
Private Home Placement Program

Communications
Protocol
March 2014

Manitoba First Nations
Education Resource Centre Inc.



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Background

The Private Home Placement (PHP) Program makes it possible for First Nations students to access secondary education if the high school program or specific academic and/or vocational courses of study are not available in their community. The PHP has been in existence since the 1960s and operates exclusively in Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario.

Funding for the PHP program is provided by AANDC.

In Manitoba, approximately 900 First Nations students, 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. (AANDC, 2011)

In 2009, the Chiefs of Manitoba requested a review of the PHP Program, Manitoba Region, as another effort to address a program that is perceived as inadequate to meet the needs of First Nations students.

The Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre (MFNERC) included the PHP Program Review in the Education Partnerships Program (EPP) proposal to AANDC. It was a three-year research partnership that entailed data collection, framework development, and recommendations for PHP program enhancement and capacity building. The project was funded by AANDC through the 2009-2012 fiscal years and subsequently expanded to include the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 fiscal years.

Goal

The goal of this communication protocol is to address the challenges related to communication and coordination amongst all stakeholders of the PHP by conveying information in a planned, appropriate, timely and consistent manner.

Implementation of the recommendations found in the Program Review Report necessitates communication with all stakeholders including government funding agencies, First Nation and other administrative organizations, service providers such as counsellors, students, parents, house parents, sending and receiving schools.

Due to the geographical location of the home communities and the varied distances to the receiving schools, communication is important so that all stakeholders are informed and encouraged to become active participants in the PHP reform process.

Partnership Objectives

1. The partners will work together in planning the communication activities and in preparing the communication materials. Any information to be shared will be mutually agreed on by all partners.
2. The partners will participate in any events related to the PHP on a date, time and location agreed to by the partners.

Communication Objectives

1. To increase awareness of the PHP.
2. To increase the understanding of the issues associated with the PHP.
3. To increase understanding of rights, roles and responsibilities of each of the stakeholder groups.
4. To encourage all stakeholders to take action to address these challenges.

Target Audience

Students, parents and house parents will benefit from understanding their rights, roles and responsibilities while they are participating in the PHP program, particularly those related to communication and the safety of the students.

Sending and receiving schools will benefit from understanding their rights, roles and responsibilities, particularly related to sharing information on students and in the provision of seamless programs and services to students.

Service providers such as First Nation counsellors, guidance counsellors, home school coordinators, teachers and school administrators in sending and receiving schools will benefit from understanding their rights, roles and responsibilities in providing seamless programs and services to the PHP students, particularly with understanding the challenges facing students while they are in the program.

First Nation Sponsoring Agencies, the federal and provincial governments and other funders will benefit from understanding the issues and the recommendations related to the PHP as identified by the Program Review Report.

Key Messages

1. Approximately 900 First Nation students, some as young as 13 years of age, leave home each year to access a high school or a course of study not available to them in their home community.
2. The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs called for a review to address the issues related to an inadequate program. The PHP project was approved for funding by AANDC in 2009 and has resulted in a PHP Program Review Report, a PHP Framework and a PHP Handbook containing a sample policy.
3. The Program Review Report identified deficiencies in the PHP program and formulates widespread recommendations to address these challenges.
4. The stakeholders all have a role in addressing the issues and improving the PHP and all stakeholders are encouraged to take action.

Implementation

1. Prepare a media release or community service announcements on the PHP reform in mainstream and First Nation media outlets.
2. Produce materials such as posters, fact sheets, newsletters, brochures, and issue papers to be made available by mail to all stakeholders.
3. Utilize a well-known spokesperson or competition to draw attention to the PHP reform.
4. Provide PHP information on the MFNERC and First Nation websites. Make the PHP documents available online.
5. Prepare direct contact with stakeholders through letters and emails to offer information and invite participation in the PHP reform.
6. Offer workshops, family information nights or parent updates, forums, and stakeholder meetings to share information, to discuss the PHP or to offer training on the PHP.

Process

In accordance with this protocol and MFNERC external communications policy (see Policy Statement), the following process shall be adhered to:

1. All information to be released shall be prepared by the assigned PHP staff person.
2. All documents shall be reviewed and approved by the Director of Support Services.
3. The Director of Support Services shall ensure the information is reviewed and approved by the Task Force.
4. Upon approval by the Task Force, the Director of Support Services shall ensure the Executive Director signs off on the documents for distribution.



**Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre Inc.
Policy**

Subject External Communication	Approved By MFNERC Board of Directors	
Policy # 0002-015	Approval Date March 14, 2014	Revised Date December 28, 2013

Policy Statement

Respectful communication practices and protocols are a necessary component of MFNERC.

The Executive Director is the official designated spokesperson for the MFNERC on all matters including: external requests for information and media and public relations, excluding matters of a political nature. The Executive Director may delegate this task to another employee as appropriate. In matters of a political nature, the Executive Director in consultation with the Board of Directors is responsible for communicating directly with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs.

There may be times when an employee is asked to participate in promoting the MFNERC activities that may involve the media. On these occasions, employees are required to receive prior approval from the Executive Director.

Procedure:

All employees must maintain professional and respectful communication practices with all First Nations and First Nations agencies.

All external communication, including, but not limited to, external reports, proposals and letters, must be approved by the Executive Director. The Executive Director may delegate this activity to others when appropriate. This facilitates communication processes and updates the Executive Director on activities in MFNERC offices.

All MFNERC documents, letters, memos, posters, textual material, or any written material must use the term "First Nation" when referring to one First Nation and "First Nations" when referring to more than one First Nation. The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, to whom MFNERC reports to, does not use the term "Aboriginal," which includes the Inuit and Métis.

Letters:

All letters to be sent on behalf of the Executive Director must be submitted to the Executive Assistant for review prior to the Executive Director's signature. Upon approval by the Executive Director, the Executive Assistant shall keep a copy for the Executive Director's file and return the original to the appropriate Administrative Assistant/Secretary for distribution.

In-Coming Correspondence:

All incoming correspondence/phone calls should be responded to within two days by phone call or receipt of correspondence form letter.

Published Materials:

Any and all published materials to be distributed by the MFNERC must be thoroughly edited before submission to the Associate Executive Director for approval. The Associate Executive Director will ensure that the Executive Director signs off the final copy of the document prior to printing multiple copies for distribution.

Templates/Forms:

The Publishing Department develops all inter-office templates/forms for employee use. The templates/forms must not be altered without prior approval from the Executive Director.

The Publishing Department saves the templates in the "Common O: (Share Folder) under the file "Templates" with the most recent revised date.

Employees are required to use these templates. Usage of incorrect forms will result in the requests being returned to the employee for re-submission using proper forms.

The Publishing Department will ensure that old forms/templates are deleted from the common share folder.