



TSESHAHT FIRST NATION

5091 Tsuma-as Dr. Port Alberni, BC V9Y 8X9
P: 250.724.1225 | F: 250.724.4385 | Tseshaht.com

March 2, 2023

To:
Government of Canada
Prime Minister Justin Trudeau
111 Wellington St, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A4

Government of British Columbia
Premier David Eby
501 Belleville St
Victoria, BC V8V 2L8

Presbyterian Church in Canada
50 Wynford Drive
Toronto, ON M3C 1J7

United Church of Canada
3250 Bloor Street West, Suite 200
Toronto, ON M8X 2Y4

Re: Alberni Indian Residential School (AIRS) Tseshaht First Nation's 26 Calls for Truth and Justice

On behalf of čišaaʔaṭh (Tseshaht) First Nation, we are calling on the Government of Canada, Government of British Columbia, Presbyterian Church in Canada, and United Church of Canada to implement 26 Calls for Truth and Justice to support the healing of survivors and victims of AIRS and all residential schools in Canada.

For the past 18 months, members of the ʔuuʔatumin yaqckʷiimitqin (Doing It for Our Ancestors) project team worked tirelessly to uncover the truth of what happened at AIRS. We released preliminary findings from the extensive research and scanning performed by this team in a presentation to the public on Tuesday, February 21, 2023.

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) Memorial Register recognized 29 students who passed away while attending AIRS. Through resources and research, the project team found during this first phase that this number is **at minimum 67 children**.

Alongside the historical research result, the project team also announced **at minimum 17 geophysical features** representing suspected graves of children who never made it home found during scanning.



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We cannot let these findings become just another statistic. Our 26 Calls for Truth and Justice ensure any further investigations into what happened at this 'school' are done independently and that Survivors, their families and our community are given the wellness support they need to heal.

They are also vitally important in ensuring that Canadians and future generations continue to learn about the atrocities that happened to our people over generations. There is no reconciliation without truth and there can be no change without justice.

We call upon Canada's Prime Minister, the Premier of BC (and all government officials) and the RCMP, as well as churches and faiths to meet with Tseshaht First Nation as soon as possible to develop a solid action plan and resources to implement all 26 Calls for Truth and Justice.

Please contact Executive Assistant Virginia Shrimpton (vshrimpton@tseshaht.com or 250-724-1225 ext. 218) to arrange a meeting in person in our community, at any other agreed location or virtually on Zoom. Survivors have made it clear that "you cannot have reconciliation without truth, and justice and accountability must occur."

To view the 26 Calls for Truth and Justice, see attached PDF document.

Kleco, Kleco

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ken Watts', written in a cursive style.

**Wahmeesh (Ken Watts), Elected Chief Councillor
čišaaʔath (Tseshaht) First Nation**

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CC:

Hon. Marc Miller, Minister of Indigenous Relations
Hon. Patty Hadju, Minister of Indigenous Services
Hon. Murray Rankin, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
Hon. Rachna Singh, Minister of Education and Child Care
Hon. Bill Blair, Minister of Public Safety
Hon. Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
Hon. Josie Osbourne, MLA for Mid Island-Pacific Rim
Gord Johns, Courtenay-Alberni MP
Chief RoseAnne Archibald, Assembly of First Nations
Terry Teegee, elected Regional Chief of the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations
Judith Sayers, President, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
Commissioner Brenda Lucki of the RCMP
First Nations Summit Executive
Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs