

When students feel welcome, supported, respected and safe, they are more engaged in learning

February 15, 2023

Dear Families,

Next week many schools have activities and learning opportunities planned as part of their participation in Pink Shirt Day, which takes place on February 22. It's one of several recognition days honoured during the school year that generate powerful moments of conversation. Pink Shirt Day began more than 15 years ago as an awareness campaign about homophobic bullying. We want to take this opportunity to share with you, on behalf of the Burnaby Board of Education and senior staff, what kind of community and culture we work to create.

Pink Shirt Day reminds students that they can be who they are, encourage others to do the same, and stand up to name-calling, bullying or discrimination. It's an opportunity to explore the origins of the day and for meaningful discussion about allyship, empathy, recognizing harm, lifting each other up, and celebrating kindness.

When students feel welcome, supported, respected and safe, they are more engaged in learning. We continue to encourage the ideals of diversity and inclusion through policies that are guided by the District Code of Conduct. Each and every student and staff member are valued and respected members of our community. There are initiatives and activities throughout the year that explore the richness of what makes us unique and the strength in our differences. In advance of this February's Black History Month, the Burnaby School District was honoured to host and co-plan with the Ninandotoo Society the official Black Excellence Day event, which was attended virtually by more than 30,000 students and staff from throughout BC. Black Excellence Day, Orange Shirt Day – which honours those who attended residential schools – and Pink Shirt Day are important opportunities to develop greater understanding of the lived experiences and challenges within our community. The District's Diversity Dance for high school students, which is back on in person for the first time since the pandemic began, is another example of an occasion to come together in friendship, allyship and joyful celebration of being fully and freely who you are.

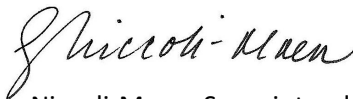
Learning first-hand about cultures and expressions of who you are benefits us all. The connections between us are beautifully captured by local Indigenous artist Gord Dick from the Tseil-Waututh and Lil'wat Nations who designed the District's official pink shirt. The symbol of the wolf represents how we are all standing together as one heart and the eagle brings healing and guidance from the ancestors.

We value our partnership with families. By keeping you informed about initiatives such as these, together we can continue to support a learning environment that supports a culture of belonging and benefits everyone.

Sincerely,



Bill Brassington, Board Chair



Gina Niccoli-Moen, Superintendent

IMPORTANT INFORMATION *Please have this translated.*

አስፈላጊ መረጃ። አባዘዎ ይህን እንዲተረጎም ያድርጉ። | አንዳሲ ሓበሬታ። ብኸብረትኩም እዚ ከም ዝተርጎም ግበሩ።

معلومات مهمة. الرجاء ترجمتها. | Información importante. Por favor, que esto se traduzca.

Agahiyên girîng. Ji kerema xwe vê wergerîne. | لطفا این ترجمه را انجام دهید

重要信息, 请找人代为翻译. | لطفا از شخصی بخواهید تا این متن را برای شما ترجمه کند.

ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਤੋਂ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕਰਵਾਉ। | 중요한 정보입니다. 이것을 번역하시기 바랍니다.