

Appendix B: What we learned

Engagement overview and analysis

Prepared by [Argyle Communications Inc.](#)



**Mash Koh
Wee Kah
Pooh Win**

**Standing
Strong
Task Force**

Ryerson Standing Strong Task Force

**WHAT WE LEARNED
ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW
AND ANALYSIS**

**Ryerson
University**



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Executive summary

The focus of this report is to convey findings from the public engagement period, which ran from March 16 to May 16, 2021. It is notable that during this period, the statue of Egerton Ryerson remained on campus, so all responses relating to the statue's preservation, relocation, or removal should be considered in that context.

When it comes to complex and nuanced matters of legacy, commemoration and reconciliation in the Ryerson University community, hearing community members' voices must be central to conversations about how to address the past and build a better future based on what has been learned. The Standing Strong Task Force (SSTF) sought to implement a broad engagement opportunity for members of the university community and the public to understand perspectives, and ideas relating to four main topics: the statue of Egerton Ryerson, the legacy of Egerton Ryerson, commemoration, and reconciliation. The SSTF also shared six draft principles to guide decisions about commemoration and invited the public to share their feedback on them as well as how they could be put into action.

Engagement opportunities included an online survey (with seven open-ended questions), community conversations, and the option to send written submissions directly to the Task Force. In addition to these options, the SSTF considered open-letters and op-eds that were published in the media. To understand who was engaging in the process, the survey and conversation report-back included optional demographic questions. This allowed us to provide a further layer of analysis based on self-reported demographic identities to ensure we captured and could report back on how themes varied between select focus communities. This chapter presents the overall findings from these engagement mechanisms. Overall, the top themes in order of frequency were:

- Desire to remove the statue
- General support for the principles
- No desire to commemorate Egerton Ryerson
- General suggestions to advance reconciliation
- Keep the statue as is

There was overwhelming desire to remove the statue, or to relocate it to a less prominent location on or off campus. We heard a variety of suggestions on what could replace the statue, with many respondents wanting to see decisions based on conversations with and guidance from Indigenous community members. However, we also heard support to keep the statue, either as a reminder of the troubling past, or because historical figures cannot be judged based on modern-day views. Most respondents expressed disapproval of commemorating Egerton Ryerson due to his controversial past and role in the design and implementation of the Indian Residential School System (IRSS). Many felt that it is unethical to commemorate an individual who had a part in an education system that sought to assimilate Indigenous children into a settler colonial society. Thus, many offered ideas and possible next steps for the university to advance reconciliation, including actions, commitments, and structural changes.

When it came to the six draft principles for decision making about commemoration, most agreed that they are a good starting point for the university's approach to commemoration. However, many also expressed desire for more concrete, action-oriented language, and that action should be grounded in equity and in listening to the voices of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. When asked if there was anything else respondents would like to share with the Task Force, the main theme was a plea for the university to take action. There was also significant support expressed for the SSTF work and a desire to see it moving ahead. Together, these responses indicate that this engagement is just one part of ongoing and important conversations within the university community and broader public to guide next steps.

Opening

Report prepared by Argyle Communications Inc.

The SSTF engagement and communications program was supported by Argyle Communications Inc. As part of this work Argyle was responsible for the review, analysis, and summary of feedback as well as the preparation of the *'What we learned'* report for the Task Force. Throughout the *'What we learned'* report, "we" refers to the Argyle engagement team. This is to differentiate between (1) the overall engagement process, which was designed and directed by the Task Force, and (2) the data collection, coding, and analysis process, which was led by Argyle. Argyle was supported by a group of graduate students at the university in the data coding process, connecting this work to ongoing research work related to Egerton Ryerson's legacy and commemoration.

Argyle has over 30 years of experience leading engagement across the country. We execute and design complex and integrated programs that focus on shaping public policy, developing public infrastructure and supporting diverse groups and communities that have historically been underrepresented. We are proud of the diversity of our work, including:

- Helping survivors of the Federal Indian Day School Program complete their class-action claims with in-community support
- Our leadership of public engagement and communications on the Ontario Anti-Racism Strategy and the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy
- Our award-winning program to educate Canadians and help achieve justice for survivors of the Sixties Scoop, a dark chapter in Canadian history in which Indigenous children were taken from their families and cultures
- Our public health work in partnership with Indigenous communities in Canada's North
- The models we have built for the inclusive engagement of diverse and equity-seeking communities

Introduction

About the engagement process



The design of the engagement process was guided by the wisdom and direction of the SSTF members and Co-chairs. This work is represented as a circle with no one above, no one below, no one ahead and no one behind. Regardless of age, stage, or position, everyone has an equally valued voice. Within the circle, an eagle feather honours the truth and bravery brought into this work by all the community members who joined the process.

To bring this representation into practice, the engagement program was designed to provide everyone with an unbiased opportunity to share their thoughts. Accordingly, the engagement did not seek to inform individuals before participating – instead it asked everyone to come as they are and said that all would be treated equally. This approach informed the design of the online survey, as well as the creation of the community conversation process. Community conversations provided the engagement questions and offered support to individuals who wished to host a discussion about the engagement topics with a small group of their choosing. Supports included but were not limited to accessibility and technology. This decentralized approach allowed hosts to create and shape a discussion space that was safe to them and their participants and that reflected the customs, practices or protocol that was meaningful to them.

About the Task Force

The Task Force was struck by the university President in fall 2020 with a mandate to:

- Conduct broad, open and transparent consultations to gather feedback from students, faculty, staff, alumni, partners and others about what the university can do to reconcile the history of Egerton Ryerson.
- Examine and more fully understand Egerton Ryerson’s relationships with Indigenous Peoples, education and the residential school system, and consider how that legacy aligns with Ryerson University’s values and mission.
- Examine how other universities have addressed the challenges of monuments and statues.
- Develop principles to guide the recommended actions that Ryerson could take to respond to Egerton Ryerson’s legacy and the findings of the consultations.
- Submit a final report to the President with recommended actions regarding the statue and other elements of Egerton Ryerson’s history.

Originally named the Egerton Ryerson Presidential Task Force, co-Chair Joanne Dallaire, a Cree pipe carrier gifted with the ability to seek out Spirit Names, sought out a Spirit Name for the Task Force in early 2021. Further to this, Joanne said, “this name is in recognition of our ancestors and spirit helpers

who are invited to join this process to help guide us.” The Spirit Name for the Task Force in English is Standing Strong. In Cree (N-dialect), it is written as ‘Mash Koh Wee Kah Pooh Win.’

Engagement process and methods

Engagement approach

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Task Force had an opportunity to structure an engagement process that met people where they were, on their time, and without significant barriers to participation by conducting everything virtually. To support community members who did not have internet readily available, resources and supports were offered to all those who wished to participate in another format. The Task Force recognized that people had different understandings of the statue and related matters of commemoration and reconciliation – and that they needed to ask questions in a format that allowed people to reflect and share their input in a variety of ways.

Engagement methods

Participants were encouraged to share ideas through an online survey or by hosting a community conversation. A conversation toolkit was provided to support those who facilitated their own discussions. The toolkit included suggestions for virtual engagement, a conversation guide and resources for accessibility support such as closed captioning and translation services. There were also recommendations on the best way to record feedback, as well as a report-back template for conversation hosts. This process was established to ensure that people felt supported in hosting conversations and that the data coding and analysis team could review all feedback in a relatively systematic way.

Engagement questions

Throughout the engagement process, the Task Force used five guiding questions (with three sub-questions related to the draft principles) to invite feedback on key areas of consideration. The questions were designed to be open and reflective of a range of voices. This approach sought to ensure responses would capture the complexity of commemoration and reconciliation, and that participants had space to share a range of perspectives including comments, questions, and suggestions to the university community as to possible next steps. All questions were open-ended. The questions were:

1. What are your thoughts and ideas about the statue of Egerton Ryerson?
2. Given what you may know of Egerton Ryerson’s legacy, how does that affect your view of commemoration today?
3. In Fall 2021 the Task Force will present recommendations on commemoration to the Ryerson University President. In order to do this, the Task Force is building principles that will build on the vision and values of the university.*
 - a. Thinking about these principles, what do you like?
 - b. Thinking about these principles, what should be changed?

- c. Thinking about these principles, what else would you like to see included?
4. Given the university's commitment to reconciliation, what ideas do you have to address the legacy of Egerton Ryerson?
5. Is there anything else about the work of the Task Force you'd like to share with us?

* Please tell us what you think of the **draft principles below** for future decision-making about commemoration.

- Reconciliation: we have a responsibility to better meet the needs of Indigenous Peoples by examining our education system and how we can do things differently
- Transparency: in the spirit of trust-building, we must be open about our decision making
- Impact: we must consider harm and achievement as critical factors for decisions on commemoration
- Equity and inclusion: we are deliberate in our pursuit to advance institutional equity for sovereignty-seeking Indigenous Peoples, as well as equity-deserving groups including Black and People of Colour communities
- Humility: we humble ourselves to acknowledge that we are part of a greater whole, and we must take responsibility when we have erred
- Integrity: we embody these principles with intention and advance them with courage

Engagement mechanisms

As part of an inclusive engagement program, we offered several mechanisms for community to share their input. The goal was to ensure people could respond in a way that felt safe, comfortable, and culturally relevant. All engagement was supported by tailored communications to the public and stakeholder groups, including two public presentations. To reach focus communities within the university and the broader public, the Task Force used a variety of communications channels and techniques to share information and opportunities for engagement. Please see *Appendix B* for a detailed stakeholder list, including each individual and organization who received communications about the engagement program.

Table 1: Engagement snapshot

Engagement mechanism	Description	Number of participants
Total	We engaged with over 11,000 individuals across all engagement mechanisms listed below.	11,000+
Online survey	The online survey was housed through an online portal (CivilSpace, a user-friendly virtual engagement platform) and open to any member of the public from March 16 to May 16, 2021. It included seven open-ended questions and seven optional demographic questions; respondents could choose to answer as many questions as they wished.	8,566 total survey starts 22,860 individual question responses
Community presentations	The co-Chairs presented an outline of the SSTF mandate and engagement program to the broader university community through two presentations on March 23 and April 8, 2021. These presentations provided the community with opportunities to ask questions about the process and learn how they could share further input. For those who could not attend the pre-scheduled times, a video recording was posted on Youtube and shared on social media and the engagement portal .	195+ participants and 24+ YouTube video views
Community conversations	Participants were encouraged to host their own community conversations. A conversation toolkit was provided on the online. It included five conversation starters, tips to access supports and resources, and a report-back form to return on the online portal, by email, or by mail.	18+ community conversations with 250+ participants
Direct communications to the Task Force	Any member of the Ryerson University community could send a direct message to the Task Force via e-mail or written submission. These communications were logged as part of the engagement process and were included in analysis.	250+ direct communications
Social media	The University ran five targeted ad sets, which generated 186 link clicks to the online survey.	40,700 digital impressions and 186 link clicks to online survey

Communications support provided

The Task Force offered a variety of communications support to share information about engagement and how the university community and members of the public could learn more and provide their input. All communications were grounded in clear messaging and used a consistent look-and-feel to ensure that people recognized them as components of SSTF engagement. All events and engagement opportunities were promoted digitally using the university's communications channels, including social media, website, and e-newsletters. All engagement materials, including the online survey, conversation toolkit, and short introductory video were also housed on the online portal to ensure that everyone could access them in one place. These materials included:

- Promotional posters for community organizations
- Paid promotions – paid social media ads to reach specific communities within the university and the broader landscape of Toronto community organizations
- Social media posts – organic posts to reach the broad public and stakeholders within the university community
- E-newsletters sent to university faculties, departments, and alumni
- Infographic to outline engagement timelines and phases (shared on the online portal and other communications materials)
- Community presentations, hosted on Zoom and open to any interested person
- Community presentation recording and materials (housed on YouTube and shared on the online portal)
- Short video about the Task Force and engagement (housed on YouTube and shared on the online portal)
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet
- Direct outreach to stakeholders (e.g. emails, phone calls)

Timeline

The following graphic illustrates how engagement was designed into the larger SSTF process:



Public engagement launched on March 16 and closed on May 16. This two-month window was timed to coincide with the university's winter term while also providing a large window of time within which community members could engage with the project and share their feedback.

While engagement was framed around this two-month opportunity to provide feedback, input was received via email before the launch of engagement and between May 17 and June 30 that was also

captured and incorporated into this summary report. Feedback received after May 16 is included in the post-engagement period correspondence addendum.

Concurrent to engagement, a research project and Task Force presentations were taking place. The SSTF research team completed an external scan of similar processes that have happened globally and they conducted historical research on Egerton Ryerson's life and legacy. Task Force presentations were provided by scholars, knowledge keepers, and subject matter experts who were identified by the membership.

Following the close of the engagement window, the project team reviewed and organized comments from the various input mechanisms. To conduct analysis, we themed feedback to identify emerging ideas. This process is known as engagement coding and is a type of content analysis used in qualitative research. Once all comments were themed and coded, we summarized each theme and cross-tabulated responses with the available demographic data to identify responses from various demographic communities (referred to throughout the report as focus communities).

Next, to tell the story of engagement and summarize the extensive feedback provided, we crafted a report structure that reflected the questions asked, and nuance of comments received through the engagement period.

Finally, this report will be submitted to the President of Ryerson University, Mohamed Lachemi along with the final report and recommendations of the Task Force.

Program opportunities and limitations

An online-first and decentralized approach to engagement

Initiating engagement design with COVID-19 public health recommendations in full effect meant leveraging a range of digital tools to connect with community, while ensuring they had an accessible and inclusive opportunity to provide feedback. To this end a virtual engagement hub was established to provide a single point of contact for all related engagement materials. Parallel to the online hub, technological and accessibility supports were provided through the SSTF Engagement Manager and Community Conversation process.

