



## ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES

*Gaa kina gwii waabamaa debwewin - All those who seek the truth*

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Lawyers for the families of six of the seven youth who were the subject of the First Nations Youth Inquest in Thunder Bay from October 2015 to June 2016 today issued their fifth annual report card updating the progress made meeting the inquest jury's 145 recommendations.

Jonathan Rudin and Caitlyn Kasper of Aboriginal Legal Services and counsel for the families of Jethro Anderson, Reggie Bushie, Robyn Harper, Kyle Morrisseau, Paul Panacheese and Jordan Wabasse gave an overall grade of A- for the efforts made in the fifth year to implement the jury's recommendations. This grade is up from C+ in Year One and a B+ in 2020.

In addition to providing an overall grade, each of the parties were graded as well. This year three parties saw their grades improve from last year: Canada from C+ to B-; the City of Thunder Bay from B to A-; and Nishnawbe Aski Nation from B+ to A-. The other four parties saw their grades stay the same: Ontario B-; Matawa Learning Centre A+; Northern Nishnawbe Education Council and Dennis Franklin Cromarty A+; and Keeywaytinook Okimakanak A+.

As has been the case since the Year Two Report Card, the Thunder Bay Police Service (TBPS) was not given a final grade. An evaluation of the TBPS' response to the report of the Office of the Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD) in Broken Trust - released in December 2018 - should be completed next year and at that point, the decision about giving a grade to the TBPS will be reassessed. The work done by the TBPS on the recommendations is still factored into the overall grade for the year.

Of the grades Jonathan Rudin said: "It is certainly a good sign that the overall grade has improved from last year and that no party's grade dropped. There is no question that everyone who was involved in the inquest understands how important this work is."

Caitlyn Kasper, who has been in contact with the families, said: "Progress on the remaining recommendations will be hard but they are crucial to actually getting to a place where all First Nations Youth in the north have a chance for a real

education. Families need education options that do not require their children to go to Thunder Bay for high school.”

All grades were based on reports filed by the parties with the Office of Chief Coroner with regard to their progress on meeting the recommendations. A mathematical formula was created to determine the grades. All the material used to compile the grades and the grade calculations, including those for the TBPS, can be found at Aboriginal Legal Services’ website - <https://aboriginallegal.ca/resources/first-nations-youth-inquest>.

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