



Dear Parents, Guardians, Caregivers and/or Families:

UGDSB recognizes and acknowledges Truth and Reconciliation Week each year during the final week in September. Staff are provided with carefully selected content and activities that help students engage respectfully in learning about the Residential School System in Canada. Through age-appropriate texts, media and literature in classrooms, students will learn from survivors and intergenerational survivors about the impacts that the residential school system has, and continues to have on, Indigenous families, communities, and peoples in what is now commonly referred to as Canada.

Staff are provided with slide decks of vetted resources from the Indigenous Education Team and guidance on how to incorporate this content into their classrooms safely and respectfully. As students learn about Indigenous histories, it is also the goal that their learning will lead to a greater understanding of, and appreciation for, the resilience, resistance and resurgence within Indigenous communities and Peoples today.

For some students, these topics may create strong emotions or at times might trigger students who have, or whose families have, experienced trauma and/or are Indigenous Peoples who have been impacted by the Residential School System. We want to ensure that families, particularly Indigenous families, know that this content will be covered in classes, so that they can make informed choices about their child's participation. The goal of this learning is to develop and deepen students' knowledge and understanding of Canada's past, and to do so in ways that are safe, respectful, and appropriate for all students.

For many generations, First Nations, Métis and Inuit children did not learn about themselves in school and their right to safe and equitable education was denied. Teaching about the Residential School System in UGDSB schools is part of our commitment to fulfilling the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action 62 to "make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students."

Citizenship education is an important facet of students' overall education and part of the Ontario curriculum. Truth and Reconciliation Week gives students opportunities to learn what it means to be a responsible, active citizen and how they might work towards reconciliation throughout their lifetimes and within their local communities. We invite students and staff to wear Orange Shirts on Sept 30th to commemorate Truth and Reconciliation Week.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'H. Perico'.

College Heights Secondary School