Recognizing the highly sensitive and personal nature of conversations related to the engagement program, a decentralized approach was applied to the Community Conversation stream. This approach meant that community members could host conversations in a way that was most relevant to them. They were able to download a user-friendly toolkit that was designed to support this decentralized approach. The toolkit included a report-back form to facilitate data gathering.

The challenges of recognizing complex histories

The question of what to do with the statue of Egerton Ryerson and how to advance reconciliation by addressing Egerton Ryerson's legacy within the university community is complicated and grounded in many layers of history. We knew there were a multitude of understandings of Ryerson as a historical figure and as an ongoing symbol on campus. To make space for this breadth of perspectives, we

designed the survey questions to allow for open responses, encouraging participants to reflect and respond from their own experiences and understandings of history, and to share with the Task Force whatever they felt was relevant to the project. Throughout engagement we communicated the Task Force’s openness to hearing different narratives, rather than reinforcing any single or dominant perspective.

An opportunity to listen and learn

At outset the SSTF established that engagement was not a truth-telling exercise but rather a process to listen, reflect, and learn. The goal of the process was to document all ideas and suggestions and shape them into a full list of considerations to inform the Task Force’s next steps and recommendations. This approach meant providing feedback and community recommendations without weight, or filter. All ideas would be presented equally for the Task Force’s consideration. The process also included consideration of tone and sentiment – both towards the engagement topics as well as about the Task Force and the engagement program itself. Attending to tone meant that a deeper understanding of feedback was provided to the Task Force to inform their decision-making.

Engagement challenges and mitigation strategies

Given the sensitive nature of the project and public discourse on the subject, several key considerations were reflected through engagement planning. Under the leadership of the SSTF, the planning team took great care to ensure that all participants were treated with respect and had accessible opportunities to provide their input.

Table 2: Engagement challenges and mitigation strategies

Challenge	Description	Planning strategy
Planning engagement within the context of longstanding conversations and history	The complex history and highly sensitive nature of the project, as well as past conversations had to be considered when creating the engagement plan.	Undertook an extensive media scan and audience analysis to better understand interests and concerns, and designed engagement to build on conversations that have been happening for years.
Accommodating different levels of understanding	Participants had different understandings and opinions on this subject.	The Task Force was created to provide an unbiased and informed approach to this project. All participants had equal access to background information and the conversation toolkit to host their own community conversations.
Securing broad participation	It was important to receive as many perspectives as possible in order to inform the university of the best recommendations.	The promotional and communications plan was created to gather input from broad audiences, with a target on the university

		community. We promoted through social media channel and email newsletter campaigns and we encouraged participants to share posters within their community.
Working within a limited mandate for engagement	The Task Force's mandate for this project is limited to providing suggestions to the university. All final decisions will be made by the university.	We supported the Task Force to manage expectations and were open to sentiments of frustration, skepticism, and engagement fatigue. We clearly communicated the scope of engagement and were transparent about the emergent context to ensure that even if people had criticisms about the process, they understood what we were doing and why.
Designing online engagement due to COVID-19 restrictions	An online engagement program brought challenges related to adapting to technologies, screen fatigue and competing responsibilities at home.	Participants had the opportunity to host their own community conversations and were encouraged to use the conversation toolkit that provided resources to mitigate this challenge. Some of the resources that were made available included translation services and the option to complete a paper survey. Engagement was also open for two months to provide greater flexibility for respondents.
Other outreach challenges	Reaching important groups was challenging due to past history and trauma having to be relived. We understood that sometimes those with the most direct and person experience might not wish to participate, especially if there were a risk of being re-traumatized.	Whenever possible, participants were offered supports and resources to create a safe and welcoming environment.

What we learned: overall

Summary of key themes

The top five themes we heard overall were:

- Desire to remove the statue
- General support for the principles
- No desire to commemorate Egerton Ryerson
- General suggestions to advance reconciliation
- Keep the statue as is

We used a qualitative content analysis approach to review each comment, identify overarching themes, and then code each comment to a theme. This led to the emergence of five top themes listed above. These are broad themes and there was variation within each theme. For example, within the broad theme “Desire to remove the statue”, sub-themes included safety (e.g. it creates an unsafe environment, harms BIPOC communities), values alignment (e.g. it doesn’t reflect the university’s values), and broader comments about the university (e.g. removing it would demonstrate commitment to a changing environment and ethics). It is important to note this variation within themes and looking closely at sub-themes and comments to understand people’s values and experience that shaped each comment.

There was overwhelming support for removal of the statue because it provides a solid first step on the journey of reconciliation. There were also many suggestions on what could replace the statue, should it be removed. This sentiment was also reflected for the principles. Many respondents acknowledged that the principles provide a base for this journey and should thus be treated as a guide to reconciliation in all that the university does. There was consensus around the disapproval of commemorating Egerton Ryerson due to his controversial past. Many felt that it is unethical to commemorate an individual who had a part in Canada’s devastating history with Indigenous communities. Thus, many offered suggestions and recommendations towards the next step of the university’s reconciliation journey, including actions and processes that the university can implement. There was also support to keep the statue as is for a few different reasons. Some felt that keeping the statue would be a constant reminder of our horrific past so as not to repeat these mistakes, and others felt that historical figures cannot be judged based on views held in past years.

It is important to note that within each theme, there were many subthemes reflecting a diversity of experiences and opinions, all of which should be considered in the decision-making process. Below you will find a more detailed analysis which captures nuance and diverging perspectives.

Reflecting on tone and sentiment

Given the complexity of the survey questions and the ongoing conversations about the statue, commemoration, and reconciliation, we also sought to capture tone and sentiment across responses. This additional layer of analysis was used to distinguish between sentiment about the engagement process itself and comments about the statue, commemoration, principles, and reconciliation (i.e., expressions of opinion in response to the survey questions). In some cases, tone and sentiment

reflected the opinions expressed (e.g. desire to stop commemorating Egerton Ryerson and anger/frustration about the engagement process); in other cases, tone and sentiment diverged from the opinions expressed (e.g. desire to remove the statue and gratitude for the engagement process).

We used this additional level of analysis to account for differences between feelings about engagement and about the matters at hand – recognizing that many participants have been having these conversations for a long time and wanted space to share their feedback about engagement more broadly. It was also important to note that many participants had positive sentiments about engagement while having strong negative opinions about the statue of Egerton Ryerson, which demonstrates the importance of using open-ended questions to invite people to share their perspectives as well as where they were coming from.

We heard a spectrum of sentiments in response to the survey questions and about the engagement process itself, which are summarized in *Figure 1*. In addition to general positive and negative sentiments, we also noted a theme of uncertainty or questioning, indicating these conversations can be ambiguous and do not point to one outcome by consensus. By noting the presence of divergence in opinions, we strove to acknowledge differing and sometimes conflicting narratives.

Figure 1: Spectrum of tone and sentiments



*Includes those who expressed gratitude for a space to reflect, for dialogue, and for the engagement process.

**Includes those who expressed a sentimental tie or connection to the statue due to being an alumnus/alumna of the university and seeing the statue as a landmark on campus.

Emerging ideas and suggestions

Throughout the engagement process, we heard many suggestions or ideas on what to do about the statue of Egerton Ryerson, approaches to commemoration, and ideas on advancing reconciliation. Some suggestions were broad in nature while others were specific and tied to action items (either for university leaders or for the broader public). Following the approach to analysis where all responses are considered equally and none is weighted higher than another, we compiled a list of all suggestions and ideas, which are presented in the summary tables below. The suggestions for the statue should be considered in the context of the March to May 2021 engagement window when the statue remained on campus in its painted state (from the demonstrations in summer of 2020).

Table 3: Suggestions relating to the statue

Keep	Remove and/or replace	Relocate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep as it is • Keep in its vandalized state • Keep and add historical context on site (e.g. descriptive text on accompanying plaque, QR code) • Keep and add art installation led by Indigenous communities • Keep and have an Indigenous muralist or sculpture artist add historical context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove altogether • Replace with larger historical plaque • Replace with a new sculpture created by an Indigenous artist • Replace with memorial for Indigenous populations affected by the IRSS • Implement institution-wide education grounded in Indigenous histories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to another location on campus (e.g. quad, Kerr Hall, somewhere less prominent) • Move and add interpretive hallway walkthrough video with audiovisual displays • Move to a location off campus (e.g. museum, cemetery)

Table 4: Suggestions relating to commemoration

Expand education	Centre diverse voices and historical figures	Name and symbols	Accountability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand education on Indigenous histories Explore ER's relationship with Indigenous Peoples Highlight ER's role in segregated schools and the limited educational opportunities for women - in addition to his role in the IRSS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centre Indigenous voices in future commemoration strategies and actions Commemorate someone else, e.g. Indigenous People, Canadians who contributed to the university (e.g. Viola Desmond) Demonstrate solidarity with BIPOC communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rename the university (general suggestion) Remove the statue and associated imagery and symbols (e.g. campus mascot, other images) Create an historic display about ER and other historical figures of 19th century Ontario/Upper Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to accountability to addressing ER's complex legacy – positive and negative Minimize existing commemoration of ER Issue a public apology Establish a reparations program

Table 5: Suggestions relating to reconciliation

Learn from the past	University action/accountability	Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn from the past, through explanation of historical context of ER's legacy (good and bad) Communicate historical accuracy and transparency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledgement and accountability, in form of an official statement and commitment to principles Desire for systemic, structural change: e.g., Indigenous recruitment, hiring, and outreach General support for a name change Desire for strong, clear and impactful messaging RE: university action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational reform: e.g., mandatory first-year course for all programs, mandatory module/week dedicated to ER's legacy and impacts, more experiential learning within Indigenous communities Commemorative space for learning and providing materials for all on Indigenous history Place-based education: adding to the existing plaque, building a video kiosk, replacing the statue with a commemorative art piece

Table 6: Suggestions relating to the draft principles

Process and decision-making frameworks	University action/accountability	Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processes for implementing principles should be completely transparent, e.g. who is on the Task Force, how are decisions being made, when, why, and how Consider the frameworks of: decolonization, land back, harm reduction, anti-colonialism Broaden equity language without diluting the focus on Indigenous reconciliation Make students a priority in the principles and decision-making process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urgent call for action and accountability mechanisms for oversight and enforcement of principles Desire for plans on how to address similar issues in the future Add truth to the principle of reconciliation (related to weariness of the use of the term ‘reconciliation’ in Canada and associated empty promises) Principles cannot be upheld without institution name change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principles should be upheld beyond the name/statue to create ongoing institutional improvements (e.g., hire/tenure more BIPOC faculty, more Indigenous curriculum and courses) Education on ER’s full history (both the good and the bad) should be transparent Institution should lead by action and correct injustices (i.e., change name) Institution should be forward-looking, proud, and re-define what Ryerson means (keep the name)

Please see *Appendix A* for a complete list of ideas and suggestions heard throughout engagement for the Task Force’s consideration.

What we learned: online survey

Detailed overview of survey responses

This section provides detailed summaries for each of the five survey questions asked about the commemoration of Egerton Ryerson. It includes supporting quotes verbatim (i.e., no edits for grammar, spelling, or punctuation), with names, ethnicity, and other identifiers removed to protect respondents' confidentiality.

Our analysis starts with an overview of the responses for each survey question before highlighting feedback from the focus communities outlined below. To center their voices we filtered survey responses by demographic identifier and by affiliation with the university community. These results are represented in summary tables for each question.

Recognizing that communities have experienced the impacts of the statue in different ways, we sought to bring their voices to the forefront throughout the survey analysis. These communities include respondents who self-identified in the optional survey demographic questions as:

- First Nations, Indigenous or Metis (represented in the analysis below as "Indigenous")
- Black, e.g. Afro-Caribbean, African-Canadian (represented in the analysis below as "Black")
- Current university students
- University alumni
- University staff
- University faculty
- Community members

Survey questions and themes

Q1: Statue

We asked the question "*What are your thoughts and ideas about the statue of Egerton Ryerson?*" Table 1 provides the top three broad themes by frequency of comments, along with sub-themes and analysis. We have also included sample verbatim quotes below to illustrate key commentary we identified within each theme.

General positive sentiments included positivity for Egerton Ryerson as a person and wanting to acknowledge his role in Ontario's education system – recognizing that his contributions were both beneficial and problematic, particularly for Indigenous students. Some respondents felt that the name was important to the university identity, whether or not Egerton Ryerson played a role in its founding.

Comments also spoke to concerns about a “false persona” resulting from misinformation that has led people to believe Egerton Ryerson contributed to harm against Indigenous communities.

General included feelings of concern, distrust, and skepticism. These comments were often tied to an overwhelming feeling that this engagement process is too little, too late, and that people are concerned engagement will not lead to meaningful action within the university community. Other notable sentiments included a desire to move away from glorifying/honouring Egerton Ryerson, concerns about what the statue represents (e.g. symbol of discrimination/oppression to Indigenous peoples), and deep concerns about the statue contributing to traumatization. Among respondents who self-identified as Indigenous, comments expressed discontent, discomfort and being offended by the statue. Some questioned the university’s commitment to advancing truth and reconciliation, while the statue and other commemorative symbols remain part of the university’s identity.

We also noted sentiments of embarrassment and frustration, for example questioning why we are still having these conversations when communities within the university have been calling for removal of the statue for a long time – and that we should be focussing on reducing harm to communities who have experienced marginalization at the hands of historical figures within the education system.

