



Every child matters.

Ey Swayel Colleagues!

September 30th is **Orange Shirt Day!** This event arose from the story of Phyllis (Jack) Webstad, a survivor of the Indian Residential Schools. We wear orange to honour the children who survived the Indian Residential Schools and to remember those who didn't. It is an affirmation of our

commitment to ensure that everyone matters.

This year, we will be commemorating this event on **Monday, September 30th** and once again, several schools will be marching to St. Mary's Residential School (Fraser River Heritage Park).

This year's Sacred teaching focuses on HUMILITY, represented by the Wolf. Siwal Si'wes will be providing schools participating in the march to St. Mary's with a Wolf cut-out from cardstock. The idea is to have the students draw and/or write what the word HUMILITY means to them, or alternatively, what the word reconciliation means to them.

Please refer to the following for suggestions on how to prepare for this event.

PRIOR TO THE MARCH...

- 1) Ensure that the field trip permission form has been completed (see attached).
- 2) Familiarize yourself with Phyllis' story (see attached). Share it with your students.
- 3) Access any of the following websites:
 - SD75's locally developed Residential School website, www.greatspirithand.com,
 - Siwal Si'wes' Library Website, <https://swwslibrary.com/>.
 - Orange Shirt Day Website: <http://www.orangeshirtday.org/resources--supplies.html>
 - Project of Heart website, <http://projectofheart.ca/>. This is a site dedicated to honouring those who attended the residential schools.
 - FNEsc (First Nations Education Steering Committee), <http://www.fnesc.ca/irs/>, a site dedicated to advancing quality education for First Nations learners in BC, as well as supporting all educators of BC in their walk toward reconciliation.
- 4) Access and share any of the following picture books, novels and non-fiction resources:
 - Shi-shi-etko*. Nicola I. Campbell
 - Shin-chi's Canoe*. Nicola I. Campbell (this is the "sequel" to Shi-shi-etko)
 - Secret of the Dance*. Andrea Spalding & Alfred Scow
 - Stolen Words*. Melanie Florence
 - When We Were Alone*. David Alexander Robertson
 - Kookum's Red Shoes*. Peter Eyvindson
 - I Am Not A Number*. Jenny Kay Dupuis & Kathy Kacer

When I was Eight. Christy Jordan-Fenton & Margaret Pokiak-Fenton
Not My Girl. Christy Jordan-Fenton & Margaret Fenton
Fatty Legs: A True Story. Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton
A Stranger at Home: A True Story. Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton
Dear Canada: These Are My Words (The Residential School Diary of Violet Pesheens). Ruby Slipperjack
As Long as the River Flows. Larry Loyie
My Name is Seepeetza. Shirley Sterling
The Secret Path. George Downie & Jeff Lemire
Sugar Falls. David Alexander Robertson
Speaking Our Truth: A Journey of Reconciliation. Monique Gray Smith
I Lost My Talk. Rita Joe (poem – can be found online)

- 5) Show one or more of the following videos (preview them ahead of time to decide if they are age-appropriate for your students):
 - Phyllis' story – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ll1pUrK29MM>
 - Shi-shi-etko - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKErhCGjSDE>
 - Gentle Warrior (song dedicated to Rita Joe, writer of the poem, I Lost My Talk) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UkUxIFw5vOg>
 - Residential Wreck – (song produced by Harmony Parent and Grade 4/5 students) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cHisNlnal8s>
 - Savage - <https://vimeo.com/68582103>
 - The Secret Path - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=za2VzjkwTfc>

- 6) Share the Wolf/Humility artwork created by Student Artist, Alicia Desjarlais. Have your students decorate their individual Wolf cut-outs and write words of Humility, or your commitment to Reconciliation on them. Students can choose to write one to four words or draw an image (the words and images should be visible, especially since they will be arranged into a larger art piece).

- 7) Reminders for your students:
 - Wear orange on September 30, 2019.
 - Dress appropriately for the weather, as this is a rain or shine event.
 - Respectful behaviour is paramount (much like that of a Remembrance Day Assembly) to honour our Elders and gravity of the day's events.

ON THE DAY OF THE MARCH...

- 1) Collect the decorated wolf cards and take them with you to the park. We will collect them once you have arrived.
- 2) Collect also enough giveaways for your participating staff and students from one of a student helper – they will be walking through the crowds before the march begins. This year, it is a bookmark.
- 3) Assemble on the field by 12:35pm at the park (see the attached diagram for details).
- 4) See the attached itinerary for details.

AFTER THE MARCH...

- 1) Review the day with your students. As the topic of the Indian Residential Schools is highly sensitive, it is important to note any thoughts, feelings and reactions from your students.

Thank you!

Merci!

tsel ts'íthomé

Orange Shirt Day is September 30th

September 30th has been declared Orange Shirt Day annually, in recognition of the harm the residential school system did to children's sense of self-esteem and well-being, and as an affirmation of our commitment to ensure that everyone around us matters. The acknowledgement started in 2013.



