Backgrounder

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# Manitoba First Nations School System

In 2012, a resolution from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs mandated the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre (MFNERC) to offer similar services which in a provincial education system are provided by a school board, including services for teachers (e.g. professional development or pedagogical support) while also continuing their work on developing other enhanced education system(s) for First Nations.

The establishment of the Manitoba First Nations School System is the result of efforts by Manitoba First Nations to address the needs of First Nations students. The Manitoba First Nations School System, formerly known as the Partnership Transition Initiative (PTI), is a First Nations-led initiative to create a new culturally relevant, high-quality education system. The purpose of the Manitoba First Nations School System is to establish a strong system that will support First Nations schools, improve the quality and relevance of education, improve academic standards, and improve student outcomes, including retention, completion and graduation rates.

The Manitoba First Nations School System will administer and manage elementary and secondary education programs and services for those First Nations participating. It is the first of its kind in Canada – a First Nations-designed school system, with funding comparable to provincial school divisions. The Education Governance Agreement will enable the Manitoba First Nations School System to provide education programming and supports up to 2,220 First Nations students in Manitoba. Other First Nations that are operated by the Manitoba First Nations Education resource centre may choose to join the system in the future.

The participating First Nations are:

* Bloodvein First Nation;
* Brokenhead Ojibway Nation;
* Dakota Plains Wahpeton First Nation;
* Fox Lake Cree Nation;
* Keeseekoowenin Ojibway Nation;
* Lake Manitoba First Nation;
* Pinaymootang First Nation;
* Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation, and;
* Sagkeeng First Nation.

This agreement is an example of the Government of Canada’s commitment to reconciliation through a renewed relationship with Indigenous peoples based on the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership.