

# THE CANOE

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 43 (COQUITLAM), No. 75 (MISSION), No 78 (FRASER-CASCADE)  
December 2018 Volume 10



## JOURNEYS OF INDIGENEITY



The Canoe is excited to once again be back relating the diverse complexities of our stories from the youth to the Elders and everyone in between. We thank all those who offer and share their experiences and insights with us and we are truly honored to do this work.

The notion of reconciliation lies at the heart of our publication and as we think about what that might mean in all its complexities, we at The Canoe

encourage all contributors to write from their own experience. Therefore, for the next series of editions our focus (or theme) is going to be authenticity and what that might mean. Of course, that is a mere curiosity of ours, we surely invite anything and everything you want to submit.

Happy Paddling,

Kirk Gummow Managing Editor, The Canoe

*Front Cover: Two Rivers Education Centre Staff & Students*

# SD78 Youth Summit: Moytel/ KEN Cheen (To Help Each Other)

by Bonnie Millward and Kevin Bird

On October 3 Grade 9 students from across the Fraser Cascade School District gathered at Hope Secondary School for the second annual youth summit. School District 78 and the Hope and Area Transition Society (HATS) partnered to organize this interactive learning opportunity. More than a dozen other service provider agencies were represented at the event to promote the theme of Móytel /əK n chEEEn – which is Halq'eméylem and Nlaka'pamux for “To Help Each Other”. The name for the summit was developed by the youth councils of Hope and Boston Bar.

The 130 students gathered in the Hope Secondary School gymnasium for the opening ceremonies by the Chawathil Drummers. Key note speaker Jolene Greyeyes then provided a moving account of her journey from addiction and living homeless on the Vancouver East side, through to recovery, and her now passionate advocacy for children and youth. Her mes-

sage was cautionary but also one of hope and determination setting the stage for the rest of the event.

The students were organized into four colour groups: red, yellow, black and white (representing the colours of the Medicine Wheel). They rotated through four break-out sessions throughout the day the topics of which were chosen by youth throughout the District. The four interactive sessions included : Youth Rights (presented by Kimberly Grey an Advocate with the Representative for Children and Youth BC); Substance Use Education (presented by Alex Peterse a psychiatric nurse with Riverstone Outreach); Gang Awareness (presented by the RCMP CFSEU team); and a Power Zone where students interacted with various local and provincial resources showcasing the many opportunities for support, programs, events and information.





The stories of the Canoe are organized around what is known to some as the 4r's: Respect/Reciprocity/Responsibility/Relevance. A response by Indigenous scholars Virna J. Kirkness and Ray Barnhardt to the idea that if education systems were to take seriously the inclusion of diverse knowledge systems (including those of First Peoples) then it would need to respect who they are, be relevant to their world-

view, offer reciprocity in relationship with others, and ultimately help them exercise responsibility through participation over their own lives (Kirkness, Barnhardt, 2001).

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Taryn Hatch and Wilfred Bolton



# RESPECT

## Orange Shirt Day: Honouring First Nations Children

by Sara P. (Cree Métis), Grade 4, SD75

Orange Shirt Day is a day to respect the First Nations children who had to go to residential school. Phyllis Webstad created Orange Shirt Day. The story of Phyllis Webstad was that her grandmother brought her a beautiful orange shirt for going to residential school. When she got there, the nuns took away her orange shirt and made her dress like all the other children.



That's the story of Phyllis Webstad, Orange Shirt Day, and the reason we honour First Nations children on this day.

As the survivors of historical traumas pass on, the lasting resonance of their experiences will depend on whether younger generations can understand and recognize them. Such recognition will challenge subsequent generations to discover new connections across historical events and to maintain distinctions among them. To be grounded in individual experience, and to recognize common ground in the historical experiences of others.

— The Legacy Project

# Walking Toward Hope: Orange Shirt Day March for Reconciliation

by Vivian Searwar, District Vice-Principal, Aboriginal Education, SD75

For the third consecutive year, students and staff from Mission Public School District (MPSD), along with Aboriginal Elders and other community members, gathered together to observe Orange Shirt Day, a day when we honour those who survived the Indian Residential Schools and those who did not. A crowd of over 1000, donning orange T-shirts, gathered together at the original site of St. Mary's Indian Residential School, the park that now bears the name Fraser River Heritage Park.



Many of the students marched from their schools to the park, while others were bussed. As they arrived, the unmistakable sea of orange grew larger and larger, and the sight alone was enough to spread the message of resiliency and hope to those who watched from afar.

Students carried card stock cut-outs in the shape of the buffalo, decorated with words and drawings of respect, one of the Seven Sacred Teachings and the focus teaching for this year for MPSD. The buffalo cut-outs were gathered together and placed in cedar baskets at the feet of the Elders, an act to honour the Elders' experiences, knowledge and wisdom.

The march began with Johnny Williams, an MPSD cultural worker from Sq'ewlets, drumming and

singing as he led the students down the hill toward the gazebo, where Elders sat waiting. Students carried flags bearing the message Every Child Matters in seven different languages (Halq'eméylem, English, French, Spanish, Punjabi, Arabic and Japanese), as well as the PRIDE flag. After Johnny addressed the crowd and explained the reason for the gathering and the gravity of the event, Elder Cheryl Gabriel from Kwantlen First Nation spoke to the crowd, sharing her experience of life in the residential school, and the lasting and intergenerational impact it had on her, her siblings, her parents and her extended family members. She also spoke of respect—respect for the land upon which we live and learn, respect for all who inhabit the earth, respect for humankind and respect for ourselves. Cheryl shared her appreciation for the commitment made by all who witnessed the event and ended with a message of hope, that one day all Canadians will commit to truth and reconciliation for Indigenous peoples of Canada.



Children are often our best teachers. The students who participated in this march will be our future leaders. Our hope is that the impact on their growing hearts and minds will be deep and long-lasting.



# Orange Shirt Day: A Visit from Phyllis Webstad

by Terri-Mae Galligos

École Panorama Heights Elementary invited Phyllis Webstad (Jack) to an assembly honouring and leading up to Orange Shirt Day. Orange Shirt Day honours and acknowledges the past and present survivors of residential school.

