

Le Villazh Maachi Kashkihtow

The Village of Learning K-12



Welcome to the
Summer 2024
edition of **Le Villazh**
Maachi Kashkihtow,
The Village of
Learning K-12



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■ History & Cultural Teachings Awaana Niiyaanaan Lii Michif? Who are the Métis?

SOUTHERN MICHIF TRANSLATION BY NORMAN FLEURY

A Métis person is defined as “a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of historic Métis Ancestry and who is accepted by their Métis community.”

Métis culture and nationhood are rooted in the intermarriages and other social connections between Europeans and First Nations people during the early North American fur trade period. During the 1600s to 1700s, fur traders from France, Scotland, England, Ireland, and other parts of Europe married First Nations women, including Cree, Anishnaabe, Dene, and others. The children of these couples were mixed Indigenous



individuals, but they were not yet Métis. Over time, these children grew and chose to marry other mixed Indigenous individuals creating a distinct Métis kinship system, community identity, and culture. A Nation solidified over generations, in what is often called an ethnogenesis, and historic Métis communities emerged in the lands now

known as British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Northwest Territories, and parts of northern United States.

It is important for educators to know that the term Métis does not encompass all individuals with mixed Indigenous and European heritage. Rather, it refers to a distinctive people who developed their own worldviews, customs, and way of life. They are a recognizable group identity that is separate from their First Nations or European ancestors. It is not accurate to refer to your students as Métis solely because they have mixed Indigenous and European heritage, especially at such a critical point in their development. It is also not appropriate to dictate their identity, in instances where there is a clear lack of understanding, educators might consider embedding more authentic Métis resources that foster understanding and appreciation for distinct Métis cultural

(cont'd on page 3)

Awaana Niiyaanaan Lii Michif? Who are the Métis? (cont'd from page 2)

identity and worldviews, so the issue self-corrects.

Métis culture is influenced by its roots in European nations and First Nations, but Métis culture is more than a sum of its parts. Métis people share collective cultural practices, kinship ties, and history as a nation. Métis people have their own style of dress, music, art, storytelling, dance, and language (Michif). Although they are one Nation, there are diverse expressions of Métis culture

throughout the Métis homeland that are localized.

Métis people were not always known by the term Métis. Over the years, Métis people had several terms that they were identified by. One common term in English was half-breed, a term that can carry a negative connotation today as a racial slur but was used by Métis



people in the past. In Cree, Métis people are referred to as Otipemisiwak, which translates

to "the people who govern themselves" or "the people who are their own bosses." In Michif, many Métis people call themselves Michif.

Resource: Kaa-Wiichihitoyaahk, pages 18-23 ■

■ Métis Core Values: Sharing | Taashkinikayen

Share your talents, gifts and ideas with others in a good way

These 12 Core Values are the Métis Way of Knowing and Learning:

| | |
|--------------|----------|
| Mother Earth | Balance |
| Kindness | Courage |
| Honesty | Strength |
| Respect | Love |
| Patience | Sharing |
| Tolerance | Caring |

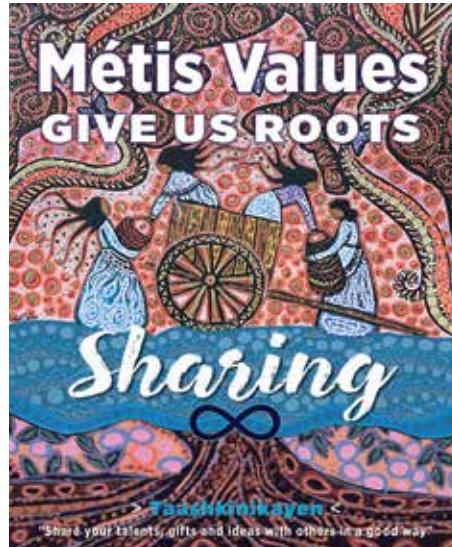
The Core Values, as outlined in the book "The Giving Tree" by Leah Dorion, build a foundation for Métis students, guiding them on how to relate to each other and their surroundings, centering around the importance of cultural ways.

