



LEADERSHIP, ADVOCACY AND SERVICE FOR MANITOBA'S PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS

16 January 2025

Hon. Patty Hajdu, PC  
Minister, Indigenous Services Canada

Hon Gary Anandasangaree, PC  
Minister, Crown-Indigenous Relations

Hon. Dan Vandal, PC  
Minister, Northern Affairs Canada, Prairie Economic Development Canada, The Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency; Senior Minister for Manitoba

[via e-mail only: [patty.hajdu@parl.gc.ca](mailto:patty.hajdu@parl.gc.ca); [gary.anand@parl.gc.ca](mailto:gary.anand@parl.gc.ca); [dan.vandal@parl.gc.ca](mailto:dan.vandal@parl.gc.ca)]

Dear Ministers Hajdu, Anandasangaree and Vandal:

On 12 December 2024, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs issued a press release underlining its support for immediate address and response to what was described as a “crisis” in respect of Jordan’s Principle funding in Manitoba. For reference, this press release can be accessed online at: [https://manitobachiefs.com/press\\_releases/amc-supports-the-jp-technical-advisory-group-re-funding-crisis/](https://manitobachiefs.com/press_releases/amc-supports-the-jp-technical-advisory-group-re-funding-crisis/)

It must be noted that in addition to AMC, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak and many other Manitoba First Nations partnered on the release of this significant announcement. On behalf of affected Manitoba school boards, we wish to support these concerns.

Recent decisions made at the Federal level regarding Jordan’s Principle have had dire and unwarranted impacts upon many school boards across Manitoba. As just some examples, these impacts range from layoff of much needed Educational Assistant supports to address frontline classroom requirements, through to unforeseen reduction and in some instances, suspension of critical supports and services as delivered to First Nations students within these boards’ schools.

Where services continue, the pending challenges issued by multiple partners before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal in respect of the need for a more efficient reimbursement process for payment of Jordan’s Principle services, are concerns that we trust can be addressed towards our greater ability to provide key programming and services in support of our students.

Jordan’s Principle is essential to providing culturally responsive services to First Nations children, many of whom attend public schools. Between 2016 and 2024, approximately 7.6 million services and supports were approved under Jordan’s Principle nationwide. First Nations students in public education systems, including and especially those in Manitoba, remain key beneficiaries of this funding: that one third of all investments in the program in this present budget year has been directed to Manitoba, certainly attests to the greater than average need that exists in this province in comparison to our national counterparts.

From our perspective, it is important that this be well understood by Federal authorities. That the fund itself is named after Jordan River Anderson, himself from Manitoba, certainly attests to this longstanding reality.

Decisions and approaches made unilaterally in respect of Jordan’s Principle funding have impacted many school divisions across Manitoba. We believe that educational success through delivery of public education to First Nations students is a significant trust– when our public education system is called upon to do so. Jordan’s Principle support helps us in fulfilling this trust.

Support for coordinator positions within Manitoba’s public education system, expansion of capacity for First Nations service providers under Jordan’s Principle, and enhancing frontline services and programs through needs-focused funding, will each serve to promote greater efficiency and effectiveness. We therefore echo the calls issued by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs: particularly that federal decisions not “oversimplify” the complexity of our students’ needs.

On behalf of the many school boards that have been affected, we therefore call upon the Federal Government to reverse course: by funding prior services; by restoring the “back to basics” framework; and by strengthening local First Nation administration, with consideration for expanding local capacity and investment across Manitoba in relation to Jordan’s Principle funding.

We thank you for your attention to our request. Should you wish to arrange a meeting with us to discuss further, please do not hesitate to contact us as you are available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandy Nemeth".

Sandy Nemeth  
President

Cc. Deputy Minister Gina Wilson, Indigenous Services Canada [gina.wilson@sac-isc.gc.ca]  
Deputy Minister Valerie Gideon, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada [valerie.gideon@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca]