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# PRIVATE HOME PLACEMENT PROGRAM

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PROPOSED  
CONCEPTUAL  
FRAMEWORK  
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Manitoba First Nations Education  
Resource Centre Inc.



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### Consultants:

Virginia Arthurson  
Rebecca Ross

### Editor:

Cynthia Bird

### Staff and Students of First Nations Schools:

Berens River Student Services  
Frontier Collegiate  
Southeast Collegiate

### Private Home Placement (PHP) Review Team:

Bill Gamblin	Nisichawayasihk Education Authority
Debra Perih	Frontier School Division
Derek Bradley	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
Don Robertson	Elder Representative
Melanie Everette	Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
Richard Perrault	Manitoba Education
Susy Komishin	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, Canada
Sydney Garrioch	Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

### Private Home Placement (PHP) Focus Group:

Allan Letandre	Interlake Reserves Tribal Council
Francis McGillivray	Swampy Cree Tribal Council
George Desnomie	Manitoba Indian Education Association
Irene Graveson	Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council
Lambert Hart	Manitoba Indian Education Association
Richard Grisdale	Southeast Tribal Council
Sharon Mckay	Keewatin Tribal Council

### Manitoba First Nations Education Directors

### Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre (MFNERC) Staff:

Lorne C. Keeper	Executive Director
Gwen Merrick	Associate Executive Director
Violet Okemaw	Director of Support Services
Myra Laramee	Curriculum Writer
Sandy Robinson	School Planning Specialist
Sheleen Daniels	Administrative Assistant

Information on the PHP documents may be acquired by contacting the Director of Support Services at 204-594-1290 or via website [www.mfnerc.com](http://www.mfnerc.com)

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## *INTRODUCTION*

A First Nation mother gives a painful account on the loss of her child who left home to go away to school and provides one of the strongest reasons to review the PHP program. She gave the interview because she fears for her other child who wants to go to school. She speaks for changes to improve the program; to keep her child safe.

*Like when my oldest boy went, I didn't expect this would be the last time I'd see him... and I never did see him again. ...he was a valedictorian, he won all kinds of trips, trophies, he was such a good kid and I think someone did something to him.; he wouldn't just take off, not come back, he wasn't the type; he would come and ask me if he could go and sleep at his friends; ...hardest part is not knowing... (Parent Interview, March 2009)*

The Private Home Placement (PHP) Program has been in existence since the 1960's and operates primarily in Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario. The funding rates have increased minimally since that time (\$10 per month per student for accommodation).

First Nations students leave their communities to attend high school if there is no high school in their community or if specific academic courses and/or vocational courses/programs are not available in the local high school (2010-2011, Education Handbook, AANDC).

In the 2010-2011 nominal roll, there are over 900 First Nations students in Manitoba, some as young as 13 years of age, must leave their communities annually to gain access to the grades or programs that they need to graduate with the qualifications and skills required for personal and community success (AANDC, 2011).

In 2009, the Chiefs of Manitoba requested a review of the PHP Program, Manitoba Region. The MFNERC included the *Learning for Living* project with the PHP Program Review as one component, in the Education Partnerships Program (EPP) proposal.

Consequently, the *Learning for Living* project was funded by AANDC years from 2009-2012 fiscal years.

## ***PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK***

The proposed conceptual framework<sup>1</sup> for an effective PHP Program consists of 7 areas: Funding Support; Continuum<sup>2</sup> of PHP Services; Development and Implementation of PHP Program and Services; Social and Academic support; Program and Professional Standards; Research and Knowledge Development; and Infrastructure to Support PHP Reform. Figure 1 provides an illustration of the proposed framework.

Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework



<sup>1</sup> A Framework is a set of ideas, principles, agreements, or rules that provides the basis or outline for something intended to be more fully developed at a later stage. (Encarta Dictionary, English)

<sup>2</sup> A link between two things; or a continuous series of things that blend into each other so gradually and seamlessly that it is impossible to say where one becomes the next. (Encarta Dictionary)

## ***1. FUNDING SUPPORT***

The following actions will ensure adequate funding for PHP services:

- Develop a funding formula to include tuition and living allowances, support services, adequate counselling supports, adequate academic supports, transportation, extra-curricular activities, etc. comparable to similar programs that provide home placement for children (i.e. international students);
- Collaborate with federal departments, such as AANDC and FNIHB, to provide services to help PHP students settle in and integrate into their school;
- Introduce reporting and accounting procedures that require schools and school boards to report how they have used PHP tuition funding to provide services to PHP students. Reporting procedures should include how the students are doing academically and socially;

## ***2. CONTINUUM OF STANDARDIZED PHP SERVICES***

### **Information, Assessment, Placement, Transitional Programs, Tracking, Communication**

The following actions will promote a continuum of standardized PHP services:

- Utilize standardized instruments and procedures for PHP students that focus academic and socio-psychological profiles of students, reading, writing and math skills, and other additional support needs before they leave their home community;
- Establish guidelines and procedures at the local level for placement of PHP students;
- Promote the placement of PHP students in schools with academic support including tutorials and transitional programming;
- Establish standards of counselling services (i.e. counsellor to student ratio) for PHP students including monitoring of academic and social progress on a regular basis;
- Develop and implement a province-wide tracking system using a standard template;
- Establish guidelines for ongoing monitoring of the academic performance of PHP students that involve classroom teachers, school counselors, parents and/or First Nation counsellors and/or house parents;
- Require that all PHP students participate in the provincial assessment program and that their PHP status is identified on the student answer sheet;
- Develop and establish communication protocols between all stakeholders;

### ***3. PHP PROGRAM AND SERVICES DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION***

The following actions will ensure development and implementation of standard PHP services:

- Develop a legal framework for the PHP program;
- Develop guidelines for service delivery for PHP students;
- Develop orientation programs and policy templates for use by all First Nations and sponsoring agencies;
- Establish reporting structures for implementation;
- Provide resourcing and professional development opportunities for implementation of PHP Programs (orientation and retraining);

### ***4. SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC SUPPORTS***

The following actions will ensure associated psychological, socio-cultural and academic support to PHP students:

- Provide transitional support and coordination of services for PHP students between First Nation schools and between school divisions;
- Promote collaboration between schools and provincial and federal departments to help PHP students settle in and integrate in their new school;
- Provide academic support to PHP students including mentoring, tutoring, etc.;
- Provide support to families of PHP students and to house parents;

### ***5. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS***

The following actions will ensure professional standards in the PHP program:

- Require all teachers of PHP students be in-serviced on the PHP program, cultural awareness and students needs;
- Promote cultural awareness for all school personnel;
- Require all counsellors be qualified;
- Ensure that all future teachers have access to a continuum of training opportunities from First Nations' cultural awareness to First Nations' cultural competency;

- Ensure all House Parents undertake an orientation/training session in the PHP program and meet requirements of child abuse registry and criminal records clearance;

## ***6. RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT***

The following actions will ensure progressive research and knowledge development in the First Nations PHP program:

- Engage multi-stakeholders in the development and implementation of a collaborative research agenda and priorities for the PHP program, including First Nations perspectives, early intervention when a student is having difficulty, benchmarks for academic success, and classroom, school and community-based research;
- Provide sustainable funding for research activities (i.e. pilot schools) in the area of PHP education;

## ***7. INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT PHP REFORM***

The following actions will ensure infrastructure to support PHP reform:

- Include performance measures related to the education of PHP students;
- Establish a task force/implementation committee to develop, support implementation and evaluate province-wide strategic PHP directions. The task group will comprise the following representatives:
  - Senior leadership in AANDC;
  - Senior leadership of departmental services in Manitoba Education;
  - MFNERC/First Nations Education Directors;
  - Senior leadership of school boards;
  - Senior leadership in post-secondary education sector, particularly the faculties of education and related human services;
  - Senior leadership from the Manitoba Teachers' Association;
  - Researchers;
  - Parent representatives; and
  - Student representatives.
- Establish a regular schedule of reporting to AMC, Manitoba Education and AANDC.

LIST OF ACRONYMS:

AMC – Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

AANDC – Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (formerly INAC - Indian and Northern Affairs Canada)

FNIHB – First Nations Inuit Health Branch

PHP – Private Home Placement Program