

St. James–Assiniboia School Division

Great Schools for Growing and Learning

Jenness Moffatt

Superintendent / Chief Executive Officer

Kimberley Kummen

Secretary-Treasurer / Chief Financial Officer

Dear St. James-Assiniboia School Division Families;

Re: Indigenous Identity Declaration

The Province of Manitoba requests that school divisions give First Nations, Metis, and Inuit students an opportunity to declare their cultural identity. The Indigenous Identity Declaration (I.I.D.) collects information about the ancestral/cultural background of Indigenous students. Accurate data is essential in improving the programming in St. James–Assiniboia School Division, and helps us in supporting student success.

The form includes an opportunity for parents to indicate if they are declaring their child for the first time, whether they want to alter or edit a child's previously declared identity, or whether they are simply confirming that a previous declaration has been made.

Declaring your Indigenous Identity is always voluntary, and it can be completed at any point during your child's educational journey.

If you are interested in declaring your child's Indigenous identity, please complete the registration form and return it to your school's office as soon as possible. If you can't remember if you have declared in the past, please feel free to do it again to ensure your family is included.

For more information, please visit http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/iee/aid/q_a.pdf or <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/iee/aid/brochure.pdf>

Thank you in advance for your support!

St. James-Assiniboia School Division

Declare your child's **Indigenous Identity**

Questions and Answers for Parents and Guardians

1. What is Indigenous Identity Declaration?

Indigenous Identity Declaration (IID) is an opportunity for parents/guardians of Indigenous students to declare their child's Indigenous identity within Manitoba's Kindergarten-Grade 12 provincial school system usually at time of registration. IID information received from parents/guardians is entered into a database by the school office and is then reported yearly to the Department of Manitoba Education and Training.

2. Why are Indigenous students being asked to declare their ancestral/cultural background?

IID helps direct resources to Indigenous students to help them succeed. Manitoba Education and Training is committed to supporting the academic success of Indigenous students. Your declaration helps school divisions enhance services and supports for Indigenous students. By declaring, your child (children) receives the appropriate support and programming they may need.

3. Statistics Canada collects this information. Why are parents/guardians being asked to provide information to the school?

Aboriginal identity refers to whether the person reported identifying with the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. This includes those who reported being an Aboriginal person, that is, First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuk (Inuit) and/or those who reported Registered or Treaty Indian status, that is registered under the Indian Act of Canada, and/or those who reported membership in a First Nation or Indian band. Aboriginal peoples of Canada are defined in the Constitution Act, 1982, Section 35 (2) as including the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada. The key data sources for statistics on Aboriginal people comes from the Census, which collects information on the language spoken at home, mother tongue and knowledge of language

IID provides accurate and detailed school level information and is recorded by schools and reported yearly to Manitoba Education and Training. Additionally, this information is combined to give a school division and provincial summary. Information collected through IID is protected under *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)*.

4. I'm a First Nation member and my partner is Métis. Which box do we check?

For families that have multiple ancestral/cultural elements, choose what is most relevant for your family. For more detail, please see the IID identifier descriptions provided on the website at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/aed/abidentity.html.

5. I know I'm Indigenous but I don't speak any Indigenous languages. Do I still check any boxes?

YES. The linguistic identifiers refer to ancestral/cultural identity, NOT your ability to speak a specific Indigenous language. Select the identifier(s) that best reflect your identity. If you are still unsure what to choose, you can check the "Other" linguistic category, and write "uncertain" in the space provided.



6. My child is adopted and Indigenous, while our family is not Indigenous. Which box do I check?

Check the box most appropriate for your child's Indigenous identity. For more details, please see the IID descriptions provided or visit edu.gov.mb.ca/aed/abidentity.html.

7. I moved to Manitoba from another province and my language/culture identifier is not on the IID list. Which box do I check?

As the list of languages spoken by Indigenous people in North America is quite large, the IID uses the majority of the languages spoken in Manitoba. If your language is not listed, please check the box labelled "Other". Then you may indicate the language(s) spoken in the space provided (if known, write the language, or if unknown, write "uncertain").

8. There are so many languages to choose from and my language choice is spelled differently than I remember it being spelled. Are they likely the same?

Yes. They can be considered the same for the purposes of the IID. There are many different ways of spelling the major language groups. As an example, the word Ojibwe can be spelled, Ojibway and Ojibwa. The same can be said of Inuktituq. It can also be spelled as Inuktitut. Both are considered to be the language spoken by the Inuit people.

