



Mississaugas of The New Credit First Nation

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Kris Hill
Regional Manager, Education
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
58 Dalhousie Street, PO Box 1960
Brantford, Ontario N3T 5W5

February 11, 2011

Dear Ms. Hill:

Re: Request for Special Education Funding

I am writing to request that Indian and Northern Affairs Canada ("INAC") fully fund the special needs education of two children with Down's syndrome who are members of our First Nation. These are the same two children we requested funding for in a letter to Robert Maguire (Director, Funding Services South, INAC) dated October 30, 2008, and who are the subject of a human rights complaint discussed below (File No. 2009 1016).

As you may know, these two children attended an off-reserve provincial school in 2008-2009 because of their high special needs. The provincial school required over \$80,000 to pay for the special education supports required for the two children (such as educational assistants). The First Nation asked INAC to pay for those amounts. Although INAC was able to assist with funding for certain ancillary costs and basic tuition, it refused to pay for the over \$80,000 in special education costs (e.g. for educational assistants). INAC stated that it would not provide any special education funding beyond the amount allocated to MNCFN according to INAC's funding formula.

As an interim measure, MNCFN has provided funding for the two children's special education. However, this funding has come from outside MNCFN's special education funding allocation from INAC. This high cost amount (over \$80,000 in 2008-2009) cannot be absorbed by MNCFN's existing special education allocation – it would take up approximately half of the First Nation's overall allocation. The two children continue to require special education supports that cannot be funded through MNCFN's special education allocation from INAC.

As a result, MNCFN requests that INAC:

- (1) Reimburse the First Nation for the cost of the two children's special needs expenses incurred to date; and
- (2) Fully fund the required and appropriate special education services (such as educational assistants) for the two children for the remainder of their elementary school education.

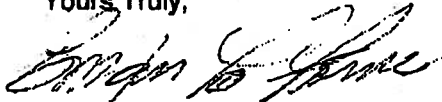
We would greatly appreciate a written response to the above requests. If we receive no response within a month of this letter, or if you are not willing to comment on the above requests, we will assume that INAC's position remains unchanged – that it will not provide any special education funding beyond the allocation determined according to INAC's special education funding formula.

As you likely know, a human rights complaint has been filed in relation to this matter (CHRC File No. 2009 1016). This letter is not an offer to settle that complaint. Instead, it is an appeal to fund

the special education supports required by two young First Nations children. However, we may disclose this letter and your response in those legal proceedings.

It is extremely important that First Nations special needs children receive appropriate special education supports. Our exceptional children deserve an education that will allow them to function in society to the best of their abilities and with dignity and respect – the kind of education that non-First Nations children living in neighbouring communities receive. We are simply asking INAC to provide the funds required to make that a reality.

Yours Truly,



Chief M. Bryan LaForme
Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation