



**June 25, 2021**

### **215 and 751: SASW Shares in Sorrow and Stands in Solidarity**

An unprecedented wave of shock and disbelief has spanned our nation in response to the discovery of 215 remains of Indigenous children in Kamloops, BC and more recently, the 751 unmarked graves on the site of the former Marieval Residential School on Cowessess First Nation in Saskatchewan. We are mindful of the greater somber reality of many more lost Indigenous children yet to be uncovered across the other former residential schools<sup>1</sup> recognized by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers (SASW) shares in the mourning of these children alongside Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation, Cowessess First Nation and all Indigenous communities across the country.

Missing children from this era has been a long known truth among Indigenous communities, and it is one of many truths of concealed cultural genocide which continues to reveal itself until action towards reconciliation is taken. The systemic injustice and inequities experienced at that time continue to exist and have provided a foundation for the longstanding racism experienced by Indigenous people in present day.

Our association is committed to action towards reconciliation, and we support Indigenous people, communities, and leaders in the demand to prioritize the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action<sup>2</sup>. We echo their stance for the all the calls to action, including calls 71 to 76, to be expeditiously and thoroughly completed under the direction of Indigenous Nations and leaders. The SASW also strongly advocates the passing of Bill C-5<sup>3</sup> into law to further uphold the Government of Canada's accountability and commitment to reconciliation and to restore a relationship between Nations centered on the principles of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See recognized residential school locations: <http://www.trc.ca/about-us/residential-school.html>

<sup>2</sup> See full report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action: [http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls\\_to\\_Action\\_English2.pdf](http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Status and updates to Bill C-5 can be reviewed at the Parliament of Canada: <https://www.parl.ca/LegisInfo/BillDetails.aspx?billId=10870098&Language=E>

<sup>4</sup> More information about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada can be viewed at the Government of Canada: <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1450124405592/1529106060525>