



Washington State  
Truth and Healing Tribal Advisory Committee  
Preliminary Report  
June 2025



## Artist Description of Cover Art

Artwork expertly illustrates the importance of symbology and storytelling in Indigenous history and education. Native American art is not only beautiful—it also tells a story, encapsulates historical knowledge, and, often, teaches a lesson.

Artist Edgar Charlie's description of the work:

Bentwood boxes have multiple meanings, including a symbol of reconciliation, a traditional storage container, and a burial box:

- **Symbol of reconciliation:** The Bentwood Box is a sacred box that honors residential school survivors and commemorates the journey toward healing and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. **Traditional storage container:** Bentwood boxes are a traditional storage container used by the cultures of the Pacific Northwest Coast. They are often adorned with clan crests or personal designs and are cherished heirlooms passed down through generations.
- **Burial box:** When a person died, their body would be folded to fit into the box and placed in a grave house, mortuary pole, or even in the tops of trees that leaned over water.

The crying face represents us as people, past and present, and remembering- the 4 ovoids and the hands represent the people and the children that are gone and still with us all in a sacred box of treasures. The masks being upside down is our ancestors in the spherical world holding us all up.

The sun and moon symbolize the same but as a sun and moon holding up all that have been affected-high in the sky like the sun and moon.

# Letter from Attorney General Nick Brown

Dear Washingtonians,

For generations, the United States and the State of Washington pursued policies seeking total assimilation of Native American and Alaska Native people into the dominant white culture, attempting to eradicate tribal cultures, languages, and governments. The government used different policies and practices to further this goal, many of which ended relatively recently. Persistent disparities for Indigenous people reflect the anti-Indigenous origins built into many systems.

Indian boarding schools were one such assimilationist effort. These boarding schools touched nearly every tribal community in the United States and caused immense trauma by separating children from their families and communities. Too often, children never returned home. There is no record accounting for the full extent of the operation of boarding schools in Washington, nor how or whether the state supported these institutions.

In 2023, the Washington Legislature directed the Attorney General's Office (AGO) to convene a group of community members with expertise and lived experience to compile a record about the operations of boarding schools in Washington. The legislature directed us to determine the amount and type of support the state provided to these schools, and to develop recommendations to address the continuing harms of this public policy. This is a step towards healing and accountability from the traumatic and harmful legacy of Indian boarding schools.

Thanks to the committee's dedicated work, we completed an initial phase of research, relationship building, and planning. The AGO is fully committed to sustaining this partnership, securing necessary resources, and supporting the committee's forthcoming recommendations to actively dismantle policies and systems that disproportionately harm Indigenous people.

There is much work ahead. Washington State leads the nation in supporting tribally led healing solutions to address historical injustices. Together, we will continue to build a trusted, transformative process toward healing and justice.

Sincerely,



Nick Brown

Washington State Attorney General

# Letter from Members of the Tribal Advisory Committee

Dear Washingtonians,

As the five members comprising the Truth and Reconciliation Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC), we write with a shared commitment to truth-telling, healing, and tribal sovereignty. We are charged with researching and documenting the operations and impacts of Indian boarding schools in Washington, to listen deeply to survivors and their descendants, and to develop recommendations that acknowledge past harms and chart a path toward healing.

From our first meeting in September 2023, we recognized that meaningful community engagement must rest on strong relationships and culturally appropriate processes. Rather than immediately moving into community events, we prioritized building trust—establishing Indigenous-safe spaces, cultural protocols, and guidance from Elders—to ensure that when gatherings do occur, they are held in a manner fully grounded in community values and led by those most impacted.

This report details our collective efforts to date:

- **Research:** Secondary source<sup>1</sup> research has highlighted the challenging nature of locating this historic data. Incomplete records illustrate the lack of care and concern for the Indian children at these facilities. Because many of these records are not digitized, the cost to access them could be significant. Partnerships with Seattle University’s International Law Clinic and the University of Washington School of Law brought insight into the structure and goals of various global truth commissions and provided deep dives into the funding and policy frameworks rooted in assimilationist education.
- **Outreach & Listening:** Twenty-seven full TAC meetings, three subcommittees, and early groundwork for the next phase of this work which will include at least six listening sessions, each guided by community to protect the cultural, emotional, and spiritual well-being of survivors and community members.

We offer this work as a foundation for the work ahead. True healing demands sustained commitment, transparent record-keeping, robust funding for tribally-led healing initiatives, and institutional reforms that honor the unique relationship between tribes and the state. As TAC members, we stand ready to support the next phase of this work in partnership with community and in consultation with tribes.

