

NEWS RELEASE



NR 16-21 EDU ENG – For Immediate Release

NTI Speaks Up for Use of Inuktitut in Cape Dorset and across Nunavut Schools

(October 27, 2016 – Iqaluit, Nunavut) “The incident in Cape Dorset invoked emotions on a very sensitive issue that we thought we would never live through again,” says the Vice President of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., James Eetoolook.

“Reports of an eighth grade student being threatened with punishment for speaking Inuktitut are very disturbing,” said Eetoolook. “As Minister Quassa has properly noted, it brings back painful memories of the past for many Inuit. That era is over. NTI is relying on the Minister to oversee a full and prompt review of the practices and policies of the Department in this regard, to make that report public, and to take the necessary corrective action.”

Until we have fully bilingual teachers and classes where the majority of educators speak Inuktitut, language and cultural conflicts may unfortunately continue.

To prevent this from happening across Nunavut, we need an education system and strong legislation that are built upon fully effective bi-lingual Inuktitut and English instruction in our schools.

Eetoolook is hopeful that bolstering the Inuit Language will bring a sense of pride for parents to be involved in their schools as well as foster a sense of belonging for children from Kindergarten to grade 12.

The time is now to enhance the roles of DEAs and provide them with full support, as a way for parents and children to channel their sense of belonging within the schools.

The Teachers Education Program was a great success story for many Inuit to become teachers after the residential school era. We can learn from that example to bring more Inuit educators into the school system.

NTI News Releases are posted to our web site: <http://www.tunngavik.com>

Twitter @NTunngavik and Facebook Page: Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.

Eetoolook noted that “NTI has been and will continue to be active in offering options and solutions to education in Nunavut that will result in Inuit children graduating with a high quality education, fully bilingual in Inuktut and English. We hope the Government of Nunavut will work with us closely on these options and solutions to improve the education system in Nunavut.”

-30-

For further information:

Karen Flaherty
A/ Director of Communications
Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.
PO Box 638, Iqaluit, NU, X0A0H0
(P) 867-975-4941 (C) 867-222-2393 (F) 867-975-4949
kflaherty@tunngavik.com
www.tunngavik.com