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



Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

About Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO)



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
- 3. Marcel Colomb First Nation, Lynn Lake
- 9. Mathias Colomb Cree Nation, Pukatawagan
- 10. Misipawistik 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 Sipihk Cree Nation



Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

Overview: Our History Through the Indian Residential School System



Former Indian Residential Schools in Southern MB:

Brandon Indian Residential School

Birtle Indian Residential School located in Birtle

located in Brandon

Mckay Indian Residential School

located in Dauphin

Fort Alexander Indian Residential

School

located in Sagkeeng First Nation

Pine Creek Indian Residential School

located in Pine Creek First Nation

Portage La Prairie Indian Residential

School

Assiniboia Indian Residential Schoolocated in Portage La Prairie

located in Winnipeg

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





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, Saskatchwan





Immediate Actions to Create the Path Forward



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 Lamettiin his role and as the independent Chief Law Officer of the Crownto 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.



Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

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June 3, 2021

The Right Hon. Justin Trudeau Prime Minister of Canada Office of the Prime Minister 80 Wellington Street Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2 The Hon. David Lametti Minister of Justice and Attorney General 284 Wellington Street Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H8

Dear Prime Minister and Minister:

Re: Discovery and Recovery of Remains of 215 Children at Indian Residential School in Kamloops

Crimes Against Humanity and Was Crimes Act S C 2000 e 24

The underlaying state-sanctioned circu led to the remains of 215 First Nation C the former Indian Residential School i humanity in accordance with the Crimes 7 of the Rome Statute of the Internation

A review of the complete history of the Hansard for each and every legislative s which form an irrefutable record of th establish and formally set into action genocide and the intentional social and Canada which measures collectively me

The Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanal Chief Law Officer of the Crown to it determining the basis for prosecution u

Please contact Brennan Manoakeesick, brennan.manoakeesick@mkonorth.con

Sincerely,

Donwon Settle

Grand Chief Garrison Settee MANITOBA KEEWATINOWI OKIMAKANA

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June 30, 202

The Hon. Cameron Friesen Minister of Justice and Attorney General 104 Legislative Building 450 Broadway Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8 The Hon. Eileen Clarke Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations 301 Legislative Building 450 Broadway Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Dear Minister Friesen and Minister Clarke:

RE: Manitoba Support for

MKO Path Forward for Investigations of Former Indian Residential School Sites

On May 27, 2021, Tk'emhips te Secwépemc issued a press release which revealed that a search with ground penetrating radar confirmed the locations of the remains of 215 children who were students of the Kamloops Indian Residential School.

On June 3, 2021 I wrote to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and to Minister of Justice and Attorney General David Lametti to request that the Attorney General "immediately commence an investigation with the objective of determining the basis for prosecution under the Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act" regarding the discovery of the remains of 215 children who were students of the Kamloops Indian Residential School (IRS) (attached).

During a press conference on June 9, 2021 that was hosted by Winnipeg Centre Member of Parliament Leah Gazan, MKO outlined and recommended seven initial elements of an MKO Path Forward for the Investigations of Former Indian Residential School Sites.

I am writing to share and to seek your support for and urgent engagement with the MKO First Nations and MKO in operationalizing the seven initial elements of the MKO Path Forward for the Investigations of Former Indian Residential School Sites. MKO is requesting that Manitoba.

- Provide support for and seek a report regarding the status of the actions of the Prime Minister and the Attorney General of Canada in response to the MKO letter of June 3, 2021;
- Support MKO's recommendation and ensure that any searches at former IRS sites and any found burial sites at IRS sites are and will remain under the control and guidance of First Nation Elders and Knowledge Keepers and to be protected in accordance with the Customary Laws, protocols and practices of each First Nation.
- Support MKO's recommendation and ensure that any search for additional burials at former Indian Residential School sites and any investigations of the circumstances must not be conducted by the RCMP, as the RCMP were an integral part of the Indian Residential Schools system.

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

- 1. As a matter of <u>first principle</u>, <u>immediate</u> 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 <u>First Nations</u> 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.



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.



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.



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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