

This narrative history of a Residential School was researched and produced by the Government of Canada as part of its response to litigation and the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation has not verified the content of this document. It is provided here for reference purposes only. Documented incidents of sexual and physical abuse are based on the documentary record and do not take into account survivor testimony.



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**Assiniboia Indian Residential School
IAP School Narrative**

NAME IN THE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT (Schedule E/F)

Assiniboia (Winnipeg)

OTHER NAMES KNOWN AS (AKAs)

1958 to 1967	Assiniboia Residential School [ARS-001726-0001, pg. 1; ARS-003141; ARS-006102]
1967; 1968	Assiniboia Hostel [ARS-003102; ARS-000221]
1966	Assiniboia Indian Residential High School [ARS-000145]
1968 to 1973	Assiniboia Student Residence [ARS-001714-0001, pg. 1; ARS-000178-0000]

LOCATION

621 Academy Road, Winnipeg, Manitoba [ARS-000088-0000; ARS-000045-0000]

PROVINCE/TERRITORY

Manitoba

OPERATING DATES AS AN INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

These dates represent the time during which the Government of Canada was responsible for the operation of the Indian Residential School, excluding any periods of closure.

September 2, 1958 to June 30, 1973

OPERATING DATES CONTEXT

The Assiniboia IRS opened on September 2, 1958, occupying the quarters of a former Veteran's home. At opening, the IRS operated a four classroom block enrolling students from Grades 8 to 10 [ARS-000045-0000; ARS-001723]. In September 1967, the IRS was converted to a Hostel and no longer offered classroom facilities; residents attended local high schools in Winnipeg [ARS-003102]. The IRS closed on June 30, 1973 [ARS-000178-0000].

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

Roman Catholic Church

1958 to 1969	Oblate Fathers of Mary Immaculate, also referred to as Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and later the Indian Eskimo Commission (INDIANESCOM) [ARS-003375; ARS-000045-0000; ARS-000182-0000, pg. 10; ARS-000105; ARS-000227-0007]
1961 to 1967	Grey Nuns [ARS-000100-0001, pg. 1; ARS-006301-0001]

1969 to 1973 Bosco Centre of the Roman Catholic Church [ARS-006831-0001; ARS-006802-0001; ARS-006773-0002]

The Bosco Centre of the Roman Catholic Church agreed to provide chaplaincy services to the IRS from 1969 to IRS closure in June 1973 [ARS-006831-0001; ARS-006802-0001; ARS-006773-0002].

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THE INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

Date	Event	Document Reference
September 2, 1958	The Assiniboia IRS opened. Members of the Oblate Order had been residing in the building since June 1958, though students did not arrive at the IRS until September. The classroom block at the IRS consisted of four classrooms for Grades 8 to 10.	ARS-000045-0000 ARS-003389-0000 ARS-001723
September 1959	Five classrooms were in operation at the IRS for Grades 8 to 11.	ARS-003189
September 1960	Grade 12 was added to the IRS.	ARS-003181
September 1962	The federal government and the Oblate Indian Eskimo Commission (INDIANESCOM) signed an agreement for the operation of the Assiniboia IRS.	ARS-000105
September 1962	Grade 8 was discontinued at the IRS by the beginning of the fall term. Five classrooms continued to operate for Grades 9 to 12.	ARS-003155
1964	Six classrooms were in operation at the IRS.	ARS-003133
September 1965 to 1967	In September 1965, Grade 9 was no longer taught at the IRS. Grades 10 to 12 continued to be taught in five classrooms for the 1965/66 school year. During the 1966/67 school year, four classrooms operated at the IRS for Grades 10 to 12.	ARS-003123 ARS-003112 ARS-003103
September 1, 1967	Assiniboia IRS became a hostel only, and all residents were sent to local high schools in Winnipeg for classroom instruction. The gymnasium and library were still used for sports and study.	ARS-003102 ARS-006175-0000 ARS-006175-0001
April 1, 1969	The management of Assiniboia IRS was transferred to the Government of Canada.	ARS-001102 CJC-000315 NCA-008943-0005
1969 to 1973	The Bosco Centre of the Roman Catholic Church agreed to provide chaplaincy services to the IRS from September 1969 to August 1970, from September 1971 to August 1972, and from September 1972 to IRS closure in June 1973.	ARS-006831-0001 ARS-006802-0001 ARS-006773-0002
September 1972	During the 1972/73 school year, the federal government Winnipeg Guidance Office moved into the chapel of the IRS, and the classroom block, except for part of the basement, was rented to the Children's Home of Winnipeg as a day centre [ARS-000167-0001; ARS-000171; ARS-004302]. Documents at the time indicate that the classroom block had been "unused for several years".	ARS-000167-0001 ARS-000171 ARS-004302
June 30, 1973	The Assiniboia IRS closed.	ARS-000178-0000

