



# imagine a Canada

CELEBRATING YOUTH VISIONS FOR RECONCILIATION

2017  
OFFICIAL SELECTION



THE GOVERNOR GENERAL · LE GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL

I am honoured to extend greetings to the selected national honorees of the Imagine a Canada art and essay competition, who will be taking part in the discussion on the future of Canada through the lens of reconciliation.

You are inspiring. You have much to teach and, together, we have much to learn. You are the present and the future. Your voices resonate along the path to reconciliation and the journey towards healing.

The residential school system shaped the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. It is a dark chapter in our history, one that we must never forget. If we are to look to the future, we must first look to the past. We must remember not only the residential school survivors, but also those children who never made it home. They are at the very heart of the reconciliation process, a process that includes all Canadians and that will succeed through education, dialogue and a willingness to listen.

Let us continue to work together so that the mistakes of the past are never repeated. Let us build a better Canada, where social justice and equality of opportunity are paramount. The future is full of hope. And that hope resides in you.

Handwritten signature of David Johnston.



**National Centre for  
Truth and Reconciliation**  
UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

**Centre national pour la  
vérité et la réconciliation**  
UNIVERSITÉ DU MANITOBA

**Chancellor's Hall**  
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The effect of Canada's policies towards indigenous peoples has left an indelible scar on this country and in the lives of indigenous homes and communities. The Residential School system was a particularly brutal element of the forced assimilation of indigenous peoples. The effects of this system will continue to reverberate for generations to come.

Reconciliation calls on all of us to forge a new path forward – one of respect, honesty, love, courage, wisdom, humility, and most importantly, truth. Now that we are collectively becoming aware of this history, what are the steps we need to take to heal, learn and ultimately, create a country that we are all proud to call home?

Across the country, young people have shared their vision of Canada's future through the lens of reconciliation. Surrounding these youth are their families, teachers, elders and fellow students. All are rallying to the cry issued by residential school survivors to never again see the pain inflicted on indigenous peoples repeated in this country or anywhere else in the world.

On behalf of the Governing Circle and the Survivors Circle of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at the University of Manitoba, I wish to congratulate all of these youth that have shared their vision of the country with us. I also wish to congratulate their teachers, parents, communities and friends for it truly takes a community to raise a child.

I would also like to thank the generous partners of the events we have held across the country. The Vice-Regal community has graciously hosted regional events across the Country instilling the sense of reverence worthy of these most important national conversations. The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, the Counselling Foundation of Canada and the Rideau Hall Foundation have generously contributed time, money and effort in ensuring this program is a success.

Reconciliation involves all of us and while we cannot change what occurred in the past, the future is ours to create together. Let this be a future where the brutal assimilation and suppression of indigenous peoples no longer continues. Let this be a future where each and every child has the same opportunity for success. Let this be a future where the rights of indigenous peoples are respected, acknowledged and celebrated.

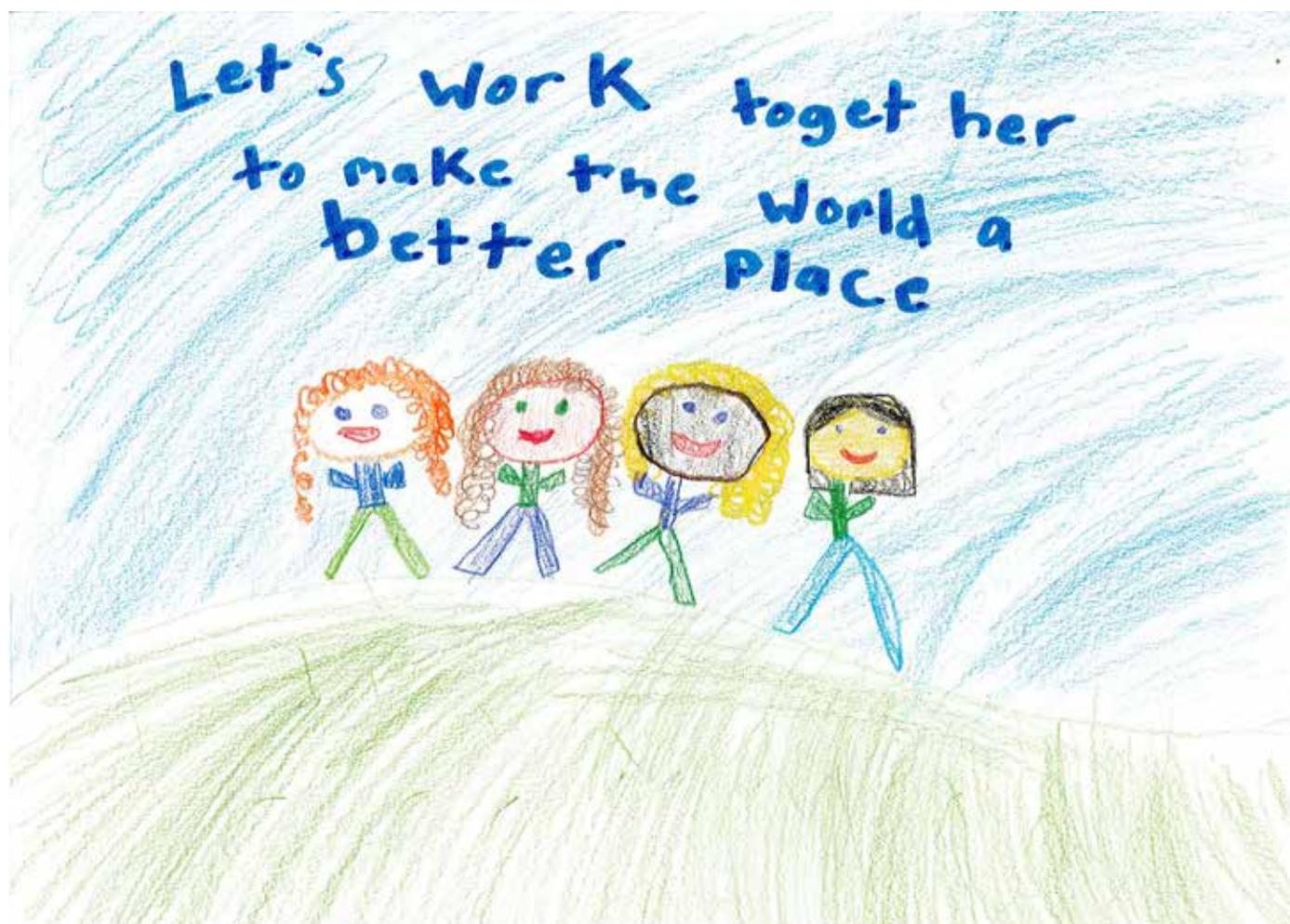
Let's create a better Canada. Together.

Ry Moran

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# Arianna Dumont

GRADE 2  
KAMEYOSEK SCHOOL  
EDMONTON  
ALBERTA



I imagine a Canada that is...  
Kind, caring, loving, fair.  
A place that is safe.  
Without hate.

Friendly.  
A place we can all play together.  
Proud of our differences.

# Purnoor Gill

GRADE 6  
FORT SASKATCHEWAN  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
FORT SASKATCHEWAN  
ALBERTA



# Jackson Ouелlette

GRADE 4  
NISTAWOYOU FRIENDSHIP  
CENTER  
FORT McMURRAY  
ALBERTA

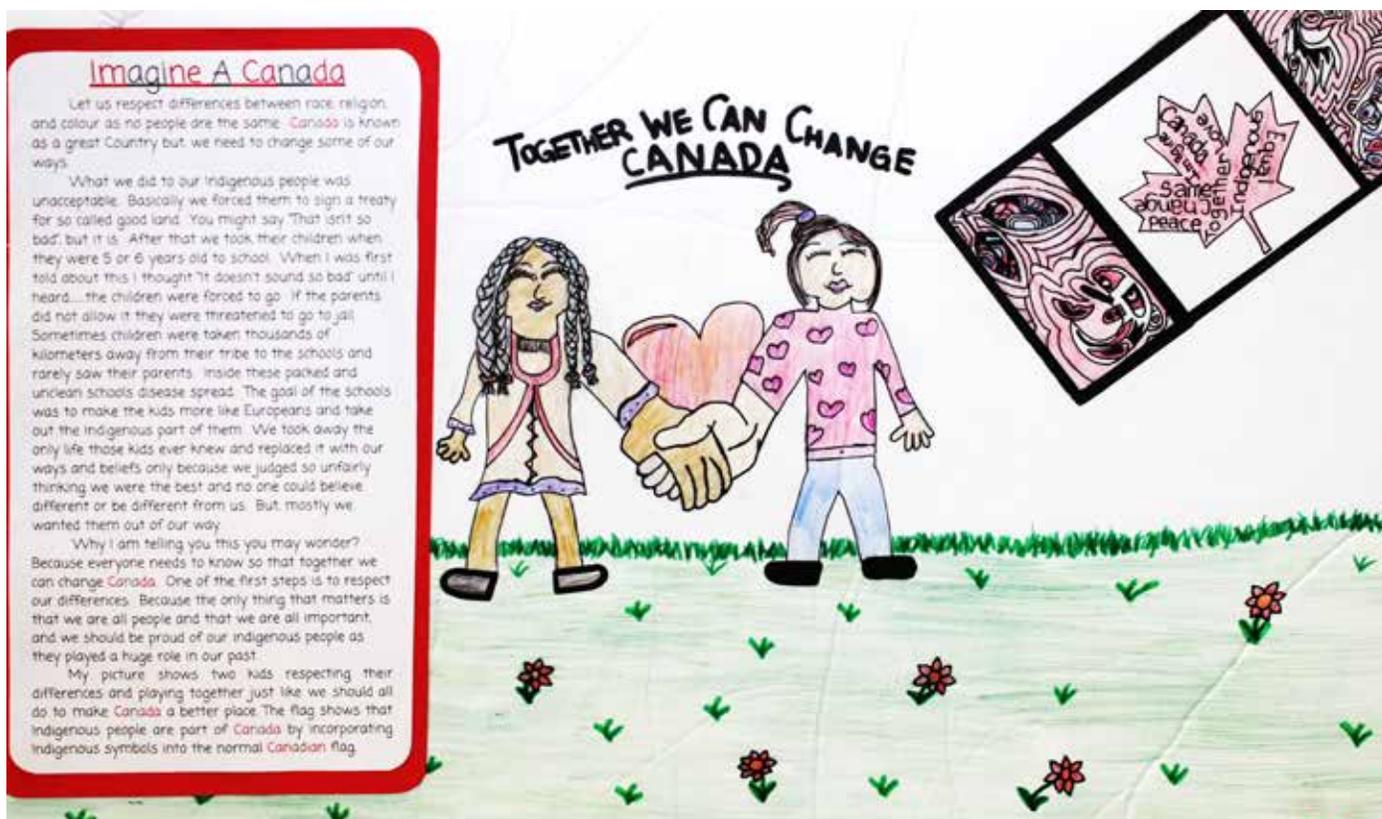
imagine  
a Canada

2017



# Ella Heinrich

GRADE 6  
WYE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
SHERWOOD PARK  
ALBERTA



# Emma Neufeld

GRADE 6  
FORT SASKATCHEWAN  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
FORT SASKATCHEWAN  
ALBERTA

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Its useless how we fight  
dark or light, black or white

We are all the same  
and no matter the game  
EVERYONE can play.

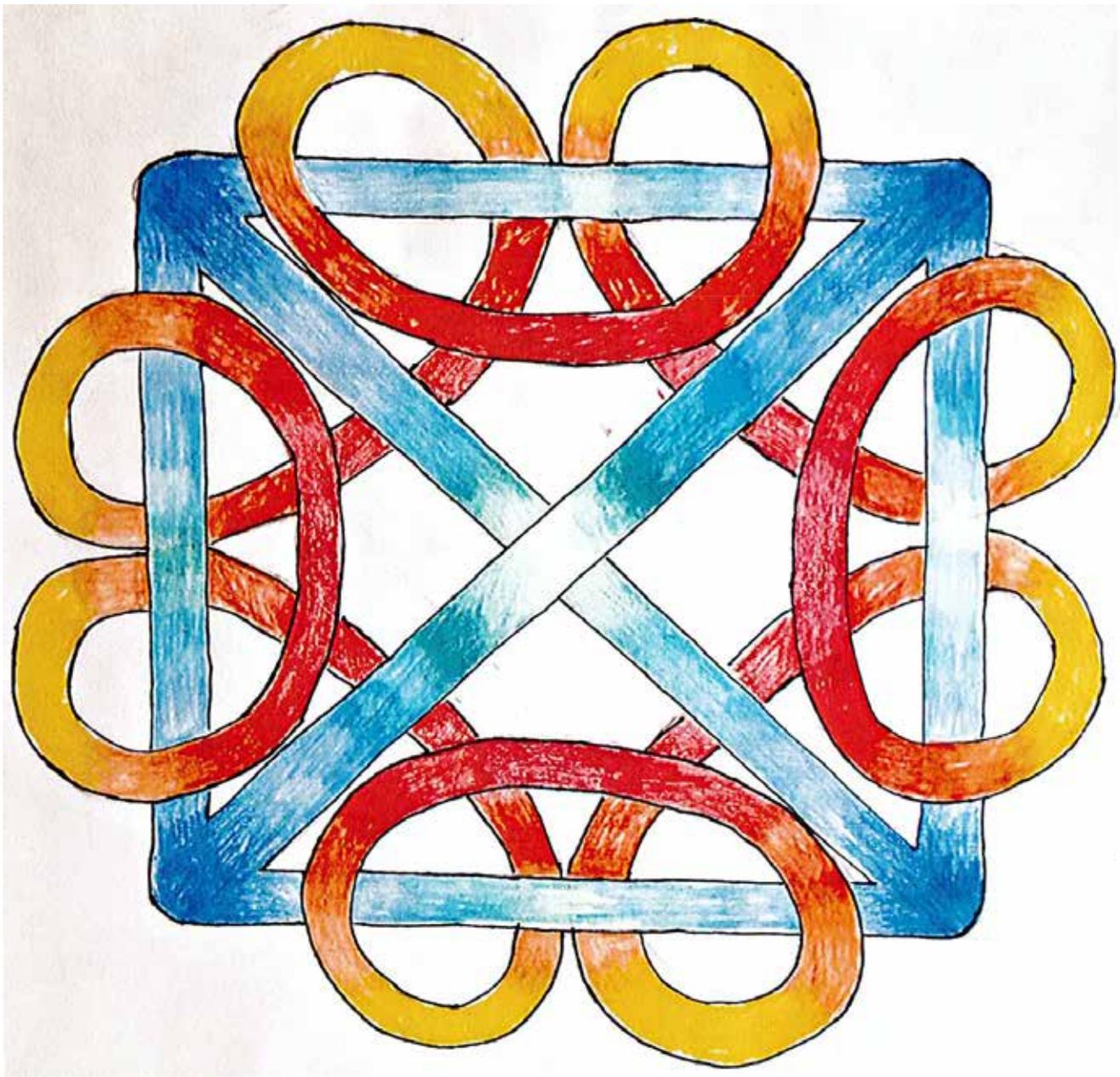
And the differences are small  
so we shouldn't be fighting at all

But together we can change things  
no matter the challenges they bring

We can make the world a better place  
and leave a smile on everyones face.

