November 2016

To Whom it may Concern,

We are a grade 5/6 class at Pierre Elliott Trudeau School in Gatineau, Quebec. Our teacher and many of the students at our school have been working to make Canada a fair and equal place for all kids, especially First Nations, Inuit and Metis children. We have marched to parliament hill many times. We have written many letters to the Prime Minister. Last year, when so many kids were taking their own lives in Attawapiskat, we write them letters of friendship. We have met elders and residential school survivors. We even had a pow wow at our school last year!

We have been learning about the conditions in many communities. We know about the lack of safe housing, the unclean water, the many schools that are in a state of disrepair. We also know that the people who live in the communities are strong and resilient and smart and hopeful. We know that they deserve better. We know that Canada signed treaties guaranteeing the rights that many Indigenous people still are denied.

We demand justice now. We demand that the Liberal government and our Prime Minister “walk their talk” and implement the Canadian Human Right Tribunal’s ruling. We demand that all kids in Canada have a chance to dream big, and to grow up believing that they are worth it.

Many of us in this class are First Nations, Inuit and Metis. We are from communities that have strong traditions and hope for the future. We love to hunt and laugh and learn. We are strong people. We want respect and we want our human rights.

Migwetch for reading,

Grade 5/6 at Pierre Elliott Trudeau School, (Lisa Howell)
Gatineau, Quebec