



# Grand Council Treaty #3

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh Disappointed in Local Member of Parliament's Canada Day Messaging**

This past July 1, Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh and Grand Council Treaty #3 participated in memorial activities across the Treaty #3 territory for the victims of the Residential School System. After reflection, Ogichidaa Kavanaugh expresses disappointment in MP Eric Melillo for his Canada Day messaging.

“It was actually one of the best July 1<sup>st</sup> experiences we have ever had,” said Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh. “I spoke with many people that day and although we were honouring Residential School victims, we were also celebrating that we are still here as a people and so we chose to spend our statutory holiday together in our own way.”

Despite the controversy surrounding the cancellation of Canada Day celebrations across the country, hundreds of non-indigenous supporters gathered at these events in the Treaty #3 territory to express their sorrow and solidarity. The regular red coloured celebrations across Canada were widely replaced by crowds dressed in orange to honour residential school survivors and those that never came home.

“I was disappointed to hear Kenora MP Eric Melillo’s consistent radio messages promoting and encouraging people to celebrate Canada Day,” added Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh. “As his constituency had one of the highest concentrations of residential schools in Canada, I would have hoped he would be more thoughtful of the people he represents. I myself, was shocked and humbled by the support we received, and I hope those people who chose empathy over tradition also express their concerns to their representatives.”

Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh and Grand Council Treaty #3 seek to work with all partners, regardless of political affiliation, but only in the spirit of mutual respect. In the coming days Ogichidaa Kavanaugh plans to reach out to MP Melillo to discuss the effects the Residential School system has had on the Kenora region.

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