



June 30, 2021

**RE: Cowessess First Nation**

APUS is deeply saddened with the announcement issued from Cowessess First Nation last week regarding the 751 unmarked graves at the site of the former Marieval Residential School. Our hearts are heavy with the realization that this is only the beginning of uncovering the horrors of what Residential Schools Survivors and Indigenous communities have been saying for years. We as a nation are only just starting to comprehend what the truth component of “Truth and Reconciliation” really means to Indigenous peoples.

With the important work that is going to be happening by some First Nation communities around the former Residential Schools, it is important for us to lend our support to Indigenous students and friends that we may have as they mourn with every child that is found. Over the summer and for the next while, as we become more aware of the atrocities that happened at these Institutions and the harm that it has caused to the survivors and their descendants, we must take the time to educate ourselves and sit with this extreme discomfort as we learn the truth that is being revealed. For many decades, survivors shared their stories and truths and it is unfortunate that it took us this long to listen. We need to do better; we can do better.

With Canada Day coming up, the celebrations that once took place in our neighbourhoods are now a time to grieve and reflect on what this day represents to the First Nations, Metis and Inuit people of this land. Instead of lighting fireworks this July 1st and celebrating a nation that hid these shameful acts, take that time to read the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s [Calls to Action](#), and the University of Toronto’s [Final Report of the Steering Committee for the U of T Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#).

Further books to read (this is only a tiny list of what is available):

- **Up Ghost River**, Edmund Metatawabin
  - A powerful, raw and eloquent memoir about the abuse former First Nations chief Edmund Metatawabin endured in residential school in the 1960s, the resulting trauma, and the spirit he rediscovered within himself and his community through traditional spirituality and knowledge.
- **They Came for the Children: Canada, Aboriginal Peoples, and Residential Schools**, Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- **Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada**, Paulette Regan
- **A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada**, E. Brian Titley
- **Truth and Indignation: Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools**, Ronald Niezen
- **Reconciling Canada: Critical Perspectives on the Culture of Redress**, Jennifer Henderson and Pauline Wakeham
- **Residential Schools, With the Words and Images of Survivors**, Larry Loyie, Wayne K. Spear and Constance Brissenden

In Solidarity,  
The Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students