# Megan Lofstrand

GRADE 9  
ÉCOLE LACOMBE  
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL  
LACOMBE  
ALBERTA



# Salma Zein

GRADE 10  
FAIRVIEW SCHOOL  
CALGARY  
ALBERTA

## *The Fight to Sing Their Song*

Did we lose sight  
when the blue birds lost right  
to fly freely in their blue sky?  
They once soared  
gloriously up high,  
until the red birds  
treated them low,  
only because a different  
song they know.

The blue birds learned to fly  
and sing as they wish  
in their blue sky.  
It was a peaceful song-  
glorifying trees, butterflies, along  
with the serenity  
brought with night  
and the moon's beautiful light.

The red birds never understood  
and thought "How could  
this song be more than  
just sounds?"  
For they had songs of metal rounds  
and keeping their feathers smooth.  
Only that song could ever soothe.

"Let us stay"  
the red birds would say.  
The blue birds were kind,  
"fly in every space you find"  
The blue birds only  
wanted to soar-  
nothing more.  
Louder, the red birds grew;  
it was part of a plan, they knew.  
They cut away the blue  
birds' voices,  
and left them with no choices  
but to keep quiet in  
the blue of the sky  
and to only let red birds fly.

The clouds forgot the blue song  
of trees, butterflies, and long  
summer days picking berries.  
The red birds were the scaries  
to be obeyed with a single note.  
Blue birds were brought  
on their boat.

But for the young  
hatchlings, it sunk,  
the useless metal hunk.  
They only wanted to fly

freely and so they did cry.  
Some shades had died out,  
not leaving even a trace of a shout.

One day, the blue birds will fly  
freely across the same blue sky  
as the red birds.  
They shall fly in mixed herds,  
as both have red coursing  
through their veins,  
allowing them to feel  
emotional pains.

All birds deserve a chance  
to touch a cloud  
and to sing their song  
clear and loud.  
The blue birds may still feel mute,  
that is not a reason to shoot.  
We can help them  
remember their song,  
one day, we will all sing along.

Of trees, butterflies, the  
summer breeze:  
A song that will come  
to us with ease.

# Brooklyn Thompson

GRADE 9  
ÉCOLE LACOMBE  
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL  
LACOMBE  
ALBERTA

## *Years from Now*

2 years from now,  
Understanding will be spread  
Everyone will see the truth  
Even though we've done you wrong  
Each of us will accept the mistakes we made  
When we tried to accomplish a terrible goal

5 years from now,  
Forgiveness will be given  
For our mistakes made long ago  
For all the children taken  
For all the innocence stolen  
When we tried to make you just like us

10 years from now,  
Trust will be repaired,  
We will be trusted  
We will not repeat our mistakes  
We will never stop regretting  
When we forced you to change your ways

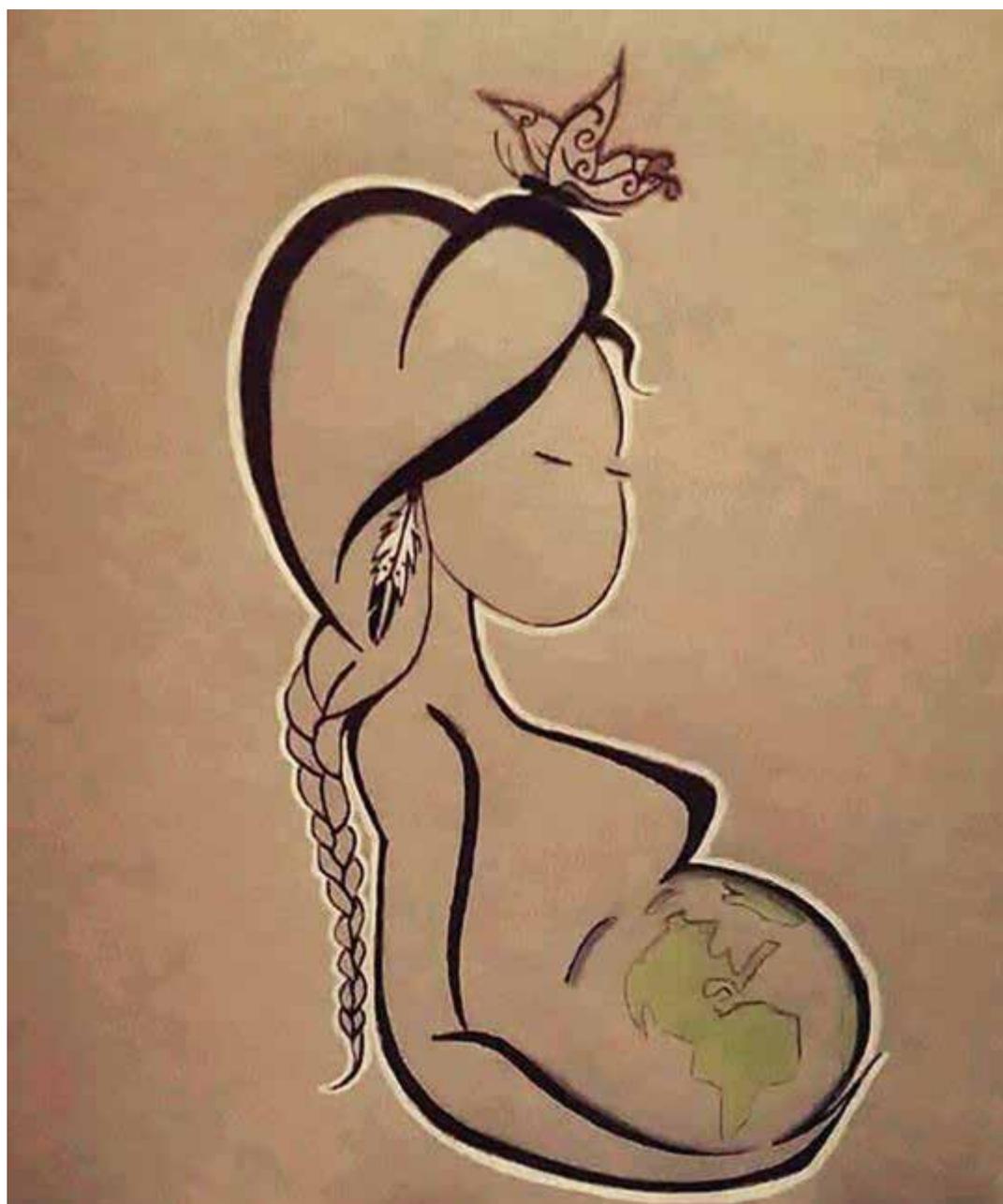
15 years from now,  
Unity will be established  
Races will come together  
Re-uniting in friendship  
Regret for the dark days  
When your existence was threatened

20 years from now,  
Peace will be everywhere  
All around us will be joy  
Anyone in pain will be healed  
A bond will be made  
And all will be well with the world

Forever,  
There will be Understanding  
There will be Forgiveness  
There will be Trust  
There will be Unity  
There will be Peace  
And there will never be anything  
like Indian Residential Schools again.

# Feather Nault

GRADE 12  
CENTRE HIGH CAMPUS  
EDMONTON  
ALBERTA



# Marley HeavyShield

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POST-SECONDARY  
STUDENT

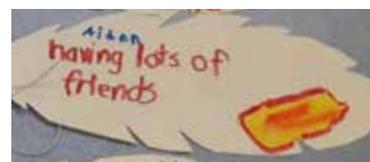
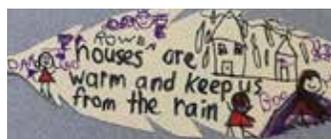
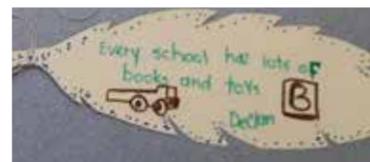
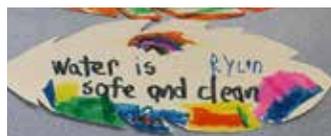
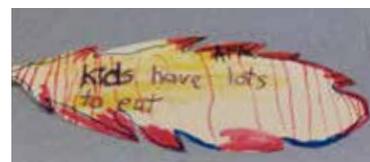
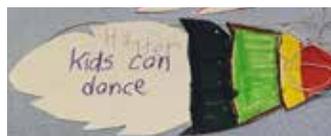
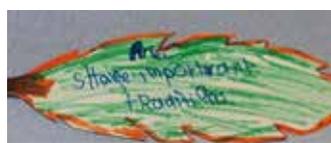
UNIVERSITY  
OF LETHBRIDGE

LETHBRIDGE  
ALBERTA



# Colleen Devlin's class

KINDERGARTEN  
/GRADE 1  
ÉCOLE PUNTLIDGE  
PARK ELEMENTARY  
COMOX  
BRITISH COLUMBIA



Bobby Adams  
Victor Champagne  
Ben Charlie  
Sunny Currie Mccarty  
Aristotle Fisher

Drake Lecasse  
Levi Lesopoy  
Rowen Logan Walkus  
Galia McKenty  
Declan Moosmann-Robb

Olivia Neufeld  
Ave-Lynn Noble  
Makayla Paterson  
Danny Regeher  
Malakai Sampson-Dean

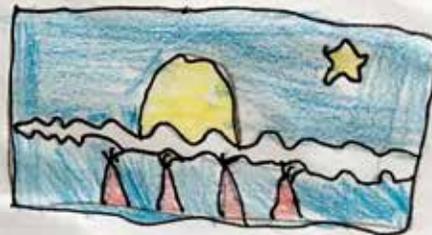
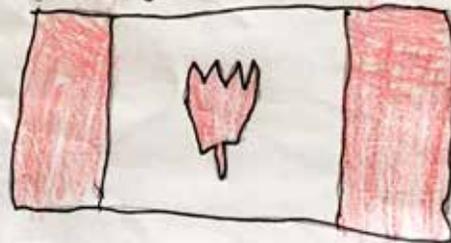
Jean-Remy Simoens  
Rylan Sordahl  
Lucas Syvret  
Ariel Wright  
Evan Youngman

# Austin Carich

GRADE 5  
SILVER CREEK  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
HOPE  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Canada is beautiful. But there is darkness in it. We still remember what went on way back then and I'm proud of Canada for owning up to what we did to first Nations. Myself, when I here about what people did to them in the schools. I feel sad inside me and I'm glad that we are finally are doing something its time we reach out to first Nations and help them.

We will live strong and Free. With No hate tent. We will heal their scars.



# Leila Cavers

GRADE 6  
HOLLYBURN  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
NORTH VANCOUVER  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

I imagine a Canada where everyone is treat with respect.  
Where everyone's needs are met.  
Indigenous communities working alongside others.  
Proud of our cultures.  
We are already moving forward to this Canada.  
We are learning, about our past together.  
We are learning the truth,  
Not to be ashamed of Canada,  
As Canada's past tried to shame the First People of their heritage.  
We are learning the truth,  
And we say sorry, for what our past has done.  
And we understand, the pain we inflicted,  
the consequences of residential school.  
And then can we move forward, with open hearts and arms.  
To the Canada that we all imagine.

# Andra Pope

GRADE 7  
HOLLYBURN  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
NORTH VANCOUVER  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

imagine  
a Canada

2017

## *Imagine a Canada*

Imagine a Canada  
A Canada with greed  
Selfish  
Needy  
Sad and bleak  
The freedom we have is no more  
Never invented  
Never explored

They never thought once  
about how they feel  
Like uninvited guests to their home  
They took what they needed,  
they never gave back  
The kindest never fought back  
The feared ruled on  
Until...  
They crossed a line  
They took the children  
And made them their own

Never really treating them right  
Never giving them education  
They couldn't stand it anymore so  
They waited  
And waited  
And waited  
And waited  
Until...  
Slowly and surely the light flowed in  
Erasing the past  
Erasing the fear  
Erasing the pain  
Erasing the greed  
The past was now gone for sure  
Now Imagine a Canada  
With trust  
With love  
Once a caterpillar  
Now a beautiful butterfly  
out of its cocoon  
Their smiles like sunshine  
Their laughter like the endless sky

# Ali Aryaeinia, Aryan Mosavianpour & Sam Talaiifar

GRADES 6 & 7  
HOLLYBURN  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
NORTH VANCOUVER  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

## *Imagine a Canada*

Just close your eyes and imagine  
if racism wasn't there,  
what would happen?

There would be peace,  
happiness, everybody laughin'.  
Trackin',  
all the great moments we havin'.

Then the europeans came,  
they thought they rule the land,  
they said they had everything,  
even the upper hand.  
Weapons, horses,  
an army in their command.

The first nations,  
it's not like they were glad,  
but they just had to work  
with everything they had.  
Well guess what, there was a war.  
Don't ask me, do you  
know what for?  
For money, for power,  
for land or more?

Sure!

it's the future I'm talking about,  
can't you see?

Imagine a canada,  
where everybody's free!  
What have we done?  
Think about it now,  
Can we fix it,  
And how?  
(how, how, how, how?)  
X2

Now let's talk about the future,  
What can you see?  
I have a vision,  
Of a nice community.  
Freedom, working,  
everyone in peace,  
Let's get started in  
one, two, three.

Not being evil, but being nice.  
Respecting opinions,  
Not just living in ice.  
Taking chances,  
And rolling dice.

it's the future I'm talking about,  
can't you see?  
Imagine a canada,

where everybody's free!  
What have we done?  
Think about it now,  
Can we fix it,  
And how?  
(how, how, how, how  
X2

We need to put this in action  
No more distraction  
I see no change.  
Start to arrange!

Do your part!  
It's time to start.

Include each other.  
Don't judge one another.

Who did we write this for?

(drum roll)

OH CANADA!!!!

piano roll

# Claire Reece

GRADE 4  
PINERIDGE  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
PRINCE RUPERT  
BRITISH COLUMBIA



# Tanaiya Pearson

GRADE 8  
PRINCE RUPERT  
MIDDLE SCHOOL  
PRINCE RUPERT  
BRITISH COLUMBIA



## *United as One*

The outside ring displays a variety of crests. The inner circle displaying the maple leaf lists a variety of nationalities with Canada. A circle is continuous and everyone is equal. Therefore, we are all united as one.



# Tobeiha-Charlie Billing

GRADE 11  
LORD TWEEDSMUIR  
SECONDARY SCHOOL  
SURREY  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

## *Pretty Covers Beautiful*

The flowers, representing our 13 provinces and territories, cover up the dreamcatcher, while simultaneously destroying it. The stone, untouched, is a warning from the spirits.



# Trafford Anderson

GRADE 12  
SELKIRK  
SECONDARY SCHOOL  
KIMBERLEY  
BRITISH COLUMBIA



# Lily Moose

GRADE 2  
WAPANOHK  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL  
O-PIPON-NA-PIWIN CREE NATION  
MANITOBA



# Sarah Fontaine-Sinclair

GRADE 5  
ÉCOLE LAURA  
SECORD SCHOOL  
WINNIPEG  
MANITOBA

Boozhoo Nimiigen Nebense N'Dizhnikaz Namagoshin N'Dodem.

I just said hello! My Anishinaabe (Ojibway) name is “the Light that Dances on the Water.” My clan is Rainbow Trout. My English name is Sarah and my Nookum (which means grandma in Ojibway) went to residential school.

Deux génération de ma famille sont allées aux écoles résidentielles. La côté de ma mère est Cree et la côté de mon père est Ojibway. Residential schools made the children feel lonely. Let me explain. While at residential school, children were separated from their mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters. They were taught to be ashamed of their language and to never use it. Do this led to the next generation to forget the culture and the language.