Phyllis published both a printed and audio child's book, *The Orange Shirt Story*, through Medicine Wheel Education: <https://medicinewheel.education/>. After École Panorama Heights Elementary showed Phyllis' audiobook on screen, Phyllis answered several questions from students.

According to Phyllis, questions from the little ones are her best part of the presentation. Her mild-mannered, genuine, kind-hearted approach to truth and reconciliation is very endearing.

Although September 30 is the chosen date for Orange Shirt Day, as it is around the time children were taken from their homes, Phyllis states that Orange Shirt Day does not necessarily have to be on that day or the last day in September. She recommends holding it "as close to September 30 as possible. However, anytime during the year is okay too; it's the conversation that is important." (Communication, October 1, 2018)

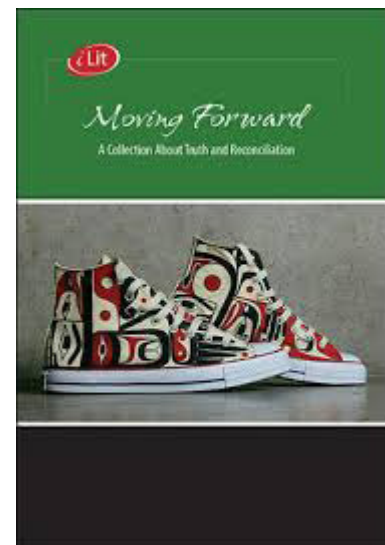


Left to Right: Dawn Marks, Terri Galligos, Phyllis Webstad, Gayle Bedard

# Moving Forward: A Collection About Truth and Reconciliation

by Kirk Gummow

A significant part of the revised curriculum involves less the idea of adding Indigenous perspectives but more of a weaving in, where it, along with other perspectives are rendered to create deeper learning. This concept is not new to Secondary teacher Marja Van Gaalen who has always pulled in voices from a variety areas including the Indigenous People of our planet. The Canoe caught up with Ms. Van Gaalen as she shared a teaching resource she is currently using in her secondary English Language Arts classes. *Moving Forward: A Collection About Truth and Reconciliation*. Van Gaalen urges educators to be sure to begin with the first page in order to set the tone for the rest of the collection. That first page is the voice of none other Justice Murray Sinclair which is always a good place to begin when relating to notions of reconciliation. He's clear, concise and always leaves you with hope of friendships.





# Orange Shirt Day at Dr. Charles Best

by Kirk Gummow

Nicole Bell from the Xaxli'p First Nation of the Stl'atl'imx nation had a vision: to honor her ancestors, and bring the conversation of reconciliation to her school at Dr. Charles Best Secondary. To bring her vision to reality, Nicole was supported by the school's Orange Shirt Day Indigenous Student and Student Council committees, with teachers Monsieur Pierre-Henri Poudre, Madame Maria Bruneau, Vice-Principal Sharon McKay and Britt Walton. Also on board was fellow student Brianna Shanahan and Aboriginal Education Staff Members Stephanie Watson, Dawn Marks and Terri Galligos and Carrie Clarke.

Like most work that's worth doing, Nicole's vision consisted of moments of both agony and uncertainty but her devotion, and that of all involved, created real moments of wholeness as the entire school community at Dr. Charles Best were left with a memory etched in their mind to take with them and undoubtedly, expand on, in the years to come.



Co-hosts Brianna Shanahan (left) and Nicole Bell (right)



Dr. Charles Best Staff

As we leave to return to classes, I'd like to leave you all with one thing, and that is to always stay true to who you are. Take pride in where you come from, your people, your language, your history. Never be afraid to grasp your roots. Everyone has a story and remember there's great value in your story. Find your voice and speak your truth.

Kúkwstumè kacw, Thank you All.

— Nicole Bell



# RELEVANCE

## We Are Open, We Are One

by Ken Lee, Grade 5, Smiling Creek Elementary School

In September, the students and staff of Smiling Creek Elementary got together and created four painted murals. The four murals were made because we are a brand-new school and wanted to create some artwork to show us coming together and gathering, and at the same time honour the land the school resides on.

The murals are spread around our school for everyone to enjoy. One is in the Library Learning Commons; one is above the glass case when you enter the school; and two are in the main hallway on the ground floor.

The mural was made by having 320 students, teachers, and EAs each paint a 6in x 6in canvas tile (the grade 4s and 5s did an extra canvas). Everyone was divided into groups and painted a section of the scenery—sun, sky, forest, mountains, land or water. We had received a donation of glue and birch plywood from a family working in the wood sector. Glue was applied on the 6in by 6in canvas tiles and stuck onto the birch plywood, which was left to dry for 24 hours. Once the tiles were done drying and mounted on the birch plywood, a couple of teachers painted the animals from the story, whose qualities we want to emulate.







Orange Shirt Display at Mountain View Elementary SD43





# Iyaqt Experience

by Sierra Sturdevant, Hatzic Middle School

Some of my classmates and I were lucky enough to be able to attend the Iyaqt field trip to Xá:ytem on October 3, 2018, where we learned about the past and the upbringing of our Elders.

The group I was in learned from Peter Gong, who taught us about the art of carving masks, boxes and house poles. He taught us the difference between house poles and totem poles. A house pole is a pole that goes inside your house and has many carvings and colours. He told us about how he carves the wood and prepares the carvings for artists who will paint his artwork and then sell them for thousands of dollars.

We also learned from Ronnie Dean Harris, who is a rapper. Mr. Harris told us about his rough childhood. He explained how he was the only Aboriginal student in his school until seventh grade, when he went to school with his cousins and brothers. When

Mr. Harris was in school, other people thought he and his family were a gang, and people called them nasty names.

Mr. Harris got into rapping when he was 12 or 13 years old, which is when he started to write rap songs. He lived in Vancouver with his mother for a while until he moved out, got a job and lived on his own. One day he wasn't happy with his life, so he started music again, and now he travels the world and is a successful rapper. He taught us to never give up on things that seem impossible because if you set your mind to it you will achieve your dream.

I learned that if you love something, you shouldn't let it go; instead, hold it more tightly and work harder to reach your goal. We learned a lot, and I am very proud to be a part of our Aboriginal community.





# Iyaqt Transition Day

by Mykayla Norman (Métis), Grade 10, Mission Senior Secondary School

Transition day in Mission had two events. I attended the one on October 3 for grades 9, 10 and 11 at Xá:ytem. This, for me, is meaningful because it brought all these students together on a traditional Stó:lō village site. I believe these kinds of days are important because seeing my peers transition with me means a lot, to know that I have the love and support of my friends and school staff.

Iyaqt in Halq'eméylem means "to change." Iyaqt event for me was about growing up. For most this can be intimidating, but I had help from some of the most amazing people I met on this day. Many presenters and speakers were there.

Some of these people included Ernie Cardinal, who is an Aboriginal youth worker and motivational speaker. Ernie inspired me to not be afraid of my Aboriginal background and to own who I am and what I can achieve. Ernie shared his story; it was moving. He didn't want to be another statistic, and despite the odds he has done great things with his life and helping many students and people by sharing his story. He is pretty funny!

There was also Ronnie Dean Harris, who is a multimedia artist. Ronnie taught me that no mat-

ter who I am I should always pursue my dreams, no matter what people say. I found it really amazing that Ronnie pursued his dream of being an artist, because I also would love to be a musical artist. When Ronnie explained his past and journey of becoming an Indigenous artist, it made me realize that I can also pursue my dreams and be who I want to be.

Finally, there was Peter Gong, an Aboriginal artist and guest speaker. Peter showed me that if you put your mind and heart towards something you can achieve it; you just have to be willing to work hard enough for it. All of these people were there on transition day to speak and give guidance. There were other inspiring people there that had sessions I was able to attend.

My transition was very frightening at first because I was scared to grow up. Learning about my ancestral background and the resiliency of our people has given me the confidence to succeed in my journeys to being an Indigenous musical artist. Hearing Ronnie speak and tell his story gave me a realization and a sense of confidence because now I know I can do it too. I am not afraid anymore; my Aboriginal Liaison Workers helped me and made me realize that change is a beautiful thing.





# Two Good Ideas

by Kirk Gummow

Providing multiple ways to connect to big ideas and competencies is among the tasks presented to educators by revised curriculum. SFU student teacher Erin Champion offers a couple ways she has found meaningful, while using Indigenous Knowledge with her students.

The work seen below uses art, in this case Coast Salish Art by artist Dillon Thomas, to relate to the work of Niels Bohr and his theory regarding the make up of the atom, commonly known as the Borh model. An idea gifted to her by a teaching mentor Aliisa Sarte. You can visit this site below on more.

<https://bcsccta.com/2018/06/13/atomic-models-and-coast-salish-design/>



Artist: Dylan Thomas

What story might this picture tell?

Art is a vehicle of utility and expression. Recognized as an expression of the soul and as way of connecting people to their inner sources of life.

—Gregory Cajete





The lesson related to the link below explores a Gitxsan method in plant classification and was produced by Veronica Ignas.

<http://www.ecoknow.ca/documents/TEKUnit1.pdf>

“This lesson starts out by asking students to consider plants vs brands, as a way to priming their thinking for critique of where we get our information from. It then asks students to consider all the local plants they can name. Using their prior knowledge on western science classification systems (in which plants are mainly organized based on similar physical features), they read and learn about how the Gitxsan people categorize plants. This includes plant classification that is focused around the cultural relevance of the plants such as medicinal, seasonal food, and other uses such as for building. Students then work in groups to organize their list of plants based on these

categories, but to also try to come up with a way of organizing them that honors the relationships between many of these categories (eg. Medicinal, and it’s season, or is a building material for wood, but the plant also produces edible berries). This was a challenging exercise for students and we discussed at the end of the lesson how difficult it is to re-frame things in your mind. We discussed reconciliation and how breaking down our ideas to reform new ones is part of this process.

I liked this lesson because it helped students to critically analyze another type of scientific model, like the Bohr model activity, and it was differentiated enough to give students choice and voice around coming up with a different way of organizing plants. Additionally, the lesson created an access point to discuss reconciliation, because it gave them experience to anchor their discussion in.”

“Listen, there are words almost everywhere. I realized that in a chance moment. Words are in the air, in our blood, words were always there...Words are in the snow, trees, leaves, wind, birds, beaver, the sound of ice cracking; words are in fish and mongrels, where they have been since we came to this place with the animals...Words and thoughts retain their capacity to create, to cause and to change.”

—Gerald Vizenor

“The living universe requires mutual respect among its members, and this suggests that a strong sense of individual identity and self is a dominant characteristic of the world as we know it. The willingness of entities to allow others to fulfill themselves, and the refusal of any entity to intrude thoughtlessly on another, must be the operative principle in the universe. Consequently, self-knowledge and self-discipline are high values of behavior. Only by allowing innovation by every entity can the universe move forward and create the future.”

—Vine Deloria Jr.

# Good Moccasins Bring You to Great Places

by Sheanan Littlechild (Cree—Onion Lake Band), Grade 9, Heritage Park Middle School

I have been in the powwow circle all my life, ever since I could walk. I was first introduced into the circle a couple weeks after I was born. When I first began dancing, I danced Fancy Shawl. I danced Fancy until I was about five years old; from then on, I've been dancing Jingle. Dancing Jingle makes me genuinely happy, as though it is a healing dance. I feel that I can bring healing to my family and those with aching hearts through the prayers that I pray while I'm dancing.

To me, dancing means showing love towards others in a completely different way. I don't dance just for myself or my family; I dance for those who can't dance, for those who are in low parts of their lives, and for those in need of prayers. When I dance, I feel like there is nothing else around me, just me and the drum. It makes me so beautiful inside and out. Dancing helps me express my feelings and beauty in a simple yet beautiful form.

When summer rolls in among us, me and my grandma travel across Turtle Island to many different reserves, too many different powwows every weekend. Powwow season ranges from early May to late September; that is when the excitement and fun begin! Powwows are a type of ceremony where you go to pray for you, your family and all other living beings. You pray for what you're grateful for or pray for those in need. Powwows are also a celebration of life; you dance, sing and pray to celebrate your life. Powwows are accepting towards everyone—it's like a second home; you can really feel everyone's love surrounding when dancing Grand Entry. Powwow life is truly a blessed life; I am proud to be a part of it and to embrace it.