Table 7: Statue – themes, sub-themes and analysis

Theme and number of comments	Sub-themes	Analysis
<p>Remove the statue (1,668)</p>	<p>Creates unsafe environment; harms BIPOC communities.</p> <p>It doesn't reflect the university's values and where we are going.</p> <p>Removing it would demonstrate the university's commitment to a changing environment and ethics.</p>	<p>The most frequent theme across responses was a desire to remove the statue; some comments were standalone and provide no further comment (i.e., "remove the statue", "get rid of the statue") whereas others included commentary on why they want to see the statue removed (e.g., it doesn't align with the university's values and commitment to reconciliation; it perpetuates harm against BIPOC communities). Generally speaking, respondents felt that we should not be commemorating colonial oppressors regardless of their roles in building educational systems, and that for Indigenous students and community members, the statue is a visible reminder of Egerton Ryerson's contribution to residential school legislation. Within this theme, some respondents suggested that the statue should be removed and replaced with statues of individuals or groups within Toronto's Indigenous communities – including the idea of adding statues of those who survived the IRSS system.</p>
<p>Keep the statue as is (1,084)</p>	<p>It's harmless, it's good for the university, it reflects our history.</p> <p>It's important to acknowledge Egerton Ryerson's role, both good and bad.</p> <p>It's just one of many symbols of Egerton Ryerson, so removing it wouldn't make a big difference overall.</p>	<p>Within this theme, there was a range of viewpoints: some comments reflected a desire to keep the statue because it is good for the university, makes the university feel like a campus, and acknowledges Egerton Ryerson as a historical figure (no suggestions for action regarding the statue); others expressed interest in keeping the statue but doing <i>something</i> to build a better understanding of his role in our education system, both positive and negative*; a third sub-theme was a desire to keep the statue, not necessarily because it is positive, but because it is just one of many symbols perpetuating a specific narrative and understanding of history, and that removing it would not result in meaningful change. Within this theme, we noted a range of perspectives underlying a desire to keep the statue, e.g. for aesthetic, symbolic, and historical representation reasons.</p> <p>*Notably, some comments expressed value in keeping the statue vandalized with paint as a statement on Egerton Ryerson's actions, contributing the current narrative around relearning histories.</p>

<p>Keep the statue but add historical context (441)</p>	<p>Add a larger/more extensive plaque clearly explaining who Egerton Ryerson was and his connections to Ontario's education system.</p>	<p>This theme is distinct from the theme above in that comments expressed a desire for action, whether that was adding/enhancing the existing plaque to give more historical context about Egerton Ryerson, adding education/programming for the university community, or general suggestions to make the statue less prominent. Comments also related to showing both sides of the story and having both good and bad exist side by side. Overall comments in this theme tended to be associated with a desire for the university to build a full understanding of his role in the residential school system and to illustrate the many histories and narratives at play to contribute to a better understanding of who Egerton Ryerson was and his role in Ontario's educational system. Some comments noted that the statue should not be a standalone object without an explanation of what he did – both good and bad. Another sub-theme to note (with some crossover with the theme: "keep the statue but relocate on campus") was a desire to move the statue somewhere else on campus (e.g. Kerr Hall, Archives, the Quad).</p>
	<p>Add an accompanying exhibit on-site to add historical context.</p>	
	<p>Acknowledge past actions without erasing them.</p>	

Example quotes for top themes

(1) Remove the statue

"Quite simply, the statue should not be there anymore. Taking down a statue does not erase its history, it does not erase the university's history and it certainly does not erase Egerton Ryerson's good deeds. A statue is not only a remembrance or commemoration, it is a glorification of a historical figure. Egerton Ryerson was a massive racist and, although our university bears his name, it would be beneficial if we acknowledged how awful he was instead of trying to use his good deeds to erase his racism and contribution to the genocide of Indigenous peoples.

My ideal scenario: remove the statue and put a plaque detailing the good actions of Mr. Ryerson as well as how he contributed to the genocide of Indigenous peoples. You can have a statue of other important figures for the university. You can have a statue of Eggy the Ram for all I care. I know a statue is a nice piece for a university but we can do better than Egerton Ryerson."

(2) Keep the statue as is

"I think that adding the plaque was a good way to contextualize Ryerson's contributions to the university into the larger history of his work, both good and bad. I support keeping the statue with the plaque given that all groups and their respective individuals contribute both good and bad ideas, policies, and practices both historically and in the present."

(3) Keep the statue but add historical context

"The statue could provide an opportunity to acknowledge past actions without wiping them away. Even getting rid of the statue could potentially suggest the ignoring of history or rewriting of it to make it seem more palatable."



Throughout this question, we also reviewed comments for **general tone and sentiment**, considered separately from opinions about the statue itself. This level of analysis was important to understand how respondents formed their opinions about the statue recognizing that there are different understandings, histories and experiences. Our initial analysis reveals a **31%/69% split** between positive and negative sentiment (244 positive and 440 negative).

Table 8: Statue – themes by focus communities

Group and number of respondents	Themes and number of comments	Sub-themes
Indigenous respondents (198)*	Remove the statue (59)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statue represents the colonizer; it's a monument to colonialism. • Leaving these monuments up is not an effective way of addressing histories, and commemoration in general is not an Indigenous practice. • Waste of money due to constant vandalism.
	Keep the statue as is (56)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It showcases where we came from. • Keep it in its vandalized state to start conversations; let people draw their own conclusion through historical reflection and review. • He was a product of his time and dismissing his accomplishments is unjust.

	General negative sentiment (40)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statue represents cultural genocide. • Why are you not listening to Indigenous voices? Don't want another report: want action. • Racist and representative of the wide-reaching effects of his involved in the creation of the IRSS.
Black respondents (223)*	Remove the statue (103)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision is tied to university's commitment to EDI and anti-racism. • There are no contributions to Canada's education system that are worth honouring at the expense of Indigenous folks. • It's offensive; has caused and continues to cause harm.
	General negative sentiment (68)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's not only a remembrance or commemoration, it is a glorification of a historical figure who caused harm. • Goes against TRC and calls to action. • Doing something about Egerton Ryerson's statue is just the tip of the iceberg of the immense work the university needs to engage in.
	Keep the statue as is (35)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to commemorate Egerton Ryerson is more than appropriate as he is an important historical figure. • Part of the school's history and symbolizes a foundation which others can help to build upon. • Instead of shunning history, we need to highlight the good and the bad so that we can learn from it and make changes for a better future.
University students (924)	Remove the statue (470)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates unsafe environment. • Harmful to BIPOC students. • Doesn't represent the university's values.

	General negative sentiment (293)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statue represents failure to understand and acknowledge histories. • Honours architect of the IRSS. • It glorifies a figure who caused irreparable harm.
	Keep the statue as is (146)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it's important to acknowledge Egerton Ryerson's role. • Statue makes Ryerson feel like a university campus. • Keep in its vandalized state.
University alumni (1,786)	Keep the statue as is (566)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It represents Ontario's and university's heritage. • Explanatory plaque provides necessary context; need to acknowledge history and not erase it. • Better to spend time and resources on other issues.
	Remove the statue (483)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't represent the university's current values. • Removing would send a message that the university is committed to action. • We should not honour/respect/commemorate someone who caused great harm to Indigenous communities.
	General negative sentiment (281)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We can remember without glorifying/celebrating historical figures like Egerton Ryerson. • Statue does not add value/promote learning and conversation to the university. • Removal of the statue from campus would be detrimental to campus community (e.g., collegial and historical feel).
University staff (423)	Remove the statue (196)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates an unsafe environment given connection with residential schools. • Represents oppression, genocide, and violence; turns a public area into a trauma-causing space for many community members.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should have been removed long ago; act of leadership is needed.
	General negative sentiment (93)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous colleagues indicate it is triggering. • Statues are not a good way to commemorate/represent our histories/learn from the past. • University is already named after Egerton Ryerson; a statue, memorializing, celebrating, and honouring him is harmful.
	Ryerson's legacy continues to impact Indigenous people (55)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statue is harmful/traumatizing/triggering to Indigenous staff, faculty and students. • Statue upholds colonialism and oppression. • Sends the message that the historical exploitation of Indigenous peoples was justified.
University faculty (331)	Remove the statue (137)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing it would reflect changing ethics and show the university's commitment to inclusion. • Focussing on the statue takes away resources from the real issues around reconciliation and advancing opportunities for Indigenous Peoples. • Removal and renaming is an important part of truth-telling.
	Keep the statue as is (52)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to acknowledge Egerton Ryerson's role in developing a system of public education in Ontario and other positive contributions (e.g., caring for typhoid fever sufferers). • Removing the statue would be an insult to the school's history and integrity. • Keeping it could be accompanied by actions to commemorate other historical figures.
	General negative sentiment (51)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's offensive; harmful; reflects a devastating legacy.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's embarrassing; don't want to be associated with the institution; addressing the statue is the least the university can do. • It's part of a broader representation of colonial oppression.
Community members (241)	Remove the statue (94)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regardless of his contributions, the statue is harmful to Indigenous students. • It's offensive, disgraceful, tone-deaf. • Goes against university's commitment to reconciliation.
	General negative sentiment (41)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statues are problematic when they honour racist figures; idea to invite a First Nations artist to rework the statue (as was done in Calgary). • Clear symbol of white supremacy and colonialism. • Listen to Indigenous People when it comes to dismantling symbols of colonialism/oppression/discrimination.
	Keep it and add historical context (36)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be accompanied by an explanation of his failings. • More notation/signage/contextual information is needed; make the existing plaque look more permanent.

**These demographic identities were self-reported by respondents in the online survey and community conversations.*

Q2: Commemoration

We asked the question "Given what you may know of Egerton Ryerson's legacy, how does that affect your view of commemoration?" The dominant theme was "no desire to commemorate Egerton Ryerson" with sub-themes including stances against commemorating a historical figure who caused harm; desire to address the impacts of commemoration especially for Indigenous students; and questioning why Egerton Ryerson has been and continues to be commemorated in the context of the university's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and reconciliation.

In terms of ideas and suggestions for action, most respondents agreed that Egerton Ryerson's history with Indigenous People is troubling. Some felt that due to this past, the statue should be removed and replaced with a different commemorative statue or art piece. Some

believed that our history, no matter how troublesome, is in the past, and so long as we understand and educate people, we can continue to commemorate key historical figures like Egerton Ryerson. We learned that most respondents would prefer no commemoration of Egerton Ryerson, specifically citing the lasting impacts of his legacy on Indigenous communities and the harm caused by glorifying him through the university's name and statue. Some expressed that the university should focus on making campus as welcoming to BIPOC communities as possible.

Table 9: Commemoration – themes, sub-themes and analysis

Theme and number of comments	Sub-theme	Analysis
<p>No desire to commemorate Egerton Ryerson – general (1,559)</p>	<p>We shouldn't commemorate Ryerson or his legacy.</p>	<p>A majority of respondents agreed that due to his controversial past, Egerton Ryerson should not be commemorated. The statue negatively impacts the university's reputation as the university values EDI. Therefore, many respondents felt that the only solution was to replace the statue to commemorate a different historical figure, such as an Indigenous person. Other suggestions included replacing the statue with art, or something that celebrates the accomplishments of the university. Some noted that he did not have a personal connection to the university, meaning there is no reason to keep his name.</p>
	<p>Commemoration negatively impacts the university's image and reputation.</p>	
	<p>Anger/confusion/questions as to why he is commemorated in a positive light given the lasting impacts of his legacy on Indigenous People and communities today.</p>	
<p>Commemoration has a negative impact – general (970)</p>	<p>Not appropriate to commemorate someone who contributed to the residential school system.</p>	<p>It was noted that Egerton Ryerson's historically harmful actions outweigh his positive contributions to history, and thus should not be commemorated. Some respondents felt that commemoration is not needed and suggested removing the statue as the only solution.</p>
	<p>His contributions to the Ontario education system cannot erase that he was also the creator of the IRSS.</p>	<p>Believing that commemoration has a negative impact was not always tied to a desire to remove his name, with some comments expressing that now is not the right time to rename/rebrand the university. Others felt that the name represents normalizing signs of respect for historical figures and ignores the harm they caused.</p>
	<p>Concerns about continued normalization of signs of respect such as the university name and the statue.</p>	

Egerton Ryerson's historical relationship with Indigenous peoples/communities (839)	Ryerson's relationship with Indigenous people resulted in the genocide of persons, with the target of Indigenous children.	Most respondents agreed that Egerton Ryerson's historical relationship with Indigenous People is troubling. Some suggestions included furthering the university's commitment to reconciliation by ensuring that Indigenous voices are centred, and that the safety and wellness of BIPOC communities is always considered. Some found that using his name for a university that claims it's committed to reconciliation is disrespectful to the Indigenous community. Given the harmful impacts of his involvement in the IRSS, people would prefer to see other figures from Ontario's education history recognized through naming and other symbols of commemoration.
	Commemorating him does not align with commitments to reconciliation.	
	His success is tied to suffering of Indigenous Peoples.	

Example quotes for top themes

(1) No desire to commemorate Egerton Ryerson – general

*"I've been a Ryerson community member (student and staff) for almost 20 years, and it's only in the last 10 years that I've learned more about Egerton Ryerson and the views he had regarding Indigenous Peoples. While he's credited with creating the Ontario education system, it is born from colonialism and the residential schools that were created were the equivalent to cultural genocide. **I do not think we can honour one without holding the other to account.**"*

(2) Commemoration has a negative impact – general

*"In terms of commemorating this man, there should be no mention of him outside of his impact on Indigenous communities. I understand using his name for the University and things like that, however I believe we should focus on his impact towards Indigenous communities as these facts overshadow any positive impact he may have had to Ontario's education system. **Because of the way Indigenous peoples today still feel the repercussions of his policies, I do not believe he should be celebrated in any way.**"*

(3) Egerton Ryerson's historical relationship with Indigenous People/communities

*"I think we need to act with the information we have now. Treatment of Indigenous Peoples in Canada is abhorrent. Past and PRESENT. He no longer represents someone who should be honoured. It's a slap in the face to Indigenous students. **Money spent on statues should be paid into bursaries for Indigenous and/or donations to Indigenous led organizations doing the work in their communities.**"*

Table 10: Commemoration – themes by focus communities

Group and number of respondents	Themes and number of comments	Sub-themes
Indigenous respondents (59)*	General: Egerton Ryerson's history and positive impact (12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid revisionist history; allow an open reflection of historical facts understanding the societal norms and values of the time. ● Learn from the past and continue forward in a more respectful, less ideological way.
	More education : Egerton Ryerson and Indigenous History (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Negative legacy does not affect my views on commemoration of him today; it's possible to commemorate without celebrating negative impacts; need to have open dialogue. ● Lack of education on such issues combined with continued normalization of signs of respect, such as the name itself as well as the statue, represent reverence for these historical figures and ignore the harm they've done to gain their status. ● Desire for broader conversation about education and Egerton Ryerson's role in segregated schools and impacts on Black communities.
	General: Egerton Ryerson's history and negative impact (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Why are we even talking about commemorating someone who contributed harm? ● Both historical and intergenerational trauma that Indigenous folks are still dealing with today.

Black respondents (110)*	General negative sentiment about Ryerson; no desire to commemorate (32)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the statue, mascot and name. • Harms (cultural genocide, abuse, ongoing trauma) far outweigh benefits; should not commemorate. • Egerton Ryerson the person is not an appropriate symbol to commemorate. • Stop glorifying a monster.
	General: Egerton Ryerson's history and negative impact (15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commemoration that is rooted in anti-Indigenous legacy and hurts our Indigenous students, faculty, and community. • This dark chapter should be abolished instead of commemorated. • Commemoration reflects poorly on university.
	Replace the statue/explore other means of commemoration (13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove and relocate the statue to acknowledge history without celebrating it. • Existing plaque is a good start but more needs to be done. • Any commemoration must be governed by the input of the indigenous community.
University students (442)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General negative sentiments (208) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egerton Ryerson should not be commemorated. • Egerton is already commemorated through his presence in books and museums. • Egerton's negative impact and link to residential schools must be recognized.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General: Egerton Ryerson's history as negative (130) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot intentionally ignore the history and negative impact of Egerton. • The history is engrained in the daily lives of Indigenous Peoples.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statues glorify/celebrate people, do not recognize history accurately.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Egerton Ryerson's historical relationship with Indigenous People/communities (110) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Honouring Egerton's legacy ignores traumatic and harmful impact on Indigenous Peoples. Egerton's legacy and link to residential schools impacts our Indigenous students. Commemoration should be used as a learning opportunity to understand his relationship with Indigenous Peoples.
University alumni (880)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General negative sentiments (261) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no need to commemorate the creator of a broken educational system. Should recognize the wrongdoings and disassociate from Egerton Ryerson. Egerton Ryerson was only beneficial to a specific group of people.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General: Egerton Ryerson's history as negative (170) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannot commit to reconciliation while commemorating an architect of policies designed to harm. Indigenous families and traditions Not appropriate to honour someone's legacy while ignoring their harmful history. His role in Indigenous education should not be celebrate but also not be removed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Egerton Ryerson's historical relationship with Indigenous People/communities (146) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rather not commemorate people who contributed to trauma, colonization and genocide of Indigenous Peoples. Egerton Ryerson has harmed generations of people and contributes to generational trauma.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His discrimination against Indigenous Peoples should be learned from and not celebrated.
University staff (219)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General negative sentiments (100) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No point in maintaining a tradition of commemoration that negatively impacts the university's image and reputation. • There are other notable Canadians/Torontonians to commemorate that are not responsible for residential schools. • Commemoration is rooted in anti-Indigenous legacy and hurts Indigenous students, faculty and community.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General: Egerton Ryerson's history as negative (60) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given his role in supporting segregated schools for Black children and opposition to education for females, the university name should change and the statue removed. • The situation speaks to the history we want heard versus the one we don't • It is awkward that Egerton Ryerson espoused public education while using it to suppress Indigenous knowledge.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egerton Ryerson's historical relationship with Indigenous people/communities (48) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By commemorating Egerton Ryerson, you are saying that his legacy and name is more important than the consequences residential schools had and still have on Indigenous Peoples. • Regardless of his good work, Egerton's actions of hate impacted generations of Indigenous People and will continue to harm them. • Commemoration needs to be a learning opportunity to teach about his relationship with Indigenous peoples.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General: Egerton Ryerson's history as negative (43) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There needs to be acknowledgement towards his contribution for colonization and residential school system by way of a plaque. • Hard to reconcile Egerton Ryerson's history with current students, does not seem to welcome Indigenous students to the University. • Taking down statues is a significant picture of defiance against honouring historic figures that stood in the way of basic human rights and respect or Indigenous People.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egerton Ryerson's historical relationship with Indigenous People/communities (43) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commemorating someone that caused irreparable damage to the Indigenous community shows that the university supports these actions.

Community members (115)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General negative sentiment; no desire to commemorate (54) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anger that Egerton Ryerson is honoured in a positive light. • No value in being attached to the name or symbol. • Causes discomfort and trauma to Indigenous students.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General comment on Egerton Ryerson's history – negative (31) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of education and normalization of signs of respect (name, statue) represent reverence for these historical figures and ignore the harm they caused. • Desire for university leaders to use their privilege to be allies instead of ignoring the issue.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egerton Ryerson's historical relationship with Indigenous People (24) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honouring Egerton Ryerson equates to honouring his history and legacy; this includes anything he was supporting, pushing, and involvement in the genocide of Indigenous Peoples. • Even if his role in the IRSS is unclear, preference not to commemorate because of the harm he caused. • Reconciliation is at the heart of this issue; that requires us to understand our history, and listen to the members of our community who were affected by that history.

**These demographic identities were self-reported by respondents in the online survey and community conversations.*

Q3: Principles

The survey included a list and description of the draft principles:

In Fall 2021 the Task Force will present recommendations on commemoration to the Ryerson University President. In order to do this, the Task Force is building principles that will build on the vision and values of the university.

Please tell us what you think of the draft principles below for future decision-making about commemoration.

1. **Reconciliation:** we have a responsibility to better meet the needs of Indigenous Peoples by examining our education system and how we can do things differently
2. **Transparency:** in the spirit of trust-building, we must be open about our decision making
3. **Impact:** we must consider harm and achievement as critical factors for decisions on commemoration
4. **Equity and inclusion:** we are deliberate in our pursuit to advance institutional equity for sovereignty-seeking Indigenous Peoples, as well as equity-deserving groups including Black and People of Colour communities
5. **Humility:** we humble ourselves to acknowledge that we are part of a greater whole, and we must take responsibility when we have erred
6. **Integrity:** we embody these principles with intention and advance them with courage

Respondents could then answer the following questions about the draft principles:

- a. What do you like?
- b. What should be changed?
- c. What else would you like to see included?

For this set of questions, some respondents remarked on the principles as a set, with the majority generally supporting them (e.g. acknowledging history without erasing it) and many expressing desire to see commitment to action, specifically to advance reconciliation and centre Indigenous voices in building a clearer picture of history.

We also heard comments about specific principles, with commentary on how these principles can underpin the engagement process – as well as how they are interrelated, e.g. transparency as the guiding principle for this work; humility as the overarching principle to ground this work in reconciliation; reconciliation as the leading principle to ensure accountability and action. A detailed summary of the responses to the three questions about principles follows under the headings “like, change, add”, noting there was some overlap between questions.

For these questions, we included only Black and Indigenous respondents in focus communities, recognizing that it was crucial to hear their feedback on the principles for the Task Forces’ consideration.

Table 11: Principles, “like”

Theme and number of comments	Sub-theme	Analysis
<p>General support for principles (1,608)</p>	<p>Each principle is of value</p>	<p>There was overwhelming support from all participants for the proposed principles. The principles were found to be of great value as a guide to commemoration. Many respondents noted that these principles provide a strong foundation that will lay the ground for future commemoration decisions. Overall, most appreciated that the principles were clear, concise and they looked forward to how these principles could be integrated into other elements of the university community. Notably, some respondents specifically spoke to the need for principles to guide work that is thoughtful, logical and grounded in respectful conversation – rather than “bending to a vocal minority”.</p>
	<p>Good foundational starting point</p>	
	<p>Clear and concise</p>	
	<p>Transparency</p>	

Most important principles (628)	Reconciliation	The top three principles that emerged were transparency, reconciliation and humility. Respondents were clear that in order for trust to be built, the university must be transparent when it comes to decision making. Reconciliation is important to overcome the wrongs of our past, and humility must be embodied by all of those who are part of this process. A clear theme was that listening and responding to Indigenous People is an important step towards reconciliation. Notably, some respondents asked for clarity/detail on the goal of reconciliation and that could translate into commitment to action.
	Humility	
Suggestions for actions to accompany principles (603)	Actions by general public: "we" framing	Respondents agreed that decision makers have the highest amount of power and a great responsibility to make the best decisions on behalf of the university community. By using the principles as a guide to the framework for decision making, the outcomes and actions will be supported by a majority of participants. Comments in this theme also mentioned a desire to ensure that principles lead to long-term change.
	Actions by decision makers	The general public also has a commitment to this process and many participants suggested that we need to further educate ourselves on the harmful past, and how we can transition to embodying a more inclusive approach within the university community and more broadly.

Example quotes for top themes

General support for principles:

"I like them all, and believe they should all be strongly enacted alongside proper knowledge and accountability." "I think they are a very noble endeavour. I hope your actions will speak to those words."

Suggestions for action to accompany principles:

"I think that all of the principles should be connected with concrete action. Who are the "we" who have erred? This one is a silly, meaningless platitude. Re: reconciliation - I think we need this to apply to people of color as well. Also, please get rid of other platitudes, such as "humble ourselves." They are "feel-good" substitutes for action. "

Most important principles: transparency, reconciliation, humility

"**Transparency** in decision-making and impact of those decisions is also important so that decisions are on facts and impact is measurable."

"**Reconciliation** and Integrity. If we can't be honest with ourselves about the facts then we can't truly reconcile anything

"I like the inclusion of **humility and integrity** as it allows us to acknowledge mistakes and move forward instead of digging our heels."

Table 12: Principles, "like" – themes from focus communities

Group and number of respondents	Themes and number of comments	Sub-themes
Indigenous respondents (81)*	General support for principles (42)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement with principles. • Appreciation for the well-roundedness of the principles. • Fair and balanced for the university community.
	Support for particular principles (14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for humility. • Support for equity and inclusion.
	Suggestions for actions to accompany principles (13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions speak louder than words. • Remove the statue. • These sound good on paper but we need to go further.

Black respondents (93)*	General support for principles (43)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are great foundational principles. • They are valid in their hope of setting a course for equality in education.
	Support for particular principles (23)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency to build trust. • Reconciliation to commemorate for the harmful past. • There needs to be better equity and greater inclusion within the Ryerson community.
	Importance of transparency principle (20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions must have the active participation of the Ryerson community. • Need to be open about decision-making. • Process must be transparent, democratic, and represent the university community as a whole.

Table 13: Principles, “change”

Theme and number of comments	Sub-themes	Analysis
<p>More detail/refinement needed on principle(s) (588)</p>	<p>Desire for stronger language around equity</p> <p>Suggestion to connect principles to funding and other support mechanisms to advance reconciliation</p> <p>Desire to fine-tune language to set and manage expectations</p>	<p>Many respondents suggested wording changes to add weight to the principles, noting that providing more detail, more active language and better descriptions would enhance their impact and lead to stronger outcomes and actions. Some suggested that without systemic change and if institutions such as the university are not held accountable for their actions, there will be no future change or growth. A smaller number of comments expressed that the principles should be changed, but that if the university already demonstrated commitment to EDI (e.g. treated all groups equally), we shouldn't have these issues in the first place. A less common but important perspective was that the principles must be worded carefully to avoid placing the needs of any one group over another to uphold academic standards.</p>
<p>Specific suggestion on principle(s) (575)</p>	<p>Suggestion to change specific principles</p> <p>Disregard for specific principles accompanied by suggestion</p> <p>Need for stronger/action-oriented language for specific principles</p>	<p>Suggestions to change specific principles was often associated with skepticism or language expressing urgency for change. Some were skeptical about whether or not these will be implemented when it comes to decision making. Others did not see the need for principles in this engagement process. Specific comments included that the principle of transparency should include a statement on openness on errors made, not just to inform future decision making, and that the principle of reconciliation should include stronger language. A notable suggestion was to word the reconciliation principle to include a commitment to funding mechanisms e.g. scholarships for Indigenous students that are named after Indigenous People.</p>
<p>No changes to the principles (508)</p>	<p>General satisfaction / no further comment for change</p>	<p>Within this theme, the majority of responses were of a general nature, e.g. “principles seem fine, are well done, no changes suggested”. Within this general satisfaction with the principles, an emerging theme was a desire for accountability mechanisms, without changing the principles themselves.</p>

Example quotes for top themes:

More detail/refinement needed on principle(s)

"Focus on simply erasing the past risks greater separation in the division already there. Forward-looking focus is over time less divisive, far more promising for all in its outcomes, and more speedily contributes to healing both people and inequalities."

Specific suggestion on principle(s)

"We are part of a greater whole, and we must take responsibility when we have erred". This MUST not extend to past generations; e.g., blaming living members of a given race for the actions of their forefathers. Yes, we are part of something greater, but our personal capacities and responsibilities are exactly that: personal."

No changes to the principles

"Nothing really, but if we treat all groups equally, we shouldn't have these issues."