You see, in our language we are never alone. The language connects us to the sun and moon and reminds us that they are our grandmother, grandfather and the earth is our mother. All of our language is like this. So when they took the language away from us, the children lost their last connection to their family: Creation. The children felt very, very alone. Can you imagine how it would feel to have no family anymore?

Avant j'ai dit que ma Nookum est allée à une école résidentielle. Beaucoup de personnes pense que les adultes qui sont allés aux écoles résidentielles ne sont pas empathiques, ne sont pas gentils, n'ont pas de sentiments ou ils sont effrayants. Mais ma Nookum et ses amis sont comme d'autres adultes. Ils sont vraiment gentils, vraiment empathiques et surtout pas effrayants.

Some people would say why don't you just forget about residential schools? My response would be: “We can't just forget about residential schools because they made a BIG impact on our culture. They made my family feel alone as we still feel this when we are re-learning our language today. We cannot forget feeling alone. No one can.

Now, I want to imagine a way we can become a family. All of us.

I imagine a Canada with Aboriginal language immersion schools. So that everyone can learn to speak Aboriginal languages. J'imagine un Canada où tout le monde est égal. I imagine a Canada where we don't have to forget but become the family we should have always been.

This is a Canada I can believe in. Meegwetch!!!

# Oscar Lavitt

GRADE 6  
ST. JOHN'S  
BREBEUF SCHOOL  
WINNIPEG  
MANITOBA

## *My Dream for Canada*

In Canada, we pride ourselves on being diplomats of peace,  
But some things like poverty and fighting never seem to cease.  
We must stop the hunger and end our bitter wars.  
Anybody should be welcome here no matter who they are.

As we grow in Canada in wisdom and in strength  
Our children will find ways to help take our dreams to new lengths.  
No sickness and pollution will plague us anymore  
And we'll live together peacefully from shore to happy shore.

Canada...

Diversity in Canada is what we need for joy,  
An open hand of kindness for every girl and boy.  
Everybody in Canada working to end all strife,  
Gives all her people a chance for a happy life.

# Carter Shippam

GRADE 6  
ST. JOHN'S  
BREBEUF SCHOOL  
WINNIPEG  
MANITOBA

## *The Country We Can Strive for Together*

After an autumn of learning about truth and reconciliation in our grade 6 classroom, I overheard one of my fellow students ask, "Why are we apologizing for something we didn't do?" This struck me because I felt in my heart that I knew why, but I couldn't put it into words. I knew, if I dug a little deeper, I could answer that question for me and for anybody who would need it cleared up for them, too.

Canadians are known for saying sorry all the time. But still, so many people resist saying it to Indigenous peoples because they believe it's not their job to say sorry for something they didn't do. The thing is, apologizing is not the only thing we have to do. Everybody needs to realize what has happened and not just leave it alone and think that it will just go away. This is what most people do and that's the problem.

Intergenerational trauma is trauma passed down through families from generation to generation. Indigenous peoples were taken away from their families and sent to residential schools, which made it harder for parents to teach their kids to parent, speak their language, hunt, bead, and celebrate Indigenous culture. In residential schools, some of the nuns and priests treated the Indigenous children very poorly by abusing them in many different ways. When the children grew up and had their own children, it became common that they would treat their own children the same way that the nuns and priests treated them. As one Indigenous leader said, "What we don't transform, we transmit." His name is Kevin Lamoureux. Intergenerational trauma is still alive in our country today. It will take seven generations to heal what happened over the last seven generations.

Lots of people want to get involved in Truth and Reconciliation in Canada but they don't know what to do to

help. To know about Canada, you might need to re-learn its history. Part of being a responsible citizen is to learn about all sides of our history and different points of view. Once a citizen has a good understanding of the history, that person should teach other people about what has happened in the past. Even if it is someone you just met and you hear them say something that you know isn't true, you can tell them the truth about what actually happened.

My teacher and my mom have done a great job of helping me become a better citizen by learning the truth. If it weren't for them, I wouldn't even know what a residential school was. I often hear people saying stuff that isn't true about Indigenous peoples. I feel like I'm always correcting people in my family or my friends at school. I feel like I need to let them know the truth so they can tell other people the truth.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has detailed a report stating the truth about what has happened with Indigenous peoples and has given us 94 Calls to Action which can be as simple as giving acknowledgement to Indigenous language rights. Maybe schools could play an honour song before "Oh Canada" every day.

When I imagine a Canada, I imagine a place where nobody has to ask why they should say sorry. I imagine a Canada where everybody is part of the change and is trying to do something that will help Canada grow and heal as a country. I imagine a Canada where intergenerational trauma has lost its effect on people – not by itself, but from everybody working together as one. I imagine a Canada where every citizen knows the history of Indigenous peoples and they no longer question the truth. I imagine a Canada where we celebrate our 150th birthday with just as much excitement as we celebrate Turtle Island and its people. Let's strive for that together!

# Arianna Vokey

GRADE 7  
JUNIPER  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
THOMPSON  
MANITOBA

We may *forgive*,  
but we may never *forget*.



# Hailey Fudge

GRADE 8  
JUNIPER  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
THOMPSON  
MANITOBA



# Brooke Graham

GRADE 8  
JUNIPER  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
THOMPSON  
MANITOBA

<b>R</b>	Resilience	Canadians need to learn resilience before we can reconcile with each other.
<b>E</b>	Empathy	Empathy is a main step towards reconciliation.
<b>C</b>	Canadian History	Reconciliation is fixing some of Canada's bad history.
<b>O</b>	Orange	The colour of supporting Residential school survivors and students.
<b>N</b>	Nations	Nations united together.
<b>C</b>	Connected	We are all connected even with our differences.
<b>I</b>	Involved	We all need to get involved in helping Canadians reconcile.
<b>L</b>	Lies	Lies were told and know we need to fix it with reconciliation.
<b>I</b>	Indigenous People	Reconciling with Indigenous people is Canada's main priority.
<b>A</b>	Action	We need to take action.
<b>T</b>	Teach	We need to teach each other more about reconciliation before it can truly happen.
<b>I</b>	Imagine	Imagine if we would all accept each other's differences.
<b>O</b>	One	We all beat as one.
<b>N</b>	Never forget	Forgetting is not part of the process of reconciliation.

# Zayna Lavallee & Gracelyn Spence

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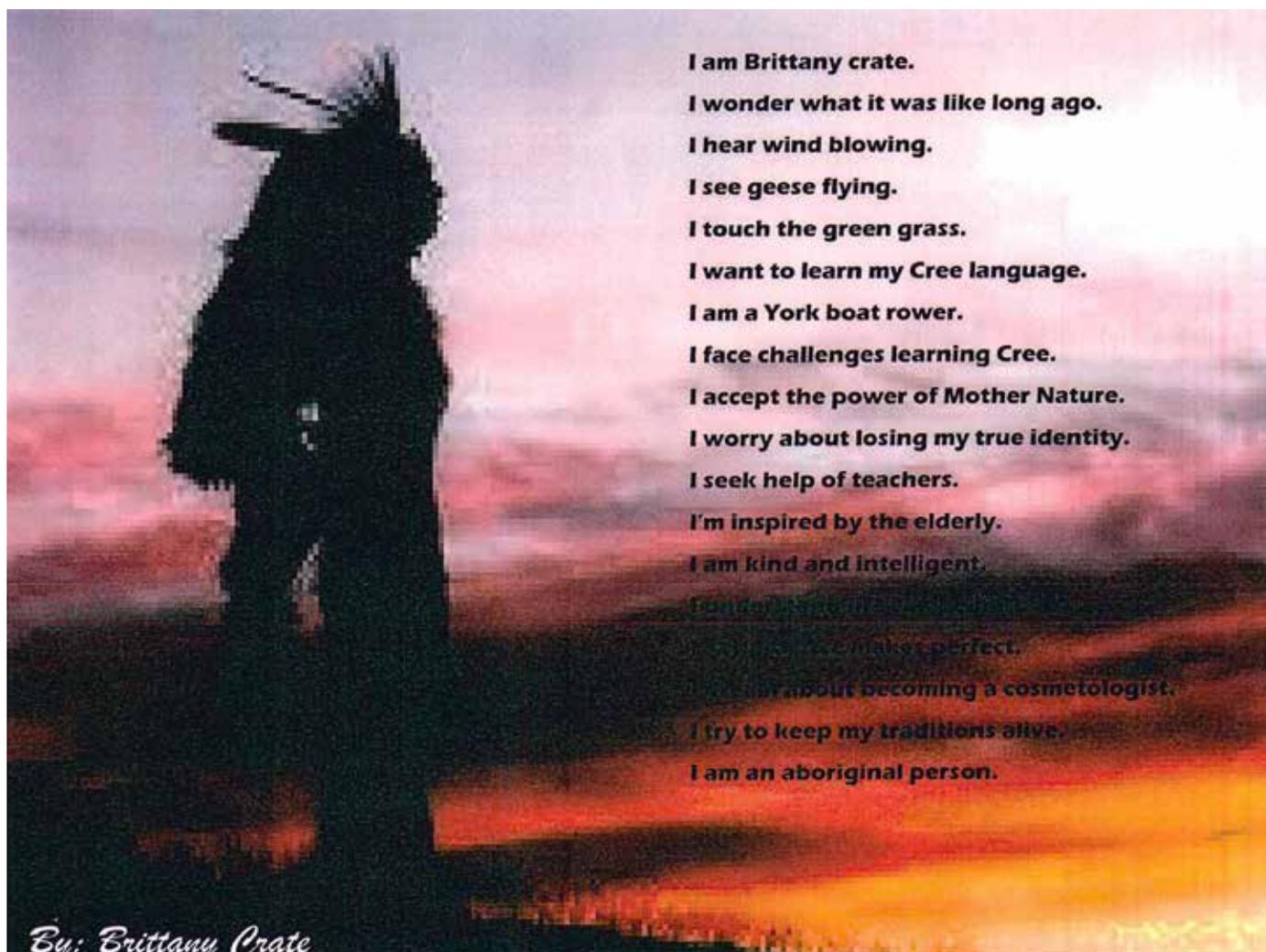
GRADE 8  
WAPANOHK  
COMMUNITY  
SCHOOL  
THOMPSON / SPLIT LAKE  
MANITOBA

## *Words without Actions*

Their words were not without actions.  
They took away our language, our names, our identity.  
They separated us from our families.  
They did not value our health, our lives, nor did they value our spirit.  
Now you must not let your words be without actions.  
Don't offer empty apologies.  
No more inequality, injustice or inhumanity.  
Give us back equality, justice and humanity.  
Let us step forward. Let us step together.

# Brittany Crate

GRADE 12  
HELEN BETTY  
OSBORNE ININIW  
EDUCATION RESOURCE  
CENTRE  
NORWAY HOUSE  
MANITOBA



**I am Brittany crate.**  
**I wonder what it was like long ago.**  
**I hear wind blowing.**  
**I see geese flying.**  
**I touch the green grass.**  
**I want to learn my Cree language.**  
**I am a York boat rower.**  
**I face challenges learning Cree.**  
**I accept the power of Mother Nature.**  
**I worry about losing my true identity.**  
**I seek help of teachers.**  
**I'm inspired by the elderly.**  
**I am kind and intelligent.**  
**I am a person who makes perfect.**  
**I worry about becoming a cosmetologist.**  
**I try to keep my traditions alive.**  
**I am an aboriginal person.**

*By: Brittany Crate*

# Helena Francis

PRESIDENT  
OF HELPING HANDS  
ENTREPRENEURIAL GROUP  
GRADE 8  
GEORGE STREET  
MIDDLE SCHOOL  
FREDERICTON  
NEW BRUNSWICK

Personally, Canada to me is a safe home. But it wasn't always that way. My people were separated from their homes, from their safe place and placed in residential schools. They were taught a completely different life style. They weren't allowed to communicate in their first language, which hurt. A lot. I'm talking about the past when I'm really supposed to be talking about the future. But how could you not talk about such a dark history that has left such scars on your people? The government really messed up, and sure, everyone makes mistakes, but this was a really big scar in Canada's history. And the wounds caused by these schools will not heal easily. Over 150,000 Aboriginal, Inuit and Metis children were removed from their communities and lost their identity and at least 6000 students died in these schools. They were abused, forced to believe that their culture was wrong. When they returned home, if they returned home, they felt they didn't belong there. They didn't have the skills to help their parents and had become ashamed of their Native heritage. But in 2005, the survivors were eligible for \$10,000 for the first year they attended the schools, plus another \$3000 for each subsequent year. As if money could erase what happened to them. I was always taught that money doesn't buy happiness, but what is the case here?

Fast forward to the modern day. I'm a thirteen year-old Native girl who lives on a reservation. I do activities in and out of school. I speak fluent French but only know some words in Wolosoquey (Maliseet). I always wanted to speak both but I was forced to pick one or the other. Why, you ask? You'll have to ask someone else because I'm confused at this point. If I can speak French, I can get a good job, but if I speak Wolosoquey I could communicate using my culture. This isn't a choice students should have to make. So, I took matters into my own hands.

A group of kids and myself made a Wolosoquey (Maliseet) teachings app called "Helping Hands". We made the app because we thought that our Wolosoquey language was

[WWW.PMPORTAL.ORG](http://WWW.PMPORTAL.ORG)

dying and what better way could we revive it than an app? Since almost everyone we knew has technology, we thought it was a perfect idea! The app has two hands and on each of the ten fingers there is a category: animals, family, weather, numbers, colors, food, body, medicine, days of the week and phrases. Each category has a list of words related to the topic. The words are written in both English and Wolosoquey. You can listen to the word spoken in Wolosoquey and then repeat it yourself.

In ten years, I would like to see the damaging stereotypes surrounding First Nations to be eliminated. Just because I'm Native doesn't mean I do drugs. Just because I'm Native doesn't mean I'm related to everyone and just because I'm Native doesn't mean I'm in love with alcohol. But, if we educate people, these rumors will slowly fade out.

In ten years, I'd like to see Canada reignite that candle of my culture that was snuffed out by residential schools. I want Canada to teach other cultures our teachings, our language, our history and our stories. In ten years, I would love to be able to speak Wolosoquey (Maliseet) to people who aren't even Native. I would like to be able to say that I helped our people speak our language because of the language app I helped create.

In ten years, I want Canada to provide more education on our culture, teach my language, provide cultural celebrations outside of powwows. This is important to me because I see many people knowing so little about the Native culture. Education is key to dispelling the stereotypes and rebuilding the culture that was lost through residential schools. I hope that in ten years, Canada will be recognizing the importance of my culture. I believe that through the rebirth of our language, our ceremonies, our traditions we can work together to heal the wounds of our past.

# Devon Middle School

SCHOOL  
RECOGNITION  
FREDERICTON  
NEW BRUNSWICK

## *Aboriginal Day-Honoring our Sacred Water*

When planning for our Aboriginal Day and our commitment to reconciliation we created a celebration that would honor culture, language and sharing of traditional stories. Our school focused on the following calls to action:

### *Language and Culture:*

*-14 iv The preservation, revitalization, and strengthening of Aboriginal Languages and cultures are best managed by aboriginal people and communities*

### *Education for Reconciliation:*

*-62iii Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods.*

*-63iii Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.*

The opening ceremony began with a traditional song, the Honor Song. A member from the St. Mary's community volunteered to sing this song Maliseet and English.

In collaboration with Wolikehkitimok (The St. Mary's learning center), students and teachers volunteered to prepare our fiddle head samples for all students to enjoy. During our nutrition break we worked together to set up tables in each grade level wing. Together we served a local traditional food to staff and students of Devon Middle School.

