



ÉCOLE SECONDAIRE
HANDSWORTH
SECONDARY SCHOOL



November 18, 2022

Dear Families of Current Grade 10 and 11 Students,

As part of the Province of British Columbia's commitments to Truth, Reconciliation, and Anti-Racism, the Ministry of Education and Child Care has updated the BC Graduation Program requirements. Moving forward, the Ministry is implementing an Indigenous-focused graduation requirement for all students in British Columbia. Under the new model, students who are currently in Grade 11 will be the first group to complete this updated course credit requirement by graduation.

The change requires that all students complete at least one 4-credit course with an Indigenous focus prior to graduation. It does not change the number of credits required for graduation which remains at 80.

Although course selection for the 2023-24 school year does not begin until after winter break, we wanted to give our families advanced notification to provide ample opportunity to prepare. We know also that grade 11 and 12 course selection is critical for post-secondary planning.

To ensure that Handsworth's current grade 10 and 11 students will meet the new graduation requirement, Handsworth will be running one Social Studies and two English courses next year that each meet this requirement. The three course options being offered at Handsworth next year are:

- English First Peoples: Literary Studies & Writing 11
- English First Peoples 12
- BC First Peoples 12

BC First Peoples 12 has been a staple at Handsworth for many years, and current grade 11 students who are already enrolled in this course for Semester 2 of this school year will have their graduation requirement satisfied.

Current grade 11 students who are not taking BC First Peoples 12 during their grade 11 year will need to either select English First Peoples 12 or BC First Peoples 12 on their course request form for their grade 12 year.

For current grade 10 students, they may elect to satisfy their requirement in grade 11 with English First Peoples 11 or BC First Peoples 12, or complete it the following year in grade 12 with either English First Peoples 12 or BC First Peoples 12.



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We have included descriptions of all three courses below to help students decide where their interests lie:

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ENGLISH FIRST PEOPLES 11 (EFP 11) Literary Studies + Writing 11: This English 11 course provides students with the opportunity to explore a diverse sample of Indigenous literature and practice writing for self-expression and communication in a variety of contexts. Students delve deeply into First Peoples oral and written literature in a range of media to explore various themes, authors, and topics. This provides a foundation for them to think critically and creatively as they continue to explore, extend, and strengthen their own writing. Within a classroom community grounded by the First People's Principles of Learning, students work individually and collaboratively to explore oral and written literature and create powerful, purposeful compositions. This course satisfies both an English 11 credit as well as the graduation requirement for a course with an Indigenous Focus.

ENGLISH FIRST PEOPLES 12 (EFP 12): This English 12 course provides students with the opportunity to explore a diverse sample of contemporary Indigenous literature and practice writing for self-expression and communication in a variety of contexts. Students delve deeply into modern Indigenous oral and written literature in a range of media to explore various themes, authors, and topics. In particular, a guiding inquiry question for this class is: "What are the lasting impacts of colonization in contemporary Canadian society and how do Indigenous authors, activists, and regular people resist and challenge this historic and ongoing colonization?". This inquiry question and the texts examined provide a foundation for students to think critically and creatively as they continue to explore, extend, and strengthen their own oral and written communication. Within a classroom community grounded by the First People's Principles of Learning, students work individually and collaboratively to explore oral and written literature and create powerful, purposeful compositions. This course satisfies both an English 12 credit as well as the graduation requirement for a course with an Indigenous Focus.

BC FIRST PEOPLES 12: This course examines the place and roles of Indigenous people in shaping the past and future of British Columbia and Canada, how contact and colonialism continues to affect the lives of B.C. First Peoples, and the ways in which colonialism has been resisted and challenged. Using critical thinking, creative insight, and their current knowledge, students will be provided with opportunities to collaborate, investigate, problem-solve, communicate, discover and increase their understanding of the history and culture of BC First Peoples through conversation, story, and experience.

Topics included in the course: the vital role of oral tradition as well as an ongoing connection to the land; traditional territories and ways of life; the diversity, richness and resiliency of BC First Peoples revealed through cultural expressions; the political, social and economic impact of contact and colonialism; and the ways in which BC First Peoples have challenged and resisted ongoing colonialism through self-governance, leadership, and self-determination. This course is available to students in



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grades 11 and 12 and meets the graduation requirement for a senior social studies course as well as the graduation requirement for a course with an Indigenous Focus.

The new 4-credit graduation requirement will provide all BC students with the necessary time and opportunity to develop deeper understandings of the experiences, cultures, and histories of Indigenous peoples in Canada, in support of the K-12 mandate to develop Educated Citizens.

For more information on the new Indigenous-Focused Grad Requirement please refer to the [BC Ministry of Education Q&A Document](#)

Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation is one of the core pillars of North Vancouver School District's Strategic Plan and is echoed in the Provincial Government's passing of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. We look forward to working with our grad class of 2024, and every subsequent class, to implement this new graduation requirement which will have an impact on our province for years to come.

Sincerely,

The Handsworth Administration