



# MOTION REGARDING ADOPTION OF AN OPEN LETTER IN SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION / LETTRE OUVERTE POUR LA JOURNÉE NATIONALE DE LA VÉRITÉ ET DE LA RÉCONCILIATION 2021-09-23

Submitted for: 2021-09-23

**Submitted to:** SSMU Legislative Council      **Document no.:** LEG-PUB-MOT-2021-09-23-006

**Moved by:** Darshan Daryanani  
SSMU President      **Current Status:**  FOR APPROVAL  
 APPROVED  
 POSTPONED  
 COMMITTED  
 NOT APPROVED

**Seconded by:** Ghania Javed  
Arts Representative

## Issue

The Students' Society of McGill University ("the SSMU") commits to standing in solidarity and supporting Indigenous communities and Indigenous students on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, which falls on Thursday, September 30, 2021. This Day is recognized as a national federal holiday. Also known as Orange Shirt Day, which is an Indigenous-led grassroots commemorative day that honours the children who survived Indian Residential Schools and remembers those who did not.

## Background and Rationale

The [open letter](#) will call upon SSMU and McGill University to stand in solidarity of the demands in this open letter and in support of the National Day For Truth And Reconciliation, which are:

1. Cancel all classes after 12 PM on September 30th or provide accommodation for students who do not show up, particularly Indigenous students;
2. Intensify efforts toward full decolonization of the University by, for example, creating safer spaces for Indigenous students, professors



and staff in all faculties, by including more Indigenous peoples into University and faculties administration's structure and by reviewing McGill's acknowledgment and promotional materials in light of the fact that it was constructed on traditional Kanienkehà:ka lands and that James McGill owned Indigenous Slaves;

3. Intensify efforts toward the "Indigenization" of the University by, for example, increasing the inclusion of the Indigenous perspective in course curricula and by recruiting more members from Indigenous communities among students, faculty and staff to reflect the great diversity of Indigenous peoples in Quebec and Canada;
4. Join the ceremony held at 12PM on September 30th and walk with an orange shirt to honour the memories of the victims and survivors of Residential Schools.

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### Alignment with Mission

As per the Constitution, Indigenous Solidarity Policy, Equity Policy

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### Consultations Completed

Indigenous Law Students Association  
McGill Law Students Association  
SSMU Political Campaigns Coordinator  
First Peoples House  
McGill Indigenous Initiatives  
Indigenous Students Alliance - Ongoing

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### Risk Factors and Resource Implications

Given that the motion is calling for the cancellation of the Legislative Council Meeting, there will be no meeting next week which may delay time-sensitive issues.

To support the March, the Society's equipment will be used (speaker system and tables).

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### Sustainability Considerations

It is important to uphold and reinforce our mission, values and maintain our social sustainability in order to create a positive environment that supports and promotes the well-being of current and future indigenous students, staff and administration.

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## Impact of Decision and Next Steps

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Following the passing of the motion, the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) will be a signatory of the letter.

## Motion or Resolution for Approval

Be it resolved that the Legislative Council approve the Open Letter set in Appendix A.

Be it further resolved, that Legislative Council the meeting of September 30, 2021 takes place to allow for Council members, students and staff to attend activities and events (a non-exhaustive list is shared in Appendix B and C) for National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day with an Indigenous focus.

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## Results of the Vote

In favour	(11)
Opposed	(3)
Abstain	(7)

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*Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories*

## Appendix A

[Open Letter In Support of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation 2021](#)

## Appendix B

[Events and Activities](#)

## Appendix C

[Drumming Ceremony, March and Vigil](#)