

## **Residential School Update**

By Claudia C. Belda

2007

For a while now NALSC has been keeping track of any developments arising out of the Indian Residential School Settlement Package. We have posted them in our website and written articles in order to keep NAN members informed.

Since January of 2007, we have also carried out Indian Residential School workshops in all of the Matawa communities, spreading all of the information necessary for you to make the appropriate claims and help you get the settlement you deserve. We sent up members of our team composed of Claudia Belda, Robert Moonias, Lisa Echum, Jason Baxter, Betty Achneepineskum and Evelyn Baxter to the communities to carry out the workshops. We also counted with support from lawyers Richard Courtis and Marcia Schmitt, who came all the way from Toronto to provide free information and advice to community members.

On March 8, 2007, in an unprecedented sitting of 9 courts, the settlement package was officially approved. On March 22, 2007, the court also began to hear the Saskatchewan appeal.

Now we are in the process of starting the “opt-out” period. A major notice campaign will begin soon letting all of the Residential School Survivors in Canada know what is going on. The notice will have detailed explanation telling you how to refuse the settlement if you do not want it. You have until August 20, 2007 to let them know you want no part in this settlement.

On the other hand, if you are happy with the settlement offer and you want to apply for the Common Experience Payment, you don’t have to do anything. The forms will be available in September, after the “opt-out” period ends. You will start to receive your compensation after November of 2007.

We will keep you informed of any new developments. Please check our website periodically for any news and information as to where you can find the forms. And if you have any questions, please call us. We will try to give you the information you need or at least put you in contact with someone who can.