With respect and solidarity,

Members of the Tribal Advisory Committee

Edward “Arlen” Washines (Yakama Nation)

Rebecca Black (Quinault Indian Nation)

Diana Bob (Lummi Nation)

Tamika LaMere (Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians)

Abriel Johnny (Tlingit, Haida)

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# Executive Summary

In the 2023 legislative session, the Washington State Legislature directed the Attorney General's Office (AGO) to convene a Truth and Healing Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC) to research and document the history and impacts of Indian boarding schools in Washington State.

The initiation of this work within the AGO highlights the responsibility of Washington state to establish a record of truth regarding Indian boarding schools, including the state's complicity in perpetrating these harms against Indian children, communities and Tribes.

## TAC Members

The TAC consists of five members who offer an array of expertise and experience related to Indian boarding schools or Indian boarding school era policies and actions that cause harm to Indigenous nations and communities. The members of the TAC are:

**Shx'my'ah Edward "Arlen" Washines, Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation**

**Rebecca Black, Quinault Indian Nation**

**Diana Bob, Lummi Nation**

**Abriel Johnny, Tlingit & Haida**

**Tamika LaMere, Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians**

## TAC Activities

The TAC is charged with guiding AGO staff in conducting research, holding listening sessions with survivors and descendants, and developing actionable recommendations to acknowledge and address historical and intergenerational harms caused by assimilationist policies.

## Research

- **Establish key research partnerships.** TAC members and AGO staff collaborated with Seattle University's International Law Clinic and University of Washington School of Law to bolster legal and historical analyses.
- **Secondary source research.** The AGO and TAC submitted 16 archival requests to repositories, such as the National Archives, state and faith-based archives, and 39 county governments.

## Relationship Building

- **Trust building.** Facilitating Indigenous safe spaces by incorporating culturally appropriate meeting protocols. Vital first steps to obtaining TAC support to engage tribal Elders and community in this work.
- **Inclusion.** Incorporating early and meaningful inclusion of TAC members in research and document drafting processes in future phases of the work.
- **Limiting the extractive nature of this work.** Establishing access and processes under Washington's community compensation law to compensate committee members for contributing their lived experiences to the project.

## Key Findings

- **Each of the 29 tribes who share geography with Washington state are unique and sovereign.** Each will have their own view on how this work should be done. The AGO's approach will require individual relationships with each to avoid retraumatization or disengagement.
- **Ongoing Impacts.** Indigenous people continue to be disproportionately harmed by policies and systems, including health and justice, that originated in colonialism, racism, and discrimination.<sup>2</sup>
- **At least 28 boarding school facilities operated in Washington.** In addition, other facility types, such as asylums and hospitals, were used to separate Native children from their families, operating in Washington between 1850 and 1930.
- **There are significant records gaps and accessibility concerns.** Many records are scattered, incomplete, or inaccessible, presenting a barrier to a full accounting of this history.

## Challenges and Opportunities

- **The nature of this research is vast and complex.** It will require adequate time to provide attention to the appropriate protocols of each tribe and tribal community and to honor the lived experiences of Elders, survivors and descendants.
- **This history is vital to addressing the disproportionalities that affect modern tribal communities.** Indigenous Washingtonians are overrepresented in categories such as chronic disease, mental health and substance use disorder, poor educational outcomes, incarceration, early death, infant mortality, and are more likely to be a victim of violent crime than their non-Indigenous counterparts.<sup>3</sup>
- **Solutions must center tribal voice and choice.** This work establishes a platform to champion tribally-led solutions by leveraging resources in way that aligns with tribal leadership and community concerns and needs.

## Next Steps

- **Listening Sessions** were not completed due to the need to develop agreements that honor tribal sovereignty and are respectful of the diverse and unique needs of each tribal community and government. These will be held in consultation and collaboration with tribal leaders and local planning committees.
- **Ongoing research** to establish a full record of truth regarding the history of Indian boarding schools in Washington State. This research requires funding for staff and TAC members to travel to repositories where records are not yet digitized. Solutions must center tribal voice and choice.
- **Identification of state policies** originating from Indian boarding schools that continue to perpetuate harm to Indigenous people and communities.
- **Recommendations** to policymakers that reflect community voice to reform state policies and practices that cause disproportionate harm to Indigenous people.

**This report lays the groundwork for sustained, Nation-to-State consultation rooted in truth, transparency, and respect for tribal sovereignty.**

## Truth and Reconciliation Tribal Advisory Committee Proviso<sup>4</sup>

The TAC's authorizing proviso directs the AGO to conduct rigorous research, survivor-centered listening sessions, and provide a transparent, accurate, and accessible record as a foundation for justice, healing, and a more inclusive future for everyone.

*(9)(a) \$250,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 and \$250,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for the establishment of a truth and reconciliation tribal advisory committee to conduct research and outreach to understand the operations and impact of Indian boarding schools in Washington run by public and faith-based institutions, and to develop recommendations for the state to acknowledge and address the historical and intergenerational harms caused by Indian boarding schools and other cultural and linguistic termination practices.*

*(b) The advisory committee shall consist of five members nominated by the attorney general. The committee members must be citizens from federally recognized tribes in diverse geographic areas across the state that possess personal, policy, or specific expertise with Indian boarding school history and policies, or who have expertise in truth and healing endeavors that are traditionally and culturally appropriate.*

*(c) The advisory committee must hold its first meeting by September 30, 2023, and shall meet at least quarterly. The advisory committee may conduct meetings in person or virtually and must accept written testimony. The advisory committee may, when feasible, invite and consult with any entity, agency, or individual deemed necessary to further its work, or with experts or professionals involved, having expertise, or having lived experience regarding Indian boarding schools or tribal engagement.*

*(d) The office and the advisory committee must conduct at least six listening sessions in collaboration with tribes and Native-led organizations. The listening sessions must be held with consideration of the cultural, emotional, spiritual, and psychological well-being of survivors, family members, and community members. In planning and facilitating the listening sessions, the office must seek to avoid imposing undue burdens on survivors, family members, or community members.*

*(e) The office of the attorney general must administer and provide staff support for the advisory committee.*

*(f) By June 30, 2025, the office must submit a final report to the appropriate committees of the legislature that includes, but is not limited to:*

*(i) A summary of activities undertaken by the advisory committee;*

*(ii) Findings regarding the extent and types of support provided by the state to Indian boarding schools;*

*(iii) Findings regarding current state policies and practices that originate from Indian boarding schools or other assimilationist policies and practices and that cause disproportionate harm to American Indian and Alaska Native people and communities; and*

*(iv) Recommendations regarding how the state can address the harm done by Indian boarding schools and other cultural and linguistic termination practices through a truth and reconciliation model, including but not limited to:*

*(A) Resources and assistance that the state may provide to aid in the healing of trauma caused by Indian boarding school policies; and*

*(B) Actions to correct current state policies and practices with origins in assimilationist policies or that cause disproportionate harm to Native people and communities.*

# TAC Activities and Progress

Following an application period, the AGO appointed the five members of the Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC) and held the first meeting in September 2023. The committee members bring an array of expertise and experience with or related to Indian boarding schools or boarding school era policies. The TAC members are from various parts of Washington and reflect the diverse tribal communities in the state. The members of the TAC are:

**Shx'my'ah Edward "Arlen" Washines, Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama**

**Nation Rebecca Black, Quinault Indian Nation**

**Diana Bob, Lummi Nation**

**Abriel Johnny, Tlingit & Haida**

**Tamika LaMere, Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians**

The TAC meets consistently on a biweekly to monthly schedule and has guided AGO staff in outreach to tribes and tribal communities, established research priorities, and provided feedback regarding recommendation development.

## Committee Approach

AGO staff administering the TAC are mindful that, since first contact with European and American settlers, government institutions at the local, state, and federal level caused significant and intentional harm to Indigenous people and tribes.<sup>5</sup> Boarding school history impacts all tribes and tribal peoples. Each community's history, experiences and level of comfort with the subject is unique. Guided by the TAC, staff gained understanding of how to create culturally safe environments to allow for listening and learning in appropriate and respectful ways. Relationship building with tribal elders, survivors, and descendants is the first and most important step in the engagement process.

AGO staff initially contacted Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs) for Washington tribes. However, that did not yield meaningful progress. With TAC guidance, the AGO pivoted to the more traditional practice of contacting tribal leadership for permission to begin this work with their community. By stepping back and honoring tribal ways of engaging in this topic, the AGO has a unique opportunity to develop the connections needed to do this work in a way that respects the profound trauma associated with the history of Indian boarding schools in Washington State.

The AGO intends to lead by example, recognizing the power of the agency to instigate real and meaningful change through the State of Washington. Governmental power historically furthered the oppression of Indigenous people. To move forward, the AGO and TAC must understand and acknowledge this painful history. This work is one step on a long journey towards justice, accountability, and healing.

## Outreach and Research

The research and outreach efforts seek to meet the legislative goals of this Committee. The AGO has worked to review existing records and identify the truth regarding the history of Indian boarding schools in Washington State. The AGO's initial research focused on facilities that operated within Washington State or territorial boundaries from 1850 through 1930. The research aims to identify the number of children sent to Indian boarding schools in Washington, how children were transported to these facilities, the number of children who never returned home, and cemeteries attached to or near Indian boarding facilities.

Unfortunately, access to information from the early Indian Boarding School period is limited due to records not being digitized or available for online viewing, and will require extensive in-person travel, both within Washington and to other states, to view and gather history from these sources.

As part of ongoing research and outreach efforts, AGO staff and TAC members contacted:

- Each of the 29 Washington tribes to engage with tribal leadership
- Tribal archivists
- Tribal museums
- Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs)
- Tribal Cultural committees
- Washington State Archives
- Regional archives
- National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)
- Jesuit Archives and Research Center
- Providence Archives
- Seattle Archdiocese Archive and Records Management
- 39 Washington counties and Sheriff's Offices for relevant records
- Indian Health Services (IHS)

AGO staff and TAC members made initial connections with: Makah Tribe, Suquamish Tribe, Swinomish Tribe, Spokane Tribe of Indians, Quinault Indian Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Puyallup Tribe, Cowlitz Indian Tribe, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation and the Tulalip Tribes.

The following presenters generously shared their experiences and knowledge conducting similar research with the TAC and the AGO staff:

Alejandra Gonza, Global Rights Advocacy

Thomas Antkowiak, Seattle University, International Law Professor

Ann Penn-Charles, Quileute Elder and Prevention Specialist

Raymond Tony Charlie, Canadian Elder and boarding school survivor

Theresa Sheldon, National Boarding School Healing Coalition

Lacey Kinnart, National Boarding School Healing Coalition

Dr. Roberta Paul, Researcher and Author, Nez Perce

Suzanne Elshult, Cairn Canines, Fort Simcoe site investigation

Guy Mansfield, Search and Rescue (SAR), Fort Simcoe site investigation

Jon Shellenberger, Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama, Fort Simcoe site investigation

Warren Seyler, Spokane Tribe of Indians Tribal Historian

The most important outreach remains to be done. In the next phase of this project the TAC and AGO staff will reach out to tribal leadership and tribal communities to plan and hold at least six listening sessions to gather Elder, survivor and descendant testimony.

# Background

European settlers arrived to a bountiful land with hundreds of Indigenous tribes and nations<sup>6</sup> who flourished due to their deep ancestral ties to the land, its plants, animals and seasons. As settlers expanded into tribal lands, European nations entered into treaties with tribal governments, as a recognition of tribal sovereignty. After independence, the United States signed more than 350 treaties with tribes between 1778 and 1871, and after 1871, numerous agreements that function as treaties.<sup>7</sup>

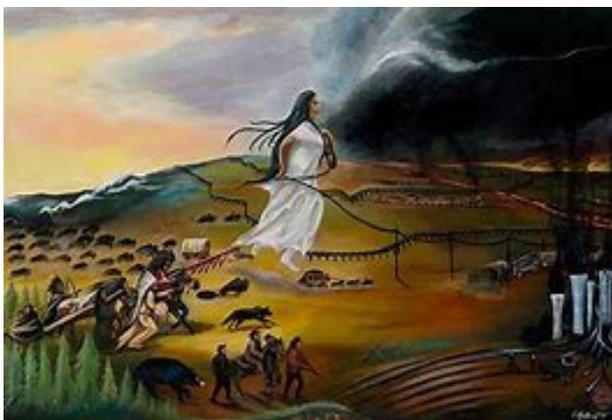
Tribal nations ceded land in exchange for the U.S. government's promise to meet their needs, creating a "trust responsibility" grounded in treaties, statutes, and historic relations.<sup>8</sup> However, as the United States expanded westward, these treaties conflicted with the desire for more land and natural resources to support the growing nation. As a result, many treaties and agreements were, and continue to be, broken by the U.S. government.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to undermining and violating treaties as settlers encroached onto land designated for tribes, the United States pursued policies intended to assimilate Indigenous people into white Christian culture and eliminate Native cultures, languages, and belief systems.

Tribal Sovereignty is the inherent authority of tribes to govern themselves. Tribal Sovereignty is recognized by the federal government, state, and local governments and is protected by the Constitution of the United States. Contemporary Tribal Sovereignty promotes the inherent right to self-determination and protects the unique cultural identity, economic wellbeing, health and safety of tribal citizens.



