

Conducting Research on Residential Schools

A Guide to the Records of the Indian and Inuit Affairs Program and Related Resources at Library and Archives Canada

Reading this guide may bring back painful and distressing memories for some.

If reading this guide distresses you or someone you know, please call the Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line at 1-866-925-4419. This crisis line will help Indian Residential School Survivors get emotional and crisis services.

You can also call the Crisis Line to get information on other health supports provided by the [Health Canada Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/services/indiresident/irs-pi-eng.php) [<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/services/indiresident/irs-pi-eng.php>]



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Introduction

Due to the recent creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and subsequent public apology by the Government of Canada, interest in Indian Residential Schools has increased steadily. This renewed interest has highlighted the need for the creation of a general guide to conducting research in this area.

Throughout their existence and since, the Residential Schools System has produced many documents of enduring interest to researchers. The complexity of the records of the Government of Canada, and particularly those of the Indian and Inuit Affairs Program of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (AANDC), results in an often highly complex records universe.

This guide is a tool to help researchers navigate the records of the Indian and Inuit Affairs Program, where the bulk of the records related to Residential Schools are located, in Record Group (RG) 10. It also provides a starting point for research in other parts of LAC's collection. Finally, it provides approaches that may be applied to research into, for instance, the Indian Day Schools system, and indeed many other subjects in the area of Aboriginal history.

Finding Records: The Challenges

Types of research

Researchers on Residential Schools may be looking for records about themselves, their families, their friends, or their communities. They may be looking for records of specific schools, or about the system in general. They may want information on how and why the government and churches administered schools. Much of this information is available at LAC. Much of it is also held in other repositories, or may no longer exist. For information on other repositories in Canada see section 8.

Research can often be time-consuming and complex, no matter what the topic. If assistance is sought researchers can contact LAC's reference services for assistance. Hiring a freelance researcher is also an option; a list of researchers is available at: <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/the-public/005-2060-e.html>.

Some documents held at LAC are subject to access restrictions or privacy and other reasons. See Section 6 for further details.

A Note on Terminology

Throughout this guide you will see terms used that require clarification at the outset.

Archival Terms

Fonds – term used to describe a collection of records that originate from the same source – the documents, regardless of form or medium, created and/or accumulated and used by a particular individual, family, or organization in the course of activities or functions.

Sous-fonds, series, and sub-series – sub-divisions of a fonds, a mean to organize the records to make information easier to find and access. Records in a sub-group are related to each other or to a function or activity.

Record Group or RG (such as RG10) – term used to describe the records of a major government entity (such as a department) and its predecessor agencies.

Textual records – usually refers to records containing written or typed words.

Finding aid – can either be a list of files found in volumes or boxes, or can be general reference tools, such as thematic guides, to find records or conduct research.

Accession – at LAC this is a group of records transferred to LAC from a government department or other individual or group, but not yet given volume numbers. Accessions are arranged as part of series or sub-series to which they relate.

Federated Search – Throughout this guide you will see references to Federated Search and finding aids. Federated Search is LAC's database search tool. It contains descriptions of accessions, fonds, sous-fonds, series, and sub-series of records, and sometimes describes files one at a time. Most of these descriptions mention a finding aid and whether it is available on paper only or electronically (see section 5).

Additional Terms Used In the Guide Which Require Clarification

Aboriginal – this term is used to comprise the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada. It should be noted that most of the records described in this guide concern schools which First Nations and Inuit attended, although many Métis also attended residential schools.

Indian – this term is used because the records in question were created by a government department that had that term in its name. Archives do not change the names that creators give to their records or programs. In this way the original state of the records is preserved, which in turn allows for a better understanding of the records. This term is also the name of the main piece of legislation governing the relationship between the government of Canada and Aboriginal peoples – the *Indian Act*.

Changing Administration of Residential Schools

To provide contextual information regarding the effect of historical changes to the organization of AANDC and its impact on the records related to residential schools.

A key challenge for researchers of Residential Schools in Canada is that relevant files are often organized according to the office of the department responsible (today called Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), or its predecessors, that was responsible for administering the school at a specific time. This means that to successfully locate a record of interest, the researcher must identify not only the date of creation and the school to which it pertains, but also the name of the district or agency which was responsible for the administration of the school at that particular time.

The challenge of doing this is further complicated by the fact that agencies were dissolved, merged, split and in some cases re-established over the years, and the responsibility for specific bands (and therefore the reserves and schools associated with them) was shifted between agencies.

Finally, many residential schools related records were either created by the headquarters of AANDC, or transferred to headquarters from regional offices for administrative reasons.

As a result the records documenting the legacy of Residential Schools in Canada are scattered throughout the holdings of LAC. In the Indian and Inuit Affairs sous-fonds,

where most of the records are located, the records are spread out and can be found in the records of nearly every agency, district, or office of the department, as well as in other collections of records.

For much of the history of the department, each agency or district was issued a number, referred to as a responsibility code. These codes were used in conjunction with the filing systems in use at particular times by the department to classify its records.

The next two sections explain how to identify the codes used in filing documents related to a specific school; and how to understand the file classification systems in use at the time.

Tracing Changes in the Administration of a Band, First Nation, or Residential School

To locate records in LAC's collection about a specific school, one needs to know the agency or district responsible for the school at a particular point in time.

Tools to trace changes in administration:

- Band History Cards – available on paper in the Genealogy Services at 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa.
- Thematic Guides to the evolution of administrative agencies and districts by geographical region – see Appendix I of this Guide for a list. Available on paper at 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa.
- The list of Agency and district codes, pre- and post-1966, contained in finding aid 10-96.

To trace changes in administration, take the following steps:

1. Check the Band History Cards available in the Genealogy Services for the names of the agency(ies) or district(s) at particular times responsible for the administration of the band or first nation.
2. Using the names of agencies or districts from the Band History Cards, check the relevant geographic Thematic Guide (listed in Appendix I) for changes in the administrative structure of a specific agency or district.
3. Find the pre-1966 and post-1966 codes of the relevant agencies and districts in finding aid 10-96.

With this list of agency and district names and codes, now determine which classification system was in use by the department at the time.

Filing Systems

To locate records in LAC's collection about a specific school, one needs to know which file classification system was in effect at a particular point in time, and to understand something of how it worked.

AANDC's central filing system experienced a slow evolution between 1872, when it adopted its first central registry system, and 1988, when it converted to the current block numeric system. There were four significant phases to the evolution of AANDC records management. Further detail about each is provided below. In chronological order, they are:

- *Red Series and Black Series*, about 1872-1923 –Numeric filing systems that assigned consecutive numbers to each document or file as it was created. An index was eventually created listing the files and their file numbers by subject.
- *Subject-based systems (First Series, Thousand Series, School Files)*, about 1923-1950 – organized files according to a numeric “responsibility code” (the agency or district code) and a numeric code assigned to a subject. These systems are often referred to as duplex numeric systems, because the file numbers were duplex – a subject number and an agency number. See modified Duplex Numeric System, below, for more information.
- *Modified Duplex Numeric System*, about 1950 to 1985 (called that because the subject-based systems were often referred to as duplex numeric) also organized files according to the responsibility code and a subject number, but the subject number blocks became more detailed and organized.
- *Block Numeric System*, about 1985 to the present – organizes files by file number assigned to a program or activity.

Researchers will need to remember that files may have been “migrated forward” from one system to the next, so a general understanding of the recordkeeping context is important.¹

The Red Series and Black Series Numeric System

The Red Series and Black Series were the earliest filing system used by AANDC. Files in this system were assigned the next number in the series.

The Red Series was the original location for AANDC records, from 1872 to 1923. AANDC opened the Black Series in 1882 for correspondence from Western Canada, with Central and Eastern Canada remaining with the Red Series. The reason for this was that the Red Series was becoming overwhelmed with the volume of correspondence being received.

Later, a rudimentary subject classification system was built into the Red and Black Series. General subjects were assigned to numbers 254000 – 254022 in the Red Series, and from 427000 on in the Black Series. For schools, the subject number was the registration number of the first piece of correspondence pertaining to that school.

Finding aid 10-96 provides more detail about this file system as well as research strategies for navigating it – see Appendix I.

¹ This information was compiled from research on the evolution of the AANDC file classification system conducted by archivists Terry Cook, Sean Darcy, and Bill Russell: Terry Cook, “Paper Trails: A Study in Northern Records and Northern Administration, 1898–1958,” in Kenneth S. Coates and William R. Morrison, eds., *For the Purposes of Dominion: Essays in Honour of Morris Zaslow* (Toronto, 1989); Bill Russell, “The White Man’s Paper Burden: Aspects of Records Keeping in the Department of Indian Affairs, 1860–1914,” *Archivaria* 19 (Winter 1984–85): 50–72.; and Sean Darcy, “The Evolution of the Department of Indian Affairs’ Central Registry Record-Keeping Systems: 1872–1984,” *Archivaria* 58:161-171. See also RG10 finding aids 10-96 and 10-376 (see section 5 below).

Subject Based Classification Systems

The Department shifted from the numbered correspondence and ledger-based filing system in use earlier in the Red and Black Series to a recordkeeping system based entirely on subjects (sometimes referred to as the Duplex Numeric system) in 1923. It consisted of five independent subject based file collections, including one for school files.

In some cases, files in the older system were closed and new ones opened in the new system. In many other cases files were moved and reclassified. However, the files migrated in this way were not necessarily relabelled, so a search for specific files must take into account both the older and the newer file classification systems.

In the subject-based system files were organized according to a numeric “responsibility code” (agency or district code) and a secondary numeric code assigned to a subject.

Of particular interest is the School Files Series. More information is provided in section 4.

Of additional interest will be Thousand Series block 42000, School Matters. For example, file 42025-3 is Rice and Mud Lakes Agency (old agency code 25) – Tuition Payments for 1939-1949.

The First Series and the Thousand Series subject indexes are located in finding aid 10-376. Finding aid 10-96 provides additional detail about the subject-based file systems as well as research strategies for navigating them – see Appendix I.

Modified Duplex Numeric System

The modified duplex numeric system replaced the previous systems in 1950. File labels used a responsibility code which carried over from the subject based or duplex numeric system, along with an actual subject code.

In some cases, files in the older system were closed and new ones opened in the new system. In many other cases files were moved and reclassified. However, the files migrated in this way were not necessarily relabelled, so a search for specific files must take into account both the older and the newer file classification systems.

A sample file label is 157/25-1, where 157 identifies the agency (in this case, the Queen Charlotte Agency), and the second portion is the actual subject code (25-1 refers to Indian Education – General).

Finding aid 10-376 provides a subject index for this system as well as research strategies for navigating it – see Appendix I.

1966 Agency Renumbering

Responsibility centres (agencies and districts) were assigned new codes in 1966. This means that researchers need to include both the old the new agency code in their list of search terms if they are searching over a period of time that includes 1966.

For example, Simcoe Agency’s responsibility code changed from 24 to 475 in 1966. A researcher looking for Residential Schools records from Simcoe Agency over the period covering 1962-1968 will need to search under both codes.

A further series of reorganizations between 1966 and 1976 resulted in the merging of several agencies and districts. Some centres maintained their codes from 1966, while others acquired the codes of centres with which they merged.

Researchers should consult the responsibility centre code conversion lists in finding aid 10-376 to determine codes – see Appendix I.

Education District Codes

For a brief period of time during the use of the modified duplex numeric file system, “education districts” were established. This meant that school records were filed according to an education district code rather than the usual responsibility centre code. Accordingly, researchers should identify the relevant education district code and include this as a search term as well.

The education districts were soon abandoned and school records were again filed by responsibility centre code.

The education district code that was associated with each agency or district is listed on the responsibility centre code conversion list for 1966 in finding aid 10-376 – see Appendix I.

Block Numeric

This file system replaced the modified duplex numeric in the 1980s. It is organized by subject primary number, and uses secondary and tertiary numbers to specify types of records. The key to navigating this system is to understand how records were classified according to subject, and then to identify records within that subject block.

In some cases, files in the older system were closed and new ones opened in the new system. In many other cases files were moved and reclassified. However, the files migrated in this way were not necessarily relabelled, so a search for specific files must take into account both the older and the newer file classification systems.

Finding aid 10-376 provides an index to this system as well as research strategies for navigating it – see Appendix I.

School Files Series

Many records of residential schools can be found in this records series .

This series is actually a sub-series consisting of files dealing with all aspects of Indian school administration throughout Canada. It was one of the five subject-based classification systems outlined in the previous section. However, it was only in use for a short time and the file numbering is inconsistent. For that reason it is more useful to search these records by name of agency, district, or school.

Note that, although this sub-series contains only records relating to schools and education, not all departmental headquarters central registry files relating to schools and education for the years 1879-1953 are found in this sub-series. Researchers should consult other sub-series within the Central Registry System series for additional records relating to schools and education for that time period.

The School Files Series is listed in the on-line search tool, Archives Search (see section 5). In addition the microfilmed records in this series (the vast majority of them were microfilmed) are all also available on line.

The school files series is digitized. To consult the records first identify the reel on which the record is contained either by searching by keyword in Archives Search, or by narrowing your search by identifying the agency code and then using the reel index.

To locate the correct reel to consult, first search for the file you want to consult. Each file-level description refers to a reel number if it was microfilmed.

The digital versions are at: [<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/microform-digitization/006003-130-0002-e.html?PHPSESSID=e3rjdm072icr2nsl9rhg0134t3>].

Microfilmed copies are available on reels C-7909 to C-7963, C-8134 to C-8219, C-8639 to C-8803, and C-9801 to C-9811.

An alphabetical index of the *series* is available as the paper version of finding aid 10-17. An index to the *microfilm* by agency/district and school name is also in the same finding aid.

This information is also provided on the file-level description of the individual files in the School Files Series and on the introduction page of the digitized series.

Note: Those files which were restricted in their entirety at the time of microfilming were not filmed. Where only certain individual documents on a file were restricted, however, those restricted items were removed from the file to allow the filming of the open material. A flag inserted at the end of the open filmed portion of such files alerts users to the fact that the microfilm version is not the entire contents of the original file. This exempted material removed prior to filming has been retained with the original paper record in National Archives custody and can be consulted in accordance with the provisions of access to information and privacy legislation.

If the desired file is not on microfilm, it must be ordered according to the procedure outlined in section 6.

Finding Records

Finding Aids

Finding aids must be used in order to locate and order records for consultation. An understanding of the different forms they take is crucial.

Finding aids are created as research tools to better enable access to archival holdings. Finding aids may be either thematic guides to the records, or file lists indicating the contents of specific volumes, boxes, or containers of records.

Appendix I lists some of the most important finding aids that could be useful to a Residential Schools researcher.

Various finding aids for RG10 are available to researchers in either paper or electronic format. Finding aids exist in many different formats and can be organized in different ways. Flexibility is required in a research strategy.

Finding aids are mentioned by number (such as 10-376) in the online description of a series. The Finding aid is either electronic, or is on paper only. Paper copies of all finding aids, even those also available electronically, are stored in the consultation rooms at 395 Wellington Street.

Electronic

Electronic finding aids (which can be accessed in Archives Search) can be identified through searching by file number, title, etc. The drawback is that a too-wide search can yield too many results to effectively conduct research.

Paper

On the other hand, records not listed electronically can only be identified by consulting paper finding aids, particularly if records are created by regional offices and not headquarters, but also for some headquarters records.

If a finding aid is listed as paper, there are no file-level descriptions on line of the records in the boxes or volumes listed in that finding aid. Paper finding aids cannot be consulted on-line. They are available for consultation only on-site in the Reference Rooms at 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa, Ontario. However, researchers may obtain photocopies of relevant pages from these finding aids.

Some finding aids are restricted or severed due the possible presence of private information on the file list. More information on how to access these finding aids is provided in section 6.

Using Archives Search

Thorough and effective research often depends on knowing how to use the search tools available.

Developing Keywords

The first step to using Archives Search is to develop a list of possible search terms that are likely to return desired results.

First, gather as much information about the school and agency as possible.

Identify the **name of the school**, if not already known. Include alternate names and spellings for the name. For example, Sacred Heart Residential School was also known as Brocket Residential School. A list of schools can be found at the web site for the Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.

Consult the list of types of records in LAC's collection (see Appendix II) to determine **the type of document(s) most likely to contain the desired information**. For example, information about attendance is documented in specific types of records. If that is the research interest, the research strategy should be tailored accordingly.

Determine a **date range** for the search. The date range allows identification of the file classification system in use at the time (see section 3). Limiting the search to a date range also improves search results.


If possible, determine the **agency responsible for the school**. Using the school name and the date range as search terms in Archives Search may yield agency responsibility codes and file numbers that can be used in further searches.

Consider the result illustrated below from a keyword search for "Shubenacadie" AND "reports". The search indicates that at one point in time at least, Shubenacadie Residential School was administered by Shubenacadie Agency.

Use finding aids (see Appendix I) to find the agency or district **responsibility code**. Trace the agency using the thematic guides to determine if any changes to the school's administration took place over time. Consult the administrative history diagrams to see whether the agency's name changed at any point, or whether it was part of a merger or split. If an agency experienced a name change, or underwent a merge or split, files pertaining to the schools it administered may have been moved or relabelled.

The **File number** is also a useful search term. In the example, the file to which this record pertains was created between 1954 and 1967, when the modified duplex numeric filing system was in use. The file number 51/23-26 corresponds to Shubenacadie Agency – Quarterly Returns. The primary number in the file label (51) refers to the agency (Shubenacadie), the secondary number (23) refers to class of record (Reports and Returns) and the tertiary refers to the specific kind of record (Quarterly Return). (See section 3 for information on file classification systems and Appendix I for helpful finding aids.)

Searching “51/23” as File Number (selected from the drop down menu in Advanced Search) may now uncover similar files in Archives Search.

Description found in Archives	
Title	Shubenacadie Agency - Reports and Returns - Quarterly Returns Residential Schools - Shubenacadie Residential School. <div style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email this page • Link to this page • Copies and Reproductions </div>
Arrangement structure	 Show Arrangement Structure
File part of	Shubenacadie Agency [textual record] (R216-602-6-E)
Date(s)	1954-1967
Place of creation	No place, unknown, or undetermined
Extent	Inventory no.: 10-10
Conditions of access	<p>Documents textuels Textual records Microfilm reel C-15133 File no. (creator) Textual records Volume 8541 Former archival reference no.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">90NA: Open but not available 51/23-26 90NA: Open but not available RG10</p>
Finding aid no.	10-33
Source	Government
Other system control no.	FIND010/55457
MIKAN no.	2086388

Advanced Search

Search terminology enables a researcher to combine terms in a search or exclude a term from a search for greater specificity. There are three key terms that researchers should know how to use.

“**AND**” – If placed between two terms, **AND** will return all results which contain **both** specified terms. This strategy *will not* return any results that contain only one or the other term.

“**OR**” – If placed between two terms, **OR** will return all results which contain **at least** one of the specified terms. This strategy *will broaden* results. It is especially useful to account for variant spellings (e.g., St. Anthony’s OR Saint Anthony’s), or to run a search for a school which experienced a name change (e.g., Aklavik OR Immaculate Conception).

“**NOT**” – If placed between two terms, **NOT** will return all results that contain the first term **but not** the second. This strategy will *narrow* results.

“*” – The wildcard symbol “*” will broaden search results. Entering “M*Intosh” as a search term will return **both** “MacIntosh” and “McIntosh”. In this way researchers can control for any variant spellings. This term is also useful for words which may or may not be plural. “School*” returns results with both the word “School” and “Schools”. Similarly, “residen*” returns both “residential” and “residence”.

Using Limiters in Advanced Search

Advanced Archives Search enables the researcher to target a search with a great deal of specificity. There are a number of useful limiters that can refine search results, but it is important to use them properly.

There are three especially important fields in advanced search.

Select **Archival ref. number** from the drop-down menu and enter “RG10”. Records related to the “Indian and Inuit Affairs Program” (including most of the records related to Residential Schools) are within this Record Group (RG).

The screenshot shows the 'Archives Advanced Search' interface. On the left is a navigation menu with options: Introduction, Search All, Library Search, Archives Search, Basic, Advanced, Images, Ancestors Search, Website Search, Search Help, and Comments. Below the menu is a 'Proactive Disclosure' box. The main search area is titled 'Search' and 'Archives Advanced Search'. It contains several search fields: 'Search for:' with three input boxes (the first two are circled in red, containing 'file hills' and 'RG10'), 'Type of material:' (set to 'All'), 'Hierarchical level:' (set to 'All'), 'Date:' (set to 'after (YYYY-MM-DD)' with '1983-09-28' entered, circled in red), 'Online:' (set to 'All'), and 'Source:' (set to 'Government', circled in red). At the bottom, there is a 'Number of results:' field set to '10 results per page' and 'Submit' and 'Clear' buttons.

Limit search results to a period of time by using the **Date** field. Here, there are several options. A researcher can search for records with an exact date, before a specified date, after a specified date or between two specified dates. The illustration below uses a date limiter of “before” a certain date.

Finally, indicate the **Source** of desired results to be “Government”. Residential schools records are Government of Canada files, so it is useful to limit one’s search to only government records.

Consulting Records

Conditions of Access

Access to government records and finding aids is subject to provisions of the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act. Understanding how restrictions work is essential to conducting research.

The table below summarizes the conditions of access that may be assigned to a finding aid or a record, with implications for research. For finding aids, these conditions are listed next to the finding aid number on the online description of the records. For files, these conditions are listed at the series description, or at the box, volume, or file level of the online description of the record.

Do not be daunted by a closed record! Keep in mind that a closed record may be closed merely because no researcher has ever requested access, and so it has not yet been reviewed by Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) analysts.

Condition	Explanation
Open (code 90)	If a finding aid or a record is “open”, this means that it is open for public use and a researcher may freely consult the records without restriction.
Restricted (code 32)	If a finding aid or a record is “restricted”, this means that the record contains information that is not available to the public for legal reasons. The finding aid or record may include personal information that is protected by privacy legislation, for example.
Severed (code 66)	If a finding aid has been “severed”, this means that parts of the finding aid have been removed where there is restricted information that cannot be made publicly available. Restricted sections are severed so that the remainder of the finding aid can remain open for public use.

Even if finding aids or records are either restricted or severed, there are situations in which these records can still be consulted. Normally, a researcher will need to submit a formal Access to Information and Privacy request (ATIP). There are one or two exceptions. This procedure is detailed in the next section.

Requesting Restricted or Severed Records or Finding Aids

If the desired records are restricted, an application may be made to ATIP to access them. This may be done informally, which is faster, or formally, which may be required if an informal request does not yield the desired results.

ATIP Requests

Informal request: Records with access code 32 can be requested informally in the LAC consultation room at 395 Wellington St., Ottawa ON. Within a few days of the request, an ATIP analyst will review the file in question and, if it is readily apparent that the file can be opened, will change the code on the file and provide it to the researcher.

