

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION COUNCIL

MINUTES

An extraordinary TEAMS meeting of the Aboriginal Education Council was called to order at 10:00 am on Monday, May 31, 2021.

Present: Laurie Larsen (Board of Education Chairperson, SD #36), Jordan Tinney (Superintendent, SD #36), Lyn Daniels (Director of Instruction, Aboriginal Learning, SD #36 - Chair), Debra Merrier (CUPE), Jacquie King (STA) and Susan Beyer (SPVPA)

Absent: Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association designate, Pam O’Neill (Kekino Native Housing Society), Heather Myhre (Métis Nation BC), Chief Harley Chappell (Semiahmoo First Nation), David Kenworthy (Katzie First Nation) and parent designates

Guests: Neder Dhillon (Acting Assistant Superintendent, SD #36), Tammy Murphy (CUPE) and Juanita Coltman (Principal, Aboriginal Learning, SD #36)

- 1. Welcome and Acknowledgment**
- 2. How should we understand, what is important for the community of Surrey Schools to know and what should we do collectively and individually to respond to the discovery of the mass grave at the site of the former Kamloops Indian residential school?**
- 3. Informal survey of lower mainland district**
- 4. Direction from Tk’emlups te Secwepemc**
- 5. Next steps**
- 6. Adjournment**

Each Council member shared their understanding and feelings about the discovery of the mass gravesite at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School.

Council members contributed ideas that would acknowledge and bring awareness to the discovery.

Juanita texted other school districts to see what they are doing. Examples of what other districts are doing: wearing orange shirts, flags at half-mast, and statements from leadership teams.

There was discussion about the appropriateness of including a song in a video message.

Council agreed that:

- the district will work on a joint statement with all partners and with local First Nations that will come out soon. There will be critical input from the local First Nations;
- Lyn will connect with David Kenworthy about a song;
- 215 hours of Orange Shirt Day (9 days) or display orange in support;
- Jordan will share a list of things that the schools can do;
- Juanita will compile resource links.

Susan asked if it is appropriate for students to write messages to the Bands in Kamloops. It was suggested that the Project of Heart project might be more appropriate. Students could write on 215 tiles and display them at their school.