

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA INDIAN CHIEFS

FOUNDING HEAD OFFICE
209 - 345 Chief Alex Thomas Way
Kamloops, B.C. V2H 1H1
Tel: 250-828-9746
Fax: 250-828-0319



VANCOUVER OFFICE
Suite 401, 312 Main Street
Vancouver, BC V6A 2T2
Tel: 604-684-0231
Fax: 604-684-5726
1-800-793-9701
Email: ubcic@ubcic.bc.ca
Web: www.ubcic.bc.ca

News Release

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UBCIC Demands Fair, Equal Compensation for Day Scholars

(Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver, B.C. – March 12, 2019) A legacy of trauma and devastation inflicted upon Indigenous culture and language continues to be brushed aside by the Canadian government in its refusal to treat Day School survivors on terms equal to other Indian Residential School survivors. Day Scholars attended federally owned and operated Residential Schools during the day and returned home at night, and it is Canada's obligation and duty, as outlined in Article 8.2 of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People*, to provide redress for "any form of forced assimilation or integration" and any actions that deprived Indigenous people of their cultural values or ethnic identities.

The Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) expresses our unwavering support for Day Scholars who have reported that negotiations for fair and equal compensation have lapsed as a result of Canada's refusal to remain responsible for its past actions that have left indelible psychological wounds across generations of Aboriginal Canadians. Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of UBCIC, stated: "Day Scholars have endured the same devastating loss of culture, loss of language, and physical, sexual, spiritual and psychological abuse as other Residential School survivors. Canada stands to replicate the discrimination that fed into these injustices if they do not afford the recognition and compensation guaranteed to all survivors of Indian Residential Schools, and this undoubtedly and unequivocally includes Day Scholars."

Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer of UBCIC, stated: "Day Scholars were discriminately excluded from the 2006 Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement that provided a compensation package to Indigenous Canadians who attended and slept at Residential Schools. The class-action lawsuit launched in 2012 by Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc and shíshá'lh (Sechelt) Indian Bands is not just a fight for compensation, but a fight for Canada to recognize that they are accountable for their actions and duty-bound to support Day Scholars and their families in their healing processes."

Day Scholars previously suspended their litigation in 2017 and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Canada to resolve their claims, in the spirit of reconciliation, out of court in a timely manner. However, due to Canada's unreasonable and adversarial conduct, Day Scholars have no choice now but to take their litigation to court at great expense and through timely processes. The UBCIC calls upon the Government of Canada to take reconciliation seriously and to stop delaying efforts from Day Scholars to obtain redress for the destructive Residential Schools Policy.

Chief Bob Chamberlin, Vice-President at UBCIC, concluded, "Reconciliation is not about stagnant and timeworn apologies, but rather meaningful, substantive action and progress forward. The Day Scholar survivors are entitled to immediate redress from Canada for the blows dealt to their cultures, communities, families, and identities."

Media inquiries:

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip: 250-490-5314

Kukpi7 Judy Wilson: 250-320-7738

Chief Bob Chamberlain: 250-974-8282