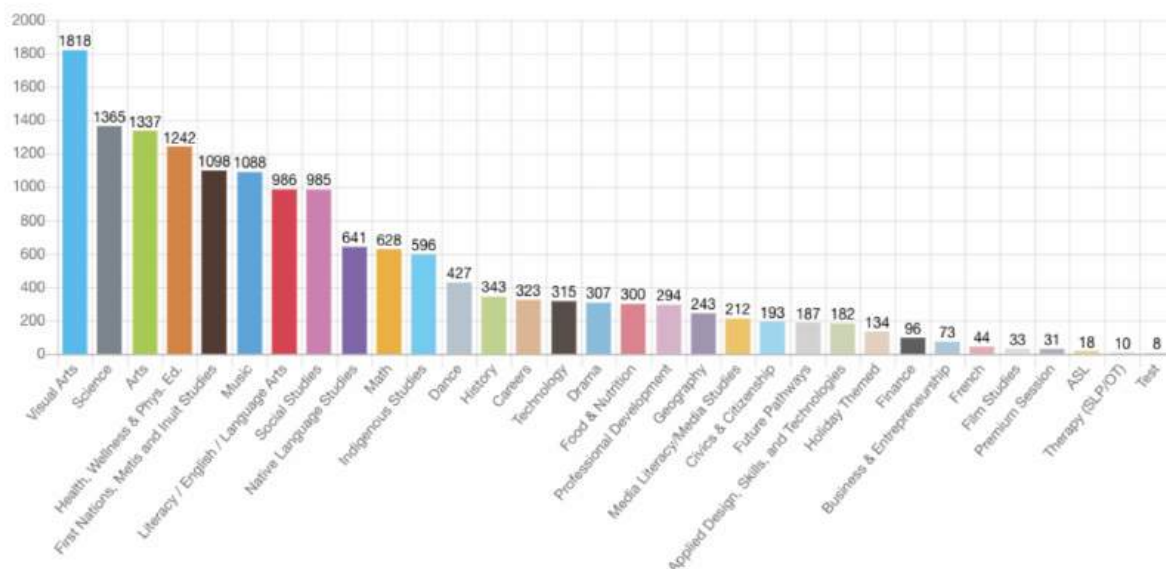


This year, we began **gathering new insights on skills development** by inviting educators to tag the skills they observed students developing during sessions. The **top skills reported were active learning, creativity and initiative, communication, adaptability and flexibility, and critical thinking.** In total, 20,000+ student interactions were tracked across 1,174 sessions aligned to these key skill areas:



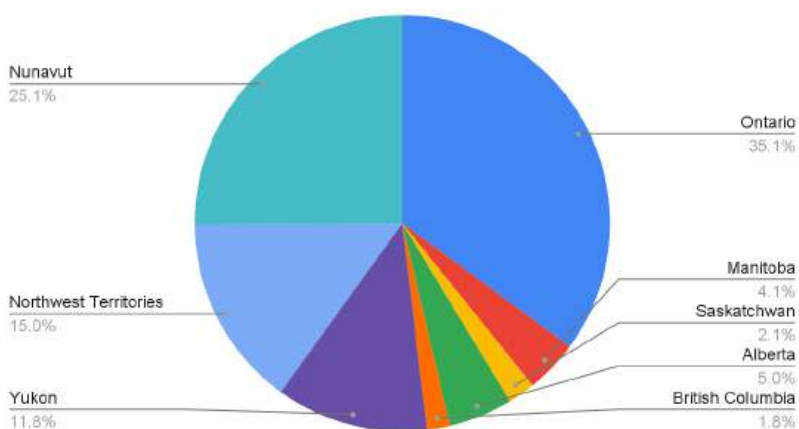
Connected North initially focused on science, but has expanded to cover the full breadth of curriculum areas, reflecting the diverse interests of students and educators. Our digital platform helps teachers easily integrate Connected North into their lesson plans by aligning sessions with curriculum expectations. This year, Visual Arts was the most requested subject, followed closely by Science, Health, Wellness & Physical Education, and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies.

Sessions By Subject



This year, **Ontario led in session participation**, with 69 active schools accounting for 35% of all Connected North sessions. Nunavut followed as the second most active region, representing 25% of sessions delivered, across all 45 schools in the Territory.

