

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

#### **Condolences to Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc and all Indigenous Communities Across Canada**

**Chilliwack, B.C., June 3, 2021** - Last week we heard of the discovery of 215 bodies found in the area around the Kamloops Indian Residential School. This is another stark reminder of the harm Indigenous peoples, families and communities have suffered and continue to suffer. The British Columbia Economic Development Association (BCEDA) recognizes the tragic, heartbreaking devastation that the Canadian residential school system has inflicted upon many. Our thoughts are with all of those in mourning, including our friends from the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc. We call upon those who can make changes, to investigate what happened and work toward ensuring that this never happens again. Reconciliation can only occur if we are willing to acknowledge what has happened and then take action.

"I can find no words to adequately state how I feel, except to express that this discovery profoundly saddens me and our thoughts are with Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, as well as with all Indigenous communities across Canada. I can only hope now that sincere efforts are taken to work towards reconciliation and encourage anyone impacted by this finding to please reach out to the various support agencies in your area," said Dale Wheeldon, President and CEO of BCEDA.

BCEDA will be reaching out to all of our members to find ways to support survivors of residential schools and Indigenous families who lost children during this horrible time in Canada's history. In the meantime, BCEDA remains committed to supporting Indigenous communities through their healing journeys and toward economic reconciliation.

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#### **Contact**

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#### **About BCEDA**

The BC Economic Development Association (BCEDA) is the leading professional association of economic development practitioners in the Province of BC. BCEDA currently has over 500 members from communities throughout the province. BCEDA provides services that help member communities grow and expand new and existing businesses, attract new business investments, and work towards strategic infrastructure investment, land use planning, and community enhancement. BCEDA started Canada's first Economic Disaster Recovery Program in 2012 to assist communities impacted by disasters.