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Inquiry Commission on Relations Between Indigenous Peoples and  
Certain Public Services in Québec: Listening, Reconciliation and Progress

## **The government is investing \$19.4 million to foster the success and persistence in school of Indigenous students**

**Odanak, November 30, 2021** – To support and improve the success and persistence in school of Indigenous students, the Québec government is investing \$19.4 million to implement three measures covering direct student support, instructional material, and program review. Minister of Education Jean-François Roberge and Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs Ian Lafrenière made the announcement today, accompanied by MNA for Nicolet-Bécancour Donald Martel and Denis Gros-Louis, Director General of the FNEC and Co-chair of the Table nationale sur la réussite éducative des élèves autochtones.

The government wishes, in this way, to implement the recommendations of the Inquiry Commission on Relations Between Indigenous Peoples and Certain Public Services in Québec: Listening, Reconciliation and Progress, and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, which demanded concrete action in the realm of education.

Ensuring that Indigenous history and realities occupy their proper place in courses of study and offering such notions as soon as possible in school paths will, in particular, enhance persistence in school and educational success, in addition to increasing the graduation rate of Indigenous students.

### **Measure related to instructional material**

It is important to make available to teachers additional instructional material that better recognizes the realities of the First Nations and Inuit. This measure seeks to enable the Québec government, in collaboration with Indigenous partners and publishing houses or other publishers of content to make available tools to help them better grasp and teach questions related to Indigenous realities.

### **Measure related to support**

Over half of the members of the First Nations and Inuit live outside Indigenous communities in the short or long term and attend the establishments of school service centres and linguistic school boards. The latter must be able to better support them during the transition and establish favourable conditions that are geared to their success. This measure enhances the adapted professional services for First Nations and Inuit students in the network. In particular, it seeks to make training accessible to all school staff, enhance reception and guidance tools and services, enhance the transitions between school environments, upgrade the knowledge acquired, establish culturally reassuring services, and enhance the link between the schools and the students' family environments.

### **Measure related to program review**

Most programs of study were drafted in the early 2000s and the Table nationale sur la réussite éducative des élèves autochtones has noted that certain content pertaining to Indigenous realities should be reviewed. The members of the First Nations and Inuit will be invited to participate in the revision of the programs of study to incorporate Indigenous perspectives into them. This measure will also better equip teachers when they deal with these topics.

The measures that the government has announced will benefit all Québec students who will, overall, be better equipped, informed, and aware of Indigenous realities.

“Education plays a key role in helping Indigenous students to succeed and enabling all Québec students to be informed and aware of Indigenous realities. To this end, we are working in close collaboration with Indigenous partners in the education sector. I am delighted to be able to respond today to the recommendations concerning education in the Viens Commission report and to thus take a step toward the education system’s recognition of Indigenous realities.”

Jean-François Roberge, Minister of Education

“Our government has taken to heart the Viens Commission’s recommendations and education is one of the most important facets of our efforts to facilitate reconciliation and the development of mutual trust. The success and persistence in school of Indigenous young people are front and centre in our initiatives, but the new measures will also facilitate better circulation of knowledge and Indigenous concerns, which makes me optimistic. It is my hope that, through our efforts, we will witness changes in educational approaches in Québec schools. This will serve not only the interests of the First Nations and Inuit but also those of all Québec students, who will have access to training that illustrates their historic reality and interpretations of it.”

Ian Lafrenière, Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs

“The members of the Table sur la réussite éducative des élèves Inuit et des Premières Nations welcome with hope the Québec government’s response. The investments will enable our respective organizations to work together on content and make known the contemporary reality of our communities. The Table sur la réussite éducative has shown that it is best placed to advise the government, the public service, school service centres, schools, and teachers concerning our realities.”

Denis Gros-Louis, Co-chair of the Table nationale sur la réussite scolaire and Director General of the FNEC

“The residents of Nicolet-Bécancour understand the need to maintain and foster exchanges and collaboration with the Indigenous nations that occupy a major place in our territory. I am, therefore, indeed proud to participate in this announcement that confirms our shared desire to live together and make our good relations even more productive and mutually advantageous.”

Donald Martel, MNA for Nicolet-Bécancour and Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier (St. Lawrence Project and Innovation Zones)

### **Highlights:**

- On September 30, 2019, headed by former judge Jacques Viens, the Inquiry Commission on Relations Between Indigenous Peoples and Certain Public Services in Québec: Listening, Reconciliation and Progress, made public the report submitted to the government at the conclusion of its deliberations.
- The Commission’s report proposed 142 measures and called for reconciliation and the establishment of a new balance of power.
- The Québec government has a \$200-million budget allowance to implement the Viens Commission’s recommendations.
- The report identified education as a cross-cutting challenge.
- The funds announced today will facilitate the implementation of three measures covering direct support to students, instructional material, and program review.
- The members of the Table sur la réussite éducative des élèves des Premières Nations et Inuit submitted to the Ministère de l’Éducation their priorities on October 21, 2021.

## Related links:

- Report of the Viens Commission:  
[https://www.cerp.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/Fichiers\\_clients/Rapport/Rapport\\_final.pdf](https://www.cerp.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/Fichiers_clients/Rapport/Rapport_final.pdf)

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