

School District #75 (Mission)
Public Meeting of the Board of Education
Agenda

January 19, 2021, 6:30 pm

Zoom Meeting

Visit www.mpsd.ca > Board of Education > Meeting Information to connect remotely.

Pages

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Board Chair will acknowledge that this meeting is being held on Traditional Territory.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

3. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1. Reporting out from Closed Meeting

5.2. COVID Update

Information

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6. NEW BUSINESS

7. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

7.1. Board of Education Public Meeting Minutes, December 15, 2020

Action

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8. INFORMATION ITEMS

8.1. Éy St'elmexw Sqwelqwel, Good Medicine Stories, Edition #1

Information

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8.2. Statement from the Board regarding an incident at HPMS

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9. CORRESPONDENCE

10. COMMITTEE MINUTES/LIAISON REPORTS

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

12. QUESTION PERIOD

Questions asked must be related to items discussed on the Agenda. Labour, Land, and Legal issues will not be discussed.

13. ADJOURNMENT

ITEM 5.2 Information

TO: Board of Education
FROM: A. Wilson, Superintendent of Schools
SUBJECT: COVID19 Update

1. Summary:

The Superintendent will provide a COVID update including a report on COVID exposures in Mission Schools.

2. Background:

3. Options:

4. Analysis and Impact:

- a. Strategic Plan Alignment
- b. Enhancement Agreement
- c. Funding Guidelines, Costing, & Budget Impact
- d. Policy, Legislation, Regulation
- e. Organizational Capacity
- f. Risks
 - i. Organizational
 - ii. Reputational
 - iii. Strategic
- g. Benefits
 - i. Organizational
 - ii. Reputational
 - iii. Strategic

5. Public Participation:

6. Implementation:

7. Attachments:

**School District #75 (Mission)
Public Meeting of the Board of Education Minutes**

**December 15, 2020, 6:30 pm
Via Zoom Videoconference**

- Members Present:** Board Chair, Tracy Loffler
School Trustee, Randy Cairns
Trustee, Rick McKamey
Trustee, Julia Renkema
- Members Absent:** Vice Chair, Shelley Carter
- Staff Present:** Secretary-Treasurer, Corien Becker
Superintendent of Schools, Angus Wilson
Assistant Superintendent, Karen Alvarez
Executive Assistant, Aleksandra Crescenzo (Recorder)

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by the Chairperson. The Chair acknowledged that Mission Public Schools is held on Stó:lō Territory. There are four First Nation Bands within the boundaries of the Mission School District: Leq:a'mel, Sq'èwlets, Kwantlen, and Matsqui First Nations.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOVED and Seconded that the Agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

Trustee Carter sends her regrets for not being able to attend the meeting.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4.1 DPAC Trustee Liaisons

MOVED and Seconded that the Board of Education appoint Trustee Shelley Carter as the 1st Trustee Liaison for the District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) and Trustee Tracy Loffler as the Alternate Liaison.

CARRIED

The item was discussed at the Committee of the Whole and the Board agreed to appoint liaisons for the District Parent Advisory Committee (DPAC). All Trustees are still welcome to attend DPAC meetings.

4.2 Assessing and Communicating Student Learning Policy

MOVED and Seconded that the Assessing and Communicating Student Learning Policy be considered by the Board for approval.

AMENDMENT

THAT the policy be approved.

AMENDED MOTION

MOVED and Seconded that the Assessing and Communicating Student Learning Policy be approved.

CARRIED

The draft policy was reviewed at the December Committee of the Whole and referred to partner groups for additional consideration. No further changes were brought forward.

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1 Reporting out from Closed Meeting

The Superintendent reported that staff and legal matters were discussed at the December 15, 2020, Closed Meeting of the Board.

5.2 Annual Report

MOVED and Seconded that the 2020 Annual Report be approved.

CARRIED

The report was reviewed at the December 1, 2020 Committee of the Whole meeting. A few revisions have been made to the wording under the sections for Organization and Strategic Plan. Chair Loffler acknowledged and thanked staff for their work on the Annual Report.

5.3 2019-2020 Statement of Financial Information

MOVED and Seconded that, pursuant to the *Financial Information Act (the "Act")*, the Statement of Financial Information be approved.

CARRIED

The 2019-2020 Statement of Financial Information includes details on employees earning more than \$75,000 a year, including their expenses,

payments to suppliers of more than \$25,000 a year, and the audited financial statements.

5.4 COVID-19 Update

The Superintendent provided an update on the recent changes Fraser Health has made to its reporting and tracing process, as well as general information on exposures at Mission school sites.

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Spread the Word Pledge

MOVED and Seconded that the Board of Education pledge to take action for a more inclusive world.

CARRIED

The Board shared their support for taking the pledge and agreed that taking the pledge as a whole offers a unified message for supporting the initiative.

6.2 Whistle Blower Protection Policy

MOVED and Seconded that the amended Whistleblower Protection Policy be approved.

CARRIED

The Chair noted that there were a few changes to the policy. Section 3.d has been updated to provide a report annually versus monthly. The procedure has been referred to legal counsel for review, as reporting to legal counsel is part of the procedure. Staff anticipate that this will result in further revisions. The policy will also be referred, and any recommended amendments will be returned to the Board in the new year.

6.3 Black Shirt Day

MOVED and Seconded that Mission Public Schools support and encourage Mission students and employees to participate in Black Shirt Day, January 15, 2021 to support ending systemic racism.

CARRIED

Black Shirt Day is meant to promote awareness of anti-racism and civil rights. It is similar in this aspect to events related to Pink Shirt Day and Orange Shirt Day. The hope of organizers is to promote conversations about racism in Canada and work towards a more positive future for all Canadians.

