



# Residential Schools and Historic Trauma

Presentation to Trustees of Superior  
Greenstone District School Board  
Nicole Richmond, Aboriginal Liaison  
December 7, 2015

# Presentation Overview

- Indian Act
- Residential Schools
- Historical Trauma
  - Sixties Scoop
  - Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- Next Steps at SGDSB

# The Indian Act

- Race-based legislation governing:
  - where Indians are live,
  - how property is managed,
  - who can and who can't belong to a band,
  - what options are available to you to give up being an Indian (enfranchisement)



# Who are Indians?

- Section 6 of the Indian Act
  - 6(1) – having 2 parents registered on a band list
  - 6(2) – having 1 parent registered on a band list
    - If a 6(2) parent has a child with a non-Indian, that child will not have status under the Indian Act
    - If two 6(2) parents has a child, that child will become a 6(1)

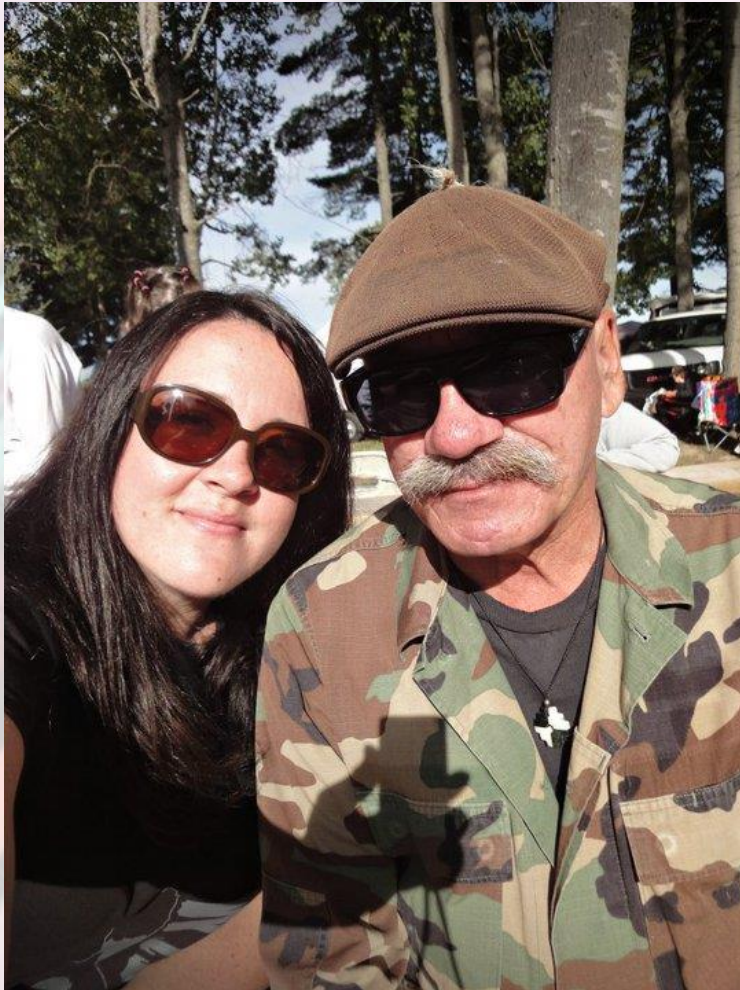
# Emma and Nicole

- Emma and I are best friends. Emma and I are both half-native – she has a non-native mom, and I have a non-native dad.
- What's the difference, legally?



Emma Taylor and Nicole Richmond at Curve Lake First Nation powwow, 2013.





Emma is a 6(1). Her non-native mom, Mary, became a 6(1) by marrying her native dad, Merrit, who is a 6(1).

I am a 6(2). My dad, Reg is non-native, and my native mom, Diane, is a 6(1). Reg did not gain status by marrying my mom.



