

Monday, September 5, 2022 | For Immediate Release

Statement From Mayor Helps on the 100th Anniversary of the Chinese Students' Strike Against Racism and Segregation Day

VICTORIA, BC — In 1922, the Victoria School District Board voted to extend the segregation of all racialized Chinese students up to Grade 7. Previously, students were segregated up to Grade 4.

On September 5, 1922, 200 Chinese children were called out of their classes at George Jay and Central schools, lined up and marched down to a newly established Chinese-only school on Kings Road. Upon arrival, a quiet and studious Chinese boy shouted something out in Cantonese and all the students dispersed and went home. This was the start of the Chinese students' strike which lasted for one year.

Mayor Lisa Helps has released the following statement on the 100th Anniversary of the Chinese Students' Strike Against Racism and Segregation Day:

"Today we stand with members of Victoria's Chinese Community as they receive an official apology from the School Board for the systemic discrimination and segregation that Chinese children faced in the 1920s. This was a dark chapter in Victoria's history where Chinese children were excluded from public schools simply because of their race.

"Unfortunately, racism and systemic discrimination are not only legacies of the past, but they are very much alive in our community today. The anti-Asian racism that was evident during COVID-19 and has continued beyond in the increase in hate crimes against Asian Canadians demonstrates that we have more work to do as a City and as a community.

"City Council, staff and a volunteer Welcoming City Advisory Committee are working hard to implement Victoria's Welcoming City Action Plan to make Victoria a more welcoming and anti-racist city so everyone can feel safe and a sense of belonging. In addition, this week Victoria Council will be considering a motion requesting that the next Council consider, as part of its strategic planning process following the City of Vancouver's lead, developing a well-researched and thoughtful apology to the Chinese community from the City of Victoria for the racism and systemic discrimination the City perpetuated against Victoria's Chinese community throughout the City's history.

"For anyone interested in standing in solidarity and demonstrating that Victoria is working to become a more welcoming and inclusive city, please meet at George Jay Elementary School on Cook Street at Princess Avenue just before 10:30 a.m. to join the walk."

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For More Information:

Bill Eisenhauer
Head of Engagement, City of Victoria
250.858.1061 | beisenhauer@victoria.ca