



Media Release – July 25th, 2022

Since May of 2021, University nuxɛłhot'ine thaaʔehots'į nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills (UnBQ) has been preparing for the ground penetrating radar search for unmarked burial sites on school grounds near St Paul. Phase one will be conducted August 9th to the 13th, 2022, beginning with a pipe ceremony. Survivors, intergenerational survivors, and families are welcome to attend. During this time, cultural and mental health supports will be available. The radar search data requires several months to process and interpret so we don't expect results until mid-winter.

In this last year, survivors have come forward to share their memories and experiences. In the coming weeks and months we will continue working with our Nations and other organizations involved in this work to ensure that all voices are included in as we proceed with the extensive search of the grounds which we anticipate may take several seasons. We will be arranging gatherings for survivors to share their memories, and individual interviews will also be available. We are preparing to host healing gatherings regularly – the first is tentatively scheduled for August 17th at the UnBQ for IRS survivors and their families.

The legacy of Indian Residential Schools is a painful tragedy that all Indigenous Peoples carry. UnBQ has been working for over 50 years to restore and revitalize our languages, cultures, ceremonies, and families that were targeted in these schools. We continue the work of our ancestors to transform the school into a place of learning and healing through education and ceremony.

Dr Kisha Supernant, Director of the Institute of Prairie and Indigenous Archeology at the University of Alberta, and a team of researchers and graduate students will be conducting the search.

We ask the media to please be respectful and enquire in advance to discuss access to the site and for interviews.

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For additional information regarding the search, the gathering and/or to be involved please email bqirs@bluequills.ca