EDUCATION OF STUDENTS

Grades taught at the Indian residential school

School Years	Grades offered	Document Reference
1958 to 1959	Grades 8 to 10	ARS-000045-0000 ARS-000048
1959 to 1960	Grades 8 to 11	ARS-003189 ARS-003182
1960 to 1962	Grades 8 to 12	ARS-003181 ARS-003176 ARS-003173 ARS-003164
1962 to 1965	Grades 9 to 12	ARS-003155 ARS-003144 ARS-003140 ARS-003133 ARS-003124
1965 to 1967	Grades 10 to 12	ARS-003123 ARS-003113 ARS-003112 ARS-003103
1967	Effective September 1, 1967, Assiniboia IRS became a Hostel only, as all students in residence were attending city schools.	ARS-006175-0000

Other Schools Attended by Residents

School Years	Name of School	Location	Administration	Grades	Document
1967 to 1970	Convent of the Sacred Heart	Winnipeg	Not stated	7, 9-12	ARS-000014 ARS-007000 ARS-006940-0001 ARS-006914-0002, pg. 3 ARS-004728 ARS-006856
1967 to 1969	St. Charles Academy	Winnipeg	Not Stated	7, 9-12	ARS-007000 ARS-006941-0000 ARS-006210 ARS-006366
1967	Daniel McIntyre Collegiate	Selkirk	Not stated	Not stated	ARS-006333
1968 to 1969	R.B. Russell School	Winnipeg	Not stated	10	ARS-006727 ARS-006914-0002, pg. 13
1967 to 1973	Gordon Bell Collegiate / AKA Gordon Bell High School	Winnipeg	Not stated	9 to 10	ARS-000029-0000 ARS-006210 ARS-006772 ARS-006182
1968 to 1969	Earl Grey School	Winnipeg	Not stated	7, 9,11, 12	ARS-000034 ARS-006210 ARS-006914-0002, pg. 10 ARS-004719-0001
1967 to 1969	J.B. Mitchell	Winnipeg	Not stated	9, 12	ARS-007000 ARS-000308 ARS-006210 ARS-004727
1968 to 1969	River Heights Collegiate	Winnipeg	Not stated	7, 9	ARS-006210 ARS-000336 ARS-006914-0002, pg. 15 ARS-006737
1968 to	Silver Heights	Winnipeg	Not stated	10	ARS-006210

1969	Collegiate				ARS-000309 ARS-006908
1967 to 1970	St. Ignatius School /Convent	Winnipeg		7, 8, 12, 13	ARS-007000 ARS-006942-0001 ARS-006210 ARS-006965-0000 ARS-011551
1968 to 1970	Grant Park High School	Winnipeg	Not stated	9 to 10	ARS-006210 ARS-006909
1970 to 1971	Isaac Brock	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	ARS-004611-0000
1967 to 1969	St. Boniface Diocesan	Not stated	Not stated	9 to 11	ARS-007000 ARS-006210
1968 to 1969	St. Mary's Academy	Not stated	Not stated	9	ARS-006210 ARS-006914-0002, pg. 5
1968 to 1969	Assiniboine	Not stated	Not stated	9	ARS-006210
1968 to 1969	Kelvin High School	Not stated	Not stated	10 to 11	ARS-006210 ARS-006914-0002, pg. 14
1968 to 1969	Deer Lodge School	Not stated	Not stated	8 to 9	ARS-006210 ARS-006914-0002, pg. 7

GENERAL ENROLLMENT STATISTICS OVER TIME

School Years	Number of Residents	If applicable, day scholars	Document Reference
1958 to 1959	98 average	No information found	ARS-001726-0001, pg. 2 ARS-001752, pg. 1
1959 to 1960	121 average	No information found	ARS-001753, pg. 1 ARS-001748, pg. 1
1960 to 1961	130 average	No information found	ARS-001749, pg. 1 ARS-001746, pg. 1
1961 to 1962	133 average	No information found	ARS-001745, pg. 1 ARS-001742, pg. 1
1962 to 1963	147 average	1	ARS-001741, pg. 1 ARS-001738, pg. 1 ARS-003148
1963 to 1964	109 average	No information found	ARS-001737, pg. 1 ARS-001734, pg. 4
1964 to 1965	141 average	1 (non-Aboriginal)	ARS-001724-0001, pg. 1 ARS-0001721, pg. 1 ARS-003133
1965 to 1966	119 average	1	ARS-001720-0001, pg. 1 ARS-001732, pg. 1 ARS-003122
1966 to 1967	111 average	No information found	ARS-000017, pg. 1 ARS-000019, pg. 1
1967 to 1968	79 average	No information found	ARS-000020-0000, pg. 1 ARS-000023
1968 to 1969	112 average	No information found	ARS-001714-0001, pg. 1 ARS-001711-0001
1969 to 1970	90 average	No information found	ARS-001708 ARS-001706-0001
1970 to 1971	77 average	No information found	ARS-001705-0001

			ARS-006896-0002
1971 to 1972	79 average	No information found	ARS-003613-0001 ARS-003614
1972 to 1973	25 average	No information found	ARS-000171 ARS-003615-0000

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

School Years	Special Programs Offered	Document Reference
1959 to 1965	Students participated in a Cadet Corps program.	ARS-003241, pg. 3 ARS-000048, pg. 3 ARS-000235 ARS-011333 ARS-000143
1959	Two skating rinks were in operation at the IRS.	ARS-003241, pg. 3 ARS-000073
1960	The Assiniboia IRS choir performed at the Manitoba Indian-Métis conference from February 24 to 27. Students participated in study sessions at the conference. Three skating rinks were in operation at the IRS. Assiniboia IRS hockey team won the Boldy Northcott trophy, as champions in the Manitoba Amateur Hockey Association Junior B league.	IMR-000183, pg. 3 ARS-000081 IMR-000403, pg. 1
1961	Extra-curricular activities included hockey, skating, baseball, track and field, rugby, curling and music lessons. Assiniboia IRS won the All-Indian Hockey Tournament in Elphinstone. A newsletter dated October 1961 makes reference to girls' volleyball, basketball and softball. The IRS also had a Cadets Corp.	ARS-000231-0007 IMR-000194, pg. 8 ARS-000101, pg. 14 ARS-000100-0001, pg. 6
1962	The students participated in a speech-making contest.	ARS-003252
1965	The students undertook unspecified odd jobs for the area citizens as well as for private companies.	ARS-000143
December 1966	A group of IRS students visited the Institute for the Blind. The St. James orchestra performed for the students. Students attended the Christian and Jewish Conference.	ARS-006104
January 1967	Grade 11 students visited the legislative building and the grade 12 students attended a one-day lecture at University of Manitoba.	ARS-006103
July 1967	The Principal stated that six students returned to the residence to attend Cadet Camp.	ARS-004410
June 1971 and June 1972	Documents indicated that grade 8 students from the Bloodvein reserve were temporary residents for an orientation program.	ARS-006860 ARS-006823 ARS-006824
1967 to 1968	In an audit report, the Administrator stated that the students' participation in sports, social events and other activities occur primarily in the city.	ARS-000226-0001, pg. 3

1969 to 1970	Piano lessons were offered.	ARS-006903
1970 to 1971	Evening tutors were provided.	ARS-006851-0005

INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Date	Event	Document Reference
1958 to 1973	The federal government owned the IRS buildings.	ARS-003368 ARS-000063 ARS-003389-0000 ARS-003389-0001 ARS-000191-0001
December 1958	A skating rink was constructed by staff and male students from the IRS.	ARS-000035 ARS-000213
1959	In February 1959, space in the basement of the main IRS building was being prepared for Practical Arts instruction. At the beginning of the 1959/60 school year, a temporary additional classroom and chemistry laboratory was constructed in the basement of the classroom block at the IRS. The majority of the work was completed prior to the opening of the school for the term, with the exception of the installation of two chemistry tables during the latter part of 1959 and in January 1960.	ARS-000048, pg. 2 ARS-001127 ARS-001142 ARS-001143 ARS-001153 ARS-001154 ARS-001157 ARS-001186
1960	Five academic classes, two Home Economics classes and one Industrial Arts class were being held in the classroom block building. The Industrial Arts class was held in the basement classroom.	ARS-000081
1961	An inspection report noted that the Industrial Arts shop and Home Economics Room were in the same block as the dormitories in the main IRS building. The basement in the classroom block was still in use as a classroom in 1961.	ARS-000095, pg. 1
1962	Treasury Board recommended that authority be given to sell 5,000 square feet of land held for Assiniboia IRS to the Metropolitan Corporation of Winnipeg in connection with the St. James Bridge Project.	ARS-000113
1964	Renovations to the dormitories and washrooms at the IRS were completed in March 1964.	ARS-005213-0000 ARS-005220-0001 ARS-005220-0002
1965 to 1966	A contract for the construction of a chapel and gymnasium at the IRS was awarded in March 1965. The gymnasium and chapel were officially opened in October 1966.	ARS-005296 ARS-005322 ARS-000145
1967	The classroom block at the Assiniboia IRS would no longer be used for classroom instruction as of the 1967/68 school year. However, it was planned that two classrooms in the upper part of the building would still be used for evening study by the Residence during the upcoming term.	ARS-004316

	It is not known from documents how often the classrooms in the classroom block were used for study sessions, though a 1972 inspection report mentioned that the classrooms were "sometimes" in use as study rooms for Residence students.	
1972	<p>The classroom block was a 32' x 68' two storey building with a full basement and two classrooms on each floor above. As of June 1972, the building was partially in use. The basement was used for storage of school supplies; a dentist used the space during visits to the Residence; and the upstairs classrooms were "sometimes" used as study rooms for the Residence students.</p> <p>During the summer of 1972, the gymnasium, stage and washroom facilities at the Residence were used for an acting workshop.</p> <p>The classroom block building, less the west half of the basement, was rented to The Children's Home of Winnipeg from September 1972 to June 1973. The Home was also permitted to use the gymnasium at the Residence for not more than 10 hours per week at times when the gymnasium was not required for Indian Affairs Branch programs.</p> <p>By November 1972, the former chapel in the Residence building had been converted into the Winnipeg Guidance Office of the federal Government.</p>	ARS-000165 ARS-000168 ARS-000169 ARS-000167-0000 ARS-000167-0001 ARS-000171

PHOTOS, PLANS AND LAYOUT

Date	Description	Document Reference
1957	Diagram of the buildings and grounds.	ARS-000195
1959	Sketch of proposed new wing at the Assiniboia IRS.	ARS-000045-0001
1959	In the main IRS building there were four boys' dormitories - two on the third floor and two on the second floor. The dormitories accommodated 13 boys each and measured 37' x 21'. There were five girls' dormitories; they measured 38' x 20' (15 girls), two measured 41' x 16' (each accommodated 14 girls), 19' x 16' (7 girls) and 10' x 16' (7 girls). There were two large verandas opening on the dormitories, both measuring 38' x 9'. The dining room was 47' x 33'. There were two small recreation rooms for the boys and two for the girls.	ARS-000048
1960	Site plan of proposed addition to Assiniboia IRS.	ARS-000088-0001
1961	Photos of Assiniboia IRS buildings.	ARS-003549-0003
1961	Drawing of Assiniboia IRS illustrates the building grounds showing the east and west IRS sections. The drawing also shows the nearby classroom block.	ARS-003549-0004
1961	The Assiniboia IRS property was described in an inspection report as consisting of two main residential buildings cut off from each other and a separate two storey classroom building located about 70 feet away from the residential buildings. The west residential	ARS-003549-0002 ARS-000095

