IndigMEC

Indigenous Mathematic Education Conference

Tromsø, 4. september – 7. september 2017

Annica Andersson & David Wagner

Balancing Acts: Numbers for truth and reconciliation

Indigenous children were taken from their families and placed in residential schools since the 1870s and until 1996 in Canada with the aim to “kill the Indian in the child.” A Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was formed in 2008 to provide victims of these schools the opportunity to recount their experiences in a safe and culturally appropriate manner. After five years of gathering these experiences, the TRC report summarizes what was heard, and identifies 94 calls to action. We will show how numbers are used and not used in two TRC documents. We identify the value of such analysis for school and university mathematics teachers as an example of a culturally situated use of number for rhetorical purposes, which relates to the ideas of culturally responsive teaching and critical mathematics education. Not only does this kind of learning address calls for democratic and critical citizenship, it belongs in Canada’s new age of responsiveness to Indigenous experiences of colonialism.