



OKANAGAN NATION ALLIANCE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 28, 2026

Syilx Okanagan Nation Stands with Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Against Residential School Denialism

tkwəlniwt (Westbank), Syilx Okanagan Nation Territory – The Syilx Okanagan Nation stands with Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc in condemning the recent demonstration by Second Sons Canada near the former Kamloops Indian Residential School and the hate propaganda, residential school denialism and racism represented by these actions.

Syilx and Secwépemc people are neighbours, relatives and longstanding allies, connected through family lineages, kinship and generations of relationships between our communities. What happened at Tk'emlúps is not something the Syilx Okanagan Nation views from a distance. It is personal to our Nation.

Many Syilx children were taken from their families and sent to the Kamloops Indian Residential School. Syilx Survivors attended that institution, and their children, grandchildren and families continue to carry those experiences and histories today.

“Our Nations are connected through our families, our histories and longstanding relationships between our peoples. Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc has stood alongside the Syilx Okanagan Nation, and today we stand firmly alongside them,” stated yǐlmixʷm Clarence Louie, Tribal Chair of the Syilx Okanagan Nation.

“This denialism will not divide our Nations or erase our histories. We will stand together, as our people have always done.”

For Syilx Survivors and families, the denialism demonstrated at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School is especially harmful.

“Our Survivors fought for generations to have the truth of what happened to them heard and believed. Our people were there. When that history is denied, it denies the lived experiences of Syilx Survivors and the histories carried by their children, grandchildren and families,” stated yǐlmixʷm sil-teekin Chief Greg Gabriel, Syilx Child and Family Governance Representative.

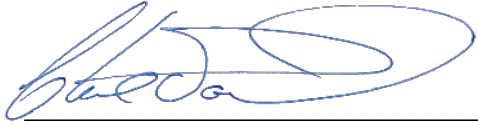
“Residential school denialism is not an abstract debate. It causes real harm to living people. Our Survivors should not have to keep defending the truth of what happened to them. We will not allow their voices or our families' histories to be erased.”

The Syilx Okanagan Nation calls upon Syilx people, First Nations everywhere, and all those who stand with Survivors and their families to come together. Attend the Walk for the Children and Truth and Reconciliation gatherings in our communities. Stand with Survivors. Stand with the families whose children were taken. Stand together against residential school denialism.

To Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, its Survivors, families and community: we have stood together before. We stand together now. And we will continue to stand together.

Limləmt,

OKANAGAN NATION ALLIANCE

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Clarence Louie', is written over a horizontal line.

ki law na yilmix^{wm} Chief Clarence Louie
Tribal Chair

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