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## A Message from the Aboriginal Education Department & Self-Identification For All Coquitlam School District Parents and Students

If you have First Nations, Metis or Inuit ancestry *anywhere* in your family tree please read the following information closely.

Coquitlam School District 43 is committed to the academic success, cultural connection and social-emotional development of all Aboriginal Learners. We have one of the highest Aboriginal graduation rates in the Province, and are very proud of the work of our Aboriginal Education Department. We wish to continue this great work and improve even more with the renewed emphasis from the revised BC Curriculum and the First Peoples Principals of Learning:

### ***First Peoples Principles of Learning***

*Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.*

*Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).*

*Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.*

*Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.*

*Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge.*

*Learning is embedded in memory, history and story.*

*Learning involves patience and time.*

*Learning requires exploration of one's identity.*

*Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.*

### **Self-Identification**

#### **What does "self-identification" mean?**

It means that if you have *any* kind of First Nation (status or non-status), Metis or Inuit Ancestry in your family tree, no matter how far back in generations, you can "self-identify" as having ancestry. Official documentation or paperwork is not required.

#### **Why self-identify yourself or your child?**

Upon completing a self-identification form, you may access a wide variety of supports and programs during the school year such as social/emotional supports and cultural activities.

Some families hesitate to self-identify due to negative past experiences or because of fears that a student may be "singled out" or made to feel uncomfortable. We are fully aware of these concerns and are sensitive to these views to support students the best way possible.

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### **How Do We Self-Identify?**

Please complete below form or email our office at [abedinfo@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:abedinfo@sd43.bc.ca) and provide the following information:

- Student name, birthdate and home school
  - Parent name and contact information
  - Type of Ancestry (Status, Non-status, Metis, Inuit)
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## **Common Questions**

### **Will student be pulled out of classes for extra support?**

The only time a student will be taken from class for support is when this arrangement has already been made between our department, the parent and either the classroom teacher or school-based support team.

There are some programs offered to middle and secondary school students (such as our Aboriginal Youth Leadership Committee or post-secondary institution visits) but these types of activities require parental-signed permission forms. If these events are during school hours, you will absolutely have full descriptions and notification.

### **What types of support are available?**

Aboriginal Education support may include such things as:

- Field trips
- “Rights of Passage” day camp in grades 5 & 8 for students moving on to new schools
- Cultural programs & activities in some schools
- Support from one of our staff members to “check in” with, make a connection and be available to talk or assist with personal issues
- Breakfast and lunch programs at some schools
- Aboriginal Youth Leadership Council for secondary students
- Invitation to Aboriginal Education community events
- Annual Honouring Ceremony for secondary students recognizing achievements and completion of grade 12. This ceremony is over and above school-based awards
- Post-secondary bursary opportunities

### **Is there a choice to self-identify and NOT receive extra supports?**

There are cases where parents and students choose to self-identify but do not want any additional supports. Due to funding regulations, we need to provide regular contact with all students who have self-identified but the type of support can vary. The goal of our department is to work with parents and students to determine the type and amount of support and/or contact that is most comfortable and useful for each student. Other supports could include monitoring attendance and school progress, advising you of special events or simply just checking in with your child.

### **How do I find and contact the Aboriginal Education staff member assigned to student’s school?**

Your school office can provide you with this information or call our Aboriginal Education office directly at 604-945-7386.

## **Continuation of Aboriginal Education Services**

Each year we are required by the Ministry of Education to have parents of students with First Nations, Inuit or Metis ancestry self-identify to be eligible for district programs, many of which support all learners. Our records indicate that you have previously identified your child as having First Nations, Inuit or Metis ancestry and as such are eligible for service from the Aboriginal Education Department.

You do not need to respond if this information is accurate and we will continue to provide service to all children with Aboriginal Ancestry for this 2016-17 school year. Unless we hear otherwise from you, we will assume that your child/children will continue with our program for this school year.

## **Department Contact**

Should you have any questions or concerns throughout the school year, we encourage you to contact our office at 604-945-7386 to arrange an appointment with our District Principal, Mr. Philippe Brulot.



## Aboriginal Education Self-Identification

(First Nations, Metis or Inuit)

*Aboriginal Ancestry is determined on a voluntary basis through self-identification. If you have First Nation's, Metis or Inuit ancestry **anywhere** in your family tree, it is imperative that you complete and return this form to either your school or the Aboriginal Education department. No "official" documentation is required and the ancestry can go back several generations.*

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
(DD) (MM) (YY)

Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents:

Mother's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_

Work #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_

Work #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge that my son/daughter is of Aboriginal Ancestry (First Nations, Metis or Inuit) and I am aware of the programs and services available through the Aboriginal Education Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Parent/Guardian)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date signed)