# RECIPROCIITY

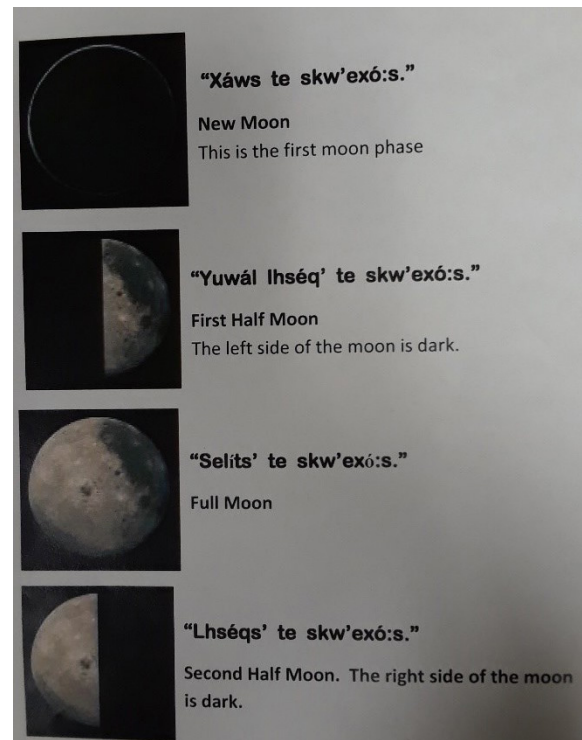
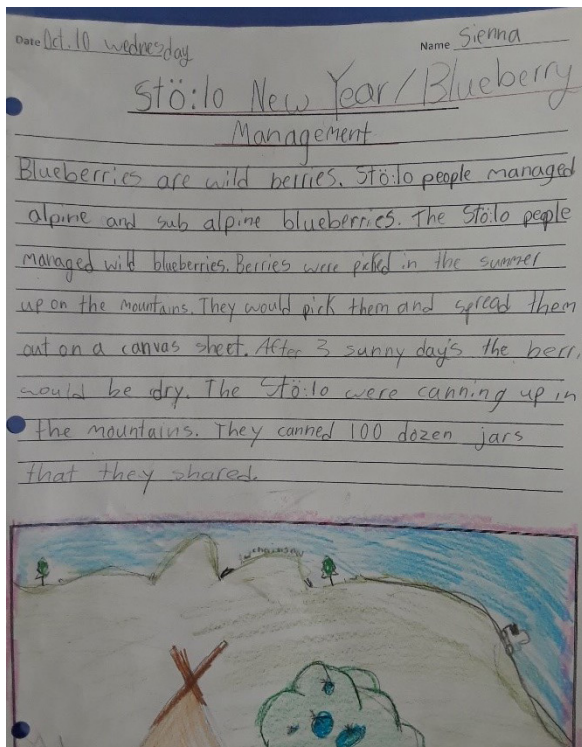
## Stó:lō New Year: Blueberry Management

by Judy Cathers, Cultural Support Worker and Malila, Halq'emeylem Teacher

Christine Morrison Elementary in Mission, BC celebrated Stó:lō New Year on October 11, 2018. Students were taught about why Stó:lō New Year is celebrated in October; we also learned about traditional Stó:lō blueberry management. As part of our celebration, everyone enjoyed dried blueberries and bannock with berry jam.

Why do the Stó:lō celebrate New Year in October? They do this because October is “time for things to be finished”—called “temhila'lxw.” For example,

the harvest is finished. The growing season is over. Berries, bulrushes, cedar and plants have been harvested. Because this season is called “time for things to be finished,” now, something is going to begin. This is the beginning of winter activities. The Stó:lō moved back to their fall and winter homes. New clothing would be made, baskets, hats—all from the material that had been gathered in the spring and summer months. This year, on October 10, the first sliver of the New Moon will show. This indicates that a new month will begin, and also the Stó:lō New Year.







# Project of Heart

by Mary Otey, Art Teacher, Minnekhada Middle School

Project of Heart is an arts-based program started in 2007 that classes and schools from across Canada have participated in. Each started with these small tiles and created their response to the Indian Residential School system of Canada in their own artistic ways, as art is a fantastic vehicle to respond to the world around us.

Art can be a reaction to the world around us, but to do that we need to know more about it.

Our past vice-principal, Sharon McKay, asked me during my first year here, three years ago, if I would be willing to do this project through art class. It being my first time in middle school, I was nervous about broaching such a difficult and emotional subject with this age group and waited until the next year, which was last year, to start.

I am so impressed with the maturity and empathy the students of Minnekhada Middle School brought to this project. Each term, in each class, each student created one or more tile, until the entire school including the staff had completed tiles by the end of last year. Our students come to us with varying levels of knowledge about the residential school system; we started by trying to imagine ourselves in those shoes.

We discussed Indigenous history in Canada post-contact—how sometimes countries do things that we don't always think are right, and how sometimes hurtful things are done in the name of religion.

We discussed the residential school system and the policies that were implemented to assimilate

Indigenous people into the dominant, European culture of Canada.

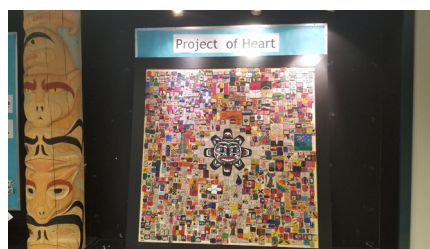
We questioned. Why would anyone think the residential school system was a good idea? How could anyone do this to another person, let alone a child?

We then discussed symbolism and how what we chose to represent on our tiles were our own personal responses to what we had just discussed. The only thing that was mandated was that they had to choose whether their tile was in the spirit of someone who passed away due to the residential school system, thus making the edges of their tile black, or in the spirit of a survivor, in which case they coloured the edges brightly to symbolize life.

At the beginning of this school year, students were invited to find their tiles and glue them onto the board. The new grade 6s were invited to glue on tiles that the grade 8s who moved on last year had left or to create their own. Together, we have made this mural as a symbol of our shared knowledge and response to the Indian Residential School system of Canada, and to show those who come to our school that we have a school culture of respect, love and community.

Students also had the option to make a tile to be given to a survivor of residential schools through Project of Heart and write a message to them. Over 40 of our students chose to do this, and these cards and tiles will be in the hands of a survivor to let the know that we care.

All my relations.





# Bad Rock Bus Tour

by Jaden Noel-Hodder (Inuit), Grade 12, Mission Senior Secondary School

On Thursday, October 4, my fellow grade 12 classmates and I had a wonderful opportunity to tour around the traditional Stó:lō territory in the Fraser Valley with Sonny McHalsie. Sonny provided us with enlightenment and education about the Stó:lō history the Fraser Valley holds. He talked about how major Stó:lō communities were always based around water, how to pronounce our community's names, and many more eye-opening things.

Sonny showed us different mountain peaks, their names and their transformation stories. One I remember is a cave where Thunderbird lived near Sumas Mountain. He also pointed out different hunting and fishing grounds used by Stó:lō people for hundreds of years, and where a traditional village site was before they drained Sumas Lake.

One of the things that stuck with me the most is the story of the water spirit in Lake of the Woods in Hope. It is said that if you swim to the middle of the lake and look down, you will see a pair of eyes staring back at you! Many still don't swim in the lake because of that.

Sonny also brought us to the only place you can dry salmon in the Fraser Valley, in Yale. It was beautiful, with the sun gleaming off the turquoise water, lighting up the whole place despite the chilling wind. He talked about people being transformed into stone or water in that spot. He talked about the water bear and the rock walls built for protection. He even shared with us his own personal story of saving two men in that spot when their boat capsized while they were fishing.

This was a great opportunity for the grade 12 students to see the Stó:lō land, and I can say I learned a lot on this trip. Thank you to Sonny McHalsie, Robby, Brittany, Mr. Heslip and Vivian for bringing us on this trip and providing a great, educational experience. More people need to be educated about the traditional lands they live on and the history.



“Like relatives, places must be fed and cared for. Like family and old friends, places are visited and in return they care for us, they may gift us with dreams and answers to our prayers. Stay awhile; sit down, tell stories, eat and drink and offer something to those who came before, those who shaped this landscape and who were shaped by it; those who made our precious and precarious life possible”  
—Cynthia Chambers

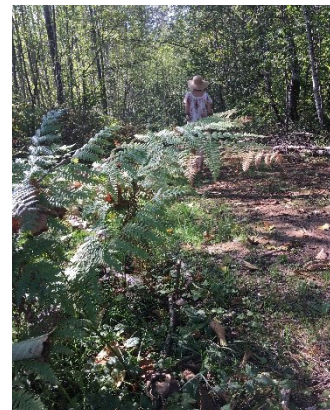




# Stave Falls Community Fall Gathering

by Sue McLeod, Principal of the future Stave Falls Outdoor School

Stave Falls is a breathtaking rural community in the northwest area of Mission. Community members, District of Mission and Stave Falls Principal Sue McLeod were led in a welcome song by Chief Gabriel and family members of Kwantlen First Nation at this Stave Falls Community Association event held in September. They spoke of the significance of the opening of the school in 2019, which will include a focus on outdoor education, forestry and Indigenous world views.



The knowledge bases of Indigenous peoples, as well as other neglected knowledge bases, can be sources of inspiration, creativity, and opportunity. They can also contribute to humanity, equality, solidarity, tolerance, and respect.

—Marie Battiste, *Decolonizing Education: Nourishing The Learning Spirit*





# Mary Hill Elementary Orange Shirt Day: A Rocks of Love Garden Commemorating Residential School Survivors

by Emily Taylor

Mary Hill recognized Orange Shirt Day by holding a school-wide assembly on October 1. Two classes of grade 1 and 2 children sang a traditional song, and children were drummed in and out of the assembly. A small presentation was provided by various children to represent the diversity within the school, demonstrating that it is okay to keep our traditions. Ms. Reid, Principal, asked every child to bring a rock for painting with messages of love in honour of residential school survivors: "It is our hope that each year the garden will grow and be added to annually as a school community on Orange Shirt Day."

The rock garden is at the front entrance of the school, providing positive and welcoming messages of love for children, staff and guests as they walk in the school.



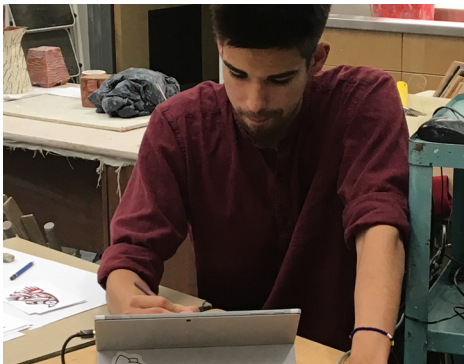


# A Night of Discovery

On a cold night in October, educators in Coquitlam School District had their hearts warmed by the gifts of local Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists and educators. The night began with a traditional Coast Salish welcoming conducted by Dawn Marks, a member of the Shishálh and Sts'ailes Coast Salish Nations, followed by a delicious meal provided by Adam Jonas, head Chef of Centennial Secondary. The Aboriginal Education (SD43) staff thanks Centennial Secondary for their hospitality.

The rest of the evening was spent apprenticing various artistic endeavours and for that we thank

Philip Hogan and Frances Bolton for sharing their rendition of Coast Salish Art. We also thank Adel and Irwin for encouraging educators to bring the spirit of dance to the kids, Jane Ferguson for continuing the teachings of drumming that were so graciously gifted to her, John Velten for sharing his approach to art through digital literacy and Paula Leon for sharing her teachings in the art of Coast Salish weaving. Experiences, such as these, within the realm of the arts, can be an effective way to weave Indigenous knowledge into curriculum and can also serve as touchstones to bigger ideas.



# The Salish Sea

by Jens Preshaw, Teacher, Glenayre Elementary School, Coquitlam School District

This summer I spent eight days exploring the northwest tip of Vancouver Island with my camera. Our sailboat anchored each night in beautiful Bull Harbour on Hope Island. This territory is the traditional land of the Tlatlasikwala, Nakumgilisala and Yutlinuk people. I was fortunate to see an area of BC that few people will ever visit. There was an amazing amount of wildlife, and the photographic opportunities were outstanding.

