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## **CSFS Applauds Draft Compensation Agreement of \$47.8 Billion for Long-Term Reform of First Nations Child and Family Services**

### For immediate release

**July 15, 2024** – The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) has announced a commitment from the Government of Canada to provide \$47.8 Billion in funding for long-term reform of First Nations child and family services, an increase from the initial commitment of \$19.807 Billion in 2021. Carrier Sekani Family Services (CSFS) applauds this announcement as it will significantly alleviate roadblocks in providing services to the Nations we serve, and is a significant step forward in reconciliation and providing justice for First Nations children and families.

Since CSFS started in 1990, CSFS has been operating without adequate funding. This proposed allocation of funding will enable the organization, in collaboration with the Nations we serve, to enhance capacity in providing culturally appropriate services and programs that will meet the needs of communities.

“Our top priority at CSFS is to ensure that First Nations children have a safe place to grow and thrive, which has been difficult without adequate funding,” says Warner Adam, Chief Executive Officer of CSFS. “In order to thrive, children need to grow up rooted in their culture. CSFS is in a good position to work with communities to overhaul the child welfare system and ensure that the revised system is based on healing citizens, care for children, and strengthening the family unit as opposed to the existing punitive system. However, we require proper funding to build adequate infrastructure for child development and create healing spaces for our people.”

Throughout July, August, and into September, the AFN will meet with First Nations leaders at regional engagement sessions to hear their views and discuss the details of the draft settlement agreement. A Special Chiefs Assembly will be held September 2024, where the First Nations-in-Assembly will deliberate on reforms of the First Nations Child and Family Services Program and vote on the proposed measures.

CSFS Board President Chief Priscilla Mueller of Saik’uz First Nation says that this increase in funding is a major step in helping Indigenous communities in their healing journeys.

“This funding isn’t just about dollars – it’s a lifeline for Indigenous communities; it’s about justice, and the well-being of our children and families,” says Chief Mueller. “This marks a significant milestone on our journey towards reconciliation.”

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Carrier Sekani Family Services extends its sincere appreciation to the AFN and Cindy Blackstock for their hard work in fighting for fair and adequate care for First Nations people in Canada. Together, we are creating spaces for our people to ground themselves in their culture and, as a result, to heal.

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