



Acknowledging Traditional Territory in Vancouver Schools

Acknowledging Traditional Territory is one of the protocols practiced in aboriginal culture for generations.

- Acknowledging territory is a way of honouring and showing respect for the Coast Salish 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 this territory. The majority of school district personnel likely would **Acknowledge** Territory.
- Acknowledging territory is performed at any important function such as a school assembly, classroom, awards night, graduation, a celebration including Aboriginal communities etc. It can also be performed before an important meeting, conference, Retreat 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.
- Acknowledgement/Welcome is usually the first item on the agenda.
- For larger events it is always respectful to have a member of the local Nation perform a welcome, if possible. This would require an honorarium to be given to this person, to acknowledge his or her knowledge & respect within the community.
- Contact Trudi Harris, Aboriginal Cultural Coordinator to invite a person for the local community to come perform a Welcoming to your event at (604) 713-5940 or email tharris@vsb.bc.ca



ACKNOWLEDGING TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

Please join me in acknowledging that we live, work and learn on the **unceded** traditional lands of the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish Coast Salish Peoples.

History

Vancouver and 95 percent of British Columbia are on unceded First Nations lands. In many parts of Canada, **treaties** were signed with First Nations that gave incoming settlers rights to much of the land, but in British Columbia very few treaties were signed. “**Unceded**” means that First Nation people did not give up or legally sign it away to Britain or Canada.

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 Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish Coast Salish Peoples.
- Acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish Nations.

PHONETIC PRONUNCIATION:

- Musqueam (pronounced *Mus-kwee-um*)
- Tsleil-Waututh (pronounced *Slay-wah-tuth*)
- Squamish Nation (pronounced *Skwa-mish*)

WHERE THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL TERRITORY CAN BE SHARED AND DISPLAYED IN YOUR SCHOOL

School Acknowledgment

Traditional Welcoming and the story of the history of the land and school name

- Traditional Welcome song
(Musqueam/Squamish/Tsleil-Waututh People)
*Note: Acknowledging Traditional Territory when you do the following:
 - ✓ School assemblies
 - ✓ School events
 - ✓ School Presentations
 - ✓ Staff meetings
 - ✓ Retreats

By acknowledging Traditional Territory shows understanding and acceptance of this strictest protocol followed by all nations.

- Insert “Acknowledgement of Traditional Territories in the following areas:
 - ✓ School Agenda
 - ✓ School monthly newsletter
 - ✓ School website
 - ✓ School Plans
 - ✓ Signage in school entrance
 - ✓ Signage in office
 - ✓ Signage in classroom
- MC continue with announcements and traditions of the school