The Superintendent commented that there is more significant work that needs to be done surrounding the content and curriculum of black Canadians and other persons of colour. This item can be revisited in the New Year.

6.4 Boundary Review

MOVED and Seconded that the Board of Education direct staff to do a detailed analysis of the Durieu area students in consideration of changing the boundary to Dewdney; and

MOVED and Seconded that the Board of Education direct staff to do a detailed analysis of the Steelhead area students in consideration of changing the boundary to Stave Falls.

CARRIED

Following the Special Committee of the Whole meeting on October 27, 2020, the Committee requested that the recommendations be forwarded to the Public Board meeting for consideration.

6.5 Motion regarding Masks

MOVED and Seconded that the Board of Education School District 75 require and expect masks to be worn in all school buildings and workplaces in the district until further notice. Exceptions would be for medical reasons.

AMENDMENT

MOVED and Seconded the Board of Education and SD 75 expect masks to be worn in all school buildings and workplaces in the District as mandated in the guidelines provided by the Public Health Authority until such time that these guidelines are revised.

AMENDED MOTION

MOVED and Seconded that the Board of Education and SD 75 expect masks to be worn in all school buildings and workplaces in the District as mandated in the guidelines provided by the Public Health Authority until such time that these guidelines are revised.

CARRIED Opposed: Trustee Cairns

The Provincial Government requires that masks be worn in all public buildings with the exception of all school settings. The recommendation is brought forward to enhance the safety of our staff. Wearing masks and washing hands are reasonable recommendations that can be followed by all individuals.

Trustees commented that the Board does not have the legal authority to mandate the wearing of masks in school buildings and that the SD should follow the recommendations of the Ministry of Health. Concerns were raised about liability issues.

The motion was not supported as presented. An amendment was presented, and the amended motion was approved. Trustee Cairns requested to register a negative vote against the amendment. He stated it is not in the interest of mitigating the transmission of COVID-19.

12. QUESTION PERIOD

How does the Board feel about the "liability shield/ aspect" with not supporting the mandate to wear masks knowing that teachers have contracted COVID and that teachers will contract COVID?

We are doing the best we can to keep everyone safe and will continue to follow Provincial Health Orders. We cannot legally mandate the wearing of masks in schools.

A question was asked about the wording used in the letter to Jennifer Whiteside. Terms like "special needs" was used because that was the wording that was in the Minister's mandate letter. The Chair acknowledged that we are trying to move away from such wording, and this is why diverse learners was used later in the letter.

Has the Board considered that a mask mandate might improve the TTOC shortage? We are following provincial guidelines and realize that COVID has impacted shortages across the province. Mandating masks in schools has to be a larger movement like lobbying BCSTA, BCTF, the Health Authority and the Minister of Education.

Is there insight or thoughts about why Hatzic Middle School (HMS) has a larger amount of exposures compared to other large school sites? No specific information or data is known about the exposures at HMS. Some research was shared from the Surrey SD. Schools are a reflection of their community, the activities that people do, and the work backgrounds of parents.

13. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED and Seconded that the Board adjourn the meeting.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm.

Chair, Board of Education

Secretary-Treasurer

ITEM 8.1 Information

TO: Board of Education
FROM: V. Searwar, District Principal of Indigenous Education
SUBJECT: Éy St'elmexw Sqwelqwel, Good Medicine Stories, Edition #1

1. Summary:

District Principal of Indigenous Education would like to share a new Siwal Si'wes Publication called **Éy St'elmexw Sqwelqwel, Good Medicine Stories**. Our goal is to continue this work every two to three months to create awareness of what is happening at Siwal Si'wes (Indigenous Department), throughout SD75 and in Indigenous-based local, provincial and national events.

Acknowledgement goes to Judy Cathers, Indigenous Liaison Worker, Jennifer Lane, SWSW Teacher-Librarian and Peggy Janicki, Indigenous Mentor Teacher, and additional staff who made submissions.

2. Background:

3. Options:

4. Analysis and Impact:

- a. Strategic Plan Alignment
- b. Enhancement Agreement
- c. Funding Guidelines, Costing, & Budget Impact
- d. Policy, Legislation, Regulation
- e. Organizational Capacity
- f. Risks
 - i. Organizational
 - ii. Reputational
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 - i. Organizational
 - ii. Reputational
 - iii. Strategic

5. Public Participation:

6. Implementation:

7. Attachments:

Éy St'elmexw Sqwelqwel - Good Medicine Stories

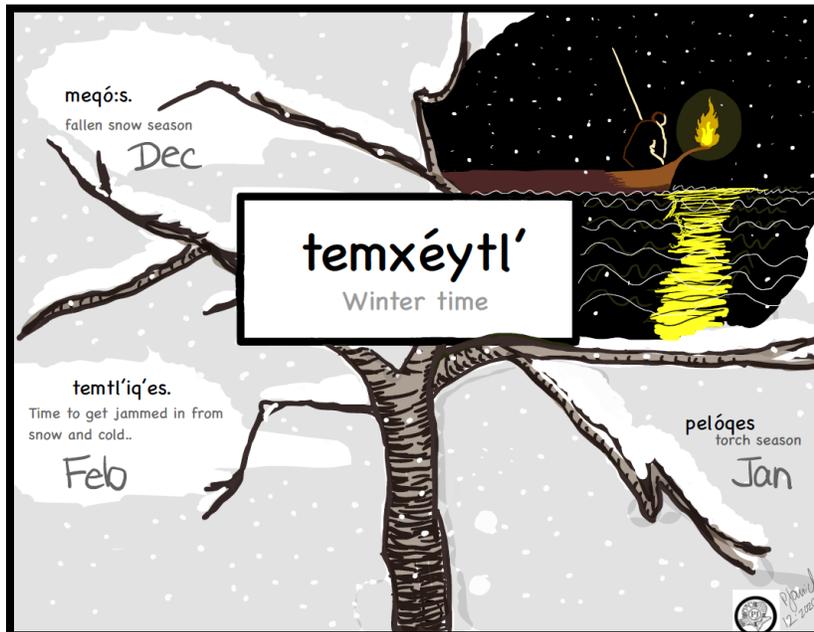
SIWAL SI'WES INDIGENOUS DEPARTMENT, SD75 Éy St'elmexw Sqwelqwel Good Medicine Stories, Edition #1



