



# Board Chair Report

**September 28, 2021**

As we approach Orange Shirt Day and the inaugural National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, former Senator Murray Sinclair's views of the critical importance of education as the "key to reconciliation" resonate with me as an individual, as a mother, and as an elected school board trustee in Burnaby.

In the frank words of Sinclair, former Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: "Education has gotten us into this mess, and education will get us out."

With the support of the district's Indigenous Education team, school communities throughout the Burnaby School District are coming together in many ways –

There is also a moral imperative for institutions to consider the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and explore how we can further them in our work. I am proud of the work done along this path by the Burnaby Board of Education and district and school staff, but also recognize there is still so much to do.

As individuals, it's probably fair to say that most of us have work to do on our own journeys towards reconciliation. In this regard, there is much to gain from listening to the words from Indigenous peoples and leaders with an empathetic heart, an openness to learn and a willingness to act.

As settlers, many have wondered how to recognize the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation in a meaningful way and support Indigenous community members. In my own journey, I have come across [One Day's Pay campaign](#), which "invites all Canadians to meaningfully recognize this new federal statutory 'holiday' with more than reflection; it is an invitation to citizens, organizations, businesses, and communities to act by giving one day's pay - or an amount of their choice - to Indigenous-led projects, movements, organizations and Nations." There are many local and national organizations that are doing important work to support residential school survivors and Indigenous communities. I would like to thank every Trustee on the Burnaby Board of Education for committing to donate to an Indigenous organization through the campaign and invite you to join us, if you can.

In the words of former Senator Sinclair: "The road we travel is equal in importance to the destination we seek. There are no shortcuts. When it comes to truth and reconciliation, we are forced to go the distance."

I look forward to continuing this work with you all.

**Jen Mezei, Chair**

**Burnaby Board of Education**