

First Métis Education Agreement in Canada creates culturally responsive education system for Métis youth in K-12

September 16, 2022 - (Victoria, BC) - The Greater Victoria School District, Métis Nation Greater Victoria, and Métis Nation British Columbia have co-developed the first tripartite Métis Education Agreement for Kindergarten through Grade 12 in Canada.



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The purpose of the agreement is to represent the voice of Métis people in the Capital Regional District and ensure culturally relevant education and early learning services are being provided to Métis children and families. All three parties commit to working together to provide resources and supports that contribute to the success of Métis students upon entry into the school system, at each grade level, and through to graduation into post-secondary education and training programs.

Key considerations outlined in the agreement include:

- Building relationships with Métis community
- Ensuring Métis cultural identity is reflected in the education and childcare systems
- Providing Métis-specific content, resources, and approaches in schools
- Supporting opportunities for all youth in early learning programs to Grade 12 about Métis culture, history, and worldviews

To review the agreement:

<https://www.sd61.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/91/2022/09/Metis-Education-Agreement.pdf>

The agreement was co-designed with Elders, community members, and staff over the past year. All topics relating to Métis students, curriculum, and representation will continue to be reviewed by the Métis House with Greater Victoria School District staff.

Métis Nation Greater Victoria (MNGV) is one of the Four Houses that provides guidance and support for Indigenous education in the Greater Victoria School District. The other three Houses include the two local Nations (Songhees and Esquimalt) and the Urban Peoples House Indigenous Advisory (UPHIA) that represents all other Indigenous Nations.

There are currently 357 students in the Greater Victoria School District that identify as Métis.

Caitlin Bird, Métis Nation Greater Victoria President:

“As a community, we have heard that Métis children and families have a better experience within the educational system when they feel seen, understood and supported. The Métis Education Agreement outlines our shared responsibility to lift up, support and wrap around the Métis children and families in the Greater Victoria School District, so that their educational experience is culturally relevant and positive. I am so grateful for the partnerships that this Agreement formalizes, and the relationships that were built throughout the development of the Métis Education Agreement. Métis Nation of Greater Victoria would also like to acknowledge that this work would not have been possible without the foundation that the other Houses have provided with their agreements with the School District. While our cultures and needs may be distinct, one thing that Métis Nation of Greater Victoria shares with Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations is that we understand the importance of placing our children at the center of the work that we do. This agreement embodies those important relationships and values.”

Debra Fisher, Métis Nation British Columbia, Minister of Education:

“After 30 years of working in Indigenous Education this is a dream come true. No one knows our Métis children like we do and to be working as true partners in this historic agreement we will make a difference! In recognizing our shared responsibility in improving educational outcomes for Métis learners, including achieving high levels of Métis student success, graduation and transition to higher learning, or employment, we hope that our work in the Greater Victoria School District sets a higher standard for collaboration and

consultation in the Education system. We hope that it will inspire other educational institutions across the province and beyond to come together and challenge the status quo to create more equitable systems and brighter futures for our Métis people.”

Lissa Dawn Smith, Métis Nation British Columbia President:

“This historic tripartite agreement demonstrates the systemic changes that are possible when community needs, values and relationships are prioritized. In a time when Reconciliation is at the forefront of all public service-related dialogue, Métis Nation British Columbia is proud to have been a partner in the successful development of BC’s first ever Métis Education Agreement. The agreement acknowledges the important role schools, Métis Chartered Communities, and Métis Nation British Columbia representation play in building a culturally relevant, positive, and effective education system for Métis students and serves as a core shared accountability mechanism regarding the education of Métis students in the Greater Victoria School District.”

Ryan Painter, Greater Victoria School District Board Chair:

“Our Board of Education is very proud to be co-creating strategies for improving the experiences of Métis students with the support of Métis Nation Greater Victoria and Métis Nation British Columbia. We wish to acknowledge all of the collective work that went into developing this agreement over the past year to ensure our District is delivering culturally relevant and quality education that contributes to the well-being and educational success of Métis students. Finalizing this agreement is a monumental moment as we look to renew our relationship with the Métis people and take steps towards reconciliation.”

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