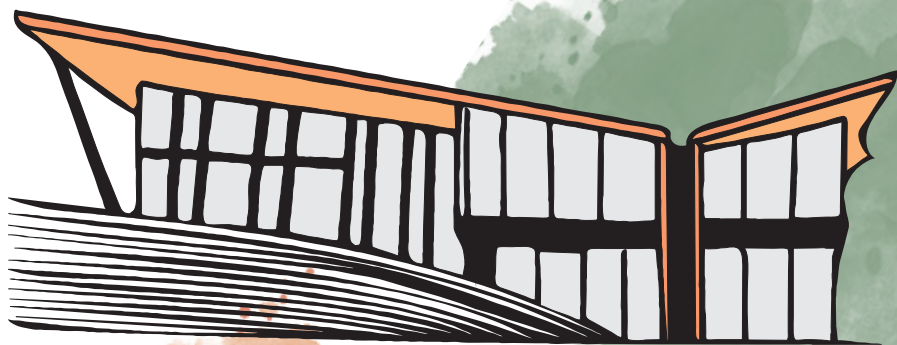


# INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL HISTORY & DIALOGUE CENTRE

## Self-Guided Tour Manual



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# Introduction

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ʔəmi ce:p k<sup>w</sup>ətɬ<sup>w</sup>iləm (welcome) to the Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre (IRSHDC). The IRSHDC is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the hə́ŋqəmiínə́m speaking x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>ə́yəm (Musqueam) peoples, who have been stewarding this land since time immemorial. Our staff is privileged to work on these homelands as we support the safe, respectful, and trauma-informed access to Residential School records by Residential School Survivors and their families. In addition to locating records, a dedicated team of staff members walks alongside Survivors and Intergenerational Survivors in the recording of their oral truths through our Oral Testimony Program.

The general public is invited to engage with our space through our various public education initiatives, including guided visits (like the one you are on today), dialogue events, film screenings, and the development of digital exhibitions centered on themes related to Residential Schools. Please visit our main website ([irshdc.ubc.ca](http://irshdc.ubc.ca)) and our Collections site ([collections.irshdc.ubc.ca](http://collections.irshdc.ubc.ca)) to learn more about the IRSHDC's work.



# The Building

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Now that you've been introduced to the work of the Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre, allow us to orient you more to the space you are located in. The IRSHDC opened in 2018 and was designed by Alfred Waugh (Formline Architecture), the first Indigenous graduate of UBC's architecture program. Waugh was born and raised in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, with community ties to Treaty 8 territory. He designed the building in consultation with the Indian Residential School Survivor Society and wove Elders' input into several architectural elements.



Exterior view of the Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre.





## Copper Roof

Chief's Copper represents dignity and honour to the Coast Salish Peoples. While you cannot see the copper itself, we are reminded of its presence by the green staining on the concrete surrounding the building. The green color comes from oxidized rain runoff.

## Charred Cedar Plank Siding

The IRSHDC is wrapped in charred cedar which keeps us warm and dry during the chilly winter months. More resilient once charred, the cedar plank siding on the building's exterior also reflects the strength of Residential School Survivors and Indigenous communities who continue to be impacted by the ongoing effects of Residential Schools.



## Floor-to-Ceiling Windows

Elders were adamant that the work of the IRSHDC should be fully transparent and visually accessible to those within and outside of the building. This directly counters the oppressive architectural design of most Residential Schools which intentionally had few windows that let in little natural light. Our windows with natural light showcase the nature outside as a relief to the emotional space inside; they counter the experience of feeling confined in Residential Schools.





Before continuing with the tour, we want to prepare our guests for the contents of our gallery space. The gallery houses Residential School records such as images and documents, which may elicit many different emotions to those engaging with them. Should you feel strong emotions during the tour, we strongly recommend taking a step back and allowing yourself a break. Survivors and

Intergenerational Survivors are welcome to visit our Elders' Lounge located at the end of the main hallway on the right, there you can take a break, relax, and staff will gladly get you a water, tea, and snack. If you require additional support, we encourage you to reach out to our partners at the Indian Residential School Survivors Society through their 24 hour crisis line at: 1-800-721-0066. All visitors are encouraged to step outside into the green space or sit at the couch right outside the gallery entrance if you need to step away.

# The Gallery

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With this preparation in mind, we invite you to walk down the stairs, or take the elevator located at the end of the main hall on your left, towards our gallery space. Please note that wheelchair accessible washrooms are located on the entry level of the building to the left of the main doors and down the hallway on your left. As you travel down the stairs you will notice a woven cedar wall on the left-hand side. This is one of our favorite elements of the building as it represents the weaving practices for which this region is well known.

Once you reach the bottom landing, take a look out of the door located on the right hand side. There you will find a glass waterfall feature which symbolizes the tears of Survivors who suffered traumatic experiences in Residential Schools. Sometimes the water runs rapidly and other times it is just a trickle, representing the ebbs and flows of the healing process.

ʔəmi ce:p kʷətɬwɪləm to our gallery space. For the past few years the gallery space and courtyard has also been the space where the IRSHDC hosts Orange Shirt Day activities at UBC. There are four main components to this room that we invite you to explore at a pace that feels right to you.



# Interactive Wall



The first element of our gallery is our interactive wall. The wall provides access to the IRSHDC's collections through the timeline, map, browse and nodes features. It provides multiple perspectives on the Residential School system to encourage continued engagement and learning.

Please explore the interactive touchscreen wall to find records, learn about Residential Schools and listen to voices from across the country as individuals share their stories. You will find an access panel on the right and left sides of each screen that allows you to access the three unique layers of the interactive wall. There is an iPad stand to the left of the wall providing further information in the wall and its different interfaces.

**Turn this page to find a summary of the interfaces.**





# Timeline

While linear time is one particular representation of the Residential School system narrative, it is a powerful reminder of the extensive and enduring impacts of the Residential School system in Canada. The timeline provides a background on the historical origins, development, and continued effects of the Residential School system. Blue tiles indicate schools, allowing visitors to see when schools opened and closed. Pink tiles highlight important events related to the history and ongoing legacy of Residential Schools. The grey lines and corresponding numbers in the background of the timeline indicate the number of schools open at a given time. The timeline extends beyond the official dates of the Residential School system. Earlier dates help explain the context of the Residential School system within Canadian colonialism and nation-building. While the last government-recognized Residential School, Lebret Residential School (also known as Whitecalf Residential School) (SK) closed in 1998, the timeline continues to the present to reflect the continued effects of settler colonialism, intergenerational trauma and ongoing work towards reconciliation.

# Map

Use the map to see the geographic scope of Residential Schools included in the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) and some events from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. We are sure to note that not all Residential Schools are included in this map. For example, Convent Schools, Day Schools, Residential Schools located in the Maritimes, and schools that closed in the late 1800s - early 1900s are not included because they fell outside the scope of inclusion as outlined in IRSSA. Thus the reason for exclusion varies based on the type of school, the years it operated to, whether it including a boarding element, and its location. One specific rationale cited within IRSSA was whether or not the school received Federal funding.

Scan the QR codes below to learn more about the schools that were not included in the IRSSA and the grounds for their exclusion.



2015 settlement agreement  
for 5 schools  
in Newfoundland and Labrador



IRSSA Agreement in Principle



Canadian Geographic map of  
non-IRSSA-recognized schools

# Nodes

The Nodes feature is a non-linear, non-hierarchical way to browse the IRSHDC's collections that is more in line with Indigenous ways of knowing. Each category, or node, represents a topic and shows records/materials related to that topic, for example Health or Sport. This visual representation of our digital collections highlights ongoing issues affecting Indigenous Peoples, stemming from colonialism and Residential Schools.

