



“Gesture of Goodwill”

# Truth and Reconciliation: A Commitment to Action

2019 - 2024

*Reaching minds. Touching hearts.*



## **“Gesture of Goodwill”**

### **by Leland Bell - Bebaminojimat**

The human figures depict youth, in their young wisdom, revealing equality amongst all people. The one with dignity and honour carries a scroll to illustrate a knowledge base yet unknown.

The rainbow symbolizes a learning pathway for life with opportunity to explore and understand the importance of balance and relationship. We are reminded of the living magnificence of the land and the water.

The circular images reference the paradigms of Indigenous perspective and value for grandmother moon, the directions, the stars, and the idea of wholeness.

The stones represent our ancestry and grandfather teachings and the lighting of an eighth fire by a people who will bring new hope for trust, acceptance and the goodwill of all people to live in balance with all of Creation through universal inspiration.

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# Forward

This plan Truth and Reconciliation: A Commitment to Action is dedicated to the former students of Canada's residential school experience – the Survivors. This includes the many men and women, the Elders – including those who have passed into the Spirit World – whose traditional territory we now make our home.

This Commitment to Action is in honour of them.

Although much of the Truth and Reconciliation: A Commitment to Action plan was developed in consultation and active involvement from the Indigenous community, it should be expressed that the responsibility of Reconciliation should not fall on the shoulders of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.

Indigenous people will gladly play a role in the development, leadership and partnership in Reconciliation, but ultimately, the responsibility for Reconciliation should fall to all Canadians. In this case, this shall fall to Rainbow District School Board who will be responsible for the acceptance and implementation of the commitments made herein.



# Introduction

## The People of the Eighth Fire

From time immemorial, long before the establishment of the public school system, the Indian Act, the founding of Canada and even the Treaties, Indigenous people of Turtle Island lived their lives according to sacred law, living in balance with Creation around them. For the Anishinabek, the original people of the Great Lakes area, their primary philosophy was the concept of Mno Bimaadiziwin – living a good life.

This pre-history also included a number of prophecies that spoke of the coming of European settlers. Each prophecy came with a warning to the Anishinabek to take measures to protect their way of life. It is said that a “Fire” would be lit with the realization of each of these prophecies. There would be eight such Fires to be lit throughout the history of the Anishinabek.

Much of these sacred prophecies aligned with the history of the Indigenous people. The prophecies spoke of the devastation to the territory, lands and waters. They spoke of the discrimination and racism that would be faced by the Anishinabek people. They spoke of the loss of their language, culture and spiritual ways of life.

Despite this, Indigenous people remained resilient and hopeful. The prophecy of the Eighth Fire predicts that the “light-skinned race” would realize their shortcomings and would come to the Indigenous people seeking their help.

The questions arise: Are we in the period of the Eighth Fire? Is this the time when Canadian society makes this realization and restarts a new era of inclusiveness and collaboration with Indigenous Nations?

## The Indian Residential School Era

The Indian Residential School experience was the most destructive chapter in the relationship between Canada and Indigenous people. From 1870 until 1996, thousands of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children were forcibly removed from their families and homes and sent to any number of 130 Indian Residential Schools run by the churches. The residential schools policy, created by the Government of Canada, was a systematic attempt to “kill the Indian in the child” and had a traumatic impact on the language, culture and wellness of Indigenous people.

Between 2010 and 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) documented the stories from former residential school students – the Survivors. Although many Survivors have cherished memories of their friends, activities and lessons learned during their school days, many recalled their stories of an inadequate education, poor living conditions as well as physical, sexual and cultural abuse.

These children were unable to speak their language, unable to practice their culture and were forced to learn an entirely new language and culture deemed more acceptable by the church and state.

As a direct result, generations upon generations of Indigenous people are unable to speak their Indigenous language and have little or no knowledge of their traditional culture. This crisis of identity, as well as the intergenerational trauma that followed the residential school experience, has resulted in a wide spectrum of health and social issues, poverty and lower success rates in education.

## Rainbow Schools Take Action

In April 2017, Rainbow District School Board passed the following motion mandating the creation of a Truth and Reconciliation Action Plan as a means of implementing the vision of the 94 Calls to Action listed in the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

### *Motion*

*Rainbow District School Board respectfully acknowledges the work of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) regarding residential schools in Canada and the resulting 94 Calls to Action, including the Calls to Action specifically related to education.*

*Be it resolved that Rainbow District School Board:*

- 1. Commit to the development of a Truth and Reconciliation Action Plan in consultation with the First Nation Advisory Committee and the Urban Indigenous Advisory Committee;*
- 2. Commit that all students graduate with knowledge of residential schools and their devastating impacts on Indigenous communities in Canada and recognize the importance of their contributions to the reconciliation process;*
- 3. Commit that all students graduate with an understanding of the significance of the treaties and the shared history of First Nations and non-Indigenous Ontarians;*
- 4. Commit to the continued implementation and development of Anishinaabemowin programs;*
- 5. Commit to provide opportunities to all staff and students to learn more about the richness of Indigenous worldview and cultures, working hand-in-hand with Indigenous peoples;*
- 6. Commit to implement, promote and enforce anti-racism strategies as it relates to Indigenous students, families and communities.*

## **Towards a Commitment to Action**

It is not enough to create a plan of action detailing a number of strategies that enhance the existing Indigenous Education function in Rainbow Schools. First Nations, Métis and Inuit education advocates certainly recognize the importance of augmenting Indigenous programming, especially in the area of language and culture and student supports that will lead to the improvement of education success of Indigenous students.

When it comes to leading reconciliation, the commitment, goals and priorities for action must go a lot further. These goals and plan for action must take measurable steps in restoring those things that we had taken from Indigenous people during the Indian Residential School era.

Above all, the Truth and Reconciliation: Commitment to Action must be led by the Spirit, of both Indigenous peoples and Rainbow District School Board. It must be offered in a solemn and sincere way by Rainbow District School Board and lead to measurable change in First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities.

## **Consultation Process Acknowledgement**

In order to ensure the many voices of our Indigenous and academic community were honoured in this Truth and Reconciliation: Commitment to Action, the following groups were consulted under the leadership of Kathy Dokis and Bob Goulais in the fall and winter of 2017-2018.

- The First Nations Advisory Committee of Rainbow District School Board
  - The Urban Indigenous Community
  - Indigenous Youth from Rainbow District School Board
  - Indigenous Staff from Rainbow District School Board
  - M'Chigeeng First Nation
  - Whitefish River First Nation
  - Sagamok Anishnawbek
  - Atikameksheng Anishnawbek
- 
- Rainbow District School Board Executive Council
  - Rainbow District School Board Principal of Indigenous Education
  - Rainbow District School Board System Principals
  - Rainbow District School Board Strategic Planning Committee



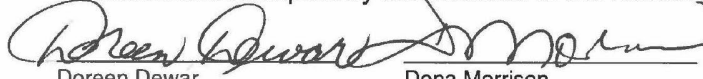
# The Commitment

## THE COMMITMENT TO ACTION

*The Rainbow District School Board commits to the following:*

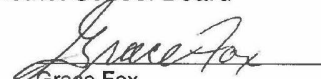
- The public school education system, as a primary means of learning for Indigenous students, must include systematic measures to restore language and culture that was taken away by the Indian Residential School experience.
- We believe that the restoration of identity, self-esteem and pride in one's self, culture and nationhood, coupled with the ability to speak and think in one's own language, will lead to vast improvements in education success and help restore that balance that was upset by the Indian Residential School era.
- Rainbow Schools and the Rainbow District School Board are committed to leading this action, and changing the way Indigenous students are educated in Ontario by exemplifying this in our schools.
- Rainbow Schools and the Rainbow District School Board is committed to enhancing Indigenous Education programs, resources and supports to Indigenous students in an effort to improve education success.
- Rainbow Schools and the Rainbow District School Board are committed to learning and cherishing the stories of Indigenous people, Indigenous Nations, Elders and knowledge keepers, and the survivors of the Indian Residential School experience for the benefit of all students, so we will not repeat the mistakes of the past and carry on as partners in the Eighth Fire.

Endorsed and Accepted by the Trustees of the Rainbow District School Board

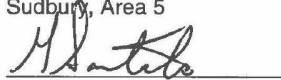


Doreen Dewar  
Board Chair  
Sudbury, Area 5

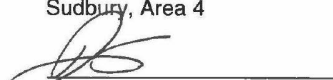
Dena Morrison  
Board Vice-Chair  
Sudbury, Area 4



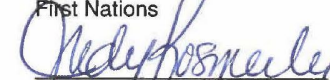
Grace Fox  
Trustee  
First Nations



Gord Santala  
Trustee  
Sudbury, Area 1



Ruth Ward  
Trustee  
Sudbury, Area 2



Judy Kosmerly  
Trustee  
Sudbury, Area 3



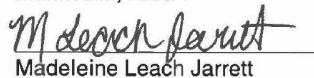
Judy Hunda  
Trustee  
Sudbury, Area 6



Larry Killens  
Trustee  
Manitoulin, Area 7

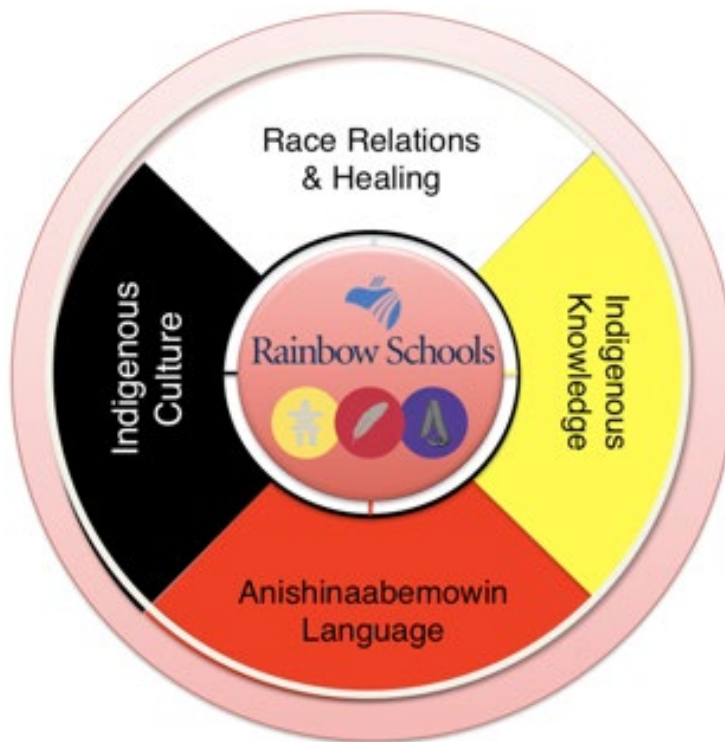


Bob Clement  
Trustee  
Espanola, Area 8



Madeleine Leach Jarrett  
Student Trustee  
Rainbow District School Board

# A Framework for Action



The Truth and Reconciliation: A Commitment to Action plan makes use of a traditional Indigenous framework based on the Anishinaabe Medicine Wheel. The Medicine Wheel is both a traditional and contemporary teaching tool that organizes Indigenous knowledge, philosophy and ideas in a holistic way.

The medicine wheel communicates a balance between all things:

- the four colours of humankind - yellow, red, black and white;
- the four directions;
- the four stages of life - child, youth, adult, elder; and
- the four parts of the self - physical, mental, emotional and spiritual.

This Framework for Action makes use of the Anishinaabe healing colours recognizing Reconciliation as a healing process. It also recognizes that the ultimate success of Reconciliation, and success of the Commitment to Action, requires a restoration of Indigenous Knowledge, Anishinaabemowin Language, Indigenous Culture as well as implementation of Race Relations and Healing. These four areas represent the priority areas of the Commitment to Action plan.

# 1. Indigenous Knowledge

**1. Goal:** All students graduate with knowledge of residential schools and their devastating impacts on Indigenous communities in Canada and recognize the importance of their contributions to the reconciliation process.

## Strategies

**1.1** Create and implement new Residential School learning resources, with enhanced lesson plans that teach students about Truth and Reconciliation, the difficult truth about the Residential School experience and intergenerational trauma and lasting impacts of the Residential School era.

**Timeframe:** 5 years

**Success Indicators:**

- New resources completed
- Implemented across all Rainbow Schools

**1.2** Hold field trips to Indian Residential School locations (Spanish, Shingwauk) alongside Survivors. Field trip opportunities may be extended to teachers, staff, Rainbow District School Board leadership and trustees.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Indicators:**

- Field trip itineraries developed
- Students attend field trips

**1.3** Support the development of an Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee that includes Residential School Survivors to advise on resource development and identify engaging Residential School survivors who can attend field trips and speak in Rainbow Schools.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Ad-hoc Committee established
- Provide the Ad-hoc Committee an opportunity to meet
- Survivors identified





**2. Goal:** Commit that all students graduate with an understanding of the significance of the treaties, traditional territories and the shared history of First Nations and non-Indigenous Ontarians.

## Strategies

**2.1** Work with local communities to identify resources for learning about local Indigenous history, area Residential Schools, historic and present Anishinaabe communities and the Robinson Huron Treaty for all grades.

**Timeframe:** 5 years

**Success Measures:**

- First Nations Advisory Committee and Indigenous community and organizations engaged
- New resources identified

**2.2** The Rainbow District School Board Treaty education cycle begins with observance of Robinson Huron Treaty Day on September 9 and concludes with Treaty Recognition Week in November.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Observance on September 9
- Observance of Treaty Recognition Week
- Activities and commemoration events take place

**2.3** When possible, include Indigenous knowledge, treaties, history and culture into other mainstream courses, subjects, lesson plans and assignments.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Courses identified
- Learning units and resources developed
- Increased number of mainstream subjects with Indigenous learning content

**2.4** The First Nations Advisory Committee develop an approved, standardized Treaty and Traditional Territory acknowledgement for recommended use at all Rainbow Schools and in Rainbow District School Board business.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Collaboration with First Nations Advisory Committee and other partners
- Approved by the First Nations Advisory Committee and Rainbow District School Board
- Communicated with Rainbow Schools Indigenous communities, partners and the public

**2.5** Where possible, post a Treaty and Traditional Territory acknowledgement sign in Rainbow Schools and the offices of Rainbow District School Board.

