

## **Day Scholars Class Action and Dene Tha's application to be added as a Plaintiff**

As you know, many of our citizens, and especially our elders, were forced to go to residential schools. Some of these schools were not far away but were right here in our communities. Many Dene Tha' people were forced to attend a residential school on or near reserve as "day scholars." This experience was destructive for our people and our culture.

There have been cases decided by the courts that deal with the harm to Indigenous people who were sent away from their community to a residential school. But the courts have never considered the great harm done to Indigenous people who were forced to attend a residential school on or near their reserve as "day scholars."

A new court case has been filed on behalf of these "day scholars" and their communities. It is a "class action lawsuit," which means that it is being brought on behalf of all the "day scholars" and their communities, as a group. This Day Scholars Class Action is also known as *Gottfriedson et al. v The Attorney General of Canada* lawsuit. The lawsuit claims that Canada acted unlawfully and harmed the "day scholars," their children and First Nation communities because the schools were used as an attempt to eliminate our language, culture and traditions.

Dene Tha' First Nation decided to join this lawsuit as one of the plaintiff bands. On July 17, 2017, the Federal Court in Vancouver considered our request to have Dene Tha' added to the Day Scholars Class Action. Dene Tha' was successful with the application. The Federal Court issued an order adding Dene Tha' to the lawsuit. Now that we are part of the lawsuit, Dene Tha' gains the possibility of getting money or other benefits that may come from a trial or settlement of the lawsuit.