

To the University of Lethbridge community,

On Thursday May 27th, we learned about the discovery of the bodies of 215 Indigenous Children at the location of the former Residential School in Kamloops British Columbia.

Like many, we are horrified, and heartbroken by the discovery. We are also aware that this is not rare, and that the knowledge and oral history carried down through the Tk'emlúps te Secwe'pemc people, acknowledged these missing children.

These children were and still are loved and wanted by their families and community, and we send our prayers and love to all who have experienced such immense grief and pain. We also acknowledge and send our love to those who survived not only this school, but all residential schools. As a society we must work to make sure that these survivors have support and access to what they need to heal.

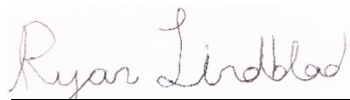
The Residential Schools were created to destroy and eliminate Indigenous people, who have lived on this continent for thousands of years. These deaths were an intentional attempt at eradicating Indigenous people, Indigenous language, Indigenous tradition, Indigenous stories, and families. The story of how Canada was founded, is not the peaceful one that many of us have been taught, and Reconciliation can only begin to happen when we begin to de-colonize our ways of thinking and living. The University of Lethbridge sits on Treaty 7, the Traditional and enduring Blackfoot homelands of the Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, the Tsut'ina, lyaxe Nakoda Nations and Metis people. We understand that as students within a westernized education system, that we have, and continue to benefit from the colonization of Treaty 7. As a Students' Union we will continue to use the privilege we have, to raise the voices of those on our campus whose voices have gone unheard for far too long.

The University of Lethbridge sits only sixty-two kilometers away from another Residential School, whose history is likely as traumatic as the former school in Kamloops. As we attend classes here, we also understand that many of our classmates, are the descendants of survivors. We honor them, and continue to stand with them against injustices. We understand the attempted genocide of the Indigenous people is still happening and we must as a community stand together against it. We know that this discovery has left many within our community in a state of grief that we cannot even begin to understand. Please do not suffer alone. You can contact mental health support on campus through health.centre@uleth.ca, as well the National Indian Residential School Crisis Line is available at 1 – 866 – 925 – 4419. Furthermore, you can find Hope for Wellness 24/7 mental health resource for Indigenous people offered in a variety of dialects at 1 – 855 – 242 – 3310 or at <https://hopeforwellness.ca>.

Yours in solidarity,



Holly Kletke, President



Ryan Lindblad, VP External



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