



Le Métis



President's Message

The month of May has already seen many positive developments along with a few challenges for our Citizens.

On Monday, May 13, we celebrated home ownership with one of the first successful applicants of our First Time Home Buyers Purchase Program. With the collective diligence of our Ministry of Housing and the Louis Riel Capital Corporation, we are delivering the opportunity for Métis families across Manitoba to experience the joy and security that comes with home ownership.

Currently, approximately 150 Métis Citizens have applied to the First Time Home Buyers Program. To date we have 138 successful applicants who have been approved for home ownership. With our initial investment of \$5 million to the Program, we anticipate over \$80 million in mortgages in the Manitoba economy. We look forward to celebrating many more success stories. Thanks to Prime Minister Trudeau and Minister Duclos for renewing the partnership between Canada and the Métis Nation. This Program is reconciliation in action. For more information, please visit www.lrcc.mb.ca/first-time-home-buyers-purchase-program.

On Thursday, May 9, I presented to the Federal Standing Committee in Ottawa on Bill C-92, An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families. Through this Act, the MMF could develop our own legislation for Métis child and family services. This legislation would focus on prevention and keep our children with our families, in our Community, and at

home in our Nation. This would be a welcome change from the current provincial legislation that rewards removal. On top of this legislation we are currently facing a provincial government that, in order to balance their books, slashes funding to our most vulnerable children and families. As President, I endorse and support this important Act. I want to thank Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his Cabinet for introducing this critical piece of legislation.

Brian Pallister continues his personal vendetta against the Métis to the embarrassment of his government. The recent decision by Pallister to cancel agreements with the MMF threatened the jobs of several of our staff. These hardworking individuals have families to feed, bills to pay, and homes to keep. The Manitoba Métis Government will ensure that we find ways to keep these skilled staff.

The Pallister government also continues their siege on Métis rights, claims, and interests. On top of the budget cuts to Métis children and family services and on top of the cancelled agreements with the MMF, the provincial government's unilateral decision to implement a commercial fishing license buy-back program is an attack on one of the last remaining traditional economies in the province. The Pallister government continues to use our tax dollars to undermine reconciliation. But his attempts to silence us will not stop us from fighting for your rights

To address the attack on the livelihood of Métis and First Nations fishers and to protect the sustainability of the fishery, the MMF co-hosted an emergency fishers meeting with the Manitoba Keewatinowí Okimakanak (MKO) and the Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO). With the buy-back, two million pounds of fish have been taken off the market. We have all witnessed that the buy-back is already devastating our Métis villages, which rely on the Lake Winnipeg fishery. To add insult to injury, Pallister's government has not only taken millions of pounds of fish out of the economy and hurt our fishers, his government has forced a new net size. Now the fishers who were already struggling will be forced to change

their nets. This is like forcing farmers to purchase new farm equipment. A similar scenario for fishers would force them out of business. There is no logic to these arbitrary decisions. This government is pitting commercial fishers against sport fishers when it should be bringing them together. I can assure you that I, as well as MKO's Grand Chief Settee, and SCO's Grand Chief Daniels will take the necessary actions to protect the fishers and the fishery.

I am proud of the staff and volunteers who helped make the Manitoba Métis Heritage Fund's (MMHF's) Annual Métis Heritage Gala a success. Close to 500 people gathered in the Grand Ballroom at the Fort Garry Hotel. This year we anticipate meeting or exceeding the \$65,000 raised last year. This year the proceeds go to the St. Boniface Hospital Foundation's Youth BIOlab Jeunesse. The lab is a space created for students and teachers to explore and experience real biomedical science in a world-class research centre. By encouraging and educating more youth as doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals we will be ensuring that you and your families have access to the professionals they need. I would encourage you to view our various social media streams to see beautiful pictures and videos from this year's gala.

I would like to welcome April Hourie, a twice-elected official for Selkirk, to her role as MMF's Senior Political Analyst. She will be seeking parties and leaders on their strategies to address Métis issues that you have stated are important to you and your family, for example: housing, health and wellness, education and employment, land use and Métis rights, youth, children, and seniors. She is dedicated to encouraging the democratic rights of voting and to help understand through a Métis-specific lens of how political decisions impact your daily life and the lives of the future leaders of tomorrow. To learn more about how you can contribute and to connect with her and share political issues that matter the most to you, please contact April at ahourie@mmf.mb.ca or **204-586-8474**.

Meeqwetch,

∞ *President David Chartrand, LL.D. (hon), O.M.*

Study Shows Métis Children Fall Behind in School Preparedness

On May 5, 2019, the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) and the University of Winnipeg's Institute of Urban Studies issued a study on the school preparedness of Métis and non-Métis children in Manitoba. According to this study – the first to focus on the Métis – children in Manitoba fall behind the rest of Canada, but Métis children in the province fare even worse.

The findings are based on the Early Development Instrument (EDI), an internationally recognized assessment tool that assesses the school readiness of children in five areas: Communication Skills and General Knowledge; Emotional Maturity; Language and Cognitive Development; Physical Health and Well-Being; and Social Competence. Compared to non-Métis children, a higher percentage of Métis children were not ready in many of the EDI categories.

According to Canada's Department of Finance, Manitoba will receive \$4.3 billion in transfer payments this fiscal year alone. The transfer payments are intended to support the provinces in the delivery of programs and services. Yet the study shows when it comes to early learning programs in Manitoba, children residing in poorer areas have higher odds of not being ready for school. The report also finds that more than one third of Métis children in Manitoba are not ready for school.