9. I've already declared my child a couple of years ago. Do I need to declare my child every year?

No. If you have declared your child in the past, you won't need to declare your child every year.

The school office will provide IID information to parents/guardians every year as Indigenous identity is not assumed. Also, sometimes the information parents/guardians provide the school may need to be updated, such as if a child is new to the provincial school system, or if changes were made to the list of IID identifiers. If your child is new to the provincial school system, or if you need to make a change to the declaration you had previously provided for your child, then a declaration form can be obtained from your child's school office at any time.

10. We've moved to a different school in a different school division. Do I need to declare my child again?

No. If parents/guardians have declared their child's Indigenous identity in the past, the declaration information will remain in the database throughout the child's education in the Manitoba K-12 provincial school system.

11. I've registered and/or they know my Indigenous identity at a First Nations school. Do I still need to identify at a provincial school?

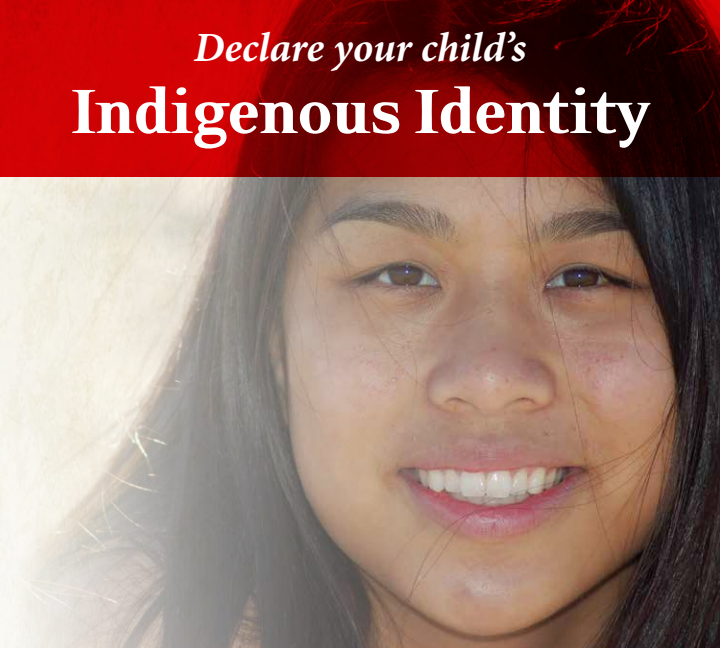
Yes. Your Indigenous identity may not be provided by the First Nations school where you attended. We are asking that you please self-identify when registering at a provincial school.

12. Will my band lose funding for schools in my home community if I self declare my child in a Manitoba public school?

By self declaring your child or children your home band or community will not lose any funds. Public school funding and federal schools funding is not connected or related in any way to self declaring your child or children and will not result in any loss of funds.



Declare your child's
Indigenous Identity

A close-up portrait of a young woman with long dark hair, smiling warmly at the camera. The image is partially obscured by a red banner at the top containing text.

Indigenous Identity Declaration: *A Guide for Parents and Guardians*



**Indigenous Inclusion
Directorate**

Manitoba 

Manitoba Education and Training is committed toward excellence in Indigenous education, a key component of public education.

Indigenous Identity Declaration (IID) provides parents and guardians of Indigenous students the opportunity to declare their children's Indigenous identity within Manitoba's school system. The term Indigenous comprises Canada's First Peoples within the boundaries of present-day Canada and includes Métis peoples. Providing IID information is voluntary.

Why Declare?

IID helps direct programs, resources and services to Indigenous students

Manitoba Education and Training is committed to supporting the academic success of Indigenous students. Your declaration helps school divisions enhance services and supports for Indigenous students. By declaring, your child (children) receives the appropriate support and programming they may need.

IID information is accurate and secure

IID provides accurate and detailed school level information and is recorded by schools and reported yearly to Manitoba Education and Training. Additionally, this information is combined to give a school division and provincial summary. Information collected through IID is protected under The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA).

Identifier Descriptions

After extensive engagement with Indigenous groups across Canada, Statistics Canada has proposed a standard approach to collecting Indigenous Identity information in Canada.

The following descriptions are applicable when completing the Indigenous Identity Declaration:

- **ABORIGINAL** – Section 35 (2) of Canada’s Constitution Act 1982 defines “Aboriginal” as Indian [First Nation], Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada.
- **FIRST NATION** (North American Indian) – Indigenous people who identify as First Nation include registered/status/treaty and non-status/non-treaty Indians. (ex: the Dakota people of Manitoba who do not have treaties with the Crown may still identify as First Nations people.) First Nations people identify with the nation to which they belong. There are five First Nations cultural and language groups in Manitoba – Cree, Ojibway, Dakota, Dene and Oji-Cree.