Table 14: Principles, "change" – themes from focus communities

Group	Themes and number of comments	Sub-themes
Indigenous respondents (69)*	Specific suggestion on principle(s) (17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire for action-oriented wording. • A personal pledge and an institutional pledge are necessary.
	More detail/refinement needed on principle(s) (15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire for specifics about abstract principles. • Desire for clarity around the word "achievement".
	Questions about equity/inclusion as a principle (13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire to simply be inclusive without couching the commitment in principles. • Does it mean equity of opportunity or of outcome?
Black respondents (73)*	No further changes to principles (17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No further changes needed. • Satisfaction with current principles.
	Negative sentiment about principles (13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions speak louder than words. • Skepticism about what this process will achieve.
	More detail/refinement needed on principle(s) (13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact should focus on harm, impact on marginalized students, impact on learning environment and cultural safety.

Table 15: Principles, “add”

Theme and number of comments	Sub-themes	Analysis
Satisfaction with principles (429)	General support; prefer to keep the principles as they are	Within this theme, most comments expressed a general satisfaction with the principles and no suggestions on adding to them. Support included statements like “the principles are thorough” “well thought-out”, “should be applied to all areas of the institution”. Echoing what we heard in questions 3a – “like” and 3b – “change”, respondents expressed a desire to see principles accompanied by action to ensure accountability and continuing to advance this work.
	Nothing to add to these principles	
	Support for broader application of principles	
Support for reconciliation (252)	Support for university's commitment to advancing reconciliation	Within comments that support reconciliation, many respondents indicated an interest in action items to advance reconciliation. Examples include: more diverse professors and instructors, financial support for BIPOC communities and resources to support BIPOC communities. Respondents also spoke to a need for structural commitments to reconciliation, as well as acknowledging intersectionality between reconciliation and supporting equity-seeking communities in the university community. An emerging theme was a desire to shift the balance of commemoration from figures like Egerton Ryerson to Indigenous figures who contributed to the educational system. We also noted a desire to work with faculties/groups within the university community to build on previous work to advance reconciliation – rather than attempting to start from scratch.
	Desire for details on how university will advance reconciliation	
	Suggestion to add symbols to commemorate Indigenous histories and figures on campus	
Suggestions for adding to or reframing principles (219)	Suggestion for additional content to principles	Many respondents had ideas to add to or reframe the principles. A broad suggestion was to ensure that the university is well resourced to implement actions associated with these principles, as well as to connect each principle to the broader goals of education and advancing understandings of complex histories. Within this theme, suggestions included: adding a statement on accountability and resourcing, adding disability framing, using
	Suggestion for revised framing for principles	

Communicate principles to the public

inclusive language and inclusion of BIPOC communities. Suggestions also mentioned reinforcing the principle of transparency by communicating principles to the public. A smaller number of respondents wished to see the university pursue renaming the university and removing associated symbols or imagery connected to Egerton Ryerson.

Example quotes from top themes:

Satisfaction with principles

"The principles listed above seem complete in their present form..." "I think these principles are thorough enough, to include more would be too cumbersome."

Suggestions for adding to or reframing principles

"A broader perspective to be more inclusive rather than focused solely on one group." "Something about inclusion of diversity of thought and opinion as well, rather than just diversity based on immutable characteristics."

Support for reconciliation

"In the spirit of reconciliation and inclusion additional monuments should be added to University grounds, honouring the pertinent achievements of these BIPOC people."

Table 16: Principles, "add" – themes by focus communities

Group and number of respondents	Themes and number of comments	Sub-themes
Indigenous respondents (65)*	Satisfaction with principles (13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Happy with current principles as they are. Principles provide a strong foundation for this process.
	Importance of accountability (7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is important to learn from the past to improve the future. More education around harmful past and how it impacts the future.
	Questioning relevancy of engagement and principles (7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questioning if this process supports change. Skepticism around how this process will contribute to the outcome.
Black respondents (68)*	Satisfaction with principles (17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No further changes needed to principles. Principles remain comprehensive as is.
	Commitment to reconciliation (11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always be mindful of the goal of this process. Egerton Ryerson's impact continues to be harmful by inducing trauma.

	Questioning relevancy of engagement and principles (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remembering the importance of all cultural groups. • People have an individual responsibility on the goal of reconciliation and commemoration.
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**These demographic identities were self-reported by respondents in the online survey and community conversations.*

Q4: Reconciliation

We asked the question *“Given the university’s commitment to reconciliation, what ideas do you have to address the legacy of Egerton Ryerson?”* In response to this question, the leading theme is that there should be some effort towards reconciliation. Respondents felt that this effort should be accompanied by acknowledgment of past errors and include a commitment to moving forward in a conciliatory way. There was also a desire to describe the concrete actions that the university will take to support reconciliation by including elements of greater accountability and strong, action-oriented language. Additionally, we heard a desire for university leaders to reflect on their roles in advancing reconciliation, including personal and institutional declarations.

Table 17: Reconciliation – themes, sub-themes, and analysis

Theme and number of comments	Sub-themes	Analysis
<p>General suggestions for reconciliation (1,186)</p>	<p>Learn from the past</p>	<p>Most respondents feel that reconciliation should be a primary goal of this process. Ideas suggested for fulfilling the university’s reconciliation commitment include starting with an understanding and acknowledgement of the past, ensuring Egerton Ryerson’s legacy (positive and negative impacts) is understood with accuracy, transparency, and accountability. Some feel a full disassociation from memorializing Egerton Ryerson is necessary to achieve this commitment.</p>
	<p>Explain historical context of Ryerson’s legacy with accuracy, transparency, and accountability</p>	
	<p>Memorialization of Ryerson should end</p>	
<p>Suggestions for systemic/structural/educational reform (631)</p>	<p>Education about Ryerson and his legacy</p>	<p>Many respondents shared a desire for reform in a broader sense, expressing a need for change at the systemic, structural or educational level. These suggestions included education about Egerton Ryerson and his legacy and a further understanding of the impact of residential schools on Indigenous People. Some respondents provided suggestions for change that included a desire for better representation through the hiring of Indigenous faculty members and increasing access to university education for Indigenous People.</p>
	<p>Further understanding and education on impact of residential schools, reparations, and reconciliation</p>	
	<p>Representation of through hiring of Indigenous faculty and increasing access to university education for Indigenous People</p>	
<p>Desire for name change (544)</p>	<p>Name change is necessary for reconciliation</p>	<p>Some respondents expressed that they feel a name change is necessary to advance reconciliation. Suggestions for how to do this included incorporating Indigenous values into the name change and acknowledging and apologizing for the impact of Egerton Ryerson’s legacy on Indigenous communities. Many respondents would like to see removal of all literature, promotions, references and visual symbols of Egerton Ryerson on campus. Some respondents expressed a wish to have a name change that reflects the campus’ history, including being home to the normal school, and being Indigenous land before that.</p>
	<p>Need a name that reflects Indigenous values</p>	
	<p>Name change that acknowledges the many histories of the land</p>	

Example quotes from top themes:

General suggestions for reconciliation

"The statue should be removed with something to replace it that doesn't erase the history but that celebrates reconciliation."

*"Spend the money to take down the statue, rename the school, and rebrand everything. If you care about this, the money doesn't matter, the university has an opportunity here to take action and be written into history as an actual trailblazer. **Don't just be performative about this.**"*

Suggestions for systemic/structural/educational reform

*"I believe that his legacy should be addressed, but not celebrated. **I believe every student at Ryerson should be aware of the harm he has caused Indigenous communities and the University should make this information more visible and available.** Because of the diverse student body at Ryerson, including many international students, some students may not know of Ryerson's impact as they were not taught it earlier. That could mean that students **learn about it in a mandatory course or seminar.** I feel the statue should be taken down immediately and a larger, clearer plaque should replace it, which would explain his actions against Indigenous Peoples and their ramifications on those communities. Throughout this process, the University should only uplift Indigenous voices and not speak over or for them."*

Desire for name change

*"**RENAME RYERSON.** Formally **acknowledging the harm** that has been caused by this man and how it still effects communities today."*

Table 18: Reconciliation – themes by focus communities

Group and number of respondents	Themes and number of comments	Sub-themes
Indigenous respondents (115) *	General suggestion, e.g. learn from the past (28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on historical accuracy, provide the historical context of Egerton Ryerson and legacy; include the positive and negative impacts. The university needs to publicly acknowledge Egerton Ryerson's legacy and show accountability.
	Systemic/structural/educational reform suggestion (14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reform the education available about Egerton Ryerson, his legacy and actions towards Indigenous communities.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to university education for Indigenous communities i.e. student support, foundation courses, and programming.
	Support for name change (13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A name change will help advance reconciliation within the university. • Adding names that reflect Indigenous values or locations.
Black respondents (115)*	General suggestion, e.g. learn from the past (32)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical transparency is needed to break barriers on education. • There is a need for development of official channels that speak to legacy. • The university needs to make an official acknowledgement statement and define principles.
	Systemic/structural/educational reform suggestion (23)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide education of Egerton Ryerson's legacy and actions towards indigenous communities and statement on what the University embodies currently. • Create mandatory components to courses or create compulsory courses in Indigenous studies. • Increase bursaries, funding, scholarships and sponsor practical experience in Indigenous communities.
	Place-based suggestion (14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand content on existing plaque and create a more permanent/official plaque. • Replace statue with a commissioned art piece or reconciliation monument.
University students (390)	General suggestion e.g. learn from the past (124)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a yearly event that addresses the historical accuracy of Egerton Ryerson, both the positive and negative impacts.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embrace the discomfort the conversation brings and commit to doing better. • Make a statement that reflects the university's action and commitment to Indigenous reconciliation, equality and social justice in the community.
	Remove the statue (general) (83)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of the statue changes the narrative and allows for healing to start. • A step towards reconciliation and decolonizing the university's public spaces. • Replace with something beautiful, a nice tree or a dedicated green space.
	Systemic/structural/educational reform suggestion (70)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have required Indigenous-focused courses or reform courses to include Indigenous aspects. • Expand resources available to Indigenous students to reinforce a positive school environment. • Incorporate foundational learning/ethical training as a base to all academic programs.
University alumni (994)	General suggestion e.g. learn from the past (262)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The university needs a forward-looking focus, acknowledging the good and bad to create a balance. • Resist the erasing of history, as it leads to forgetting and repeating. • More education and information is needed, do not know enough to have a valid opinion.
	Systemic/structural/educational reform suggestion (124)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund scholarships, (art) grants, Indigenous student housing and community projects. Reach out and create mentorships with Indigenous students or internships within Indigenous communities.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required curriculum of Indigenous culture and issues, expand to include BLM, LGBTQ2S+ or mandatory module dedicated to Egerton Ryerson and Indigenous history. • Create a website with complete legacy, Indigenous articles and dedicated space to research, education and outreach.
	Support for name change (96)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite the difficulty and financial cost, it not impossible to change the name. • If the university truly believes in these principles and values, it will consider changing the name. • Sends a strong, clear and impactful message that the university is committed to working towards reconciliation, it is an innovative opportunity for positive change.
University staff (227)	General suggestion e.g. learn from the past (71)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full understanding of what exactly must be established for a better future and better informed societies. • Provide educating products based on research that is open to the public to reflect the broader view, keep him commemorated in the history books. • Remember Egerton Ryerson's accomplishments, recognize the improvements and foundation of the system we have today.
	Support for name change (42)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than just lip-service and become a trailblazer by changing the name. • Indigenous students, faculty, staff have made it clear they are in distress and forced to embody the reconciliation goals. Action is

		<p>required to show true commitment to reconciliation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing any commemoration of Egerton Ryerson is a gesture of reconciliation and the institutes commitment to change.
	Systemic/structural/educational reform suggestion (35)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory first year course, one course can change perspectives, Indigenous-focused (i.e residential schools, Truth and Reconciliation Commission). • Commit to working for equality, diversity and inclusion by hiring staff and faculty and for students include these aspects into orientation and events. • Integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classroom environment.
University faculty (176)	General suggestion e.g. learn from the past (54)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the narrative of Egerton Ryerson to recognize his role in the creation of the residential school system. • The university needs to acknowledge his role to maintain the school's reputation as an educational institution, place of progress and learning. • Memorialization does not need to be continued, keep him in the history books.
	Systemic/structural/educational reform suggestion (38)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create mandatory curriculum or increase education in Indigenous history throughout university, ensure in art department and history department. • Improve employee education on Indigenous history or dedicate a

		<p>centre for learning, led by Indigenous community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve Indigenous recruitment and outreach within communities.
	Support for name change (25)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commitment to decolonize the school but should be done in collaboration with Indigenous communities. ● Look at changing name to a neutral name or Indigenous name. ● Cut ties with Egerton Ryerson name for his contributions to the establishment of residential schools, the discussion/debate has gone on too long.
Community members (121)	General suggestion e.g. learn from the past (31)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A complete history needs to be focussed on being truth-based and to be educated. ● Consult Indigenous community for ideas on reconciliation, if that is the goal. ● The university needs to release an official statement on plans for the future.
	Place-based suggestion (21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expand current information on plaque or create a new plaque that focusses on the fundamentals of Egerton Ryerson's belief and impacts. ● Create a permanent installation, celebration or school holiday that recognizes the school's relationship and disavows it. ● Add a significant structure that emphasises his contributions, both good and bad.
	Support for name change (16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Changing the name is needed for reconciliation.

- Focussed on stopping the colonial narrative.
- Do not change the name entirely but modify the name to include something inclusive and diverse.

