



COMMISSION SCOLAIRE SIR-WILFRID-LAURIER  
SIR WILFRID LAURIER SCHOOL BOARD

NEWS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

AN ENGLISH  
EDUCATION,  
A BILINGUAL  
FUTURE

UNE  
ÉDUCATION  
EN ANGLAIS,  
UN AVENIR  
BILINGUE

[swlauriersb.qc.ca](http://swlauriersb.qc.ca)

## Flags lowered to half-mast for 215 hours at SWLSB

**Rosemère, June 10, 2021** – Following the devastating discovery of 215 Indigenous children buried on the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School, in British Columbia, the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board (SWLSB) lowered flags to half-mast in all schools, centres and at head office on June 2. To honour and express our collective grief during these tragic times, the flags will continue flying at half-mast until tomorrow, June 11, for a total of 215 hours, in memory of each life lost.



This heartbreaking discovery shocked our nation and reminded everyone of one of the darkest chapters in Canadian history. “Some of the children were as young as 3 years old. It’s hard to believe and to understand. It’s even harder to explain to our children the atrocity these children went through. This tragedy has caused the issue of residential schools to resurface, as well as the wounds from this genocide towards Indigenous people. Thousands and thousands of children died in residential schools. As Canadians, as a school board, as educators, as parents, as caregivers, we have a critical role in facing the truth, educating ourselves and teaching our youth about First Nations in Canada, about Truth and Reconciliation,” said Paolo Galati, Chairperson of the SWLSB.

In 2018, the SWLSB established a First Nations, Métis and Inuit Committee (FNMI Committee) to represent the school board’s interests in Aboriginal education. The mandate of this committee is to ensure integration of First Nations awareness into the educational process. With better education there is better understanding and improved acceptance. The FNMI Committee which is part of our Pedagogical Services Department will continue the conversation to find ways to ensure that the school board can support, reach out and assist its schools and centres so that everyone gains a better understanding about Indigenous peoples’ culture and history. “Our school board is located on the territory of the Kanien’keeha:ka Mohawk nation and we also have students of Indigenous culture within our schools and centres. It is crucial for us to reach out to these communities and continue building relationships,” added Chairperson Galati.

We can’t change the past, but we must face the truth, so we can change the future.

With a workforce of more than 2,000 employees, the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board is the third largest English school board of the Province of Québec and has an 87.7% graduation rate. Its territory comprises the administrative regions of Laval, Lanaudière and the Laurentides. The school board provides preschool, elementary, secondary, adult education and vocational training services to over 14,000 students in 35 schools and 4 centres, as well as a business training division.

Media Contact

Maxeen Jolin, Communications Coordinator | [mjolin@swlauriersb.qc.ca](mailto:mjolin@swlauriersb.qc.ca) | 450 621-5600, extension 1385

