

July 27, 2008 (signed original to come via courier)

Watchey... My name is Shannen Koostachin. I am an Mushkegowuk Innanu from an isolated community called Attawapiskat First Nation. My parents are Jenny and Andrew Koostachin. I have three brothers and three sisters. I am fourteen years old. I've graduated and finished elementary school called JR Nakogee Elementary School and going to go to school somewhere in down south just to have a proper education. I want to have a better education because I want to follow my dreams and grow up and study to be a lawyer. For the last eight years, I have never been in a real school since I've started my education. For what inspired me was when I realized in grade in grade eight that I've been going to school in these portables for eight long struggling years. We put on our coats outside and battle through the seasons just to go to computers, gym and library. I was always taught by the parents to stand up and speak out for myself. My message is to never give up. You get up, pick up your books and keep walking in your moccasins.

Leadership Questions

When I was a little kid, I always use to think what a great leader my dad was, Andrew Koostachin, He taught me to look up to the Seven Grandfathers. Love, Respect, Truth, Honesty, Humility, Bravery and Wisdom. Those are called the Seven Grandfathers. And the other thing my dad taught me about life is to take 3 steps, put God first, because he made you and me, Second is family. Because they give you a lot of love. Third is education. School is very important! This why I'm here because children before grade 5 had already lost hope.

Personality

Well the three or four things I would like people to know about me is. One, I do not like broken promises. Two, I do not like seeing my siblings going to school in washrooms. And three, I would like them to know too that I AM NOT GIVING UP.

Motivation

1. I've been going to school in these washrooms for eight long struggling years now. I do not want my younger brother and sisters thinking those portables are proper schools.
2. Education is important because in the future you'll have a better life. Because without an education, you wouldn't have a job or go anywhere at all.
3. I would tell them to pray and be strong. To stand up for their rights and never give up.
4. Because the New School Campaign is growing. There are a lot of supporters around the world. There are even a lot of questions for Minister Strahl.

Inspiring others

1. Of course, I would support others even though they are Non-natives. I would help around and do whatever I can to support. This is why we are made the circle. One is red, one is yellow, the other is white and the other is black. We are all the same. We keep the circle strong!
2. So that he'll [Minister Strahl] know that we will not wait for another eight years. He knows that we are sick and tired walking back and forth outside in the cold winter, the cold wind, the cold rain, the hot sun. He knows that. It's just that he doesn't understand. If he did understood he could've just give us a school just like that!
3. I would tell them [other children] not to be afraid. To ignore people who are putting you down. To get up and tell them what you want... what you need!
4. I would tell them to think about the future and follow they're dreams. I would tell them NEVER give up hope. Get up; pick up your books, and GO TO SCHOOL. But not in portables.



Signed by: