



550 Poirier Street, Coquitlam, British Columbia V3J 6A7 • Phone 604-939-9201 • Fax: 604-939-7828

September 23, 2021

Dear SD43 families,

In addition to representing the end of summer vacation and a return to school, September is strongly associated with the Terry Fox Run and Orange Shirt Day in our community. This year in particular, these familiar September events will be brought into focus and converge in a unique way.

I have previously communicated with you that schools will be closed, and classes will not be in session, on Thursday, September 30, 2021, to recognize Truth and Reconciliation Day. Previously, students and staff wore orange on this day in a show of support for victims and survivors of Canada's residential school system. This tradition will continue with many choosing to wear orange over the course of the week and engaging in age-appropriate discussions and lessons around this important issue in Indigenous and Canadian history. Further, in acknowledgement of this learning opportunity and to demonstrate our commitment to reconciliation, during the week of Monday, September 27th to Friday, October 1st, flags in the school district will be lowered to half-mast.

Many of you will have participated in Terry Fox runs in your community or organized school runs this month. Usually, schools weave lessons and discussions of the life and legacy of Terry Fox into the days and weeks leading up to Terry Fox events. Soon, expanded curriculum materials will be available to elementary school teachers and students. Recently, the Fox family has explored their Métis roots and that introspection, in addition to Terry's accomplishments, has inspired the creation of the *Terry Fox Inspiration in Action Lesson Plans*. Created in partnership with the Terry Fox Foundation, the BC Métis Federation, the Indigenous Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation Council (ISPARC), and the BC Sports Hall of Fame, this exciting new curriculum resource for grades 4-7 students was piloted at École Glen Elementary here in SD43, the elementary school Terry attended as a young student. These learning resources will be officially launched on Wednesday, September 29th and made available to teachers across Canada.

In the coming days, I encourage you to take time to pause and reflect on what Truth and Reconciliation means to you and engage in age-appropriate discussion with your children. It is only through education that we may learn from the past and make positive steps forward.

Sincerely,

Patricia Gartland
Superintendent/CEO