



MARK R. ISFELD SECONDARY SCHOOL

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Welcome back!

I hope you all had a wonderful and amazing summer. We are eager to start working with your children this school year. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Jeannie McDonald, and I have been here since last December. I am originally from Alberta, with a proud Metis heritage. I am an active member of the MIKI'SIW Metis Association. My Metis ancestry is mostly from a small community in Saskatchewan called Willow Bunch with a French/Cree background. I am very excited to be working at Mark Isfeld. I look forward to meeting our newest Isfeld students as well as connecting with the existing ones.

I would like to welcome our new Indigenous Support Worker Holly Johnstone. Holly has recently moved here over the summer from Kingston, Ontario. She is a member of the Chippewas of Kettle & Stony Point First Nation. Holly has experience working with children and youth by providing them with mental health, cultural, and academic support. In addition to this, Holly has worked within a team environment of mental health professionals, teachers, and parents to enhance their children's success. Holly is very excited to begin her work at Mark R. Isfeld.

This month we will be spending time getting to know your children. We are looking forward to attending the Potlatch 67-67 event towards the end of the month. This exhibit at the Comox Valley Art Gallery marks the 67th year since the Canadian Government Potlatch ban was lifted. This is a worthwhile exhibit that shares some of the hidden art and history of our First Nations People. We are hoping to take some of the students to experience this event.

The Indigenous Parent Advisory Council will be hosting a Welcome Back barbeque on Wednesday September 19, 2018. Watch you email for more details.

The Komox First Nations will be hosting Author Nella Nelson in The Big House on September 20, 2018 from 7:00-8:00pm. Nella is Author to the book Welcome Family and Friends to our Big House. There will be a book reading and cultural sharing. All are welcome to attend.

On September 27th, 2018 we will be participating in Orange Shirt Day. Holly and I have planned some activities for the students to participate in. Phyllis Webstad, the creator of Orange Shirt Day, will be making presentations at schools within the community. We hope to take some students to those schools to hear her words.

Our vision and commitment is to provide student support to foster a sense of belonging, cultural identity and self-esteem. We aim to increase academic success through personalized learning in turn assisting in building student skills, qualities, and confidence in leadership. We will work to increase awareness and understanding of First Nations, Metis, Inuit history, traditions and the culture of all students.

We look forward to an exciting and eventful year. If you have, any questions or concerns please feel free to contact either one of us.

Jeannie McDonald & Holly Johnstone
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