



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Vancouver, March 8, 2016

The opt-in period is over and it is clear that the Day Scholars Class Action has strong support all across Canada. 94 separate bands have come forward to be included in the lawsuit representing every province where an Indian Residential School was located.

Launched in 2012 by the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc and shíshálh Indian Bands, the Day Scholars Class Action lawsuit seeks compensation on behalf of all Aboriginal Canadians who attended an Indian Residential School, but who did not sleep there. The two Bands also seek declarations regarding Canada's role in the failure to protect Aboriginal language and culture, and looks for compensation for the children of survivors, and the bands to which survivors belong.

Canada has, for several years now, recognized and admitted that the Indian Residential Schools had a profound impact not just on those who resided at the schools, but also on their communities and families. But for all its recognition of 'cultural genocide' Canada has refused to provide compensation for those who did not sleep at the schools. This lawsuit aims to rebalance that exclusion.

In addition to seeking compensation for individuals who attended the Indian Residential Schools, an important part of the lawsuit is including Indian Bands that were affected by the presence of an Indian Residential School on or near their lands. Individual Bands could decide prior to February 29, 2016, whether or not they wished to opt-in, or be a part of the lawsuit. Only those Bands that opted in will be eligible for compensation if any is awarded by the Courts.

#### QUOTES:

Chief Calvin Craigan of shíshálh Indian Bands stated:

“It is gratifying to see so many bands from Sechelt to Shubenacadie standing up to join with us and tell Canada that we will not let the story of the Day Scholars go untold. We hope that Canada will come to the table and discuss a fair and just resolution to this lawsuit before any more survivors pass on.”

Chief Fred Seymour of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc stated:

“Ninety four bands have stepped forward to say they suffered the same way, showing that this is a national disgrace. As stated by the former Prime Minister in the Apology, ‘it was wrong to separate children from rich and vibrant cultures and traditions’ and now it is time for us to work together towards true reconciliation.

With the closing of the opt in period, the two bands will continue to move the lawsuit forward, while continuing to reach out to Canada in hopes of reaching a true reconciliation.

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