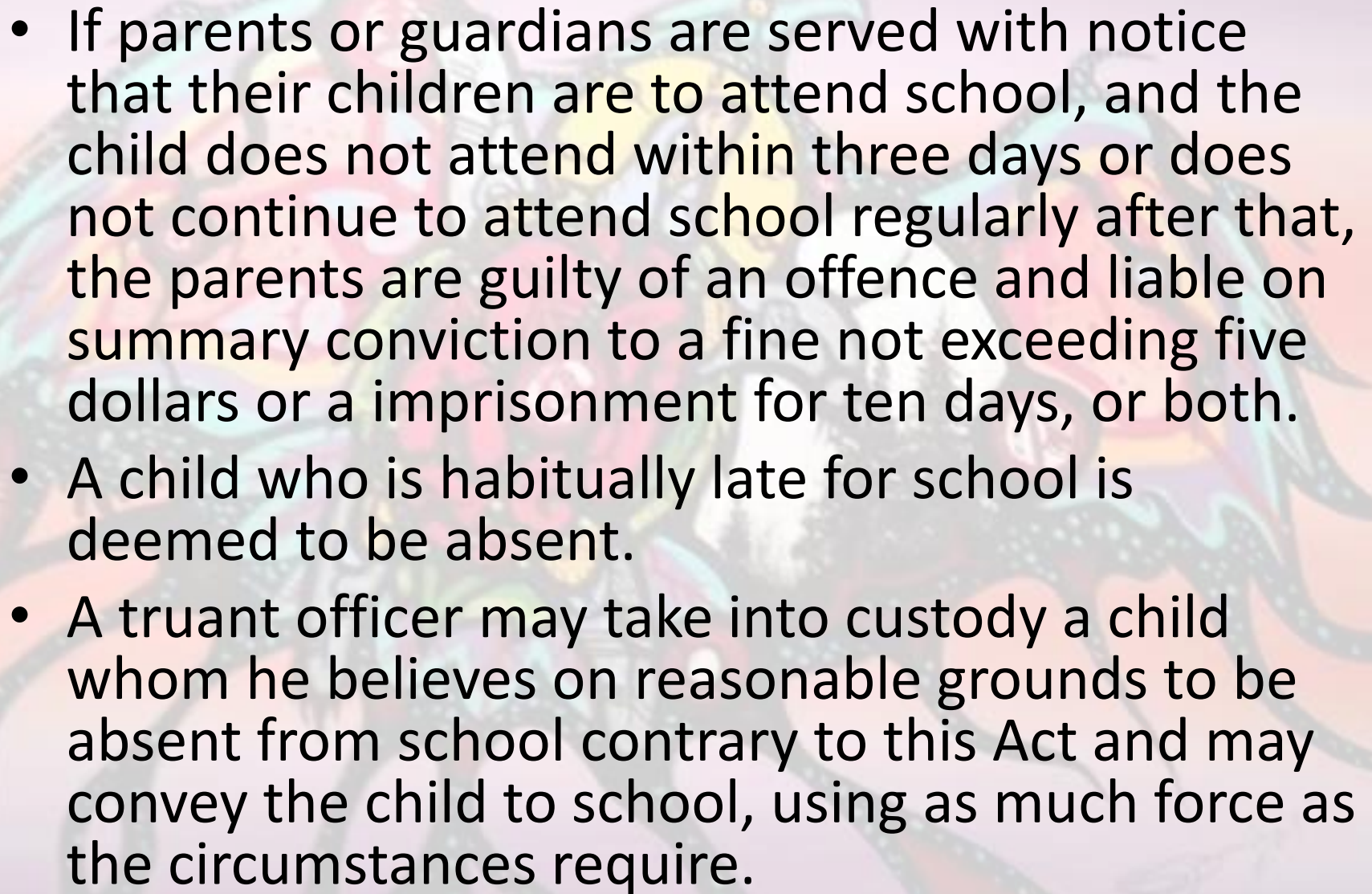
# What are residential schools?

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Knez8ZQ1XxQ&index=2&list=PLkXnb3KVbjvSuPikkbqluZ55s\\_HCzbcRM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Knez8ZQ1XxQ&index=2&list=PLkXnb3KVbjvSuPikkbqluZ55s_HCzbcRM)



- Section 119 of the Indian Act empowers truant officers to enforce attendance of Indian Children, aged 7 – 16, at school. Truant officers can enter any place where he believes there are Indian children who should be attending school, and notify parents or guardians that they are required to attend school.
- It is illegal for a truancy officer to enter a house, unless he has a warrant. A truant officer can obtain a warrant from a Justice of the Peace, *ex parte* (without notice), based on affidavit evidence that: there is a school age child in the house, that entry is necessary to enforce attendance, and that it is believed entry into the house will be refused.
- The Justice of the Peace can also authorize force to be used. If force is to be used, a peace officer is to accompany a truancy officer.



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- If parents or guardians are served with notice that their children are to attend school, and the child does not attend within three days or does not continue to attend school regularly after that, the parents are guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding five dollars or a imprisonment for ten days, or both.
  - A child who is habitually late for school is deemed to be absent.
  - A truant officer may take into custody a child whom he believes on reasonable grounds to be absent from school contrary to this Act and may convey the child to school, using as much force as the circumstances require.

# What does age 7 look like?

- The Indian Act authorized removal of children from their families at age 7 (although there are many stories of children being taken much sooner- some as young as age 3!).
- My friends shared photos of their children at age 7. Some had first-hand experience with the residential school system.
- All shared the heart-break they would experience if they lost their child at age 7.





Kelli Marshall, of her 7-year old twins, Kailah and Kieran: "I'm writing a play about residential schools and I have thought about what it would be like if my seven year olds were taken. I can't image what they went through. You have a better chance removing me from my right arm than one of my children."



Jolie Rouselle, when asked about her reaction if she lost her 7-year old Xavier to residential schools: "It would be the worst day of my life, like my world would end".





Val Desmoulin, on the prospect of losing 7-year old Jenna: “Back then they had no choice but to let the children go and I know from one of my mom’s stories that her mom Jane Kash took the children out in the bush around the same time they knew the Indian Agent was coming. I would most certainly do the same thing. No one and I mean no one, will ever take away my child or children, Indian agent or not.”





Stephanie Twance, when asked about losing her 7-year old Abby to residential schools: “It would be devastating. It would tear the family apart. We would be so worried. They are still babies at 7. At 7 they are at the age where you are starting to teach them life skills but they still need you by their side. I really don’t know how I would ever sleep at night. It made me want to cry just thinking about it.”





Sara Jane Souliere: "My father attended Spanish for 10 years. 6 until 16. They kicked him out at 16 once the school was no longer receiving funding for his education. [If I lost my daughter Lillian at age 7] I would have a gaping hole in my heart and soul. My children are my life."



# Discussion

- When do you think Section 119 of the Indian Act was repealed?



# Answer

- Section 119 of the Indian Act was repealed in the spring of 2014 by Bill C-428 (which passed in fall 2013)
- <https://openparliament.ca/bills/41-2/C-428/>



# And what happened at these schools?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdR9HcmiXLA>



# Historic Trauma

- In social work, refers to cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, extending over an individual lifespan and across generations, caused by traumatic experiences.
- The historical trauma response (HTR) is a constellation of features in reaction to this trauma.

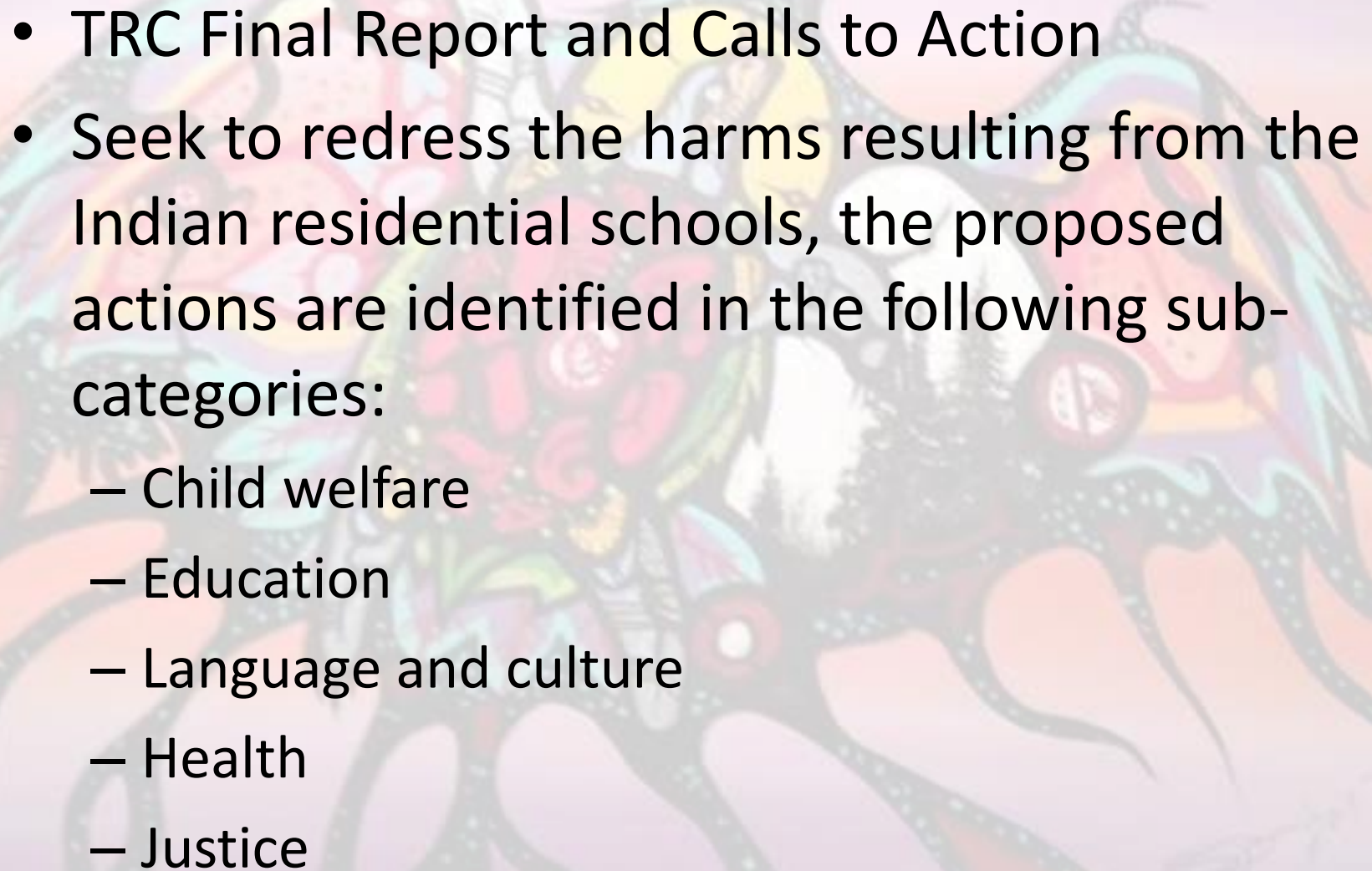
# Other Symptoms

- Sixties Scoop
  - Adopting out of as many as 20000+ First Nation children into non-Aboriginal families in the 1960s and continuing until the 1980s
- Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women
  - Disproportionate number of deaths of First Nation women
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFrjYldk6pA>



# Truth and Reconciliation

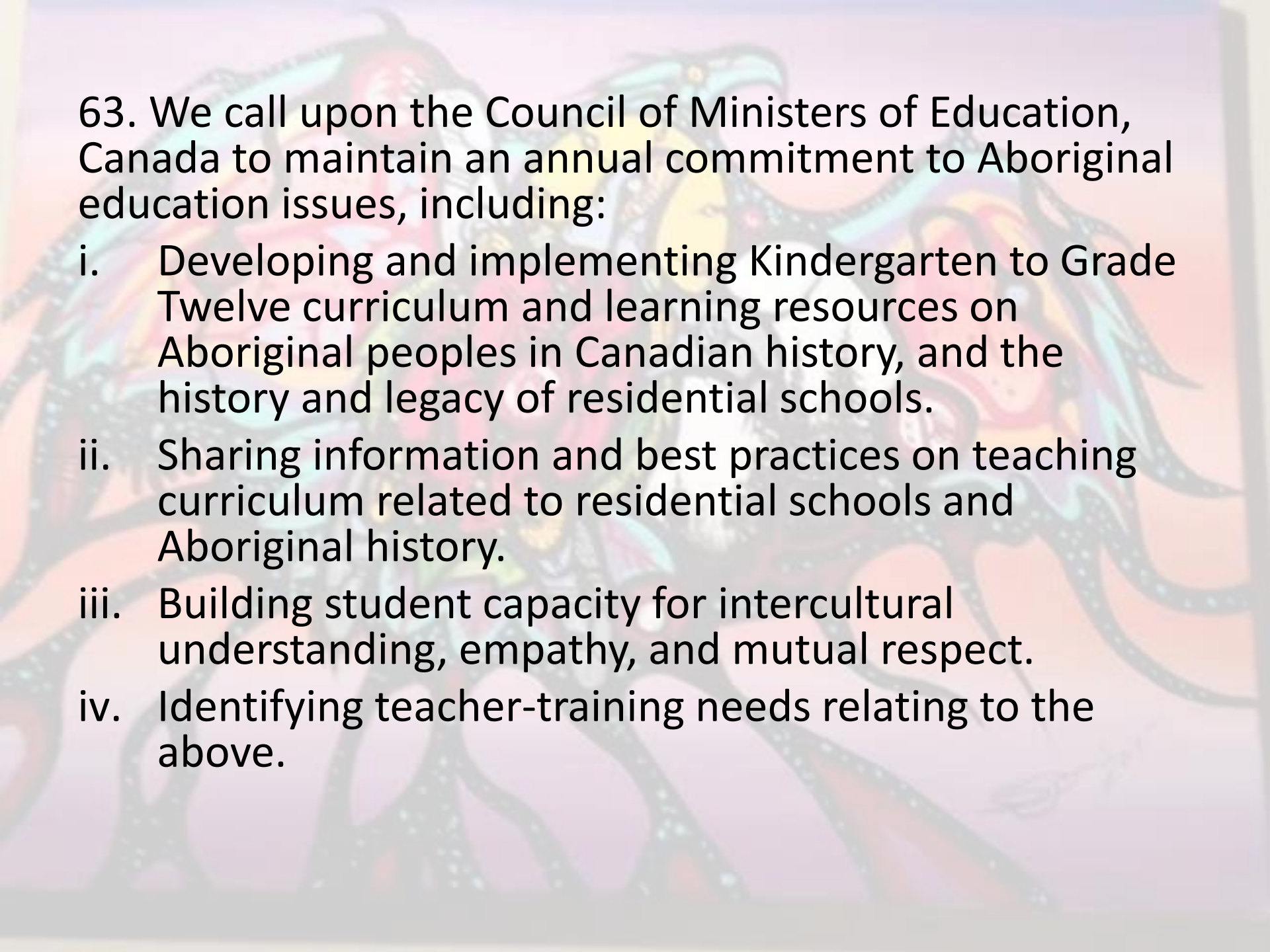
- The **Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada** (TRC) was organized by the parties to the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement.
  - holistic and comprehensive response to the charges of abuse suffered by First Nations children at Indian Residential Schools.
  - The Commission was officially established on June 2, 2008, and was completed in June 2015.
- <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/06/02/canadas-residential-schools-cultural-genocide-truth-and-reconciliation-commission-says.html>

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- TRC Final Report and Calls to Action
  - Seek to redress the harms resulting from the Indian residential schools, the proposed actions are identified in the following sub-categories:
    - Child welfare
    - Education
    - Language and culture
    - Health
    - Justice



62. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:

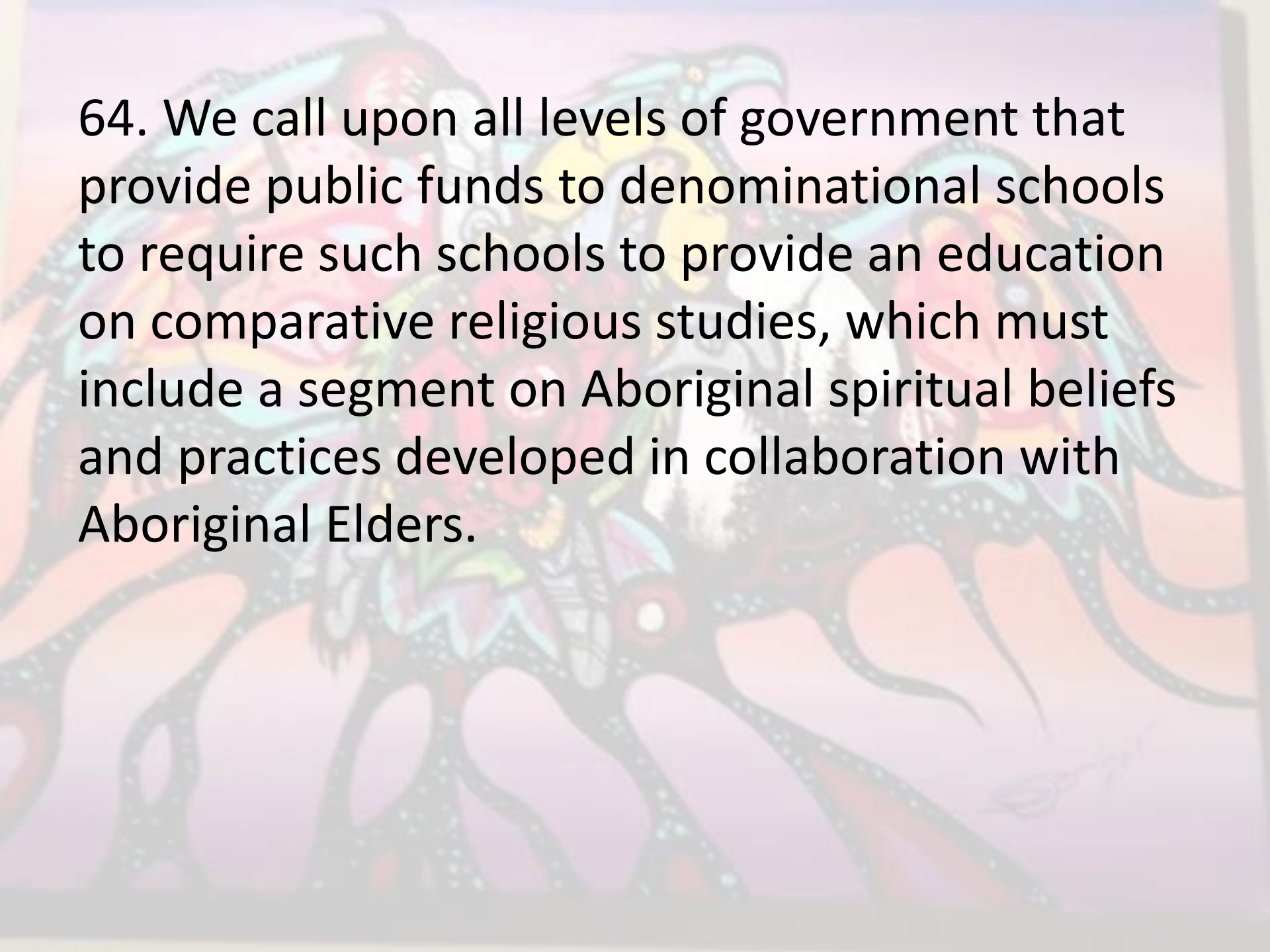
- i. Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.
- ii. Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.
- iii. Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms.
- iv. Establish senior-level positions in government at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education.



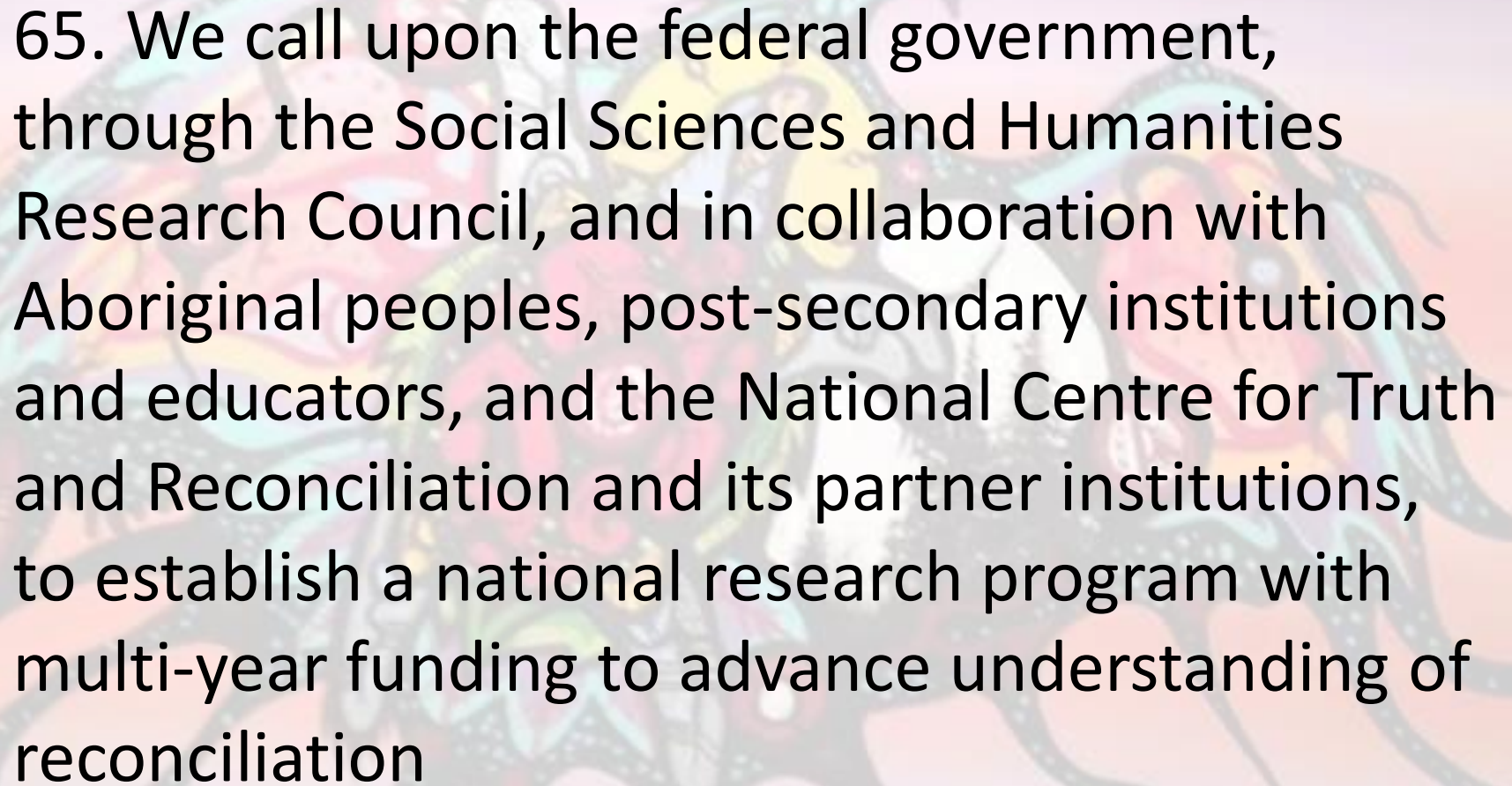
63. We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:

- i. Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
- ii. Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.
- iii. Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.
- iv. Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above.





64. We call upon all levels of government that provide public funds to denominational schools to require such schools to provide an education on comparative religious studies, which must include a segment on Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and practices developed in collaboration with Aboriginal Elders.



65. We call upon the federal government, through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, post-secondary institutions and educators, and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and its partner institutions, to establish a national research program with multi-year funding to advance understanding of reconciliation



# What are we doing at SGDSB?

- FNMI Collaborative Inquiry (evaluate success factors at GCHS)
- Reconciliation Begins with Me – Conference Series
- Walking with our Sisters exhibit
- Our Welcoming Learning Environments
- Continuing to roll out the SGDSB Aboriginal Handbook
- Trauma Informed Schools training

# Questions?

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