

June 28, 2021

Dear Mayor Dingwall,

Thank you for your letter dated June 16, 2021, regarding the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action 75.

I was horrified and heartbroken to learn that Tk'emlúps te Secwepemc reported discovering remains of children at the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School. So many children were forever taken from families and communities that loved them, and who could not properly mourn them and put them to rest.

The work of uncovering burial sites can be very painful and re-traumatizing for members of a First Nation, and reports surrounding a discovery have a deep impact on Indigenous peoples across the province. The decision of how, and when each community wishes to contend with this dark chapter of our shared history is for them to make. It is incumbent on all of us to listen to what Indigenous communities and leaders are saying about what they need. It is not up to the provincial government to speak for them; we follow their lead.

This week we announced that the British Columbia government has allocated \$12 million to support First Nations throughout B.C. with investigative work at former residential school sites, as well as cultural and wellness supports for communities and members experiencing trauma from residential school site findings.

There is no question that there is much more to do. We have all been shaken by the unfolding of these events over the past weeks, and many of us want to be able to support in some way. Reconciliation involves all of us—and our government remains fully committed to doing this work, together. Thank you for sharing your commitment to support the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Final Report.

My thoughts are, and will remain, with the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, neighbouring Nations, and all who mourn.



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