



**Media Release
For Immediate Release**

Monday, September 24, 2018

Every Child Matters: Greater Victoria Schools observe Orange Shirt Day

VICTORIA, BC – Students and staff will proudly wear orange this week to honour residential school survivors and reflect on their stories and experiences. Each year, schools participate in activities and classroom discussions with a focus on steps towards reconciliation. This has been an annual tradition since 2013, the inaugural Orange Shirt Day.

Orange Shirt Day is an event that grew from Phyllis Jack-Webstad’s story of having her sparkly new orange shirt taken away on her first day at St. Joseph Mission Residential School. Her story has since been shared broadly creating an opportunity to reflect and raise awareness about the residential school legacy.

“We cannot change the past but we can learn from it,” noted Board Chair, Edith Loring-Kuhanga. “In the spirit of healing, it is important to recognize the thousands of lives impacted by residential schools. We must continue to have conversations between First Nations, local governments, schools and community agencies on how we can continue to implement progressive initiatives and policies to better serve the future generations so we do not repeat the mistakes of the past.”

“We encourage everyone to wear an orange shirt to demonstrate our commitment to building inclusive and equitable schools that foster a sense of belonging for all of our students,” shared Superintendent Shelley Green. “It is very important that every student feels valued in order to have them fully engaged in their studies and to empower them to become lifelong learners. Every child matters and every child should have an opportunity to succeed in their studies.”

All students and staff are invited to wear orange on Friday, September 28th and again on Sunday, September 30th, 2018 for the official Orange Shirt Day.

On Friday, Oaklands Elementary will host an Orange Shirt Day Assembly that will honour and commemorate First Nations people who survived the residential school experience. The assembly will include student drummers, a storyteller who will share his button blanket and others stories about hope and healing, and the Ahousaht Dancers. Media is invited to attend.

Media Opportunity:

WHEN:

Friday, September 28, 2018

- Primary Assembly (with K's, Grade 1s, and Grade 2s) at 9:10 - 10:10 a.m.
- Intermediate Assembly (with Grade 3s, 4s 5s) at 10:35 - 11:35 a.m.

WHERE:

Oaklands Elementary School
2827 Belmont Avenue
Victoria, BC

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