



ORANGE SHIRT DAY SHARES INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES WITH STUDENTS

October 1, 2020

KELOWNA, BC – Orange Shirt Day gave Central Okanagan Public Schools students better understanding of Indigenous peoples' truths about the effects of residential schools, colonialism, and racism.

"Orange Shirt Day and the story of residential school survivor Phyllis Jack Webstad helps learners of all ages and backgrounds understand the significance of cultural experiences," said Kevin Kaardal, Superintendent of Schools/CEO. "The history of colonialism requires that education take responsibility in reconciliation, anti-racism, and anti-bullying. It inspires our work to see youth engaging with Truth and Reconciliation and even taking leadership in courageously sharing their own stories."

Central Okanagan Public Schools Indigenous Advocates took a lead role in many classrooms, sharing knowledge and engaging in discussions with students.

"Mrs. Hodder's Grade 2/3 class was very engaged as I read the Orange Shirt Story to them," said Elaine Mearns, Indigenous Advocate at Pearson Road Elementary. "In discussion, they asked very relevant and deep-thinking questions and their comments were very thoughtful. I believe they grasped the injustices done to the children forced to attend residential schools."

Orange Shirt Day is a legacy of the St. Joseph Mission (SJM) Residential School (1891-1981) Commemoration Project and Reunion events that took place in Williams Lake, BC, Canada, in May 2013. Learn more at orangeshirtday.org

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