BOARD OF EDUCATION
BURNABY
SCHOOL DISTRICT 41

POLICY #21

RECONCILIATION

PREAMBLE

Burnaby Schools is committed to advancing Truth and Reconciliation by cultivating respectful relationships with Local First Nations and all Indigenous communities, integrating Indigenous perspectives into education, and acknowledging the historical and ongoing impacts of colonialism. This policy outlines the District's approach to Reconciliation through education, a distinctions-based approach, engagement and systemic change.

The Board of Education upholds Reconciliation in partnership with all Indigenous Peoples and embraces local knowledge and relationships. This commitment honours Indigenous students and families, recognizing land, community, and lived experience as foundational sources of learning that uphold respect, reciprocity, relevance, and responsibility.

In the words of late Senator Justice Murray Sinclair, we must "watch, listen, and show respect." The Board encourages staff to lean into this teaching by approaching Reconciliation with humility, openness, and a commitment to learning from and with Indigenous students, families, communities, and staff. As relationships with Local First Nations continue to grow over time, the Board is committed to reviewing this policy and adapting its approaches as appropriate.

POLICY

THE BOARD IS COMMITTED TO EMBEDDING EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES AND BOARD PROCESSES THAT ADVANCE RECONCILIATION IN THE DISTRICT'S LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS, SCHOOL CULTURE, DISTRICT FUNCTIONS AND GOVERNANCE ACTIONS. THE BOARD IS GUIDED BY THE 94 CALLS TO ACTION FROM THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION OF CANADA AND THE PROVINCIAL, FEDERAL AND INTERNATIONAL STATUTES, LEGISLATION AND RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES (UNDRIP) THAT HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED TO ADDRESS AND REPAIR BOTH HISTORICAL AND CURRENT INJUSTICES.

THE BOARD ADDRESSES ANTI-INDIGENOUS RACISM BY CREATING AND EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS THAT SUPPORT THE HEALTH, WELL-BEING, AND SUCCESS OF INDIGENOUS LEARNERS AND THEIR FAMILIES, ALWAYS IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF MUTUAL RESPECT AND A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY TO HONOUR THE HISTORIES, CULTURES, AND PERSPECTIVES OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES.

OBJECTIVES

In continuing the process of learning, changing, and growing in our actions towards Reconciliation, the Board will:

1. Work closely with local First Nations, honouring their inherent rights, histories, and leadership, and recognizing that following local protocols brings everyone together and respectfully acknowledges all Indigenous communities;

2. Work to create and establish environments that are culturally safe, welcoming, and inclusive where Indigenous identities, knowledge systems, perspectives, and ways of being are respected, valued, and represented, and where anti-Indigenous racism is challenged.

3. Support the development of safe environments where students, families, staff, and Trustees critically examine assumptions, biases, and current practices to deepen understanding of Truth, Reconciliation, and healing. The Board recognizes that individuals are at different places in their learning journeys.

4. Begin public and private Board meetings, as well as formal school events, gatherings, and ceremonies with a Land Acknowledgement. The District's formal Land Acknowledgment, developed with guidance from local First Nations, reflects a commitment to respectful relationships, ongoing learning, and understanding of the lands on which we live, learn, and work. Staff are encouraged to engage in Land Acknowledgements using the formal wording or more personalized expressions, as a meaningful practice that honours Indigenous presence, strengthens connection to place, and advances Reconciliation through awareness, commitment, and responsibility.

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Date Adopted: 2026-09 Cross References:
Date(s) Revised: