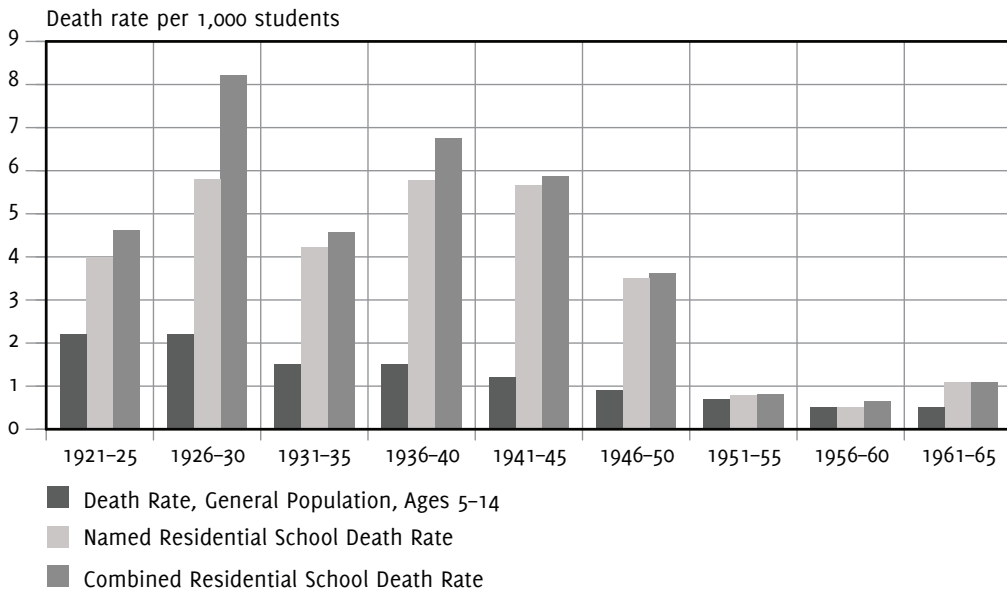


Graph 4

Comparative death rates per 1,000 population, residential schools (Named and Unnamed registers combined) and the general Canadian population of school-aged children, using five-year averages from 1921 to 1965.



Source: Fraser, Vital Statistics and Health, Table B35-50, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-516-x/section-b/4147437-eng.htm>; Rosenthal, "Statistical Analysis of Deaths," 13.

initially selected for their reserves. In making the Treaties, the government had promised to provide assistance to First Nations to allow them to make a transition from hunting to farming. This aid was slow in coming and inadequate on arrival. Restrictions in the *Indian Act* made it difficult for First Nations farmers to sell their produce or borrow money to invest in technology. Reserve land was often agriculturally unproductive. Reserve housing was poor and crowded, sanitation was inadequate, and access to clean water was limited. Under these conditions, tuberculosis flourished. Those people it did not kill were often severely weakened and likely to succumb to measles, smallpox, and other infectious diseases.³⁵⁴

For Aboriginal children, the relocation to residential schools was generally no healthier than their homes had been on the reserves. In 1897, Indian Affairs official Martin Benson reported that the industrial schools in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories had been "hurriedly constructed of poor materials, badly laid out, without due provision for lighting, heating or ventilation." In addition, drainage was poor, and water and fuel supplies were inadequate.³⁵⁵ Conditions were not any better in the church-built boarding schools. In 1904, Indian Commissioner David Laird echoed Benson's comments when he wrote