We had an invited guest from the St. Mary's community to share stories about the importance and sacredness of water.

All students and teachers were invited into the gym to listen to stories and take on a new point of view on how water connects us all together.

We must always be thoughtful of how it is our responsibility to carry the water. As a symbol of healing and our responsibility as water carriers, students crafted a water bucket necklace with each bead representing the 7 teachings. This necklace was to be worn as a symbol during our walk along the Wolastoq river to the Old Reserve. Drummers and dancers met us there to finalize our day.

Each class created a medicine bag for our jingle dress dancer to carry with her on the walk and as she danced. The Jingle dress dancers represent healing and prayer therefore we connected it with the water ceremony. The dancers proceeded to carry medicine bags down to the river and release the medicine into the water.

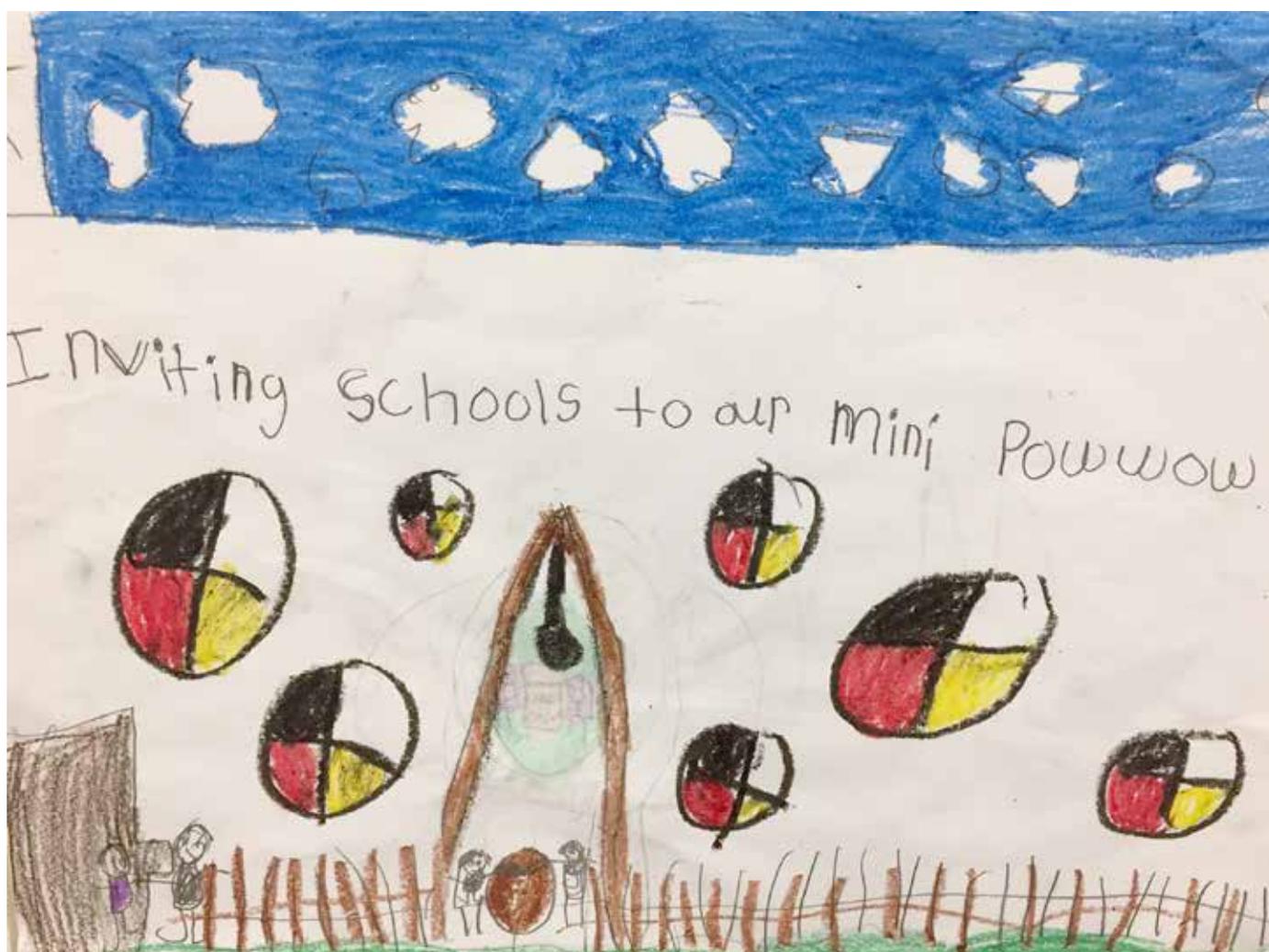
Our fancy shawl dancers, who represent butterflies, are always discovering new things and celebrate joy. Our dancers that day were excited and proud!!

We learned that sharing our culture and connecting to the land was an experience that everyone enjoyed. This inspired us to start planning for our next celebration.

Some ideas we are planning to include are being outside and connecting to an earth element, inviting more guests from the community, introducing another traditional food for all to sample, and continuing to visit the old reserve with drummers and dancers. We believe in sharing our language and culture with all. This will help us to develop a better understanding of mutual respect.

# Mya Jeddore

GRADE 1  
SE'T ANNEWAY  
KEGNAMOGWOM SCHOOL  
CONNE RIVER  
NEWFOUNDLAND  
AND LABRADOR



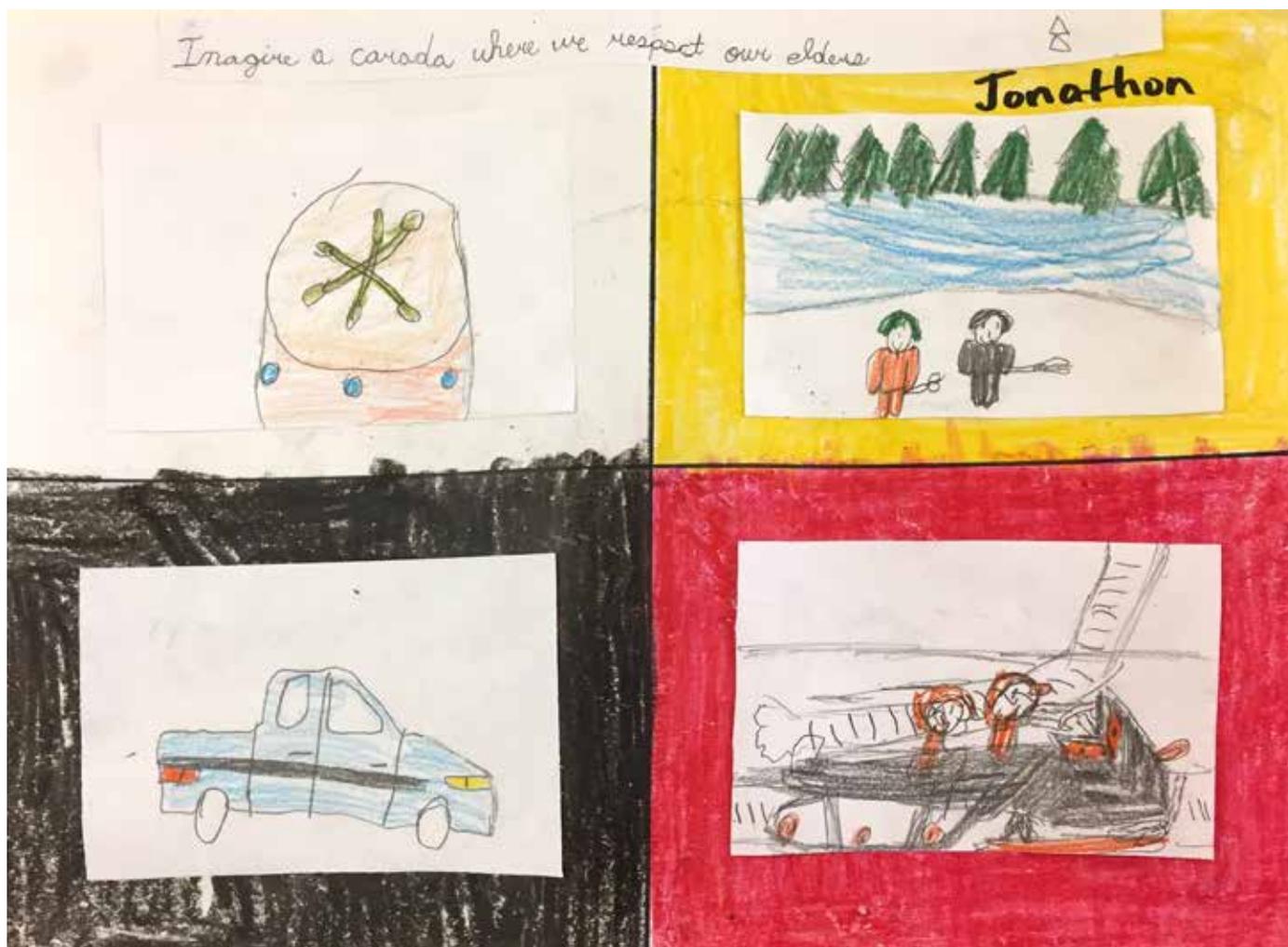
# Addison John

GRADE 2  
SE'T ANNEWAY  
KEGNAMOGWOM SCHOOL  
CONNE RIVER  
NEWFOUNDLAND  
AND LABRADOR



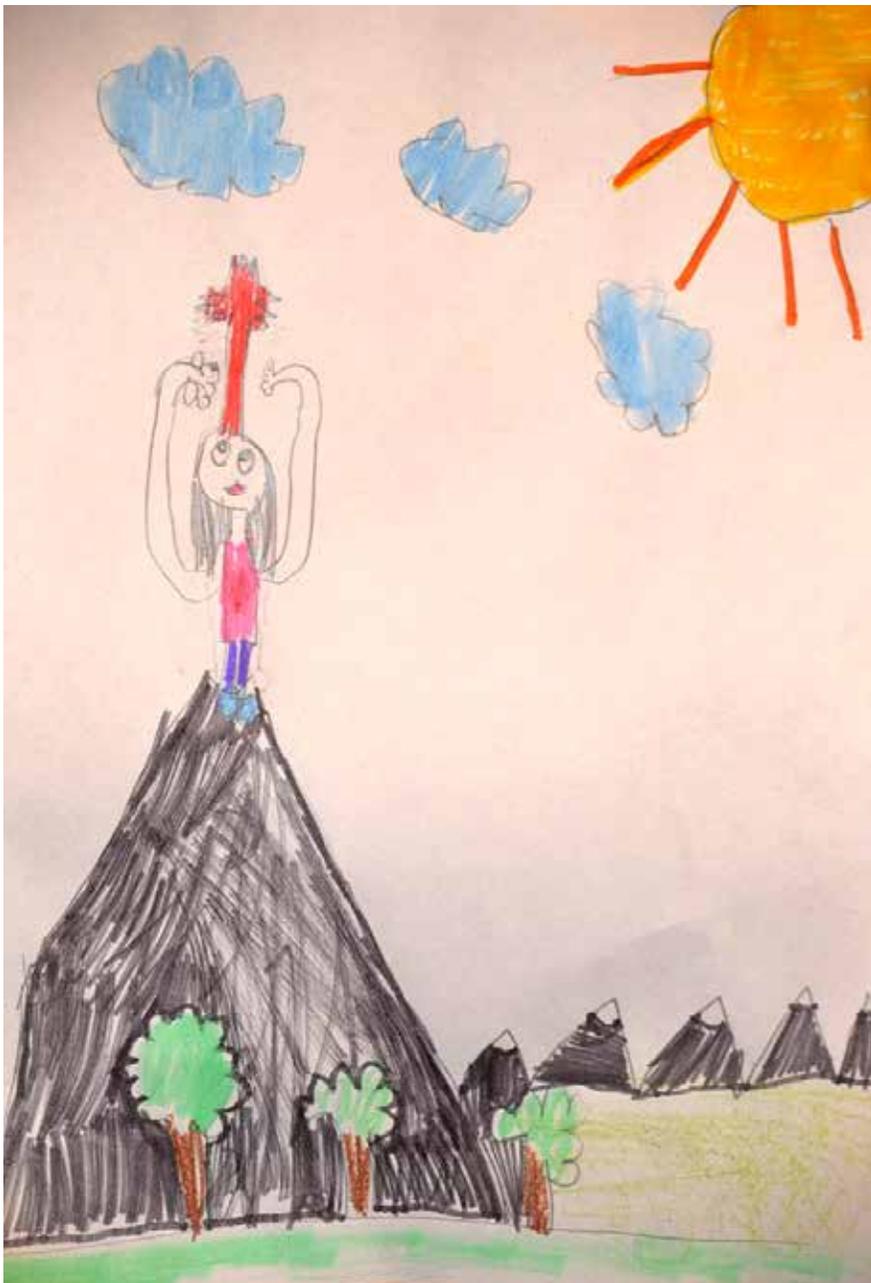
# Jonathan Drew

GRADE 3  
SE'T ANNEWAY  
KEGNAMOGWOM SCHOOL  
CONNE RIVER  
NEWFOUNDLAND  
AND LABRADOR



# Lauren Morrissey

GRADE 3  
SAINT PETER'S  
PRIMARY SCHOOL  
CONNE RIVER  
NEWFOUNDLAND  
AND LABRADOR



# Kyler Drake

GRADE 4  
SE'T ANNEWAY  
KEGNAMOGWOM SCHOOL  
CONNE RIVER  
NEWFOUNDLAND  
AND LABRADOR



# Khea John

GRADE 4  
SE'T ANNEWAY  
KEGNAMOGWOM SCHOOL  
CONNE RIVER  
NEWFOUNDLAND  
AND LABRADOR



# Lauren Rowe

GRADE 4  
SE'T ANNEWAY  
KEGNAMOGWOM SCHOOL  
CONNE RIVER  
NEWFOUNDLAND  
AND LABRADOR

Kuway! Pushu! Hello.

Welcome to the Newfoundland ancestral homelands of the Mi'kmaq and Beothuk, and Labrador, the Inuit of Nunatsiavut and NunatuKavut, and the Innu of Nitassinan.

Close your eyes and listen. You wake up tomorrow morning and “no Children”! No kids playing street hockey outside your door, empty hockey rinks, gymnasiums, playgrounds and backyards. No child’s giggles or laughter; do you hear it? Do you hear the silence? Imagine your community without children.

Someone has decided that your children belong in schools far from home. They will go to a school where they will be beaten if they speak English. They will not be celebrating their birthdays, Christmas, or important cultural traditions. They have decided to seize your children and make them “better people”.

This seems unimaginable but this is what happened to Indigenous children in our great country. They were uprooted from their homes and families and taken to residential schools. The main purpose of these residential schools was to “civilize” Canada's indigenous population (who were viewed as “savage”). Duncan Campbell Scott, with the Department of Indian Affairs between 1913 and 1931 even said,

*“...the Government will in time reach the end of its responsibility as the Indians progress into civilization and finally disappear, not by extinction but by gradual assimilation with their fellow-citizens.”*

He wanted “to get rid of the “Indian problem” until there wasn’t a single Indian in Canada that had not been absorbed” into the rest of the population. The Government with the church’s help, wanted to “beat the Indian out of the child”.

There were a total of 139 schools with the last school closing in 1996. Over 150,000 First Nations, Métis and Inuit students attended these schools. Over 6,000 students are known to have died in these schools. Student deaths were so common; Government made sure that the schools actually had grave yards included during construction. The chance of a student dying was 1 in 25. Do you know that is more than a Canadian soldier dying during World War II?