**These demographic identities were self-reported by respondents in the online survey and community conversations.*

Q5: Other comments

We asked the question *"Is there anything else about the work of the Task Force you'd like to share with us?"* Many of the responses to this question reiterated some of the sentiments from other questions. This included the desire for the university's name to be changed and an expression of urgency for the university to take action with a recognition that decision-making is fraught and complicated. We heard a strong indication of a positive sentiment about the Task Force and gratitude for the important work it is doing. Additionally, we heard comments articulating a desire for the university to listen to and credit Indigenous individuals and organizations, many of whom have already been working toward change (e.g. Aboriginal Education Council) – and to take guidance from this work rather than beginning from scratch.

Table 19: Other – themes, sub-themes, and analysis

Theme and number of comments	Sub-theme	Analysis
Positive sentiment about the Task Force (387)	General support for the Task Force’s work	Many respondents were appreciative of the work that the Task Force is doing ,noting they find this work necessary for achieving the university’s commitment to reconciliation. Some respondents included additional support and suggestions for enhancing this process, including to make sure to centre Indigenous voices and give credit to individuals and organizations who have already been doing foundational work toward reconciliation.
	Support for specific elements of the Task Force’s work (e.g. reconciliation)	
	Support and suggestions for process changes	
Plea or urgency for the university to take action (134)	Urgency to take action	Many respondents suggested the university take action, some expressing a sense of urgency, on the removing the statue of Ryerson to truly reflect the values of the university.
	Recognition that decision is fraught, but something must be done	
Remove the statue (66)	It creates an unsafe environment, harms BIPOC communities, perpetuates racism and discrimination.	Responses to this question also reiterated a desire to remove the statue of Egerton Ryerson, noting that it creates an unsafe environment for BIPOC communities and perpetuate racism and discrimination. Others reiterated that keeping the statue does not reflect the values of the university. In many cases, these comments were associated with a desire to change the university’s name and to eventually clear all references to Egerton Ryerson.
	Does not represent the university’s values	

Example quotes from top themes:

Positive sentiment about the Task Force

"Thank you for the work that has been done and is being done. These are challenging discussions that we need to have, should have, and can have."

"This is important work, but I'm sure is very exhausting. Please take care of yourselves, especially emotionally and mentally."

Plea for university to take action

*"The institution itself has a great reputation that transcends the name. This is an **opportunity to role model the change** we need to see in Canada's post secondary education system."*

*"Make the change **swift**."*

Credit and take guidance from Indigenous groups:

"Why has this taken you so long? The Aboriginal Education Council raised this years ago, hence the additional plague. Don't have such bodies if you are not going to listen to them. Ensure that when things are done about this that you give credit to the AEC as they addressed this way before others did. You also need to look at changing the name of the University as a step beyond just removing the statue. Then you have to really do your work because doing both of those things will not change the culture of the University when it comes to Indigenous Peoples."

Table 20: Other – themes by focus communities

Group and number of respondents	Themes and number of comments	Sub-themes
Indigenous respondents (50)*	General support for the work of the Task Force (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appreciation for undertaking this important work Interest in the outcomes of the project
	General comments about taking action (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The university must take action Be prepared to deal with any consequences of the outcomes, especially big decisions such as an institutional name change
	General negative sentiment (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about the money invested into this project Embrace history and improve on it
Black respondents (53)*	General support for the work of the Task Force (13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appreciation for undertaking this important work Interest in the outcomes of the project

	No further comments (8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing further to add
	General negative sentiment (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questioning if this work is necessary • Other important cultural groups that should be commemorated

**These demographic identities were self-reported by respondents in the online survey and community conversations.*

Demographic summary of respondents

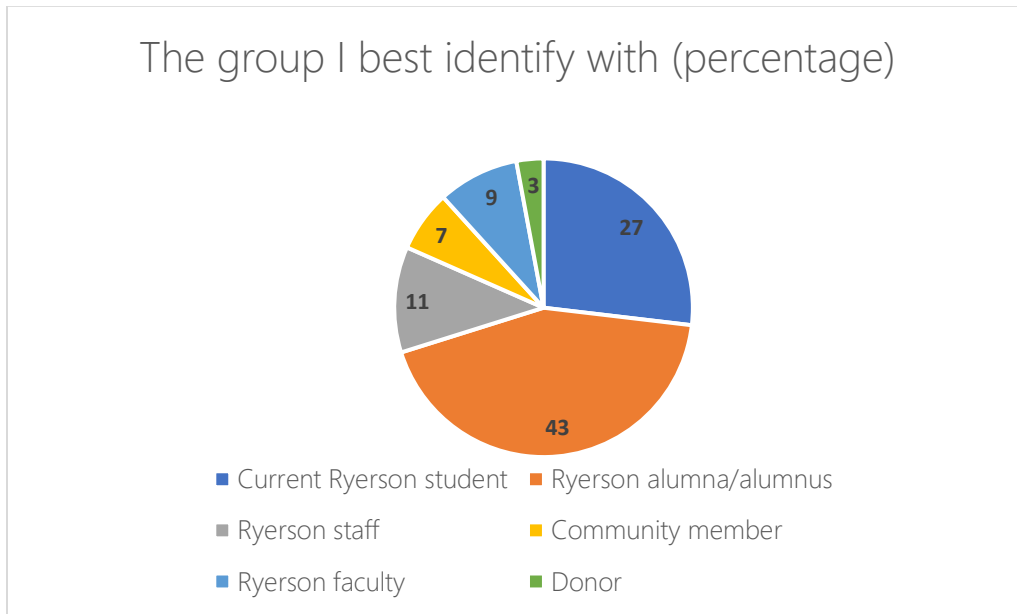
To understand who we were hearing from, we asked seven optional demographic questions in the online survey. Participants could respond to one or more of the questions, with none of them being mandatory. **Overall, 42% of respondents opted to answer at least one of the demographic questions.** For the question about ethnocultural identities, the Task Force chose to ask respondents if they identified as a member of one or more listed equity-deserving groups and asked separately about Indigeneity (with the option to identify as First Nations, Inuit or Métis Peoples). This was in accordance with the university’s approach to asking demographic questions in surveys and other engagement materials.

The demographic questions were:

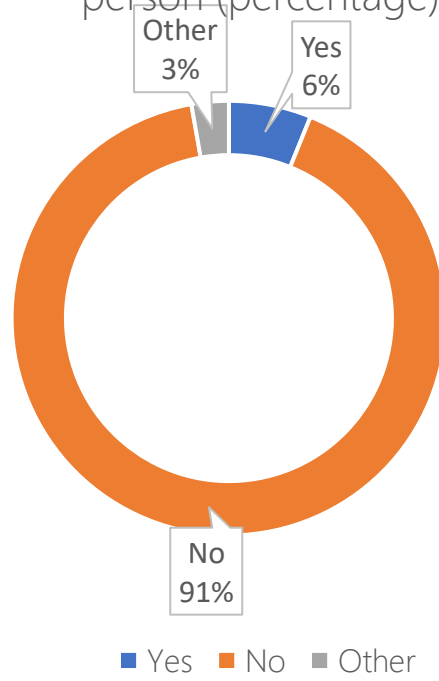
1. Please tell us which group you best identify with.
2. If you are a student, post-doctoral fellow, instructor, or faculty member please tell us what Faculty you are with.
3. First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples, sometimes referred to as Indigenous or Aboriginal Peoples, are from communities that are the original inhabitants on the lands now called Canada or the United States. Do you identify as a First Nations, Inuit or Métis person in Canada or the United States?
4. Please select any of the following equity-deserving groups with which you identify or indicate that you do not identify as a member of any of these groups.
5. 2SLGBTQ+ is an acronym used to refer to people, as a group, who identify as Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer. The plus sign acknowledges the many sexual and gender minority people who don't see themselves in the umbrella acronym and prefer other identity terms such as pansexual, non-binary, or intersex. Do you identify as a 2SLGBTQ+ person?
6. Persons with disabilities include those who experience economic or educational disadvantage due to attitudes and barriers related to long term or episodic conditions, chronic illnesses or physical, sensory, mental/emotional health, psychiatric or learning disabilities. It should be noted that the social model of disability recognizes that disability is not created by any

particular medical or physical condition, but rather by societal barriers. Do you identify as a person with a disability?

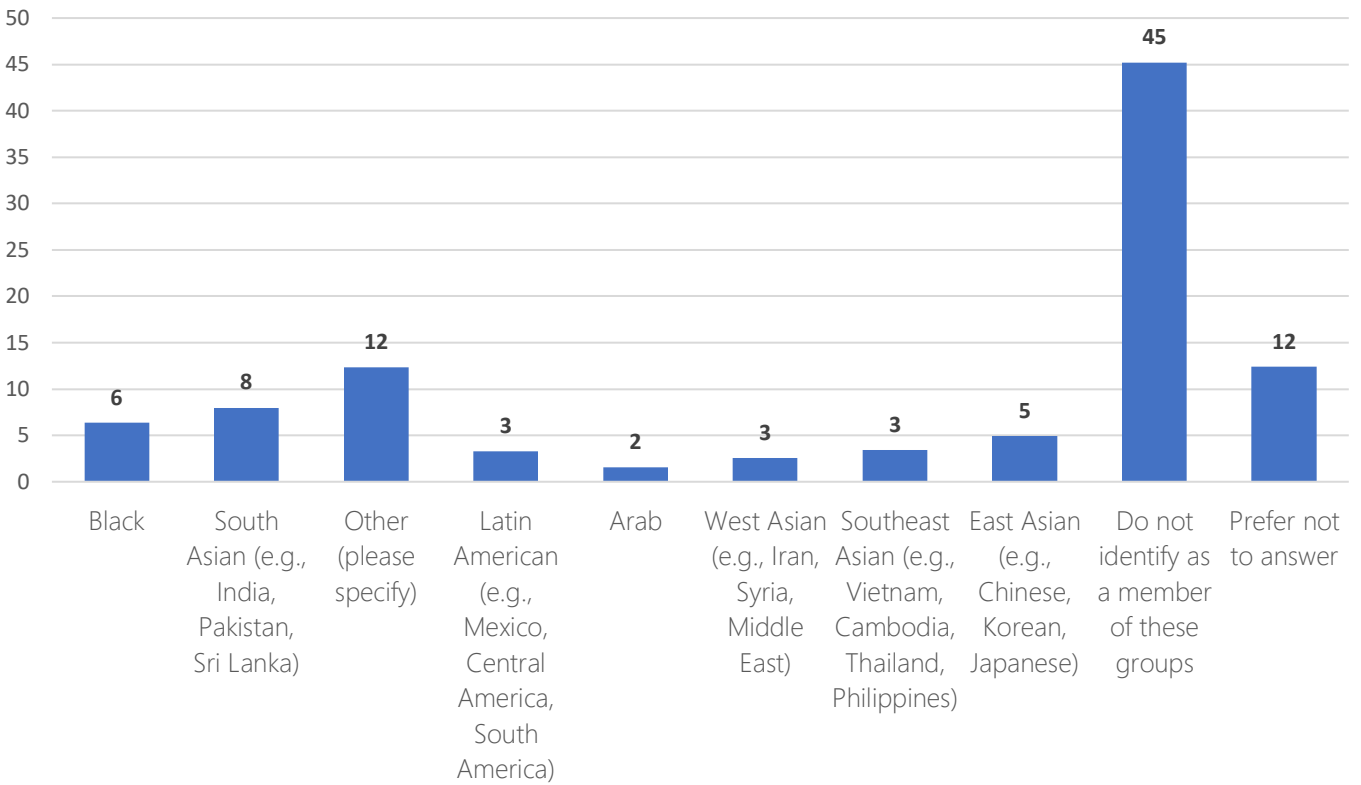
7. The purpose of this question is to ask about gender identity, and encompasses both transgender (i.e. transgender women and transgender men) and cisgender people. What is your gender identity?



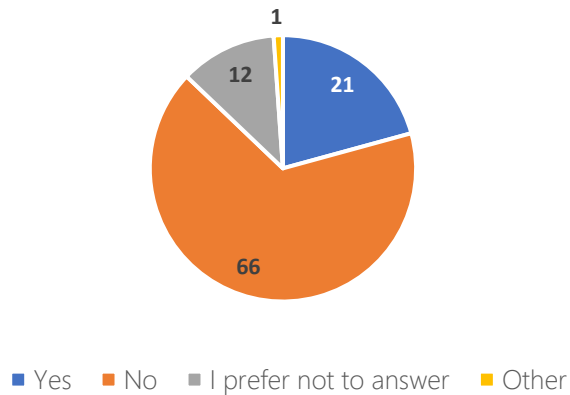
I identify as a First Nations, Inuit or Métis person (percentage)



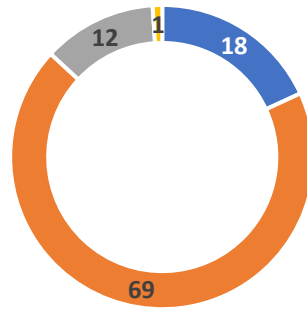
My ethnocultural identify includes (percentage)



I identify as 2SLGBTQ+ (percentage)

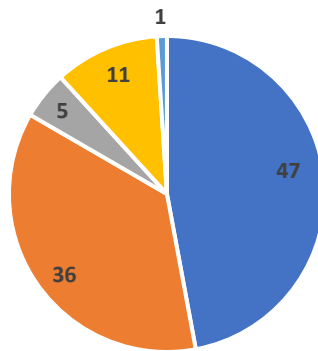


I identify as a person with a disability
(percentage)



■ Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer ■ Other

My gender identity is (percentage)

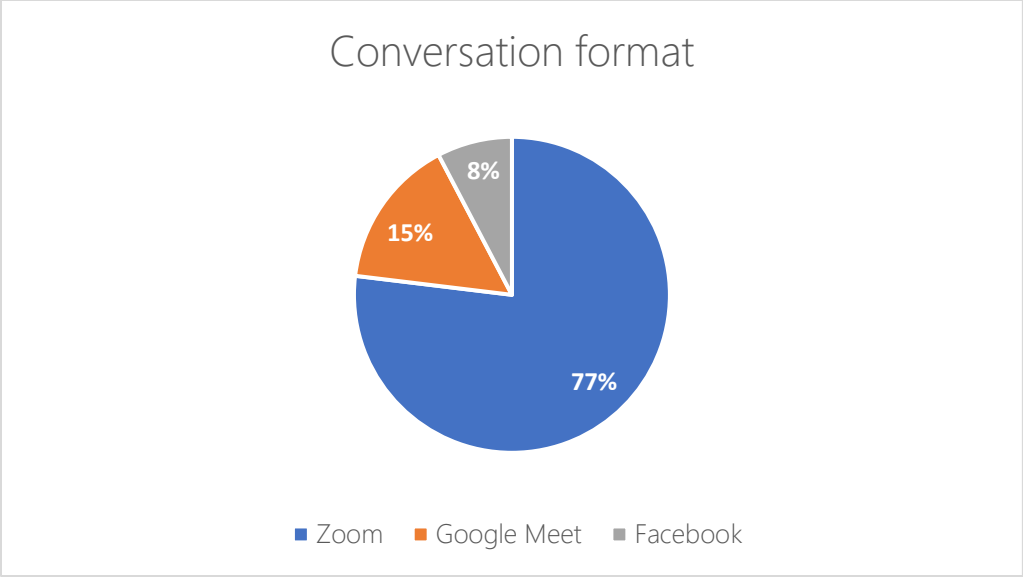


■ Woman ■ Man ■ Non-binary ■ Prefer not to answer ■ Other

What we learned: community conversations

Community conversation snapshot

- 18+ conversations
- 250+ participants
- Key audiences:
 - University staff
 - University students
- Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching



Community conversation analysis

In addition to the online survey and associated communications and promotions, we included community conversations in the engagement program. The goal of these conversations was to foster space for communities to host their own dialogues using an easy-to-follow discussion framework. Conversations are a valuable way to share with one another and provide a chance to collectively come up with new ideas and generate feedback to our core engagement questions.

With this in mind, we designed a [conversation toolkit](#) that was available on the online engagement hub. The toolkit included basic information about hosting a community conversation and five “conversation starters” which paralleled the online survey questions. The toolkit could also be printed if community members preferred to work from a paper copy. We left it up to hosts to determine the date, format, length, and outreach methods for their conversations, recognizing that groups had different levels of interest and engagement in these important conversations. The toolkit also included a resources section to help hosts take notes, collect feedback, and document what they heard, as well as source accessibility supports. Hosts were encouraged to connect with the Engagement Manager to discuss resources available to ensure that the accessibility and accommodation needs of their attendees were met.

To ensure we included all conversation feedback in our analysis, we invited hosts to report back using a simple online form (also hosted on the engagement hub) where they could share basic information (e.g. number of participants, date, format) as well as main themes discussed according to the conversation starters. Hosts could also fill out the report-back template on paper and either scan and email to the Engagement Manager or return by mail.

Figure 2: Excerpt from the Community Conversation Toolkit

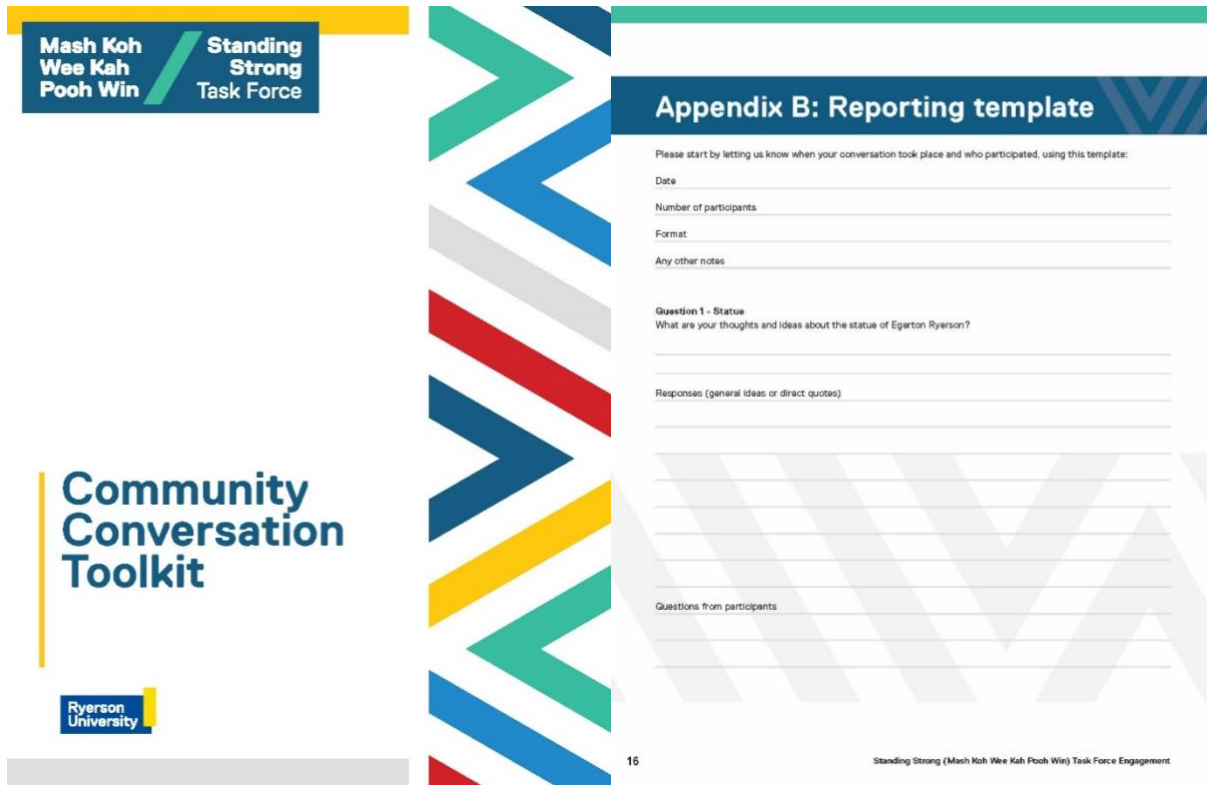


Table 21: Community conversations – themes, sub-themes, and analysis

Theme and number of comments	Sub-theme	Analysis
The university must take action (51)	Many steps involved with reconciliation	Many acknowledged the work that has been done up to this point as merely a start, and that the university must continue along this path to reconcile the past. Reconciliation and commemoration involve ongoing actions to continuously improve and build on relationships with those most affected by the harmful past.
	Honouring our past to protect our future	
	Actions must be impactful	
Remove the statue (35)	Statue is a reminder of the harmful past	There was a consensus that the first step to reconciliation would be to remove the statue altogether, as it is a painful

	Removing the statue would be the start to reconciliation	reminder to many of the harmful past. Specifically, many had concerns about the prominence of a statue that serves as a reminder of trauma and felt that it was antithetical to creating a welcoming campus environment.
Change the name of the university (30)	Changing the institution name would be the next step in reconciliation	The next step in reconciliation would be an institution name change, and many are supportive of this. Some were skeptical that this would be a possibility but recognized the impact it would make. The university community, particularly faculty and students, were supportive of a name change and felt ashamed to work or study at a place named after Egerton Ryerson.
	The name of the university is a reminder of the harmful past	
Neutral sentiment (30)	Indifferent about removing statue	Some respondents provided neutral comments, indicating indecisiveness and/or a desire for more information. Some recognized the importance of removing the statue but noted that leaving it as is would be a reminder of what happened in the past so that we don't repeat these actions. Others felt that the statue already has a negative connotation and thought removing it would make no difference. Other respondents were concerned about the investment of changing the institution name, particularly the time, money, and administrative burden it would take.
	Indifferent about renaming the institution	
University's commitment to furthering reconciliation (30)	Embedding reconciliation in all university processes, practices, and procedures	It was agreed that the university should continue to undertake reconciliation work to produce a better future that is inclusive. Many suggested that more education around Egerton Ryerson and the residential school system would be beneficial for staff and students. Others wanted to see land acknowledgement embedded into university procedures and introducing new policies to make the university a more welcoming and inclusive community for all.
	Furthering education around harmful past	

The community conversations were an important engagement tactic as they provided an inclusive and accessible space for participants to be able to host their own conversation around this important undertaking. Common themes aligned with themes from the survey analysis.

There was **overall support for removing the statue and renaming the institution**, however it was noted that many saw these actions as stepping stones to true reconciliation. Many urged the university to continue along this path of reconciliation to create a more inclusive and welcoming community for staff, faculty, students and visitors to campus.

Others were indifferent about change and noted that a shift in culture does not happen overnight. It would be an investment of both time and money and some wondered if it would be worth it, considering that most people now understand the negative connotation of the legacy of Egerton Ryerson. It was suggested that money would be better spent on furthering education on the

residential schooling system. Some felt that leaving the statue would be a constant reminder of the harmful past, which would help us to not repeat these mistakes.

Overall, respondents were satisfied with the progress thus far and recognized that this process is just the beginning of a reconciliation journey and potentially a catalyst for change that could be Canada-wide.

Report conclusion

Over the course of the engagement period from March 16 – May 16, 2021, we witnessed a high degree of interest in the five engagement topics: what to do with the statue of Egerton Ryerson, ideas about commemoration, comments on the six draft principles, suggestions to advance reconciliation, and comments about the Task Force and this work. We received over 22,000 survey responses, feedback from 18+ community conversations, and 250+ direct communications with the Task Force.

Our approach to analysis involved considering each comment from the three engagement mechanisms equally and ensuring that we identified common themes for each question as well as tone and sentiment across all questions. Looking at survey responses, many comments centred on what to do with the statue. Within that discussion, we heard specific suggestions (e.g. ideas to keep, relocate, repurpose, or remove the statue; ideas on accompanying actions such as a university name change) and broader ideas (e.g. desire or no desire to commemorate Egerton Ryerson, comments on historical accounts and understanding of multiple layers of history, valuing historical figures by acknowledging both the good and the bad).

When it came to questions about the six draft principles proposed by the Task Force, there was general agreement that the principles were thoughtful and useful, and that they could be strengthened by more concrete and action-oriented language. Another important theme was advancing reconciliation, both in general and specific terms: ideas included structural reform to the university education system to centre Indigenous histories and voices. In response to the open-ended question, we heard general positive feedback on the Task Force's work and an urgency to pursue change given this moment in time and momentum generated by these and other discussions.

Similarly, community conversation topics centred on a desire to take action, with the first step being to remove and/or relocate the statue. We also heard calls to change the university's name along with an interest in other structural changes to advance reconciliation. Specific suggestions included more education around Egerton Ryerson and the residential school system; land acknowledgement embedded into university procedures; and introducing new policies to make the university a more welcoming and inclusive community for all.

Direct communications were often connected to positive sentiment about the Task Force and this approach to work – specifically, drawing from engagement to advance reconciliation, and exploring suggestions to include and centre Indigenous voices in further engagement. Echoing survey responses and community conversations, many writers expressed a plea for the university to act –

recognizing that we are at a critical moment, and that decision-making is difficult, but we must demonstrate commitment to advancing reconciliation. Finally, direct communications often expressed a desire to remove the statue because it contributes to an unsafe environment, particularly for BIPOC communities and that it does not reflect the university's values.

While this engagement process fulfilled the Task Force's mandate to consider feedback from the community, it should also inform the process ahead for the university. The high level of interest and responsiveness to the five engagement questions throughout the two months suggests that these crucial and nuanced conversations must continue in order for the university to advance reconciliation on campus.

Given the high level of interest and responsiveness to the five engagement questions throughout this period, it is clear that these are crucial and nuanced conversations that must continue. As the university looks to advance reconciliation through dialogue, education, and action, the emerging themes and suggestions from this chapter should be further contextualized by ongoing dialogue within the university and broader communities.

