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# All Woodlands survivors should receive compensation: Dix

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The last section of the of the former Woodlands School, still not demolished, in New Westminster on July 13 , 2011. The building was the scene of abuse against mentally disabled residents.

Photo Credit: Ian Smith, PNG

Adrian Dix and the NPD believe all students who suffered abuse at the former Woodlands School in New Westminster should receive compensation, not just those who were abused before 1974 as the current settlement states.

"Today on B.C. day, an annual occasion to mark our province's history, we are reminded that it is now up to legislators to close one of the darkest chapters in our collective memory – the systemic abuse of students at the former Woodlands school," said Dix in a statement.

"Effectively, the courts have left the decision to provide compensation to

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all Woodland survivors up to the sitting provincial government.

And while the Liberals have acknowledged that former Woodlands students suffered grave abuse at the institution, they still are not providing over 300 survivors who attended the school before 1974 the opportunity to apply for compensation in advance of the September 19 deadline."

Dix said he is urging premier Christy Clark and attorney general Barry Penner to "move on moral principle, and override the legal technicality [that] leaves survivors ineligible for relief."

The NDP leader spoke on the grounds of the former school on Monday, and was accompanied by former students. Currently only those students were suffered abuse after 1974 are eligible for restitution because of a loophole created by what is known as the "Arishenkoff 2 legal ruling."

"The Liberal government has yet to signal that they will recognize all remaining survivors," said New Westminster MLA Dawn Black.

Dix said that in the event the rules do not change by the September deadline, he would introduce a motion in the legislature so MLAs could vote in favour of overturning the current ruling.

Woodlands School closed permanently in 1996, but was previously known as a 'lunatic asylum' and was home to mentally disabled children, and runaways.

We will have more on this story on the Early News at 5 p.m. and the News Hour at 6 p.m.

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