



Office of the Mayor
CITY OF VANCOUVER
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Proclamation
"YEAR OF RECONCILIATION"

WHEREAS Since time began, the first Peoples of this land cared for the well-being of land, waters and people;

AND WHEREAS This care was not reciprocated with the advent of European colonization. Grave injustices were perpetrated on Aboriginal peoples, from the devastating smallpox epidemic to crowding great nations from their large territories onto small reserves. But the most tragic injustice was the abduction of children from their families for the involuntary placement in "residential schools";

AND WHEREAS From the 1870s through until 1996, governments removed more than 150,000 Aboriginal children from their families. These children suffered cultural alienation and severe physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Recent research documents state that more than 3,000 Aboriginal children died while in the custody of the government in residential schools;

AND WHEREAS This harm has extended to all communities, Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians, and has extended over time, with the ongoing impact of residential schools felt throughout the generations;

AND WHEREAS The aspirations of Aboriginal peoples are not so different from any other peoples, with the one exception that a majority believe their children will not have the same opportunity to realize their dreams because of the bitter legacies left from the residential school system;

AND WHEREAS There is only one path moving forward, a path shared by people of all cultures. Reconciliation is an opportunity for all Canadians - within Vancouver and beyond - to witness the process of reconciliation and healing, and advance with a greater shared understanding of the historical impacts that have shaped the experiences of Aboriginal people to date;

AND WHEREAS The City of Vancouver is embracing reconciliation through a year-long effort that seeks to heal from the past and build new relationships between Aboriginal peoples and all Vancouverites, built on a foundation of openness, dignity, understanding and hope;

AND WHEREAS Through the process of reconciliation we have the promise of building a common future, a future in which all of Vancouver's children - no matter what their cultural background - have an equal opportunity to achieve their dreams and contribute to the common aspiration for a just and sustainable world;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Gregor Robertson, Mayor of the City of Vancouver, take the extraordinary measure TO HEREBY PROCLAIM June 21st, 2013 to June 20, 2014 as the

"YEAR OF RECONCILIATION"

in the City of Vancouver.

Gregor Robertson
MAYOR