% of Total Sessions by Province/Territory



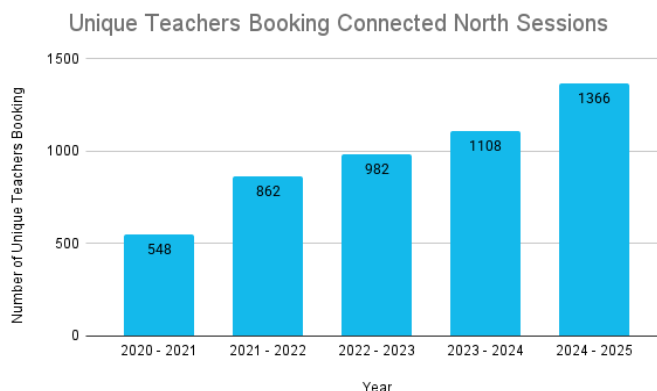
MEMORABLE LEARNING MOMENTS

- Brandon Kyikavichik, writer, performer and **Gwich'in language specialist** connected with three schools from across the Gwich'in Settlement Region to share and celebrate Gwich'in language and ingenuity.
- There were numerous **Inuit artists**, including Priscilla Boulay, Angus Cockney, Ame Papatsie, and George Qavviu Ningark that led sessions that **highlighted the beauty of Arctic life and Inuit culture**, including the very popular soapstone carving classes.
- Professor Laurie Rousseau-Nepton, the **first Indigenous woman in Canada to obtain a Ph.D. in astrophysics**, gave students a tour of the night sky, looking at the constellations and telling stories and the meaning they hold for different Indigenous communities.
- Lawrence Roy, a recognized hoop dancer from Little Pine First Nation, led 25 Connected North sessions this year, teaching students about the **history and cultural significance of the hoop dance and regalia**. He also taught many how to make their own hoops.
- Lindsay Poll, a **Métis WestJet flight attendant**, led a session on **careers in aviation**. Lindsay is also an advocate for Indigenous Peoples with CUPE and addressed how her advocacy work supports the rights of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit employees.
- The **Hockey Hall of Fame** has been a longtime partner of Connected North and delivered 44 sessions with topics including “**The Power of Team,**” “**Leaders,**” and “**The Stanley Cup.**”
- **Richard Van Camp**, a proud Tłıchoǵ Dene from Fort Smith, Northwest Territories, met with students to discuss his **journey of publishing 30 books in 30 years**.
- Scientists in Schools offered 27 different options for programs including: “Engineering it Up,” “**Electricity, Close the Circuit,**” and “Get the Dirt on Plants.”



TEACHERS

The **total number of unique participating teachers has increased over the past five years to 1,366**. To ensure the program stays on budget, each teacher is allocated ‘credits’ to use to book sessions, which requires teachers to align sessions thoughtfully with classroom priorities.



Across the Connected North national network, **406 teacher professional development sessions** were held across the program this school year, with subjects ranging from: “Chaos to Calm in the classroom,” “Potlatch to Pedagogy,” “Art Therapy in Education: Empowering Teachers through Creative Expression,” and “AI in the classroom.”

Connected North was also once again chosen to support the Nunavut Teachers’ Association’s annual professional development week. A total of 31 sessions were offered during the week-long virtual professional development experience, covering a wide range of topics—from navigating and embracing AI, to traditional Qajaq and bow making, to connecting math with lived experiences, and enhancing writing skills. More than 130 teachers from schools across the Territory participated.



CONTENT PROVIDERS

As Connected North expands to more schools, it’s essential to grow the network of experts to meet rising session demand—and to ensure students have access to fresh, diverse, and engaging perspectives. Between August 2024 and June 2025, **76 new content providers** joined the Connected North network, including 41 Indigenous role models. A **total of 447 organizations and individuals participated** in delivering at least one Connected North session this year.



“My students are always excited to see ‘Connected North’ on our agenda for the day. One day when I let them know we would be having a session, the group gave out a huge cheer.”

— Teacher, Ontario

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Connected North focuses on using technology to foster connections, but building in-person relationships remains an important and exciting part of our work. This school year, the Connected North team participated in **21 school visits**, where we supported technology training, gained a deeper understanding of school priorities and day-to-day realities, and spent meaningful time in the community. These visits also provided an opportunity to meet and onboard local content providers, helping them share their talents with a wider audience, and gain access to a new income stream through Connected North’s provider honorariums.



Connected North was also invited to attend numerous education conferences and community gatherings throughout the school year, including: 34th Annual Kishay Piisim Maamatowin/Great Moon Gathering, Science Teachers’ Association of Ontario: Northern Conference, Magnetic North Conference, Many Eagles Gathering, First Nation Education Directorate Conference, Shibogama and Windigo Teacher Orientation, Sunrise Festival, National Gathering for Indigenous Education, NAN Directors of Education Conference, among others. We thank all of these groups for sharing space with our team.



CONNECTED NORTH IN THE NEWS

- Future of Good:
[How do you plan a field trip for remote or fly-in communities? Non-profit has an answer](#)
- Cabin Radio:
[How a new approach connects Beaufort Delta artists and students](#)
- Walrus:
[The Power of Connection](#)
- Cabin Radio:
[Connected North 'allows students to see what is out there'](#)
- CBC:
[From Isolation to Inspiration: Transforming Remote Classrooms Through Virtual Learning](#)

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Connected North and the TakingITGlobal team were recognized by various organizations this year for the work being done to transform, innovate and support well-being in both the classrooms and the workplace.

- **Canadian Association of Science Centres** - 2025 CASCADE Award Finalist
- **hundrED** - featured as a top 15 innovation globally, pioneering well-being in schools
- **South Slave Divisional Education Council** - Excellence in Education Award for Partners
- **King Charles III Coronation Medal** - Jennifer Corriero, Executive Director, and Willa Black, Founder, were recognized for the impact of their work in February 2025
- **Dialogue** - 2025 Healthiest Workplace Awards
- **World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)** - 2025 WSIS Prizes Champion



OUR THANKS

Connected North is only possible thanks to a large ecosystem of content creators and providers, teachers, students, community members, local and government partners, education authorities, corporate and individual donors, private foundations, and advisors. We thank you all for your ongoing support.

PROGRAM DELIVERY & ECOSYSTEM LEADER



PROGRAM FOUNDER



CO-FUNDING EDUCATION AUTHORITIES

- Government of Nunavut
- Government of Ontario
- Yukon Government
- Athabasca Denesuline Education Authority
- Beaufort Delta Divisional Education Council
- Bella Bella Community School
- Coastal First Nations
- Dehcho Divisional Education Council
- First Nation School Board (Yukon)
- Grand Rapids School
- Keewatin Patricia District School Board
- Lakehead District School Board
- Long Lake #58 First Nation
- Marten Falls First Nation Education Authority
- Maskwacis Education Schools Commission
- Mushkegowuk Tribal Council
- Northwest Catholic District School Board
- Old Massett Village Council
- Rainy River District School Board
- Shibogama First Nations Council
- South Slave Divisional Education Council
- Webequie Education Authority
- Windigo Education Authority

VISIONARIES



CATALYSTS



CONTRIBUTORS



PRO-BONO & IN-KIND



CHAMPIONS

- *Ralph M. Barford Foundation*
- *Willa Black and Don Jarvis*
- *Graham Burton Foundation*
- *John & Nina Cassils*
- *Peter & Catherine Clark Family Foundation*
- *Gail MacNaughton*
- *Green Sanderson Family Foundation*
- *Mackinnon Family Charitable Fund*
- *Valley Properties Ltd (Marily Mearns)*

FRIENDS OF CONNECTED NORTH

- *Allan Stitt & Lisa Lewis*
- *Andrew & Sheila Black*
- *Annick Tonet-Tyers & Terry Tyers*
- *Anton Erdody*
- *Bill & Dawne Benson*
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- *Susannah Belton*
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- *Timothy Young*
- *Vered and Jay Feldman and Family*
- *William Black & Melani Griffith*

I have had more than one student in the last 2 years using Connected North who have found a sense of belonging because of a session we have attended. For some, it has sparked interest in a new skill, like soapstone carving. For others, it has helped them connect with their cultural identity in ways they hadn't before.

-Teacher, Northwest Territories

It is with respect, humility and kindness that the Connected North team would like to acknowledge the land that nourishes us. We acknowledge our interconnectedness and are thankful for the water that flows and life that grows each day. Our organization is composed of a team from many diverse backgrounds who are situated on Indigenous lands across many First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities. In this context, we approach our work with a shared responsibility in upholding treaty agreements and awareness of the ancestors who have come before us, along with the impact of our efforts for generations to come.

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