

PRESS RELEASE

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MESSAGES OF SOLIDARITY WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TO BE DELIVERED TO JOHN NATER

Messages of Solidarity is an initiative of Stratford Public Library that encouraged those in the Stratford community to write their own messages to Perth-Wellington MP John Nater in solidarity with Indigenous peoples living in Canada.

The letter-writing campaign took place in September to coincide with Canada's National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and included messages regarding conducting forensic searches on all properties used for Residential Schools, providing clean water, equitable access to health care, and minimum housing standards for all Indigenous peoples in Canada, honouring treaties across Canada, incorporating accurate education regarding Indigenous history and culture into school curricula, and enacting the 94 Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

The Messages of Solidarity campaign was well received by the community and also embraced by the students of Stratford and District Secondary School who contributed 520 of their own letters. Students' Council President Hewan Amare said, "Having SDSS participate in this initiative allowed students to demand change at a larger scale. With such a large number of students, we hope that we can encourage Mr. Nater to implement the Calls to Action."

On **Friday, January 14**, at 11 am these messages will be delivered to John Nater outside the library by Public Service Librarian, Pam Maten who initiated the campaign. Stratford Public Library encourages John Nater to respond to the civic engagement of many in the Stratford community and these S.D.S.S. students by acknowledging their work and representing their views as his constituents in the House of Commons.

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the guidance of Patsy Day, of the Turtle Clan, Oneida First Nation, in creating the Messages of Solidarity postcard campaign. We also express gratitude for the land on which we are situated which is the traditional territory of the Anishnabek, Haudenosaunee, and Ojibway Chippewa peoples, and covered by the Upper Canada Treaties. As we continue to operate on this land, we recognize the need to continue to honour and work in solidarity with Indigenous Nations in Canada.

Find more information about Truth & Reconciliation at your library by visiting <https://www.splibrary.ca/truthandreconciliation>.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Shauna Costache, Public Service Supervisor at 519-271-0220 x114 or scostache@pcin.on.ca

