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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Face the Truth: Youth Conference-Confronting the Crises Impairing Northwestern Ontario

MARATHON, Ontario – “Life in Northwestern Ontario has changed dramatically over the last few years. The damage that crises are inflicting on our communities has increased to the point where the chance of surviving the crisis is minimal”, says Cassandra Clyne, a grade 12 student of Nipigon-Red Rock District High School. We don't believe that in order for people's eyes to be opened, destruction of a community must first take place.”

Clyne as a member of the Grade 12 Canadian and World Issues class at the high school is an organizing member of *Face the Truth: A Youth Conference Confronting the Crises Impairing Northwestern Ontario*. The conference is scheduled on January 20 and 21, 2006 at the Nipigon-Red Rock District High School in Red Rock, Ontario.

The purpose of the conference is to set up a venue to discuss the future, or lack thereof, in Northwestern Ontario. Issues such as the softwood lumber dispute, the globalization of industries, the past/present/future of Northwestern Ontario, the future of youth, the decline of tourism, and many other questions and concerns round out the agenda. The class launched the idea after the announcement late last fall that Paper Machine No. 1 at the Norampac Inc, Red Rock Division would shut down. An objective of the conference is to create awareness and formulate possible solutions to the problems Northwestern Ontario is facing.

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Over 100 people are slated to attend the conference at Nipigon-Red Rock DHS. The itinerary for the two-day event includes panel discussions with area MPPs. Michael Gravelle and Joe Commuzi. As well, federal election candidates Bruce Hyer, Bonnie Satten, Keith Harris, Kristen Stansell and Ken Boshcoff will attend to discuss the issue. Mayors of the surrounding areas, students from several Superior-Greenstone DSB high schools as well as Thunder Bay's St. Ignatius, and St. Patrick's high school plan to attend.

"We aren't hoping for a miracle or for all of the crises in Northwestern Ontario to disappear", said Clyne. The problems are big and we made them that way by not taking action and by hoping that they would eventually go away. If we acknowledge them and attempt to make a difference, perhaps things will change. Youth are the future. If we don't at least try to save our towns, who will? All it takes is the power of one to open people's minds. A common goal of our guests is to make the transition from me to we. Together, we can make a difference".

Any organization or individual who wants to see improvements or resolution to Northwestern Ontario's struggling is welcome to attend. Those interested in attending may do so by registering by phone at (807) 886-2201, by email to jrissanen@sdgsb.on.ca, or by fax at (807) 886-2122 as soon as possible.