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Tsi Nahóten Karihwanákere No'nenk News Release

Education status quo not good enough, fight will continue says Grand Chief

For immediate release

(Kahnawake – 30, Onerahthókó:wa/May 2014) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) wishes to update the community on recent developments concerning the Federal education legislation Bill C-33, the *First Nations Control of First Nations Education Act*.

On May 27, Grand Chief Michael Ahríhron Delisle, Jr. and Chief Lloyd Phillips attended an Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Special Chiefs Assembly in Ottawa that was held to develop a position regarding Bill C-33. The Chiefs adopted a collective (and unanimous) statement calling for Canada to withdraw Bill C-33 and engage in an honorable process with First Nations that leads to true First Nations control of education. The Chiefs also adopted a resolution providing the AFN with direction on taking action in addressing education. Both documents are attached.

Following the Assembly, a representative from Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada Bernard Valcourt's office announced that Bill C-33 would not proceed without AFN support. On May 29, Minister Valcourt announced that the Bill is still on hold while he is considering options. There have been no formal announcements of the plans of the federal government regarding next steps.

"I am disappointed that the Minister has not confirmed immediate withdrawal of the Bill as per the collective request of the Chiefs across the country," said Grand Chief Delisle. "However, we must keep in mind that we are not fighting for status quo either – we have long standing issues that we need resolved in education. So we must continue to press the federal government for some kind of commitment to adequately address long standing education issues while respecting our rights to govern our own education systems.

"We will continue to fight for these commitments and keep the community updated as we proceed," he concluded.

More information on Kahnawà:ke's position can be found online at kahnawake.com.

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