Appendices

Appendix A: Complete list of emerging ideas

- **Suggestions for the statue**
 - Remove altogether
 - Remove and replace with something tangible (e.g. additional historical plaque, memorial for Indigenous populations affected by the IRSS)
 - Remove and replace with something intangible (e.g. institution-wide education grounded in Indigenous histories)
 - Relocate to another location on campus (e.g. quad, Kerr Hall, somewhere less prominent)
 - Remove and relocate to a location off campus (e.g. museum, cemetery)
 - Keep as is – no change
 - Keep and add historical context (e.g. descriptive text on accompanying plaque, QR code, art installation led by Indigenous communities)
 - Keep in its vandalized state
 - Replace with a new sculpture created by an Indigenous artist (pref. someone directly or indirectly affected by the school system)
 - Keep it and have an Indigenous muralist or sculpture artist add context reflecting history
 - Keep it and have an art piece reflecting his role with residential schools
 - If Kerr Hall is redeveloped, an interpretive hallway walkthrough video with audiovisual displays should cover the history and context, replayed for passers

- **Suggestions for commemoration**
 - Expand education on Indigenous histories
 - Centre Indigenous voices in future commemoration strategies and actions
 - Remove the statue and associated imagery and symbols (e.g. campus mascot)
 - Commit to accountability to addressing Egerton Ryerson's complex legacy – positive and negative
 - Rename the university
 - Minimize existing commemoration of Egerton Ryerson
 - Commemorate what we learned from the past rather than glorifying the individual without context*
 - Commemorate someone else, e.g. Indigenous People, Canadians who contributed to the university (Viola Desmond)
 - Explore Egerton Ryerson's relationship with Indigenous Peoples
 - Demonstrate solidarity with BIPOC communities
 - Highlight ER's role in segregated schools and limited educational opportunities for women in addition to Residential Schools

- Don't change anything
 - Create an historic display about ER and other historical figures of the 19th Century Ontario/Upper Canada
 - Increase commemoration of ER
 - Issue an apology
 - Establish a reparations program
 - Establish an Indigenous Student Fund/Scholarship
 - Hold education events on ER*
- **Suggestions for reconciliation**
 - Learn from the past, through explanation of historical context of Ryerson's legacy (good and bad), historical accuracy and transparency
 - Acknowledgement, and accountability, in form of an official statement and commitment to principles
 - Educational reform i.e mandatory first-year course all programs, mandatory module/week dedicated to Ryerson legacy and impacts, more experiential learning within Indigenous communities
 - Desire for systemic, structural i.e indigenous recruitment and outreach
 - commemorative space for learning and providing materials for all on Indigenous history
 - General support for a name change, strong, clear and impactful message towards positive change
 - Place-based suggestions, e.g. adding to the existing plaque, building a video kiosk, replacing the statue with a commemorative art piece, etc.
- **Additional suggestions related to principles**
 - Processes for implementing principles should be completely transparent, e.g. who is on the Task Force, how are decisions being made, when, why, and how
 - Urgent call for action and accountability mechanisms for oversight and enforcement of principles
 - Desire for plans on how to address similar issues in the future
 - Principles should be upheld beyond the name/statue to create ongoing institutional improvements (e.g., hire/tenure more BIPOC faculty, more Indigenous curriculum and courses)
 - Add truth to the principle of reconciliation (related to weariness of the use of the term 'reconciliation' in Canada and associated empty promises)
 - Consider the frameworks of: decolonization, land back, harm reduction, anti-colonialism
 - Educate to elicit more sympathetic points of view in order to challenge ignorance
 - Education on ER's full history (both the good and the bad) should be transparent
 - Principles cannot be upheld if name of institution does not change
 - Equity language needs to be broadened beyond racialized categories (to encompass identities based on abilities, class, gender, religions, etc.); without diluting the focus on Indigenous reconciliation

- Students should be made more of a priority in the principles and decision making process (many took issues with the omission of the word 'student' in task force principles and website)
- Innovation and leadership: institution should make the difficult/costly decision, set an example for other institutions in Canada, lead by action and correct injustices (i.e., change name); institution should be forward-looking, proud, and re-define what Ryerson means (name stays)

**This includes comments that expressed concern about "cancel culture"/erasing history based on just one understanding of Egerton Ryerson's impact, as well as comments expressing a desire to separate Egerton Ryerson the person from Ryerson as an institution.*

Appendix B: Detailed stakeholder list

Stakeholder Category	Organization
University community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Black Students at Ryerson (UBSR) • Indigenous Students Association • Ryerson Faculty Association • Ryerson Students' Union • Continuing Education Students' Association of Ryerson • Yellowhead Institute • Black Liberation Collective - Ryerson • BIPOC Students' Collective • Ryerson Faculty Association's Aboriginal Caucus • Dr. Pamela Palmater, Chair in Indigenous Governance • Ryerson Sociology Students' Union (RSSU) • Ryerson Alumni • Aboriginal Education Council - Ryerson • Ryerson Campus Conservatives • Ryerson Young Liberals • OPSEU • CUPE • Ryerson Journalism Course Union • Ryerson History Course Union • Ryerson Politics & Governance Course Union • Black Faculty & Staff Network • Employees with Disabilities Community Network • First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Community Group • Immigrant Family Network • Muslim Employee Network • Ryerson Parent Network • Positive Space Network • Centre for women and trans people • RyeACCESS • RyePride
University affiliated groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Black Students at Ryerson • Indigenous Students Association • Ryerson's Aboriginal Education Council • Ryerson Conservatives • RSU • CESAR • RGSU • BIPOC Student Collective • Centre for women and trans people • RyeACCESS • RyePride • SHIFT Centre • TransCollective

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black Liberation Collective • Ryerson Journalism Course Union • Ryerson History Course Union • Ryerson Politics & Governance Course Union • Yellowhead Institute • Black Faculty & Staff Network • Employees with Disabilities Community Network • First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Community Group • Immigrant Family Network • Muslim Employee Network • Ryerson Parent Network • Positive Space Network
Community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across Boundaries • Alliance for healthier communities • Black Experience Project • Canadian Civil Liberties Association • Legacy of Hope Foundation • Ontario Black History Society • Urban Alliance on Race Relations - Neethan Shan (Executive Director) • Black Artist's Network in Dialogue (BAND) • Black Lives Matter Toronto • Delta • Federation of Black Canadians • Jane Finch Centre • Kababayan Multicultural Centre • METRAC: Action On Violence • Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants • PASAN (Prisoners) • South Asian Women's Centre • The Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic (CSALC) • Toronto & York Region Metis Council • Toronto District School Board - Urban Indigenous Education Centre • Women's Legal Education & Legal Action Fund • Ryerson family • University major donors • Ryerson Community School • Ryerson Public School - Thames Valley District School Board • Ryerson Public School - Halton District School Board
Indigenous groups / representatives outside of the university community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anishnawbe Health • Council Fire Native Culture Centre • Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation • Miziwe Biik, Aboriginal Employment and Training • Na-Me-Res • Native Canadian Centre of Toronto • Native Women's Resource Centre

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres • Ontario Native Council on Justice • Toronto & York Region Métis Council • Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council • Aboriginal Legal Services • Aboriginal Student Services - U of T • Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business • Chiefs of Ontario • Native Child and Family Services of Toronto • Nishnawbe Homes • Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre • Urban Alliance on Race Relations • Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council • Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre • Metis Nation of Ontario • Missisaugas of the Credit First Nations • Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto • First Nations Technical Institute
Other individuals and groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suze Morrison (MPP - Toronto Centre) • Kristyn Wong-Tam (City Councillor) • University Affairs - Alumni • CUPE • RFA • OPSEU • RASS • Diversity Institute

Addendum: Post- engagement period correspondence analysis

This addendum is a brief thematic summary of email submissions and open letters received by the Task Force between May 16 and June 30, 2021. Following the conclusion of the Task Force’s formal engagement period, community members were invited to email the Task Force with further questions, ideas, and comments.

Notably within this period, hundreds of unmarked graves were discovered in Tk’emlúps te Secwépemc at the Kamloops residential school on May 28, 2021, and the statue of Egerton Ryerson (ER) was toppled by protesters just over a week later on June 6, 2021. In light of President Lachemi’s announcement that the statue would not be reinstated, there was a tangible shift in Task Force correspondence to questions regarding the institution’s name. The discovery of the unmarked graves renewed a palpable sense of urgency, both in support of and opposition to an institutional name change.

Emails

All emails received by the Task Force were tracked and considered. While the range of information, ideas and opinions shared by community members over the course of the earlier engagement period was broad, most emails received after May 16th were about the statue and/or the name of the university. While the majority of people were in favour of the removal of the statue, there were notably some upset by how it came down and felt that it should remain on campus. Of those who emailed, more people were in favour of a name change for the university.

Themes and number of comments	Sub themes	Analysis
In favour of statue staying/being reinstated (13)	Concerns for lawlessness and destruction of property	Some correspondence expressed disappointment in the statue not being re-instated after it was toppled. Some concerns with the university allowing destruction of property with impunity; suggestions that statue should be reinstated until the university makes a decision on what to do with it. Concerns for tolerance of ‘different’ and opposing ideas, and fears that the statue not being reinstated is giving in to ‘mob mentality.’
	Calls for tolerance of ‘different ideas’	
In favour of statue being gone (33)	Statue is a disgrace, desire to remove it/not replace it	Many expressed a desire to remove the statue, calling it a disgrace to the university for causing undue distress and pain to Indig. community

	<p>Statue should have come down sooner</p>	<p>members by being in a central location on campus that many walk by on a daily basis.</p> <p>After the statue's removal, community members felt disappointment that the university had not acted sooner to remove the statue themselves.</p> <p>Many felt frustration that the university missed the opportunity to do the 'right thing'; felt statue removal was long overdue.</p>
<p>In favour of university name change (51)</p>	<p>Ryerson can be a leader, innovate and do the 'right thing'</p>	<p>A major, urgent call to act on the name of the institution. The institution has an opportunity to innovate, be a leader, and 'do the right thing,' by taking a stand and changing the name; sees name change as positive, exciting, a new chapter and opportunity to lead by example.</p> <p>In light of recent events (the uncovering of mass graves at IRSSs) many feel that ER is not a person worth commemorating, and the university having any perceived relation to the IRSS system must be vehemently opposed; commemorating ER goes against university's values, mission, and commitment to EDI.</p> <p>Many community members (self-ID'd faculty and alumni) feel a sense of shame, embarrassment, having a degree associated with the ER's name.</p> <p>They feel that the name Ryerson devalues their degrees.</p>
	<p>ER does not deserve to be commemorated; commemoration goes against the institutions values</p>	
	<p>Ryerson name devalues degree</p>	
<p>In favour of university name staying (43)</p>	<p>Ryerson brand is valuable, separate from the person</p>	<p>A lot of concerned expressed for the potential loss of the Ryerson brand; many self-ID'd business students worried about applying for international MBA programs from a 'random' school; business alumni concerned about the loss of the Ryerson brand in the 'cut throat' business world.</p> <p>Many suggestions that money that would be spent rebranding should instead be used to</p>
	<p>The university should seek other institutional means for reconciliation</p>	
	<p>Changing Ryerson name would devalue degrees</p>	

		<p>support Indig. students (through tuition support, bursaries, and scholarships); the university's money would be better spent by improving the material conditions of Indig. people instead of the 'performative' act of changing the institution's name.</p> <p>They feel that changing the Ryerson name would devalue their degree.</p>
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Pull quotes from emails

In favour of statue staying/being reinstated

"I was disgusted by the violent destruction of property that was shown on the news. If there was an intention to remove the statue then it should have been the university decision, not toppled by attention seeking mob."

"My thoughts are that the statue should be restored immediately, to show people that defacing property, before understanding all the facts, is not acceptable."

"How does this fit with being consultative, inclusive, respectful and thorough? In my opinion, not replacing or restoring the statue further makes a mockery of this statement. As Ryerson appears to accept the defacing and destruction of Ryerson property as 'making space for demonstrations and social protest', is anyone then allowed to go to Ryerson and tear down or destroy anything they disagree with, with impunity? Is the impunity limited only to large, angry mobs? "

In favour of statue being removed/gone

"Our Ryerson academic plan states, it is Our Time to Lead, and we need to do so with swift action."

"Ryerson took no action to remove the statue unilaterally. This was a missed opportunity for the school show its solidarity with First Nations people, by taking it down peacefully (and safely) in a gesture of support. I graduated Ryerson in 1984. I live blocks away from the campus and walk through it, past the statue, regularly. It was covered in paint well over a year ago in a protest, yet the school did nothing either to cover it up nor clean it up. Yet the opportunity to remove it was always present. I just wanted to let you know that I'm extremely disappointed by Ryerson's inertia regarding its history and its communications regarding our First Nations Peoples."

"The reasons for removing the Egerton Ryerson statue are valid, and if his statue removal will help ease the pain suffered by the indigenous community and survivors of the residential school system, I am all for it. Pragmatically, the statue removal also makes sense. It will just continue to be covered in paint if it is not removed, which is more reason to remove it."

“I am ashamed to be associated with this X University that carries the name of a self pronounced racist. I am also feeling very frustrated by the delay in renaming and removing the statue of this racist personality who has blood on his hand. What more evidence need to be considered? I am very confused by this lack of inaction and perpetuation of hurt for entire community of X University.”

In favour of a name change:

“I think the right question for the university to ask itself now should not be ‘Why should we change our name?’ but rather ‘Why wouldn't we do so?’ Why do we believe that we'll find anything in this man's legacy that would make it ok to keep hurting people living today? We cannot claim to be ignorant to the awful parts of his legacy, and no amount of ‘good’ would be enough to balance that out, in my opinion.”

“Our university’s Core Strategic Commitments are being violated by our collective inaction. By continuing to carry this namesake, we cannot claim to: foster a welcoming culture; advance Indigenous inclusion; or cultivate and protect wellbeing.”

“I believe now we have a real shot at this ‘reconciliation’ but it will take some real sacrifices on the part of many Canadians just like me - white, settler, privileged. The leadership of Ryerson (or whatever it ends up being called) will be important. From the school named after the man who orchestrated the residential school system to the school with a new name and a new legacy to build around reconciliation and getting things a little bit more right around this issue now I feel there is a real opportunity there.”

“As long as our school bears the name of ER, his legacy will cloud any achievements that past, present, and future students will make. I'll happily pay for a new diploma to be printed and a new school sweater to commemorate my time at an institution that not only gave me a Masters degree, but listened to Indigenous peoples and took steps towards reconciliation in a time of reckoning for our country. “

In favour of keeping the name Ryerson University

“We should be working to change the future instead of spending time and resources trying to erase the past, which ultimately benefits no one”

“Changing the name doesn’t physically help the indigenous community Ryerson affected nor does it change the past. The only thing changing the name would be is a misuse of funds, cover up of the past and a devaluation of degrees for current and future degree holders.”

“The Ryerson name is on my certificate, on my clothing, on my resume, and on my heart and mind when I talk about my post-secondary experience. Removing this name would not only cost millions and create mass division in both the current student population and alumni, but it would be an erasure of my, and thousands of other alumni’s money, effort, and pride that went into our university.”

Open letters

In June 2021, two open letters were circulated and signed by over 600 faculty and staff members calling on the university to permanently remove the statue of Egerton Ryerson and announce a commitment to changing

the name of the university. While these letters were addressed to the University administration and spoke to concerns about this decision being made through a “drawn out institutional process” with the Task Force, they demonstrated to the Task Force the strong support from employees for the statue removal and name change.