



BOARD STATEMENT ON TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

September 28, 2021

Kelowna, BC – Central Okanagan Public Schools will mark the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation this week. Throughout the week, schools will engage in reconcili-Action and deep learning about Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Flags at all District schools and workplaces will fly at half-mast on September 30th.

Public education has a vital role and responsibility in reconciliation, as outlined by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

As school system leaders, our Board of Education acknowledges that the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is an occasion to establish our commitment to the Calls to Action and lead the learning that must take place throughout the school year. We need to both hear and teach the truth if we are to collectively act on inequities in the education system.

Truth and Reconciliation is a guiding principle of the Board of Education's Strategic Plan. We know that to build equitable outcomes for Indigenous students and develop engaged global citizens across our district, we must learn together. We need to listen to survivors of the residential school system and their descendants, we need to invite Elders and Knowledge Keepers into our classrooms, and we need to fortify our curricula with Indigenous ways of knowing.

We apply the lens of Truth and Reconciliation to critically evaluate policy and practices in our system. We want to ensure that every generation of students going forward moves beyond our classrooms with a full knowledge of Canada's colonial history, as well as a knowledge of the resilience and contributions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. This knowledge is critical to both staff and students knowing how to contribute to reconciliation.

The Central Okanagan Public Schools Board of Education is dedicated to truth and reconciliation. We will work alongside Indigenous leaders, communities, and families in our district with cultural humility. We are grateful to those who have led our work thus far, and we commit to continuing this journey for the sake of all the children entrusted to our care.

"Education is what got us here, and education is what will get us out."

-Hon. Murray Sinclair

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For comments, please contact:

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