



**ST. THOMAS AQUINAS
REGIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL**

31 May 2021

Dear Parents:

During this past weekend Canadians began to learn of the discovery of children buried at the former residential school in Kamloops, B.C. This tragedy has brought the legacy of residential schools to focus once again, and it has reminded us of the history of the site on which our school now sits.

St. Paul's School opened in 1898 and was staffed by the Sisters of the Child Jesus. It was situated at the north end of Mission Road on what is now our staff parking lot. The school was taken over in 1900 by the Department of Indian Affairs and operated thereafter as a residential school. From 1920 Canadian federal legislation required all First Nations children to be sent to residential schools from age 7 to age 16. Children from the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations were brought to the school.

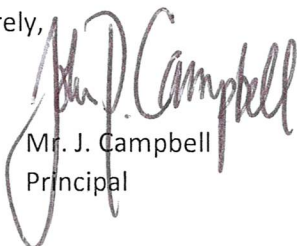
The school closed in 1958 due to fire safety concerns and was replaced with St. Paul's Indian Day School, which was located on West Fifth Street near St. Edmund's School. The old St. Paul's was demolished in 1959 and the land was subsequently used by the Archdiocese of Vancouver for the construction of St. Thomas Aquinas High School.

We wish to share with you the following measures we are undertaking to observe the tragic news from Kamloops and educate our students accordingly:

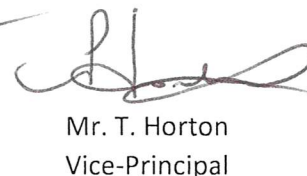
- All flags outside the school have been lowered to half-mast in memory of the 215 children whose remains were found at the Kamloops Residential School.
- A period of 215 seconds of silence was observed today during our morning announcements in memory of the 215 children.
- A series of special prayers and presentations focusing on the legacy of residential schools will be shown to students during our morning prayer and announcements this week.
- Some teachers will be taking their students out to visit the monument to St. Paul's School which is located on the southeast corner of our school site at Forbes and West Sixth Street.
- We will be preparing orange ribbons for staff and students to wear during the remaining weeks of school.
- On Wednesday June 2 staff and students will be encouraged to wear an orange shirt with their uniform, on the same day as members of the North Vancouver School District community will.

Our school community joins Archbishop Miller in expressing our profound sadness at the news from Kamloops, and we offer our prayers for all those in our community affected by the legacy of residential schools.

Sincerely,


Mr. J. Campbell
Principal


Mr. J. Galat
Vice-Principal


Mr. T. Horton
Vice-Principal