

Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Reservation Business Committee

1720 Big Lake Rd.
Cloquet, MN 55720
Phone (218) 879-4593
Fax (218) 879-4146

March 18, 2022

Dr. Michael Cary, Superintendent
Cloquet Public Schools
301 14th Street
Cloquet, MN 55720

Mr. Aaron Fisher, Superintendent
Esko Public Schools
2 E. Hwy 61
Esko, MN 55733

Dear Dr. Cary and Mr. Fisher:

Last evening, one of our Reservation Business Committee members received a disturbing screenshot of a Snapchat conversation between Cloquet and Esko students making racist remarks and threats directed toward Native students and the Tribe. We are horrified and saddened by the ignorant and racist statements of students from schools where many of our Native youth attend. It is imperative that our schools remain safe places for *all* students to attend, including Native and minority youth. Our students cannot receive an education they are entitled to under the law if they feel unsafe and unwelcome in their own schools.

As the leaders of the School Districts where this incident occurred, we would like to know what Cloquet Public Schools and Esko Public Schools intend to do to address this atrocious and harmful behavior from their students. While punishment of the students involved may be one step, we need to ensure that our students remain and feel safe in the public schools they attend. The schools and school districts must teach all students the harms of racist and violent rhetoric and impress upon our community's youth the importance of treating all people with respect and dignity.

We want to receive an immediate response from the school districts and school leadership on how you intend to address this situation, not only with the specific students involved in the incident but also with the larger student-body community. We would also like to understand how you will ensure that the Native students in your schools are safe and treated with respect. In addition, we would like to schedule a meeting between Fond du Lac leaders and the leadership of the Cloquet and Esko schools and school district to address this matter and discuss what can be done in the future to avoid similar racist and violent rhetoric and behavior from students.



Chairman
Kevin R. Dupuis, Sr.

Secretary/Treasurer
Ferdinand Martineau, Jr.

Dist. I Representative
Wally J. Dupuis

Dist. II Representative
Bruce M. Savage

Dist. III Representative
Roger M. Smith, Sr.

Executive Director,
Tribal Programs
Miyah M. Danielson

Executive Director,
Tribal Enterprises
Terry Savage

Please follow up with Miyah Danielson, Executive Director of Tribal Programs, to schedule a meeting and discuss the school districts response. Ms. Danielson can be reached at miyahdanielson@fdlrez.com.

Sincerely,



Kevin R. Dupuis, Sr.
Chairman

CC: **Cloquet School Board**

Ted Lammi
Nate Sandman
Dave Battaglia
Gary Huard
Melissa Juntunen
Ken Scarbrough

Esko School Board

Jerry Frederick
Leona Johnson
Steve McConnell
Todd Rengo
Jeff Salo
Margaret Sunnarborg