



February 17, 2023

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

We are writing to you today to share important information that you may wish to discuss with your child(ren).

As you may be aware, the čišaaʔaṭṭ (Tseshaht) First Nation conducted extensive research and scanning over the last 18 months on the site of the former Alberni Indian Residential School (AIRS). The čišaaʔaṭṭ First Nation and the AIRS project team will host a presentation, rooted in čišaaʔaṭṭ culture, to publicly release results of the ʔuuʔatumin yaqckʷiimitqin (Doing It for Our Ancestors) project Phase 1 findings on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, at 1 p.m.

The čišaaʔaṭṭ First Nation has full respect, support, and cooperation of the Board of Education, the Superintendent, and school district staff. To this end, teachers, Principals, Vice-Principals, and school staff members will be asked to take a few moments of recognition at 1 p.m. on Tuesday to speak with students about the significance of this announcement, through the support of developmentally appropriate scripted talking points as provided by the SD 70 District Critical Incident Team.

The School District 70 Pacific Rim Board of Education and Staff recognize that public announcements such as this will have a profound impact on AIRS Survivors, čišaaʔaṭṭ First Nation community members, Nuu-Cha-Nulth communities across the district, members of the broader communities in the Pacific Rim, and our school communities – including students and staff. We further recognize, and are committed to, the importance of Truth and Reconciliation. Knowing and understanding the ‘truth’ and stories behind systemic structures such as Indian Residential Schools is an important first step towards taking reconciliatory action and true healing.

The Board of Education and Staff fully acknowledge and respect that the district is situated on the ha-houlthees of the čišaaʔaṭṭ, hupačasath, tla-o-qui-aht, Yuuʔuʔiʔaṭṭ, and Huu-ay-aht First Nations and acknowledge that we work alongside all Nuu-Chah-Nulth nations. In fact, the district strives to increase awareness, understanding and integration of Nuu-chah-nulth culture, history, and language in all SD70 schools as part of our ongoing commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.

We are sure you are aware that Canadian flags at each School District 70 site remain at half-mast since the announcement by leaders of the **Tkʼemlúps te Secwépemc (formerly Kamloops Indian Band)** in recognition of the finding of 215 unmarked graves at the site of the former Kamloops Residential School. This decision by our Board of Education was made as an act of Reconciliation and unity with the čišaaʔaṭṭ First Nation in recognition of the extensive research and scanning work being conducted. The flags will remain at half-mast through this period and district staff will collaborate, listen to, and receive guidance from members of the ʔaaʔuupćamis (“teachings about things” or “teachings by doing”) Elders’

Culture Council as to timing, protocol, and cultural understandings as to when and how flags will be appropriately raised in the future respecting the announcement as is being presented by the čišaaʔatḥ First Nation and the AIRS project team.

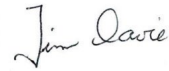
We thank you for your understanding, sensitivity, compassion, kindness, and patience, as we continue to work alongside and show support for members of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth communities, specifically survivors of the Alberni Indian Residential School, and community members from the čišaaʔatḥ First Nation.

Finally, we thank you for taking the time to discuss this circumstance with your child(ren), sharing the truths of our shared history, and for seeking ways to bring true reconciliation and healing to our communities.

With kindest regards,



Pam Craig, Board Chair



Tim Davie, Superintendent/CEO