

January 4, 2010

"I would tell the children not to be afraid. Get up and tell people what you want... what you need! I would tell them to think about the future and follow they're dreams. I would tell the children to NEVER give up hope."

-- Shannen Koostachin

Dear First Nations School Board, School or educator;

Shannen Koostachin of Attawapiskat First Nation had a dream - safe and comfy schools and culturally based education for First Nations children and youth. Shannen never lived to see this dream become a reality. She died tragically in 2010 at the age of 15. But people across Canada are coming together to help make Shannen's dream a reality. We would like to invite you and your students to join us in this national campaign to ensure that every First Nation student has access to equitable and culturally based education.

The campaign includes a website [www.shannensdream.ca](http://www.shannensdream.ca) which provides an opportunity for people of all ages and organizations to learn more and to register their support *Shannen's Dream* as well as Private Members Motion 571 in support of *Shannen's Dream* tabled by Member of Parliament, Charlie Angus (NDP). *Shannen's Dream* was officially launched on November 17, 2010 and we already have 2300 supporters so please have students, parents and educators in your school join them!

But *Shannen's Dream* is also a grassroots campaign of connecting students and educators across Canada to take action to change the situation facing too many First Nation students. This is where your school comes in.

Shannen inspired First Nation youth to become empowered by documenting their school realities and challenging for change through social media networks like Facebook and You Tube. We would like to work with your community to share stories on the Shannen's Dream website on how education funding inequities affect your children and youth. We would also like to work with you to create youth teams who will begin speaking out to ensure culturally based equity and proper schools for all First Nations children and youth.

Our experience shows that pictures (jpeg), video and testimonials from students and educators have the most power in educating and engaging the public and we welcome the opportunity to profile the inequities in your school or how your school is supporting *Shannen's Dream*.

If you would like to find out how you can get your school involved, please contact Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society at [cblackst@fncaringsociety.com](mailto:cblackst@fncaringsociety.com) or by calling 613 230 5885.

Respectfully,



Charlie Angus,  
Shannen's Dream Co-Chair



Cindy Blackstock.  
Shannen's Dream Co-Chair