*John Gast, American Progress*



*C. Hilliard, Reversing Manifest Destiny*

Indian boarding schools were a centerpiece of U.S. assimilationist policy from the mid-19th century through the 1970s. While in operation, agents of the government forcibly removed thousands of Native children from their families and sent them to these institutions, where they were forbidden from speaking their languages, and subjected to physical and cultural violence.<sup>10</sup> These institutions functioned as tools of cultural erasure, aimed at "killing the Indian to save the man" by severing ties to language, kinship, spirituality, and traditional lifeways.<sup>11</sup>

The full extent of the harm caused by these institutions is not known, although all tribes, tribal members and communities, and descendants are deeply impacted by their operations<sup>12</sup> and practices. Outside of tribal communities, American history has been carefully constructed to omit, or erase, the record of truth from the perspective of Indigenous Americans. In public schools, American children learn of defining American moments from the perspective of settler colonizers. This history ignores Indigenous histories and meaningful Indigenous presence on the land before settlers arrived.<sup>13</sup>

This violence is ongoing.<sup>14</sup> Indigenous people continue to face systemic marginalization, erasure of their histories, and denial of their sovereignty. This reality emphasizes the need for continued research into Washington's Indian boarding school history, and the development of recommendations on how the state can support tribes by championing tribally led healing solutions.<sup>15</sup>

# History and Impact of Boarding Schools

For tribal nations in Washington State, boarding school history is not a distant chapter but a living legacy.

Intergenerational trauma manifests today in disproportionate rates of chronic disease, mental health challenges, educational disparities, and involvement in the child welfare and criminal legal systems<sup>17</sup>. Fact finding about these institutions—through efforts such as survivor testimony, archival work, and community-led memorialization—will serve as an essential first step toward truth telling and healing. By fully documenting this history and the policies and entities that sustained boarding schools, the state supports tribes as they continue their work to reclaim language, cultural practices, and sovereignty over their own narratives.

Understanding this history is vital not only for Indigenous communities but for all Washingtonians and indeed all Americans. A full accounting of this history confronts foundational myths about national identity, justice, and democracy. Boarding schools were government-sanctioned programs of cultural genocide.<sup>18</sup>

Secondary source research has uncovered 28 facilities (see p. 16) that operated within the boundaries of Washington State or Territory (pre-statehood) or that accepted children from tribes in Washington.. The AGO, with guidance from the TAC, is committed to uncovering and laying bare the state’s history and role in perpetuating these harms against tribes, tribal people and communities.

Future work, centering truth through survivor-centered listening sessions and transparent reporting will allow the state to honor the lived experiences of tribal elders, survivors and descendants. An accurate, accessible record is the foundation for justice, healing, and a more inclusive future for everyone. To pursue justice, accountability, and healing, the full history and experiences of Indigenous Washingtonians must be

brought to light, giving all people the opportunity to learn, understand, support, and recognize tribes and tribal peoples not only for this tragic history, but also for the profound accomplishments and progress despite these enormous challenges.

Continuous research supports adaptive policy making and validates the lived experiences of affected communities. Documenting these histories, in accordance with tribal data sovereignty<sup>19</sup> guidance from tribes, contributes to a global dialogue of truth telling, restorative justice and healing. This echoes the practices recommended by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)<sup>20</sup> and insights from other international truth telling commissions<sup>21</sup>. A 2021 U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) review noted that federal support for Native well-being is inadequate, citing persistent high-risk program failures, lack of adequate funding and dozens of unimplemented recommendations<sup>22</sup>.

Support for tribally-led healing work must honor Indigenous ways of knowing and being and must center ancestral knowledge as an essential part of the solution.

## **Tribes and Tribal Citizens are a Political Class**

Tribes, tribal members, descendants, and others separated from their communities because of acculturative policies, occupy a unique political status, rooted in sovereignty, treaty rights, and self-determination. Race is a social construct often used to identify groups as separate from one another. Historically, race has been used to justify disparate treatment and outcomes, nearly always harming marginalized racial groups.

The concept of race emerged from colonial practices that sought to justify the subjugation and marginalization of Indigenous peoples and enslaved Africans. While valuable in other contexts, in relation to tribes, race obscures the realities of settler colonialism. Tribes are sovereign nations with distinct governing structures and legal rights. Their identity is shaped by treaties, historical agreements, and cultural heritage, which sets them apart from conventional race categories. As such, tribal members are a distinct political class. Recognizing this prevents reinforcing the very narratives and power structures that contributed to settler colonial violence.

### *Benefits of an Accurate Record of Truth*

- **Policy Reform & Accountability:** Full documentation enables legislators and agencies to dismantle remaining assimilationist policies—such as restrictive language laws or funding inequities—and to craft grounded, reparative measures.
- **Educational Integrity:** Incorporating accurate boarding-school history into K–12 and higher-education curricula fosters informed citizenship, critical thinking about institutional power, and empathy across communities.
- **Collective Healing:** Public recognition validates survivors’ experiences, reduces stigma, and builds solidarity across cultural lines—an essential ingredient for genuine reconciliation.
- **Preventing Recurrence:** Learning these lessons guards against future human-rights abuses by highlighting how legal authority and bureaucratic systems can be weaponized against marginalized groups.

## The Vast and Complex Nature of the Research

This initial project represents a first step and is not a complete view of this history. It is meant to showcase the need for more, in-depth research going forward. This research should include archival investigations, oral history collection, legal analyses, and quantitative data assessments to capture the full spectrum of experiences related to Indian boarding schools in Washington State. Guided by the TAC, the next phase of this work, beginning in July 2025, will bring the project to community where we plan to hold at least six listening sessions in consultation with tribal leadership and tribal communities.

This work also serves as a critical foundation for healing-centered policy reform in future work. With community as our guide, we will combine the research and investigation of historical documents, collection of survivor narratives and policy review to ensure the nuanced impacts of assimilationist practices are accurately represented.

Documenting Washington’s Indian boarding school history is an immense, multidisciplinary undertaking. This initial project lays the groundwork but represents only the first phase of what must be a sustained, in-depth inquiry. Our next steps will include:

- Archival investigation across federal, state, and faith-based repositories
- Oral history collection honoring survivor narratives
- Legal analyses of treaties, policies, and court decisions
- Quantitative data assessment of services, mortality, and funding streams

<b>Research Component</b>	<b>Scope &amp; Parameters</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>Archival</b>	National Archives & Records Administration (NARA), state archives, faith-based institution archives	Uncover policies, enrollment, unmarked burial sites
<b>Oral Histories</b>	Survivor interviews, tribally led protocols	Center lived experiences, preserve cultural context
<b>Legal Review</b>	Seattle University & UW Law School partnerships	Analyze legal mechanisms of truth commissions and policies that are harmful to Indigenous peoples.
<b>Data Analysis</b>	Policy funding streams, demographic impacts	Quantify legacy effects, inform policy recommendations

### **Lessons & Implications**

- **Ongoing commitment:** Research must continue beyond this report to fully document the systemic, structural, social, and cultural injustices
- **Healing-centered policies:** A robust evidentiary base enables the state to co-create recommendations with tribes for truth, memorialization, and reparative justice.

# Findings

**“...it is in the boarding schools that the worst practices of psychological and cultural disintegration have occurred.”**  
**- Richard M. Ross<sup>23</sup>**

As part of our efforts to understand and address the full scope and legacy of Indian boarding schools in Washington, we are developing a list of facilities known to have operated within Washington State and/or Territory. This list is not intended to be exhaustive or final as the research into facilities operating in Washington is ongoing.

At this time, we identified 27 facilities have been found to have operated in Washington State. Of these facilities, at least 16 received at least some form of federal support. Many others were run solely by private, religious or faith-based organizations. The facilities identified, to date, are listed in the chart below.<sup>24</sup>

School	Location & Years Active	Additional Information
Puyallup Indian School	Tacoma/Squaxin Island, WA 1857-1869	Also, Cushman Indian School; Federal reports names both facilities with Cushman not having boarding facilities
St. George Indian Industrial School	Federal Way, WA 1888-1937	Also St. George’s Industrial School, St. George’s Mission School, St. George’s Catholic Boarding School
St. Leo’s Grammar & High School	Tacoma, WA 1912-1976	
Tulalip Mission School	Priest Point, WA Tulalip Reservation 1857-1902	Also, Tulalip Indian School, St. Anne’s Catholic Mission School, Tulalip Mission School of Our Lady of Seven Dolars, Tulalip Boarding School
Tulalip Indian Industrial School	Tulalip Bay, WA Tulalip Reservation 1905-1932	Also, Tulalip Training School, Tulalip Industrial Boarding School, Tulalip Agency Male and Female School
Fort Simcoe Indian Boarding School	White Swan, WA 1859-1922	Also, Yakima Indian Boarding School, Yakima Agency Boarding School, Yakima Reservation School, Yakima School, Yakima
Fort Spokane Boarding School	Davenport, WA 1900-1914	Also, Colville Boarding School, Spokane School, Fort Spokane Indian School, and Colville Spokane Sanatorium
St. Joseph’s Academy	Federal Way, WA 1888-1969	
S’Kokomish Boarding and Day School	Olympia, WA 1866-1918	Also known as S’Kokomish School
Quinaelt Boarding and Day School	Taholah, WA 1870-1920	Also, Quinait School, Taholah (Quinaelt) Day School, Taholah Day School, Tahola Day School

Sacred Heart Academy	Kettle Falls, WA 1873-1921	Also, Goodwin Mission School for Indians
St. Francis Regis Mission School	Ward, WA 1873-1921	Also St. Francis and St. Francis Xavier Boarding
St. Mary's Mission School	Omak, WA 1886-present day	Also, Pascal Sherman Boarding School
Colville Mission School	Kettle Falls, WA 1873-1921	Also, Colville Boys School, Colville Girls School, and Colville Industrial Boarding School
St. Joseph's Boarding School	1888-1889	
Neah Bay Boarding and Day School	Neah Bay, WA 1890-1933	Also, Neah Bay Industrial Boarding School
Chehalis Boarding and Day School	Oakville, WA 1890-1920	Also, Chehalis School, Puyallup-Chehalis School
Tonasket Boarding School	Tonasket, WA 1891-1897	Also known as Okanagan Boarding School
Quileute Day School	Mora, WA	
St. Ambrose Mission	Clallam Port Gamble, WA 1891-1903	
St. Joachim Mission	Bellingham, WA Lummi Reservation 1891-1903	
St. Paul Mission	Swinomish, WA Swinomish Reservation c. 1892	
Boarding School for Boys	1878-1908	
School for Male Indian Boys	1857-1878	
St. Francis Xavier	North Yakima 1888-1896	Second location to St. Joseph's Academy
Our Lady of the Seven Dolores School	Priest Point, WA Tulalip Reservation 1868-1901	Listed with Tulalip Mission School in federal report
Stickney Home Mission School for Indians		Also known as Stickney Memorial Home and Industrial School, Stickney Day School, Nooksack Boarding School, Lummi Boarding School

Other facility types, such as asylums and hospitals, were used to separate Native children from their families. Details about these facilities are limited and will be the subject of additional research going forward. The known facilities other than boarding schools that housed Indigenous children away from their families are listed below.<sup>25</sup>

<b>Facility Name</b>	<b>Location</b>
St. David's	Hoquiam
St. Joseph's	Aberdeen
St. Joseph's House Providence Orphanage	Vancouver
M&M Orphanage	Poulsbo
Children's Home	Tacoma
F.C. Paddock	Tacoma
St. Joseph's Hospital	Tacoma
White Shido Home	Tacoma
St. Elizabeth Hospital	Sedro Woolley
Everett Hospital	Everett
St. Peter's	Olympia
St. Ignatius	Colfax
St. Lukes	Whatcom
St. Elizabeth's	North Yakima

**The following facilities were known to have accepted Indigenous children from Washington<sup>26</sup> but operated outside of current state boundaries:**

- St. Ignatius Mission, Flathead Reservation, 1864-1972
- Sacred Heart Mission, Coeur d'Alene Reservation, 1878-1974
- St. Andrews Mission, Umatilla Reservation, 1890-1961
- St. Joseph's Mission, Slickpoo, Idaho, 1903-1958
- Mt. Angel Academy, Mt. Angel, Oregon, 1888-1950s

## Looking Forward

Much work remains to be done to establish a full and transparent record of the history of Indian boarding schools in Washington State. The TAC will continue research and engagement to develop additional findings and recommendations for future reports.

The TAC and AGO staff will work with tribal leaders to begin in-community work, such as gathering testimonials and/or archival research and to develop a recommendation for a truth and healing framework. This framework, if adopted, could bring additional resources to this investigation and house future work related to supporting healing efforts in Indian Country.

Additionally, in 2023, the AGO received a grant to provide resources to work with tribes and tribal archives to research, identify, and create an inventory of cold cases involving Indigenous victims who also suffered civil rights violations prior to 1980. The project requires engaging the expertise of tribal staff and/or individuals with deep knowledge of tribal archives. We expect children who did not return from boarding school to comprise a portion of this list.

### **Key Goals of the Work Ahead:**

- Conduct at least six listening sessions in collaboration with tribes and Native-led organizations. These sessions must be held with consideration of the cultural, emotional, spiritual, and psychological well-being of survivors, family members, and community members and must accept written testimony.
- Report findings regarding the extent and types of support provided by the state to Indian boarding schools.
- Report findings regarding current state policies and practices that originate from Indian boarding schools or other assimilationist policies and practices and that cause disproportionate harm to American Indian and Alaska Native people and communities.
- Develop recommendations regarding how the state can address the harm done by Indian boarding schools and other cultural and linguistic termination practices.
- Strengthen relationships between tribes and the AGO in relation to cold case investigations.
- Identify cases that can be referred to AGO Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People Cold Case Unit for investigation and/or prosecution with the consent of the tribe and family.
- Work with Indigenous families and impacted community members in identified cold cases to learn and document what accountability/justice means to them.
- Develop guidance for working with tribes and tribal archives to identify cold cases for future work.

These combined efforts allow the AGO to leverage additional resources with the guidance of the TAC, tribes and tribal communities to address the systemic harm suffered by Indigenous nations over generations.

We acknowledge that this report is not an endpoint but a living testament to our shared responsibility. In gratitude, we look forward with hope and action to the continued journey of accountability, healing, justice and nation-to-state partnership.

**“It is a pity that so many Americans today think of the Indian as a romantic or comic figure in American history without contemporary significance. In fact, the Indian plays much the same role in our society that the Jews played in Germany. Like the miner’s canary, the Indian marks the shift from fresh air to poison gas in our political atmosphere; and our treatment of Indians, even more than our treatment of other minorities, reflects the rise and fall in our democratic faith.” -Felix Cohen**

# Endnotes

- 1 “A secondary source is anything that describes, interprets, evaluates, or analyzes information from primary sources. Common examples include: books, articles and documentaries...and essays. <https://scribbr.com/workgin-with-sources/primary-and-secondary-sources/>
  - 2 “Indigenous Health,” Stanford Medicine Lane Medical Library, <https://laneguides.stanford.edu/multicultural-health/indigenous-health>
  - 3 WA HCA (2023) Governor’s Indian Health Advisory Council 2022-2023 Biennial Report. <https://www.hca.wa.gov/assets/program/final-biennial-indian-health-improvement-advisory-plan-2023.pdf>.; DCYF (2019) WA State Child Welfare Racial Disparity Indices Report. <https://dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/reports/CWRacialDisparityIndices2019.pdf>.; DOC (n.d.) Tribal Relations. <https://www.doc.wa.gov/about/agency/tribal>
  - 4 Link to the proviso: <https://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2023-24/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Passed%20Legislature/5187-S.PL.pdf?q=20230516172937>, Pg. 38-39
  - 5 See also, “Indigenous Health” <https://laneguides.stanford.edu/multicultural-health/indigenous-health>.
  - 6 1600-1754: Native Americans: Overview. <https://www.Encyclopedia.com>
  - 7 Federal Law and Indian Policy, U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs, <https://www.bia.gov/bia/history/IndianLawPolicy> (last accessed May 14, 2025).
  - 8 U.S. Government Accountability Office. (n.d). Tribal and Native American Issues.
  - 9 Pruitt, Sarah. (2023). Broken Treaties with Native American Tribes: Timeline. History.com July 12, 2023. <https://www.history.com/news/native-american-broken-treaties>
  - 10 Galtung, J. (1990). Cultural Violence. *Journal of Peace Research*, 27(3), 291–305. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/423472>
  - 11 U.S. Department of the Interior. (n.d.) Federal Boarding School Initiative. <https://www.doi.gov/priorities/strengthening-indian-country/federal-indian-boarding-school-initiative>
  - 12 Indian Land Tenure Foundation. (2021). Project Update. Reversing Manifest Destiny: Marking the return of Indian lands to Indian Hands. [https://iltf.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/ProjectUpdate\\_2021.pdf](https://iltf.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/ProjectUpdate_2021.pdf)
  - 13 Smiles, Deondre. (2021). “Erasing Indigenous History, Then and Now.” *Origins: Current Events in Historical Perspective*. September 2021. <https://origins.osu.edu/article/erasing-indigenous-history-then-and-now>
  - 14 Smith, A. (2005). *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. South End Press.
  - 15 Carson, W.O., Cordova-Marks, F.M., & Carroll, S. (2024). Exploring the historical complexities of Native identity formation, blood quantum, and modern tribal enrollment criteria. *Journal of Global Indigeneity*, 8(1). <https://nni.arizona.edu/publications/exploring-historical-complexities-native-identity-formation-blood-quantum-and-modern-tribal>
- Truth commission schematic
- U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2021). High risk series: Dedicated leadership needed to address limited progress in most high-risk areas.
- U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2021). High risk series: Dedicated leadership needed to address limited progress in most high-risk areas. *Cultural Integrity and American Indian Education* [article], *Arizona Law Review*, Vol. 11, Issue 4 (Winter 1969), pp. 641-676, Ross, Richard M., 11 *Ariz. L. Rev.* 641 (1969).
- 16 ICT, [Getting a bead on Felix Cohen’s ‘miners’ canary’ - ICT News](#), ICT Staff, 9/6/2006, updated 9/12/2018, retrieved 11/18/2023