	<p>building was two storeys with a basement, dormitories on the second floor, and a chapel, living quarters and a recreation room on the first floor. The east residential building was three storeys with a basement. Dormitories and living quarters were on the second and third floor, and on the first floor was the kitchen, dining rooms, offices and living quarters. The basement in the east residential building contained a boiler room, locker room, repair shop, wood working shop, recreation rooms and storage rooms.</p> <p>The Industrial Arts and Home Economics classrooms were located in the same block as the dormitories, in the main IRS building.</p> <p>The kitchen on the main floor of the IRS building was 15' x 30'. The dining room was 30' x 50', and was also used for all social gatherings. The dishwashing room was 18' x 18', and was situated in between the kitchen and the dining room. Store rooms, or pantries, were located off the kitchen and off the hall. Root vegetables were stored in a root house in a nearby small town.</p>	
1964	Survey and site plan of new chapel and gymnasium.	ARS-001899
1965	<p>An Inspector's report provided a detailed layout of the main IRS building at the Assiniboia IRS:</p> <p>Basement: boys' dressing room and television room (26' x 16' x 7'); boys' washing room and toilet facility; boys' shower room (16' x 15' x 9'); situated along hallway from boys' dressing room and TV room); boys' locker room; manual training room; vegetable storage; heating plant room; Home Economics classroom (18' x 25' x 7') and Home Economics kitchen (17' x 18' x 7').</p> <p>First Floor: kitchen, dishwashing room; cafeteria; girls' playroom and T.V. room (25' x 20' x 11'); girls' washroom; classroom; flour and dry goods room; refrigerator rooms (deep freeze fridge, walk-in fridge, kitchen fridge); classroom/chapel/playroom (73' x 24' x 11').</p> <p>Second Floor: Boys' dormitory and toilet facilities (20' x 32' x 11'); girls' dorm (27' x 15' x 11'); girls' shower (11' x 14' x 11'); girls' dormitory – North End No. 1 (35' x 16' x 11'); girls' dormitory – North End No. 2 (35' x 16' x 11'); girls' dormitory – South Middle (16' x 36' x 11').</p> <p>Third Floor: new boys' toilet facilities including shower room (installed October 1964); boys' dormitory – east (30' x 20' x 10'); boys' dormitory – west (30' x 20' x 10'); boys' dormitory (25' x 26' 10').</p>	ARS-006124-0000 ARS-006124-0002
1974	Photographs of the former Assiniboia Student Residence.	ARS-000182-0001

DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO SCHOOL INCIDENTS

To date, we are unaware of any convictions for abuse at Assiniboia IRS or of any convicted abusers present at the IRS.

Incidents (Sexual)

No information found

Incidents (Physical)

No information found

Incidents (Student on Student)

No information found

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 1961 An inspection report of food services noted that students at the IRS ranged in age from 15 to 20 years old [ARS-000100-0001, pg. 6].
- 1962 Due to overcrowded conditions at the IRS, a number of students were transferred to St. Benedict's Academy and St. Charles Academy [ARS-001231].
- 1965 A report indicated that there had been a recent outbreak of infectious hepatitis at the IRS [ARS-006124-0000, pg. 2].
- 1966 Fifty elementary school students were lodged at the IRS during July and August 1966 for an educational program. The program was sponsored by the St. John Bosco Indian Métis Cultural Center [IMR-000235, pg. 11].
- 1966 A complaint was made that a boys' supervisor allegedly referred to IRS pupils using derogatory names [ARS-006176; ARS-006177].
- 1967/68 In November 1967, complaints alleged that a Supervisor / Guidance Counsellor made disparaging remarks about some of the IRS pupils [ARS-006297-0001; ARS-006795]. In March 1968, the IRS Principal admitted that the staff member was not counselling the students properly; she was informed of her errors and told that more drastic action would be taken if the inappropriate behaviour continued [ARS-006794].
- 1968 In October 1968, a student struck a member of the domestic staff [ARS-008223].

PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS

Name	Position	Tenure Dates
Father Omer Robidoux	Principal	September 1958 to October 1966
Father Roland Chaput	Principal	October 1966 to August 1968
Father Laurent Alarie	Administrator	August 1968 to July 1973

Narrative Completed: July 19, 2012
Narrative Updated: November 23, 2012

The original school narrative document produced by Canada also contains a number of records that have been separated pending review.

