



June 4, 2021 Media Release

The Board of Education of School District No. 52 (Prince Rupert) acknowledges the news that the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation found the unmarked graves of 215 children at the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School. We offer our deepest condolences to the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation, and to all of the communities whose children attended this school.

Indigenous families across our district have been impacted by the residential school system. Students and staff are among those impacted. This news is likely to reawaken the trauma they have endured. The Board stands ready to support the local First Nations, and the families of all students and staff in the district. As a Board, and individually as trustees, we stand ready to listen to your stories. There are many other supports available, which are listed on the district website – www.rupertschools.ca.

We are very grateful for the many staff members who have stepped up to support one another, and their students, in these difficult days. As people will grieve this news at different times and in different ways, we ask everyone to be mindful and patient with one another.

The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission brought to light that a significant number of children died at residential schools. As a result, this finding is no surprise. It is, however, the first investigation of the many unmarked gravesites across the country. We encourage the Government of Canada to assist Indigenous communities across the country to continue the work begun by the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation.

The Board reaffirms our commitment to the 94 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. We call on the Provincial and Federal governments to avoid any further delay in responding to these calls to action. As a Board, we also renew our commitment to assist the Indigenous Education Council and Department as they continue their important work for truth and reconciliation.

We encourage everyone to take the time to learn about the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Further resources are available on the website of the Indigenous Education Department – <https://sd52wap.wixsite.com/abed/residential-schools-reconciliation>.



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