# Interviews

**Video on screen opposite interactive wall.** The Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre at UBC is guided by Indigenous leaders, many of whom are Survivors or Intergenerational Survivors, and each of whom has a deeply personal connection and commitment to truth-telling and dialogue around the legacy of Residential Schools in Canada.

In July 2022, four members of the Indigenous Advisory Committee spoke about their connection to the Residential School system, their ongoing work to support justice and truth-telling, and pathways toward reconciliation at UBC and beyond.

**Chief Dr. Robert Joseph** is a Hereditary Chief of the Gwawaenuk First Nation, Ambassador for Reconciliation Canada, and a member of the National Assembly of First Nations Elders Council.

**Elder Barney Williams Jr. (Klitch-wii-taa)** is a member of the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, social worker, clinical counsellor, and passionate advocate for mental health care that supports traditional healing practices.

**The Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew** is a member of the Dene Nation, former Member of Parliament for the Northwest Territories, and the first Indigenous woman to hold a seat in Canadian Parliament.

**Cliff Atleo Sr. (Wickaninnish)** was born and raised in Ahousaht and grew up as a fisherman. A former President of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, he sits on the First Nations Health Council on behalf of the NTC.



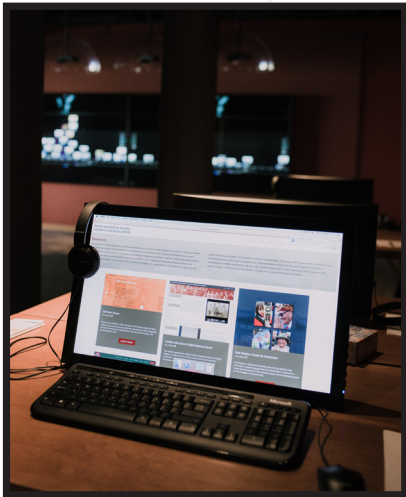
# Intergenerational Corner

The Intergenerational Corner houses books that support age-appropriate learning about the Residential School system in Canada. In addition to literature, visitors will find puppets, art supplies, and games.



## Research Stations & iPads

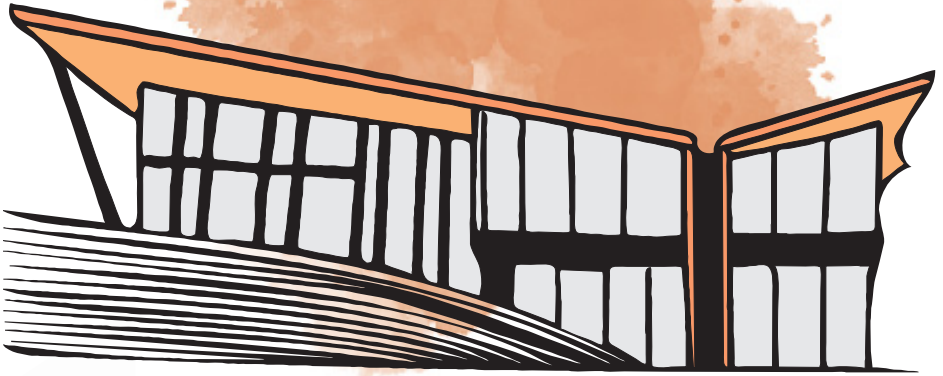
Three individual computer kiosks and four iPad stations in the exhibition space allow guests to browse the digital collections privately through the Collections website, conduct research, or view digital exhibitions. All the records on the interactive wall can be found on the Collections website, which is publicly available online.



We encourage you to explore the space and its many offerings. If you have any questions related to Residential School records, you are more than welcome to connect with our Reference Team at: [irshdc.reference@ubc.ca](mailto:irshdc.reference@ubc.ca).

Additional information can also be found in the pamphlets available at the desk just outside the gallery entrance. Here you will find pamphlets on the building, the Oral Testimony Program, and research and collections.





hay čx<sup>w</sup> qə for visiting the Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre. We wish you wellness wherever your journey takes you, once you leave us today.



The artwork featured in this manual is by Kenzie Littlelight.