



## For All Coquitlam School District Parents and Students

Coquitlam School District 43 is committed to the academic success, cultural connections, and socio-emotional development of all Indigenous Learners K to 12.

The revised curriculum now being implemented across the province as per the Ministry of Education, includes integrated material related to Indigenous culture, history, and ways of knowing in each grade, K-12. The best summary of why this is important for *all* students is embedded in the First Peoples Principles of Learning. For more information on this topic, please access the Ministry website at: <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/documents.htm#curriculum>

### **Self-Identification**

#### **What does “self-identification” mean?**

It means any individual can self-identify as an Indigenous person: First Nation (status or non-status), Metis or Inuit Ancestry if they believe they have Indigenous ancestry in their 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?**

Knowing who you are and where you come from is an essential aspect within an Indigenous worldview. Knowing your identity can lead to an increased positive self-image.

By self-identifying as an Indigenous student you may have access to a wide variety of academic, cultural, and social/emotional supports, programs, and activities (see examples below). By acknowledging your Indigenous ancestry, you can help contribute to the provision of high-quality learning opportunities that are responsive, flexible, and accessible to Indigenous students and contribute to strategic goals, strategies, and policies set up by the Indigenous Advisory Council.

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

Elementary, middle, and high school lists of Indigenous students are carried forward from the previous year. The ‘self-identification’ forms have been completed and authorized by parent/guardian or student. A new form is required when the students transition from elementary to middle, or middle to high school. Each school has an Indigenous Youth Worker assigned to the school. Please call the school youth worker or Indigenous Department if you have any questions or concerns.

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## **Common Questions**

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

Indigenous Education support may include such things as:

- Field trips
- 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 (AYLC) 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.
- Awareness of and applying for Aboriginal scholarships and bursaries for post-secondary.

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

No. We are working with a new integrated model of delivering Indigenous curriculum, therefore, all students will have access.

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

Yes. 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 (parent/guardians) who have self-identified, but the type of support can vary.

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

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

## **Continuation of Indigenous Education Services**

We will continue to provide service to all children with Indigenous Ancestry for this school year. If you do not wish support from our department, please let us know by email. Unless we hear otherwise from you, we will assume that your child/children will continue with our program, and we look forward to celebrating school successes with your son/daughter.

## **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 a conversation or meeting with our Acting District Principal, Ms. Nancy L. Bennett.