

**THE HONOURABLE ALFRED MOSES
MINISTER OF EDUCATION, CULTURE
AND EMPLOYMENT**

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Canada's Outstanding Principals Award

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Kate Powell, Principal of Deninu School in Fort Resolution, on being recognized as one of Canada's Outstanding Principals for 2018. Principals who receive this award are nominated by their colleagues, school staff, and community members. She is the 14th principal in the Northwest Territories to receive this honour.

Ms. Powell is a committed educator who is always searching for new educational experiences for the students and staff of her school. In the past, Deninu School has had attendance issues, students were alienated and disengaged, and there was high staff turnover. Her collaborative approach to education and ability to lead by example has changed the school into a vibrant hub of activity, learning and interaction.

Kate Powell began working as a Literacy Coach at Deninu School 10 years ago. In 2012, Ms. Powell was part of the Deninu School Team who received the Premier's Award for Excellence. She herself received the Ministerial Literacy Award in the Educator category, jointly with a colleague. That year, she became the principal of Deninu School.

In 2014, under her leadership, the students of her school were awarded the Ministerial Literacy Award for their efforts in revitalizing the Chipewyan language in their community. While she was doing all of this, she also earned her Masters degree in Education in 2015, specializing in Curriculum and Instruction.

Most of the students at Deninu School are Indigenous. Ms. Powell has worked tirelessly to include art, sports, language and activities reflecting the culture and traditions of the community. Dene Elders are honoured and welcomed in the school, and the new Government of the Northwest Territories Our Languages curriculum is being implemented.

Mr. Speaker, as Deninu School moves towards fully Indigenizing education, Ms. Powell actively promotes the Dene Laws, and established the Dene Peacekeepers, a group of staff and community partners who encourage young people to take responsibility for their behaviour through justice circles and restitution. She encourages all her staff to learn the Chipewyan language, facilitates the community Interagency Committee, supports the Deninu Jiggers club, and established an annual Dene Hand Games Tournament.

Ms. Powell promotes Heritage Fairs, and brought the annual Canada-Wide Science Fair to the South Slave. Her students have consistently won awards at this fair. At the national level, her students were recognized for their research project on the impact of alcohol in the community. Participation in these fairs has resulted in Deninu students bringing home national medals and university scholarships two years in a row.

Ms. Powell secured funding to construct a welding shop in the school, expanded elective courses, and encouraged exchange visits from students in other parts of the country. She promotes courses available to her students through the Northern Distance Learning program. One recent Indigenous graduate of this program is now transitioning into medical school.

Kate Powell has worked very hard to build a strong and dedicated team focused on student success. She has welcomed the District Education Authority, Deninu Kue First Nation, partner agencies, and parents to Community Education Planning days to provide input into priorities for school improvement. Student achievement has improved significantly.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to review the award nomination documents. Words like fearless, strategic, committed, inclusive, innovation, warmth, and leadership were threaded through all of these documents. An excerpt from one of them reads, "Kate is an example to our children, a mentor to our teachers, a champion for our traditional medicines and healing, and a friend to everyone. I am merely one of the lives that she has influenced throughout her daily efforts. She is an inspiration and continues to succeed in spite of considerable odds."

Ms. Powell was a member of the Northwest Territories Education Renewal and Innovation committee. She has truly embraced the principles behind Education Renewal. Her groundbreaking approaches to teaching and learning, and her commitment to her students, community, and excellence in education make Ms. Powell a shining example of the impact one educator can have on the lives of others.

Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Education Week in the Northwest Territories, please join me in congratulating Ms. Kate Powell on her well-deserved award as one of Canada's Outstanding Principals.

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.