Phyllis' Story (Phyllis Jack Webstad)

I went to the Mission for one school year in 1973/1974. I had just turned 6 years old. I lived with my grandmother on the Dog Creek reserve. We never had very much money, and there was no welfare, but somehow my granny managed to buy me a new outfit to go to the Mission school. I remember going to Robinson's store and picking out a shiny orange shirt. It had string laced up in front and was so bright and exciting – just like I felt to be going to school! When I got to the Mission, they stripped me, and took away my clothes, including the orange shirt! I never saw it again. I didn't understand why they wouldn't give it back to me, it was mine! The colour orange has always reminded me of that and how my feelings didn't matter, how no one cared and how I felt like I was worth nothing. All of us little children were crying, and no one cared.

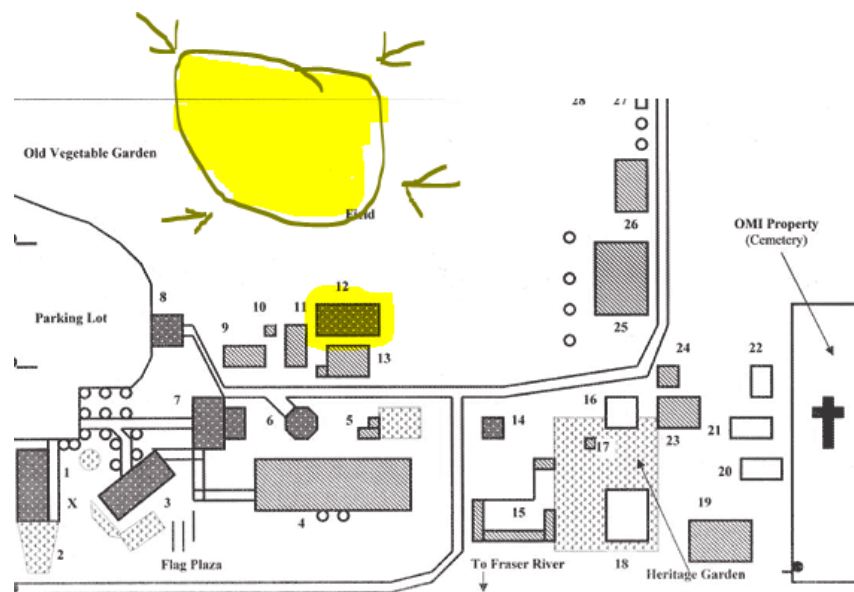
I was 13 years old and in grade 8 when my son Jeremy was born. Because my grandmother and mother both attended residential school for 10 years each, I never knew what a parent was supposed to be like. With the help of my aunt, Agnes Jack, I was able to raise my son and have him know me as his mother.

I went to a treatment centre for healing when I was 27 and have been on this healing journey since then. I finally get it, that the feeling of worthlessness and insignificance, ingrained in me from my first day at the mission, affected the way I lived my life for many years. Even now, when I know nothing could be further than the truth, I still sometimes feel that I don't matter. Even with all the work I've done!

I am honored to be able to tell my story so that others may benefit and understand, and maybe other survivors will feel comfortable enough to share their stories.

All participants must arrive no later than **12:30pm** and shall assemble on the field (the large circular area with arrows). Ensure that your students are assembled in an organized fashion.

At **12:40pm**, participants march together to the covered area (see diagram below) to meet with Elders. (Building **#12** below).



Itinerary – Orange Shirt Day March for Reconciliation 2019

Photos to be taken by Jennifer Lane during the ceremony.

Information for March Organizers/ALW helpers only:

- Set-Up of the stage area
- **12:00pm** – Elders meet at the park. Gifts to Elders as they arrive.
- **12:15pm** – Johnny & Lekeyten are blanketed, as are the speakers.

Information for all participants:

ALL PARTICIPANTS SHOULD ARRIVE NO LATER THAN 12:35PM

- **12:35pm** – All participants (Admin, teachers, ALW's, parents) confirmed at the park - congregate on the field "en masse", about 150m north of the covered area, on the hill. Please arrange your students in an organized fashion in between the orange cones.
- ALW's will collect wolf cards (placed in baskets) while waiting for the procession to begin.
- Teachers will collect giveaways for attending students; ALW's and MSS student helpers will help to distribute them to teachers.
- Johnny Williams and Lekeyten will be at front of the group/flags and paddles held by students from MSS.
- **12:40pm** - Students and staff will begin to march down to covered area to meet in front of Elders (seated). Drumming by Johnny and Lekeyten. Baskets containing the buffalo cards to be placed on the ground in front of the Elders.
- **12:45pm** – Johnny to address the crowd; announces that we are all witnesses to this event. Introduces speakers (Elders Cheryl Gabriel and Lekeyten, from Kwantlen First Nation)
- **12:55pm** – Speakers will address the group.
- **1:35pm** – Vivian Searwar will address the crowd (asking them to share their experiences with their families and friends; thank everyone for participating; next steps for the buffalo cut-outs).
- **1:40pm** - Group Photo
- **1:40pm** – Busses arrive.
- **1:40pm** – Lekeyten will play an honour song. Dewdney & Deroche to head back to bus.
- **1:45pm** - Conclusion of proceedings. Students either march or are bussed back to their schools having been witness to an impactful act of Reconciliation in Mission.

The Wolf will be arranged artistically by an Indigenous artist. It will be displayed at the SBO as a sign of our District's commitment to Reconciliation in Mission.