Thank you all for being here…

Morning of Wednesday June 11, 2008, circle of eleven chairs added to house of commons floor

5 aboriginal leaders, 6 r.s. survivors, each guest of honour, extraordinary event

Then PM issued formal apology for IRS system, historic policy of assimilation, forced enfranchisement

damage both caused to aboriginal children, families, ways of life

IRS system was network of boarding schools, industrial schools, federal hostels

created to remove indigenous children from homes, families, cultures

Primarily active following passage of Indian Act in 1876 until last fed. operated closed in 1996

In years since, gov’t joined in its apology by individual provs and territories, several church groups and religious orgs, and ONE university

Also in 2008, gov’t mandated truth and reconciliation commission

embarked on arduous task of collecting and analyzing documents record and data from gov’t archives, church files, school records

as well as collecting thousands and thousands of statements from r.s. survivors

This project makes use of that data to investigate IRS system visually, first through stories of survivors and then transitioning into the narrative of each school and the system as a whole

Reading the gov’t’s 2008 apology and the articles, documentaries, reports published since, easy to jump to conclusions about Indian Res. Schools

But to fully understand what happened to the children who attended these schools, we need to hear ***their*** stories

So here we see an ever-expanding collection of personal accounts

Like that of Bob Baxter who talks about his experiences during lights out time

And Noel Starblanket, who has good memories playing hockey and running cross-country

Who attended Gordon’s Residential School in Southern Sask.

Gave statement to the commission on June 18, 2010

Emily’s story begins long before residential schools, growing up in York Factory Manitoba

Good memories of her parents, siblings, experiences learning English

She goes on to talk about her journey to school, being on a train not knowing where she was going and that she may never see parents again

She continues, speaking to various points in her life both at school and after

Like her language and cultural education, doing chores and housework, and finally being integrated into a public school in eighth grade

While her story is quite compelling and paints a vivid and in-depth picture of life at R.S., it is important to note and very important to remember that Emily was just one of an estimated 150,000 aboriginal children to attend a RS in Canada

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Overall there were 132 schools, drawing from tribes, reserves, and bands all across the country

Some as far away as 8000 km.

This final map layer shows all 132 schools, some 700 reserves, tribes, and bands, and the ***known*** connections between them.

Clicking into a location allows us to dive deeper into the narrative of a single school

This shows us enrolment levels

a chrono history

any management or incident reports throughout the school’s lifetime, like physical/sexual abuse, health/medical issues, policy changes, or anything that happened here that we know of.

Going back to this map, we see this full screen, fully interactive map is quite revealing as a visualization tool

In that it shows just how far aboriginal children were made to travel to go to school

Supports argument made by indigenous researches that schools purposely drew students from far away

to distance the from their families and limit opps. parents had to see them

Often had incredible distance to travel to return home

As outlined by survivor statements, never made journey

Throughout entire visualization, always search tool available in upper left

In addition to links to key points of the story, allows us to search across stories, reserves, and schools, returning top three results

Allows for an in-depth exploration of the data on **Canada’s Indian Residential Schools**

Conclude by inviting you all to explore data t [residentialschools.info](http://residentialschools.info)