



In my last message, I touched on some of the plans we have for 2022. I wanted to provide you with more information on how your Métis government is implementing your vision and mandate on a number of files that you've told us are close to your heart.

If you're a regular listener of the *Métis Hour* x2 on NCI, you'll know that I always deliver a weekly report on our activities. I encourage you to tune in to the program, along with reading these regular messages, and checking out our website and social media. Together, these messages will give you an ongoing update on the progress we're making towards the goals you've told us are important to you.

## Finalizing our modern-day treaty

The agreement signed on July 6 between Canada and the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) acknowledges the MMF as the government of the Red River Métis. Our work on a modern-day treaty is simply the next step in revitalizing our rightful place in Canada's Confederation, enshrined in the constitution and reinforced by legislation.

I'm happy to report that negotiations for our treaty with Canada are over 90 per cent complete. Signing this modern-day treaty will create a foundation for many of our priorities in 2022 and beyond, including negotiations around taxation, law enforcement, and fiscal arrangements.

## Settling our land claim

When we surveyed Citizens last year, you told us that one of the most important issues for you was settling our land claim. We know the *2013 MMF v Canada* declaration said that the constitutional promise made in s 31 of the *Manitoba Act* was not kept. As I am sure you know, the 1.4 million acres promised to Métis children as a head start were not delivered. The ensuing scrip program was a failure, rife with negligence and fraud.

We have listened to the input of our Citizens since the 1980s and are acting with this background information as we continue to move forward. The loss of the economic "head start" is about much more than land, and we are currently taking an in-depth look at how we can settle this land claim before the next federal election.

These meetings with Canada are ongoing, but rest assured we are meeting internally with experts in the field to work towards meeting our goal of settling this within the next two years.

## Advancing Métis-specific healthcare

Along with settling our land claim, you told us that another important issue for you was Red River Métis-specific healthcare supports.

The need for a Métis-specific healthcare strategy has never been clearer than it has been through the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw our ability to access appropriate support for Citizens become subject to the political whims of the provincial government.

The federal government has committed to distinctions-based healthcare legislation. We are advocating for this legislation, and we truly believe that we are making strong progress in the healthcare field. We undertook multiple health legislation consultations and heard the experiences and barriers our people face when it comes to accessing quality healthcare.

Therefore, we seek the empowerment to deliver healthcare services to Citizens, including health hubs, laboratories, home care, hospital funding, long-term care, and data-sharing so we can properly deliver on population health surveillance, infectious disease management and immunization record keeping.

## Assuming full responsibility for our families

Thanks to the improving relationship we have with the provincial government, we continue to make headway on full implementation of *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*. Manitoba finally came to the table with a mandate in August of 2021 – this was a major hurdle and now that we've passed it, we can work faster to get this agreement done.

Currently, we are working with Manitoba and Canada to enter into a Coordination Agreement, which will return the jurisdiction and authority to care for our families and children back to us, the Red River Métis. Part of this transfer includes constructing our laws and policies. We have held consultations with the community in this construction, and we received approval at last year's Annual General Assembly to move forward using several guiding principles shared by Citizens, including ways to ensure stability during the transfer of responsibility.

## Helping more Citizens in their own homes

We will continue to build on the successes of last year, which saw more than 600 families purchasing their own homes, as well as continued support for Citizens who wish to make critical upgrades to their existing homes.

Not only did our First Time Home Purchase Program create approximately \$160 million in positive economic spinoffs within Manitoba, it also put a roof over the heads of nearly 1,300 people. I want to congratulate each and every new homeowner who accessed this First Time Home Purchase Program. This is truly a strong testament to your Métis government's ability to mobilize and successfully roll out a much-needed program.

As part of our housing initiatives, we will also continue to build new transitional housing to counter challenges of homelessness and build more affordable senior and family housing across the province, to ensure that all our Citizens have a safe, warm, and accessible place to call home. As is part of our culture and tradition, these new facilities will not simply provide a place to live – we will continue to build out programs and services that provide wraparound support for the residents.

We will advance this important work in 2022, as we know that a home is more than just a place to live – it is a building block in leaving a legacy for our families.

## Opening more child care facilities

Manitoba has a large deficit of child care spaces throughout the province, including an approximate 32,000 spot deficit in Winnipeg alone. If we were to open one new child care centre every day in Winnipeg, it would take one year and 10 months to meet this need. The lack of spots extends to our rural and remote communities, and are complicated by a lack of choices in child care, and in some cases, the need to travel outside of the community to access any available spots.

As you know, part of our tradition is that we always look at the whole family instead of just the child. That's why our child care facilities include programs like: our Little Métis Literacy Program; Super Dad, Super Kids; and Nobody's Perfect Parenting.

