

Ministry of Education

Mowat Block
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2
Telephone (416) 325-2600
Facsimile (416) 327-9063

Ministère de l'Éducation

Édifice Mowat
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2
Téléphone (416) 325-2600
Télécopieur (416) 327-9063

**2017: B12**

MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

FROM: Andrew Davis
Assistant Deputy Minister
Education Labour and Finance Division

Denise Dwyer
Assistant Deputy Minister
Indigenous Education and Well Being

DATE: **September 22, 2017**

SUBJECT: **Reverse Education Service Agreements**

The Ministry of Education is committed to supporting the success and well-being of all students. Following discussions with First Nations partners, the Ministry will be taking new steps to better enable First Nations learners to choose the educational paths that best meet their needs and support their well-being. We are writing to inform you of the ministry's intention to propose legislative changes to the *Education Act* with regard to Reverse Education Service Agreements¹ (RESAs). Over the coming months, the ministry will be engaging with First Nation partners and education stakeholders to discuss proposed changes to the *Education Act* that will require boards to enter into agreements when approached by First Nation-operated schools or education authorities.²

RESAs allow students living off reserve, within the jurisdiction of a school board, the opportunity to attend First Nation-operated schools. In the spirit of reconciliation, the Ministry is committed to support student choice and removing the financial and administrative barriers that prevent children and youth from attending First Nation-

¹ Reverse Education Service Agreements are entered into when a pupil of the board wishes to attend a First Nation-operated school.

² Education Authorities are First Nations-run educational organizations that deliver elementary and/or secondary education programs or services, including but not limited to the Northern Nishnawbe Education Council.

operated schools at present. We recognize that students may change school systems for a variety of reasons, including safety, well-being, and/or to seek deeper connections with the First Nation community. It is expected that this change would support the well-being of First Nation children and youth.

As we move forward, boards are strongly encouraged to begin discussions with First Nation communities and education authorities interested in developing RESAs with them. A guide to assist with the negotiation of Education and Reverse Education Service Agreements that was co-developed by the Chiefs of Ontario, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ontario Public School Board's Association, is available online at the following link:
<http://www.opsba.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/Tuition%20Handbook%20English%20re-ad-only.pdf>.

This fall, the Ministry will convene a working group on Education and Reverse Education Service Agreements to update this guide and to bring increased ease, transparency and clarity to the process of negotiating agreements between boards and First Nation communities.

If you require further information about these changes, please contact:

Subject	Contact	Telephone and E-Mail
Operating Funding	Andrew Bright	(416) 325-2037 andrew.bright@ontario.ca
Indigenous Education Office	Taunya Paquette	416-314-5739 taunya.paquette@ontario.ca

Collaboration between the ministry, school boards and First Nation communities are key elements to a stronger future for First Nation students in Ontario. We appreciate your engagement and ongoing support as we work together to support the success and well-being of these students.

Original signed by

Doreen Lamarche (on behalf of Andrew Davis)
Assistant Deputy Minister
Education Labour and Finance Division

Denise Dwyer
Assistant Deputy Minister
Indigenous Education and Well Being

Copy: Superintendents of Business and Finance