We acknowledge that, as a learning partners of Mission Public School District, we humbly work and learn on the Traditional, Ancestral, Unceded, and Shared lands of the Stó:lō people, of Qwó:ltl'el, Leq'á:mel, Matheqwi, Sq'ewlets, peoples of this land since time immemorial.



Our forefathers' teachings



Meqo:s is from December 25 to January 22, means **fallen snow season**; *ma:qa* is fallen snow and *es* means a periodic cycle of time.

Peló:qes is from January 23 to February 20 is **January Torch Season**.

This is a time when torches, **pelo:qel** are made out of dried sockeye salmon heads and used at night when spearing fish from canoes (torch lighting). The fish can be seen by the light reflecting from their scales when the water is clear.

Watch a video about the Torch Season here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOGXoSbM34Q&feature=youtu.be>

Temtli'i:q'es is from February 21 to March 22, a time to get jammed in (as a trap, a box, etc.) or **Temt'elemches** - time one's hand sticks to things (from the cold).

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Sasq'ets, the'itqel



The teaching of **the'itqel**, or **honesty** is taught to us by **Sasq'ets** or Sabe (usually pronounced as saw-bey). Sasq'ets is believed to be closer to the spirit world than humans. It is believed that Sasq'ets used to walk among humans to remind us of the Creator's wish for us to remain true to our natural forms. Sasq'ets reminds us that we must be truthful to who we are. Honesty is speaking and acting truthfully, and thereby remained morally upright. It is only by being honest that we can have integrity. Actions such as being true to our spirit and accepting who we are will guide us in being honest. To be truly honest is to keep the promises one made to the Creator, to others and to oneself.

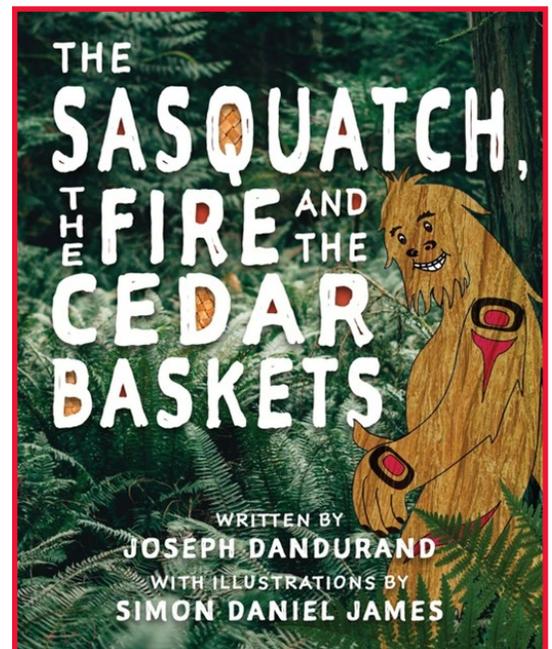
-Art created by Coast Salish graphic artist Ovila Mailhot

The Elders say, "Never try to be someone else; live true to your spirit, be honest to yourself and accept who you are the way the Creator made you."

SASQ'ETS RESOURCES FROM THE SIWAL SI'WES LIBRARY

"Deep in the thickest part of a cedar forest there lived a young Sasquatch. He was over nine feet tall and his feet were about size twenty. He had long brown hair that covered all of his body. His hands were so big and his arms so long he could wrap them around the biggest of the cedar trees. He had been born here many years ago and he did not know his parents, as they had been scared away by a great fire. He was left on his own and he had survived by eating berries and he had grown into the Sasquatch he now was..."

So begins this charming story for children by Kwantlen storyteller Joseph Dandurand. The Sasquatch, spirit of the great cedar forest, eludes human hunters, falls in love, fathers a lovely daughter and saves his little family from a forest fire by dousing the flames with water stored in baskets carefully woven by his mate.



The story is told with grace and simplicity by a master storyteller in the great tradition of the Kwantlen people. Accompanied by whimsical illustrations from Kwakwaka'wakw artist Simon Daniel James, *The Sasquatch, the Fire and the Cedar Baskets* follows a similar style to popular Nightwood titles such as *Salmon Boy*, *Mayuk the Grizzly Bear* and *How the Robin Got Its Red Breast*. (Source: Harbour Publishing).

Sxwōxwiyám: True Tellings

*"Sxwōxwiyám - a story from the time before the world was made into its permanent form. A sxwōxwiyám is not a fairy tale. It is not made up. It is a true story that has been passed down for countless generations."
(Carlson, K. "I am Stó:lō", p.29, 1998).*



[The Hunter and the Sasquatch by Dolly Felix \(Chehalis\)](#)

"The hunter in this story shows his courage and his respect for nature when he meets the Sasquatch. This adventure may surprise you in its teachings. Dolly's story tells, in a traditional way, about the nature of the Sasquatch." (Source: [Coqualeetza Cultural Education Centre](#))

A Story Teaching about Sxwōxwiyám and the Decolonization of Language

by Vivian Searwar, District Principal of Siwal Si'wes, Indigenous Education, SD75

I was at a conference with the First Nations Educations Steering Committee several years ago. Fortunately, while sharing a meal, I was seated amongst many Knowledge Keepers from various First Nations in BC, and so an incredible learning opportunity was about to cross my path...