Formal request: If a fast review shows that the record contains information that should not be open, such as private information, a formal request is necessary. Formal requests may take several weeks to complete, depending on the number of files requested, complexity of the record, etc. Formal requests may be made at any point in the process.

Special Situations

If the research is being done by a first nation or band, or by a researcher on behalf of a first nation or band, the following clause in the *Privacy Act* may apply:

Disclosure of personal information

8. (1) Personal information under the control of a government institution shall not, without the consent of the individual to whom it relates, be disclosed by the institution except in accordance with this section.

Where personal information may be disclosed

(2) Subject to any other Act of Parliament, personal information under the control of a government institution may be disclosed

(k) to any Aboriginal government, association of Aboriginal people, Indian band, government institution or part thereof, or to any person acting on behalf of such government, association, band, institution or part thereof, for the purpose of researching or validating the claims, disputes or grievances of any of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada

If this applies to you, please consult an ATIP analyst on how to secure the required documentation to access the files in situations covered by this provision in the Act. Contact information and other ATIP-related information is available here: [\[http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/the-public/005-6010-e.html\]](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/the-public/005-6010-e.html).

Regional Holdings

Regional holdings present a unique challenge for consulting records. A visit to the regional centre itself may be required, and in some cases the records cannot be consulted directly but copies must be ordered. More detailed instructions regarding conducting research at the regional centres can be found here: [\[http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/the-public/005-3050-e.html\]](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/the-public/005-3050-e.html).

However, this is not the only option for consulting the desired records. If the specific records are known, then copies can be ordered provided the necessary ATIP restrictions and procedures have been met. The online order form for photocopies and reproductions is at: [\[https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/copies/secure/005010-5100-e.php\]](https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/copies/secure/005010-5100-e.php).

Accessing Records from Outside Ottawa

Researchers based outside Ottawa can either plan a trip to Ottawa, or access records from where they are, with some restrictions.

Planning a Trip to Ottawa

A trip to Ottawa will go best if records of possible relevance are identified in advance, and ordered in advance, using our web site. Information on how to do this is available here: [<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/the-public/005-4000-e.html>].

Accessing Records from Outside Ottawa

Many of our records are digitized, including the School Files Series. These records can be consulted on line.

Microfilm and published materials can be ordered through interlibrary loan.

For all other records, if there is good reason to believe the contents of a particular file will be of research value, copies can be ordered by following the instructions available here: [<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/copies/index-e.html>].

LAC's Collection

There are various kinds of records relating to Residential Schools in LAC's holdings, and it is useful to have a sense of what different records contain and what they do not in order to properly target one's research.

Researchers who are attempting to document a specific individual's attendance at a Residential School may be most interested in those records that contain names of students. These may include admission/discharge reports, various kinds of applications, nominal rolls, principal's monthly reports and quarterly returns. Researchers interested in the administration of the school may wish to consult such records as those documenting the establishment of the schools; school supplies, school buildings, etc.

On the other hand, researchers interested in the early history of the school system may need to consult the private holdings and other holdings of LAC.

There are also many non-textual records at LAC, such as photographs and films, which are relevant to research in this area. Maps can be useful for getting a sense of geographical relationships between Aboriginal groups, for instance. Non-textual records may or may not be segregated from textual records in the collection. Archives Search allows for a search by medium or format.

A selection, with brief descriptions, of the types of records to be found in the LAC collection, especially RG10; other government records; non-governmental and private records; and published materials and Published Heritage, are available in the appendices.

Other Sources

Aboriginal Sources

Many Aboriginal cultural centres and museums are excellent sources of records from an Aboriginal perspective. Some are listed at the end of the following guide for Aboriginal archives:

[Association of Canadian Archivists: Aboriginal Archives Guide](http://archivists.ca/sites/default/files/Attachments/Outreach_attachments/Aboriginal_Archives_English_WEB.pdf)

[http://archivists.ca/sites/default/files/Attachments/Outreach_attachments/Aboriginal_Archives_English_WEB.pdf]

[A directory of resources is available on the LAC web site](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/aboriginal/index-e.html)
[http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/aboriginal/index-e.html]

Here are a few examples of institutions with residential schools-related holdings:

[Shingwauk Project, Algoma University College](http://www.shingwauk.auc.ca)
[http://www.shingwauk.auc.ca]

[Secwepemc Archives, Kamloops, B.C.](http://secwepemc.org/museum/archives)
[http://secwepemc.org/museum/archives]

[Dene Nation Archives, Yellowknife, NWT](http://www.cylex.ca/company/dene-nation-library-archives-16638636.html)
[http://www.cylex.ca/company/dene-nation-library-archives-16638636.html]

[First Nations House of Learning, Xwi7xwa Library, University of British Columbia](http://www.library.ubc.ca/xwi7xwa/library.htm)
[http://www.library.ubc.ca/xwi7xwa/library.htm]

Provincial and Church Archives

Not all Residential Schools were operated by the government of Canada. Some were provincially run. For records of these schools researchers are advised to look in provincial or territorial archives, many of which have on-line search tools and databases describing their collections.

The various churches that ran Residential Schools also often have their own records of the schools. Many of these records are available to researchers. Some examples include:

[United Church Archives Network](http://www.united-church.ca/local/archives/using)
[http://www.united-church.ca/local/archives/using]

[Anglican Church Archives](http://www.anglican.ca/about/departments/gso/archives/archives-list.htm)
[http://www.anglican.ca/about/departments/gso/archives/archives-list.htm]

[Anglican \(Church of England\) – Archives in the Anglican Church of Canada](http://www.anglican.ca/about/departments/General-Secretary/archives/archives-list.htm)
[http://www.anglican.ca/about/departments/General-Secretary/archives/archives-list.htm]

[Presbyterian – Presbyterian Church in Canada: Archives and Records Office](http://www.presbyterianarchives.ca/)
[www.presbyterianarchives.ca/]

There are [many others archives, some of which are listed in the LAC directory](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/aboriginal/020008-110.01-e.php?q1=%22Archives%22&c1=contact_type_list_en&brws=1&brws_s=1&PHPSESSID=i1sp3bgd1eqbi0ljnnch573d63)
[http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/aboriginal/020008-110.01-e.php?q1=%22Archives%22&c1=contact_type_list_en&brws=1&brws_s=1&PHPSESSID=i1sp3bgd1eqbi0ljnnch573d63].

Researchers may also wish to contact church organizations directly for further information.

Appendix I: Selected Important Finding Aids for Research on Residential Schools

Title	Description
10-376 (HEADQUARTERS CENTRAL REGISTRY)	This is a paper finding aid which gives narrative explanations of the various filing systems used in the headquarters central registry between 1872 and 1950. For each filing system, it provides useful research strategies. Available in English only.
10-96 (HEADQUARTERS CENTRAL REGISTRY)	This is a paper finding aid which provides researchers with additional background on AANDC and its predecessors' central registry system. It can help researchers identify search terms for on-line research. Available in English only.
10-202 (BRITISH COLUMBIA)	This is a paper finding aid which lists changes in the administration of Indian agencies in British Columbia between 1875 and 1990. It also provides a brief administrative history of each agency. It can be used to identify the official name of an agency responsible for a particular area at a particular time. It is available in both English and French.
10-12 (WESTERN CANADA)	This paper finding aid lists changes in the administration of Indian agencies in Western Canada between 1871 and 1959. It also provides a brief administrative history of each agency. It can be used to identify the official name of an agency responsible for a particular area at a particular time. It is available in English only.
10-249 (QUEBEC)	This paper finding aid lists changes in the administration of Indian agencies in the province of Quebec between 1809 and 1971. It also provides a brief administrative history of each agency. It can be used to identify the official name of an agency responsible for a particular area at a particular time. It is available in French only.
10-475 (EASTERN CANADA)	This paper finding aid maps changes in the administration of Indian agencies in the Atlantic provinces on a timeline that covers 1871-1992. It also lists each change, and provides a brief administrative history of each agency. It can be used to identify the official name of an agency responsible for a particular area at a particular time. It is available in English only.

Title	Description										
10-145 (NOVA SCOTIA)	This paper finding aid maps changes in the administration of Indian agencies in the province of Nova Scotia on a timeline that covers 1871-1997. It also provides a brief administrative history of each agency. It can be used to identify the official name of an agency responsible for a particular area at a particular time. It is available in English only.										
10-157 (ONTARIO)	This paper finding aid lists changes in the administration of Indian agencies in the province of Ontario between 1809 and 1971. It also provides a brief administrative history of each agency. It can be used to identify the official name of an agency responsible for a particular area at a particular time. It is available in English only.										
10-640 ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY DIAGRAMS	<p>This paper finding aid consists of diagrams which depict the evolution of Indian Agencies on a timeline. It can be used to identify the official name of an Agency as well as predecessors or successors which may have been responsible for the records of that agency. These diagrams exist for:</p> <table data-bbox="607 1087 1214 1318"> <tbody> <tr> <td>British Columbia</td> <td>Quebec</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alberta</td> <td>Atlantic Canada</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Saskatchewan</td> <td>Nova Scotia</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Manitoba</td> <td>Northern Canada</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ontario</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	British Columbia	Quebec	Alberta	Atlantic Canada	Saskatchewan	Nova Scotia	Manitoba	Northern Canada	Ontario	
British Columbia	Quebec										
Alberta	Atlantic Canada										
Saskatchewan	Nova Scotia										
Manitoba	Northern Canada										
Ontario											

Appendix II: Some Types of Residential-Schools-Related AANDC Records

The following table provides brief descriptions of some of the various kinds of residential schools-related records in LAC's holdings of the records of AANDC. It is not an exhaustive list of all Residential Schools related records at LAC or elsewhere. These types can also be used as keywords to search for records in Archives Search.

Record	Description
Admission/Discharge Form	<p>Standard form completed monthly by the principal. Includes personal details of admitted or discharged students and a statement of the reason for a late admission or any discharge.</p> <p>Correspondence between parents, staff and/or the Department regarding admissions is also sometimes found on these files.</p>
Application for Admission	<p>Standard form includes personal details of the applicant, including Indian name and English name, age, band, identification of parents, statement about the applicant's health, religion, language, previous school attendance. Reverse of form includes details of a physical examination.</p>
Application for Educational Assistance	<p>Standard form submitted to the Department for financial assistance to offset the cost of education in extenuating circumstances. Includes basic information about the pupil, parent/guardian, and the superintendent's notes detailing any reasons for assistance. Also includes estimated amounts for compensation determined on a case-by-case basis.</p>
Application for Leave	<p>Correspondence between teaching staff and the Superintendent requesting temporary leave from teaching duties.</p>
Application, Employment	<p>Files include correspondence between prospective teachers and the Department (inquiries about vacancies, qualifications, working conditions); standard application form for teaching positions; explanations of classification of teaching staff.</p>

Record	Description
Audit Report	Completed annually to determine total actual operating cost of a given school. Reports were submitted so that schools could be reimbursed by the government up to an allowable amount. They include information about salaries (administrative, teaching, support), and expenditures for food, supplies, extracurricular activities, building repairs and maintenance, etc....
Building Maintenance (various)	Various types of records. Consists mostly of correspondence received by the superintendent regarding repairs to school properties. Other records include order forms for maintenance supplies, estimates for labour and material for specific repair projects, invoices for work completed. Architectural drawings, photographs may also be included. Inspection Reports are also useful as they include narrative statements about the physical condition of schools and recommendations for improvements where deemed necessary.
Daily Register	A list of names and attendance records of individual students, often by school, and then by class and/or year.
Death of Pupils in Residential Schools	Correspondence re: deaths of pupils; statements of the principal, attending physician and Indian Agent re: deaths of pupil; narrative accounts provided by witness of events leading to accidental deaths.
Inspection Report	Comprehensive report prepared by inspector. Includes a form for assessing the state of classrooms/learning environment, appearance of children, health/sanitation, and extracurricular activities, as well as a form for assessing the state of common facilities, grounds, supplies of water, electricity, teacher's residence etc.... The reports are narrative, and include sections for recommendations. Submission correspondence may be attached.

Record	Description
Medical Record	Receipts for prescription eye glasses, drugs and miscellaneous medical supplies for Residential School students; correspondence re: the medical/dental care of students between school administration, care providers and government officials.
Nominal Roll	A list of students by name enrolled in a school or in schools in a district or agency.
Principal's Monthly Report	Completed by the principal and submitted to government officials. Documents the names of resident students, their date of birth, band, grade and number of days in residence for the quarter.
Pupil Withdrawal Form	A form filled out by officials to document the withdrawal of a student from a school.
Quarterly Return	Contains names of students, information about their age, gender, band, grade level, class standing, date of school entrance and details about their attendance. Prepared by the principal, reviewed by the agent and submitted to government officials.
School Committees	Minutes from the meetings of school committees, which consist of teachers, administrators and families of students.
School Establishment	Report containing basic information about the initial establishment of a Residential School at a specific site.
School Supplies	Receipts for supplies and furnishings; correspondence between school administration/teaching staff and government officials re: requests for supplies.

Record	Description
Semi-Annual Report	Prepared by the superintendent. A narrative account of the operations of the Agency in general. A progress report on major projects. References to Residential School related matters may be included in the context of the Agency as a whole.
Staff Residences	Correspondence containing details about occupancy, maintenance, rental fees/accommodation deduction, amenities. Records include correspondence containing details about principal's residences. Architectural drawings may also be included.
Transportation of Students	Correspondence containing details about the transportation of students to and from Residential Schools. Includes trip details and invoices from service providers.
Training of Teachers	Correspondence documenting the ongoing training of Residential Schools teachers.

Appendix III: Other Government Records

The below table is a list of selected records from the other main groups of records related to Aboriginal Peoples in LAC's government records holdings: Northern Affairs; Administration Program files of AANDC; and Citizenship and Immigration, which was the parent department of "Indian Affairs" until the 1960s. There are many other examples. For instance, some records of interest may be contained in records dealing with Aboriginal health services, and indeed in many other record groups and records of government departments another than AANDC. For these related records, consult reference archivists, and use the on line search tools.

Reference number and title of collection	Types of records	Some examples of volumes or files
RG22, Administration Program, AANDC	Deputy Minister's records and some Central Registry files, 1922-1983 Funding, curriculum and administration of Indian schools	Vols. 330-442, 496-97, and 632-669 and accessions 1983-84/231 and 1983-84/247
RG85, Northern Affairs Program	Inuit and Indian social and economic conditions, general, after 1920. Includes schools	Vols. 567-613, 614-669, 1129-1130
	Native education. General files, including records on policy, funding of church and territorial schools, curriculum, and files relating to specific schools, c.1906 ff. see also liaison files with the individual churches	Vols. 535-546, 641-646, 1130, 1260-61, 1339, 1434; accession 1985-86/220
	The "Eskimo Book of Wisdom", c. 1930-46. [developed for and used in northern schools]	Vols. 1131, 1339
RG26 Indian Affairs Branch Solicitor's Files	Lawyers' working files on a wide variety of legal and policy issues, c. 1945-66. These include drafting regulations on Indian schools and estates.	Vol. 70
RG 91, Yukon Territorial Government	Schools for Aboriginal people funded by the Department of Indian Affairs, 1926-48.	Vol. 9 file 1491A, vol. 11 file 2335 (reels M-2834/35) and vol. 74 file 79 (reel M-2882)

Appendix IV: Non-Governmental Records

The range of records from non-governmental sources held by LAC includes not only the private or personal textual records accumulated by individuals and corporate bodies but also drawings, photographs, maps, sound recordings and other audio-visual recordings. The creators of these records include missionaries and teachers, bishops and nuns, RCMP and military officers, and government officials who compiled private diaries, albums of drawings and photographs, and other records, during or after their service at or visits to Residential Schools. Broadcasters compiled radio and television or cinematic documentaries about the schools.

Missionaries and religious communities sought both to evangelize and to educate. The Ursuline order of nuns, for example, focused on the education of both French and Aboriginal girls. Their earliest efforts to bring literacy to Aboriginal peoples focused on translating devotional works and sending promising youths to church-run schools in towns, then to fostering the establishment of “mission schools” in Aboriginal communities.

LAC holds microfilm copies of records preserved in private and official archives in England and France, as well as Canada. Those archives may set access restrictions on the microfilm reels. The finding aids vary in level of detail, often specifying little more than names of the mission and missionary, plus the dates for journals, reports and correspondence.

The table below illustrates the range of records in LAC holdings: the major missionary societies and selected private individuals. Note that photographs and drawings, maps and plans, sound-recordings and other audio-visual materials may be described as part of a fonds or series, or as a separate collection.

In addition to these few examples, researchers interested in the very earliest history of Aboriginal education in Canada should look in the other LAC collections of church and missionary societies, such as Séminaire de Saint-Sulpice, Oblats-de-Marie-Immaculée, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Methodist Missionary Society, Wesleyan Methodist Missionary society, New England Company, and Moravian Brethren. Individuals’ private records may also be of some use, such as those of Reverend James Hunter, William Duncan, and photo albums such as those in the Simeon H. Parsons Collection.

