



ANNUAL REPORT

2023 - 2024

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NOVEMBER 2024



LETTER FROM THE SECRETARIAT LEAD

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff at Survivors' Secretariat, I am pleased to present our 2023/2024 annual report, covering April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.

This year marks the completion of our first three years of funding, during which we've made significant progress in our mission to Bring the Children Home. We know, however, there is still a great deal of work ahead of us in both our investigative work and in securing funding to ensure the truth is told within the lifetimes of our remaining Survivors.

In our first three years of work, we've identified over 48 archives with more than 20,000 relevant records. We have purchased and applied various technologies including Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) to scan more than 11 acres. We have collaborated with Survivors and a variety of experts to develop a comprehensive approach to our research, document collection, and ground search efforts. Our team has been actively participating in knowledge-sharing events and hosting gatherings to foster collaboration among Survivors. We have also been able to hold Fireside Chats across several communities, creating spaces for Survivors to share, reconnect, and heal.

Over the past year, we completed the initial stage of data collection on the grounds of His Majesty's Royal Chapel of the Mohawks, enabling us to gather and analyze comparative GPR data from a known graveyard. We were also able to travel to England in October to access critical records at national archives, thanks to the support of the Jays Care Foundation. Additionally, we were able to begin Phase One of developing our searchable database which will eventually connect families with information about their loved ones.

Despite our progress, funding challenges remain significant. Last Fall we began to get a sense of a shifting landscape when it came to the ongoing level of federal funding. This uncertainty has forced us to halt two major projects to maintain core operations. Seven months into the current fiscal year, we still await federal funding and have relied on reallocated resources from paused projects to continue operating.

We hope Canada will restore essential funding to the Residential Schools Missing Children Community Support Fund. Until then, we'll continue to operate to the best of our abilities, advocating for the answers Survivors deserve.

As always, in good medicine,

Laura Arndt

Laura Arndt, Secretariat Lead



LAURA ARNDT

Secretariat Lead



OVERVIEW OF FUNDING CUTS

The 2023/2024 fiscal year marks the end of the 3-year “Residential Schools Missing Children Community Support Fund,” which allocated \$216.5 million to 142 communities across Canada. Survivors’ Secretariat received \$10.3 million from this fund for 2021-2024, which amounts to approximately 70% of overall funding.

With the end of this initial funding period approaching, the Secretariat submitted a new 3-year funding application in October 2023. However, seven months into the fiscal year, the status of this application remains unknown.

Timeline of Federal Funding Cuts

- **October 2023:** 3-year application submitted to Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC).
- **February 2024:** CIRNAC advised a new funding cap of \$3 million per year, with funds delayed until July 2024, citing the need to wait for 2024 Federal Budget.
- **April 2024:** The Secretariat opposed the funding cap in a letter to government officials, citing a larger scope of work.
- **July 2024:** Canada announced a \$500,000 per community cap with a national allocation of \$91 million over two years. *This cap would have resulted in an 86% reduction to the Survivors’ Secretariat’s federal operating budget.*
- **August 2024:** The funding ceiling was raised back to \$3 million per community, yet the national budget remained \$91 million over two years.

Operational Adjustments

To continue core activities, the Secretariat paused the Mohawk Village Memorial Park installation and Data Sovereignty projects, reallocating remaining 2021-2024 funds to sustain key operations including human rights monitoring and seasonal ground search activities (May - October 2024).

Current Situation (as of October 2024)

Seven months into the fiscal year, the Secretariat has received no new federal funding and continues operating on carry-over funds from paused projects.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Survivors' Secretariat is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of seven Survivors of the Mohawk Institute. Member terms are for three years and extend from April 2021 - March 2025.



Tony Bomberly

Turtle Clan, Cayuga Nation



Sherlene Bomberly

Wolf Clan, Cayuga Nation



John Elliot

Wolf Clan, Mohawk Nation



Dawn Hill

Turtle Clan, Mohawk Nation



Diane Hill

Turtle Clan, Mohawk Nation



Geronimo Henry

Bear Clan, Cayuga Nation



Roberta Hill

Turtle Clan, Mohawk Nation



OUR VALUES



Survivor-Led

The Survivors' Secretariat was established by a dedicated group of Survivors from the Mohawk Institute. As a not-for-profit organization, we are led by a Board of Directors made up of Survivors. Our governance structure empowers the Secretariat Lead to ensure that all of our work aligns with the priorities laid out by our Survivor Group.

