



THE GOVERNOR GENERAL • LA GOUVERNEURE GÉNÉRALE

As we mark International Mother Language Day 2018, I am pleased to send greetings to the students of British Columbia's school districts.

This year, UNESCO has chosen such an inspiring theme: Linguistic diversity and multilingualism count for sustainable development.

When I was young, I wanted to be an astronaut after watching the televised Apollo missions and seeing mankind take its first steps on the moon. It didn't matter that I didn't even speak their language; I wanted to do what those astronauts were doing. I followed my dream, went into space and learned to speak six languages, which proved especially useful during my missions orbiting the Earth. I have also found that in addition to helping us to communicate with one another, languages are powerful vehicles for culture, values and knowledge.

For the sake of that incredible treasure that is diversity, let us commit to preserving and protecting our mother languages. May this day be filled with wonderful discoveries!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Julie Payette'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Julie Payette

2018