



Aboriginal Education
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Acknowledging Traditional Territory

Welcome everyone and thank you for being here. We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the shared traditional territory of the Coast Salish people on which our schools are located. We recognize that the Katzie and Semiahmoo First Nations have signed the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. We would also like to recognize the diverse population of people who have come to Surrey School District and contribute to its dynamic culture.

****Important message:**

The introduction is flexible, please introduce and welcome people as you naturally would, the important part in this protocol is the second sentence. Even this though, can be worded in such a way as to be most natural for you.

- Acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the Coast Salish people.

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- Acknowledging territory is a way of honouring and showing respect for a group of people who have been living and working on this land from time immemorial.
- The only people who would *Welcome* to the Territory are the First Nations people who are traditionally/originally from that territory. The majority of school district personnel likely would *Acknowledge* Territory.
- Acknowledging territory is performed at graduation and celebrations including Aboriginal communities etc. It can also be performed before an important meeting or presentation.
- The host is the person who would acknowledge Territory, you would usually not ask a guest to acknowledge territory as it is not his/her function/event. It is not necessary to have an Aboriginal person acknowledge territory.
- Acknowledgment/Welcome is usually the first item on the agenda. (If you forget, just quickly acknowledge then, and don't worry about it!)
- For larger events it is always respectful to have a member of the local First Nation, preferably an Elder, perform a welcome, if possible. This would require an honorarium to be given to this person, to acknowledge his or her knowledge and respect within the community.
- Seek out the name of the traditional territory you will be in if you are travelling to speak and or to work with people.