



tx̣ẉəl g̣ẉəlapu, g̣ẉəlapu dʒiišəd, dsyayayəʔ čələp. Amber Sterud Hayward tsi dsdaʔ. spuyaləpabš čəd. λ'uyayus čəd tx̣ẉəl ti spuyaləpabš ʔal ti slələʔul'badiʔ yəx̣ẉ ti tx̣ẉəlšucidadiʔ.

Good day to you all, my friends and relatives. My name is Amber Sterud Hayward and I am a Puyallup Tribal member. I work for the Puyallup Tribe, formerly in the Historic Preservation Department and currently in the Language Program.

You just watched “The Boarding School & Cushman Project: A Timeline of Events at St. George’s Indian Boarding School, Cushman Indian Boarding School and Cushman Indian Hospital & Sanatorium.”

This video describes the events that transpired on the Puyallup Tribal Reservation in Washington State during the assimilation of Indian children through the boarding school era. Also included was a timeline of events that transpired on the property over the years.

Before we discuss local assimilation, I’d like to broaden our scope and take a peek at the rest of the world as it relates to these practices. Assimilation is the process in which a cultural group is absorbed into a dominant culture group – whether it be by force or undertaken voluntarily. The goal is to have the minority culture group take on the cultural practices, languages, foods and religious beliefs of the dominant group. European colonizers used forced assimilation on Indigenous people across the globe throughout history. These frequent colonization attempts were common in North and South America, Africa, Australia and Asia. Colonizers used many of the same methods on these continents that included religious conversions, forced removal of children, taking community property and dividing it up into individual parcels of land for ownership, undermining community economies, and removing Indigenous food sources. However, colonizer’s forced assimilation attempts are rarely successful. It is uncommon for the colonizer’s cultural practices to be accepted by the Indigenous groups completely. Forced assimilation is rarely successful, but it does have incredibly negative and harmful effects on the targeted group.

Keeping this information in mind, let’s focus back locally. Forced assimilation was happening across the United States in the late 1800’s, taking thousands of Indian children from their parents and forcing them into government or religious boarding schools. Children were also being removed from their parents and adopted out to white families at alarming rates. The goal was to take the children from the influences of their culture and language, and force White culture, values, religion and language on our Native children. This forced assimilation practice happened right here in Tacoma Washington on the Puyallup Reservation.

THE BOARDING SCHOOL & CUSHMAN PROJECT
ST. GEORGE’S INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOL • CUSHMAN INDIAN BOARDING
SCHOOL • CUSHMAN INDIAN HOSPITAL & SANATORIUM – VIDEO SCRIPT

Video Script by Amber Sterud Hayward
THE PUYALLUP TRIBAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM - 2020



When I worked in the Puyallup Tribe's Historic Preservation Department, I would go out and share the Tribes history with non-natives. The majority of people that I spoke with had no idea there were two boarding schools here on the Puyallup reservation. However, many recalled seeing the huge brick Indian hospital that was visible from I-5 as people drove through Tacoma.

Many of these people would ask, "Why didn't I know about these boarding schools?" That's a really good question. Let's pause there and think about that.

For those of you watching, if this is new information for you, why do you think you didn't know about the boarding schools located on the Puyallup reservation?

Why is this timeline of events not taught or quickly brushed over in Washington State history?

This was a horrific timeline of events that happened in American history that were intended to stay hidden. Our stories and perspectives are not shared widely because our people were traumatized and stripped of everything that was important to us, in attempts to destroy us. As described earlier, assimilation practices do not completely work on the target group, but much harm is done to the people in the process. By us sharing this very information with you, we get to reveal the truth behind the very script that was devised to hide this history. Sharing helps our people to identify, process, and heal so we can move forward. Sharing also puts our words, experiences and our perspective of these events into the history books.

Our intent for this section of the video is to remove the blanket statements regarding country wide assimilation, and focus your eyes on Tacoma, WA. By doing this, we are making you connect through location and geographical landmarks. If you've driven down I-5 past the current Emerald Queen Casino, or past the Puyallup River, you are connecting to the land and location that these boarding schools were located by. The intent of this video is to have you see us as human beings, and not turn away and say these things happened somewhere else. These things happened right here, and we want to acknowledge that.

Being aware of what transpired on the very land that you and I live on is incredibly valuable to begin healing the damage that was done, moving past the grief and pushing forward to understanding and reconciliation.

Please know that the full immersion Lushootseed video and this accompanying video has not been arbitrarily put together. Each word, perspective, story, and each question has been chosen very intentionally. We want you to know that these things occurred right here, to our people, on the Puyallup Reservation in Pierce County Washington – and the effects of this history still has an impact on our community today.

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