The conversation circled around myths and legends. One of the gentlemen began talking about traditional stories from the Nation to which he belonged. He told us a story of an Elder who had shared this teaching:

"There are no such things as legends or myths in First Nations cultures. Through oral tradition, stories are shared by those who hold the truth of the stories, and passed from one generation to the next. These stories are true tellings of important origins, and familial and/or community events. One cannot dispute the reality or integrity of the story as it is accepted to be true to the people and to the community members who share it."

*From that moment, I ceased using the word legend or myth and use instead **true tellings**.*

Decolonization sometimes crosses our paths serendipitously!

Check out more true tellings here: <https://stolositel.weebly.com/>³

Upcoming Events: Showing Solidarity

BLACK SHIRT DAY

At the December 16, 2020 SD75 Board Meeting, the Board of Education moved a motion to support **Black Shirt Day**, which occurs on January 15th, 2020. Black Shirt Day is meant to commemorate racial injustice experienced by black Canadians as well as other persons of colour.



JOIN US on January 15, 2021, the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. to take part, and in solidarity, show our commitment to working toward racial equity and justice for BIPOC, Black, Indigenous and People of Colour.

For more information, see:

<https://vancouver.sun.com/news/local-news/vancouver-anti-racism-advocates-calling-for-black-shirt-day>

"These conversations will be hard because they will always be about the hurt and pain of real people. We are talking about our identities and our histories and the ways in which these are used and exploited to elevate and oppress. As long as racism exists to ruin the lives of countless people of color, it should be something that upsets us."

-Ijeoma Oluo, So You Want to Talk About Race



THE BALLANTYNE PROJECT

The Ballantyne Project was founded in April 2019 by Dwight Ballantyne. Dwight spent his first 21 years growing up in Montreal Lake Cree Nation, a remote northern Saskatchewan community. Like thousands of other youth living in these communities he experienced limited employment, isolation, social inequity and unique challenges not experienced by those living in other areas of our vast nation. Dwight's desire is to bridge the gap between individuals living in remote Indigenous communities and the rest of Canada by bringing **#WESEEYOU Day, January 11, 2021** to you.



The Ballantyne Project

To learn more about Dwight Ballantyne's life story and passion to bring awareness of on-going challenges faced by Indigenous youth, watch the #WeSeeYou video at: www.theballantyneproject.com.

See and hear Dwight speak virtually!

Dwight will be virtually visiting SD75 on February 12, 2021, at the District Pro-D Day during the morning session. To sign up, complete the Pro-D registration form available at your school sites, or contact mtu@missionteachersunion.com.



"Growing up in Montreal Lake Cree Nation I always felt like I was looking through one way glass. I could see everything the rest of the world was doing but no one could see me. That to the rest of the world who lived beyond the borders of my remote community I did not exist."

-Dwight Ballantyne



MOOSE HIDE CAMPAIGN

*JOIN US on **February 11, 2021** to take part in our National Online Moose Hide Campaign Day and together, in solidarity, we can show our commitment to ending violence against women and children.*

The Moose Hide Campaign is a grassroots movement of Indigenous and non-Indigenous men and boys who are standing up against violence towards women and children.

Wearing this moose hide signifies your commitment to honour, respect, and protect the women and children in your life and to work together to end violence against women and children.

To order Moose Hide Campaign pins:

<https://www.moosehidecampaign.ca/get-involved/order-pins-and-cards>



HAVE A HEART DAY

Have a Heart Day, **February 14, 2021** is a project of the *First Nations Child and Family Caring Society*. Led by Dr. Cindy Blackstock, the Caring Society educates about and advocates for the rights of Indigenous kids across Canada.

It is a child and youth-led reconciliation campaign to engage in respectful action to promote the Rights of First Nations children and to ensure they get a fair chance to grow up safely at home, get a good education, be healthy, and feel proud of who they are.



You are encouraged to continue to celebrate Have a Heart Day online or socially distanced with their classes, places of work and families in COVID-19 safe ways.

You may register your Have a Heart Day celebration at:

<https://fncaringsociety.com/sign-up-have-a-heart>.

To see where Have a Heart Day is being celebrated, please check out:

<https://fncaringsociety.com/map-have-heart-day-celebrations-2020>

What's the biggest lesson you've learned through your activism for Indigenous children?

"That you have to build a movement of justice on love. I think too many people base their movements off of anger or sadness. I've come to understand that the only way to defeat the darkness is with love and light."

-Cindy Blackstock, 2019

HAVE A HEART DAY RESOURCES FROM THE SIWAL SI'WES LIBRARY

"When Spirit Bear's mom tells him about an important human rights case happening in Ottawa, Ontario, he makes the LONG trip (by train, his favourite way to travel) to go and watch, and to stand up for First Nations kids. And he isn't the only one! Lots of children come too—to listen, and to show they care. Spirit Bear knows that children can change the world because he's there to see it happen. This is the story of how kids—kids just like you—made a difference... with a bit of help from some bears and other animals along the way!" (Source: [First Nations Child and Family Caring Society](#))

- Teacher Resource: [Learning Guide](#)
- Resources from last year's K-6 blog post: <https://sd75vlc.com/2021/01/07/have-a-heart-day-2021/>



Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

On February 14, 2021, what will you do to create awareness for a safe, healthy and respectful space for our grandmother and mothers, our aunties, sisters and daughters, ending the cycle of violence?

The National Inquiry's Final Report calls for social change to resolve violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people. "The [Their Voices Will Guide Us] guide is a resource for educators at all levels to introduce the value of Indigenous women's and girls' lives into the classroom and into the minds and hearts of young people. It will prepare educators to use a decolonizing pedagogy and a trauma-informed approach in their teaching" (p. 2). The Executive Summary can be found here:

<https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/publications/>



MMIWG Project: Hatzic Middle School, Grade 9

"There was a time when First Nations, Métis and Inuit women had significant influence in governance, lands, economies and cultures. Indigenous oral stories from across Canada show women and gender-diverse people played key leadership roles, including as "mothers" of the nation; healers and medicine people who tended to physical, emotional, and spiritual health; and protectors who managed community resources, and acted as land defenders and water keepers. Colonization affected Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people differently than men. The European systems relied on patriarchy, which undermined the traditional roles of Indigenous women and subjected them to economic, political and social marginalization imposed by Christian churches, and the government, most notably through the Indian Act."

Read more here:

<https://www.thestar.com/opinion/contributors/2019/05/09/a-vision-for-canadas-mothers-sisters-and-daughters.html>

See more here:

<https://vimeo.com/376586360>

MMIWG RESOURCES FROM THE SIWAL SI'WES LIBRARY



NFB Campus resources: ****Trigger Warning: Preview films before using with students.****



<https://www.nfb.ca/film/protect-our-future-daughters/>

Protect Our Future Daughters

https://www.nfb.ca/film/finding_dawn/



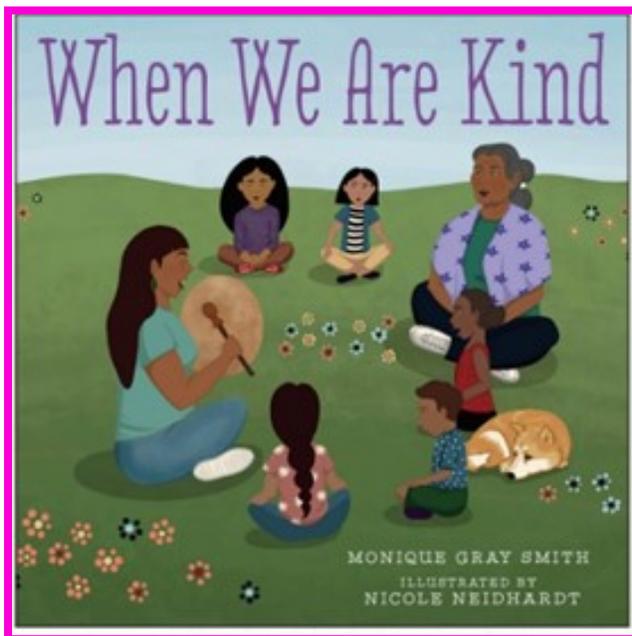
Finding Dawn

PINK SHIRT DAY

JOIN US on February 24, 2021 to take part in National Pink Shirt Day and together, in solidarity, we can show our commitment to anti-bullying and kindness.

The focus for Pink Shirt Day 2021 is working together and treating others with dignity and respect. The Covid-19 pandemic has affected us all and shown the importance of helping one another and advocating for those who need it. Help us "lift each other up" and support programs that encourage healthy self esteem and teach empathy, compassion and kindness.

[-https://www.pinkshirtday.ca/](https://www.pinkshirtday.ca/)



PINK SHIRT DAY RESOURCES AT THE SIWAL SI'WES LIBRARY

Additional resources:

- [Teacher Resource](#) for When We Are Kind, by Monique Gray Smith
- <https://sd75vlc.com/2021/01/07/pink-shirt-day-2021/>

Pause & Reflect: Cultural Connections



Photo Credit: Alexis Christie, Indigenous Liaison Worker

***Article 15 of UNDRIP,
United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples***

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information.

Teachings from Siyá:ye: Lolehawk Laura Buker

"A basket can hold a culture. It can also hold the dreams of our children."

Éy Swayel, Mekw'wat. Good day everyone!
Lolehawk Laura Buker, tel skwix. Te lítsel kw'e Stó:lō and Lake Babine Nation.



I grew up on So'lh Temewx as my family lived by the river east of Mission. I am a river woman of the Stó:lō and learned at an early age that everything that fed our family came out of that river. Salmon, it is said by my elders, "is found in our bones. It is in our DNA. My family has deep roots of living sustainably with the land, and from my earliest memories, I learned from my elders to respect everything that we grew and harvested, and that you always shared.

It is January 2021. This is temxéytl, winter, "the time when things are cold." We begin this season with a pandemic still active throughout our nation. As I write, my thoughts go out to each one reading this message that good health and wellness be with you and your family this new year.



Today, I took time to get out into the forest and walk by a lake. When I have felt low and the lack of energy, I often get myself outside and gently remember that so many positive benefits come from getting into nature, even if it is only for a short time. I saw red cedar trees, and fir trees and heard bird song as I walked along. When stopping by the big cedars, I thought about how so many gifts come from that one tree and that our oldest stories tell us how cedar was created to be used for all good things like baskets, clothing, canoes, paddles, bowls, ladles, cedar hats, medicines, and the longhouses.

I have included a photo of a coastal cedar coiled basket. For as long as I can remember, this basket was in the care of my mother. She gave this to me to carry forward, when I completed my doctoral work many years ago. My mother, who was one of the oldest storytellers on the river, lived until she was 99 years old. She told me that to have a cedar basket is to go on a journey.

What did she mean by a journey?

A world of indigenous knowledge is found in a cedar basket. I have brought this cedar basket into classrooms from K-12 to University curriculum. This Cedar Basket is something the students can hold, feel the cedar bark, open the lid, and explore the design, color, and shape. I invite my learners to discover more about how basket makers from the past to present times bring the knowledge of the land to life through weaving the gifts of cedar. Well my friends, that was my walk through the forest today. When I returned to my car, and had one last look at the trees this thought came to me, "a basket can hold a culture. It can also hold the dreams of our children."

Yálh yuw kw'a's hò:y. Thank You.

Wiyóth kwsu éys te sqwálewels te lólets'e. (always be a person with good thoughts) Coqualeetza Elder's Group, 1968



Halq'emeylem: Éy kwesé e'mi Keneesh!

Ey Swayel, Good Day! Keneesh Tel Skwix, Brenda is my name. Teli tsel Kwa Sts'ailes. I come from Sts'ailes community and I raised on the reserve as they call it, until I left at the age of 17 years. I lived with my sister for about five years while working a few jobs in Indigenous Organization. I am so proud to have been given the opportunity to work with the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, where I became proud of the struggles of the people with whom I worked.

I returned to my community, met a man from Katzie and was married in 1981. We have five wonderful sons who are all working in rewarding careers. I believe as parents we have believed in our children and want them to be happy in what they do. They range from ages from 30 to 44 years. I also have four grandchildren and very excited to finally have two granddaughters. I have worked while attending school in the evening to obtain my Halq'emeylem Teaching Certification. I wanted to learn the language to follow the work of the speakers on the floor of the longhouse and to follow my grandfather's legacy that he has left to the people.

I have recently completed and graduated in November 2020 with my Social Services Diploma.

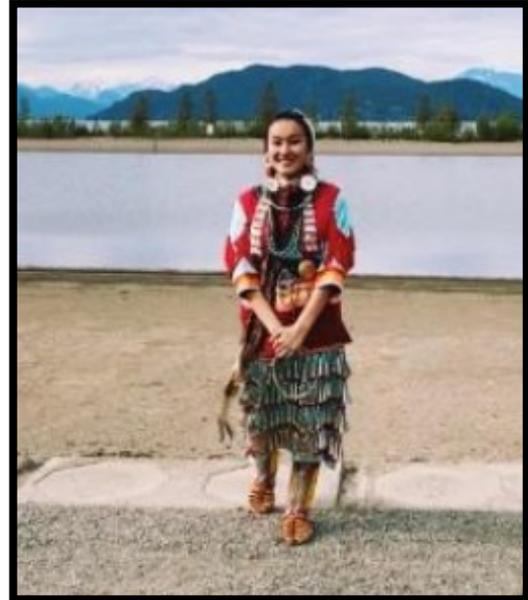
I am grateful to be working in Mission School District as an Indigenous Liaison Worker. I would like to thank all the people who have been so kind and resourceful to me as I fit into this role. I am so proud to share my knowledge that can be something that students embrace. With a good heart and mind, I have prayed for guidance from the ancestors and I look forward to this work.



Student Role Models

Okeymow-pisim-iskwew (Sheanan Little-child)

Sheanan is a Grade 11 student from Mission Secondary School. Her cultural name *Okeymow-pisim-iskwew* is which means *Leading Thunderbird Woman*. Sheanan travels on the powwow circuit yearly, often competing in jingle, fancy and traditional; she has been involved with powwow since she was born. Sheanan is an excellent beader; she likes to make jewelry, regalia and traditional clothing. She also likes to be with her grandma picking medicines and/or berries in Saskatchewan. Sheanan is also a traditional singer and is often asked to sing at ceremonies. She is looking forward to getting back to normal life, so she can continue on the powwow circuit. Sheanan is kind, smart and caring and always a joy to talk to when she comes to visit and/or work in the Indigenous room at MSS.



Submitted by Jasmin Wells, MSS Indigenous Liaison Worker



Kelser Levitt, Saulteaux/Metis, Cherry Hill Elementary

Kelser is a Grade six student at Cherry Hill Elementary. Kelser has eight siblings and lives with his Mom and Dad in Mission. This Christmas Kelser received a gun as one of his gifts and has been going out to the Gun Range outside of Mission to practice shooting with his Father. Kelser is learning to hunt the traditional way which is part of his culture. One day Kelser hopes to hunt 'wild meat' for his family to help supplement their meat supply.

At home Kelser watches his Mom make bannock and his Mom makes homemade 'Indian Soup.' The Levitt family love to attend Pow Wows and one day Kelser hopes to become a dancer or drummer at the Pow Wows. He currently is growing out his hair for traditional reasons.

Kelser was chosen for a role model because he is kind, considerate, caring, and always polite. He constantly thinks of others and their needs and is extremely proud of his Indigenous heritage. It has been a pleasure working with Kesler at Cherry Hill Elementary.

Submitted by Susan O'Soup, Cherry Hill Indigenous Liaison

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Student Role Models (continued)

Ts'ts'mthumnomit (Myrna Williams)

My name is Myrna Williams, and my ancestral name is Ts'ts'mthumnomit and comes from Cultas Lake territory. I am from Sqewlets First Nation and I am 15 years old. I am the oldest girl of 6 matching siblings. My family is very involved in our community and my father is the Chief of Sqewlets.

I am involved culturally in my community with canoe pulling. My greatest gift I feel is stamina that I have developed through canoe pulling. I also was able to help my dad in making a traditional strip canoe. I am the lead puller of our canoe team and I encourage my team and work hard at being a good role model. I also participate in long house traditions and will sing and dance for special events. In addition, I fish and go hunting with my family. I enjoy traditional art and feel it is one of my greatest strengths with room to grow.

I would have to say that my late grandfather, John Williams has been my greatest role model. He taught me how to can fruits and salmon and how to preserve traditional foods. He also taught me to be proud of who I am and where I come from.

My favorite classes at school are foods, media arts and working with computers. I love coming to school to see my friends and hang out with them at lunch.

In December I entered a contest for the Indigenous Policing team, and I received a text letting me know that I had won 1st place. My design will be displayed on the RCMP fleet and RCMP swag.

I am honored to be chosen for the student spotlight and will strive through the year continuing to be the best role model I can be.

Submitted by Rachel Schooner & Jenny Snow HMS Indigenous Liaison Workers



Learn & Leap In



Article (Academia Forum):

Continuing reconciliation against the backdrop of a pandemic and rising tensions

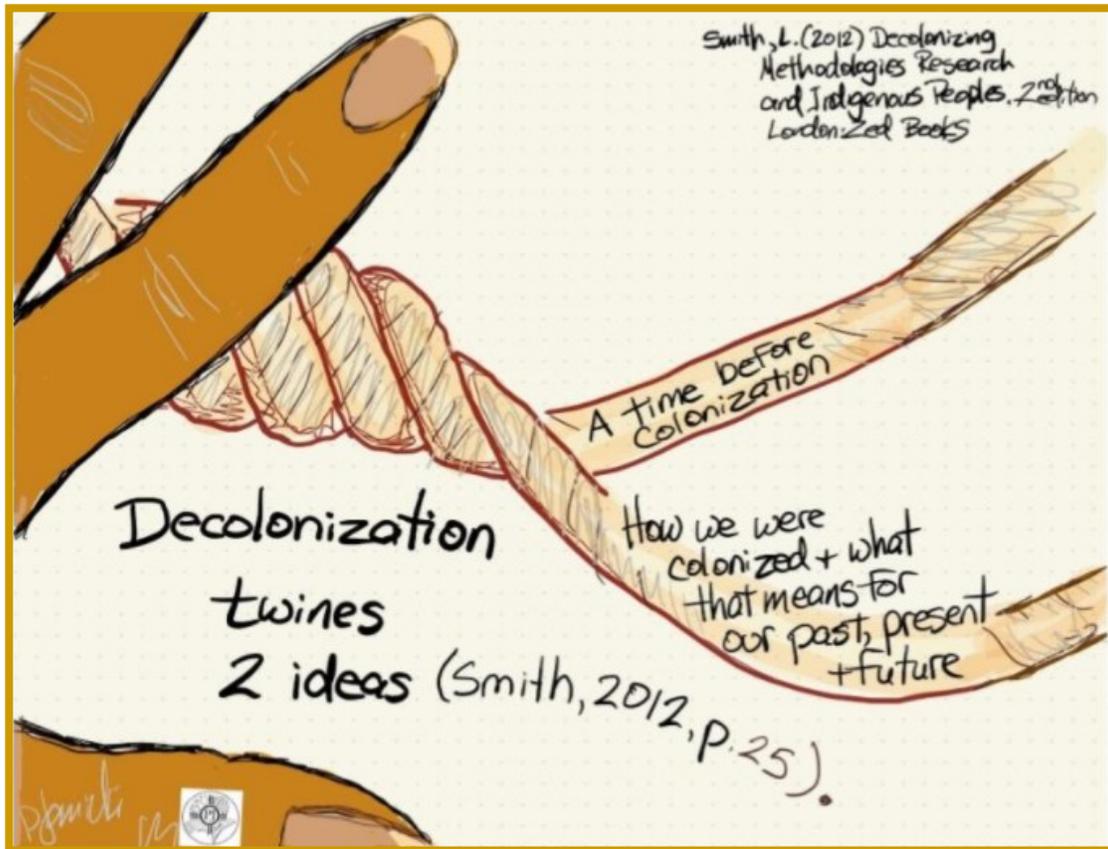
For many Canadians, reconciliation remains an ambiguous and abstract concept that will not be fully realized in our lifetimes. The term itself is politically loaded and hotly contested; most notably by Indigenous peoples who face the everyday lived consequences of how the term is envisioned and enacted. For many non-Indigenous, the fear of making mistakes or missteps in this contentious terrain halts any commitment to the work and ultimately any progress. In 2020, these stark realities are backlit by a global health crisis and a spotlight on ongoing racial injustices. In this unparalleled time of uncertainty, the question of whether we will move forward as a nation of diverse citizens - further divided or united - refuses to go unanswered.

Click on the link to learn more, and leap into the work towards a Reconciled Canada!

<https://forum.academica.ca/forum/continuing-reconciliation-against-the-backdrop-of-a-pandemic-and-rising-tensions>

Author, Yvonne Poitras Pratt (Métis) is Associate Professor at the Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary. Yvonne publishes in the realm of social justice, Métis education and Métis studies, reconciliatory pedagogy, service-learning, and the integration of arts in education.

A Message from Kilaksten, Indigenous Mentor Teacher, SD75



Decolonizing, along with Indigenizing, the curriculum has been a large part of the work I do. And I often wonder, but how do I do that? How can I bring that into the curriculum and classrooms?

Well, firstly, how is Decolonization defined? Dr. Linda Tuhiwai Smith wrote a ground-breaking book titled "Decolonizing Methodologies Research and Indigenous Peoples" in 1998 that can help our knowing. In short, decolonization twines two ideas. 1 idea is to consider a time before colonization and the 2nd is to consider how we were colonized and what that means for our past, present, and future (Smith, 2012, p. 25). Once I found this definition, I had to draw it to centre my attention and thought processing (see above illustration). Also, as a Weaver, I had to illustrate it as wool spinning. I wanted to share as it informs how I approach many topics and grade levels and to clarify definitions.