"We pay hundreds of millions every year in federal and provincial taxes. What do we get in return," said MMF President David Chartrand. "Our children spend the rest of their elementary school and high school years trying to catch up. This has far-reaching effects when they graduate and compete with their peers for university programs. This has far-reaching effects on employment. The Brian Pallister government thinks it is saving a few dollars now, but the long-term costs to the provincial economy are



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staggering. Pallister's unwillingness to invest in early years programming short-changes all Manitobans. He is taking our hard-earned taxes to prop up his rich friends and punish the children, especially the children of our working poor."

Fortunately, the MMF has been working toward improved education outcomes for Métis children and their families while the provincial government has sat idle.

In September 2019, the Métis National Council and its five governing members (MMF, Métis Nation–Saskatchewan, Métis Nation of Alberta, Métis Nation British Columbia, and Métis Nation of Ontario) announced a Métis Nation Early Learning & Child Care (ELCC) Accord, which went into effect as of March 6, 2019.

The Accord invests \$450 million over the next 10 years for distinctions-based early learning and child care initiatives to support Métis Nation

children and families. The programs delivered under the Accord will be culturally appropriate and accessible to families regardless of where they live.

More than \$112 million of the funding will be allocated to the Manitoba Métis Community. The MMF plans on investing these funds into Métis Aboriginal Head Start programs for preschool-aged children, child care supports for working Métis parents, and the creation of educational and employment opportunities for Métis Citizens pursuing careers in child care and early childhood education. The Accord will support Métis self-determination in the coming years.

A full report on the University of Winnipeg's study can be accessed on the MMF website.



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MMF Hosts Emergency Meeting with Indigenous Fishers

On May 8, 2019, the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF), Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO), and the Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) hosted an emergency meeting in Winnipeg to address the consequences of Manitoba's recent commercial fishing licence buy-back program.

Implemented last month, the buy-back has already purchased 126 quota entitlements from 90 fishers on Lake Winnipeg. With the buy-back, more than a million pounds of fish have been taken off the commercial market.

"The buy-back is already devastating our Métis villages, which rely on the Lake Winnipeg fishery," said MMF President David Chartrand. "This action is putting fishers out of business and will result in the closure of fish sheds. These are our People, all of whom have families and mortgages, all of whom spend their hard-earned money in their villages. With this buy-back program it is clear the Pallister government wants to force more people out of work."

In a March 11 press release about the buy-back, Manitoba's Minister of Sustainable Development Rochelle Squires said her government recognizes the value of listening and finding better ways of doing things in partnership. In contrast to her statement, none of the 120 fishers in attendance at the emergency meeting could say they had been consulted about the province's changes.

"We need to meet with this provincial government to address the concerns of current and future fishers," said Raymond Barker, an Indigenous commercial fisher from Northern Manitoba. "It seems like there is no consultation, only dictation."

Several fishers at the meeting also raised concerns that the new net-size regulations

coming into effect in 2020 will require them to replace their equipment, which can be too costly for many. They worry that generational fishers will dwindle away and aspiring fishers will not be able to afford the start-up costs of getting into the industry.

Statistics reveal that close to 80 per cent of fishers on Lake Winnipeg are Indigenous.

"When the commercial fishing industry is gone out of our community, our economic base is gone," said Valerie Disbrowe, a fifth-generation fisher from the Berens River Commercial Fishery. "Eighty-five per cent of our people are on social assistance and the other little portion of us working as commercial fishers. So how do we come together as people to fight the province and all these people that try and do changes without consultation?"

"The commercial fishing industry is one of the last remaining traditional economies in the province," said President Chartrand. "Now, one snap decision by the Pallister government and people lose their jobs. Imagine the domino effect if the provincial government decides to expand the buy-back program. This will destroy rural fishing villages and leave the countryside littered with ghost towns. Is this what Pallister calls fiscal responsibility?"

At the meeting President Chartrand, MKO Grand Chief Settee, and SCO Grand Chief Daniels confirmed their commitment to take the necessary actions to protect the fishers and the fishery.



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MÉTIS VOTE

YOUR MANITOBA MÉTIS GOVERNMENT IS HERE FOR YOU

The Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) is the democratic, self-governing representative of the Manitoba Métis Community. The Manitoba Métis are Canada's Negotiating Partner in Confederation and the Founders of the Province of Manitoba. There are over 120,000 Métis Living in Manitoba, the Province that we helped create. The MMF holds the federal and provincial governments accountable in having **YOUR HARD-EARNED TAX DOLLARS INVESTED** to advance reconciliation and enhance the lives of Métis Citizens, all Manitobans and the future leaders of tomorrow.

**YOUR TAX DOLLARS MATTER
YOUR ISSUES ARE IMPORTANT
YOUR VOTE COUNTS**

President David Chartrand, the MMF Cabinet and staff continue to listen and address your important concerns, issues and opportunities. We call upon federal and provincial party leaders and their candidates to acknowledge and understand where your Métis-specific concerns fit within their party's agenda and commitments. Some areas of importance you have expressed include:

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS
HOUSING
EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT
LAND USE AND RIGHTS
CULTURAL PROTECTIONS
YOUTH, CHILDREN AND SENIORS**

The Métis Government will keep you posted on all the political party agendas, announcements and commitments. Stay tuned!



Connect with us for upcoming announcements and commitments.

www.mmf.mb.ca