

## HALIFAX REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD

### Cultural Proficiency Needs Assessment Survey Report

**PURPOSE:** To inform the Governing Board of the results from a Cultural Proficiency Needs Assessment conducted with HRSB employees during the fall of 2014.

**BACKGROUND:** In alignment with Goal 2 of the HRSB Strategic Plan the 2013-14 Business Plan included a priority to *increase the cultural proficiency of teachers and administrators*. A team was established in October 2013 to develop and administer a cultural proficiency needs assessment survey for HRSB. The results of this survey are intended to inform future professional development.

The online survey was administered from September 15 to October 3, 2014. The team has carefully analysed respondent data and summarized their findings. The Cultural Proficiency Needs Assessment Survey Report provides four recommendations for an inter-departmental team to use to guide further action.

**CONTENT:** Please see Appendix A – Cultural Proficiency Needs Assessment Survey Report.

**COST:** Within existing budget

**FUNDING:** N/A

**TIMELINE:** N/A

**APPENDIX:** Appendix A - Cultural Proficiency Needs Assessment Survey Report, 2014

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended the Governing Board receive the report for information.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

AUDIENCE	RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE
Governing Board	Nancy Sparks, RCH Program Advisor	February 25, 2015
Website	Doug Hadley	February 25, 2015

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**To:** Governing Board - February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015

# HRSB Cultural Proficiency Needs Assessment Survey Report

2014

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# Cultural Proficiency Needs Assessment Survey Report

## Overview

Goal 2 of the HRSB Strategic Plan is to *maximize exemplary teaching practices to support high quality instruction*. The strategic plan also includes a strategy to *increase the cultural proficiency of teachers and administrators*. One measure of success articulated in the strategic plan is for *100% of teachers to complete professional development on (a) exemplary teaching practices and (b) cultural competency and proficiency*.

*Cultural Proficiency is defined as “an approach which offers both educators and their students’ knowledge and understanding of how to interact effectively with people in their environments who differ from them” (The Culturally Proficient School: An Implementation Guide for School Leaders, Lindsey et al., 2008). Cultural Proficiency is an approach that builds from Cultural Competence. Cultural Competence is defined as “a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enables that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations” (Terry Cross in Cultural Proficiency Inquiry: A Lens for Identifying and Examining Educational Gaps, Lindsey et al., 2005). (Racial Equity / Cultural Proficiency Framework, p. 1, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2011)*

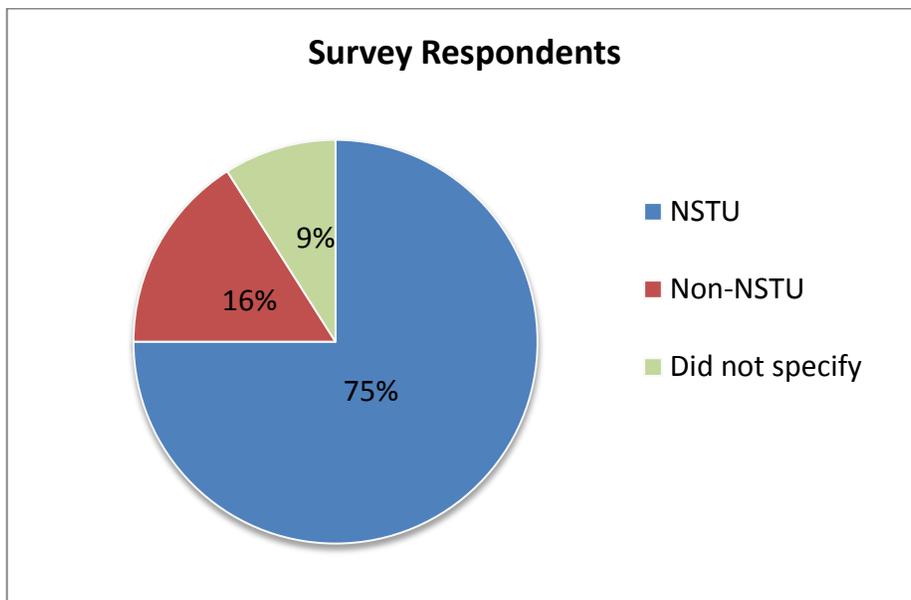
In alignment with the strategic plan, the Business Plan speaks to increasing the cultural proficiency of teachers and administrators. To meet this priority, a team was established in October 2013 to develop and administer a cultural proficiency needs assessment survey for HRSB. The team consisted of Tracey Jones-Grant (Board Services), Wendy Mackey (School Administration), Nancy Sparks, Miranda Burns and Karen Lemmon (Program) along with the support of Eric Doucet (Operations/Information Technology).

The survey consisted of demographic questions and three sections of statements on which respondents were asked to provide their opinion. The first section asked respondents to indicate the extent of time and/or resources HRSB **should** commit to particular actions, while the second section asked how much they thought HRSB **does** commit. In the third section, staff rated their level of agreement with statements about personal experience and beliefs. The survey was administered from September 15 – October 3, 2014. All current employees received an email communication asking them to participate by clicking the survey link. Passwords to access the survey were distributed to staff by Principals and Directors in a separate email.

## Demographics of Respondents

At the time the survey was completed, HRSB had 4854 permanent employees. In total, 1223 staff members responded to the survey, giving us a response rate of 25%. Typically, the average response rate for email surveys is 24.8%.

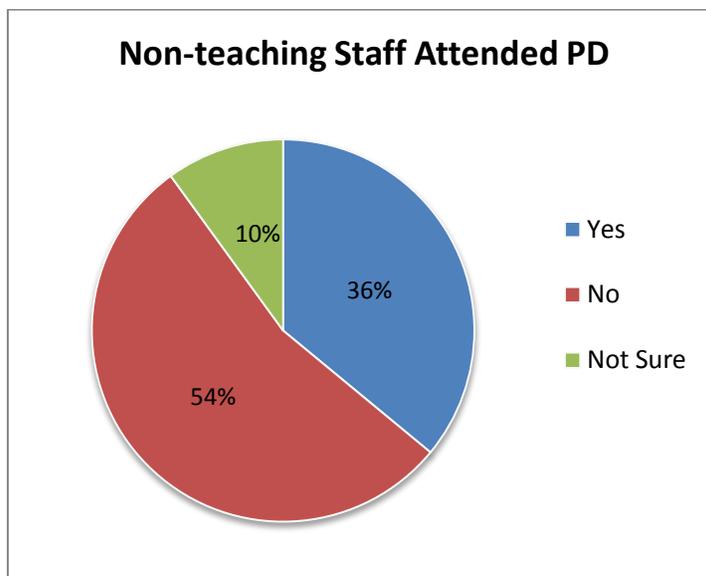
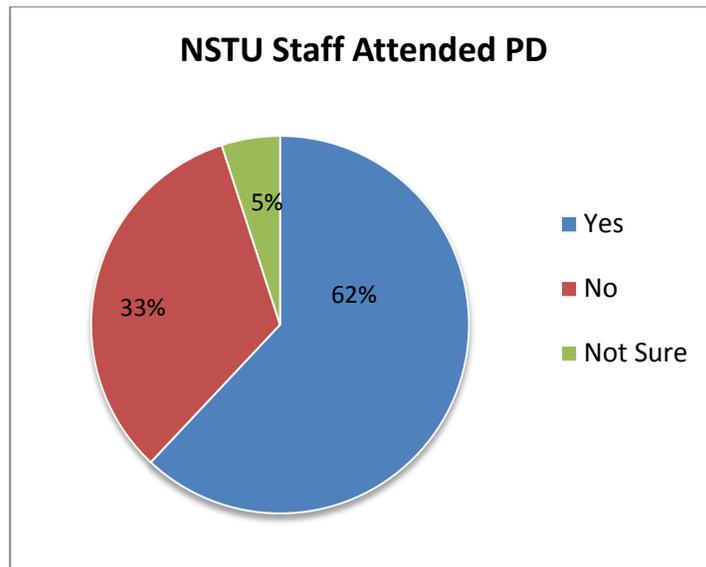
Respondents were given the opportunity to indicate their employee group: NSTU or non-teaching. Three-quarters of the participants were NSTU members, 16% were non-teaching, and 9% chose not to answer the question.



## Attendance at Professional Development

Respondents were asked whether they had attended an RCH in Learning, Cultural Competency, or Cultural Proficiency professional development (PD) session with HRSB. Overall, 58% of respondents had attended this type of PD session, 36% had not, and 6% were not sure.

Findings were different for the two employee groups: 62% of NSTU members had attended such PD compared to 36% of non-teaching staff.

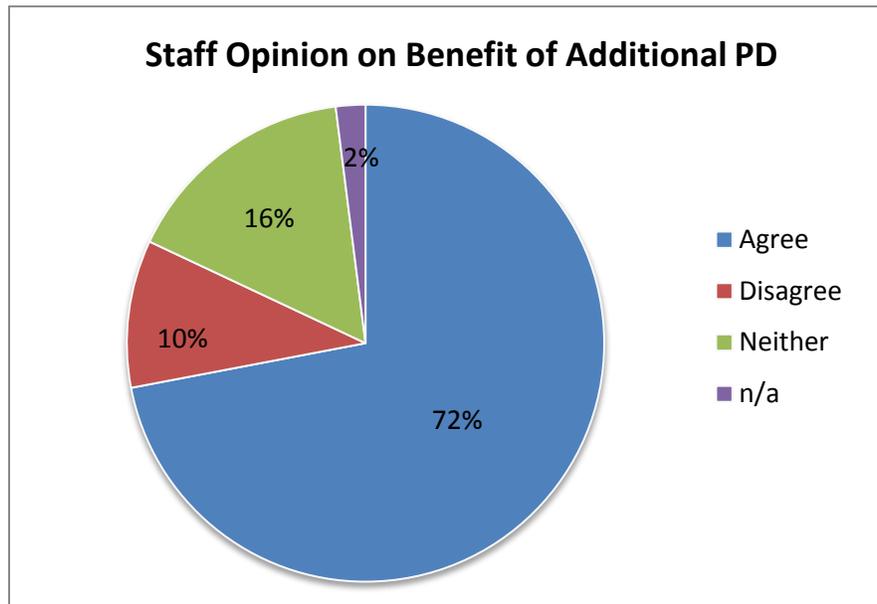


In looking at the total group who had **not** attended any professional development in these areas (N = 404), we found that 76% were unaware of the training and 10% were unable to attend. Some other reasons indicated for not attending were:

- Did not actively pursue the opportunity
- First year with HRSB, have not attended any PD
- Have done similar training elsewhere
- Past PD hard to access, ignores teaching situation
- Only the RCH rep goes at our school

Of the 33% of NSTU members who said they had not attended any professional development in these areas (N = 301), 74% were unaware of the training. Of the 54% of non-teaching staff who indicated they had not attended any professional development in these areas (N = 103), 84% were unaware of the training.

When asked whether they would benefit from additional professional development or guidance in the area of cultural proficiency, 72% of all respondents (N = 1120) agreed.



## Conclusions from Survey Statements

The next sections asked respondents to indicate the extent of time and/or resources HRSB *should* and *does* commit to particular actions. Throughout these findings, differences between the two responses were statistically significant with **should** being higher than **does**.

Respondents believe that HRSB should commit more time/resources to the following:

- 1) a formal selection process for materials that are inclusive;
- 2) activities to encourage interactions with people of different cultural groups and learning opportunities that value cultural commonalities and differences, strengths and needs;
- 3) regularly review policies to ensure there no subtle discriminatory practices;
- 4) teach collaborative problem-solving techniques and teach people how to ask others appropriately about their cultural practices;
- 5) hold staff accountable for holding high expectations for students and for their practice respecting the culture of others;
- 6) having consequences for those whose behaviours conflict with practices that promote diversity;
- 7) encouraging students and school staff to talk about difference without making judgments;
- 8) employing and promoting educators who reflect the cultural makeup of the student body;
- 9) teach us how to acknowledge differences among groups and that cultural groups often communicate in different ways;
- 10) provide opportunities for learning about one's own and other cultures;
- 11) ensure that cultural groups within the community are represented in decision-making groups and are represented on SACs;
- 12) clearly stating its norms, values, and cultural expectations;
- 13) policies against racist, sexist or homophobic language use and consequences for those who use such language.

## **Recommendations**

Participants' attitudes and beliefs indicate that considerable work needs to be completed to maximize exemplary teaching practices.

An inter-departmental team should be established to lead and implement the following recommendations:

- Define and share guiding principles of cultural proficiency for HRSB.
- Incorporate the guiding principles into all professional development.
- Deliver Cultural Proficiency Professional Development for all employees, defining the nature and frequency of the professional learning as well as an emphasis on sessions for new employees.
- Incorporate the guiding principles in all employee evaluation processes to outline clear expectations for a culturally proficient workforce.