



September 27, 2021

Today marks the start of Truth and Reconciliation Week across Canada. This is an opportunity to deepen our understanding and awareness. I encourage everyone to take time this week to learn and unlearn.

As more Indigenous children have been found buried across the country we have all grappled with sadness, anger, and pain. For too long the uncomfortable realities of Canada's residential school system have been swept under the rug and the burden of truth telling has been carried by Indigenous peoples.

However, the City is committed to deepening relationships with First Nations people and governments as we walk the path of reconciliation.

As part of Call to Action number 80, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission called on the federal government to establish, as a statutory holiday, a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

How we honour the children who never came home, survivors and their families is an important part of healing.

Earlier this month Council officially declared September 30, 2021 as a day of recognition and commemoration.

I will continue to call on the federal government to implement **all** 94 of the calls to action outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report as those actions will move us all forward. Implementing the recommendations must be met with deep investments in culturally-safe services. This is essential in advancing reconciliation.

Residential school survivors and families can call 1-866-925-4419 for 24/7 support. I urge anyone experiencing pain to call.

The City of North Vancouver was home to St. Paul's Indian Residential School where Indigenous children were forcibly sent having been removed without consent from their homes. This summer the Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh, and Musqueam First Nations announced their investigation of the site where the school once stood. It was an honour to be invited and witness this moment.

The City and Council are committed to supporting them unequivocally in this work on their terms and on their time.

September 30 has been recognized as Orange Shirt Day for many years now. The story Phyllis Webstad has shared about having her shiny new orange shirt, a gift from her grandmother, taken away from her as a six-year old girl has resonated with so many others. We are now having a global conversation around the truth of residential schools, which is long overdue.

City Hall will be lit up orange all week. Our flags will be flown at half-mast. I encourage people throughout the week to take the time to reflect and look for opportunities to educate themselves. If you are unsure of where to start our City library has a collection of significant resources which you can find online.

This is just the start of our journey to renew and strengthen relationships with Indigenous people. I encourage everyone to take this journey with us.

I will now read the proclamation.

Mayor Linda Buchanan