



SHAWNIGAN

September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Dear parents and guardians,

Shawnigan Lake School is joining others across Canada in observing Truth and Reconciliation Week, which began on Monday, September 27. Like many Canadians, we are emerging in our journey, and we enter this week humbly as we seek to learn about the legacy of residential schools in Canada and to celebrate Indigenous cultures.

Yesterday morning I attended a virtual meet-up for new parents and the Shawnigan Parent Association. In our Zoom Q & A session, international parents expressed interest in learning more from the School about Truth and Reconciliation Week in order to engage their children in meaningful conversations going forward.

Members of our Indigenous Advisory Committee (which brings together student, staff, alumni and Board representatives) have prepared some events for this week, with many of them planned for Thursday, September 30 – the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (previously known as Orange Shirt Day).

Our students will be invited to:

- wear orange shirts (which have become a symbol of remembrance – started by [Phyllis Webstad](#) – for those who were forced to attend residential schools in Canada);
- bring shoes to line the hallways in the Main Building (in response to the unmarked graves recently uncovered at former Canadian residential schools)
- engage in the classroom with the legacy of residential schools in Canada and discussions surrounding Truth and Reconciliation;
- listen to guest speaker [Dr. Brad Baker](#) (with a time for Q & A);
- participate in a commemoration ceremony, run by students and with support from the Malahat Nation, in the Kaye Gardens;
- participate in optional staff-led learning opportunities after the ceremony;
- reflect in Houses about the programming from the week and how individuals and community can continue on the journey of Truth and Reconciliation;
- have access to support from the School's counsellors.

We encourage you to talk to your child(ren) about Truth and Reconciliation Week and what they are discussing, learning, experiencing, and feeling.

The Shawnigan Lake School Library has collected a number of resources on Residential School and Indigenous ways to support the learning, exploration and inclusion of Indigenous values in our School. Parents are welcome to refer to any of these resources, or offer ones not available yet



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on this resource board, for the enrichment of our community. We would recommend – should you wish to learn more – any of the following helpful resources for awareness and discussion:

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation: <https://nctr.ca/>  
Orange Shirt Society: <https://www.orangeshirtday.org/>  
BC Indigenous School Resources (Library resource page on ShawNet):  
<https://shawnigan.libguides.com/c.php?g=726278&p=5205026>

We have also passed on our resources to alumni who have also expressed an interest in receiving them. We encourage our community to approach the upcoming Truth and Reconciliation Day with a sense of curiosity, humility, respect, and an open mind and heart.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard D A Lamont". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Richard D A Lamont  
Head of School