The Métis Core Value of Sharing is Highlighted in this Newsletter.

Sharing can enhance classroom learning by encouraging the development of critical social skills, showcasing talents and gifts, and encouraging the sharing of stories with others in a good way. We also learn to share the land and all that Mother Earth offers. It reinforces generosity in children, family, community, and beyond to all our

relations. Sharing in school plays a crucial role in fostering a sense of community and collaboration among students.

Sharing helps students Develop Social Skills, Promotes Equality, Encourages Teamwork, Builds Trust, Enhances Learning, and helps students Prepare for the Future.



In essence, sharing is a fundamental aspect of education that not only enriches the learning process but also helps in the holistic development of students. We can learn more working together than working alone.

There are a variety of practices and activities

that can provide sharing opportunities in a classroom that foster collaboration, communication, and community. It can involve:

Sharing Resources: physical items like art materials or books, or intangible resources like brainstorming ideas

Morning Meeting: daily or weekly, sharing circle, items, or taking turns with task-based roles or speaking opportunities.

Opportunities for Speaking: building and practicing communication skills, specifically learning to understand the value in both expressing own thoughts and listening with an open heart to those of others.

Project-Based Learning: sharing tasks, responsibilities, and credit on class projects.

Social Emotional Learning: develops empathy and understanding, fostering healthy peer relationships.

These practices are integral to creating an environment where students feel valued and part of a supportive learning community. Encouraging sharing builds an understanding of our shared responsibilities to each other in community, which is a critical aspect of the Métis worldview. **Ka-Wiichihitoyaahk: We take care of each other.** ■

■ Invitation to Learn

Métis Foundational Knowledge Themes Course

As many Canadians and educators are aware the Métis peoples are considered (as per section 35 (2) of the Constitution Act, 1982) one of the 3 equally recognized Indigenous peoples of Canada.

Yet, if you asked students “who are the Métis?” you might find that many students, and sometimes educators, don’t really know. The reasons for this are multi-faceted, but we know that systemic racism played a huge part.

A great resource that helps unpack some of those lived experiences can be found through Rupertsland Centre for Teaching and Learning under the Métis Foundational Knowledge Themes tab: it is free for educators. This course explores the lived experiences of the Métis in Alberta, from discrimination

to persistence and resilience, and as well as other historical, and cultural teachings. Although it is not a comprehensive resource of all Métis history across Canada, it is a great place to start!

Learn more about the course [here](#). ■



■ Incorporating Métis Content in a Respectful Way within K-12 Classrooms

Respect in education is mutual. Educators need not avoid Indigenous studies for fear of cultural misappropriation. Métis communities value your sincere efforts and understand that learning is ongoing for everyone, including our youth.

To build confidence, engage with Chartered Community members and elders in kawiihitoyahk. This connection is vital, as every Indigenous Education Council (IEC) now expects a Métis representative, facilitating educator access to Indigenous Education resources.

Be mindful of sensitive topics. Avoid singling out Métis students for discussions on residential schools; they may be unaware of

their family's experiences or feel spotlighted. When addressing cultural misappropriation, ensure educational materials like documentaries don't inadvertently suggest Métis claims are insincere. Preface such content with clear explanations that legitimate Métis communities exist, and false claims by others don't reflect on all Métis or First Nations peoples.

Incorporate Métis culture respectfully by inviting Elders from local Métis Chartered Communities or through MNBC for guest talks. Consider the Métis Sashing ceremony for graduates, allowing them to wear their Sash, symbolizing their achievements and connections, with pride alongside their peers. ■

■ Learning from the Land

The Wild Rose

If you have lived in Canada for any length of time you cannot help but notice the presence of the Wild Rose across Canada: there are “over 35 different species of wild roses that are indigenous to North America”. In today's terminology we know the medicinal properties of this plant to be: “Anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, astringent, purgative, restorative, and tonic.”. Not only are all parts of the plant used for various medicinal purposes from roots, stems, leaves to petals, but we also know that rose hips contain more Vitamin C than oranges, and are also high in vitamins A, K and many B vitamins.

