



Grand Council Treaty #3

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Grand Council Treaty #3 Concerned that KCDSB's return to Face-to-face Learning will put Students at Risk

The announcement made by the Kenora Catholic District School Board regarding a return to face-to-face learning and reducing the availability of online learning is a concern to Treaty #3 First Nations with students attending their schools. With the recent increases of positive Covid-19 cases in the region, it is not a plan Treaty #3 First Nations can support. Chief Howard Kabestra, education portfolio lead for Treaty #3 states, "Treaty #3 First Nations have checkpoints to minimize the risks of outbreaks in our communities, we need to self-isolate and protect our members when the risks run high".

First Nation leadership implemented back to school plans based on the direction of their community members on how to best support their students during this Covid-19 pandemic. First Nation students are considered students at-risk, therefore KCDSB's unilateral decision to write to Queens Park seeking approval for their decision to limit access to online, homebased learning does not have the support of Treaty #3 First Nations.

Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh is concerned about how this will impact First Nation students, "Treaty #3 leaders will continue to focus on the health and well-being of our members. While education is a priority, we must ensure that our children have access to learning in the safest settings, which for some students is in their own home".

Treaty #3 First Nations purchase education services from school boards via Education Service Agreements and they have the right to determine the types of services they receive. The KCDSB needs to show their commitment to providing access to safe and supportive learning opportunities for First Nation students' which can be demonstrated by working on solutions in partnership with Treaty #3 First Nations.

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