**Timeframe:** 3 to 5 years

**Success Measures:**

- Concept design for sign approved
- Signs posted in Rainbow District School Board schools and offices

**2.6** Rainbow Schools consider that announcements, gatherings and special events begin with a Treaty and Traditional Territory acknowledgement.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Wording consistent with approved acknowledgement
- More gatherings and events use acknowledgement

**2.7** Rainbow District School Board consider use of Treaty and Traditional Territory acknowledgement at the start of new Board terms, the beginning of a new school year, and when hosting special guests and at special occasions.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Script and wording approved
- Acknowledgements made at Rainbow District School Board meetings and events

**2.8** Develop an implementation plan for using the Kairos Blanket Exercise in Rainbow Schools.

**Timeframe:** 3 to 5 years

**Success Measures:**

- First Nations Advisory Committee sanctions the exercise
- Identify qualified facilitators
- Identify opportunities where the Kairos exercise can be held
- Consider an alternative exercise for younger learners
- Kairos Blanket Exercise held in schools



**3. Goal:** All Indigenous students obtain diverse, robust and culturally relevant education opportunities, sufficient educational resources and supports to achieve education success.

## Strategies

**3.1** Advocate, with the province, for additional and stable funding, through Grants for Student Needs (GSN), to support the Indigenous Education Program that will facilitate the growth and development of Indigenous programs and Indigenous student supports.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Advocacy strategy developed
- Discussions underway with the Ministry of Education

**3.2** Explore models and examples for a new Indigenous elementary school that could focus on Anishinaabemowin extended immersion, Indigenous knowledge and culturally appropriate methodologies of learning.

**Timeframe:** 5 years

**Success Measures:**

- Research conducted including visits to similar schools including First Nations school at Toronto District School Board

**3.3** Explore the development of a Rainbow District School Board Indigenous Learning Centre with adequate education resource materials for every grade level to support Indigenous education goals.

**Timeframe:** 5 years

**Success Measures:**

- Seek and secure funding
- New resources identified and developed for all grades
- New resources (books, media, materials, electronic resources) in the Learning Centre
- Numbers of teachers, staff and students using the Learning Centre

**3.4** Continue to develop Indigenous learning resources within libraries at every Rainbow School.

**Timeframe:** 5 years

**Success Measures:**

- Supporting plan and strategies developed
- Increased number of Indigenous resources in all libraries

**3.5** That the proposed Rainbow District School Board Indigenous Learning Resource Centre develops reciprocal sharing arrangements with other education partners and First Nations libraries.

**Timeframe:** 5 years

**Success Measures:**

- Reciprocal arrangements made with supportive partners
- Sharing of resources underway

**3.6** Understanding that education resources for Indigenous traditional knowledge involves storytelling and oral traditions, begin to document, record and archive lessons within the proposed Rainbow District School Board Indigenous Learning Centre.

**Timeframe:** 5 years

**Success Measures:**

- Resource needs assessment complete
- Archive and digital strategy using cloud technology/G-Suite developed
- Audio-visual and digital technology procured
- Elders, teaching sessions and presentations recorded
- Students and teachers accessing/making use of recordings



**3.7** That secondary school English courses consider learning modules that involve study of Indigenous literature and works of Indigenous authors and take measures to actively involve Indigenous writers in these classes.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Learning module and implementation plan developed
- Resources, books and authors identified



**4. Goal:** Develop and mobilize a team of Indigenous educators to support Indigenous programs in all schools with a focus on knowledge transfer, capacity building and training for teachers and staff.

## Strategies

**4.1** Consider strategies for recruiting and retaining more Indigenous teachers, Indigenous Studies teachers, Anishinaabemowin and Indigenous language teachers and Aboriginal Support Workers.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**4.1.1** Advocate and collaborate with the Ministry of Education and Teachers' Unions to address barriers to hiring Indigenous teachers.

**Timeframe:** 5 years

**Success Measures:**

- Barriers identified
- Government Relations and Labour Relations Strategy developed
- Discussions underway
- Barriers/challenges mitigated

**4.1.2** Use Indigenous employment listing sources (e.g. Indigenous media, newswires, Indigenous organizations and communities) to recruit employees into Rainbow Schools.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Sources identified
- Job listing taking place

**4.1.3** Establish a recruitment strategy to hire Anishinaabemowin language teachers and to hire Anishinaabemowin speakers as language instructors to support and work alongside qualified teachers.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- First Nations Advisory Committee consulted on how to find more candidates
- Strategy developed
- Increased number of language teachers hired

**4.2** Based on student need, hire dedicated, full-time Indigenous Support Workers in Rainbow Schools.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measure:**

- Student needs assessed
- New ASWs hired

**4.3** Provide adequate and ongoing support and training for teachers in Cultural Competency, Native Studies, History, Treaties and Indigenous Culture.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Training needs assessment and priorities identified
- Training modules developed
- Indigenous teaching and learning methodologies considered
- Training opportunities offered
- Teachers feeling better prepared, knowledgeable and confident

**4.4** Continue to hold regular, Indigenous-focused Professional Development Days for staff to learn more about First Nations, Métis and Inuit people, Residential Schools, Indigenous history and culture through engaging speakers and unique Indigenous learning opportunities.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Plan and strategies developed
- Positive evaluations from teachers and staff
- Increased knowledge in Indigenous areas





## 2. Anishinaabemowin Language

**1. Goal:** Commit to the continued implementation and development of Anishinaabemowin programs to create a new generation of fluent Anishinaabemowin language speakers.

### Strategies

**1.1** In consultation with the First Nations Advisory Committee, Elders and language speakers, advocate with the province for new, progressive Anishinaabemowin language curriculum beginning in Kindergarten through to Grade 12 with a focus on conversational Anishinaabemowin and alternatives to the western style of learning focused on reading and writing.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- First Nations Advisory Committee consulted
- Curriculum working group established
- Advocacy/Government Relations Work plan established

**1.2** Explore the development of an Anishinaabemowin immersion pilot project to support Indigenous learners to be educated in their own culture provided in their own language.

**Timeframe:** 5 years

**Success Measures:**

- First Nations Advisory Committee consulted
- Project plan explored
- Targeted program developed
- Teachers, resources and learning units identified

**1.3** Develop resources and supports for parents and families to assist Anishinaabemowin language learners with speaking Ojibwe at home.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Working group established to develop resources
- Resource plan developed
- Consider web resources and community partners
- Resources created and published
- Parents and guardians more involved in homework
- Improvement in language learning

**1.4** Plan and host a two-week long (110-hour) Anishinaabemowin Immersion summer program, open to students in Grade 8 and higher, to obtain a junior level secondary school credit in Anishinaabemowin language.

**Timeframe:** 3 year

**Success Measures:**

- Curriculum and learning plans developed
- Teachers, resources and learning units identified
- Summer camp space identified
- Number of students in program
- Enhanced language learning outcomes

**1.5** Continue to develop and enhance reciprocal and mutually beneficial community partnerships with area First Nations, Friendship Centre, Colleges and Universities and other Indigenous organizations to extend curriculum development and language learning into communities.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Community partners identified
- Relationship protocols considered
- New language learning opportunities
- Language learning taking place with the community

**1.6** Make use of technology such as G-Suite, Moodle, Sharepoint, Skype, Facetime and mobile apps to aid in the learning of Anishinaabemowin.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Digital strategy for language learning developed

**1.7** Encourage daily use of Anishinaabemowin through greetings and common daily phrases, developing school signs in the language, and playing of O'Canada in the language, and using phrases in Rainbow District School Board meetings and everyday activities.

**Timeframe:** 1 to 2 years

**Success Measures:**

- Develop a strategy and implement a process for content and delivery
- Simple Language Guide developed
- Signage opportunities and concepts identified
- Signs, strategy and content approved
- O'Canada recorded in Anishinaabemowin and provided to all schools
- Simple words and phrases used at Rainbow District School Board meetings and in Rainbow Schools
- Increased awareness of Indigenous language in schools and among staff

**1.8** Using Anishinaabemowin during assemblies and other school gatherings and functions.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Simple Language Guide developed
- Simple words and phrases used in Rainbow Schools gatherings
- Increased awareness of Indigenous language in schools and among staff



**2. Goal:** Explore opportunities and resources to support the language learning needs of other Nations.

## Strategies

**2.1** Develop a resource list of books, websites, electronic resources for use by Mushkegowuk Cree and learners from other Indigenous Nations for inclusion into the proposed Rainbow District School Board Indigenous Learning Centre.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Identify resources and create a list
- Include language resources in the development of the Indigenous Learning Centre

**2.2** Develop learning units within the Native Studies curriculum that demonstrates an appreciation for the many diverse Indigenous languages in North America.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Indicators:**

- Learning unit completed
- Learning unit incorporated into Native Studies curriculum





# 3. Indigenous Culture

**1. Goal:** Commit to provide opportunities to all staff and students to learn more about the richness of Indigenous worldview and cultures, working hand-in-hand with Indigenous peoples.

## Strategies

**1.1** Hold a Pipe Ceremony and share traditional teachings about the significance of the Commitment to Action and Reconciliation. Invite Rainbow District School Board senior leadership and trustees to participate.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- First Nations Advisory Committee and Elders consulted about ceremonies
- Rainbow District School Board, Trustees, senior management invited to attend ceremony
- Ceremony takes place
- Rainbow District School Board officials have an improved understanding of Truth and Reconciliation: A Commitment to Action.

**1.2** Hold a ceremony, celebration and feast to announce the acceptance of Truth and Reconciliation: Commitment to Action and the Commitment Statement.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Event plan developed
- First Nations Advisory Committee and Elders consulted about ceremony and feast
- Rainbow District School Board, Trustees, senior management, teachers, staff attend event
- Media strategy and news release developed
- Ceremony, feast and announcement take place
- Truth and Reconciliation: A Commitment to Action policy shared with all Rainbow Schools

**1.3** Develop a new Indigenous Cultural Liaison Program to support Indigenous cultural renewal in Rainbow Schools.

**1.3.1** Engage First Nations Advisory Committee on the development of Indigenous Cultural Liaison Program framework.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Consult and collaborate with First Nations Advisory Committee
- Develop the program framework with objectives and proposed activities

**1.3.2** On the advice of First Nations Advisory Committee, develop an Elders Sub-Committee that will provide guidance, advice to the Indigenous Cultural Liaison on traditional cultural matters and protocols for traditional knowledge.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- First Nations Advisory Committee consulted on the working group concept
- Elders invited to participate
- Establish an Elders Sub-Committee and Terms of Reference

**1.3.3** Hire a dedicated Indigenous Cultural Liaison to work with Rainbow Schools and students. The Liaison worker should be grounded in Indigenous culture.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Resources identified
- Job description and work plan developed
- Cultural Liaison hired
- Cultural program underway

**1.4** Provide opportunities for all Rainbow District School Board teachers and staff to learn more about Indigenous culture through informal learning (lunch and learns) and guest speakers at schools.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- New program developed
- Topics and speakers identified
- Lunch and learns held
- Teachers and staff more informed

**1.5** Provide opportunities for dialogue between the Rainbow District School Board Indigenous Education program, parents, First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and organizations to share ideas on how to support students and Indigenous learning objectives.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Plan and strategy developed for community forums as needed
- Event plan developed
- Community forum held
- Positive evaluations from participants



**2. Goal:** Commit to the design and development of new cultural education spaces in all Rainbow Schools and dedicated traditional activity and ceremonial lands.

## Strategies

**2.1** Where appropriate and wherever possible, plan for dedicated space for Indigenous learning in Rainbow Schools that can be used for classroom learning, multi-use space for ceremonies and gatherings and for use by support programs, Elders and Aboriginal Support Workers. This space would be open to all students.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Indigenous spaces included in facilities planning across the Board
- New spaces identified

**2.2** Where possible, create Indigenous learning spaces using culturally appropriate and accurate Indigenous themes, authentic artwork, learning resources and practical comforts that facilitate an open, welcome learning environment.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Students, First Nations Advisory Committee and the Indigenous community come up with design and cultural theme ideas
- Schools implement the ideas in Indigenous space planning
- Indigenous artists and student artists featured

**2.3** Set aside an outdoor space for the collective use by all Rainbow Schools for Indigenous traditional activities and ceremonies. Consider collaboration with Indigenous partners.

**Timeframe:** 5 years

**Success Measures:**

- Plan and strategy developed
- Rainbow District School Board canvass and evaluate possible outdoor Indigenous space including at Centre for Education
- Community involvement and partnerships considered



**3. Goal:** Implement Indigenous land-based cultural learning and in-class cultural learning across all grade levels for all students.

## Strategies

**3.1** Encourage land-based Indigenous cultural learning including holding ceremonies, fall harvest, lodge building, medicine walks and harvesting, community food and medicine gardening, lye corn preparation, smoked fish preparation, kinnikinnick, hide tanning, etc.

**Timeframe:** 2 years

**Success Measures:**

- Identify opportunities that may incorporate land-based learning
- Identify key staff leaders for land-based learning
- Increased level of traditional land-based learning

**3.2** Encourage in-class Indigenous cultural learning including traditional teachings, moccasin and regalia making, beadwork, medicine bag making, crafts, ribbon shirt/ribbon skirt making, etc.

**Timeframe:** 2 years

**Success Measures:**

- Identify opportunities for in-class Learning e.g. preparation before school pow-wow, Treaty awareness activities, Native Studies class
- Identify resources, instructors/leaders, Elders and volunteers



**4. Goal:** Celebrate the Indigenous community, student life and achievement through the development of Indigenous students and ally organizations and by school-led and student-led Indigenous cultural celebrations including feasts, pow-wows and gatherings.

## Strategies

**4.1** Where appropriate, recognize the achievement of Indigenous students through a Rainbow Schools Seven Grandfathers Awards and annual celebration.

**Timeframe:** 2 years

**Success Measures:**

- Awards program and criteria developed
- Events plan developed
- Nominations received and winners decided
- Celebration event takes place

**4.2** Encourage and support the development of Indigenous students and ally organizations and clubs that facilitate student dialogue, activities and cultural sharing.

**Timeframe:** 2 years

**Success Measures:**

- Plan and strategy developed
- Staff resources/volunteers identified to lead organizations and clubs
- Student organizations and clubs established

**4.3** Continue to support Rainbow Schools to hold cultural events such as powwows and feasts throughout the school year.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Planning committees established
- Cultural advisors consulted
- Resources and volunteer needs identified
- Event plan developed
- Cultural events take place

**4.4** Encourage and support student drum circles and drum groups that include learning drum teachings and songs from Elders and singers from within the community.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Resources (volunteer, Elders and singers) needs identified
- Singers/advisors consulted
- Singing groups and drum circles established

**4.5** Encourage traditional feasts in Rainbow Schools using traditional foods produced and sourced locally.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Traditional food sought from families and community partners
- Feasts are planned and take place
- Feasts take place in different schools
- Increased cultural pride

**4.6** Where appropriate, host traditional ceremonies that include Rainbow District School Board students, families, staff, Elders and community members.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Ceremony is planned and takes place
- Indigenous students feel more included
- Healing opportunities provided to participants

# 4. Race Relations and Healing

- 1. Goal:** Commit to implement, promote and enforce anti-racism strategies as it relates to Indigenous students, families and communities.