- **MÉTIS** –people of mixed First Nation and European or Canadian ancestry identify as Métis people.
- **INUIT** –people of Arctic Canada (primarily Churchill in Northern Manitoba, Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Northern Labrador, Northern Quebec and Northern Manitoba). Identify as Inuit.

Language/Cultural Identifiers

The following descriptions for the distinct groups in Manitoba may help when completing the Indigenous Identity Declaration.

- **ANISHINAABE** (Ojibway/Saulteaux) – This refers to people of the Algonquian language family who identify with Odawa, Ojibwe/Ojibway/Saulteaux and Chippewa.
- **ININEW** (Cree) – This refers to people of the Algonquian language family who identify with Cree dialects (Swampy Cree/Ininimowin, Woods Cree/Nihithawiwin and Plains Cree).
- **DENE** (Sayisi) – This refers to people of the Athapaskan language family who identify with the distinct groups of Dene (T’Suline Dene and Sayisi Dene).
- **DAKOTA** – This refers to people of the Siouan language family who identify with Assiniboine, Dakota, Lakota and Nakoda.
- **OJI-CREE** – This refers to people whose language and culture come from mixed Ojibwe and Cree traditions, but are generally considered a distinct nation from either of their parent groups. They are considered one of the component groups of Anishinaabe, and reside primarily in a transitional zone between traditional Ojibwe lands to their south and traditional Cree lands to their north (in northeastern Manitoba, this refers to the Island Lake region).
- **MICHIF** – This refers to people of the Métis Nation who may speak the Michif language which is a mixed Cree or Ojibway and French.
- **INUKTITUT** – This refers to people of distinct Inuit language families (Inuvialuktun, Inuvinnaqtun, Inuittitut and Inuttut).

- **OTHER** (please indicate if not on the list above)
 - This refers to Indigenous people who do not identify with any of the above linguistic/cultural descriptions in Manitoba (e.g. an Indigenous person from another province who does not identify with the above descriptions distinct to Manitoba may declare as Other, for example Mohawk).

Frequently Asked Questions

I'm a First Nation member and my partner is Métis. Which box do I check?

For families who have multiple ancestral/cultural backgrounds, choose what is most relevant for your family. For more details, please see the IID descriptions provided or visit edu.gov.mb.ca/aed/abidentity.html.

I'm Indigenous but I don't speak any Indigenous languages. Do I still check any boxes?

YES. The linguistic identifiers refer to ancestral/cultural identity, NOT your ability to speak a specific Indigenous language. Select the identifier that best reflects your identity.

My Indigenous child is adopted but our family is not Indigenous. Which box do I check?

Check the box most appropriate for your child's Indigenous identity. For more details, please see the IID descriptions provided or visit edu.gov.mb.ca/aed/abidentity.html.

I moved to Manitoba from another province/state and my language is not on the IID list. Which box do I check?

IID lists the majority of the languages spoken in Manitoba. If your language is not listed, check the box labeled "other". You may then indicate the language spoken in the space provided or, if unknown, select "uncertain".

There are so many languages to choose from and my language is spelled differently than those listed. Are they likely the same?

Yes, they are likely the same. There are various ways of spelling the major language groups. For example, Ojibwe can also be spelled Ojibway or even Ojibwa. The same can be said of Inuktituq. It can also be spelled Inuktitut. Both are considered the language spoken by the Inuit.

I declared my child's Indigenous identity a couple of years ago. Do I need to declare my child every year?

No. The IID declaration form is provided to parents or guardians every year the child is enrolled in the Manitoba provincial school system. However, if you have already declared your child in a previous year, you do not need to declare your child again.

If your child is new to the provincial school system, or if you need to make changes to the declaration, you can obtain a declaration form any time from the school office.

We've moved to a different school/school division. Do I need to declare my child again?

No. If you have already declared your child in a previous year, you do not need to declare your child again. Your child's information will remain in the database throughout the child's education in the Kindergarten to Grade 12 provincial school system.

Contact Information

For more information about the Indigenous Identity Declaration, please contact your child's school office or the Indigenous Inclusion Directorate at:

Indigenous Inclusion Directorate

510 Selkirk Ave

Winnipeg, MB R2W 2M7

Phone: 204-945-1416

Toll Free MB: 1-800-282-8069

Ext. 1416

Email: richard.perrault@gov.mb.ca