



Acknowledging the Traditional Territory in which we currently reside

Why?

It is important to acknowledge the traditional territory of the First Nations communities that we reside. In Abbotsford we have two First Nations communities: Matsqui First Nation and Sumas First Nation. These two Nations are part of the Stó:lō Nation. The Stó:lō Nation covers territory from Yale in the Fraser Canyon to Fort Langley. Stó:lō in Halq'eméylem translates as “river”. The Stó:lō people are called “people of the river”. The Stó:lō people have lived in the Fraser Valley for at least 10 000 years.

There is evidence of the Stó:lō people living in this territory for 10 000 years in two ways. One is the traditional stories of the Stó:lō elders. Stó:lō culture is an oral tradition. This means that Stó:lō history, culture, teachings, and spirituality are passed down orally. There was not a written tradition in Stó:lō culture. Traditional stories of the Stó:lō people tell us of a time prior to 10 000 years. Secondly, archaeological evidence at Hatzic Rock carbon dates artifacts to 10 000 years. It is for these reasons that we recognize the ancestral relevance to the Fraser Valley.

Acknowledging the indigenous people of our community is important to increase the sense of belonging and cultural pride of our Aboriginal students and families at school.

What?

We encourage you to recognize the traditional territory in which we currently reside whenever you are addressing students, staff, and the public. If you are recognizing the indigenous community outside of the Abbotsford area substitute the name(s) of the First Nation(s) in which you are gathering.

“We would like to acknowledge the traditional ancestral unceded shared territory of the Sumas First Nation and Mastqui First Nation. These two First Nations are part of the Stó:lō Nation. The Stó:lō people have lived in the Fraser Valley for 10 000 years. It is for this reason that we acknowledge the traditional territory in which we reside.”