

September 16, 2026
D/BU #026/2026–2027

OSSTF/FEESO Recognizes the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and the Truth and Reconciliation Week

To: Presidents and All Members

From: Gary Fenn, Interim Associate General Secretary – Professional Services

For Action

Truth and Reconciliation Day, observed annually on September 30, is dedicated to recognizing and addressing the injustices faced by Indigenous peoples in Canada. The day is a result of years of advocacy and calls for justice. This day stands as a vital step in the ongoing journey towards reconciliation.

OSSTF/FEESO is committed to reconciliation and ensuring that the tragic history and ongoing legacy of Indian Residential Schools are never forgotten. Reconciliation requires an ongoing commitment throughout the year; however, on *National Day for Truth and Reconciliation* (also known as *Orange Shirt Day*) and *Truth and Reconciliation Week*, we make time to specifically honour the lost children and survivors of residential schools, their families, and communities.

Members are encouraged to participate and support the following events:

- *National Day for Truth and Reconciliation* – Wednesday, September 30, 2026
- [Truth and Reconciliation Week](#) – September 21-25, 2026

In addition to honouring survivors, the pursuit of Truth and Reconciliation should occur regularly, year-round, and should be meaningful with the spirit of ReconciliACTION. It is crucial to remember that dates like the *National Day for Truth and Reconciliation* are meant to be solemn times to learn and reflect on what we can all do to eliminate structural and overt racism, as well as other forms of discrimination, in our schools, worksites, and communities. It is about acknowledging the truth in our collective history and the ongoing inequities faced by Indigenous peoples across this land. The day is also about hope for the future and how Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples can work together to create a better future for all.

"Reconciliation is not something that government can legislate into reality and it's not something Indigenous people can force on the rest of Canada. Every person in Canada — every citizen, every immigrant, every refugee, and every visitor — is responsible for Reconciliation." Senator Murray Sinclair Former Commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Canada (Indigenous Innovation, 2019)

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Wednesday, September 30, 2026.

OSSTF/FEESO Members are encouraged to acknowledge this day in your school, worksite, or local community.

This September, we invite you to wear your commitment to reconciliACTION proudly and visibly by locating First Nations and non-profit organizations that produce *Orange Shirt Day* promotional materials. Local leaders are encouraged to support groups/distributors that directly support Intergenerational survivors suffering from the impacts of the Residential School system. The story behind *Orange Shirt Day* begins with Phyllis Webstad of Stswecem'c Xget'tem First Nation and she has formed an organization that produces and sells *Orange Shirt Day* merchandise. To purchase your orange shirt from the *Orange Shirt Society*, visit their [site](#). Let your Orange Shirt be a conversation starter, a sign of solidarity, and a reminder of the truths we have a responsibility to carry forward. But do not let the journey end with what you wear. Keep learning. Keep listening. Keep reflecting. Keep showing up.

Truth and Reconciliation Week, September 21-25, 2026

[The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#) (NCTR) In honour of the sixth annual *National Day for Truth and Reconciliation* (NDTR), NCTR invites people to join daily Lunch and Learn webinars (50-minute sessions). They are immersive experiences designed to help UN-learn the myths of colonial history in Canada. All sessions will include simultaneous English-French and ASL interpretation. For more information, including registration, please visit the NCTR [event page](#).

[The Moose Hide Campaign](#) invites you to join them on September 24 for a special webinar reflecting on our collective journey of truth and reconciliation in Canada. Bestselling author and journalist Waubgeshig Rice of Wasauksing First Nation, author of *Moon of the Crusted Snow* and *Moon of the Turning Leaves*, has shared stories of contemporary Anishinaabe life, culture, language, family, and community through his writing and journalism with audiences across Canada and beyond. For more information, including registration, please visit the [event page](#).

[The Downie and Wenjack Fund](#) (DWF) also invites you to #DoSomething by Honouring Truth with Action. In recognition of the *National Day for Truth and Reconciliation* DWF is offering a week of learning and reflection, including webinars and resources to support your ongoing reconciliation journey. For more information, please visit the DWF [event page](#).

Caution re: Exploring/discussing Truth and Reconciliation with Colleagues and Students

Any time teachers and education workers learn and educate themselves or others about the history of residential schools and try to implement the TRC's calls to action, they need to be mindful of the pain and trauma caused by oppression, discrimination, violence, and racism, past and present, against Indigenous peoples.

Respectful engagement with reconciliation work ensures that as a non-Indigenous person, as an ally, you are assuming the correct role and not placing the burden on your Indigenous colleagues, students, and community members. While the focus should always be on uplifting and providing space for Indigenous voices, it must be on their own terms and not through

pressure or fear. This means not burdening Indigenous peoples with requests to speak about residential schools, reconciliation, or Indigenous history, specifically during the month of September leading up to NDTR.

Days like the *National Day for Truth and Reconciliation* can be extremely difficult for Indigenous students, colleagues, families, and communities. Some may choose to be with their family or community during these days.

Many Indigenous students and colleagues use these times for healing and as times to take collective action to pressure policymakers to not only address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action but also grant justice to the missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two spirited peoples.

OSSTF/FEESO members should seek advice and support from their employer prior to initiating, organizing, or participating in any truth and reconciliation-related activity, event, or lesson. For more information regarding this DBU, please contact vanessa.stoby@osstf.ca.

Additional Resources and Lessons:

- Aboriginal Healing Foundation - [Where Are The Children?](#)
- British Columbia Teacher Federation - [Gladys We Never Knew](#).
- Canadian Teachers' Federation - [Speak Truth To Power Canada: Defenders for Human Rights](#).
- Canadian Labour Congress – [Indigenous Rights and Justice Resource Center](#).
- [Canadian Museum for Human Rights](#)
- Downie Wenjack Fund – [Honouring Truth with Action](#)
- Empowering the Spirit – [Alberta Professional Learning Consortium](#)
- First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Association of Ontario, [Public Resources](#).
- Indigenous Education – The National Centre for [Collaboration](#).
- Paths to Reconciliation - [Paths to Reconciliation \(canadiangeographic.ca\)](#).
- Manitoba Teachers' Society - [Secret Path Lesson Plans](#).
- [Moose Hide Campaign](#)
- National Film Board of Canada – [Indigenous Voices and Reconciliation](#).
- Ontario Teachers' Federation [Useful Links for Aboriginal Education](#).
- Secret Path by Gord Downie [Video and Resources](#).
- Government of Canada [National Day for Truth and Reconciliation - Canada.ca](#).
- Canadian Geographic – [Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada](#).
- [National Day for Truth and Reconciliation: Resources for Learning and Reflection | Public Service Alliance of Canada](#)
- Walking Alongside – [McGill University](#)

VS/nd cope 343