



# Acknowledging **TRADITIONAL TERRITORY**



## Why do we recognize traditional territory?

Recognizing traditional territory follows a customary protocol of acknowledging the traditional stewards of the land. Following this protocol is an important way of showing respect to those that have lived on the land since time immemorial. Acknowledging traditional territory is also a way of building greater mutual understanding, respect and relationships between our local Aboriginal peoples (First Nations, Metis and Inuit) and the greater community.



## Who acknowledges traditional territory?

The host of the event, any staff member or student may **acknowledge traditional territory** at the start of an event. It is not necessary to have an Aboriginal person do this, although at larger more formal events it is proper protocol to have an elder or designate from the host Nation provide a **welcome**.

## What is a welcome to traditional territory?

In Burnaby, a **welcome** can be delivered at larger more formal district events (ie: school openings, graduation ceremonies) in lieu of acknowledging traditional territory. The welcome to the territory can only be provided by a member of the Musqueam, Squamish and/or Tsleil Waututh Nation (Elder or designate), as these Nations have lived on this land since time immemorial. The welcome follows a traditional protocol for Aboriginal nations where people entering another's traditional territory or language area would seek permission from the traditional stewards. Guests granted permission to enter another traditional territory would be welcomed to the area through an opening ceremony.

*It is important to note that when inviting an Elder or designate to provide a welcoming, it is traditional practice to provide an honorarium in recognition of the Elder's or designate's time, knowledge and support of your event.*



## Territory Acknowledgement Script:



The Burnaby School District  
would like to acknowledge and thank the  
Coast Salish Nations of Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish,  
on whose traditional territory we teach, learn and live.



## When do we acknowledge territory?

The acknowledgement of traditional territory should take place at the start of an event. If you happen to forget at the top of the agenda, the acknowledgement can be still be completed. Examples of events in which the acknowledgement should be performed at include, but are not limited to:

- School assemblies
- Awards nights
- Graduation ceremonies
- Important meetings and/or presentations
- Board meetings

## What is the order of introductions at special events?

Please refer to Board Policy 2.40, but if a Chief, Elder or designate is present, be sure to include them in your recognition of dignitaries in attendance.



The Territory  
Acknowledgement  
is meant to be flexible  
and can be adapted  
to suit the needs of the  
person delivering it.

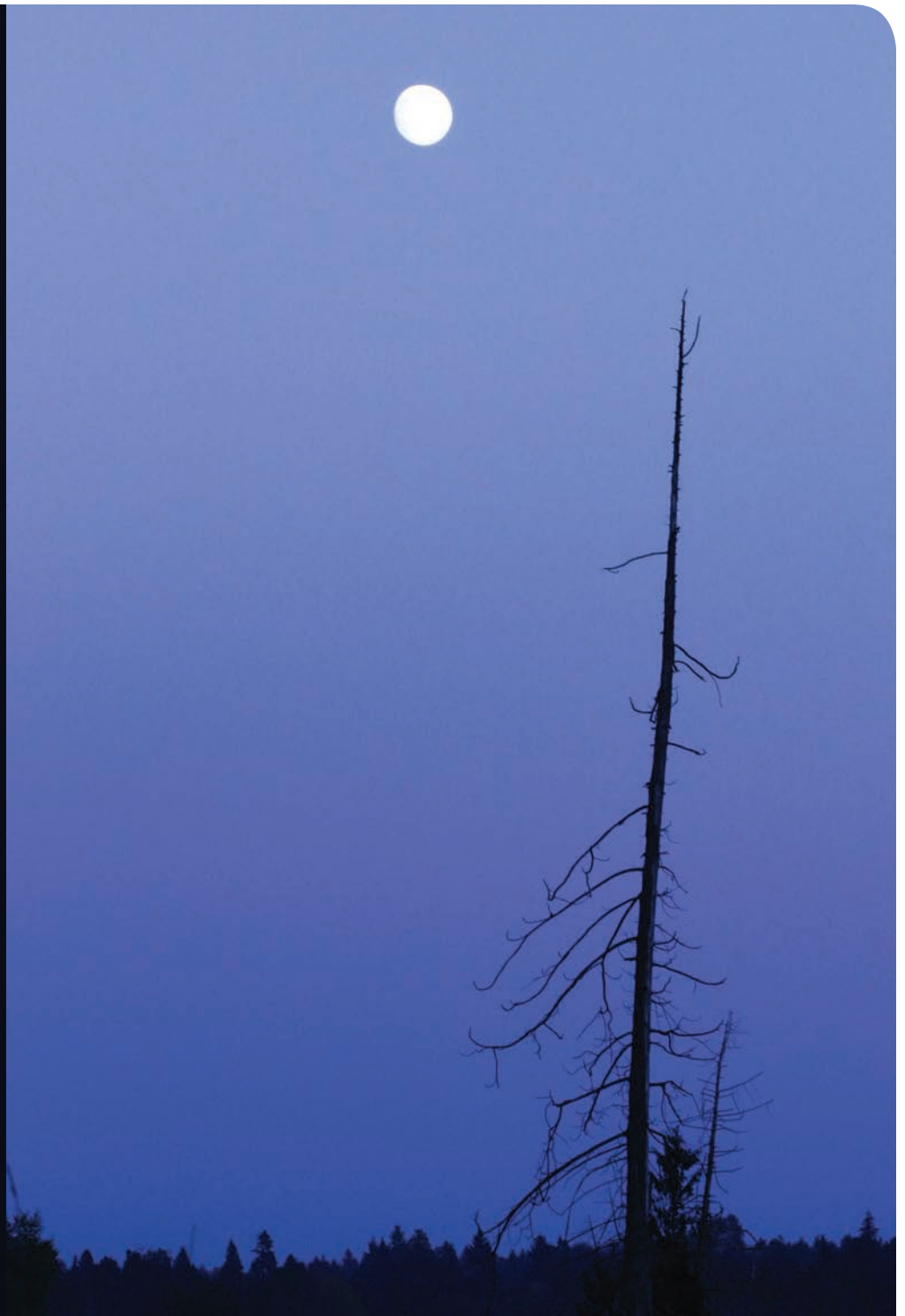
It is important that the  
Coast Salish Nations are  
acknowledged in any  
adaptation to the script.

For further information  
on event protocol in the  
Burnaby School District,  
please refer to  
Board Policy 2.40.

Photography  
(Deer Lake area):

**Kathleen Jansen**  
(photos 1, 2 & 3)  
Teacher  
Byrne Creek  
Community School

**Shelley Janvier**  
(photo 4)  
District Aboriginal  
Resource Teacher



[www.burnabyschools.ca](http://www.burnabyschools.ca)