After returning to Port McNeill, I decided to visit Alert Bay. There is a ferry that runs daily between that community, Port McNeill and Sointula. The crossing time is about 45 minutes, and you can board as a walk-on passenger.

After disembarking in Alert Bay, it's a short walk to the U'mista Cultural Centre. The U'mista Cultural Centre is one of the longest-operating and most successful First Nations cultural facilities in British Columbia. It was founded in 1980 as a groundbreaking project to house potlatch artifacts that had been seized by government during an earlier period of cultural repression. The return of the potlatch artifacts also provided U'mista's name, which means "the return of something important." I was impressed with their large collection of wooden masks.

At the museum I also learned about Spencer O'Brien, a female snowboarder who competed in the 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang, South Korea.



She was born in Alert Bay, and her grandmother is from the Kwakwaka'wakw First Nation. I think it's really interesting that someone from a small community on Cormorant Island with a population of about 1000 people can go on to represent Canada in the Winter Olympics.

Behind the U'mista Cultural Centre stood the St. Michael's Residential School, which was built in 1929 and closed in 1974. With space for 200 live-in students, it was the largest operated by the Anglican Church at that time. At the school, First Nations students were prohibited from speaking their language and kept away from their families for years. Reports of abuse are common. Former residential school students provided testimony to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

In 2015, former students of St. Michael's Residential School in Alert Bay gathered to witness the symbolic demolition of the decrepit building, sharing songs, embraces and tears—and hurling rocks at it—as part of their "healing journey." An estimated 160,000 children attended residential schools across Canada.

I would highly recommend, if you ever get the opportunity during your summer travels, that you visit Alert Bay on beautiful Cormorant Island. If you would like to see images of the wildlife near Hope Island, BC, please visit [jenspreshaw.com](http://jenspreshaw.com).



# Making a Difference

by Kirk Gummow

**Q: Could you tell us a little bit about who you are and where you come from?**

**A:** My name is Chloe Goodison, and I am a grade 11 student at Heritage Woods Secondary School in Port Moody. I have lived in Port Moody my whole life, and I have no Indigenous heritage but I am passionate about raising awareness about reconciliation. When I'm not at school, you can find me playing piano, rowing in the Burrard Inlet, and working/volunteering in the community. I'm very goal oriented, and when I have passion for a cause, I always do whatever I can to raise awareness and gain support. Above all, I love helping others!

**Q: Could you tell us a little about your Orange Shirt Day initiative at Heritage Woods Secondary?**

**A:** We first started selling shirts in June of last school year, just to get the project into people's heads and in case anyone wanted to buy their shirt early. The shirts we were selling were the official Orange Shirt Day 2018 design, bought right from orangeshirtday.org. Then, as soon as school started back in September, we worked very hard to get the word out about the upcoming day. We put posters up, got leadership classes involved, and did everything we could to spread the word. It was the first year that Orange Shirt Day was held at Heritage Woods, but we had an awesome turnout of people wearing orange - and we know that it will only grow bigger each year. I was very impressed with how many people participated. It was very inspiring!

**Q: What inspired you to take action?**

**A:** I would say the starting point was reading Richard Wagamese's novel "Indian Horse". This book got me hooked on the topic and passionate about the concept of reconciliation. A very good family friend is a high school counsellor in the Burnaby School District, and she had spoken with me about Burnaby's Orange Shirt Day, as it happens in their district. I then became very aware of the initiative and read more about the founder, Phyllis Webstad, and her life. Orange Shirt Day is a day every school and community should acknowledge, so I feel I was just doing my part as an active citizen to bring this initiative

to my school

**Q: What were some of the challenges you experienced getting your initiative off the ground?**

**A:** Probably the biggest challenge was just figuring out my starting point. Fortunately, my go-to teacher, Mrs. Powell, was able to direct me as she has so much knowledge and expertise in creating school-wide events. Mrs. Powell was an excellent help in spreading the word, which itself is more difficult than one may realize. However, as we spoke to people around the school and made people aware of the project, word of mouth took over and eventually most of the school knew about Orange Shirt Day.

**Q: To educate yourself more in relating to Indigenous people, you took an online course. What was the online course and what were some "aha moments" for you? Or what were some of the big ideas or main ideas you took away from the course?**

**A:** I took the online course "Indigenous Canada", offered through the University of Alberta. It was a fantastic course and I'd recommend it to anyone who wants to learn about the history of our country. The module that disturbed me the most was the unit on Residential Schools - specifically, the stories told from the survivors. I strongly believe all Canadians should be educated on these matters.

**Q: You also had your parents take you to see some Indigenous speakers. Who were they, and what were some key teachings that you unfolded for yourself from their talk(s)?**

**A:** One of the speakers who really resonated with me was Wab Kinew. My mom and I saw him at the Vancouver Playhouse, when he was in town promoting his book, "The Reason You Walk". Hearing Wab's story, and reading his book, not only reinforced the inter-generational effects of Residential Schools, but also highlighted how many of the answers to our modern-day quandaries can be found in traditional Indigenous teachings.



# RESPONSIBILITY

## Efforts Toward Saving Our Raincoast

by Kota Clarkson, Heritage Park Middle School

My name is Kota, and I am a student at Heritage Park Middle School in Mission, BC. My class and I have been studying the Great Bear Sea together for over a year now.

I was so sad when I heard about a baby whale in J Pod that died. I wanted to raise money to help the whales have more salmon to eat. I knew I had to help them to get food. I decided to donate money I had earned getting my chores done. I challenged my friends at school to donate their chore money and decided to help in other ways too.

My teachers and the education assistants were inspired and offered to help us do a popcorn sale. I did a presentation for some of the other students in our school to help teach them how they could help save salmon in lots of different ways. At the end of my presentation I told them that we were going to have a

popcorn sale to raise money for the salmon. We sold popcorn on the school's movie days, and lots of students and staff bought popcorn to help. We also grew geraniums in our school greenhouse all year long and sold them in the spring. We donated all the money we made doing that too. Together we raised \$338.00.

I really hope the whales, bears, eagles, seals, otters, wolves, salmon, trees—all the things in the Great Bear Sea—stay healthy and alive. We are going to raise money again to keep helping everything that lives there.

I also hope that other schools will raise money together!

Many Indigenous traditions recognize the animals as having been created first and therefore as being older and wiser than humans. From an Indigenous perspective, much of the knowledge of the past came from the relationships that human beings developed with animals. The histories of tribal people are filled with stories of how particular animals sacrificed and taught the human communities.

—Micheal Marker





# Zero Hunger

by Vanessa LeMercier

At Heritage Woods Secondary, the Food Studies class had a Métis speaker named Lori Snyder take children on a nature walk in our forests and point out the many useful plants around us that were often used by local First Nations.

I spoke with the students and the teacher, and they were very surprised and shocked that there were so many plants used in a variety of ways just steps outside our school.

“I was surprised that we didn’t have to go very far to look for food sources.”—Mrs Woods, Foods Teacher

“I thought that the plants would be farther, and I had no idea that we could use these simple plants in all these ways!”—Victor, Grade 12 Student

The class used some of the plants. They took one to use as their traditional ingredient, and presented it along with other uses and the backstory of the plant and how it relates to Indigenous culture.

These foods were presented and sampled to celebrate and help promote World Food Day. World Food Day’s main theme is #ZeroHunger. The central focus around zero hunger is that by 2030 it is possible to end world hunger. This means that everyone everywhere has access to nutritional, healthy and clean foods. In order to successfully reach this world-changing goal, we have to work together to reduce our waste by respecting our earth and living a sustainable life—as being among the many Indigenous cultures who “live off the land” and honour and respect the land that provides them with all these resources.

As caretakers of Mother Earth, we strive to live a sustainable life to help prevent environmental degradation of resources and maintain purity of food and water for the future generations. Indigenous culture has such strong values on community, and we take only what we need because we have to respect Mother Earth. We also practise a strong sense of sharing throughout our community and giving what we don’t need to others, since we place a high value on community.



Artwork provided by Olivia Oh

Across Canada, many Indigenous people face food insecurity in households. In Canada, Indigenous people face a statistically higher rate of food insecurity in their households than do non-Indigenous households. Many traditional foods are hunted, gathered or fished, but due to pollutants caused from industrial development, our resources are being contaminated. Many Elders believe that eating these traditional foods are important, since they are a part of their culture and Mother Earth gives us these resources. This is a major problem in our community, leaving people food insecure.

The main focus around World Food Day is making sure that everyone has access to nutritional and safe food, since it’s a basic human right. The ways of meeting the #ZeroHunger challenge are through values that have been practised by First Nations for many years, and it starts with respecting the earth, not wasting, eating locally and living sustainably.

I believe that we are all connected, and the statement “All My Relations” means that we are all connected to things spiritual and natural. We are taught that “we are the land and the land is us”—in other words, what we do to the land and others, we do to ourselves. This means that we are all connected to land and to others through our relations, and to protect our relations we must protect our land and share with others. If we all followed Indigenous wisdom such as this and honoured their sacred values around Mother Earth, we would place a higher value on earth and sharing with the community.

I believe it is time to think Indigenous and act authentic even at the price of rejection. To disagree with mainstream expectations is to wake up, to understand what is happening, to be of service to a larger whole. You may even begin to work on behalf of our lands, water and air. —Dr Manu Aluli-Meyer, Professor of Education, University of Hawaii

# Staff and Students Learn Halq'eméylem

by Teqwotenot (Roxanne George), Halq'eméylem Language Instructor, SD78

Ey Swayel,  
Teqwotenot tel skwix. Telitsel kwa Squi-  
ala qas te Shxw'owhamel.

Good day,

My name is Teqwotenot (Roxanne  
George). I'm from Squiala and Shxw'ow-  
hamel.

I'm the new, full time Halq'eméylem  
language instructor for SD78. My first  
month of teaching has been fantastic.  
At Kent Elementary and Silver Creek  
Elementary, I took the opportunity to  
teach Salish weaving while teaching  
Halq'eméylem (colours and numbers),  
as well as the historical stories of Sal-  
ish weaving. I look forward to teaching  
Halq'eméylem through various cultural  
activities with the staff and students of  
SD78



To affect the needed reform, educators need to make a conscious decision to nurture Indigenous knowledge, its dignity, identity, and integrity by making a direct change in school philosophy, policy, pedagogy, and practice. They need to develop missions and purposes that carve out time and space, that affirm and connect with the wisdom and traditions of Indigenous knowledge, that are with the people themselves, their Elders and communities. They need to define what it means to teach in holistic ways and develop humanistic connections to local and collective relationships. They need to make educational opportunities for students that nourish their learning spirits and build strong minds, bodies, and spirits.

—Marie Battiste, *Decolonizing Education: Nourishing The Learning Spirit*



# An Evening with Wab Kinew

by Melody Ferrer

In my dual role as Teacher-Librarian and School Leader of New Curriculum Implementation at Heritage Woods Secondary, I am always on the lookout for authentic Indigenous resources that will help both staff and students move forward on the journey towards reconciliation. When I learned that Vancouver Kidsbooks was hosting a teachers' night with Wab Kinew featuring his new book *Go Show the World: A Celebration of Indigenous Heroes*, I jumped at the opportunity.

Wab Kinew came out on stage, greeted the audience in his own language (Anishinaabemowin), then switched to English. He started by reading the book and I was surprised to hear the musical influences of rap / hip-hop. (In case you weren't aware, Wab Kinew used to work as a singer-songwriter and sang in a band during his youth.) After the reading, he went through each page of the book and talked about the people he had chosen to showcase as Indigenous heroes and why. Did you know that Sacagawea was a guide for Lewis & Clark on their American expedition? I had never heard of her . . . How about Dr. Susan Laflesche Picotte? She was one of the first Indigenous doctors in the Victorian era when it was uncommon for females in general to be admitted to medical school, let alone a woman with "dark skin." There are also many contemporary examples, including Dr. Evan Adams, a Two Spirit physician and well-respected actor from BC; Waneek Horn-Miller, who was stabbed by an army soldier's bayonet at 14 years of age during the Oka crisis and ultimately overcame tremendous adversity to become an Olympic athlete. The overriding message of the book is repeated three times and is a powerful reminder that all of our students are important:

"You're a person who matters. Yes, it's true. Now go show the world what a person who matters can do."

