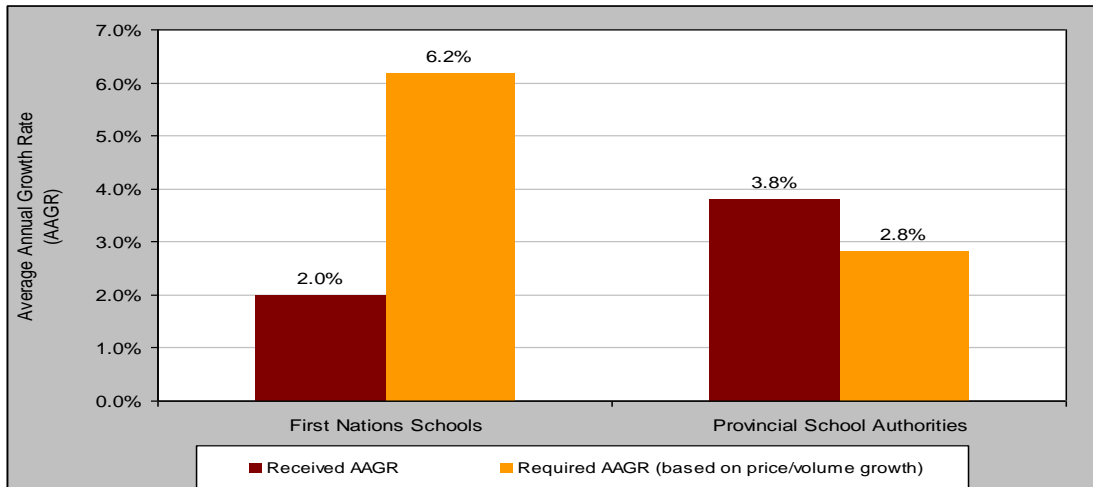




## Elementary /Secondary Education – Impact of the 2% Cap at the National Level

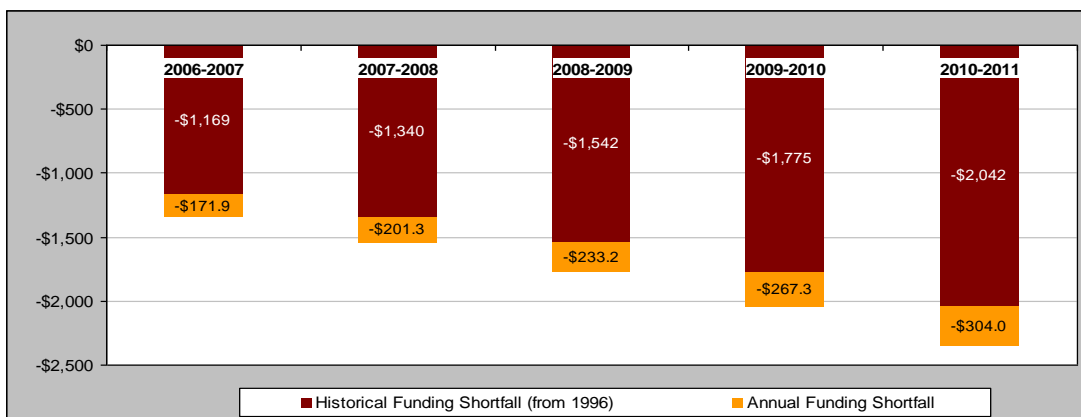
- *Although* the national INAC funding levels have been capped at 2% since 1996, both cost of living and population growth demanded an annual funding increase of 6.2% for First Nations education
- Between 1996 and 2006, provincial and territorial education funding has increased, on average, by 3.8% per year across Canada



Source: Calculations based on historical INAC expenditures and Statistics Canada school board expenditures, 2007

### First Nations education funding shortfall

- The 2% cap on spending has resulted in a historical funding shortfall of \$1.54B between 1996 and 2008
- In 2008 alone, there is an annual funding shortfall of \$233M



