

# MKO Path Forward For Investigations of Former Indian Residential School Sites Project

Also Referred to as the MKO IRS Path Forward Project

*National Gathering on Unmarked Burials:  
Supporting the Search and Recovery of Missing Children*



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Keewatinowi  
Okimakanak Inc.

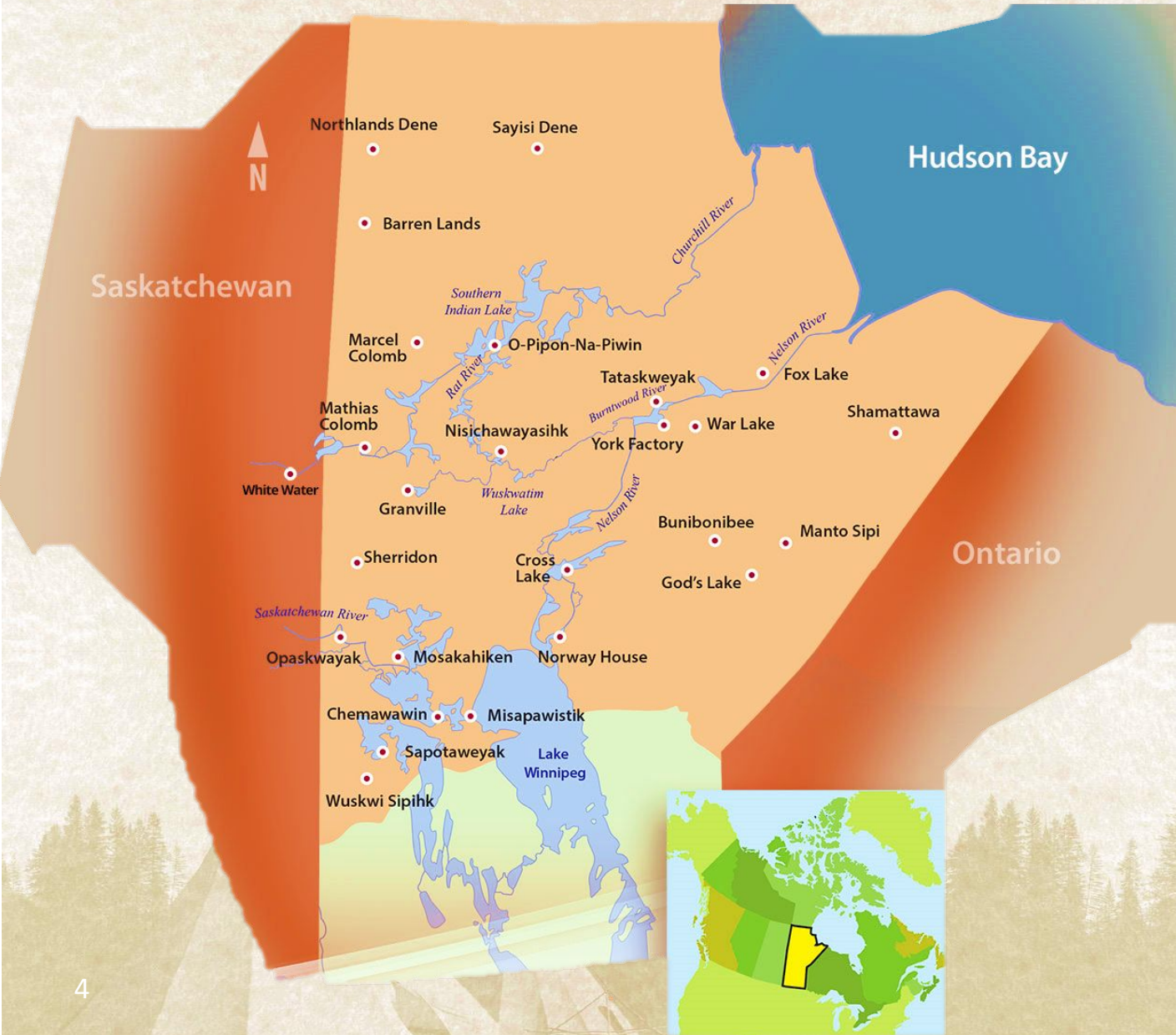
# About Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO)



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Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) is a non-profit, political advocacy organization that provides a collective voice on issues of inherent, Treaty, Aboriginal and human rights for the citizens of the sovereign First Nations we represent. The MKO First Nations are signatory to Treaties 4, 5, 6 and 10.





## MKO First Nation Communities:

1. Barren Lands First Nation, Brochet
2. Bunibonibee Cree Nation, Oxford House
3. Chemawawin Cree Nation, Easterville
4. Fox Lake Cree Nation, Gillam
5. God's Lake First Nation, God's Lake Narrows
6. Granville Lake, Leaf Rapids
7. Manto Sipi Cree Nation, God's River
8. Marcel Colomb First Nation, Lynn Lake
9. Mathias Colomb Cree Nation, Pukatawagan
10. Misapawistik Cree Nation, Grand Rapids
11. Mosakahiken First Nation, Moose Lake
12. Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, Nelson House
13. Northlands First Nation, Lac Brochet
14. Norway House Cree Nation
15. Opaskwayak Cree Nation
16. O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation, South Indian Lake
17. Pimicikamak Cree Nation, Cross Lake
18. Sapotaweyak Cree Nation, Pelican Rapids
19. Sayisi Dene Denesuline Nation, Tadoule Lake
20. Shamattawa First Nation
21. Sherridon
22. Tataskweyak Cree Nation, Split Lake
23. York Factory First Nation, York Landing
24. War Lake First Nation, Ilford
25. White Water Reserve, Saskatchewan
26. Wuskwi Sipiik Cree Nation



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# Overview: Our History Through the Indian Residential School System



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# Former Indian Residential Schools in Southern MB:

## **Brandon Indian Residential School**

located in Brandon

## **Mckay Indian Residential School**

located in Dauphin

## **Pine Creek Indian Residential School**

located in Pine Creek First Nation

## **Assiniboia Indian Residential School**

located in Winnipeg

## **Birtle Indian Residential School**

located in Birtle

## **Fort Alexander Indian Residential School**

located in Sagkeeng First Nation

## **Portage La Prairie Indian Residential School**

located in Portage La Prairie

## **Elkhorn Indian Residential School**

located in Elkhorn

Regional Advisory Committee Members  
Sandy Robinson and Councillor David Swanson  
paying respects to their loved ones buried at Brandon IRS.



# Former Indian Residential Schools in the MKO Region:

## **Mckay Indian Residential School**

located in Opaskwayak Cree Nation

## **Guy Hill Indian Residential School**

located in Opaskwayak Cree Nation

## **Norway House Indian Residential School**

located Kinosao Sipi/Norway House Cree Nation

## **Notre Dame Indian Residential School**

located in Kinosao Sipi/Norway House Cree Nation

## **St. Josephs/Cross Indian Lake Residential School**

located in Pimicikamak Cree Nation

## **Churchill Indian Residential School**

located in Churchill, Manitoba



Photo taken at Crosslake IRS



Mckay IRS Photo Archive

# Former Indian Residential Schools in Saskatchewan

## Marieval Indian Residential School

Located in Cowessess First Nation

## Guy Indian Residential School at Sturgeon Landing

Located in Sturgeon Landing, Saskatchewan

## Qu'Appelle Indian Residential School

Located at Lebret, Saskatchewan

## Gordon's Indian Residential School

Located at in Punnichy, Saskatchewan

## File Hills Indian Residential School

Located at Balcarres, Saskatchewan





# Immediate Actions to Create the Path Forward



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**June 2021, Grand Chief Garrison Settee wrote letters to Justin Trudeau, Hon. David Lametti**