The significance of the Wild Rose in the culture of the Métis people extends beyond its use for medicinal purposes. As the Métis became known as the Flower Beadwork People, a beading practice taught to the young Métis women by the Catholic Grey Nuns, their focus on using Indigenous flowers as the subject matter of their artwork included many plants and flowers indigenous to Canada including, but not limited to, the Wild Rose. Below you will see a picture of a Wild Rose, below that, a painting of a Rose in the Métis beadwork style, and the final picture is that of actual Métis beadwork by a Métis Artist Sarah Lyons. ■



Photo by: Sarah Lyons, 2022, as cited from <https://ameliadouglasinstitute.ca/arts-and-culture>

■ Michif Language On the Go!

Exploring the Rich Heritage of Michif Languages

The Michif languages are historically linked to Métis communities across the Métis homeland. The three Michif languages, commonly referred to as Southern Michif, Northern Michif, and French Michif, and are made up of elements from both First Nations languages and European languages – predominantly Cree and French. Southern Michif uses mostly Plains-Cree verbs and French nouns, but also borrows nouns from English, Saulteaux, and Cree [1].

Southern Michif is most associated with communities in southern Saskatchewan and North Dakota [2]. Southern Michif may also be referred to as Heritage Michif, Mixed Michif, or Turtle Mountain Chippewa Cree. Language (ameliadouglasinstitute.ca)

Michif is upheld as the national Métis language.

It is a unique language that developed in the Red River valley in the early 1800s. Michif is

a mixed language that contains Plains Cree verbs and French nouns and noun structure, as well as some vocabulary and structures from Saulteaux and English.

There are three types of Michif:

- Métis French (also called Michif-French)
- Métis Cree (also called Northern Michif or Île-à-la-Crosse Michif)
- Southern Michif (also called Turtle Mountain Michif, Chippewa-Cree, or Heritage Michif)

Métis people have a long tradition of multilingualism, which stems from their connections to multiple cultures and their resourcefulness and adaptability. Diverse expressions of Métis culture and different kinship networks have resulted in communities and individuals speaking a variety of other languages, such as Cree, Saulteaux, French, and English.

The Words of our Ancestors? <https://ameliadouglasinstitute.ca/michif-language> Classroom Language.

School – kiskinwahamatowikamik
(Northern Michif)

Classroom – kiskinwahamatowikamikos
(Northern Michif)

Student – kiskinohamakan (Northern Michif)

Teacher – kiskinohamakew (Northern Michif)

Book – masinahikan (Northern Michif)

Pencil - l'krriyon (Northern Michif)

Paper - l'papi (Northern Michif)

Friend – mitotim (Northern Michif)

**TRANSLATIONS BY
"HERITAGE MICHIF
TO GO" APP**

[Michif To Go \(Metismuseum.ca\)](http://MichifToGo.Metismuseum.ca) ■

■ From the Hearts and Minds of K-12 Education in BC

Friendship Blooms, Building Bridges Through Education and Culture

To streamline the integration of Métis lessons into K-12 education and foster a collaborative environment among staff, Métis parents, Chartered Communities, and the broader community, several school districts are initiating Métis Education or Friendship Agreements.

For instance, SD82 Coast Mountains recently signed a Friendship Agreement with the Northwest BC Métis Association, Tri-River Métis Association, and Métis Nation British Columbia. Named 'Nutr Faasoon Kaa Kaanawaymikooyaahk Aansaam'—a Michif term meaning 'Our ways that keep us together'—this agreement symbolizes unity.

This Friendship Agreement marks the beginning of a mutually respectful relationship, aiming to craft an educational framework that enhances culturally

pertinent education and early learning for Métis students.

Featured below are pictures of our own Métis Family Connections Navigator - Elementary and Secondary Years, Brandi Murphy, attending and speaking at the Worldview for ReconciliACTION speakers panel event that took place in School District 82, in Terrace, BC, in 2023. The friendship agreement is an example of ReconciliACTION! ■



Métis Family Connections

Elementary, Middle & Secondary Years

The Métis Family Connections – Elementary, Middle, and Secondary Years Program was developed by Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC) for families with Métis children ages 9 to 18 years. The Elementary Secondary Years Program focuses on connecting families with community, culture, and opportunities to access relevant programs and services that support a healthy transition from elementary and secondary education to post-secondary education, skills training, and the workforce. If you have Métis students in your class or school community, referring them to this program can be life changing.

Why is it important for families to enroll their children in the Métis Family Connections – Elementary and Secondary Years Program?

- To learn more about Métis identity and Métis Nation.
- To be up to date on what elementary and secondary education services are available in your community and how to access them.
- Be aware of services offered to MNBC citizens such as the Métis Child Care Benefit (MCCB) Program, the Skills Training, Employment and Post Secondary (STEPS) program, and other valuable services offered by the Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Children and Families, Ministry of Housing, and Ministry of Health.
- To be connected to other Métis families.



- To have support in a healthy transition through the elementary and secondary education system into adulthood and the workforce.
- Opportunities to attend Métis family gathering events. ■

Métis Nation Elementary and Secondary Years Bulletin

Study Examines Unique Realities of Métis Educators

Métis Nation British Columbia's (MNBC) Ministry of Education was invited to do a call-out for a study on K-12 teachers who are Métis citizens. Two Academics, Dr. Laura Forsythe from the University of Winnipeg, and Dr. Lucy Fowler from the University of Manitoba are undertaking this study called **Kaanawapatha maytress/maytr d'ikol dann li niikinaahk: Taking a Look at the Experiences of Métis Teachers in the homeland**. This unique study will examine the lived realities of Métis educators on two fronts: recruitment and retention. They would like to tell the story of how Métis Educators experience educational training in Canadian universities and subsequent teaching careers within the K-12 education system. They hope to interview 50 Métis educators who are MNBC citizens. These 1-3 hour interviews will be conducted over the summer and fall of 2024 virtually (Zoom) or by telephone and they will follow Métis protocols. This project is fully funded by the Rideau Hall Foundation and the results of the research will be gifted to MNBC and distributed as broadly as possible. Questions can be emailed to Métisteachers2024@gmail.com ■

Kaanawapatha maytress/maytr d'ikol dann li niikinaahk: Taking a look at the experiences of Métis Teachers in the homeland

METIS EDUCATORS

WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR STORY

For a study on the experiences of Métis K-12 educators across the homelands

Questions can be emailed to métisteachers2024@gmail.com



 THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

 University of Manitoba



■ Navigators out in the Community

Filomi Days – Port Hardy

Filomi Days is an annual celebration of Port Hardy's industry and culture held in July. It is an opportunity to reconnect with long-lost friends, experience flavourful food, and various local vendors displaying their amazing skills. The oceanside stage featured local musicians and brave Port Hardy citizens presenting their talents in the talent show.

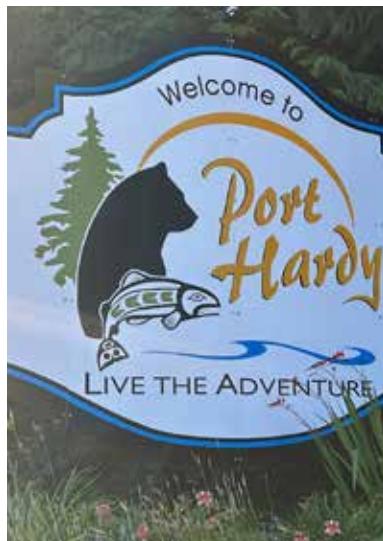
Diana, MNBC's Elementary and Secondary Years Navigator for Vancouver Island, attended along with the North Island Métis Association Chartered Community. Diana was grateful to be able to engage with the community of Port Hardy. She connected with local Métis families, Educators, local First Nations Members, community workers, and members of the Port Hardys population. Many people shared their stories with Diana, including how they came to be in Port Hardy, their Métis ancestry knowledge or discovery, revitalizing the culture and language in their community, struggles with residential schools and forgiveness. Diana was able to provide information to families, regarding Métis Education, Métis Family Connections, Citizenship, Métis Child

Care Benefit, Wellbeing Program, STEPS opportunities, and much more.