With Little Stars PLAYhouse in Winnipeg, Michif Children's Place in Dauphin, Li Chi Shevru in St. Eustache, and the child care facility at the Elbert Chartrand Friendship Centre in Duck Bay, we have already created approximately 150 culturally appropriate child care spots in our communities. This momentum will not stop in 2022, with many more yet to come – your Métis government plans to build at least 10 more centres within the next two years.

There are many advantages to this important work beyond the child care spots, including new jobs for child care professionals and creating time and opportunity for parents to seek economic and educational opportunities.

**Supporting our entrepreneurs**

While COVID-19 has put a great deal of pressure on many industries, our ability to support our entrepreneurs seems to be helping to keep them going during these challenging times. We continue to support entrepreneurs in our traditional economies as well as all other sectors.

One of the trends that has emerged with the pandemic is the growth of microbusinesses. From beadwork to clothing design, leatherwork and jewelry design, we see this as a growing space that suits the entrepreneurial spirit of the Red River Métis.

Between supports for these new startups and the traditional small and medium-sized businesses that form the backbone of our country and our Nation, we will continue to advance your interests and ensure you have the right tools to succeed.

**Creating opportunities for Youth**

Along with our incredibly successful program supporting Youth as they seek higher education, we are introducing Youth camps and supporting the development of elite Red River Métis athletes.

We will be opening two Youth camps in 2022, focusing on education for our Youth and expanding on current developments. We will continue to update you on these camps as the year progresses.

**Supporting our harvesting tradition**

We will continue to invest in harvesting and our traditional economy of fishing. Our commercial fishing net program has been ongoing since last year, but we continue to receive new shipments of nets to provide to active fishers, to help them keep their businesses operational. Your Métis government will continue to provide you with updates on this important portfolio.

To keep our harvesting traditions alive, we will also be providing land-based harvesting education for our Youth. Understanding the resources around us, how to harvest them, and how to conserve them are key pieces of knowledge that we must ensure are provided to the next generation.

**Addressing the Sixties Scoop**

One of the things we heard from our community was that the Sixties Scoop needed further focus and attention. That’s why the MMF established a Sixties Scoop department in 2021, with a team focused on creating programs and services through the Sixties Scoop Wellness Centre. The department is currently designing repatriation and mental/emotional supports along with cultural programming. More details on these programs will be coming soon.

We are also building our legal strategy to bring us closer to a settlement and reconciliation for survivors. Unfortunately, shortly after we entered negotiations with Canada, a class action lawsuit was commenced by private law firms claiming to represent the best interests of Métis survivors, bringing our negotiations to a standstill. In response to this, your Métis government has hired legal counsel to ensure our Sixties Scoop survivors are not misidentified, as well as provide clarity that the class action lawsuit in no way settles our claim.

For survivors, know that the MMF will never abandon you, and will continue pursuing justice on your behalf.

**Conclusion**

These are just some of the priorities we are looking at, but there are others, including supporting better mental health for our Citizens, and offering help in coping with addiction.

None of these advancements would be possible without the unprecedented nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship we have with Justin Trudeau’s government. As we continue to make headway with the new leadership of Manitoba’s government, I hope to see even greater progress on our pathway to achieving these important priorities.

Your Métis government continues to work at a strong pace to turn these plans into reality, even in the face of the rising tide of Omicron. Our sincere hope is that this latest wave of illness signals the end of the pandemic and a move to endemic, where it’s controlled and we have achieved a significant degree of immunity in our population.

This change will allow us to start to gather again, which would mean finally being free to host an in-person Annual General Assembly, visiting our communities and hearing your concerns as well as advancing our Red River Métis agenda nationally and internationally. I long to be face-to-face with Citizens, and look forward to a time when that is possible. Until then, be confident that we have your back, now and always.

Until we can gather again, I offer my prayers to all our Citizens, friends, and neighbours, and my deepest condolences to those who have been caused to grieve. With Omicron continuing to infect so many in our communities, it’s vital to continue to stay safe and keep our Elders and vulnerable community members protected against this terrible virus, that has made so many people ill.

Meeqwetch,

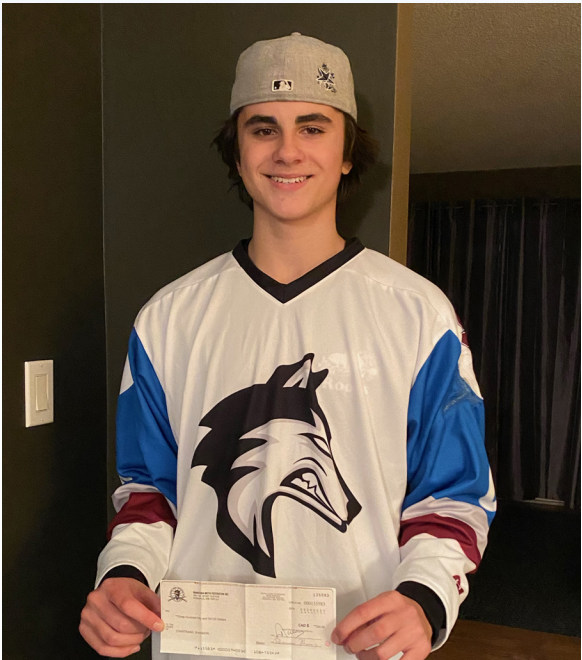
*President David Chartrand. LL.D. hon . D.M.* ∞



# Ice and stick for Picklyk



Jordan Picklyk plays defence for the Sturgeon Heights Huskies.



Picklyk was the recipient of the Manitoba Métis Federation's Individual Youth Sponsorship program, which provides up to \$350 of financial support for youth in sports.



Picklyk has been voted captain of his volleyball and hockey teams.

For Jordan Picklyk, being called “captain” is becoming a common occurrence. The 14-year-old 10th grader from Winnipeg, Manitoba plays defence for the Sturgeon Heights Huskies boys hockey team. He’s been playing hockey since he was five years old.

When hockey season isn’t in full swing, Picklyk plays volleyball. He was voted the captain of the team twice, once on the court and another on the ice.

For Picklyk, it’s an honour he’s proud to accept. He scores more than goals when he’s on the ice, and aside from the good experience of playing the game, he likes to draw on those around him for motivation.

“(It’s a) good experience. The leadership, meeting new people,” he explained, “It’s about playing with my friends and being competitive.”

His favourite sports team is the Seattle Kraken, though being from Winnipeg he also roots for his hometown team, the Winnipeg Jets. His favourite athlete is Jets forward Kyle Connor, but standing at six feet four inches, Picklyk has more in common with his second favourite player, defenceman Logan Stanley. Fittingly enough, Picklyk also wears the number 6.

Not only does he sport the long flowing hair as Stanley does, he also shares an advantage the Jets defenceman has: his stature. He said his size might be the reason his coaches decided he play defence.

“One of the coaches switched me there and that’s all I’ve been playing ever since,” he said, “Probably because I’m a little bit bigger than all of the other kids.”

Due to the pandemic, a shortened season in 2020 only allowed Picklyk to play two months of hockey before it being cancelled altogether. He worked out a lot during the shutdown, taking the time to work on his physique and stay active.

Now that he’s back on the ice, Picklyk looks forward to continue chasing his passion. For him, hockey is more than just a way to keep busy and stay in shape; it’s the social aspect he enjoys.

“All of the people I’ve met, staying in shape, having something to do, having a good hobby,” he said about his love of the game.

Outside of hockey and volleyball, he also likes to hunt and fish. It’s a hobby he shares with his dad.

“I like hunting and fishing, the outdoors and all the animals,” he said. “I went out last weekend with my dad and a couple of his buddies.”

He didn’t catch anything.

“Not yet,” he joked.

As an athlete, it would come as no surprise to hear that among his favourite school courses is exercise class, but Picklyk adds that he enjoys science, and especially appreciates his First Nations history class and learning about First Nations and their culture.

“Just learning about all of the First Nations and their culture. Everything,” he said.

For those out there who are unsure about playing, or

have trouble thinking about participating or joining in on their chosen sport or hobby, Picklyk has one message.

“Do whatever you want. Shouldn’t be nothin’ holding you back from what you want to do. Believe in yourself.”

In keeping with the spirit of inspiration, and trying to motivate the next generation to be the best of who they are, Picklyk’s humbleness shines through when asked if there’s anything he’d like to add.

“Thank you for giving me this opportunity to share,” he said.

Jordan Picklyk was a recipient of the Manitoba Métis Federation’s Individual Youth Sponsorship, which offers financial support for Métis Youth ages 29 and under of up to \$350 per year for registered activities. For more information on the sponsorship, email [youth.coordinator@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:youth.coordinator@mmf.mb.ca) or go to the website at [www.mmfmetisyouth.com](http://www.mmfmetisyouth.com)



# CITIZEN SPOTLIGHT

STORIES HIGHLIGHTING RED RIVER MÉTIS CITIZENS IN THE COMMUNITY, ALONG WITH MMF PROGRAMS, INITIATIVES, PROJECTS, AND EVENTS.

VISIT [MMF.MB.CA](http://MMF.MB.CA) FOR MORE INFORMATION



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