

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 lose of funds.

