

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.



You are welcome to contact the NCTR if you wish to add, comment on, or challenge any versions of the history presented herein.

**Brandon Indian Residential School  
IAP School Narrative**

**NAME IN THE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT (Schedule E/F)**

Brandon

**OTHER NAMES KNOWN AS (AKAs)**

1895 to 1925	Brandon Industrial School [BRS-000183; BRS-000206; BRS-001532]
1926 to 1967	Brandon Indian Residential School [BRS-003650; BRS-000686]
1967 to 1969	Brandon Residence for Indian Children [BRS-000686; BRS-006542]
1968 to 1972	Brandon Student Residence [BRS-000748; BRS-006760-0001]

**LOCATION**

The Brandon IRS was located approximately 3 miles north west of the city of Brandon, Manitoba on the north bank of the Assiniboine River [BRS-000182; BRS-003103, pg. 44].

**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.

1895 to June 30, 1972

Interim closure from July 1, 1929 to July 18, 1930.

As of the 1968/69 school year, Brandon IRS became a hostel/student residence only. Residents attended non-federal schools [NCA-000984; BRS-103082; BRS-004805]

**OPERATING DATES CONTEXT**

The Brandon IRS opened in the 1895/96 school year [BRS-003103, pgs. 44-47; BRS-000168; BRS-000181]. In July 1929, the Brandon IRS closed while a new residence building was under construction. During this time, 83 students were transferred to Edmonton IRS, with the remaining pupils returning to their homes to attend day schools [BRS-003666; BRS-003667]. The new Brandon IRS opened on July 18, 1930 [BRS-000407; BRS-000230; BRS-000231]. In 1968, one class was operating, and by November 1968 all students in the Brandon IRS were attending non-federal schools [BRS-000686; BRS-002032; BRS-103082; BRS-000748]. The IRS closed on June 30, 1972 [BRS-000837; BRS-006760-0001].

**RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION**

- 1895 to 1926                      Methodist Missionary Society / Methodist Church  
[BRS-000169; BRS-000202; BRS-003133, pg. 3]
- 1926 to August 1970            The United Church of Canada / United Church Board of  
Home Missions [BRS-003134, pg. 3; BRS-000627-0001;  
BRS-000771-0001, pg. 2]
- September 1970 to 1972      Oblate Indian and Eskimo Commission (INDIANESCOM).  
On September 1, 1970 management of the Brandon Student  
Residence transferred from the United Church of Canada to  
the Roman Catholic Oblate Indian and Eskimo Commission  
[BRS-000767; BRS-000779-0000].

**CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THE INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL**

Date	Event	Document Reference
1895	The IRS, then known as Brandon Industrial School, opened.	BRS-000181 BRS-000180 BRS-000407
July 1, 1929 to July 18, 1930	In July 1929, the Brandon IRS closed while a new residence building was under construction.  During this time, 83 students were transferred to the Edmonton IRS, with the remaining pupils returning to their homes to attend day schools.  The new Brandon IRS opened on July 18, 1930.	BRS-003666 BRS-003667 BRS-003668 BRS-000407 BRS-000230 BRS-000231
1957	Farm operations at the IRS ceased.  There were 6 operating classrooms at the IRS. Two additional classrooms were being built near the main IRS building.	BRS-001436-0000  BRS-001946
June 1962	The federal government and the United Church of Canada signed an agreement for the operation of the Brandon IRS.	BRS-000627-0001
April 23, 1964	A report indicated that grades 1 and 2 were taught in a Brandon IRS building referred to as the "Cottage School". A plan of the IRS site identifies the building as a "two classroom school" near the main IRS building.	BRS-001941 BRS-000639-0001, pgs. 2-3
February 1967	The name of the IRS changed from Brandon Indian Residential School to the Brandon Residence for Indian Children.	BRS-000686
June 1968	By June 1968, one class was operating at the IRS, and by November all residents were attending non-federal schools.	NCA-000984 BRS-002032 BRS-103082
1968 to 1969	The name of the IRS changed from Brandon Residence for Indian Children to Brandon Student Residence during the 1968/69 school year.	BRS-006936 BRS-000647
1969 to 1970	From June to October 1969, it was decided that Roman Catholic pupils in need of a hostel would be accommodated at the Brandon IRS for the 1970/71 school year. This decision was based on the closure of Roman Catholic Indian Residential Schools in Manitoba (Pine Creek IRS, Fort Alexander IRS, and Sandy Bay IRS)	BRS-000742 BRS-000748 BRS-000767

	and the Brandon IRS having fewer than 50 pupils.	
August 1970	Guidance Couesllors relocated from their district office to the IRS building.	BRS-004812
September 1, 1970	Management of the IRS was transferred from the United Church of Canada to the Roman Catholic Oblate Indian and Eskimo Commission (INDIANESCOM).	BRS-000771-0001, pg.2 BRS-000779-0000
June 30, 1972	The IRS closed in June. About 12 students were to be transferred to Guy Hill IRS at The Pas after the closure, but the majority of students would be able to attend school from their own homes. Other children, if necessary, would be placed in foster homes and the homes of relatives.	BRS-000837 BRS-000853 BRS-000854 BRS-006760-0001

## EDUCATION OF STUDENTS

### Grades taught at the Indian residential school

School Years	Grades offered	Document Reference
1895/96 to 1912/13	No information found	
1913/14	Grades 1 to 6	BRS-003782
1914/15 to 1937/38	No information found	
1938/39	Kindergarten, Grades 1 to 12	BRS-000432, pgs. 13-14, 16
1939/40 to 1940/41	No information found	
1941/42	Kindergarten, Grades 1 to 8	BRS-000001
1942/43 to 1950/51	Grades 1 to 8	BRS-000008 BRS-000011 BRS-000090 BRS-000092 BRS-000097 BRS-000104 BRS-001323 BRS-000103 BRS-000115
1951/52 to 1953/54	Kindergarten Primary, Grades 1 to 8	BRS-000116 BRS-001490 BRS-001492
1954/55 to 1956/57	Kindergarten, Grades 1 to 6	BRS-001503 BRS-001512-0001 BRS-001524
1957/58	Grades 1 to 6	BRS-002014
1958/59	Beginners, Grades 1 to 6	BRS-002015
1959/60 to 1961/62	Beginners, Grades 1 to 5	BRS-001619 BRS-001629
1962/63	Beginners, Grades 1 to 3, 6	BRS-001632
1963/64 to 1964/65	Beginners, Grades 1 to 2	BRS-001649 BRS-001659
1965/66 to 1966/67	Grades 1 to 2	BRS-001669 BRS-001678
1967/68	Grade 1	BRS-002032

No information was found to indicate when the Kindergarten, or Beginners, class was first introduced at the Brandon IRS. The first reference to a Kindergarten class was during the 1938/39 school year [BRS-000432, pg. 13]. Kindergarten students appear on Quarterly Returns for school years 1941/42, 1951/52 to 1952/53, 1958/59 to

1967/68, 1969/70 [For example: BRS-000001, pgs. 4, 8; BRS-000116, pgs. 4-5; BRS-000119, pgs. 4-5; BRS-001116-0001; BRS-001118; BRS-001121; BRS-001125; BRS-001123; BRS-001029-0001; BRS-000438; BRS-000445; BRS-000449; BRS-000462; BRS-001034]. While Kindergarten students appear on other documents outside these years, no information was found to confirm that they were residents during these other years.

By June 1968, a single grade 1 class was operating at the IRS, and by November all students in Brandon Student Residence were attending non-Federal schools [BRS-002032, BRS-103082].

