



AREA 1 - WABOWDEN



Traditional Community Name:

Piwápisko Méskanáhkánihk
(The "iron road" in reference to the railway tracks)



Population:

Approximately 400



Mel Johnson School:

Grades: Nursery to Grade 12
Enrollment: Approximately 111
Staff: Approximately 26



Access:

Paved, all-weather road and by train



Indigenous Language(s):

Ininimowin
(N-Dialect/Swampy Cree)



Average Temperatures:

January

High -17 °C Low -26 °C
Extreme Low -39 °C

June

High 20 °C Low 6 °C
Extreme High 30 °C



Treaty Territory:

Treaty 5



Location:

668 km north of
Winnipeg and 112 km
south of Thompson

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

The town of Wabowden is situated within the traditional territories of the Ininew (Swampy Cree) and the Ithiniwi (Woods Cree). The local area hosts a plenitude of outdoor recreation opportunities and the breathtaking nature surrounding the town is a photographer's dream. Local amenities include a store, car repair shop, post office, RCMP detachment, nursing station, arena (hockey and curling), a greenhouse, and an ice cream shop.

The earliest known European settlement in the vicinity of Wabowden was Wegg's Post, a Hudson's Bay Company outpost that was operational from 1795 to 1796. Although it was only used for its intended purpose for one winter, the area remained a popular rest stop throughout the fur trade era.

By 1914, a settler community developed around a group of nearby station buildings used as part of the construction of Hudson's Bay railway. This community was initially known as "Mile 137", indicating the distance from the railway's origin in The Pas; the name Wabowden was adopted later in honour of W.A. Bowden, who was then Chief Engineer at the Department of Railways.



SUBSIDIZED HOUSING IN WABOWDEN

Staff housing is located a short walk from the school. Each house is fitted with a fridge, stove, washer, and dryer. Heat and electricity are included in the rent and Frontier School Division provides maintenance. Up to two pets are allowed. Cell service and internet are available but must be arranged and paid for by the tenant.

SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

Mel Johnson School has partnered with Manitoba Aboriginal Head Start to provide an in-house "New Beginnings" program for children up to the age of five. This program offers culturally appropriate activities that help children succeed in transitioning from the home to the classroom in a way that honours and engages with local Indigenous tradition.

The Cree language is prominent at Mel Johnson School, being spoken regularly in some of its classrooms. There is also athletic programming that includes volleyball, baseball, basketball, and badminton, as well as access to the community arena for extra-curricular activities, such as skating and pick up hockey games. Annual events hosted by the school include a community cleanup every spring, the Megan McIvor Memorial Volleyball Tournament in April and an annual Culture Week packed with activities surrounding Indigenous Peoples Day in June.

REASONS TO JOIN FRONTIER SCHOOL DIVISION

- Our 39 school communities are populated with friendly people and are located in some of the most scenic areas of the province.
- There are many opportunities to engage with local Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers and to participate in local cultural events and activities.
- Frontier School Division is dedicated to the preservation and revitalization of Indigenous languages and cultures, as well as advancing the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee.
- We provide our teachers with PD and other supports to ensure our students receive a quality, inclusive education that includes Indigenous perspectives, local language(s), and cultural programming.
- Frontier School Division has a unique 3-tiered, grassroots governance system to help provide meaningful, appropriate, and locally relevant education in our schools.
- Frontier School Division spans nearly 75% of the province and is organized into 5 Areas.



Frontier School Division Contacts

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