

Benvenuto! Aaniin! Bienvenue! Welcome!

The 14th NAREA Winter Conference

With great pleasure, we welcome you to the 14th NAREA Winter Conference, “Educational Research: An Essential and Ethical Dimension in the Life of Children and Adults.”

We mark our 21st year of working with Reggio Children and local communities to bring professional development opportunities to more than 200,000 educators, families, advocates, policymakers, and community members across North America. Working from a space of hopefulness and optimism, we offer our annual conferences, a variety of initiatives, webinars, publications, exhibitions, and resources to support an elevated vision of education based on a new image of children, families, and communities. This year, we return to Toronto, a host community with a long history of dialogue, critical reflection, and relationship with those who act on the rights of children and adults. We are happy to be back!

Our colleagues from Reggio Emilia, Italy, Tiziana Filippini, Consuelo Damasi, and interpreter Jane McCall, will support our understanding as we continue to construct strong interpretations of the values, principles, and experiences of the Preschools and Infant-toddler Centers – *Istituzione* of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia. For that, we are most grateful, and we thank them.

Through our professional development projects, we encounter a host of schools at varying points of their own journey, willing to open their doors, expose their work, and welcome the participation of visitors. With gratitude, we recognize Bishop Strachan School, the children, educators, and families for receiving us into their context. This style of development has been introduced to all of us by the only “Reggio schools” of Reggio Emilia, Italy. To be continually encouraged to find our own unique identities as schools, in different communities worthy in our own identity, is to see how much the message of Reggio Emilia is based on attitudes of research and innovation rather than prescriptive dogma.

As we enter the topic of educational research with our Reggio colleagues over the next three days, we invite you to embrace an innovative pedagogy grounded in the belief of Loris Malaguzzi that intelligent children deserve intelligent teachers. We applaud you for your efforts.

Chi miigwech, merci, grazie mille, thank you.

With nostalgia for the future,

NAREA Board and Staff

