



Peace River School Division

September 17, 2021

Dear parents and guardians,

The Government of Canada has declared September 30th as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The day is intended to recognize and honour residential school survivors, their families and their communities. It will also ensure that public commemoration of the tragic and painful history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process. Please note that as this is a federal holiday, it only applies automatically to the federal government, federal crown boards and agencies and federally regulated companies.

However, during the regular board meeting held yesterday (September 16, 2021), the PRSD board of trustees voted that for the 2021-22 school year, **Thursday, Sept. 30 will be designated as a non-operational day in Peace River School Division** to demonstrate our commitment to the process of truth and reconciliation. **This means there will be no classes and schools will be closed for the day.**

Initially the board of trustees believed that having students in school on the National Day of Truth of Reconciliation would ensure that the importance of this day would be observed by all our students. However, upon learning that members of our community would value us honoring the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation by taking it as a day off school, we decided to explore this idea further. After consulting with various local Indigenous organizations, Elders and Knowledge keepers, we learned, and now agree, that our best way forward is that this day be observed in the same way as other national holidays.

The board also voted that **September 27 to October 1, 2021 be declared Truth and Reconciliation Week in PRSD schools**. By dedicating a full week to Truth and Reconciliation, schools will have the flexibility to select a minimum of one school day within the week to recognize Orange Shirt Day while students learn about the history and legacy of residential schools. Other learning activities that support Truth and Reconciliation will also be encouraged.

Please note that our school and divisional websites will be updated in the coming days to reflect this change.

Thank you for supporting this important initiative.

Adam Murray
Superintendent of Schools

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