Access restrictions on records in the private collections differ from those placed on government records. Restrictions may be in place because a records donor placed them there, for instance. Restrictions vary from collection to collection. For an explanation of how to access these records, consult a reference archivist.

Reference number	Collection title and details	Finding aid
MG 17, B 2	Church Missionary Society [Anglican] – microfilm and microfiche copies of headquarters correspondence and accounts, reports and journals from mission posts, and letters sent to the missionaries across North America	MSS Finding Aid 23
MG 17, B 4	Colonial and Continental Church Society [Anglican] – microfilm copies of minutes, reports, publications and other records of the CCCS and predecessors	MSS Finding Aid 40
MG 29, D 53	Reverend Allen Salt - Methodist missionary, after teaching at Alderville Industrial School - Journals kept 1854-1855 and 1874-1899 at various missions.	Shelf list prefaces microfilm reel C-15709
R10873	Tamarack Productions fonds – Audio, video and associated textual records relating to “As Long as the River Flows” documentary on Aboriginal education, with interviews with children who attended Kamloops Indian Residential Schools and with Aboriginal educators	Finding aid is electronic; individual items described on line and linked to fonds
MG 31, D 153	Joseph Vincent Jacobsen and family fonds – textual records, photographs, audio reels and audio discs and 1 film reel - accumulated by Joseph Jacobson during his career, notably as Superintendent of Education in the Northwest Territories, 1951-1960	MSS Finding Aid 1496
R12036	Marg and Roy Hall fonds, 1960-1964, 1970 – textual and photographic records relating to Old Crow School, Yukon	Finding aid is electronic; individual items described on line and linked to fonds
MG 27, ID10 (R-4037)	David Laird – Served as Minister of the Interior, 1873-1876; Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories, 1876-1881; and Indian Commissioner for the North-West Territories, Manitoba and Keewatin, 1898-1914.	No finding aid

Reference number	Collection title and details	Finding aid
MG 26, A (R-4505)	Sir John A. Macdonald - Served as Superintendant General of Indian affairs, 1878-1887 (Minister of the Interior, 1878-1883, and Privy Council 1883-1887).	Finding aid MSS 104
MG 29, E 106	Hayter Reed – Served as Indian Agent for Battleford District in 1881; Assistant Commissioner for the North West Territories in 1884, Commissioner in 1888 and Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs in 1893.	Finding aid MSS 1394
MG 27, IC4 (R-4505)	Edgar Dewdney - Served as Indian commissioner for Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, 1879-1888; Lieutenant-Governor of the Northwest Territories, 1881-1888; Minister of the Interior and Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, 1888-1892.	Finding aid MSS 56 (electronic)
MG 27, ID6 (R-4035)	Thomas Mayne Daly - Served as Minister of the Interior and Superintendant General of Indian Affairs, 1892-1896.	No finding aid
MG 27, IID15 (R-7693)	Clifford Sifton – Served as Minister of the Interior and Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, 1896-1905.	Finding aid MSS 136 (electronic)

Photographs and maps

There are many photographs and maps spread throughout the LAC collection. Specific examples of interest include:

RG85, Accession # 2003-02187-6, 1973-357 NPC, Northwest Territories and Yukon Branch: Photographs

R8236-0-7-E, David Ewens collection – Indian Industrial Schools Album

R13144-0-2-E, Ryan Swain Family Fonds (images from St. Paul's Residential School, Aklavik and Herschel Island, NWT)

Appendix V: Published Materials and Published Heritage

Published Heritage

Library and Archives Canada's published collection includes the largest collection of publications by and about Aboriginal peoples of Canada. These publications date back hundreds of years; from early rare Aboriginal language dictionaries to recently published works on current Aboriginal issues.

The Aboriginal collection includes over 50 Canadian Aboriginal serials, newspapers and newsletters, including many now available on-line. Within this large collection, hundreds of publications can be found which include information on the subject of Aboriginal residential schools. They range in scope from publications of Canadian government departments to publications of individual residential schools to over a dozen film documentaries.

A highlight of the Aboriginal published collection is the Canadian Indian Rights collection which includes documents such as theses, manuscripts, official documents, research papers and other published and non-published materials relevant to Aboriginal claims and rights.

The majority of the publications can be found through the Amicus on-line catalogue: [<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/lac-bac/search-recherche/lib-bib.php?Language=eng>].

This online catalogue also lists titles on the subject held at other major libraries in Canada.

Titles at LAC can be accessed through interlibrary loan. Service copies of titles in the Library and Archives' collections can normally be borrowed on interlibrary loan by making arrangements with a local public or university library. Details about the LAC's interlibrary loan services can also be found on the LAC Web site at: [www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/ill/index-e.html].

For information on the Indian Rights Collection please contact reference services at: [<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/the-public/005-2021-e.php>].

Other Published Sources

A bibliography of published sources (books, articles, etc.) was produced by LAC as part of the exhibit *Where are the Children? Healing the Legacy of the Residential Schools*, produced by the National Archives of Canada, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation and the Aboriginal Healing Charitable Association in collaboration with the National Library of Canada, numerous church and other archives presented at the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa from June 18, 2002 to February 3, 2003. The bibliography is on our web site and can be found here: [<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/native-residential/index-e.html>].

Annual statistical and informational charts on Indian schools have been published in the DIA (Department of Indian Affairs – old name for AANDC) Annual Reports from c. 1864 to the present, with some related financial records in the Annual Reports of the federal Auditor General. Also published in the DIA annual Reports were detailed reports on individual school (1881/82 and c. 1888/89 to 1915/16) and reports of the Superintendent of Indian Education (1910-1916; thereafter summaries were published in the DSGIA's Report, printed with the Annual Report).

These reports are available on line at:

[<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/index-e.html>].

One other significant source is the database at Canadiana [www.canadiana.org], which contains over 3 million documents and counting. Parliamentary papers, DIA annual reports, and many other documents of interest are online and searchable by key-words.

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