Today there is a Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report that talks about the heart breaking stories of 7,000 survivors.

Edmund talks about the day his father dropped him off at the age of 7 in 1956. He remembers looking at his father walking away with his head down looking really sad. The teacher, a nun, grabbed his shoulder, gave him a vicious slap across the face from behind. She told him that daddy's not here to protect you no more! He was only seven.

Toby Obed, from Labrador, is another survivor. In 1976, at the age of four, Toby was placed at a residential school. He shares his story with us.

“I was beaten and abused, and bullied. When the school closed in 1979, I graduated to the foster care system, staying in over 20 foster homes. I returned to my home alone, confused, and angry. I became a heavy drinker as a way to deal with the pain of my past. One cold January night, I was drinking liquor straight from the bottle. The last thing I remember is waking up several months later with no feet and one hand due to frostbite. Toby’s school experience has made his life unbearable.

We must do more to help people like Toby and Edmund and get rid of negative stereotypes. According to a national survey, 67% of non-Aboriginal Canadians believe that Indigenous people receive special treatment, and take handouts rather than contribute to society. This is false.

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Canadians must find practical ways to make a difference in the lives of indigenous people.

Canada can

- Respect and value aboriginal culture
- Provide funding where there is often extreme poverty.
- Protect their land to preserve the traditional ways: hunting, fishing, and the connection to the land.
- We must strive for respectful partnerships as we search for collective healing and true reconciliation and honour this beautiful land together. The words “Indian” and “savage” are not our words but the words of a very tragic past.

Justice Murray Sinclair, who headed the Truth and Reconciliation report, wants Canada to remember the parents who had their children ripped out of their arms, taken to an unknown place, never to be seen again, buried in an unmarked grave long ago forgotten and overgrown.” Do not forget and let us not repeat this tragedy. Let us do more than imagine a better Canada, let us make a better Canada.

Thank you ! Nakummek (Na/ku/mik)

# Zoe Rowe

GRADE 4  
SE'T ANNEWAY  
KEGNAMOGWOM SCHOOL  
CONNE RIVER  
NEWFOUNDLAND  
AND LABRADOR

But, I really don't want to go, Mommy! Daddy, please don't let them take me. Why do I have to leave you and go to school there? How can we get in trouble for wanting to stay together? Summer is too far away. We won't be together for our birthdays, Christmas and all those celebrations. No dinners together, no board game family nights. No visits to see Nanny. No volleyball, soccer or basketball teams. What about my choir? I am afraid. I can't go. I will be a good girl. I promise! Pleaseeeeeeeeeee! I feel myself dragged off to new surroundings surrounded by children. They are crying. Who are they and where did they all come from? It's like jail here. They have taken my own clothes and cut off my hair. My beautiful long hair. I am not allowed to speak English, my language. Who are these strangers and what have I done wrong? Daddy, please come get me. I have no voice. No one is hearing me. I feel frozen. I am engulfed in fear. I plead for mommy and daddy..... then I hear their voices calling for me....

- *"Zoë! It's time for school. You are going to be late. Let's get moving. Don't forget that you have volleyball today!"*

Daddy is tugging on my leg trying to drag me from the arms of slumber. I wake up, shaking; feeling alone! I look around. Daddy is there. My baby sister is already up and getting ready. I feel relieved now at the outdated posters on my wall. Snoopy, my dog is sleeping on my bed. The comforting aroma of coffee lingers from the kitchen. I am home and I am safe. It was a dream,... no a nightmare!

And so it was also a nightmare for the many indigenous children uprooted and stolen from their families not so very long ago. -separated from their language, spiritual traditions, their culture and history. Taken unwillingly from their homes, their unheard voices of yesterday echo today. "Itsivungal!" "Angiggagumavunga!" "Jipasi!" "Ketu elmiey!"

How do we reconcile the pain we have inflicted?

To my indigenous friends, can we together imagine a Canada void of a gap between you and me? I am a non-indigenous fifteen-year-old who can barely understand your pain, anguish and isolation but I want to. How can we move forward on a path to gain a deeper understanding of indigenous people, cultures and heritage if I do not have a glimpse of your past? I want to meet you and get to know you. I am listening now.

How is it that I have heard the expressions like "low man on the totem pole", too many chiefs and not enough Indians", on Indian time, or let's have a POW WOW, AND I made no connection to their origin. I promise you that they were meant no harm. Admittedly, I know little about you. I believe our past stole from you and me both. Your trust in me has been shaken. I imagine a Canada where we can learn about, understand, and respect each other's culture, beliefs, and heritage. We will trust each other. Please have patience with me as I may need help. I need help from my family, my teachers, our communities, our leaders, and our Canada. I need your help.

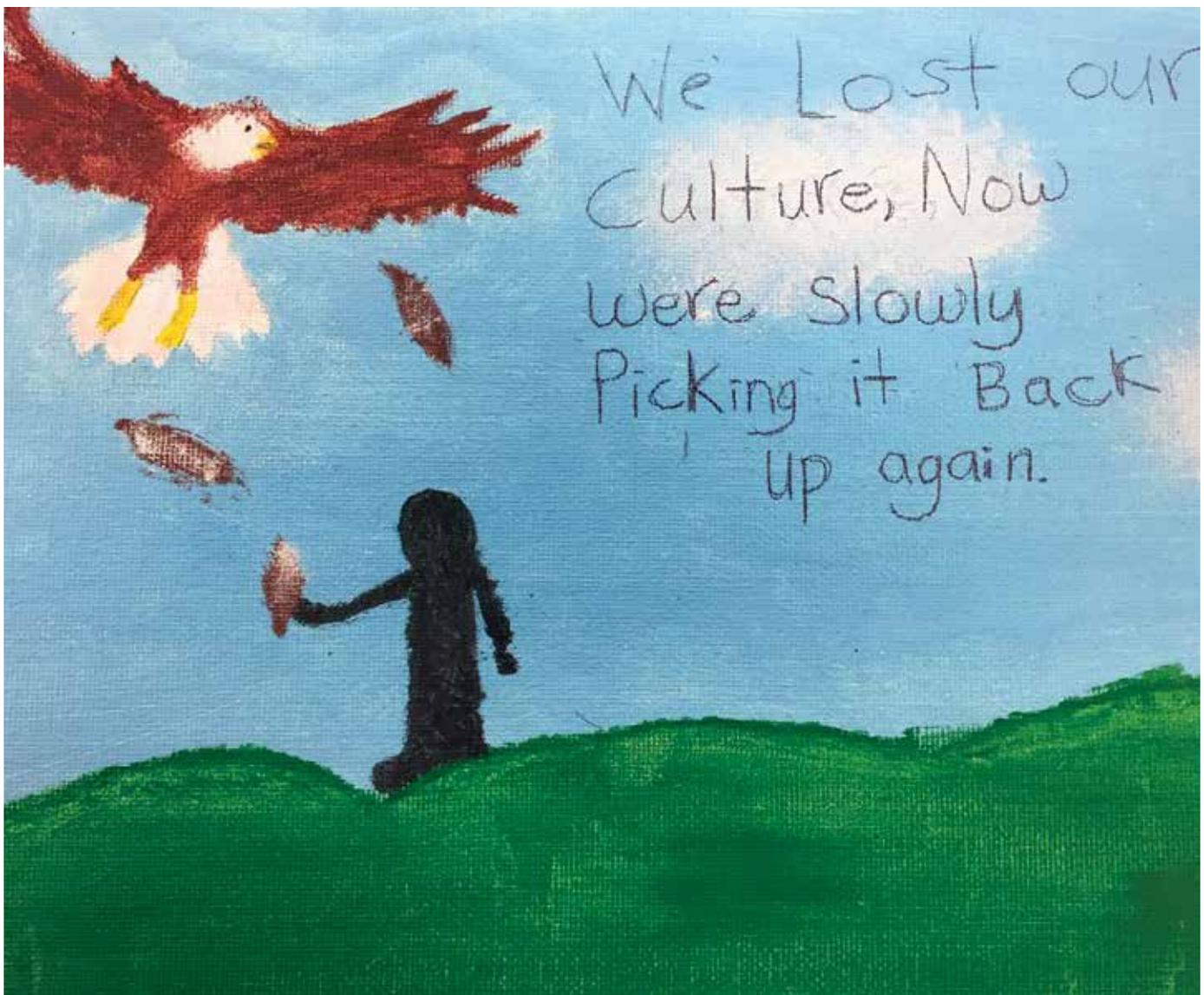
My Indigenous friends, let us embrace the words of Justice Murray Sinclair, who champions an old Cree word, Wetaskiwin, "having good relations." Let us hold hands and do just that.

The late Jack Leyton, foresaw a shared future based on equality, respect and truth. How simple this seems. I believe that together we can heed the dying words of Jack Leyton, "My friends, love is better than anger. Hope is better than fear. Optimism is better than despair. So let us be loving, hopeful and optimistic. And we'll change the world."

Imagine a Canada where we shout together, Kesalul!

# Meghan McDonald

GRADE 7  
SE'T ANNEWAY  
KEGNAMOGWOM SCHOOL  
CONNE RIVER  
NEWFOUNDLAND  
AND LABRADOR



# Carmen Benoit

GRADE 9  
SE'T ANNEWAY  
KEGNAMOGWOM SCHOOL  
CONNE RIVER  
NEWFOUNDLAND  
AND LABRADOR



# Serena Sevigny & Didier Ostiguy- Corminbeuf

ÉCOLE ALLAIN ST-CYR  
YELLOWKNIFE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES



# Diana Rockwell

GRADE 10  
SIR JOHN FRANKLIN  
HIGH SCHOOL  
YELLOWKNIFE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

## *Home*

On my own at last  
Nowhere to turn don't look back  
The one thing on my mind  
No, look ahead, not behind

They can push, they can pull  
But I won't fall  
I won't budge, I won't break until  
I finally make it home  
Home

Sunlight glints off the trees  
So removed from my realities  
Pray, obey, don't make a sound  
Lose my voice, watch my  
friends become a mound

They can push, they can pull  
But I won't fall  
I won't budge, I won't break until  
I finally make it home  
Home

You know what I learned those  
years in that school?  
How to fight and how to be cruel  
If I could tell you something that'd last  
I'd say child, remember your past

Because

They can push, they can pull  
But you won't fall  
You won't budge, you won't break until you  
finally make you can fight, you can win forget  
if it's called a sin you won't stop, you won't wait  
until you finally make it home home home home

Oh look, there's home.

# Allison Foran

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GRADE 6  
SPRINGVALE  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
HALIFAX  
NOVA SCOTIA

imagine  
a Canada

2017

## *Imagine a Canada*

I envision Canada as a place where everyone is welcome  
A place where everybody is allowed to be who they want to be  
Where no one judges other people for their beliefs and choices  
A place that is free to be free.

Canada should be a place of equality  
Where there's no wage gap anywhere  
A land where all rights are equal  
Where all people get treated fair.

I want a country filled of joy.  
Where smiles is all I can see.  
A place filled of happiness.  
This is what Canada should be.



# Kirsten Pameolik

GRADE 10  
JOHN ARNALUJUAK  
HIGH SCHOOL  
ARVIAT  
NUNAVUT

imagine  
a Canada

2017

An open letter to my people,

The purpose of residential schools was to assimilate young Indigenous people from their homes, family, culture and heritage. And a lot of people were emotionally, physically and sexually abused. The government wrote an apology letter saying it was not right to try to assimilate Aboriginal people. It has caused confusion, loneliness, harm and painful memories which in turn has created intergenerational trauma for many Aboriginal peoples. The government recognizes that what they invented was negative and that it should not have had a place in our country. Aboriginal culture and language have taken a damaging impact. But today we are who we are and we should learn to forgive and reconcile. If we are to survive as a race, we must have the patience and understanding of the dominant cultures. It feels like it would be a mistake to completely forget the past because the past determines the present and the present determines what will be the future. We do not need the pity, welfare, hatred or colonialism which has been heaped upon us over the years. We all need to realize that hating on the government will not put us anywhere towards happiness. If we really want to strive towards happiness and peace then we must accept and forgive what has been done to our people. The Inuit were once strong, independent and proud people and that is why we have survived. That strength, that independence and that pride must surface again. The feeling toward Europeans and now Canadians is easy to understand. It is easy to blame what people for the predicament we find ourselves in today. But hatred and anger are not the answers. We need the patience and understanding of other Canadians. If we are to expect those from them, we must offer the same in return. Let us have a new beginning and an opportunity to move forward together in partnership.

Sincerely,  
Kirsten Pameolik

# Trina Qaqqaq

POST-SECONDARY  
STUDENT  
FLEMING COLLEGE

They took me away and brought me to a foreign place, one that makes no sense to me. I miss my kin. I am not to speak my native tongue. When I need the washroom I cannot go, I'm not sure how I ask in this new language and want to avoid the consequences. I see my peers being struck. Children ran away and never came back; whether or not they made it home I will never know. They still run. We are bred to believe that native is synonyms with savage and the lesser. We must change our immoral ways in order to live a fruitful life.

My feet were meant to mould to Mother Earth with each step I took. They were never meant for the shoes I need in this man made jungle. I search and cannot find a pair that is comfortable; they make my skin bleed and my feet hurt. The only ones ever suitable are that modeled off of my ancestor's knowledge. It's as though the knowledge, love, and respect is embedded into each stitch. The respect for Mother Earth is known by her, so she is kind to my feet.

My ancestors have not been gone long and already feel forgotten. Where did Canada capitalize on the "healing" aspect between "truth" and "reconciliation"? Not enough feelings have been explored or felt to start the needed healing journey. We have lost many traditional knowledge holders before they had the opportunity to pass on valuable information. It is very easy to research the European descent that travelled north, but not a lot in regards to those of my own people, let alone my own kin. Although they stripped many things of us, they could not take away the knowledge of survival in harmony, our love for the land, and our love for one another. My ancestors are why we, the Inuit, still stand here today.

In our own lands we are homesick, because our own land isn't ours anymore, in the way that it does not mirror us anymore nor do we mirror Mother Earth. Inuit were not given the opportunity to combine both progressive

traditional and modern ways. We have, in result, lost our identity along the way. We are torn between two worlds where neither makes sense anymore.

In present day, I am no stranger to suicide. We have sat down and had conversations, it has taken people away from me, and it has held hands with those close to my heart. Suicide is my acquaintance, but it knows many around me much better. Suicide was welcomed more and more as foreign systems invaded on Inuit way of life. We, Inuit, now also know contaminated drinking water, poor education, over crowded housing, high living costs, among many other newer malicious relatives to suicide. I wish I could introduce mental health and basic human rights to those I care for and that are part of my being, my people.

We all equally share a dream; a newer, better, healthier life. But where do we start? Who do we start with? How can we possibly revitalize what was stolen and made to feel ashamed of?

Imagine a Canada:

Where Nunavut's suicide rate isn't 11 times than the national average.

Where our basic human rights and needs are met.

Where all of our people have access to clean drinking water.

Where justice is found for our murdered and missing.

Where all teachers and government workers are invested in the communities and not just a pay cheque.

That genuinely seemed concerned for our people because they are aware of our struggles.

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That provided mental health resources,  
as done in much of Canada.

That knew anything of our people, our  
land, traditions, and history.

That has Inuit history in the education textbooks.

That provided housing to those families  
of 10 struggling in a two bedroom.

With shortened education gaps so that Nunavummiut  
have as many equal opportunities as other Canadians.