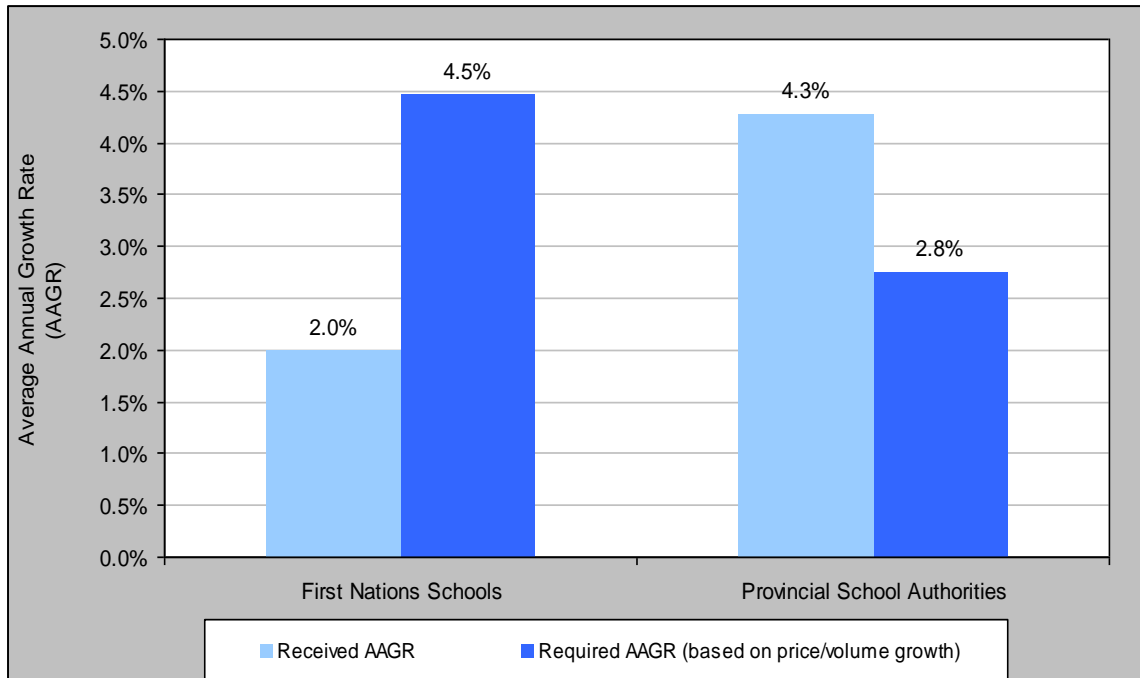
Source: Assembly of First Nations, 2006

Reference: Paper on First Nations Education Funding, First Nations Education Council, February 2009



## Elementary /Secondary Education – Impact of the 2% Cap in Quebec

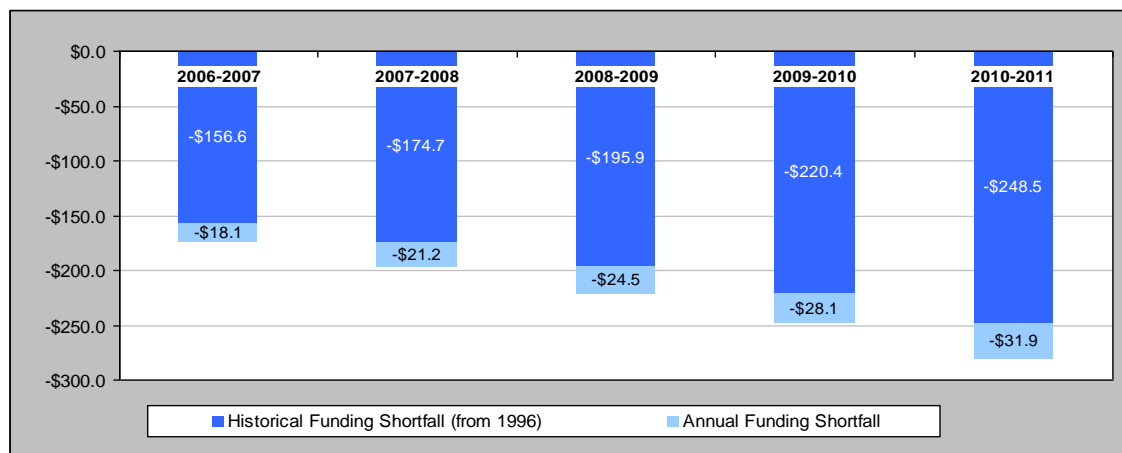
- For First Nations in Quebec, actual cost of living and population growth demanded an annual funding increase of 4.5 % for First Nations education
- Quebec school boards have seen funding increases, on average, of 4.3% per year between 1996 and 2006



