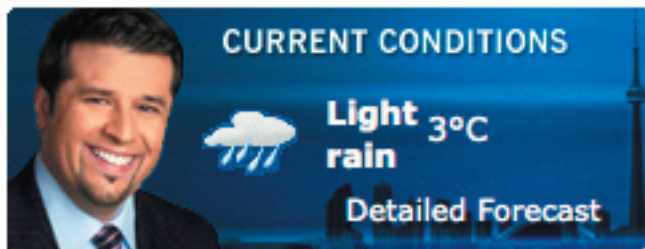


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Light rain 3°C

Detailed Forecast



CTV TORONTO

Attawapiskat children lead rally for new school

Updated: Wed Nov. 26 2008 5:07:57 PM

The Canadian Press

TORONTO — Students from a northern Ontario First Nations community relegated for years to a makeshift school rallied hundreds of their provincial peers in Toronto today in a bid to gain a proper school.

Elementary schoolchildren living in Attawapiskat, an isolated fly-in community on the coast of James Bay, have been housed in seven portables since 2000.

That's when J.R. Nagokee School was closed because children were becoming sick from a massive diesel spill that's been underneath the building since 1979.

Thirteen-year-old student Chelsea Edwards says the portables are cold, have cracks in the walls, doors that don't shut properly and face vermin problems.

She blamed the poor conditions on the federal government, which has reneged several times over the years on commitments to fund a new school.

Attawapiskat and government officials both say a new school for 600 students will cost \$30 million.