



First Nations students have a myriad of challenges and obstacles to overcome in their life journey because of the significant social issues that exist in their communities. The Inquest examined the circumstances surrounding the deaths of Jethro Anderson, Curran Strang, Paul Panacheese, Robyn Harper, Reggie Bushie, Kyle Morriseau, and Jordan Wabasse, and the substantial challenges faced by NAN communities was a factor that contributed to the tragic deaths of the youth. A goal of the Inquest was to reduce the risk of future deaths of high school students from the First Nations communities. So, it is incumbent on all of us to keep First Nations youth safe, and to help students to succeed in all areas of their life including their educational goals with the necessary supports in place throughout their journey.

Choose Life and Jordan's Principle support several Inquest recommendations for Keewatinook Okimakanak, Matawa Education and Care Centre, and the Northern Nishnawbe Education Council. There is great risk that progress achieved and positive changes made through Choose Life will be lost if this funding source does not continue to support First Nations students attending high school off-reserve. We therefore call upon the Government of Canada to fulfil its legal and fiduciary obligations, and to commit to the continuation of the Choose Life program as a permanent funded program.

Yours,

First Nations Organizations who are Parties to the Seven Youth Inquest



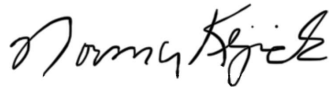
Deputy Grand Chief Walter Naveau  
Nishnawbe Aski Nation



David Thompson, Executive Director  
Keewatinook Okimakanak



Sharon Nate, Executive Director  
Matawa Education Department



Norma Kejick, Executive Director  
Northern Nishnawbe Education Council

Cc: *NAN Executive Council*  
*Andrew Solomon, Director of Education, Nishnawbe Aski Nation*  
*David Paul Achneepineskum, CEO, Matawa First Nations Management*  
*Brad Battiston, Principal, Matawa Education and Care Centre*  
*Leonard Mamakeesick, Board Chair, Keewatinook Okimakanak Board of Education*  
*Dobi-Dawn Frenette, Director of Education, Northern Nishnawbe Education Council*  
*Christiane Fox, Deputy Minister of Indigenous Services*  
*Valerie Gideon, Associate Deputy Minister of Indigenous Services*  
*The Honourable Greg Rickford, M.P.P., Minister of Indigenous Affairs*  
*Rebecca Ramsarran, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Indigenous Affairs*

