



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **District of Port Edward Raises "Every Child Matters" Flag in Honourable Ceremony Led by Tsimshian First Nation Elder Murray Smith**

Port Edward, BC - June 1, 2024 - The District of Port Edward proudly raised the "Every Child Matters" flag today in a poignant ceremony led by Tsimshian First Nation Elder Murray Smith (Algmxaa) of the Lax Kw'alaams Band. As a Residential School Survivor, Elder Smith offered profound insights into the significance of this symbolic act and what it represents for reconciliation and healing.

Mayor Knut Bjorndal expressed deep gratitude for Elder Murray Smith's presence and leadership during the ceremony, stating, "It was an honor to have Elder Murray Smith present and to lead our community through this ceremony."

The "Every Child Matters" flag serves as a visible reminder of the ongoing commitment to reconciliation, healing, and acknowledging the intergenerational trauma caused by the Residential School system. Its raising signifies a step forward in the District of Port Edward's journey towards truth, understanding, and meaningful collaboration with Indigenous communities.

In alignment with this commitment, the District of Port Edward has recently awarded a Truth and Reconciliation plan development to consultant Urban Systems. This initiative underscores the municipality's dedication to building, establishing, and promoting enhanced relationships with the First Nation people in the area.

"The relationship, consultation, and collaboration that are built here will guide us for years to come and foster positive partnerships with First Nations people," Mayor Bjorndal affirmed. "We look forward to developing this plan and working with First Nations for years to come."

The District of Port Edward remains steadfast in its commitment to reconciliation, actively engaging in meaningful dialogue and actions that contribute to healing and understanding. By raising the "Every Child Matters" flag and embarking on the development of a Truth and Reconciliation plan, the municipality reaffirms its dedication to building a more inclusive and equitable future for all.



District of Port Edward (left) Councillors Christine MacKenzie, Dan Franzen, Mayor Knut Bjorndal and Elder Murray Smith