

Wednesday, September 22, 2021

## Greater Victoria School District recognizes and supports National Day for Truth and Reconciliation; Orange Shirt Day and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation Week

**VICTORIA, BC** – Students and staff across the District will recognize the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Orange Shirt Day and Truth and Reconciliation Week from September 27<sup>th</sup> to October 1<sup>st</sup>.

All schools and offices will be closed on Thursday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, to mark the new statutory holiday, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, which has been known as [Orange Shirt Day](#) since 2013.

This year, students and staff will wear orange throughout the week of September 27<sup>th</sup> to October 1<sup>st</sup> to recognize Orange Shirt Day and the National Centre Truth and Reconciliation Week. During this time, schools are encouraged to reflect on the legacy of residential schools and engage with the Calls to Action identified in the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's final report](#).

Schools are encouraged to participate in [Truth and Reconciliation Week](#), an online event open to Grade 5 to 12 students. It is a five-day event hosted by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. The event will provide historical workshops, videos, and activities for students and educators.

“It is important as a Board and a District that we support, and together engage with initiatives that increase our understanding of the TRC Calls to Action for Education and how this work affects our learning community so that we are able to better serve students,” said Board Chair Ann Whiteaker. “It is essential to honour the truth and recognize the thousands of lives affected by residential schools, and that we focus on repairing our relationships with Indigenous People.”

The newly revised BC curriculum is responsive to the calls to action on Education, outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Report. It includes the history of the residential school system to educate students and builds intercultural understanding amongst students.

“Our pursuit towards reconciliation will not be performative; it must be based in action. There is important work ahead to ensure that our efforts go beyond a day or a week—and that education for reconciliation continues throughout the entire school year,” said Interim Superintendent Deb Whitten. “We must continue to weave Indigenous ways of knowing into our schools to create a better sense of belonging for our Indigenous students, and for all learners to benefit from these perspectives.”

“The National day for Truth Day for Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day are opportunities for all learners, educators and staff to demonstrate their commitment to ongoing learning about the legacy of

Residential Schools and to engage with the beauty and resiliency of Indigenous worldviews and perspectives,” said Dr. Shelly Niemi, District Administrator of Indigenous Education.

On Monday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, teachers and staff will also have the opportunity to engage in meaningful professional learning hosted by the District’s Indigenous Education Department.

For more information on learning opportunities, resources for children and families, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Final Report: Calls to Action, visit: <https://ied.sd61.bc.ca/>

*The Greater Victoria School District recognizes and acknowledges the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, on whose traditional territories, we live, we learn, and we do our work.*

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