"To make transformative and systemic change, it is important to learn about decolonization. We are all responsible for ongoing decolonization work and together we can imagine a new reality that honours Indigenous perspectives, culture and peoples" (BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner website). How we all decolonize matters, in all forms, whether it is small or large.

One way I try to decolonize, is to reveal resistances by checking out Cindy Blackstock's website, First Nations Caring Society (<https://fncaringociety.com/>) which is in French and English. You may find MANY classroom resources for the Social Justice-thinking adult to bring into the classroom/school. To the folks that may not know, Canada has been/is racist to First Nations children with regards to health care. Canada LOST at its' own Human Rights Tribunal and Cindy Blackstock invites all of us to learn about it—and to DO something about it. With Valentine's Day fast approaching I invite you to send a Valentine to the Prime Minister and/or your Member of Parliament for "Have a Heart" DAY. Clear, and well organized, information can be found on the website: <https://fncaringociety.com/have-a-heart>

Equity & Anti-Racism



The vision of the Equity Scan is to support school districts in identifying promising practices as well as addressing barriers impacting Indigenous student achievement and success. It is a collective and collaborative decision-making, inquiry-based process involving genuine and meaningful self-assessment dialogue about educational experiences for Indigenous learners with the goal to create conditions for their success.

After having consulted with Indigenous rightsholders, Siwal Si'wes Family & Learning Partners, Members of Siwal Si'wes Indigenous Advisory Council, Indigenous Students of MPSD75, SD75 Educators & Members of the SD75 Board of Education, we collated the input into four areas of commitment:

- *Sp'óq'es, The Eagle: Honouring Relationships and Kin Connections*
- *Swep'áth', The Sunrise: Creating and Maintaining Safe Learning Environments*
- *Sq'éméł, The Paddles Raised: Supporting Student Success in Equitable Ways*
- *Sléxwelh, The Canoe: Honouring the Past, Being in the Present, Strengthening the Future*

If you would like to participate in the Equity Scan, please contact Vivian Searwar, District Principal of Indigenous Education, SD75

"Young people are watching. Believe in us and love us, it matters and makes a difference".

-Alicia Desjarlais, Student, SD75

In the Artist's Words

The eagle is one of my favourite representations used in our culture & among many Nations. To me the eagle can represent strength, knowledge & wisdom. A symbol that I could see easily tied into students, teachers & family. That some might see as a role model as well, eagle being the one creature capable of soaring closest to the creator above all.

The sunrise behind the eagle brings meaning of a new day & new journeys ahead. A combination shared by both students & teachers. With the educator's role to show care, a healthy love while nurturing the students to grow and continue their new beginnings in life.

The paddles raised. A representation of a diverse group of individuals sharing a common goal on their journey together as educators & students. Each individual has their own unique qualities, different skill sets to paddle on the same path together. The skill sets, techniques and knowledge of operating these paddles in life's journey come from our educators & parents mentoring and knowledge shared.

The canoe is a representation of our past and something that is still used to this day. Representing how our culture & traditional ways remain intact. The canoe is used on our destination in a collective journey."

-Ovila Mailhot, of Seabird Island, whose roots are both of Stó:lō & Nlaka'pamux Nation

SD75 Anti-Racism Learning Opportunities

Tune in here for a plethora of Anti-Racism & Equity Resources:

<https://sd75curriculum.com/antiracism/>

Contributor Acknowledgment & Siwal Si'wes Resource Staff

Check out our collection of authentically Indigenous resources at the Siwal Si'wes Library with **Jennifer Lane, Siwal Si'wes Teacher-Librarian!**

Contact: Jennifer Lane
jennifer.lane@mpsd.ca

Or work with your school-based Teacher-Librarian.



Connect with Indigenous Mentor Teacher, *Kilaksten* (Peggy Janicki), to collaborate!

Contact: Peggy Janicki
peggy.janicki@mpsd.ca

Contributor Acknowledgment & Siwal Si'wes Resource Staff (continued)



Judy Cathers, is an **Indigenous Cultural & Liaison Worker** who currently works at Ecole Christine Morrison Elementary.

To book Judy for a cultural presentation, please contact your school site liaison.

Vivian Searwar, District Principal of Siwal Si'wes, Indigenous Education, SD75

Contact:
vivian.searwar@mpsd.ca



January 14, 2021

The Board of Education is appalled by the assault of a student at Ecole Heritage Park Middle School earlier this week. We take this incident very seriously. The School District does not tolerate bullying, harassment, or violence, and will follow our protocols to deal with the serious situation.

The Board expects adherence to district policy and has an [Anti: Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy](#) and a [Sexual Minority \(Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity\) Anti-Homophobic Policy](#). We strongly believe that students have the right to attend school in a safe and inclusive manner and are very concerned about this incident.

Everyone involved in and affected by this confrontation is being offered supports, and District Staff is working with the school, the Ministry of Education, the RCMP, and community agencies as they investigate this matter.

The Board clarifies that Covid-19 did not cause the incident. We have seen an increase in tension in our schools since the onset of the pandemic, but Covid-19 was not the cause of this incident, and the Board apologizes if Superintendent Wilson's comment was interpreted this way. This specific incident is under investigation and the conduct of all students involved, including bystanders, will be addressed by the School District.

Violence, assault, and personal attacks are unacceptable at any time and Mission Public Schools is committed to reviewing its policies and procedures to ensure we have a safe, equitable and inclusive educational system for ALL students. We will continue to review options that will assist in educating students to know and understand that there is no room in our school district or society for hate speech or physical violence.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at tracy.loffler@mpsd.ca.

Sincerely,



Tracy Loffler, Board Chair

Shelley Carter, Vice-Chair

Randy Cairns, School Trustee

Rick McKamey, School Trustee

Julia Renkema, School Trustee