## Strategies

**1.1** Develop and include a focus on Indigenous anti-racism in Rainbow Schools equity and inclusion campaigns to encourage all students to be allies to each other in promoting diversity, respect and inclusion.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Plan and strategies reviewed to enhance the Indigenous focus
- Communications products/promotion materials created and shared with schools
- Decreased number of incidents documented over time
- Process shared with FNAC

**1.2** Develop an Indigenous peer mentorship program where youth can talk to one another about their experiences with racism.

**Timeframe:** 2 years

**Success Measures:**

- Plan and strategy developed
- Staff resources/volunteers identified to lead peer initiative
- Peer mentorship program established
- Improved relationships among students
- Decreased number of racism incidents documented over time

**1.3** Make use of the existing Rainbow District School Board climate survey to obtain baseline and ongoing data about race relations within Rainbow Schools.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Plan and strategy developed
- Climate survey adapted
- Baseline sample survey takes place
- Regular follow-up sample surveys take place
- Summary report developed and shared with the First Nations Advisory Committee





**2. Goal:** Support opportunities for healing for individuals within the school community, and improving the understanding of the intergenerational impacts of Residential Schools.

## Strategies

**2.1** Promote and explore space for individual and group use of spiritual activities including smudging, tobacco offerings and singing.

**Timeframe:** 2 years

**Success Measures:**

- Elders, Cultural Liaison consulted
- Communication to staff, schools and students
- Space and time set aside for cultural activities
- Increased cultural pride
- Number of students participating

**2.2** Develop guidelines for smudging in Rainbow Schools.

**Timeframe:** 2 years

**Success Measures:**

- First Nations Advisory Committee and Elders consulted
- Smudging guidelines developed
- Smudging guidelines shared with all schools
- Indoor spaces set aside for smudging

**2.3** Partner with local Indigenous organizations on developing and implementing school-based wellness programs.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Discussions take place with Health Centre and Friendship Centre
- Partnership and objectives affirmed
- Indigenous healing resources and practitioners engaged in Rainbow Schools
- New healing and wellness programs offered in schools

**2.4** Explore opportunities for Healing Circles, Sweat Lodges and Ceremonies for students, families, teachers and staff to improve wellness.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Plan and strategy developed
- Resources identified to lead Healing Circles, Sweat Lodges and Ceremonies initiative
- Healing Circles, Sweat Lodges and Ceremonies program established

**2.5** Develop or adopt learning units on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the 60s Scoop.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Indicators:**

- Curriculum working group established
- Learning unit completed
- Learning unit embedded into selected curriculum

**2.6** Ensure schools, staff and students have access to counsellors and mental health supports to facilitate Indigenous healing.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Review existing crisis action plans
- Resources identified to lead Indigenous healing during crises
- Plan and strategy developed

**3. Goal:** Provide training and supports to teachers and staff on how to address racism, race-related bullying and other racial conflicts and situations that may arise.

## Strategies

**3.1** Host regular and ongoing race relations training for teachers to build an understanding of what racism is, recognize implicit bias, and learn effective strategies to deal with racism, race-related bullying and racial conflicts.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Training requirements and needs identified
- Anti-racism training program established
- Improved understanding, skills, strategies and confidence to deal with issues

**3.2** Build an understanding that all Canadians, including Indigenous people, continue to learn the history, cultures and traditions of the First Peoples of this land. Not all Indigenous people necessarily possess historical or cultural knowledge.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Distribute a communiqué to principals, teachers and staff
- Include messaging in Indigenous PD Day activities



**4. Goal:** Develop an understanding and sharing of what decolonization means through the lens of the Indigenous people with the goal of removing systemic barriers.

## Strategies

**4.1** Begin to build an understanding across the system of what “decolonizing” means.

**Timeframe:** 5 years

**Success Measures:**

- Develop a plan and strategy to build an understanding of decolonization
- Consult with First Nations Advisory Committee and educators

**4.2** Establish a process for conducting a review of policies, programs, curriculum and resources to identify systemic barriers to learning and access to services by Indigenous students e.g. cultural appropriation issues, learning away from their home community, etc.

**Timeframe:** 5 years

**Success Measures:**

- Develop a plan and strategy
- Evaluation takes place
- Report provided to Rainbow District School Board

**4.3** Ensure Indigenous learning consists of a balance of First Nation, Métis and Inuit perspectives.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Métis and Inuit representation included in learning units
- Relationships and dialogue established with the local Métis Nation of Ontario and the Tungasuvvingat Inuit





**5. Goal:** Develop initiatives that involve all students working together towards Mno Bimaadziwin (a good life), respectful relationships and recognizing and understanding the intergenerational trauma and impacts arising from residential schools including lateral violence.

## Strategies

**5.1** Make use of Indigenous values systems including Mno Bimaadziwin and the Seven Grandfather Teachings across all Rainbow Schools.

**Timeframe:** 1 year

**Success Measures:**

- Increased awareness of Mno Bimaadziwin and Seven Grandfather Teachings
- Communications and promotional materials include these Indigenous values
- These Indigenous values included in Rainbow District School Board strategic plan

**5.2** Build staff and student understanding of basic cultural ceremonies (e.g. Rights of Passage, Berry Fast, Vision Quests, Fasts, funerals) and support interested students to take part in these ceremonies as part of the self-identity process.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Identify resources, teachers, Elders to speak to these topics
- Hold learning sessions
- Students identify interest and take part in rights of passage

**5.3** Identify and facilitate, through community partners, opportunities for Grandfather Teachings, Grandmother Teachings and Two-Spirited Teachings based upon the medicine wheel.

**Timeframe:** 3 years

**Success Measures:**

- Facilitate opportunities with community partners
- Identify teachers, Elders to speak to these topics

# Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action

All 94 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) are listed here. This is mainly for learning and quick-reference only, to better understand the full scope of the TRC's recommendations. They are not necessarily intended for implementation by Rainbow Schools, Rainbow District School Board or their partners. In fact, many Calls to Action are quite specific and are intended for certain parties e.g. federal and provincial governments.

## LEGACY

### CHILD WELFARE

1. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to commit to reducing the number of Aboriginal children in care by:

- i. Monitoring and assessing neglect investigations.
- ii. Providing adequate resources to enable Aboriginal communities and child-welfare organizations to keep Aboriginal families together where it is safe to do so, and to keep children in culturally appropriate environments, regardless of where they reside.
- iii. Ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the history and impacts of residential schools.
- iv. Ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the potential for Aboriginal communities and families to provide more appropriate solutions to family healing.
- v. Requiring that all child-welfare decision makers consider the impact of the residential school experience on children and their caregivers.

2. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with the provinces and territories, to prepare and publish annual reports on the number of Aboriginal children (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) who are in care, compared with non-Aboriginal children, as well as the reasons for apprehension, the total spending on preventive and care services by child-welfare agencies, and the effectiveness of various interventions.

3. We call upon all levels of government to fully implement Jordan's Principle.

4. We call upon the federal government to enact Aboriginal child-welfare legislation that establishes national standards for Aboriginal child apprehension and custody cases and includes principles that:

- i. Affirm the right of Aboriginal governments to establish and maintain their own child-welfare agencies.
- ii. Require all child-welfare agencies and courts to take the residential school legacy into account in their decision-making.
- iii. Establish, as an important priority, a requirement that placements of Aboriginal children into temporary and permanent care be culturally appropriate.

5. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate parenting programs for Aboriginal families.