Community-Involved

The significance of our work is rooted in truth-telling and healing, starting with family and community. We prioritize having Intergenerational Survivors and community members from Six Nations of the Grand River Territory and other communities affected by the Mohawk Institute lead our efforts.

As a Secretariat, we collaborate with Survivors to guide discussions about the history and truth of the Mohawk Institute. We achieve this by organizing gatherings, Survivor Group meetings, and welcoming guests from impacted communities. One of our goals is to unite Survivors, community members, and youth throughout our work whenever possible.

Trauma-Informed

The Survivors' Secretariat is committed to taking a trauma-informed approach in fulfilling our mandate and achieving our four core objectives: Document Collection, Ground Search, Commemoration, and Advocacy. Our aim is to create a supportive environment where each Survivor can share their truth or bear witness to the truth-telling of the children who attended the Mohawk Institute. This journey belongs to the Survivors, and we are here to provide support as they choose their path forward.



MOHAWK INSTITUTE

INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

Opened: 1831 **Closed:** June 27, 1970 **Location:** 184 Mohawk St. Brantford, ON

- Previously opened as the Mohawk Mechanical Institute for Boys by the New England Company (under the Anglican Church) in 1828.
- The Canadian Government assumed management of the Institute in 1922, however Anglican influence was still asserted over the school's operations until its closure.
- Over 600 acres associated with the former Institute including the grounds of His Majesty's Royal Chapel of the Mohawks, where the children were made to attend church.
- Known as the longest running Indian Residential School in Canada.
- More than 15,000 Indigenous children were estimated to have attended from over 20 Indigenous communities. *The number of communities with children sent to the Mohawk Institute has dramatically increased to more than 60 different communities and two geographic regions (James Bay and Hudson Bay).**
- The farthest a child was recorded to have travelled to the Mohawk Institute was from Saddle Lake First Nation, 3,137 km away.

*As of March 31, 2024



OUR MISSION

The Survivors' Secretariat was established in 2021 to organize and support efforts to uncover, document, and share the truth about what happened at the Mohawk Institute during its 140+ years of operation.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

To download our Audited Financial Statements for 2023-2024, scan the QR code to visit our website.



The Survivors' Secretariat began the work of *Bringing the Children Home* in the Spring of 2021. The Secretariat was approved for an initial federal funding package of \$10.3 million over three years (2021-2024) and has received supplementary funding from the Province of Ontario and the Law Foundation of Ontario.

Additional revenues are received through incurred interest payments, other income, and donations.

2023-2024 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Revenue	\$4,468,262
Expenses	\$4,392,652
Excess over Expenses	\$75,610

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

REVENUE

The Organization follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Restricted contributions, if any, are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenditures are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount can reasonably be estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Donations are allocated to the purpose to which they related. If the contributor makes no designation they are allocated to general purpose revenue. Grants are recognized in the period in which the related project occurs. Grants are recorded as income when the corresponding conditions of the funds received are met or the period for which the funds are designated. Interest income is recorded as earned.

Revenue	2023-2024	2022-2023	2021-2022 (243 days)
Grants - Federal	\$3,549,405	\$1,998,386	\$450,059
Grants - Provincial	\$590,312	\$570,853	\$790,955
Grants - NIB Trust Fund	-	\$196,894	-
Amortization Related to Capital Assets	\$78,863	\$65,429	\$45,969
Grants - The Law Foundation of Ontario	\$70,208	-	-
Donations	\$46,704	\$34,058	\$1,812
Other Income	\$49,533	\$196	-
Interest	\$83,237	\$25,817	-
TOTAL	\$4,468,262	\$2,891,633	\$1,288,795



PRIMARY REVENUE SOURCES

The Organization received approximately 80.63% (2023 - 70.50%) of its funding from The Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) and 13.75% (2023 - 20.58%) of its funding from the Province of Ontario (Minister of Indigenous Affairs) in 2023-2024.

The organizations ongoing existence is dependent upon continued funding by the aforementioned agencies.

Subsequent to year end, the Organization has not yet finalized a funding agreement from the Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (See note 15) or from the Province of Ontario.

ASSETS

The Survivors' Secretariat has capital assets which are amortized over the lifetime of the asset (see note 5). These include Leaseholder Improvements (\$120,712), Sonar Equipment (\$128,171), Computer Equipment (\$95,922), Security System (\$8,327).

The Secretariat also has intangible assets (see note 6) that include Phase One of the database development (\$989,800).

LIABILITIES

The Survivors' Secretariat's current liabilities include Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities (\$126,199) as well as Deferred Revenue (\$4,799,721) and Deferred Capital Contributions related to Capital Assets (\$1,152,670) and Unrestricted Net Assets or Donations (\$111,042). Liabilities total \$6,189,632 which accounts for all assets.

Assets	2023-2024	2022-2023	2021-2022
Cash (Note 3)	\$2,437,924	\$4,460,931	\$664,430
Grant Receivable	\$1,330,879	\$100,000	\$2,499,750
Loan Receivable	\$30,000	\$50,000	-
Government Receivable	\$59,001	\$15,229	-
Prepaid Expense	\$1,179,157	\$1,268,611	\$22,957
Capital Assets (Note 5)	\$162,871	\$201,430	\$208,479
Intangible Assets (Note 6)	\$989,800	\$89,800	\$25,200
Total	\$6,189,632	\$6,186,001	\$3,420,816

Deferred Revenue	2023-2024	2022-2023	2021-2022
Deferred Grant Revenue, Beginning of the Year	\$5,739,478	\$1,979,089	-
Net Grant Received/Receivable	\$4,210,473	\$6,649,501	\$3,499,750
Total	\$9,949,951	\$8,628,590	\$3,499,750
Grants Utilized in the Year	(\$5,150,230)	(\$2,889,112)	\$1,520,661
Deferred Grant Revenue	\$4,799,721	\$5,739,478	\$1,979,089

DEFERRED REVENUE

The Survivors' Secretariat has made a request to both Canada and Ontario to defer any unused funding to 2024-2025 fiscal year. The need to move funding forward was, in part, due to the Secretariat's inability to directly access funding until the Fall of 2022. This funding appears in Deferred Revenue (See note 7) of the audit.



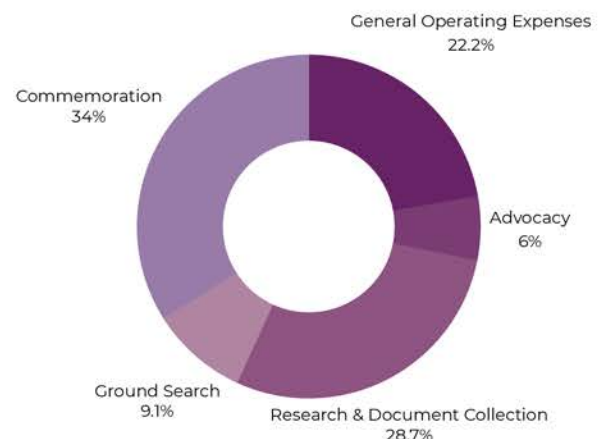
CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS EXPENSES

The Survivors' Secretariat expenses have risen in the past year with the most notable increase to Outreach & Engagement, Meeting & Hospitality, and Administration & Staffing. This is partly due to the growing number of communities impacted by the Mohawk Institute.

Expense Category	2023-2024	2022-2023	2021-2022 (243 days)
Outreach & Engagement Costs	\$700,214	\$444,847	\$160,793
Meetings & Hospitality	\$751,320	\$303,112	\$43,965
Occupancy Costs	\$98,422	\$72,242	\$1,472
Office	\$136,267	\$27,905	\$9,829
Administration & Staffing	\$1,018,620	\$486,038	\$134,051
Travel & Accommodation	\$89,876	\$18,461	\$8,198
Equipment & Rental	-	\$14,927	\$59,830
Vendor Contract Services	\$1,457,753	\$1,425,052	\$822,876
Amortization Expense	\$78,863	\$65,429	\$45,969
Ground Search Expenses	\$61,317	-	-
TOTAL	\$4,392,652	\$2,858,013	\$1,286,983
Excess Revenue over Expenses	\$75,610	\$33,620	\$1,812

EXPENSES OVER 3 -YEARS

The Survivors' Secretariat expenses total have amounted to \$8,537,648 over the past three years, with \$2,454,178 spent on General Operating Expenses; \$1,011,250 on Ground Search; \$3,174,321 on Research & Documentation Collection; \$3,767,389 on Commemoration; and \$668,404 on Advocacy.



STANDING WITH SURVIVORS

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff of the Survivors' Secretariat and Survivors, we want to extend our gratitude and collective good medicine to the many people and organizations who have made financial and/or in-kind contributions in 2023/2024. We are honoured that you have joined us in the work, and we hope you will continue to be part of our efforts to Bring the Children Home.

Standing with Survivors 2023-2024

- Jays Care Foundation
- Six Nations of the Grand River
- Law Foundation of Ontario
- COBS Bread, Brantford, ON
- The University of Guelph
- The City of Brantford
- Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
- Government of Ontario
- Conseil scolaire catholique Providence
- The Merry Dairy Inc.
- The Running Works
- Union of Ontario Indians
- Nighthawk Security





A YEAR IN REVIEW



NIA:WEN TO OUR TEAM

Without the support of our dedicated staff, expert advisors and consultant services we would not be able to further this difficult work. We are thankful for the continue support from our allied organizations that allow us to access the lands associated with the Mohawk Institute.

THANK YOU TO THE DEDICATED STAFF 2023-2024

- Ashly Monture, Manager of Outreach & Engagement
- Misty Ladd, Community Outreach & Engagement Worker
- Joslyn Jamieson, Manager, Ground Search
- Eric Patterson, Ground Search Coordinator
- Jesse Squire, Ground Search Analyst Coordinator
- Abby Carpenter, System Navigator
- Shelley Clarke, Cultural/Spiritual Wellness
- Tania Jonathan, Cultural Wellness Support
- Treyton Squire, Office Manager
- Kiko Jacobs, Administration
- Liviu Georgescu, Director IT
- Laura Arndt, Secretariat Lead

EXPERT ADVISORS

- Dr. Bevely Jacobs, Human Rights Monitor
- Peter Schuler, Cultural Advisor
- Mark Pritchard, Investigative Advisor
- Scott Robertson, Government Liaison
- Dr. Scott Hamilton, Archeological Panel
- Tanya Hill-Montour, Archeological Panel
- Ed Eastaugh, Archeological Panel

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Know History Historical Services
- Animikii
- The Albert Group
- Fluid Consulting

ALLIED ORGANIZATIONS

- Mohawk Village Memorial Park
- Woodland Cultural Centre
- City of Brantford
- Six Nations of the Grand River
- Mohawk Chapel



April

- Secretariat Board and Staff celebrate Blanche Hill-Easton's 90th birthday at the office.
- Survivors' Secretariat's GPR team undergo drone training and certification.
- Survivors' Secretariat Staff attend the Indigenous Knowledge Gathering with Tom Porter at Six Nations Polytechnic.

May

- Ground search officially opens for the 2023 season.
- The Multijurisdictional Police Task Force (MJPTF) assist to lay search grids at the Mohawk Chapel.
- Survivors' Secretariat participates in Six Nations Community Awareness Week, inviting guests to stop by for soup and scone and to learn more about the work of the Secretariat.
- Youth Supporting Survivors Program begins and training is conducted by Archeological Panel members Ed Eastaugh and Milad Malekzadeh on how to use survey and GPR equipment.

June

- Secretariat Board and staff travel to the Indigenous History & Heritage Gathering hosted by the NCTR and the First Nations Confederacy of Cultural Education Centres.
- The Second Annual Survivors of the Mohawk Institute Gathering takes place from June 27 - 29 at the Gathering Place by the Grand and Chiefswood Park. This year's gathering was attended by approximately 100 Survivors from 17 impacted communities across Canada.
- Survivors of the Blue Quills (Sacred Heart) Residential School located in Alberta travel to Ontario and take part in an evening event with board members and staff. All Survivors are able to exchange insights, and discuss the vital work carried out by the Secretariat and the Acimowin Opaspiw Society.





July

- Survivors attend the 2023 Weengushk International Film Festival, a non-profit Indigenous run independent film festival on Manitoulin Island in Northern Ontario featuring award winning filmmakers and Indigenous leaders, to promote the Nature of Healing.

August

- The Youth Supporting Survivors Program wraps with a total of 66 grids searched.
- Survivors' Secretariat Board and attend the Annual Gathering for Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association (CSAA) in Sault Ste Marie.



September

- Memorial 96 was launched for the first time - a display of 96 feathers arranged in two hearts, as a memorial to the 96 known students who died while attending the Mohawk Institute.
- Secretariat Board and Staff attend the OSI Gathering in Montreal on Supporting the Search and Recovery of Missing Children.
- Jays Care Foundation act as the anchor support for the Secretariat's first Orange Shirt Day Campaign.
- Secretariat Board and Staff visit Iroquois Lodge to hand out Orange Shirts to residents.
- Secretariat Board and Staff visit Blue Quills First Nation to attend the Acimowin Opaspiw Society, Investigation Methodologies National Symposium.



October

- Survivors' Secretariat Staff host a pumpkin giveaway on National Pumpkin Day encouraging families to get together to talk about the impact of Residential Schools.
- Survivors' Secretariat's Outreach and Wellness Teams host the first Fireside Chat at the Best Western in Brantford to create a space for Survivors to share with one another.
- Laura Arndt, Secretariat Lead, Roberta Hill, Board Member, Beth Sollis, Researcher, Jennifer Bate, Researcher, and Mark Pritchard, Investigator, travel to England to access records and documents at the Palace Archives at Lambeth Library, the Metropolitan Library and the National Archives.

November

- Ground search officially closes for the 2023 season.
- Survivors' Secretariat hosts the Knowledge is Sacred, Truth is Healing Gathering in Thunder Bay.
- Survivors' Secretariat Board and Staff participate in the Six Nations 35th Annual Santa Clause Parade.
- On November 30, Survivors' Secretariat celebrates its second year anniversary as an incorporated entity.

December

- Survivors' Secretariat hosts the Annual General Meeting for the 2022/2023 Fiscal Year. This includes a presentation thanking donors for "Standing with Survivors."
- Survivors' Secretariat's Wellness Team travel to Walpole Island to talk with the community about commemoration.
- Survivors' Secretariat staff end the year off with a celebratory lunch before the holidays began.





January

- Survivors' Secretariat Board and Staff travel to the Iqaluit for the OSI Gathering - Northern Voices.
- The Gary Miller Documentary begins filming at Woodland Cultural Centre.
- Secretariat Lead, Laura Arndt and Board Member Roberta Hill travel to Ottawa for a strategy meeting with partner Know History.
- The Ground Search team travel to Thunder Bay for Ground Search Training.
- Survivors' Secretariat Staff host a Winter Wellness Fair at Six Nations Community Hall.

February

- The Outreach Team attends the Six Nations Job Fair as recruitment begins for the 2024 Youth Supporting Survivors Program.
- Secretariat Lead, Laura Arndt attends the Graves and Legislative Policy Conference in Winnipeg.
- Survivors' Secretariat Board and Staff attend the NAN Gathering in Thunder Bay.

March

- Survivors' Secretariat Board and Staff attend the Never Ever Forget Me Gathering, hosted by Chippewa of the Thames First Nation, in London, ON.
- Survivors' Secretariat Board and Staff attend a screening of "The Nature of Healing" in Windsor, ON, followed by a private tour of the Art Gallery of Windsor. Post-tour, Survivors attended an exclusive art presentation by Indigenous artist, Moses Lunham.





OUR FOUR PILLARS



FULFILLING OUR MANDATE

To fulfill our mandate the Survivors' Secretariat's work focuses primarily on Document Collection and Ground Search initiatives, which involve extensive archival research, as well as the processing, storage, and analysis of gathered data.

Additionally, our work encompasses Commemoration and Advocacy activities associated with Bringing the Children Home.

Scan the QR code to subscribe to our newsletter to stay up to date on the Survivors' Secretariat.



The Secretariat remains committed to Survivors and we are extremely grateful for their guidance as we continue our investigation into missing children and unmarked burials associated with the Mohawk Institute.



DOCUMENT COLLECTION



4 DEATHS

New deaths identified raising Known Deaths to 100



350 CHILDREN

New children documented to have attended the Mohawk Institute raising Known Children to 4,950



1,400 RECORDS

Additional records and/or documents reviewed raising documents reviewed to over 20,000

As of March 31, 2024



One of the Secretariat's main objectives is to access and obtain all information, documentation, and records related to children who were taken to the Mohawk Institute. Through their partner, Know History, the Secretariat has seen a steady increase in identifying students who attended the Mohawk Institute, as well as the number of students known to have died while associated with the Mohawk Institute.

In October 2023, Secretariat Lead, Laura Arndt, and Board Member Roberta Hill traveled to England to access additional records and documents. These records and documents have been reviewed and tagged with the intent to compile them all into a searchable community database. All records will be held by the Secretariat, ensuring access remains in the hands of Survivors, their families and communities.



COMMEMORATION

Through our work, we are committed to commemorating the lives and legacies of those who never returned home and honouring the resilience of those who survived. By creating dedicated spaces to house and safeguard these memories, we hope to provide a place for remembrance, healing, and reflection—a place where stories will be preserved, voices will be heard, and future generations can learn from and honour this vital history.



Survivors' Secretariat Outreach Team worked diligently to grow the contact list of Survivors of the Mohawk Institute, engaging the help of other Survivors to reach out on the Secretariat's behalf, encouraging them to share the work of the Secretariat with their contacts. The Secretariat hosted two gatherings in 2023 - the first being on Six Nations, the Second Annual Survivors of the Mohawk Institute Gathering, which hosted approximately 200 guests with over 100 Survivors attending from 17 communities impacted by the Mohawk Institute. The second gathering, Knowledge is Sacred, Truth is Healing, was held in Thunder Bay, this gathering focused on healing and wellness, with a large emphasis on youth participation.



GROUND SEARCH



66 GRIDS

Scanned using Ground Penetrating Radar



1.6 ACRES

Scanned on and around the Mohawk Chapel graveyard



8 STUDENTS

Trained to conduct ground search through the Youth Support Survivors summer employment program

As of March 31, 2024



The 2023 ground search season ran from May to October; with the search moving from the grounds of the Mohawk Institute to the Mohawk Chapel. OPP were onsite again this year to assist in laying grids. The Youth Supporting Survivors Program (YSSP) resumed for its second year, with students being trained to use survey and GPR equipment. They were taught how to lay search grids with great accuracy using Total Station. New drone technology was employed and GIS software was secured.



This year's search was plagued with air quality issues as Canada saw record-breaking wildfires throughout the country. The Ground Search Team's year concluded in meetings with collaborating experts, requests for utility line maps to rule out anomalies with a focus on areas of interest.

ADVOCACY

The Survivors' Secretariat has taken impactful steps in advocacy, bringing attention to the lives lost at the Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School in Brantford, Ontario. For the month of September, the Secretariat arranged 96 feather signs on the lawn in the shape of two hearts. The small heart honours the children who have been identified, while the larger heart represents those who remain to be found. Each feather serves as a solemn tribute to the 96 known children who died at the institute. To deepen community engagement, the Secretariat included a weekly community giveaway to encourage visitors to stop in the Secretariat's office to learn more about our mission.



The Secretariat also actively participated in advocacy events by attending OSI Gatherings in Montreal and Iqaluit, the Acimowin Opaspiw Society, Investigation Methodologies National Symposium hosted by Blue Quills First Nation in Edmonton, the Graves and Legislative Policy Conference in Winnipeg and the Indigenous History & Heritage Gathering hosted by the NCTR and the First Nations Confederacy of Cultural Education Centres.

The Secretariat launched an orange shirt day fundraiser which was supported by the Jays Care Foundation. The shirts were worn by all game day staff on September 30, 2023.











NIA:WEN THANK YOU

To download our Audited Financial Statements for 2023-2024 please visit our website and don't forget to follow us on social media.

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