



CHIEFS COUNCIL

RESOLUTION of the Matawa Chiefs passed at the 34th Annual General Meeting in Webequie First Nation to be effective from and after 1:00 pm Eastern Standard Time on July 26, 2022.

RESOLUTION #13-28-07-2022

ADDRESSING RE-TRIGGERED INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA DUE TO ATTENDANCE AT INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS AND DAY SCHOOLS IN MATAWA

WHEREAS, between the late 1800s and 1996, the Government of Canada and church organizations operated the Indian Residential School (IRS) system as part of official Canadian policy aimed at assimilating Indigenous people, and;

WHEREAS, an unidentified number of children from First Nations in Matawa (in the hundreds or thousands) were forcibly removed from their homes and sent to Indian Residential Schools in Ontario and in some parts of Canada, and were subjected to atrocities in an act and pattern of genocide that dislocated these children from their families, people, land, culture and language, and;

WHEREAS, between the 1860's – 1990's (as the Indian Residential Schools were shutting down) the Government of Canada and church organizations opened and operated Indian Day Schools (IDS) in the Matawa communities continuing with the policy to assimilate and, like the experience at IRS—children who attended IDS faced verbal, physical, sexual, mental, social, spiritual abuse and Indigenous communities were not given a say in the operation and curriculum of the IDS, and;

WHEREAS, the children from the First Nations in Matawa who survived IRS and IDS experience long-term impacts which are felt to this day including: loss of family, parenting skills, culture, language and identity, which has led to intergenerational grief and trauma which is the root of all social issues across Matawa, and;

WHEREAS, as part of some of the largest class action settlements in Canadian history to-date, the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement came into effect in 2007 and the Federal Indian Day Schools and Federal Day Schools settlement agreement came into effect in 2019, and;

WHEREAS, in May of 2021, 215 unmarked graves were recovered at the sites of former IRS in Kamloops, BC, Cowessess First Nation, SK, and elsewhere in Canada with the help of ground penetrating radar and that some of these unmarked graves contained the remains of fetuses and children as young as 3 years old, and;

WHEREAS, outside of those in the Matawa First Nations who survived IRS and IDS, a number of children died or went missing and that as of October 2021—organizations such as Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN) are developing strategic responses to the identification or unmarked graves and the recovery of missing NAN children from IRS (NAN Chiefs Resolution 21/10), and;





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WHEREAS, the IRS and IDS settlements and the discovery of unmarked graves have re-triggered intergenerational trauma amongst members of Matawa First Nations and that although, mental health supports have been put in place, a more direct Matawa strategy on addressing intergenerational trauma as a result of IRS and IDS is needed, and;

WHEREAS, Chiefs resolutions addressing these matters have been passed at the national, regional and political territorial organization levels but none have been passed at the Matawa Chiefs Council level, so;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Matawa Chiefs Council, direct that recommendations be developed by Matawa First Nations Management (MFNM) to address re-triggered intergenerational trauma within Matawa as a result of attendance or family attendance at Indian Residential Schools, Day Schools and the finding of unmarked graves at former IRS sites, that should include, but not be limited to:

- a) Building internal capacity/human resources to provide full-time attention to the matter;
- b) Advocacy on usage of mental health resources that are available;
- c) Research and documentation on the specific experience of IRS and IDS survivors within Matawa as part of an educational and communications campaign using a number of lenses including how it affected different generations, educational outcomes, etc.;
- d) A determination of how departments within Matawa can contribute interdepartmentally as part of their annual workplans;
- e) Researching how communities in Matawa can partake in IRS and IDS commemoration and healing projects and providing assistance where required;
- f) Other relevant issues arising, and;

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that these recommendations be provided at various opportunities prior to the 2023 Matawa AGM.

MOVED BY: Chief Wayne Moonias, Neskantaga First Nation
SECONDED BY: Chief Judy Desmoulin, Long Lake #58 First Nation

OPPOSITION(S): None
ABSTENTION(S): None
CARRIED: Consensus

Chief Executive Officer

