

Clean Air Responsible Schools (C.A.R.S) with PRAMP

2018 Report: Clean Air Responsible Schools supported by the Peace River Area Monitoring Program

Winter 2018 was the first foray for the Clean Air Responsible Schools (C.A.R.S.) program in the Peace River Area. We worked with the Peace River Monitoring Program (PRAMP), and it was a great success! **175 students** from **5 schools** in and around Peace River, participated in the curriculum-enhancing citizen science program during the week of January 22 - 26th.

Thanks to the support of PRAMP, schools participated in the C.A.R.S. program at no-cost, and teachers attending the professional development workshop were eligible to receive a \$100 supply teacher subsidy. The support ensured the program was accessible to all schools interested in participating.

Connecting to Inside Education's Climate Change Education Initiatives and the Alberta Program of Studies, our C.A.R.S program aims to develop understanding about air quality, emissions and climate change. With an emphasis on personal action and citizen science this class-based project engaged students in local stewardship action while contributing meaningful data to a nationwide citizen science campaign.



A Grade 5 student analyzes the live results of his partner's air monitoring device for the pollution levels of an idling diesel truck.

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By the end of C.A.R.S., students are more confident in their knowledge about local air quality, air pollution, and the connections between air and global climate change.

C.A.R.S. achieves the above learning objectives through hands-on inquiry that inspires students to think critically, then take action with a stewardship campaign.

The C.A.R.S. program included:

- a 1/2 day **teacher PD** workshop on January 22nd at the NAIT Boreal Research Institute,
- a **classroom presentation** led by an Inside Education professional educator,
- hands-on **citizen science** with air quality monitoring devices, and
- a culminating **school-based stewardship campaign**.

Participation

# of Schools	# of Classes	# of Students
5	10	175



Students experience the connection between air quality and climate change.

Program Feedback

According to our participants, the inaugural C.A.R.S. program in the Peace River Area was successful in facilitating hands-on air quality education. When we asked teachers what they thought about the program, we heard the following:

“Thank you for the program access! It was nice to have in a rural area!”

Laura Wuth, École Routhier School (Falher)

“I really enjoyed that it was a hands on program. The students were asking lots of intelligent questions and were engaged. I also appreciated that the program took the time to educate the teachers on the topic before hand.”

Helen Wevik, Lloyd Garrison School (Berwyn)

Participating Schools

- Savanna School, Silver Valley
- Worsley Central School, Worsley
- École Routhier School, Falher
- Good Shepherd School, Peace River
- Lloyd Garrison School, Berwyn

Successes

- Program materials/directives were age-appropriate and relevant.
- Rural schools were able to participate and access external resources for their classrooms.
- Local perspective added from PRAMP in presentations and PD.
- Active and hands-on presentations for students.
- Ability to contribute rural geographic data to a citizen science database.
- Support provided by Inside Education and PRAMP for student-led stewardship campaigns.



Students in the midst of adding greenhouse gas ‘emissions’ to their atmospheres.

100% of teachers said they would participate in the program again.

Challenges

- First time reaching out to schools in the area - very few already knew of Inside Education.
- January is a busy month for most teachers so many did not want to commit to the program.
- The strongest curriculum connection for the program is to Grade 5 Weather Watch, but many teachers appear to teach this unit towards the beginning of the school year (i.e. September/October).
- Teachers in some rural areas have difficulties finding a substitute teacher, so they could not attend the PD even with the subsidy provided.



Recommendations

- Begin outreach at the end of November if aiming to deliver programming late January.
- Consider changing the time of year for C.A.R.S. delivery to coincide with when most teachers facilitate Weather Watch.
- Recruit past C.A.R.S. teachers to aid in spreading the word.
- Offer a more flexible format for the PD in which teachers can participate electronically.



A Grade 5 student doodled this anti-idling poster for her school to, “remind parents that idling is bad for the air.”

The future of C.A.R.S.

The C.A.R.S. program, in conjunction with PRAMP, was a great success. It provided students in the area, even in more remote communities, the opportunity to engage in interactive, citizen science. The feedback from teachers was overwhelmingly positive and the reaction from students was fantastic.

Inside Education greatly values the opportunity to partner with the Peace River Area Monitoring Program in the delivery of this important program. The history of this program in other areas of Alberta has shown that participation only increases in years following the pilot. Therefore, we hope to grow C.A.R.S. in the future.

