



## **Information Note Advice to Premier**

**Date: May 23, 2018**

**Cliff #: 113121**

**Issue: Tour of UBC's Indian Residential School History and Dialog Centre**

### **Background / Facts:**

- Following a conference held in March, 2011 by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), the UBC First Nations House of Learning and the Indian Residential School Survivor's Society began discussions about the creation of an institution of memory addressing the experience of survivors of the residential schools on the West Coast.
- As it neared the end of its mandate, the TRC issued a request for proposals to establish a National Research Centre to be a repository for its records.
- UBC supported the successful bid by the University of Manitoba to locate the national centre in Winnipeg, with the understanding that UBC would pursue the possibility of establishing a West Coast affiliate Centre on its Vancouver campus.
- When the TRC conducted its final West Coast National Event in September 2013, UBC President Stephen Toope announced the university's intention to build the Centre.
- In June 2016, the UBC Board of Governors approved the Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre (IRSC) for construction.
- On September 12, 2016, President Santa Ono announced the start of construction.
- On April 9, 2018, the Centre had its official opening.

### **Analysis:**

The Centre has been developed with four functions in mind:

1. To provide access to TRC and other records for survivors, families, and communities, and to be a place where survivors and others can share their experiences and reflect on their significance.
2. To support research on residential schools and other histories as the Centre's records become available and as the Centre's information systems make them usable.
3. To provide curricular and public information, through the use of interactive technology, that will allow people from many different backgrounds to explore records in ways that are most meaningful to them.
4. To provide a place where people can meet to think and talk about the representation of history and other issues of common concern – the challenges and opportunities facing communities, the benefits of collaboration, and the knowledge and understanding that will advance their common work.

The IRSC is designed to be a history centre as well as a dialogue centre where fundamental questions about history, how it is discussed in schools and communities and in public communications for example are discussed.

The Centre is a place for those conversations to occur and ensure regular and sustained interactions among many people who aspire to advance their work.

The Centre will also provide a place to develop advanced curricular materials for classes at UBC and other post-secondary and K-12 institutions, using interactive technology that can be replicated in many other places throughout Canada and elsewhere.

**Conclusion:**

- The Centre provides a significant opportunity to students and the public to learn more about the Indian Residential Schools and will enable enhanced curriculum development in the K-12 and post-secondary systems.
- The Provincial Government could partner with the Centre to ensure that the invaluable resources are accessible to government employees, supporting the recently released “Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia’s Relationship with Indigenous People”.

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