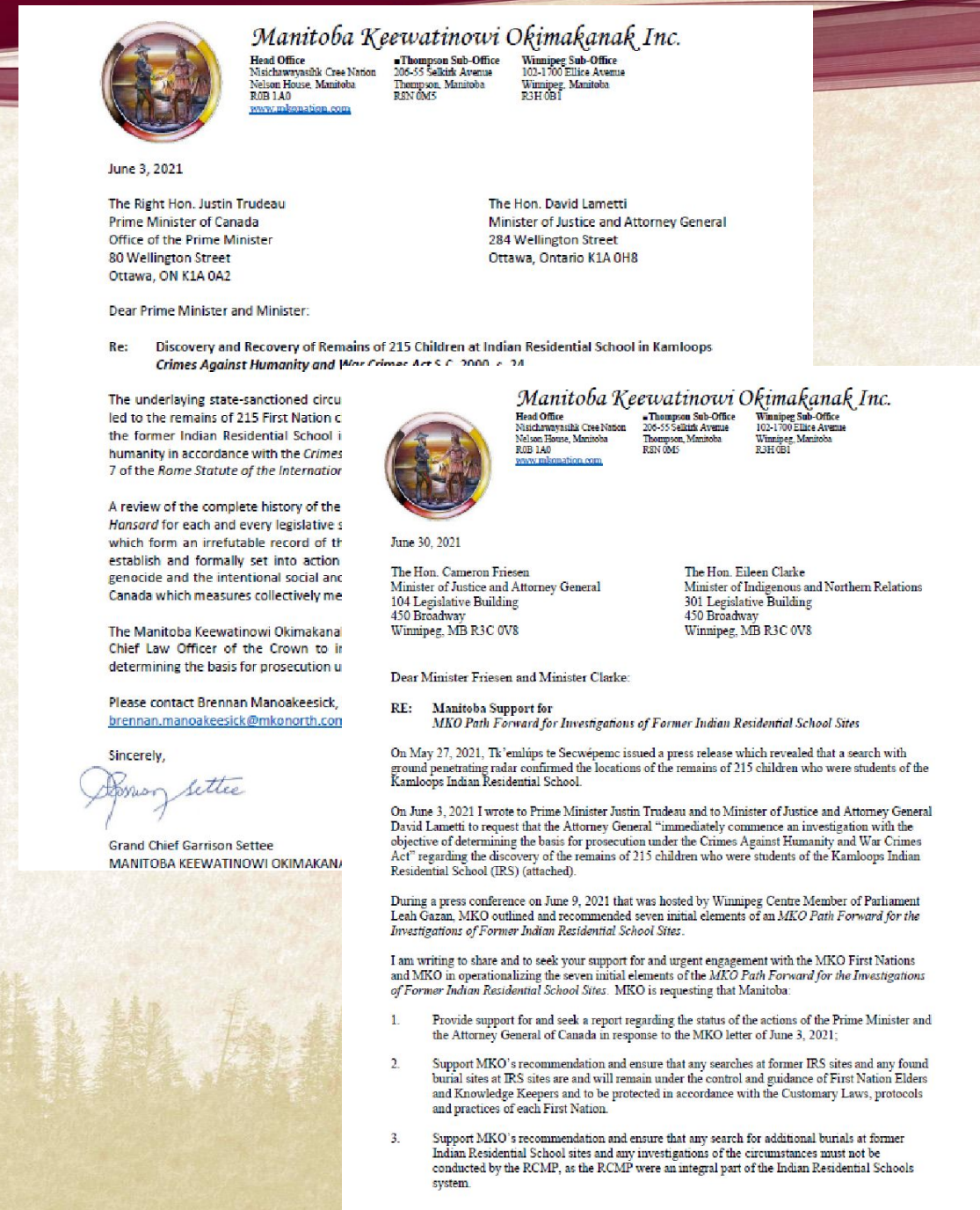
**Purpose of Letter:**

- Call upon Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to recognize the Discovery and Recovery of Remains of 215 Children at Kamloops Indian Residential School as a crime against humanity in accordance with ***the Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act***.
- Call upon Minister of Justice and Attorney General David Lametti - in his role and as the independent Chief Law Officer of the Crown - to immediately commence an investigation with the objective of determining the basis for prosecution under ***Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act***.

**June 2021, Grand Chief Garrison Settee wrote letters to Hon. Cameron Friesen, Hon. Eileen Clarke.**

**Purpose of Letter:**

- Call upon Honourable Cameron Friesen and Honourable Eileen Clarke to support urgent engagement with the MKO First Nations and MKO in operationalizing the seven initial elements of the ***MKO Path Forward Project***.



## Two core elements recommended in our letter to Hon. Cameron Friesen and Hon. Eileen Clarke:

1. As a matter of first principle, immediate and conclusive steps must be taken to conclusively protect any site where the remains of children are known or are suspected to be located.
  - MKO suggests that protective steps include an agreement to ensure that the culturally affiliated First Nations and their families have control, custody and clear authority to make decisions regarding the disposition of the children.
  - MKO looks to the principles, processes and provisions of the ***Agreement for a Protocol for the Protection of Heritage Resources and Aboriginal Human Remains Related to the Wuskwatim Generating Project***, dated August 11, 2006.
  
2. That new provincial and national legislation similar to the ***Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act*** of the United States, known as NAGPRA, be urgently developed and enacted.
  - MKO suggests this to ensure collaboration with First Nations and to require the protection, control and decisions regarding disposition or repatriation of the remains of our children and all First Nation remains and grave belongings wherever they are found or are presently located.
  - MKO is presently working on a NAGPRA-type law as a Private Member's Bill to be introduced in the Senate by Senator MaryJane McCallum.



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## **A third core element that MKO has raised with the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and the Manitoba Minister of Indigenous Reconciliation and Northern Relations:**

3. Canada holds a continuing and persisting duty and obligation for the children pursuant to Article 91(24) *British North America Act, 1867* due to the fact that the children perished and are located where they now are as a direct result and consequence of the exercise by Canada of Article 91(24) of the BNA Act through the Orders in Council and the amendments to the *Indian Act* which established and operated the Indian Residential School system.



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# MKO and Sioux Valley Dakota Nation Working Relationship



MKO and SVDN are working together to ensure that MKO Communities affected by Brandon IRS are **engaged, consulted, and informed** of the Brandon IRS Investigation.

MKO and SVDN are working together to ensure that **Survivors** are provided with opportunities to visit the former IRS, heal amongst former classmates, and have their experiences/stories documented.

MKO and SVDN are working together to ensure that the children buried on sites associated to the Brandon IRS are **conclusively protected** by First Nations.



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# Our Path Forward Looks Like...

## Key Objectives: *What we set out to do...*

- Advocate and negotiate arrangements to conclusively protect every site.
- Ensure First Nations and families have control, custody and make decisions.
- Develop new national and provincial legislation similar to the *Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)* of the U.S.
- Build working relationships with Indigenous communities and Investigation Teams in Manitoba and neighboring provinces.
- Organize and/or support a series of fora/summits/gatherings listening to the ideas, needs and priorities of MKO communities.
- Organize and/or support events for sharing information, research findings, and investigation updates to affected communities and family members.
- Support MKO communities, tribal councils, and organizations with leveraging funding from federal sources and other agencies supporting work related to Indian Residential Schools.
- Collect, analyze, and transcribe archival documents.
- Collect, store, and protect Survivors truth-telling accounts.



*Ekosani. Kinanaskomitinawow.  
Miigwech. Masi Cho.*



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