This event brought the community together. From local Port Hardy residents who have been here their entire lives to people who have traveled back from afar to celebrate their hometown community. The diversity, interwoven with laughs and smiles, was truly heartwarming. What stood out was how Métis people in Port Hardy walk proudly with their heads held high, and

there is a passion in this community for Métis to come together. Bravo to Port Hardy for putting on one of the Best Community Celebrations on the Island!

If your district is hosting an event for Indigenous families, we would love to join you. Email Métiseducation@mnbca.ca ■





■ UPCOMING EVENTS

Indspire National Gathering for Indigenous Education

November 20–22, 2024 | Winnipeg, MB

Join Canada's leading voices on Indigenous education in Winnipeg, Manitoba – or from the comfort of your home!

Indspire is pleased to announce that the 2024 National Gathering for Indigenous Education will take place via a hybrid format, allowing educators from across the country to attend virtually or in person.

The National Gathering is a one-of-a-kind venue where educators and partners can share their voices and work together to improve the educational outcomes of K-12 Indigenous students. This uniquely important annual conference attracts hundreds of educators and partners each year. We invite you to join the conversation!

Back by popular demand, there will also be a student panel discussion featuring three Indigenous students who will discuss their experiences in post-secondary educational settings.

[Register for 2024 National Gathering](#) ■

■ UPCOMING EVENTS

Mawachihitotaak

Sept 25–28, 2024 | Winnipeg

Over the past year, visioning and planning have been underway for the second Mawachihitotaak (Let's Get Together) Métis Studies Symposium to bring together a diverse community of Métis thinkers. This gathering will occur in Winnipeg, MB from September 25-28, 2024, at the University of Manitoba. We intend to create a space for Métis scholars, artists makers, Elders, knowledge holders, students, language speakers, organizers, writers, and other community members to share knowledge, engage in conversation, and dream together. Through our visiting, we will discuss a range of Métis priorities and scholarship areas while nourishing our relationships, celebrating our diverse experiences and contributions, and building Métis knowledge.

[Register for Mawachihitotaak 2024](#) ■



Our Métis Family Connections – Elementary and Secondary Years Navigators

The specialized Navigators can walk alongside our Métis learners and their families as they navigate their years of the K-12 Education system right up to graduation.

Meet Your Navigator:

Diana Wass dwass@mnbc.ca Region 1 Vancouver Island

Brandi Murphy bmurphy@mnbc.ca Region 2 Lower Mainland

métiseducation@mnbc.ca Region 3 Thompson-Okanagan | Region 4 Kootenays

Colette Nelson cnelson@mnbc.ca Region 5 North Central | Region 6 Northwest | Region 7 Northeast

References

Constitutional Studies Canada. (2024). Centre for Constitutional Studies. Constitutional Studies Canada.

Ruperts land Institute. (2024). Teaching & Learning.

Belcourt-Dittloff, A. E. (2007). Resiliency and risk in Native American communities: A culturally informed investigation. University of Montana. ■

Contact Information

For more information about Métis programs and services, contact us at Métiseducation@mnbc.ca

Resources

[Ruperts land Institute - Métis Education Resources](#)
[Métis Education Resources - Rupertsland Institute](#)

[The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture](#)
[The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture \(Métismuseum.ca\)](#)

[First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Professional Learning Project](#)

[FNMI – First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Professional Learning Project \(fnmiprofessionallearning.ca\)](#)



MÉTIS NATION
BRITISH COLUMBIA