INITIATIVE: Indigenous Cultural Appropriation vs. Appreciation

Kwiyeqel Secondary School Trades Program

Students in grades 9 - 12 Trades Program at Kwiyeqel Secondary participated in a lesson addressing cultural appropriation and misrepresentation of Indigenous cultures, helping them understand respectful engagement with Indigenous traditions and fostering cultural competency. The lesson intends to foster cultural awareness, reconciliation, and allyship among students by distinguishing between appropriation and appreciation of Indigenous cultures.

Students participated in a case study and guided discussion about the appropriation of Indigenous culture displayed by the Vancouver 2010 Olympics logo. Students then had the opportunity to engage in Indigenous art and carving under the direction of Raphael Silver, a local Indigenous carver. Raphael also provides cultural knowledge during the lesson.

GOALS:

- Develop critical thinking about Indigenous representation in media, fashion and art.
- Encourage students to respectfully engage with Indigenous cultures through appreciation rather than appropriation
- Provide a hands-on cultural experience through Indigenous led art creation and carving.
- Align with Chilliwack School Districts commitment to Truth and Reconciliation by amplifying Indigenous voices in education.

Human and Social Development

The lesson aligns with our Strategic Plan goal of Human and Social Development, particularly its commitment to Truth, Reconciliation and healing to address inequities for Indigenous learners.

High Quality Instruction

This lesson supports our Strategic Plan goal of High-Quality Instruction by engaging students in critical thinking and meaningful discussions on cultural respect.

IMPACT:

- Students can clearly differentiate between cultural appropriation and appreciation.
- Increased respect and allyship toward Indigenous communities.
- Students express their learning through art, discussion and written reflections.