Source: Calculations based on historical INAC expenditures and Statistics Canada school board expenditures, 2007

### First Nations education funding shortfall

- In Quebec, the 2% cap on spending has resulted in a historical funding shortfall of \$195.9M between 1996 and 2008
- In 2008, there was an annual funding shortfall of \$24.5M in Quebec;



Source: Calculations based on Assembly of First Nations analysis, 2006

Reference: Paper on First Nations Education Funding, First Nations Education Council, February 2009



## Statements by Canadian Politicians

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Paul Martin, who was Canada's prime minister from 2003 to 2006, writes the following in his memoirs:<sup>1</sup>

*"How can the federal government justify spending substantially less per capita on the high school education of a young Aboriginal Canadian in its jurisdiction than the provinces do for a similar student in their jurisdiction? It's wrong, and it cannot last."*

Michael Bryant, Ontario's former Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, is quoted as follows in a November 30, 2007 article from *The Toronto Star*:<sup>2</sup>

*"The province could, for example, take over responsibility for on-reserve schools from Ottawa, which does an abysmal job in this area. **But reserve schools now receive substantially less cash per student than schools in the rest of the province**, so the province would want Ottawa to top up the funding before the transfer of responsibility took place. "*

A July 17, 2008 article by the Canadian Press summarizes a statement from Quebec's premier, Jean Charest, in these terms:<sup>3</sup>

*Mr. Charest affirmed that funding of education in the First Nations would be among the priority issues to be discussed at a future meeting. He noted that in Canada, **spending on the education of First Nations children comes to less than half of the amount spent for the education of children in the non-Aboriginal communities**. "In itself, this number tells us a great deal," he said. "There are several priorities and we don't want to close the door on this issue."*

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Martin (2008). *Hell or High Water: My Life in and out of Politics*.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.thestar.com/printArticle/281262>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ledevoir.com/2008/07/17/198039.html>

Following is an excerpt from a speech made on February 10, 2009 by Manitoba's Education Minister, Peter Bjornson:<sup>4</sup>

*"Unfortunately, the federal government has not always lived up to its duty to Aboriginal learners. The federal government is constitutionally obligated to provide k-12 education on First Nations. **However, this education has traditionally been under-funded by Ottawa – especially in comparison to students and schools funded under the provincial education system. For example, the average per-student funding for the Frontier School Division was almost \$17,000 in 2008/09, while the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada average per-student funding was under \$14,000. That's a \$3000 gap.**"*

Finally, we present an excerpt from a February 19, 2009 article<sup>5</sup> quoting Gene Zwozdesky, Alberta's minister for Aboriginal relations:

*"Alberta's minister of aboriginal relations says the federal government has to spend more educating aboriginal children in the province.*

*Gene Zwozdesky says education is a provincial responsibility and Alberta provides, on average, 11-thousand dollars to educate a student for a year.*

*First Nations are a federal responsibility and Canada provides between six-thousand and eight-thousand dollars to educate a student for a year.*

*Zwozdesky says that gap needs attention."*

In a recent article<sup>6</sup> published on October 13, 2009, the Minister of Education of Alberta, Dave Hancock, highlighted the underfunding issue:

*One of the biggest issues is education funding (...) First Nation Albertans on First Nations land need to have equivalent access to good quality teaching, to good quality schools . . . that means they have to have finances that are on an equitable level.*

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.mbteach.org/news/chamber-bjornson.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.inews880.com/Channels/Reg/LocalNews/story.aspx?ID=1064476>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/School+cash+lags+First+Nations/2094760/story.html>



## Recognition of the problem by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and the relating unfulfilled remedial engagements

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For years and years, the problems affecting First Nations education have been portrayed and analyzed in a whole host of reports and studies. First Nations, independent researchers, research institutes, parliamentary committees and joint INAC-First Nations Working groups have produced hundreds of such reports. Nonetheless, the government has systematically ignored the ensuing recommendations. Below is an excerpt from the year 2000 report of the Auditor General as regards this issue:

*4.26. Although we are concerned that costs have been incurred to produce studies that have been left dormant, we believe that the costs of remedial inaction are greater. (p. 4-10).*

Hence during the course of the past twenty-five years of its existence, the FNEC has witnessed a long series of shamelessly un-kept promises. An example which perfectly illustrates this reality is the case of the funding formula for First Nations schools.

### **INAC's funding formula, an internally recognized and admitted problem**

Below is an excerpt of the government's response to the five recommendations of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, following the report of the Auditor General in 2000:

*In renewing the program authority for education which will be completed by fall 2001, the Department is examining the same issues - performance and results indicators, comparable cost information, **funding formulas**, funding arrangements, and consulting and monitoring mechanisms to support accountability.*

In 2005, an internal report of the Evaluation of the Band-Operated and Federal Schools confirmed the necessity of renewing the funding formula in the following terms:

*Conclusion 8:*

*The current funding formula is an archaic instrument for achieving public policy ends and meeting the needs of First Nations people.*

### **Unfulfilled Engagements**

The 2005-2006 INAC Report on the Plans and Priorities, mentioned an unequivocal engagement in renewing the funding formula. The Department in effect proposed to:

*Renewed First Nations Education Policy Framework supported by a strong management and accountability regime with particular attention to:*

- *roles and responsibilities*
- ***adequate funding formula***
- *clearly defined expected results*
- *performance information and analysis*

In its Strategic Plan 2005-2008, the INAC Quebec Regional Office set itself, as regards education, the objective to:

- *Establish a collaborative process in education with the First Nations groups concerned*
- *Develop and begin implementing joint action plans*
- ***Help develop new funding formulas for band schools***

Finally, the following extract from the Department's reply to a recommendation of the 2004 Report of the Auditor General also refers to an initiative to renew the funding formula:

*Indian and Northern Affairs Canada has undertaken a review to compare **the funds it allocates to schools operated by First Nations with the funds those schools would receive under the applicable provincial funding formula.***

**In 2009, the formula is yet to be renewed and this objective seems to have been forgotten and forsaken**

After several deferrals, INAC set the deadline for the renewal of the funding formula in April 2008. The renewal is still due.

In the same year, the INAC Quebec Regional Office established a new strategic plan for 2008-2011. The latter made absolutely no mention of the renewal of the funding formula.

## **Conclusion**

The FNEC deems that it is high time to put an end to this strategy of attrition against First Nations in all files pertaining to education. A strategy which corroborates the hidden agenda of the government: **the complete assimilation of First Nations within the dominant society.**



## Fact Sheet on

## New schools construction and major repairs of First Nations Schools

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### ***New schools construction***

- There are insufficient plans to respond to the need for new schools in First Nations communities.
- By 2007, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's (INAC) own capital list identified a need for **69 new schools and 27 were in need of major renovations** across Canada.
- In 2008, INAC announced that they would begin building 21 schools by the year 2013 and maybe six more after 2013. (Minister Chuck Strahl, INAC to House Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, March 5, 2008). **What about the other 42 new schools required?**
- The building of possibly 27 new schools by or around 2013 does not account for the population growth of the First Nations peoples over 5 years.

### ***Major repairs***

- There were over 846 millions dollars worth of major repairs (\$1.5 million and above in cost) identified in First Nations schools across Canada in the years before 2004. The major repairs affect over 95 First Nations schools.
- The actual and planned spending by INAC for the major repairs was in the amount of \$457 million by 2008-09. And another \$178M by 2011-12 and \$210M beyond 2012. This planned spending does not account for the increase in the cost of the repairs over the years due to inflation.
- The non-residential construction price index (NRCPI) increased by 11.6% in last year alone (2007-II to 2008-II). (Statistics Canada, "Non-residential Building Construction Price Index", The Daily, Tuesday August 12 2008, online).

### ***Schools in Afghanistan***

- The Canadian Government announced its plan to build, expand, or repair 50 schools in the Kandahar province of Afghanistan by the year 2011. This investment will total \$12 million over the next three years through the national education department, the Education Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP). Canada will also support this signature project by training up to 3,000 teachers and providing adult literacy and vocational training.