



Nishnawbe Aski Nation

ᐱᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᐱᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅ

100 Back Street, Unit 200 Thunder Bay, ON P7J 1L2  
Tel: (807) 623-8228 Fax: (807) 623-7730

## NEWS RELEASE

Thursday April 10, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **NAN RESPONDS TO INTRODUCTION OF FIRST NATION EDUCATION LEGISLATION**

**THUNDER BAY:** Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Deputy Grand Chief Goyce Kakegamic has responded to the introduction of federal legislation on First Nation education in the House of Commons this morning.

“We strongly agree that there need to be standards in education, but this legislation does not support our vision for the future of education in Nishnawbe Aski Nation. We have negotiated in good faith on governance and education jurisdiction since 1999 and we look to this government to honour this process as the way forward,” said NAN Deputy Grand Chief Kakegamic, who holds the education portfolio. “This legislation does not address the many challenges our communities face in the delivery of education and is a blatant attempt to redefine and limit our jurisdiction to whatever the federal government dictates as appropriate.”

The federal legislation has been rejected by NAN Chiefs-in-Assembly as it:

- gives the Minister unilateral control over First Nations education;
- will force First Nations to assume ultimate liability over education while the government retains authority;
- does not respect First Nations Inherent and Treaty rights;
- does not respect or recognize First Nations jurisdiction over education;
- does not include early learning, adult education, or alternative education; and
- unilaterally defines the terms upon which First Nations will be educated.

“We are opposed to any legislation regarding First Nation education that does not reflect the unique circumstance of our communities, address the needs of our people according to our Treaty rights, or honour our Nation-to-Nation relationship with the Crown as represented by the Government of Canada,” said Kakegamic. “Education is a sacred responsibility that our Chiefs have accepted, and NAN First Nations will not accept unilateral encroachment of this sacred responsibility.”

On November 7, 2013 NAN Chiefs-in-Assembly declared their First Nations Inherent and Treaty Right to control the future of education in NAN territory (see attached).

*Nishnawbe Aski Nation is a political territorial organization representing 49 First Nation communities in James Bay Treaty No. 9 and Ontario portions of Treaty No. 5 – an area covering two thirds of the province of Ontario in Canada.*

***For more information please contact:*** Nick Sherman, Communications Officer – Nishnawbe Aski Nation (807) 625-4906 or cell (807) 472-1464 or by email [nsherman@nan.on.ca](mailto:nsherman@nan.on.ca)