Our youth have not lost the willingness to work together  
and to work hard. If we want to move forward we need  
to give our youth a sense of hope and identity. We must  
involve them in conversations at all levels. Show them  
they are not being ignored or forgotten, a feeling that has  
lingered too long. With providing basic human rights, the  
first peoples of this country, my people, can help Canada  
thrive in ways we never thought possible. Now imagine a  
Canada like that.

# Avery Robertson

GRADE 7  
SIR JOHN MOORE  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL  
CORUNNA  
ONTARIO

I imagine Canada being a country where people aren't judged by their race or colour of skin, a country where people are accepted for who they are not what others want them to be.

My Grandma went to a residential school in Brantford Ontario, she was taken there when she was about 11 years old. She has told me stories about what happened there, about how when you were bad they would whip you with a belt or make you hold your tongue out for a long period of time. Other things that happened at residential schools are at night they would get boys to fight in the basement until one of the boys were severely injured or knocked out severely yeah I see any more than two minutes what is it in conscious or unconscious and conscious they knocked out.

Sometimes the children would hide in the holes in the walls because the nuns and other adults in the building couldn't fit in there to get them or even reach them.

In the 1950's my Grandma lost her status because she married a white man. She gained it back around the year 1984, because one woman kept fight and fighting for the native women in Canada who lost their status and finally won because they realized that it was wrong to take away their status and heritage, but they still don't have their full status like a native man does, It is called Bill c-84.

Now Canada has changed, there are no more residential schools as the last one closed in 1996. Now First Nations are accepted and are allowed to know and learn their language but still most do not speak it fluently. Now instead of keeping the residential schools in secret we learn about them.

Before residential schools parents would pass down traditional beliefs, and teach their children their language. One of their beliefs is the all theirs traditions and resources are gifts from the Creator.

I hope nothing like residential schools ever happens again because I have heard of the abuse and what it has done to my Grandma, I want no one else to have to go through that. I also hope that all children have the proper education that they deserve without racism or discrimination. For the future of Canada I hope that no one ever has to go through anything like that ever again.

# Emma Wilson

GRADE 8  
STONECREST  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
WOODLAWN  
ONTARIO

## *Speak the Truth*

I pulled into the little parking lot of the old red-brick school, grabbed my things and got out of the car. I took a breath and stared at the school, “It’s okay, I’ve got this,” I whispered to myself over and over again. I stepped forward and went into the school. The school was small but cozy, with only about 200 students total. I was greeted by the principal as soon as I walked in, “Hello, I’m Ms. Smith, thank-you so much for being here today! We know that this is an emotional and difficult topic to discuss. If you need to stop, please don’t hesitate to take a break,” she said in a deep voice.

“Thank you very much, I am honoured to be here today,” I responded. “We’re going to bring the students into the library, why don’t you wait in here for a few minutes?” she said, gesturing to a room to her left, “Tea?”

“Yes please,” I replied. I sat down and pulled my special rock from my pocket and rubbed my fingers over it again and again.

The principal returned, with a cup of tea and handed it to me. “Meegwetch,” I whispered sipping the healing brew. “K a'n nigodizinon,” the principal responded in my native language. I smiled, and a lady knocked on the door, “So sorry to interrupt, but may I speak to Ms. Smith for a moment?” she whispered. “Yes, are you okay for a little bit?” Ms. Smith asked me. “Yes! Go, go!” I said. I sipped my tea and watched her disappear into the hall.

A few minutes later she returned, “Are you ready for the presentation?” she asked. “Yes,” I say, as I always do, though I never feel truly ready. I stood up and collected my things, and followed Ms. Smith.

“Good morning class,” she started, walking into the library with about 20 kids, “Today we are honoured to have our guest speaker, Ruth Arthur, who has come to talk to us about her story, please give her a warm welcome everyone,” she finished. “Mino Ishkwa Nawakwe, that means good afternoon in my language.

I am from the Algonquin tribe, and today I am here to tell you our story. There was a time when we were not treated as equals. A long time ago, when the Europeans first came, we shared our knowledge and helped them learn our ways, you might say. We would trade our furs for their tools and weapons. We helped them establish themselves on the land, we gave them blankets and food. But as the Europeans gained more knowledge of the land and resources, they no longer required us. They became more self-sufficient and their thoughts about us began to change.

They started to think of us as wild, they called us “uncivilized savages” and “Godless.” We were not what they said.

They stole our land and forced us out. There were many quarrels, and eventually battles fought. Many of my people died trying to defend their ways of life. As new colonies grew bigger they became more and more insistent that we learn their ways, and adopt their beliefs.

That is when they started building the residential schools. In 1867 the First residential school opened. Residential schools were created by the Europeans to convert us to Christianity, but that is not what went on at these schools.

Wicked things went on there, my people were systematically stripped of their traditions, their language, and their beliefs,” I paused, letting my words sink in, “They stole our children. There was nothing we could do about it. They would come to our villages, demand we give them our children and take them away to these schools of intolerance, darkness, and hatred.”

CONTINUED....

In a hushed tone, I said, "In 1947, I too, was stolen. I was but 6 years old. The day I was taken was the last day I ever saw my parents." I saw the children's faces turn to sadness. "It was also the last day I saw my brother for three years. He was taken to the boy's side of the school, and I to the girl's.

We were not allowed to speak our language, say our prayers, or practice our beliefs in any way. If we did we were severely punished. We didn't have food; We ate mush and bread - some of my best friends starved to death.

Every day was the same. You'd wake up, make your bed, while the nuns stood over you and made sure it was perfect - it had to be perfect or you'd be punished. For ten years after I left the school, I made my bed making sure it was perfect, it was etched into the fabric of my being. Then we would do our chores, wash up and go to school. After school, we would go to their church, and finally go to bed.

I escaped the school at 17 and went to a nearby village. I got married and had a child. After some time, I started to drink a lot. That was how I started to deal with what happened to me, to all of us. I started to become a wicked person. I was abusive to my children," I confessed, tears welling in my eyes, "I was wicked, a wicked mother, wife, everything. My husband committed suicide, leaving me with our six children. I don't see them much anymore. I don't blame them for staying away. I was not a good person anymore.

With time, I began to heal. There is a future, just ahead of me where I am not angry, hurt, alone, and afraid. There is a light at the end of the tunnel, I can see it, I can feel it. We will conquer the darkness in our hearts. We will stand together - as one people again," I almost shout to them, tears now trickling down my cheek, a visual reminder of my pain. It will take time, but we are on our way. You are all a part of our journey towards healing and reconciliation.

You are the future of the healing of my people. You have the power to help us realize our long-time dream of having the "white man" own their past. It is not the bruises of my past that hurt, it is the open wounds on my heart that remain long after the bruises are gone." I cannot fully heal until my truth is known.

My real name is not Ruth Arthur. That is the name they gave me. My real name is Kuwanyauma. In my language it means butterfly showing beautiful wings. I am Kuwanyauma and this is my story.

"Will you help me find my beautiful wings? I finish, and look around. A few students are tearful, some deep in thought, others look as though they have questions. "We have time for some questions if you have any."

A curly-haired girl, of about 13 or 14, puts her hand way up. "Yes?" I say, pointing to her. "What can we do, to help you in your journey towards healing?" she asks. "Let us be heard," I reply instantly, "We've spent years in silence, the truth simply needs to be spoken. Let us be who we are without judgement. We need to be heard - let us talk about ourselves freely and without restraint, ask us questions," I say, pointing to another hand in the back, "Have you shared your story elsewhere, besides schools?" a boy with brown hair asks. "Yes, I have. I wrote a book, called "The Path to Reconciliation, where I tell my story."

A little red-headed boy in the back corner, who was clearly troubled, raises his hand. The teachers around the room look at each other nervously, as though they are afraid of what he would say. I knew from experience that what he wanted to say needed to be heard. I pointed to him, "I will tell everyone I know what happened. I will help you tell your story," he said.

I smiled, "Thank-you for seeing the truth. The world has to know - what we endured, what we lost along the way, and feel our deeply personal stories. We need to let it hurt, let it bleed, let it heal, and finally, let it go!"

The class was fully involved now, they understood me. It felt good to be heard. I felt as though this was one more step for me in my quest for peace and healing. "Please friends, would you pray with me?"

*"O Great Spirit of our Ancestors,  
I raise my pipe to you.  
To your messengers the four winds,  
and to Mother Earth who provides for your children.  
Give us the wisdom to teach our children to love,  
to respect, and to be kind to each other so that  
they may grow with peace in mind.  
Let us learn to share all the good things you  
provide for us on this Earth,"*

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I look up for a brief moment and see these children, our future. I see the good in them. They will do good things in their time on the Earth. Their actions - in knowing and speaking the truth - will help our wounds heal. "Please, friends, remember, it is within you to change the world."

A great thinker, Maya Angelou, said, "There is no greater agony, than bearing an untold story inside you." Let my people speak their truth. And then my beautiful wings shall be set free. I am Kuwanyauma and this is my story."

# Hayley Wong

GRADE 8  
KENNEDY  
PUBLIC SCHOOL  
SCARBOROUGH  
ONTARIO



# Kimberly Kakekayash

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GRADE 9  
AGLACE CHAPMAN  
EDUCATION CENTRE  
KITCHENUHMAYKOOSIB  
INNINUWUG  
FIRST NATION  
ONTARIO

I am Kimberly Kakekayash your future Prime Minister of Canada. I have a dream to help make Canada a better place for everyone, including my Aboriginal Peoples. I am a fifteen year old Gemini. I play the drums, keyboard, and the guitar. I also enjoy writing short stories and poems. I am a K.I youth leader. I speak and write inspirational speeches that inspire younger kids in the community. I really want to finish High School in a few years. When I get older, I want to continue to inspire the youth and other people, showing them that they can survive anything, including depression.

There are a few things which are harming our communities. One relates to littering and the other to lack of higher educational opportunities.

I am really worried that the next generation may not see the beauty of nature with all the trash lying around. The next problem is that, my school only goes up to grade ten. We need a High School here that goes all the way to grade twelve. This would be a great change for my community. I know it is difficult going outside of the communities to complete High School because we have to leave our homes, parents, families, and friends and we often get home-sick.

In conclusion I wish that my community would consider offering grades eleven and twelve courses for the youth, including me. This would mean that, there would not be a need for us to leave our community in order to accomplish High School.

Your future Prime Minister,  
Kimberly

# Hannah Morningstar

GRADE 9  
ST. CHARLES  
COLLEGE  
ATIKAMEKSHENG  
ANISHNAWBEK  
FIRST NATION  
ONTARIO



I made this basket with two red strips as it is inspired by the two row wampum. We should be trying to live in Canada side by side, as equals with Indigenous peoples. We should be honouring each others' ways and respecting each others' differences. My basket is round and so the strips are like two big circles, they are neverending, this is the way it should be forever in our country. In this new time of reconciliation, this is my hope. My papa, Art Petahtegoose, taught me how to make a split ash basket. We started the process this summer by harvesting a black ash tree. Then we had to pound the log to loosen the strips and that took two days. After we had all our strips, we softened them in water, dyed a few that we wanted and then weaved the basket. It was a lot of fun and took a lot of patience. My great-grandmother, Julia Petahtegoose, made beautiful baskets as well. I'm happy to be learning the art of split ash basketry from my papa who was taught by my great-grandma. I'm happy to share this basket with you today and why I weaved it the way I did. Miigwetch.



# Guillaume Olivier DesRochers

GRADE 12  
BROOKLIN  
HIGH SCHOOL  
BROOKLIN  
ONTARIO

## *All for one*

Imagine  
A distant  
Time without the name  
Where pits of fire never flamed  
And there were rules  
to play the game  
But  
In full,  
There was a house  
Where different  
people ran about  
And then the white bears  
came and striked  
While changing  
everybody's lives.

Without a heart  
Or did they have?  
The future recognized  
The past  
And if they made you finish last  
Then you'll be sure  
to win the dash  
You will be looked  
right in the eyes  
Instead of one who's  
made of lies

Where all the pain  
will turn to prize  
Where truth no longer  
feels disguised

To get to Highs  
We come from lows  
We first adapt  
then change the flow  
Actions forever be despised  
It Ain't enough to  
toss some dough  
You need some integrated lives  
Like It's never been seen before  
A full society will rise  
They really coming out the floor

There's no more hiding anymore  
Society will knock the door  
We got treaties to re-explore  
No need for greedy  
screaming roars  
Let's make the dreamers  
wake from snoring  
Recognition starts restoring  
All our pasts and inner demons  
All the deepest darkest feelings  
With a step to know

the meaning  
Towards a true an utter healing  
With some actions for a reason  
sign our hearts to an allegiance.

We can all come to agreement  
That there was some  
mistreatment

But now we are to fix it  
The youth is ready to listen  
Let's change the conversation  
topic to "tell me what  
your missing"

We've got to complete  
this mission

We've birthed a new  
sense of vision

Together we will build a nation  
where we'll all stand and glisten

# Corinne Barrette

POST-SECONDARY  
STUDENT

UNIVERSITY  
OF OTTAWA

OTTAWA  
ONTARIO

## *My vision of a reconciled Canada*

A reconciled Canada demands respect for the land, relationships to the land, and respect for the Earth.

A reconciled Canada includes repatriation of land and regeneration of Indigenous governance upon these lands.

A reconciled Canada is a vision of relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples based on truth and knowledge of the Indigenous peoples of Canada.

A reconciled Canada means that the Indigenous peoples truth is known, and is no longer hidden in history books, conversations, the government, or education.

A reconciled Canada means that everyone is treated equally and the discrimination against Indigenous people is no longer present.

A reconciled Canada means that education will include Indigenous peoples' work and knowledge in science, math, languages, physical education and art.

A reconciled Canada includes the necessary treatment and support for the Indigenous people suffering from the intergenerational trauma of residential schools.

A reconciled Canada means that all Canadian citizens accept their responsibility in taking part of reconciliation right now, to build a future that honours the Indigenous peoples on the land we call Canada.

Most importantly,  
A reconciled Canada will be achieved when all 94 Calls for action have been answered.

## *My vision of the future of Canada*

This vision is not impossible; nor should it seem impossible. The future of a reconciled Canada depends on the conversations we have between friends, family, coworkers, acquaintances and with students. Reconciliation will happen when these conversations are not taboo, when we no longer fear to stand up, when we ourselves develop and teach children and youth to develop empathy.

My goal in writing this is to inspire people to have the same vision as me and to act on this vision. I have heard people say they are afraid to say the 'wrong thing'. But the 'wrong thing' is saying nothing.

To begin, I am teacher candidate at the University of Ottawa. My goal is to inspire other teachers, citizens, youth, and children, to accept the Calls for Action as a responsibility, as the calls will ensure the success of reconciliation. As future teachers, education is a responsibility we chose to accept. Most importantly, as we teach history, we teach about the present.

Therefore, honouring the Indigenous peoples whose stories have been silenced for so long, the survivors and victims of residential schools, the people who have been moved from their homes, the people who have been resilient through many years and for all Canadians; teach your students the truth. The Indigenous peoples of Canada are still here; the residential school system did not work; together let's build a future for Canada where everyone is equal.

Whenever I speak about residential schools, I always remind people not to feel guilty, we weren't there, and guilt is not the answer. The point is that we can do something now, and we should feel guilty if we do not do anything about it right now. It is one thing to

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say this, and it another to act on it. I would like to share how I am acting on this to ensure the future of Canada looks like my vision of a 'reconciled Canada'.

As a teacher candidate, I saw an opportunity to change the narrative of Canadian history in the classroom through 'Project of Heart'. This project allows educators to bring reconciliation into the classroom. I thought if I take this project and bring it to classrooms, I will be teaching students some of the history forgotten in their history books so that they too will take on the role of teachers.

My goal was also to show other teacher candidates, teachers and other Canadians, that there are ways to include the real history in the classroom, as well as in our everyday life, and if we work together we can accomplish that.

I wanted people to see what students are able to do, how our Canadian students care about reconciliation, as well as how the youth in Canada are willing to take the conversation even further, and have them take on the role of educators when it comes to the truth. The questions, the discussions, the artwork, and the passion students put through demonstrate that we are in good hands if we continue the conversation and teach students to take action.

Project of heart is an inquiry-based learning project that allows anyone who is interested in learning about the truth of Indigenous peoples of Canada. The steps are divided into different tasks, where educators can modify the content so that it is age-appropriate. Students create a commemorative piece such as decorated wooden tiles, to honour victims and survivors of residential schools. Once created, the artefacts will be displayed to inspire people to learn about the residential school system.

In addition, one of the steps is a visit from a survivor of the IRS who can speak to the students about their experience. In the news clip below, the message from the survivor was passed on to the students at Manotick Public School for Project of Heart, as well as anyone who watched the news that night. The ability for people to speak the truth and have their story heard gives us hope about the future of a reconciled Canada.

Most importantly, the last part of the project is the social action piece. This is the piece that allows reconciliation to continue to be part of the youth's life and future. This is the piece that will help the future of Canada; teaching students that learning about an event is not enough; we need to act on it. "Educating the heart as well as the mind helps young people to become critical thinkers who are also engaged, compassionate citizens." (TRC Final Report, 2015)

Going beyond the curriculum and the learning expectations, students are taught empathy, the truth, social actions, critical thinking, citizen responsibility, and building relationships, isn't that what reconciliation is all about? If educators bring this social action project to the classroom, they are giving the students the opportunity to do their part, they are giving the students the chance to learn about people in their communities, as well as giving them the opportunity to become educators, and continue to strengthen the reconciliation process in Canada.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission called on us as Canadian citizens, through the 94 Calls to Action, to do our part. This does not mean simply doing one project or one unit at school. As a future Canadian teacher, I'm calling on other teacher candidates and teachers to spend some time educating yourself about the history, and acquire knowledge and resources to honour the Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Go beyond the curriculum, because reconciliation is an ongoing process that requires much more than following learning expectations. You do not need to be an 'expert', the idea is that learning never ends, which is what I took to heart and will never let go. I was told by Sylvia Smith, founder of Project of Heart, and Lisa Howell, a veteran Western Québec teacher, both incredible teachers who have taken reconciliation into their hands, that you must teach from your heart.

Students see the wrong, and want to act on the injustice, the best thing you can do is give them the space and opportunity to understand what reconciliation means to them and how they will take this responsibility and voice their opinion. Just always remember, that no matter how old you are, you will never know enough.

I had the opportunity to travel to Nunavut last summer for a charity named Actua, where I visited multiple communities. We had the chance to integrate what the students knew, and Indigenous knowledge into the science workshops we facilitated. The importance of this when it comes to reconciliation was that Actua took an approach that teachers should take when it comes to teaching; the students were able to connect what their parents know, what their Elders know, and what they know from their traditions and culture into the 'science' curriculum.

The students are given the ability to grow within their communities, and apply the connections they have made to help their communities grow. This is exactly what reconciliation through education should be and we should be seeing this in the future to ensure the vision of a reconciled Canada is attained. I will not stand here and tell everyone teaching is easy, because it is not. I also will not tell you that teaching about residential schools is easy. But what I will tell you is: it's easy to stay quiet.

“Remember, reconciliation is yours to achieve. We owe it to each other to build a Canada based on our shared future, a future of healing and trust”

Justice Sinclair

# Sasha Ekomiak

POST-SECONDARY  
STUDENT  
NIPISSING UNIVERSITY  
CHISASIBI  
QUEBEC

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a Canada

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It was my first day at my job. I was quickly getting the hang of things and I instantly learned how the cash register worked. My boss was surprised and told me, “Wow, you're really smart for your kind of people.”

My whole life my family and I have had to live under ridiculous stereotypes that people put onto our culture. From “our people are not smart” to “all Natives are alcoholics” and to “Natives are gamblers.” It really makes me sad that such a beautiful culture is painted so ugly through all of these stereotypes.

When some Natives do fall into some of these stereotypes, people should not judge so quickly. It breaks my heart how people can be so insensitive and make fun of others for the way that they are. Some Natives are alcoholics and some Natives are addicted to gambling. But people should not judge someone so harshly before trying to see how they became that way in the first place. Many Natives had their language and culture taken away from them. They were beaten and raped and made to think that their culture was disgusting. These emotionally and physically abusive pasts make it hard for some Natives to cope.

So I hope people will stop putting stereotypes on others and instead try to see how their pasts have made them that way and how they can help.

# Keanu Dubé

GRADE 4  
L'ÉCOLE SIMON-  
PINESHISH-OTTAWA  
ATIKAMEKW  
DE MANAWAN  
QUEBEC

Si tous les amérindiens convainquaient le premier ministre pour qu'on ait l'équité dans notre pays Canada, nous aurions un meilleur avenir. Notre communauté deviendrait comme une ville avec tous les services convenables pour le mieux-être de notre nation.

# Alexis Flamand

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GRADE 4  
L'ÉCOLE SIMON-  
PINESHISH-OTTAWA  
ATIKAMEKW  
DE MANAWAN  
QUEBEC

Nous devons protéger tous les enfants du Canada peu importe sa couleur. Je voudrais rayer le mot racisme et passer à l'action plus joyeuse. Protégeons tous nos langues autochtones. Dites non à la violence sous toutes ses formes. Ne mentons plus aux autochtones du Canada.



# Danaïck Flamand

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GRADE 4  
L'ÉCOLE SIMON-  
PINESHISH-OTTAWA  
ATIKAMEKW  
DE MANAWAN  
QUEBEC

Il faut que tous les enfants soient protégés. Tout le monde soit instruit.  
Que tous les autochtones parlent sa langue maternelle et la protègent. Nous  
vivons dans un pays uni et je souhaite que tous les hommes soient unis.

# Dan-Martin Flamand

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GRADE 4  
L'ÉCOLE SIMON-  
PINESHISH-OTTAWA  
ATIKAMEKW  
DE MANAWAN  
QUEBEC

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Il faut protéger tous les enfants des premières nations car ils ont leur propre croyance. Les autochtones ne sont pas des êtres qu'on peut chasser de leur terre. Nous sommes des humains qui cherchons à vivre pleinement dans l'harmonie. Nos ancêtres ont accueilli les étrangers et nous méritons leur respect.

# Thomas Flamand

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GRADE 4  
L'ÉCOLE SIMON-  
PINESHISH-OTTAWA  
ATIKAMEKW  
DE MANAWAN  
QUEBEC

Il faut que l'enfant Atikamekw soit protégé.

Il faut que l'enfant Atikamekw ait le droit de s'instruire.

Il faut que la nation Atikamekw garde sa langue maternelle.

Il faut que la nation Atikamekw garde ses droits  
de chasse, de pêche et de trappe.

Il faut que tous les autochtones soient soignés  
convenablement comme les autres.

Il faut que toutes les premières nations se nourrissent  
bien pour qu'ils aient une bonne santé.

# Yoahkim Jacob

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GRADE 4  
L'ÉCOLE SIMON-  
PINESHISH-OTTAWA  
ATIKAMEKW  
DE MANAWAN  
QUEBEC

Au Canada, la langue maternelle et la culture des premières Nations seront de moins en moins utilisées. De nos jours, les jeunes comme les adultes utilisent de plus en plus la technologie. Dans le futur, les autochtones dépendront aussi sur les systèmes informatiques.

# Emilio Wawatie & Joshua Salt

POST-SECONDARY  
STUDENTS

CAMBRIAN  
COLLEGE

KITIGAN ZIB  
QUEBEC

## *We Stand Together*

Anishnabe Aki, Weshkitc oma niin N'tishikeh  
(Algonquin territory is where I'm from)  
Anishnabe Aki, Desh Kin-Kina ki'naniibwiinaw  
(Algonquin territory, is where you all stand)  
Kitci weshkitc aji, nii gwe kipiwan'nan,  
nii tcotcom'non e nekajyaganiatc (For  
years we've fought to protect this land)  
Kan niin'wet m'shii niki pakiten masiinan  
(Unceded and free, flowing like the Kitchi sibi)

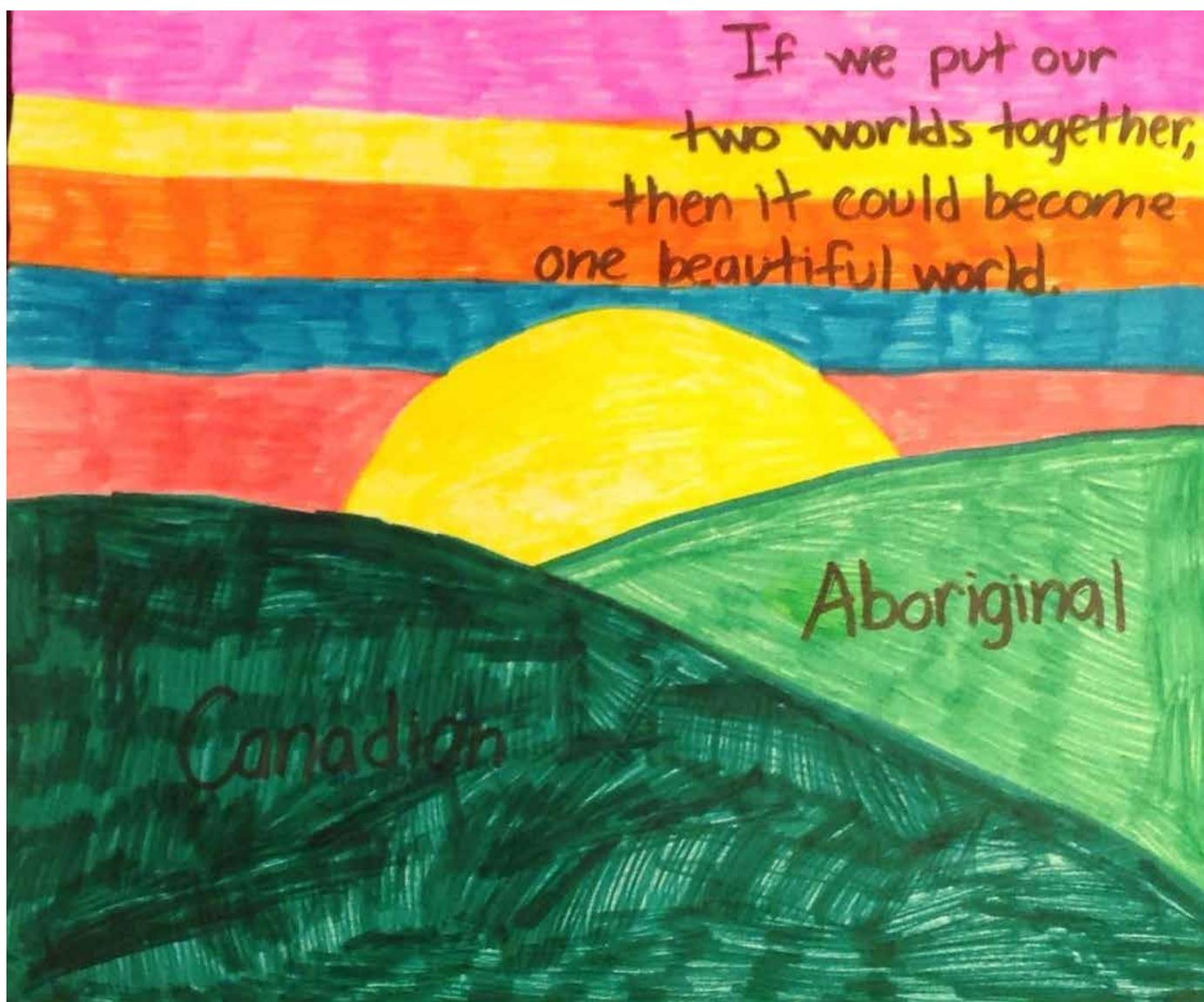
We stand together now  
We stand together now  
We stand together now

Kitchi Manido  
Shebee eh meeyoshiidge (The river is beautiful)  
Miiyatch Piimaatisiiwin (It gives us life)  
Meshikum Chisiikaaw (Everyday)  
Je nanaskum dunn (I'm thankful)  
Shebee eh meeyoshiidge (The river is beautiful)  
Eh meeyoshiidge (It's beautiful)  
Standing amazed  
Gazing at this beautiful world  
Beautiful world  
The trees from the seeds  
Mountains to the core

We stand together now  
We stand together now  
We stand together now  
We stand together now

# Lily Jay

GRADE 4  
MOUNT STEWART  
CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL  
CANAVOY  
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND



# Daniel FitzGerald

GRADE 5  
STRATFORD  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
STRATFORD  
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND



# Nathan MacIntyre

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GRADE 5  
STRATFORD  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
STRATFORD  
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND



# Roisin Mullen

GRADE 4  
MOUNT STEWART  
CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL  
CANAVOY  
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND





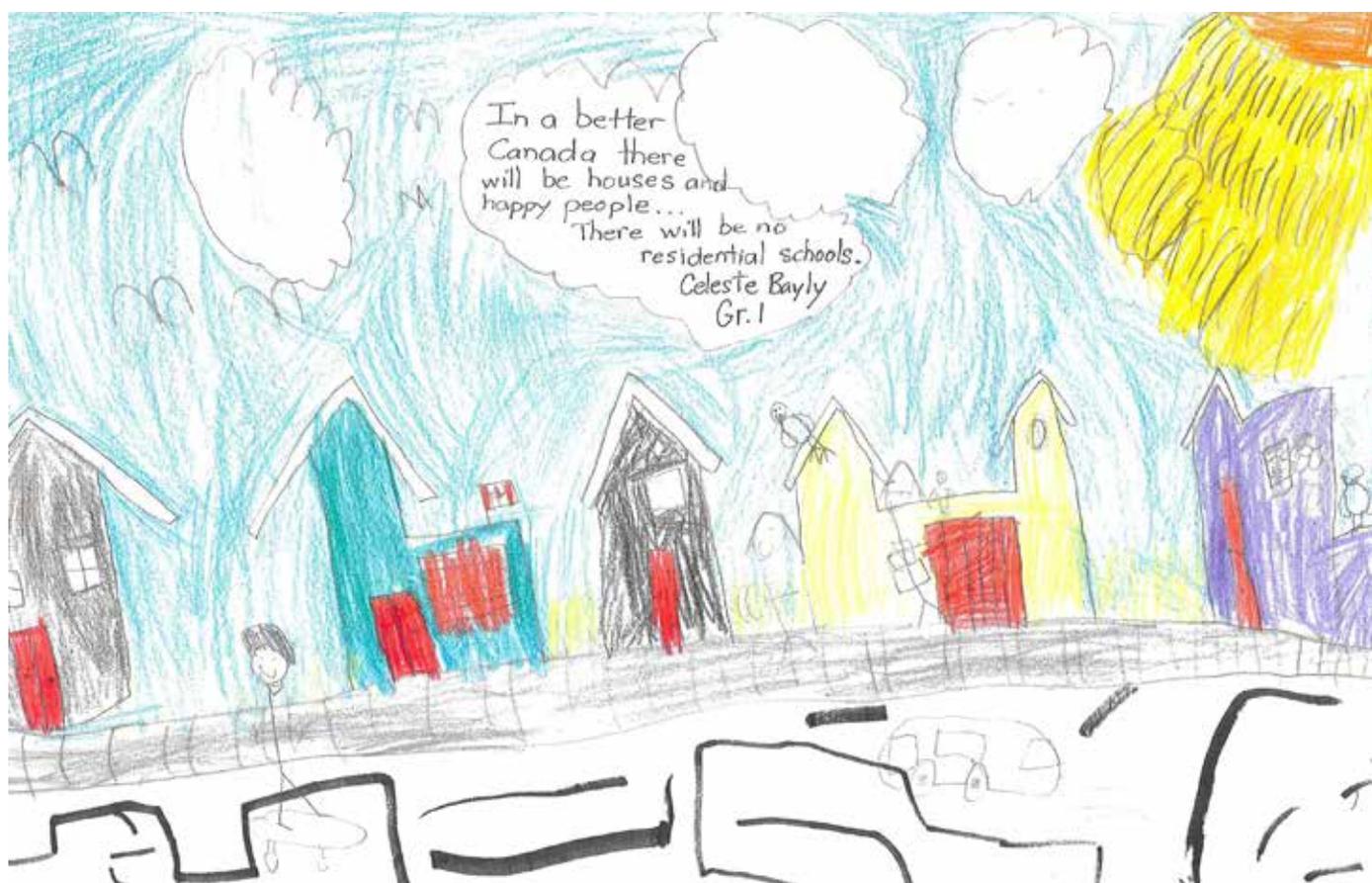
# Brooke Baptiste

GRADE 1  
PALLISER  
HEIGHTS SCHOOL  
MOOSE JAW  
SASKATCHEWAN



# Celeste Bayly

GRADE 1  
PALLISER  
HEIGHTS SCHOOL  
MOOSE JAW  
SASKATCHEWAN



# Alexa Bird

GRADE 7  
WESTMOUNT  
SCHOOL  
MOOSE JAW  
SASKATCHEWAN

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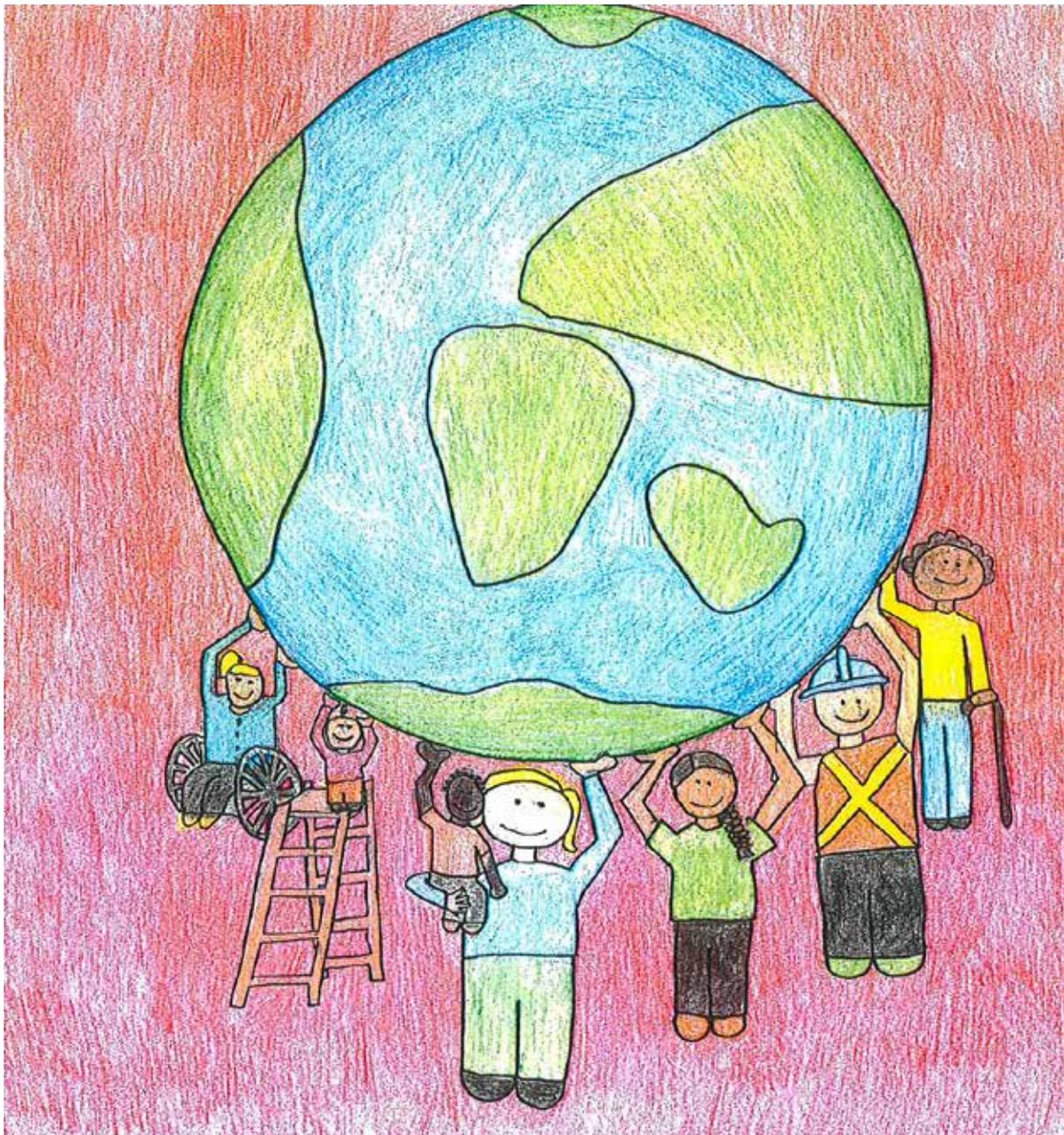


# Ellie Gauvin

GRADE 7  
PALLISER  
HEIGHTS SCHOOL  
MOOSE JAW  
SASKATCHEWAN

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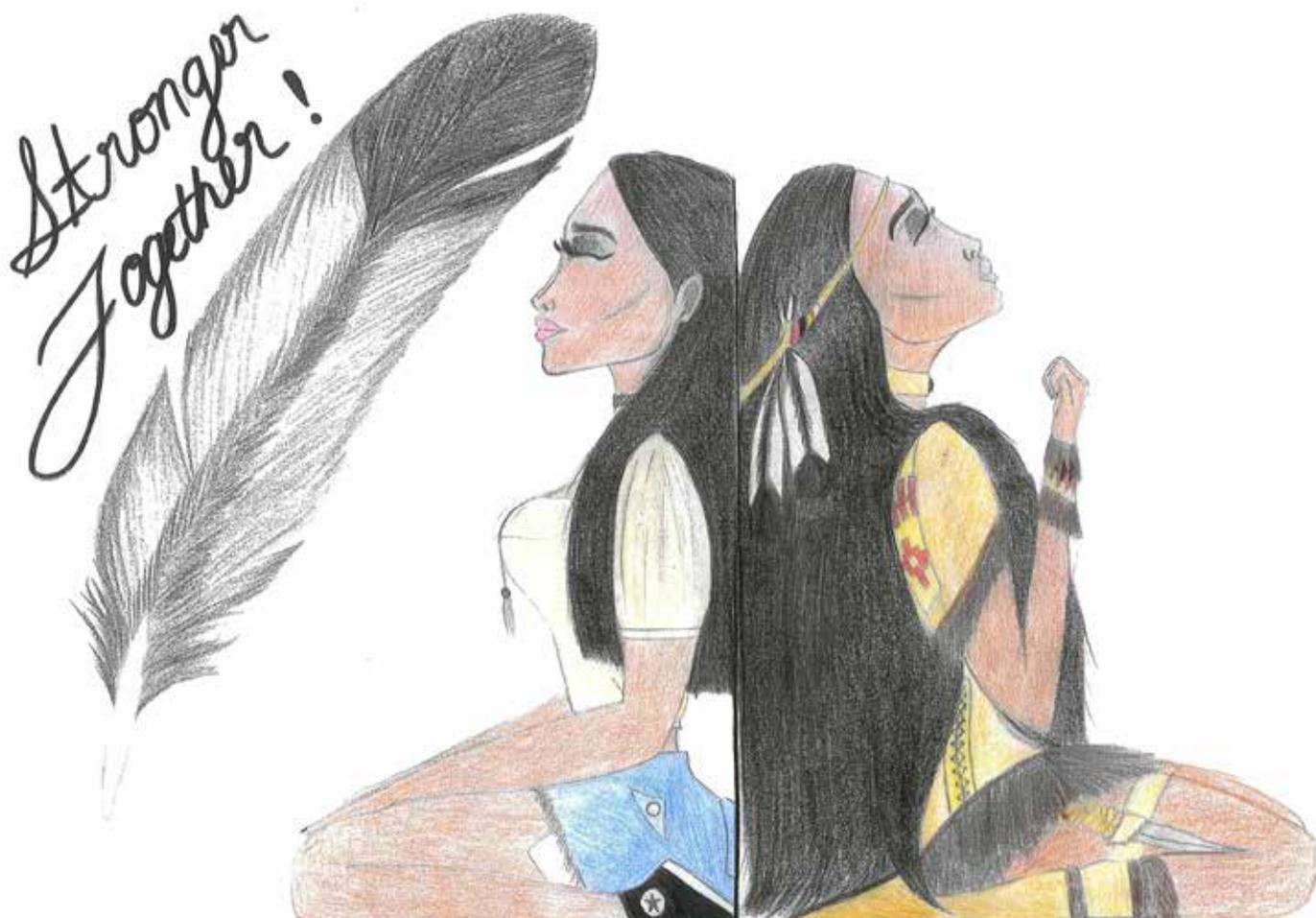
# Adrienne Kaye

GRADE 12  
PRAIRIE SOUTH  
VIRTUAL SCHOOL  
SASKATCHEWAN



# Brennan Mistickokat

GRADE 8  
PALLISER  
HEIGHTS SCHOOL  
MOOSE JAW  
SASKATCHEWAN



# Kerry Adams

GRADE 12  
MORTLACH SCHOOL  
MORTLACH  
SASKATCHEWAN





# Michael Turner

GRADE 12  
HOLY CROSS  
HIGH SCHOOL  
SASKATOON  
SASKATCHEWAN



# Jane Kish

POST-SECONDARY  
STUDENT  
UNIVERSITY  
OF REGINA  
REGINA  
SASKATCHEWAN



# Kassia Emery

GRADE 4  
ÉCOLE ÉMILIE  
TREMBLAY  
WHITEHORSE  
YUKON



# Jamie Baker

GRADE 6  
ELIJAH SMITH  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
WHITEHORSE  
YUKON



# Tess Crocker

GRADE 6  
ROBERT  
SERVICE SCHOOL  
DAWSON CITY  
YUKON

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## *New Perfect Canada*

K'ày' finished her chores and ran down to the river. She sat down on the bank and watched the water. Nichël, her younger brother, came and sat down beside her.

"What are you thinking about?" he asked.

"Ts'òk," she replied. Ts'òk was their older sister and was taken to a school far away. K'ày' knew she would have to go soon as well, and worried constantly.

"Nichël!" their mother called.

"I'd better go," he laughed and walked away. K'ày' turned back to the river. Suddenly, a loud sound that seemed to be thunder came from down the path. She looked and saw a truck identical to the one that took Nichël away. K'ày' got up and ran towards the trees. She ran for a couple of minutes before she collapsed, breathing hard. Eventually she got up, lay down at the base of a big tree and drifted into sleep.

"Wake up! K'ày'!" her mother nudged her awake. "It's time to go to school." At those words K'ày' jumped up and started to run.

"I won't go."

"It's just in the village next to ours."

"You mean the white village? I don't want to go there."

"It's not just white. Many First Nations live in or near it, like us." Her mother beckoned to K'ày', "Come back and get ready."

K'ày' reluctantly turned around and walked back to their village. As soon as she got there she gasped. There were white people all around. One was even being taught to speak K'ày's language! K'ày' followed her mother into their house. She hugged Nichël and walked out with her mother. "Peter!" her mother called.

"Yes Mrs.?"

"Can you show K'ày' to the school?"

"Sure. Follow me."

Clutching her bundle tightly she walked out of their village and started trekking through the forest. After a while of worrying, walking, repeat, she could see the lights of the white village. However, as soon as she got there she realized why her mother didn't call it that. There were just as many First Nations as whites there. The school was the most amazing of all. Groups and pairs of both cultures came in through the big doors, laughing and chatting.

"Is Ts'òk there?" asked K'ày'.

"Yes," responded Peter. She gingerly walked towards the doors.

"Hi!" a white girl said. "My name's Lucy. What's yours?"

K'ày' stammered, not understanding.

"Oh. Sorry!" she pointed to herself. "Lucy." She pointed to K'ày' and shrugged.

"K'ày'" she replied, and smiled. Lucy smiled back. They walked into the school. Lucy showed her to her first class, English.

"I've got to go to Han class. See you after!" Lucy said.

Her teacher, Ms. J, was First Nations and helped her learn Hello, Goodbye, How are you, I am good, What is your name, and My name is... in English. She only remembered Hello, Goodbye, and My name is... The next class was mathematics, which had a white teacher, Mr. Hoptoe. He was nice but couldn't speak any of her language. Lëkay, another girl from K'ày's village, helped her understand and Lucy encouraged her. At the end of the day as she was getting ready to go back she saw someone familiar."

“Ts’òk!” K’ày’ called as she ran towards her sister. Ts’òk hugged her tightly.

“I know so much English now! But I want to go back to our village tonight.” Ts’òk said. “I can’t wait for you too learn all this too.”

“How come you were so sad to leave home?” K’ày’ asked.

“I wasn’t.” Ts’òk replied. She dropped the subject as a chaperone called out, “Everyone who isn’t staying the night must leave now. We’re locking up in five minutes.” Then she repeated it in K’ày’s language. K’ày’ and Ts’òk started to walk back to their village. When they got there, Nichël ran up to Ts’òk and K’ày’s mother said, “That wasn’t so bad, was it?” “I don’t think so.” K’ày’ said. “But it might get worse.” Her mother laughed.

“Are you going to go back?” She asked.

“Maybe. I probably will. English is fun even though it’s difficult.”

So, true to her word, she went back to school the next day. Although she knew that something had happened during the time she had been asleep, she didn’t try to find out what happened. She hadn’t realized how bad her culture had been treated until she came to this perfect place. Here, she could learn English, math, reading, and writing while still learning about her culture. She walked into her house and lay down to sleep.

“Please don’t send me back to the old time,” she prayed as she fell asleep.

The next morning, to her delight, she was still there. And so, living her life how she wanted to, K’ày’ thrived in the new, perfect, Canada!

Han names – English names

K’ày’ – Willow

Ts’òk – Spruce Tree

Nichël – Our Younger Brother

Lëkay – Sweet, Good

# Macy Dewald-Rose

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ROBERT  
SERVICE SCHOOL  
DAWSON CITY  
YUKON

imagine  
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# Leandrea Reeves

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GRADE 7  
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ELEMENTARY  
WHITEHORSE  
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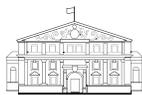
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