After going through each beautifully illustrated page (kudos to Joe Morse), Wab pointed out that the end of the book has short biographies on each

person represented. He then took questions from the audience and more than one person requested that he produce an audio recording of his book. He said that he would definitely put something on YouTube. Other requests from the audience included a French version of the book as well as more books, perhaps even a graphic novel! Wab laughed and said that it had taken him 3 years to write "Go Show the World" and noted that he is rather busy with his current job . . . Manitoba's leader of the NDP!



"Wise women and men have known for millennia: when we are wronged it is better to respond with love, courage, and grace than with anger, bitterness, and rage. We are made whole by living up to the best part of human nature—the part willing to forgive the aggressor, the part that never loses sight of the humanity of those on the other side of the relationship, and the part that embraces the person with whom we have every right to be angry and accepts him or her as a brother or sister."

"Reconciliation is realized when two people come together and understand that what they share unites them and that what is different about them needs to be respected."

—Wab Kinew, *The Reason You Walk: Memoir*



# Eat, Laugh, Love

by Kirk Gummow

One of the true honors of working with young people in Aboriginal Education is now and again you get the opportunity to celebrate life with them and their families. Getting together to eat, laugh and love in community is the richest of experiences and we thank all those who brought themselves to the party. Aboriginal Education (SD 43) would like to particularly thank Spirit of the Children Society for their efforts in sponsoring the event and providing the many give-aways for the families and children. We would also like to thank the Kwhlii Gibaygum Nisga'a Traditional Dancers for sharing the songs and dances of the Nisga'a Nation.



Community is the context in which the affective domains of education unfolds. It is the place where one comes to know what is to be related. It is the place of sharing life through everyday acts, through song, dance, story and celebration.

—Gregory Cajete



# Shout Outs

The Canoe would like to do a shout out to the following students: Shelton Burgie for his commentary on bullies, Madden Lynch for stepping forward and leading his school in acknowledging the traditional territories, Tiara Sumner for choosing her own regalia in this past June's High School graduation ceremonies, and Nikita Lagasse for beautifully articulating from her perspective the power of Indigenous knowledge and ways of being.

Shelton Stop Bullying Sept 20 2018  
 Holding each other up mean we all have each others backs

we should not make other think they cannot be who they really are

we need to all work together and stop fighting and stop hurting each other it is not right

when people hurt others it mean they are being hurt so they think it is right to do to others

do you want a world of fighting or Happiest killings or living together

I am done hereing that people want to hurt there selfs because of what people say to them when they all wanted was for kids to like them

nothing is right about what we are doing to each other we all have someone who belives them and cares but to many people and kids are hurting them selfs for what people say to THEM

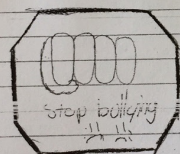
It is not something fun and should not bring happy niss to ~~anyone~~ anyone

there are so many people getting bullied for who they are

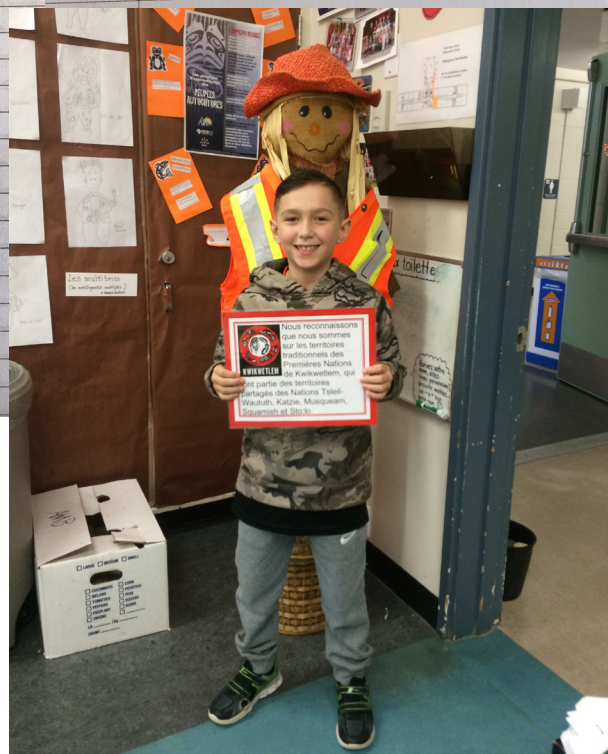
it is not right when someone bullies a person for what they have in life

It all needs to stop and I am one that wants it to stop because it as been happening to me for 9 year or longer so are you with me

Stop Bullying



Madden Lynch  
 École Porter Street Elementary





Peoples' lives are enriched by connections with other generations

Peoples' lives are enriched by connections with other generations. First of all, Elder generations pass down their knowledge with traditional singing, dancing, art and language. Elders teach their community members traditional things. Secondly, the young ones teach adolescents many things, such as love and patience. Young ones teach adolescents not to be selfish and to understand how to give love. Finally, interacting with other generations is important because it helps individuals with personal growth and the sharing knowledge.

Elders pass down information about traditional things. First Nations communities rely on Elders to pass down information about cultural teachings such as singing, dancing, art and language. Without Elders the native in 'us' would have died. Elders teach communities how to respect everything such as, nature, respect, tradition, and animal teachings. For example, First Nations people pray before taking the life an animal so that the animals will go to a better place and come back to the world more powerful.

The young ones teach people responsibility and patience. Adolescents learn patience by recognizing that young ones require lots of attention and affection. The young ones enrich lives by teaching the value of love and the ability to be more selfless. Young ones give First Nations people a purpose in the world. Community members watch them to turn into young warriors and also remind members to see the world differently and from a positive lens.



Nikita Lagasse



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AND  
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.78 (FRASER-CASCADE)

## PERSONAL AWARENESS & RESPONSIBILITY



- I can show a sense of accomplishment and joy
- I can imagine and work toward change in myself and the world
- I can advocate for myself and my ideas
- I can participate in activities that support my well-being, and tell/show how they help me

**New curriculum connections found inside**

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