### Other Schools Attended by Residents

School Years	Name of School	Location	Administration	Grades	Document
1917	Brandon Collegiate	Brandon, Manitoba	Not specified	One student intended to take Teacher's Course	BRS-000207
1931	Brandon Collegiate	Brandon, Manitoba	Not specified	One student in 12	BRS-000231
1931	Business College	Brandon, Manitoba	Not specified	One student in College	BRS-000231
1951	Brandon Collegiate	Brandon, Manitoba	Not specified	One pupil attending Brandon Collegiate was discharged from the Brandon IRS	BRS-000937-0001
1955	"Brandon Schools"	Brandon, Manitoba	Not specified	51 pupils were taking grade 9-11	BRS-001512-0001
1956	Brandon Schools	Brandon, Manitoba	Not specified	48 pupils were taking grade 9-11	BRS-001524
1959	"Brandon City Schools"	Brandon, Manitoba	Not specified	24 pupils were attending city schools, grades were not specified	BRS-002021
1960	"Brandon City Schools"	Brandon, Manitoba	Not specified	85 pupils were attending city schools, grades 2 -7	BRS-001612
1961	"Brandon City Schools"	Brandon, Manitoba	Not specified	44 pupils were attending city schools, grades 2 -6	BRS-001622
1962	"Brandon City Schools"	Brandon, Manitoba	Not specified	70 pupils were attending city schools, grades 2 -7	BRS-001633
1963	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	81 pupils were attending non-Indian Schools, grades 2 -5	BRS-001643
1964	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	81 pupils were attending non-Indian schools, grades 2-5	BRS-001643
1965	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	80 pupils were attending non-Indian schools, grades 2-5	BRS-001650
1966	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	130 pupils were attending non-Indian schools,	BRS-001661

				grades 2-6	
1969	Park School	Brandon, Manitoba	Not specified	Senior Ungraded Class	BRS-103224 BRS-103749
1971	Brandon Collegiate	Brandon, Manitoba	Not specified	List of grade 9-12 students attending Brandon Collegiate Institute	BRS-006502-0002
1972	Park School	Brandon, Manitoba	Not specified	4	BRS-103386

**GENERAL ENROLLMENT STATISTICS OVER TIME**

School Years	Number of Residents	If applicable, day scholars	Document Reference
1895/96 to 1896/97	54	Not applicable	BRS-003103 (pg. 45)
1897/98 to 1929/30	No information found	Not applicable	
1930/31	150	Not applicable	BRS-000231
1931/32 to 1948/49	No information found	Not applicable	
1949/50	174	Not applicable	BRS-000103, pg. 8
1950/51	174	Not applicable	BRS-000115, pg. 7
1951/52	160	Not applicable	BRS-000118, pg. 8
1952/53	179	Not applicable	BRS-000366, pg. 14, 15
1953/54	170	Not applicable	BRS-000370-0000, pg. 14, 15
1954/55	154	Not applicable	BRS-000372
1955/56	197	Not applicable	BRS-000376-0002
1956/57	151	Not applicable	BRS-000380
1957/58	151	Not applicable	BRS-000384-0000
1958/59	172	Not applicable	BRS-001117, pg. 1
1959/60	173	Not applicable	BRS-001120, pg. 1
1960/61	190	Not applicable	BRS-001124, pg. 1
1961/62	145	2	BRS-001128, pg. 1 BRS-001629
1962/63	157	Not applicable	BRS-001027, pg. 1
1963/64	157	79	BRS-001031, pg. 1 BRS-001649
1964/65	154	79	BRS-000441, pg. 1 BRS-001659
1965/66	186	58	BRS-000448, pg. 1
1966/67	200	55	BRS-000447, pg. 1 BRS-001678
1967/68	183	29	BRS-000587, pg. 1 BRS-002032
1968/69	177	Not applicable	BRS-000663-0001, pg. 1
1969/70	55	Not applicable	BRS-000653, pg. 1
1970/71	No information found	Not applicable	
1971/72	80	Not applicable	BRS-000853

**SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

School Years	Special Programs Offered	Document Reference
1939 to 1940	Extra-curricular activities at the IRS included softball, football, student council, choral class, basketball, hockey, badminton, swimming, golfing and skiing.	BRS-000426, pgs. 10-11, 13-14, 30, 37
June 4, 1946	Students participated in church concerts and evening gym classes.	BRS-000414, pg. 1
November 27, 1964	Students participated in a Carol Festival, sing songs, and games evenings.	BRS-103077
March 11, 1965	There was an Xmas concert and students had attended the Children's Theatre in town, as well as a display of native dances.	BRS-103074
April 30, 1969	Students participated in "community activities" such as Music and Speech Festival, Track and Field, Elementary Art Show.	BRS-006784
May 1969	A Newsletter dated May 1969 noted that the annual Sports Day and Buffet Supper will be held on June 15. It also indicated that many residents had taken part in a City Wide Road Races. As many as 55 residents had entered each Wednesday race. Two residence boys' soccer teams participated in the Manitoba Minor Soccer League.	BRS-006811

**INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS**

Date	Event	Document Reference
1891 to 1900	City of Bandon land adjoining the Brandon Experimental Farm was chosen as the site for the IRS. The land was acquired by the federal government in a land trade. In 1900, the deal was finally completed and regularized by Order in Council.	BRS-000159 BRS-000158 BRS-003100, pg. 3 BRS-000229
1895, 1896	The federal government provided funds for the construction of the IRS.	BRS-000168 BRS-000181
1896	The IRS was located "in the midst" of 320 acres of farmland; nearly 200 acres of the farmland were under cultivation by the IRS.	BRS-003103, pg. 45
1927	The federal government owned a farm of over 900 acres, which was used by the IRS.	BRS-000222
September 1929	Construction of the new IRS building began.	BRS-000407
1930 to 1931	The new IRS building was opened. It had an assembly hall, four dormitories, four class-rooms, two large study rooms, recreation rooms for boys and girls, a sewing room, a sun room, a hospital ward with nurses' quarters, and a laundry. There were four residences for the Principal and other staff. Adjacent to the IRS were farm buildings.	BRS-000230 BRS-000231
November 1944	A small dormitory for girls appeared overcrowded. The dormitory measured 28 x 15 x 9.5 and was occupied by thirteen girls. The Inspector requested that the girls be transferred to the large dormitory. The federal government agreed that the dormitory was overcrowded.	BRS-000507 BRS-000508

August 1947	The federal government approved the establishment of an extra classroom for grades 4 and 5 in the assembly hall of the IRS.	BRS-000050-0000
1957	There were six operating classrooms at the IRS. Three were regular classrooms, and three were make-shift. Two additional classrooms were being built near the main IRS building.	BRS-001946
1957	Farm land was leased to the Dominion Experimental Farm with the provision that produce be sold to the IRS at cost.	BRS-000918 BRS-000919
May 3, 1961	A provincial government school Inspector's Report notes that the IRS classroom block called the "Cottage School" contained two classrooms and it is recommended that water and bathrooms be installed in the building.	BRS-000561-0001
August 1961	868 acres of IRS farm land transferred by the federal government to the federal Department of Agriculture for the Experimental Farm.	BRS-000876, pg. 5
March 28, 1962	Four classrooms were in operation at the IRS. Improvements had been made to the artificial lighting, electrical outlets and toilet and water facilities.	BRS-003660
October 1962	The main IRS building had a basement and three floors. The basement had a recreation room, a dining room, a kitchen, a laundry facility, a pump room, a boiler room, and storage rooms. The first floor had classrooms, offices, recreation rooms, and an assembly hall. The second and third floors had dormitories which could each accommodate 45 children.  Other buildings on the IRS property included two skating sheds, a two- classroom building, a workshop, a "red cottage", the principal's residence, the maintenance man residence, and a root house.	BRS-000639-0000, pg. 2 to 5
November 1970	The IRS was renovated to provide care for 120 to 150 students. The residence consisted of 6 dormitories, and each could accommodate 20 to 25 students. Each of the six dormitories had bedrooms to accommodate two or four students, a common sitting room, dinning area, kitchenette, houseparent's office and a storage room.	BRS-004805 BRS-000801

**PHOTOS, PLANS AND LAYOUT**

Date	Description	Document Reference
Unknown	Drawing of agricultural lands illustrating the location of pasture, alfalfa, and grain fields as well as the garden, cemetery, and approximate location of the IRS buildings.	BRS-000803
Unknown	Photographs of the front of the main student residence from the left and ride side, as well as from a distance.	BRS-000674
1896	The two storey IRS building had two classrooms, two dormitories, two play-rooms, a dining room, a	BRS-003103, pgs. 44-47



	kitchen, a buttery, a pantry, two wash-rooms, two bathrooms, one store room, two closet rooms, two cold air rooms, three furnace rooms, a wood room, a coal room and nine rooms for staff accommodation. Other buildings at the IRS were an old farm house, an old barn, and a root house. A new ice house was built during the year. The Assistant Principal's house was built in 1893.	
1931	Photographs of the Brandon IRS illustrating the exterior of the newly built IRS as well as small photographs of the staff sitting room, assembly hall, classroom, dormitory, kitchen, and laundry.	BRS-000231
1956	Alterations and additions to the Brandon IRS. Plans of basement, ground, 1st and 2nd floors and elevations.	BRS-060002-0000 BRS-060002-0001 BRS-060002-0002 BRS-060002-0003 BRS-060002-0004 BRS-060002-0005
1960	Diagram of the Brandon IRS grounds and buildings.	BRS-001822
October 1962	Fire Inspection report provides detailed descriptions of the building layout, including the size and specific use of rooms, etc.	BRS-000639-0000
1962	IRS site maps and photographs of residential building, red cottage, two classroom block, principal's residence, maintenance man's house, workshop and boys' activity building at Brandon IRS.	BRS-000639-0001
1962	Plans of proposed alterations and additions to the Brandon IRS.	BRS-000639-0002
1972	Land plan illustrating the main IRS building, two room classroom block, root house, and lumber storage building. Other features shown include land elevations and location of sports recreation area.	BRS-000835
1972	Land survey of new cemetery relative to residence, cattle facilities, and research station.	BRS-000867-0001
1973	Diagram of room layout of all four floors of the Brandon IRS.	BRS-000863-0001
1983	Plan of survey of part of north east of section 28 in Brandon, Manitoba.	BRS-000672

## DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO SCHOOL INCIDENTS

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

The following suggestions of abuse, listed chronologically, comprise all known identifiable complaints and/or allegations received by government officials and all available information regarding the follow-up and outcome.

### Incidents (Sexual)

No information found

Incidents (Physical)

- 1926 A 17 year old former student was charged with unauthorized entry into the IRS. The document mentions the boy's improper conduct including "carnal knowledge". He was subsequently convicted in juvenile court of breaking and entering, and was sentenced to spend one additional year at the Portage la Prairie Industrial School [BRS-000216; BRS-000217; BRS-000219].
- 1936 A federal inspector noted that while the IRS Principal uses the strap for punishment, the Principal denies hitting pupils with his fist [BRS-000251].
- 1936 Letter expressed concern that children at the IRS were mistreated and did not get enough to eat [BRS-000244].
- 1943 A local Member of Parliament had received a complaint that the children at the IRS were not fed or clothed properly [BRS-000492-0000; BRS-000492-0001]. The federal government replied that reports on the Brandon IRS indicated it "continues to be capably managed under the auspices of the United Church of Canada" but that an Inspector would be visiting the IRS in the near future and would rectify matters, if necessary [BRS-000494; BRS-000493-0000; BRS-000493-0001; BRS-000495; BRS-000496].
- 1944 Two anonymous letters of complaint received by the RCMP alleged that students were badly under-nourished, and truant students were severely beaten before being returned to the IRS [BRS-000509-0000; BRS-000509-0001; BRS-000510].
- 1946, 1947 A letter from a federal government Inspector referred to sworn statements submitted by two parents regarding the alleged mistreatment of their children by the IRS Principal. The Inspector suggested that the statements be investigated, as he had received other complaints of a similar nature about the action of the Principal, "and perhaps it is an explanation of the numerous cases of truancy at this school" [BRS-000523; BRS-000525]. Please note that the sworn statements were not found.
- 1951 A student told an Inspector that the IRS Supervisors were "sometimes rough with boys" [BRS-000882].
- 1962 Two parents had heard that their children were being mistreated at the IRS and wanted to remove them from residence [BRS-003661].

Incidents (Student on Student)

- 1950 A father complained that the Principal was not "looking after things" and that some of the children were "very mean to the little ones and the reason is the staff aren't with them enough to see to these things, and they are not getting enough to eat". The letter also mentioned a boy who froze his feet while running away from the IRS the previous winter. The father asked to keep his child at home and send him to a day school [BRS-000944].
- The Superintendent of the Pelly Indian Agency wrote that parents refused to send their young boys to the Brandon IRS because the boys were not supervised outside the classroom and that "the little boys were much abused and knocked about by the older boys and if they complained to their teacher, it only resulted in more abuse from the older boys" [BRS-001022].

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- 1918        A nurse reported that throughout the year at the IRS there were three deaths from tuberculosis, five cases of pneumonia, thirty six cases of measles, fifteen cases of grippe and that all “of these pupils had to be kept in the dormitories” [BRS-000209]. The federal government recommended that all pupils should have their own bed and sick children should not remain in the dormitories [BRS-000210].
  
- 1942        The federal government noted concern over the numerous reports of truancy received from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and requested that the Principal “remove any friction that may be causing the pupils to truant” [BRS-000483; BRS-000485; BRS-000489-0000].
  
- 1949        A child was accidentally run over by a tractor and died [BRS-000331-0000; BRS-000330].
  
- 1953        The federal government received a complaint from “a reliable source that a deplorable condition” existed at the Brandon IRS with respect to the quality and quantity of meals served to the children [BRS-001001; BRS-000964].
  
- 1961        The Principal informed the Board of Home Missions of the United Church that he discharged one of the Supervisors, as he found her to be “quite odd and peculiar in her actions” and was “found on many occasions to be in a trance-like attitude, her control of the children...practically nil...” [BRS-000632].
  
- 1962        On February 18 it was reported that there had been 50 cases of an infection virus that was originally thought to be measles. Ten children became very ill with a repeat infection and the Principal suggested having a doctor make weekly visits [BRS-003662].

**PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Tenure Dates</b>
Reverend. J. Semmens	Principal	1895 to 1899
Reverend Thompson Ferrier	Principal	1899 to 1929
Reverend John A. Doyle	Principal	1929 to June 1941
Reverend Roscoe T. Chapin	Principal	April 1941 to July 1944
Reverend Oliver B. Strapp	Principal	July 1944 to September 1955
Reverend G. Roy Inglis	Principal	September 1955 to June 1957
Lachlan McLean	Principal	July 1957 to June 1959
Mr. M.D. Bannerman	Assistant Principal	1958 to 1959
Ford Bond	Principal/ Administrator	July 1959 to August 1970
Father Arthur Zenophile Joseph Masse, OMI	Administrator	September 1970 to June 1971
Reverend Jean Soulodre, OMI	Administrator	July 1971 to July 1972

Effective February 1967 the title of the Principal was changed to Administrator [BRS-000686].

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



National Centre for  
Truth and Reconciliation  

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UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA