



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
EMPOWERING OUR NATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 2, 2021

The AMC supports and commends O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation and Chief Shirley Ducharme

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) issues the following statement in support of O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation (OPCN), Chief Shirley Ducharme and Council for their decision to remove the previous school name which stood for and represented a colonial and painful past. The individual who the school was named after was complicit in forcibly removing children from their parents and caregivers to residential schools over several years.

AMC Grand Chief Arlen Dumas stated, “During these distressing times as all First Nations in Manitoba and across the country grieve and relive the terrible crimes inflicted on our loved ones through the residential schools, it is important to remove painful reminders of this past within our schools and educational institutions. It takes great courage and great leadership to change the course of history and to chart a new path forward. I commend and applaud Chief Ducharme and OPCN for removing a name which represents the pain of the past and for seeking a new path forward for not only the building itself, but for all students that will call the building their school in the future. Students should be taught about the tragedies of the past, but do not need to be reminded of these painful times on a daily basis through the celebration of a figure who was complicit in crimes against First Nations.”

“The AMC further recognizes and commends Frontier School Division for their commitment in this case to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. They were contacted by Chief Ducharme to immediately remove the signage and heeded that call. I encourage all allies to work in partnership with First Nations in this collaborative way as we seek redress and meaningful reconciliation. There are many more place markers and names throughout the regions that need to be considered for renaming, and the AMC will work with all First Nations and concerned citizens to have the injustices of the past addressed through the renaming of place markers, including street names within the urban centre. We will never forget the past, and will work in the present to chart a more positive future for all Manitobans,” concluded Grand Chief Dumas.

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About the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

The AMC was formed in 1988 by the Chiefs in Manitoba to advocate on issues that commonly affect First Nations in Manitoba. AMC is an authorized representative of 62 of the 63 First Nations in Manitoba with a total of more than 151,000 First Nation citizens in the province, accounting for approximately 12 percent of the provincial population. AMC represents a diversity of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho / Ininew (Cree), Anishinew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.