



PRIME MINISTER • PREMIER MINISTRE

Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A2

July 6, 2021

Dear Grand Chief Phillip et al.:

Thank you very much for taking the time to write to me regarding the discovery of the unmarked mass burial site at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School on Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc territory.

Our government is profoundly saddened by the shocking discovery of a mass grave in the area of the Kamloops Indian Residential School, as well as other discoveries found recently, and our thoughts are with Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation, as well as with all Indigenous communities across Canada. Residential Schools were a shameful part of a colonial policy that removed Indigenous children from their communities and denied them their families, language and culture. Thousands of children were sent to these schools and never returned home. After six years of hearing from survivors and experts, the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRC) found Canada guilty of committing cultural genocide against Indigenous people and our government has accepted those findings.

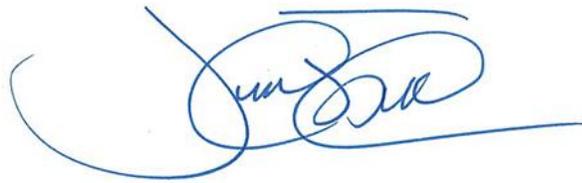
The tragic news from Kamloops is a poignant reminder of the horrific harms done to residential school attendees and the trauma survivors and families continue to suffer every day. Our government will be there for the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation, as well as all Indigenous communities across Canada. We are working with Indigenous communities across Canada on how best to support them in finding their lost children, including how they can access \$27 million of funding being made available on an urgent basis. Recently, we announced that we will provide the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) with \$4.88 million in funding to help with research, knowledge gathering and initial ceremonies related to the burial sites of children who never returned from residential schools.

Mr. Stewart Phillip  
Grand Chief  
President  
Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs

Given that this important matter falls within the portfolio of the Minister of Indigenous Services, the Honourable Marc Miller, and the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, the Honourable Carolyn Bennett, I have asked that a copy of our exchange be sent to their respective office. I am certain your recommendations will be given every consideration.

Thank you once again for your letter, and for sharing your recommendations with me. Know that our government will continue to work directly with all Indigenous communities across Canada in finding and building a better path forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Justin Trudeau", written in a cursive style.