Indian Residential School Historic Timeline

The Recollets, a religious order from France, established the first Residential School in Quebec City.

1763

The Royal Proclamation of 1763, issued by the British Crown, acknowledged Indigenous land rights as "Not having been ceded to or purchased by Us... are reserved to the said Indians, or any of them."

The Mechanic's Institute is established in 1829, which later became the Mohawk Institute Residential School in 1834. Mohawk becomes the oldest and longest continually run Residential School in Canada.

The Bagot Commission recommended the establishment of manual labour schools for Indigenous children.

The Robinson Treaties, also known as the Robinson-Superior Treaties, north of the upper Great Lakes, provided for the creation of 24 new reserves.

The Gradual Civilization Act required that all Indian males over the age of 21 who could speak, read, and write English or French be "enfranchised," meaning that they had to renounce their Indian status and no longer be Indigenous and were to become a British subject.

The Constitution Act (also known as The British North America Act) creates the Dominion of Canada which includes Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. It also gave the Federal Government responsibility for Indigenous Peoples and their lands.

Treaty No. 3 was signed with Ojibway/Saulteaux First Nations from Southeastern Ontario (Lake of the Wood area).

Treaty No. 5 was signed with the Saulteaux and Swampy Cree of from Central and Northern Manitoba

The Federal Government passed the Indian Act giving them exclusive right to control legislation regarding who is deemed an "Indian, and Indian lands" and established related legal rights.

The Davin Report recommended the creation of a system of Industrial Schools where Indian and Metis children were separated from their parents to reduce the influence of the "wigwam."

Following recommendations made in the Davin Report, Sir John A. MacDonald authorized the creation of Residential Schools in the Canadian West.

The Indian Act was amended to formalize in law that Traditional First Nations' ceremonies, such as Potlatches and the Sun Dance were made illegal and anyone caught participating would be imprisoned.

Allegations of physical and sexual abuse emerge from Rupert's Land School.

The Federal Government and some Christian churches enter into a formal agreement to operate Residential Schools.

The Indian Act was amended. A European style education was now compulsory for status Indians. Children are forbidden from practicing their own language, culture, and spirituality and are forced to learn and adopt English, Western culture, and Christianity.

Treaty No. 9 was signed by Ojibway, Cree and other First Nations from Northern Ontario (James Bay region).

St. Anne's Residential School in Fort Albany is established and under the direction of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and the Grey Nuns of the Cross (also known as the Sisters of Charity) with the financial and administrative support of the federal government.

Bishop Horden Hall in Moose Cree, also known throughout the years as Bishop Horden Memorial School, Moose Factory Residential School, and Horden Hall opens and is ran by Anglican missionaries.

Chief Medical Officer for Indian Affairs, Dr. P.H. Bryce, reports that Residential School conditions are "dangerous to health." His report statistics showed students were dying at rates between 24 to 69 percent. However, these reports never gained much publicity as the Department's head bureaucrat, Duncan Campbell Scott, discredited his report and later dismissed Dr. Bryce from his duties at Indian Affairs.

Chapleau Residential School, also known as St. John's opens and is operated by the Anglican Church of Canada until 1919 north of the town of Chapleau, ON. In 1920, a new school is opened at a site south of Chapleau. In 1908, an Indian Affairs inspector said that seven of thirty-one children at the school had died in a three-month period, and parents temporarily stopped sending their children to the school. Thirteen years later, parents hired a lawyer stating that students were being cruelly treated.

Residential School attendance is made mandatory for every Indian child between seven and fifteen years of age, however, parents reported that children as young as four were taken.

1927

Pelican Lake school is established near Sioux Lookout, ON and operated by the Anglican Church of Canada. Despite its location on the Canadian Shield, the students cleared a portion of the school's 287 acres for a farm operation. In the late 1940s there was severe overcrowding in the school. In the 1950s the school increasingly served as a residence for students attending local day schools.

The Federal Government begins to apply some Provincial curriculum standards to Residential Schools and to integrate Indigenous students into mainstream schools. Despite this, Residential Schools continued to be established in the North during this period.

Chapleau Residential School, or St. John's closes after being damaged by fires in 1944 and 1947.

Indian Affairs Regional Inspectors recommend the abolition of Residential Schools, yet they continued.

Approximately 10,000 students are still attending 60 schools across the country.

The Poplar Hill School opens in a small school building that had previously been operated by the Mennonite Northern Light Gospel Mission of Red Lake, Ontario. The Northern Youth Program branch of the Mission operates the residential school. In 1969 it became the Poplar Hill Development School.

The partnership between the government and churches ends, and the Federal Government takes over the Residential School system.

The Mohawk Institute Residential School in Brantford, Ontario closes.

Responsibility for education of Inuit is transferred to the government of the Northwest Territories and the province of Quebec. At the request of the National Indian Brotherhood, transfer of education management to Indigenous

Stirland Lake High School, also known as Wahbon Bay Academy opens on remote Stirland Lake in Northwestern Ontario and is operated by Mennonite program Northern Youth Programs Inc. This school is exclusively for boys.

The National Indian Brotherhood produces a paper, Indian Control of Indian Education.

Grand Council Treaty No. 9 is established.

St. Anne's Residential School located in Fort Albany closes. The residence was phased out and the school transferred to the local First Nation. Former staff members have been convicted on charges that include indecent assault, assault causing bodily harm, assault, and administering a noxious substance.

After being taken over by the federal government in 1969, Bishop Horden Hall finally closes the Horden Hall Student Residence this year.

Cristal Lake Residential School opens in remote Northwestern Ontario and operated by Mennonite organization Northern Youth Programs Inc. This school is exclusively for girls.

Grand Council Treaty No. 9 made a public declaration – A Declaration of Nishnawbe-Aski (The People and the Land) – of our rights and principles

Pelican Lake Residential School, or Pelican Falls closes. It was taken over by the federal government in 1969 and upon its closure, was operating solely as a hostel.

Roughly 1,200 children are enrolled in 12 Residential Schools across Canada.

Grand Council Treaty No. 9 changes their name to Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN).

The Federal Government changes the Indian Act to reinstate the status of Indigenous women who had previously lost their status by marrying a non-status man, however, her status (along with that of her children and grandchildren) was still not equal status to Indigenous men and their descendants.

The Cristal Lake girls' school merges with the Stirland Lake boys' school, run by the same organization, the Northern Youth Programs Inc. Following the merger, the Cristal Lake facility was closed, and the entire operation was moved to Stirland Lake which became co-educational.

Students and parents of Stirland Lake (Wahbon Bay Academy) stage a protest against excessively restrictive conditions at the school. After a cooling off period following the protest, several students do not return.

Apologies are issued from the United Church, Catholic Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Anglican Church, Presbyterian Church, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for their participation in the Residential School System.

The Poplar Hill Development School, formerly Poplar Hill School closes.

Phil Fontaine (then the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations) and other began to speak publicly about the abuses they suffered at Residential Schools and their stories were reported by the media.

Stirland Lake (Wahbon Bay Academy) closes when Northern Youth Programs decides to withdraw permanently from providing residential school programs.

The final Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, a 4000-page document, is released. It calls for a public inquiry into the effects of the Residential Schools upon generations of First Nations people.

The last federally run Residential School, the Gordon Indian Residential School in Punnichy, Saskatchewan closes.

The last church run Residential School, Grollier Hall closes.

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation was established with a mandate to encourage and support Indigenous Peoples in building and reinforcing sustainable healing processes that address the impacts of physical, emotional, spiritual, and sexual abuse experienced in the Residential School System, and the generations that followed. Its mandate ended in 2014.

The Legacy of Hope Foundation (LHF) was founded with a mandate to educate and raise awareness and understanding of the impacts of Residential Schools including the ongoing intergenerational effects on First Nations, Inuit and Metis, and to support the continued healing process of Residential School Survivors and their families.

Representatives from the Assembly of First Nations, Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the Metis National Council and the Native Women's Association of Canada sign the Indian Residential Schools Agreement with the Government of Canada and church entities.

On June 11, 2008, as part of a legal agreement with Indigenous Peoples, the Government of Canada issues a Statement of Apology to former students of Indian Residential Schools.

The Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established with funds from the Settlement Agreement with the mandate to document the truth of Survivors, their families, communities, and anyone who

Pope Benedict XVI expresses "sorrow" about the abuse of Residential School students during a private meeting with Phil Fontaine, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission communities respond to and heal of Canada holds five national events. Activities include statement-taking, Healing Circles, public hearings, and educational programming.

Section 67 of the Canadian Human Rights Act (a federal law that addresses discrimination) is removed, allowing it to come into effect on First Nations' reserves and territories.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission held a four-day national event in Vancouver which included a Walk for Reconciliation that involved more than 40,000 people.

2015

The Canadian Press obtained a signed copy of the 2015 agreement through federal Access-to-Information laws, marking what appears to be the first time the document has been widely publicized. In this document, Canada agreed to "forever discharge" Catholic entities from their promise to raise \$25 million for residential school survivors and also picked up their legal bill.

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation opened at the University of Winnipeg as a repository for all of the testimonies given to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The Legacy of Hope Foundation holds more than 600 survivor testimonies.

On December 15, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada held its final national event in Ottawa and released its 94 Calls To Action for all Canadians.

The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, in a landmark decision, found the Federal Government guilty of racially discriminating against First Nations children by providing flawed and inequitable child welfare services; and by failing to ensure equitable access to government services. The complaint was filed against the Federal government by the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society and the Assembly of First Nations.

Since 2007, Canada has been only one of four member-countries of the United Nations to vote against and maintain a "permanent objector" status for a declaration that was to enshrine rights for Indigenous people worldwide. On May 9, 2019, Canada announced it would adopt the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a non-legally binding "aspirational document."

The First Nation of Tk'emlups te Secwépemc announces on May 27 that following searches with ground penetrating radar (GPR) on the grounds of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School, 215 suspected unmarked graves were detected. Following the announcement there is an outpouring of support and grief across the globe.

On August 10, the Government of Canada announces approximately \$320 million in additional support for Indigenous-led, Survivor-centric and culturally sensitive initiatives and investments to help Indigenous from the ongoing impacts of residential schools.

On September 24, the Catholic Bishops of Canada issues a formal apology to the Indigenous Peoples of the Land.

2021-Today

Following in the footsteps of Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, First Nations across the country undertake the important and sacred process of searching their own former Residential School grounds. Using GPR, thousands of suspected unmarked graves are uncovered across the country with new announcements being made until this day.

2022

In April, Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum announces that Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) has secured funds for NAN to implement the Reclamation & Healing strategy through a department that will "develop healing initiatives to support our families and communities through community-driven initiatives as they search for their loved ones."

2022

On June 8, Kimberly Murray was appointed as Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools. She previously worked for Survivors Secretariat of Mohawk Institute and was the Executive Director of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

2022

Pope Francis visited Canada from July 24 to 29, 2022, with stops in the provinces of Alberta and Quebec and the territory of Nunavut. The trip mainly focused on apologizing for the Catholic Church's role in the Canadian Indian residential school system and reconciliation with the country's Indigenous peoples.

"In order for Indian Residential School Survivors to move on to a stronger and healthier future, we must address our own individual history's to address the issues which broke us. This individual work will solidify and will make our nation strong again."

Peter Sackaney, Survivor and Families Empowerment Council (SAFE Council)



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: reclamationandhealing.ca



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