### EDUCATION

6. We call upon the Government of Canada to repeal Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada.

7. We call upon the federal government to develop with Aboriginal groups a joint strategy to eliminate education and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

8. We call upon the federal government to eliminate the discrepancy in federal education funding for First Nations children being educated on reserves and those First Nations children being educated off reserves.

9. We call upon the federal government to prepare and publish annual reports comparing funding for the education of First Nations children on and off reserves, as well as educational and income attainments of Aboriginal peoples in Canada compared with non-Aboriginal people.

10. We call on the federal government to draft new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples. The new legislation would include a commitment to sufficient funding and would incorporate the following principles:

- i. Providing sufficient funding to close identified educational achievement gaps within one generation.
- ii. Improving education attainment levels and success rates.
- iii. Developing culturally appropriate curricula.
- iv. Protecting the right to Aboriginal languages, including the teaching of Aboriginal languages as credit courses.
- v. Enabling parental and community responsibility, control, and accountability, similar to what parents enjoy in public school systems.
- vi. Enabling parents to fully participate in the education of their children. Respecting and honouring Treaty relationships.

11. We call upon the federal government to provide adequate funding to end the backlog of First Nations students seeking a post-secondary education.

12. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families.

## LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

13. We call upon the federal government to acknowledge that Aboriginal rights include Aboriginal language rights.

14. We call upon the federal government to enact an Aboriginal Languages Act that incorporates the following principles:

- i. Aboriginal languages are a fundamental and valued element of Canadian culture and society, and there is an urgency to preserve them.
- ii. Aboriginal language rights are reinforced by the Treaties.
- iii. The federal government has a responsibility to provide sufficient funds for Aboriginal-language revitalization and preservation.
- iv. The preservation, revitalization, and strengthening of Aboriginal languages and cultures are best managed by Aboriginal people and communities.
- v. Funding for Aboriginal language initiatives must reflect the diversity of Aboriginal languages.

15. We call upon the federal government to appoint, in consultation with Aboriginal groups, an Aboriginal Languages Commissioner. The commissioner should help promote Aboriginal languages and report on the adequacy of federal funding of Aboriginal-languages initiatives.

16. We call upon post-secondary institutions to create university and college degree and diploma programs in Aboriginal languages.

17. We call upon all levels of government to enable residential school Survivors and their families to reclaim names changed by the residential school system by waiving administrative costs for a period of five years for the name-change process and the revision of official identity documents, such as birth certificates, passports, driver's licenses, health cards, status cards, and social insurance numbers.

## HEALTH

18. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to acknowledge that the current state of Aboriginal health in Canada is a direct result of previous Canadian government policies, including residential schools, and to recognize and implement the health-care rights of Aboriginal people as identified in international law, constitutional law, and under the Treaties.



19. We call upon the federal government, in consultation with Aboriginal peoples, to establish measurable goals to identify and close the gaps in health outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, and to publish annual progress reports and assess long-term trends. Such efforts would focus on indicators such as: infant mortality, maternal health, suicide, mental health, addictions, life expectancy, birth rates, infant and child health issues, chronic diseases, illness and injury incidence, and the availability of appropriate health services.

20. In order to address the jurisdictional disputes concerning Aboriginal people who do not reside on reserves, we call upon the federal government to recognize, respect, and address the distinct health needs of the Métis, Inuit, and off-reserve Aboriginal peoples.

21. We call upon the federal government to provide sustainable funding for existing and new Aboriginal healing centres to address the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual harms caused by residential schools, and to ensure that the funding of healing centres in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories is a priority.

22. We call upon those who can effect change within the Canadian health-care system to recognize the value of Aboriginal healing practices and use them in the treatment of Aboriginal patients in collaboration with Aboriginal healers and Elders where requested by Aboriginal patients.

23. We call upon all levels of government to:

- i. Increase the number of Aboriginal professionals working in the health-care field.
- ii. Ensure the retention of Aboriginal healthcare providers in Aboriginal communities.
- iii. Provide cultural competency training for all healthcare professionals.

24. We call upon medical and nursing schools in Canada to require all students to take a course dealing with Aboriginal health issues, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, and Indigenous teachings and practices. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

## JUSTICE

25. We call upon the federal government to establish a written policy that reaffirms the independence of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to investigate crimes in which the government has its own interest as a potential or real party in civil litigation.

26. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to review and amend their respective statutes of limitations to ensure that they conform to the principle that governments and other entities cannot rely on limitation defences to defend legal actions of historical abuse brought by Aboriginal people.

27. We call upon the Federation of Law Societies of Canada to ensure that lawyers receive appropriate cultural competency training, which includes the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

28. We call upon law schools in Canada to require all law students to take a course in Aboriginal people and the law, which includes the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and

and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and antiracism.

29. We call upon the parties and, in particular, the federal government, to work collaboratively with plaintiffs not included in the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement to have disputed legal issues determined expeditiously on an agreed set of facts.

30. We call upon federal, provincial, and territorial governments to commit to eliminating the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in custody over the next decade, and to issue detailed annual reports that monitor and evaluate progress in doing so.

31. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to provide sufficient and stable funding to implement and evaluate community sanctions that will provide realistic alternatives to imprisonment for Aboriginal offenders and respond to the underlying causes of offending.

32. We call upon the federal government to amend the Criminal Code to allow trial judges, upon giving reasons, to depart from mandatory minimum sentences and restrictions on the use of conditional sentences.

33. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to recognize as a high priority the need to address and prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), and to develop, in collaboration with Aboriginal people, FASD preventive programs that can be delivered in a culturally appropriate manner.

34. We call upon the governments of Canada, the provinces and territories to undertake reforms to the criminal justice system to better address the needs of offenders with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), including:

- i. Providing increased community resources and powers for courts to ensure that FASD is properly diagnosed, and that appropriate community supports are in place for those with FASD.
- ii. Enacting statutory exemptions from mandatory minimum sentences of imprisonment for offenders affected by FASD.
- iii. Providing community, correctional, and parole resources to maximize the ability of people with FASD to live in the community.
- iv. Adopting appropriate evaluation mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of such programs and ensure community safety.

35. We call upon the federal government to eliminate barriers to the creation of additional Aboriginal healing lodges within the federal correctional system.

36. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to work with Aboriginal communities to provide culturally relevant services to inmates on issues such as substance abuse, family and domestic violence, and overcoming the experience of having been sexually abused.

37. We call upon the federal government to provide more supports for Aboriginal programming in halfway houses and parole services.

38. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to commit to eliminating the overrepresentation of Aboriginal youth in custody over the next decade.

39. We call upon the federal government to develop a national plan to collect and publish data on the criminal victimization of Aboriginal people, including data related to homicide and family violence victimization.

40. We call on all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal people, to create adequately funded and accessible Aboriginal-specific victim programs and services with appropriate evaluation mechanisms.

41. We call upon the federal government, in consultation with Aboriginal organizations, to appoint a public inquiry into the causes of, and remedies for, the disproportionate victimization of Aboriginal women and girls. The inquiry's mandate would include:

- i. Investigation into missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.
- ii. Links to the intergenerational legacy of residential schools.

42. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to commit to the recognition and implementation of Aboriginal justice systems in a manner consistent with the Treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal peoples, the Constitution Act, 1982, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, endorsed by Canada in November 2012.

## RECONCILIATION

### Canadian Governments and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People

43. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.

44. We call upon the Government of Canada to develop a national action plan, strategies, and other concrete measures to achieve the goals of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

### Royal Proclamation and Covenant of Reconciliation

45. We call upon the Government of Canada, on behalf of all Canadians, to jointly develop with Aboriginal peoples a Royal Proclamation of Reconciliation to be issued by the Crown. The proclamation would build on the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and the Treaty of Niagara of 1764, and reaffirm the nation-to-nation relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Crown. The proclamation would include, but not be limited to, the following commitments:

- i. Repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius.
- ii. Adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.
- iii. Renew or establish Treaty relationships based on principles of mutual recognition, mutual respect, and shared responsibility for maintaining those relationships into the future.
- iv. Reconcile Aboriginal and Crown constitutional and legal orders to ensure that Aboriginal peoples are full partners in Confederation, including the recognition and integration of Indigenous laws and legal traditions in negotiation and implementation processes involving Treaties, land claims, and other constructive agreements.

46. We call upon the parties to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement to develop and sign a Covenant of Reconciliation that would identify principles for working collaboratively to advance reconciliation in Canadian society, and that would include, but not be limited to:

- i. Reaffirmation of the parties' commitment to reconciliation.
- ii. Repudiation of concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and the reformation of laws, governance structures, and policies within their respective institutions that continue to rely on such concepts.
- iii. Full adoption and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.
- iv. Support for the renewal or establishment of Treaty relationships based on principles of mutual recognition, mutual respect, and shared responsibility for maintaining those relationships into the future.



- v. Enabling those excluded from the Settlement Agreement to sign onto the Covenant of Reconciliation.
- vi. Enabling additional parties to sign onto the Covenant of Reconciliation.

47. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and to reform those laws, government policies, and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts.

### **Settlement Agreement Parties and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

48. We call upon the church parties to the Settlement Agreement, and all other faith groups and interfaith social justice groups in Canada who have not already done so, to formally adopt and comply with the principles, norms, and standards of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for reconciliation. This would include, but not be limited to, the following commitments:

- i. Ensuring that their institutions, policies, programs, and practices comply with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- ii. Respecting Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination in spiritual matters, including the right to practise, develop, and teach their own spiritual and religious traditions, customs, and ceremonies, consistent with Article 12:1 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- iii. Engaging in ongoing public dialogue and actions to support the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- iv. Issuing a statement no later than March 31, 2016, from all religious denominations and faith groups, as to how they will implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

49. We call upon all religious denominations and faith groups who have not already done so to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius.

### **Equity for Aboriginal People in the Legal System**

50. In keeping with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, we call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal organizations, to fund the establishment of Indigenous law institutes for the development, use, and understanding of Indigenous laws and access to justice in accordance with the unique cultures of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

51. We call upon the Government of Canada, as an obligation of its fiduciary responsibility, to develop a policy of transparency by publishing legal opinions it develops and upon which it acts or intends to act, in regard to the scope and extent of Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

52. We call upon the Government of Canada, provincial and territorial governments, and the courts to adopt the following legal principles:

- i. Aboriginal title claims are accepted once the Aboriginal claimant has established occupation over a particular territory at a particular point in time.
- ii. Once Aboriginal title has been established, the burden of proving any limitation on any rights arising from the existence of that title shifts to the party asserting such a limitation.

53. We call upon the Parliament of Canada, in consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, to enact legislation to establish a National Council for Reconciliation. The legislation would establish the council as an independent, national, oversight body with membership jointly appointed by the Government of Canada and national Aboriginal organizations, and consisting of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members. Its mandate would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Monitor, evaluate, and report annually to Parliament and the people of Canada on the Government of Canada's post-apology progress on reconciliation to ensure that government accountability for reconciling the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Crown are maintained in the coming years.
- ii. Monitor, evaluate, and report to Parliament and the people of Canada on reconciliation progress across all levels and sectors of Canadian society, including the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action.
- iii. Develop and implement a multi-year National Action Plan for Reconciliation, which includes research and policy development, public education programs, and resources.
- iv. Promote public dialogue, public/private partnerships, and public initiatives for reconciliation.

54. We call upon the Government of Canada to provide multi-year funding for the National Council for Reconciliation to ensure that it has the financial, human, and technical resources required to conduct its work, including the endowment of a National Reconciliation Trust to advance the cause of reconciliation.

55. We call upon all levels of government to provide annual reports or any current data requested by the National Council for Reconciliation so that it can report on the progress towards reconciliation. The reports or data would include, but not be limited to:

- i. The number of Aboriginal children - including Métis and Inuit children - in care, compared with non-Aboriginal children, the reasons for apprehension, and the total spending on preventive and care services by child-welfare agencies.
- ii. Comparative funding for the education of First Nations children on and off reserves.
- iii. The educational and income attainments of Aboriginal peoples in Canada compared with non-Aboriginal people.
- iv. Progress on closing the gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in a number of health indicators such as: infant mortality, maternal health, suicide, mental health, addictions, life expectancy, birth rates, infant and child health issues, chronic diseases, illness and injury incidence, and the availability of appropriate health services.
- v. Progress on eliminating the overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in youth custody over the next decade.
- vi. Progress on reducing the rate of criminal victimization of Aboriginal people, including data related to homicide and family violence victimization and other crimes.
- vii. Progress on reducing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in the justice and correctional systems.

56. We call upon the prime minister of Canada to formally respond to the report of the National Council for Reconciliation by issuing an annual "State of Aboriginal Peoples" report, which would outline the government's plans for advancing the cause of reconciliation.

### **Professional Development and Training for Public Servants**

57. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

### **Church Apologies and Reconciliation**

58. We call upon the Pope to issue an apology to Survivors, their families, and communities for the Roman Catholic Church's role in the spiritual, cultural, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children in Catholic-run residential schools. We call for that apology to be similar to the 2010 apology issued to Irish victims of abuse and to occur within one year of the issuing of this Report and to be delivered by the Pope in Canada.

59. We call upon church parties to the Settlement Agreement to develop ongoing education strategies to ensure that their respective congregations learn about their church's role in colonization, the history and legacy of residential schools, and why apologies to former residential school students, their families, and communities were necessary.

60. We call upon leaders of the church parties to the Settlement Agreement and all other faiths, in collaboration with Indigenous spiritual leaders, Survivors, schools of theology, seminaries, and other religious training centres, to develop and teach curriculum for all student clergy, and all clergy and staff who work in Aboriginal communities, on the need to respect Indigenous spirituality in its own right, the history and legacy of residential schools and the roles of the church parties in that system, the history and legacy of religious conflict in Aboriginal families and communities, and the responsibility that churches have to mitigate such conflicts and prevent spiritual violence.

61. We call upon church parties to the Settlement Agreement, in collaboration with Survivors and representatives of Aboriginal organizations, to establish permanent funding to Aboriginal people for:

- i. Community-controlled healing and reconciliation projects.
- ii. Community-controlled culture and language revitalization projects.
- iii. Community-controlled education and relationship building projects.
- iv. Regional dialogues for Indigenous spiritual leaders and youth to discuss Indigenous spirituality, self-determination, and reconciliation.

## **Education for Reconciliation**

62. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:

- i. Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.
- ii. Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.
- iii. Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms.
- iv. Establish senior-level positions in government at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education.

63. We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:

- i. Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
- ii. Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.
- iii. Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.
- iv. Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above.

64. We call upon all levels of government that provide public funds to denominational schools to require such schools to provide an education on comparative religious studies, which must include a segment on Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and practices developed in collaboration with Aboriginal Elders.

65. We call upon the federal government, through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, post-secondary institutions and educators, and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and its partner institutions, to establish a national research program with multi-year funding to advance understanding of reconciliation.

## **Youth Programs**

66. We call upon the federal government to establish multiyear funding for community- based youth organizations to deliver programs on reconciliation, and establish a national network to share information and best practices.



## Museums and Archives

67. We call upon the federal government to provide funding to the Canadian Museums Association to undertake, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, a national review of museum policies and best practices to determine the level of compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and to make recommendations.

68. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, and the Canadian Museums Association to mark the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation in 2017 by establishing a dedicated national funding program for commemoration projects on the theme of reconciliation.

69. We call upon Library and Archives Canada to:

- i. Fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Joint-Ortlicher Principles, as related to Aboriginal peoples' inalienable right to know the truth about what happened and why, with regard to human rights violations committed against them in the residential schools.
- ii. Ensure that its record holdings related to residential schools are accessible to the public.
- iii. Commit more resources to its public education materials and programming on residential schools.

70. We call upon the federal government to provide funding to the Canadian Association of Archivists to undertake, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, a national review of archival policies and best practices to:

- i. Determine the level of compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Joint-Ortlicher Principles, as related to Aboriginal peoples' inalienable right to know the truth about what happened and why, with regard to human rights violations committed against them in the residential schools.
- ii. Produce a report with recommendations for full implementation of these international mechanisms as a reconciliation framework for Canadian archives.

## Missing Children and Burial Information

71. We call upon all chief coroners and provincial vital statistics agencies that have not provided to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada their records on the deaths of Aboriginal children in the care of residential school authorities to make these documents available to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

72. We call upon the federal government to allocate sufficient resources to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to allow it to develop and maintain the National Residential School Student Death Register established by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

73. We call upon the federal government to work with churches, Aboriginal communities, and former residential school students to establish and maintain an online registry of residential school cemeteries, including, where possible, plot maps showing the location of deceased residential school children.

74. We call upon the federal government to work with the churches and Aboriginal community leaders to inform the families of children who died at residential schools of the child's burial location, and to respond to families' wishes for appropriate commemoration ceremonies and markers, and reburial in home communities where requested.

75. We call upon the federal government to work with provincial, territorial, and municipal governments, churches, Aboriginal communities, former residential school students, and current landowners to develop and implement strategies and procedures for the ongoing identification, documentation, maintenance, commemoration, and protection of residential school cemeteries or other sites at which residential school children were buried.

This is to include the provision of appropriate memorial ceremonies and commemorative markers to honour the deceased children.

76. We call upon the parties engaged in the work of documenting, maintaining, commemorating, and protecting residential school cemeteries to adopt strategies in accordance with the following principles:

- i. The Aboriginal community most affected shall lead the development of such strategies.
- ii. Information shall be sought from residential school Survivors and other Knowledge Keepers in the development of such strategies.
- iii. Aboriginal protocols shall be respected before any potentially invasive technical inspection and investigation of a cemetery site.

### **National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation**

77. We call upon provincial, territorial, municipal, and community archives to work collaboratively with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to identify and collect copies of all records relevant to the history and legacy of the residential school system, and to provide these to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

78. We call upon the Government of Canada to commit to making a funding contribution of \$10 million over seven years to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, plus an additional amount to assist communities to research and produce histories of their own residential school experience and their involvement in truth, healing, and reconciliation.

### **Commemoration**

79. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal organizations, and the arts community, to develop a reconciliation framework for Canadian heritage and commemoration. This would include, but not be limited to:

- i. Amending the Historic Sites and Monuments Act to include First Nations, Inuit, and Métis representation on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and its Secretariat.
- ii. Revising the policies, criteria, and practices of the National Program of Historical Commemoration to integrate Indigenous history, heritage values, and memory practices into Canada's national heritage and history.
- iii. Developing and implementing a national heritage plan and strategy for commemorating residential school sites, the history and legacy of residential schools, and the contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canada's history.

80. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, to establish, as a statutory holiday, a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to honour Survivors, their families, and communities, and ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process.

81. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors and their organizations, and other parties to the Settlement Agreement, to commission and install a publicly accessible, highly visible, Residential Schools National Monument in the city of Ottawa to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities.

82. We call upon provincial and territorial governments, in collaboration with Survivors and their organizations, and other parties to the Settlement Agreement, to commission and install a publicly accessible, highly visible, Residential Schools Monument in each capital city to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities.

83. We call upon the Canada Council for the Arts to establish, as a funding priority, a strategy for Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to undertake collaborative projects and produce works that contribute to the reconciliation process.

## Media and Reconciliation

84. We call upon the federal government to restore and increase funding to the CBC/Radio-Canada, to enable Canada's national public broadcaster to support reconciliation, and be properly reflective of the diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples, including, but not limited to:

- i. Increasing Aboriginal programming, including Aboriginal-language speakers.
- ii. Increasing equitable access for Aboriginal peoples to jobs, leadership positions, and professional development opportunities within the organization.
- iii. Continuing to provide dedicated news coverage and online public information resources on issues of concern to Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians, including the history and legacy of residential schools and the reconciliation process.

85. We call upon the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, as an independent non-profit broadcaster with programming by, for, and about Aboriginal peoples, to support reconciliation, including but not limited to:

- i. Continuing to provide leadership in programming and organizational culture that reflects the diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples.
- ii. Continuing to develop media initiatives that inform and educate the Canadian public, and connect Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

86. We call upon Canadian journalism programs and media schools to require education for all students on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations.

## Sports and Reconciliation

87. We call upon all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, sports halls of fame, and other relevant organizations, to provide public education that tells the national story of Aboriginal athletes in history.

88. We call upon all levels of government to take action to ensure long-term Aboriginal athlete development and growth, and continued support for the North American Indigenous Games, including funding to host the games and for provincial and territorial team preparation and travel.

89. We call upon the federal government to amend the Physical Activity and Sport Act to support reconciliation by ensuring that policies to promote physical activity as a fundamental element of health and well-being, reduce barriers to sports participation, increase the pursuit of excellence in sport, and build capacity in the Canadian sport system, are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples.

90. We call upon the federal government to ensure that national sports policies, programs, and initiatives are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples, including, but not limited to, establishing:

- i. In collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, stable funding for, and access to, community sports programs that reflect the diverse cultures and traditional sporting activities of Aboriginal peoples.
- ii. An elite athlete development program for Aboriginal athletes.
- iii. Programs for coaches, trainers, and sports officials that are culturally relevant for Aboriginal peoples.
- iv. Anti-racism awareness and training programs.

91. We call upon the officials and host countries of international sporting events such as the Olympics, Pan Am, and Commonwealth games to ensure that Indigenous peoples' territorial protocols are respected, and local Indigenous communities are engaged in all aspects of planning and participating in such events.

## Business and Reconciliation

92. We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with economic development projects.
- ii. Ensure that Aboriginal peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector, and that Aboriginal communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.
- iii. Provide education for management and staff on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

## Newcomers to Canada

93. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with the national Aboriginal organizations, to revise the information kit for newcomers to Canada and its citizenship test to reflect a more inclusive history of the diverse Aboriginal peoples of Canada, including information about the Treaties and the history of residential schools.

94. We call upon the Government of Canada to replace the Oath of Citizenship with the following:

*I swear (or affirm) that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, Her Heirs and Successors, and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada including Treaties with Indigenous Peoples, and fulfill my duties as a Canadian citizen.*





# Rainbow Schools

*Reaching minds. Touching hearts.*