

Tim McDonald
P.O. Box 463
Ft. Smith, N.W.T.
X0E 0P0

October 31, 2000


05/11/4

Mr. Jake Otis
Minister of Education
Govt. of the N.W.T.
Yellowknife, N.W.T.

Re: Student Financial Assistance OR lack of it.

Dear sir,

My daughter Erica McDonald is a third year education student at the University of Alberta. Erica was born in Ft. Smith, N.W.T., raised there, schooled there and graduated high school there. After highschool she applied for S.F.A. to attend Grand Prairie Community College. She was awarded the basic grant but was told that though she was of Dene' decent she was not considered indigenous to the N.W.T. Erica felt that the fact that she chose to remain with the band of her ancestors in Ft. Chipewyan, Alta. should not have been of any consequence in determining her priority for funding. She chose to go along with the decision at the time and excepted the basic grant while filing for the supplementary grant through the band in Ft. Chipewyan.

Erica was successful in completing a two year program in Early Childhood Development, she then chose to transfer to the University of Alberta and continue her studies in the field of education.

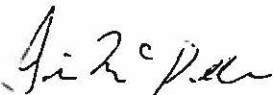
She is entering her fifth year of post secondary studies and S.F.A. in its infinite wisdom has decided that Erica is not eligible for the basic grant and her only form of assistance is a repayable loan. Erica will survive, succeed and be a productive member of our society in spite of the funding policies of S.F.A.

As a father I question the inequitable policies of the S.F.A. dept. and wonder why our children are treated in such a shoddy manner. I would really love to have her come home and teach the children in or our community. But why should she? Your ridiculous policies have made her feel like a foreigner in her own land!

Sir, if you have any compassion for our youth, the people who you will rely on, to govern in your later years. You will take a long hard look at S.F.A. attitudes and policies. A firm hand is required to provide a service that will respect and support ALL OUR STUDENTS.

Hoping for improvement.

Yours Sincerely



Tim McDonald

