

3 of 234 DOCUMENTS

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Former students of school for deaf launch lawsuit against province

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Former students of a now-closed residential school for the deaf in Saskatoon launched a class-action lawsuit against the province of Saskatchewan yesterday, alleging the government-funded school was a haven for child abusers for several decades. Although the statement of claim filed at Court of Queen's Bench in Regina names only two individual plaintiffs, a total of 52 former students of the R. J. D. Williams School for the Deaf have already joined, according to Regina lawyer Tony Merchant, whose firm is handling the case. Mr. Merchant told the Saskatoon StarPhoenix he expects news reports about the existence of the suit will prompt more plaintiffs --possibly thousands -- to come forward, seeking compensation for alleged physical, sexual and psychological abuse that spanned 1932 to 1991.

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