

ENN LETR DI NOOVEL



Métis Commission for Children and Families of BC

November 2014

Message from the President

As the new president of the Métis Commission for Children and Families of B.C, I would like to share my excitement in being part of a new beginning for MCCFBC. I would like to thank the Métis community members for voicing their concerns at our recent AGM. I want to assure the community that the board is reflecting on the past and changing to ensure a new era emerges that reflects Métis values of honesty and integrity. MCCFBC is working on repairing relationships with our service providers, assessing our service delivery and repairing our reputation. I offer a commitment to the Métis community – your voices have been heard and will continue to be heard. MCCFBC's goal for the coming year is to have an organization that is accountable, transparent and that represents the Métis community's voice.

We have started working on these changes to ensure transparency and accountability to the Métis community:

- We have hired a new CEO, Eva Coles, who has leadership experience and a honourable reputation in the First Nations community
- We had an AGM in September, 2014 which representatives from all areas attended
- We have a business plan and strategic plan in progress
- A new executive has been formed with a new president, secretary and treasurer
- We have a new HR policy committee formed with a staff representative, Commissioners and the CEO
- We are redoing policies and procedures that include adding an exit interview and a whistle blower policy, reviewing the reporting structure and confidentiality expectations for Commissioners
- The CEO is providing monthly activity reports and is working hard to rebuild relationships with the service providers
- Strategy sessions for provincial Métis service providers are set for spring 2015
- First newsletter since 2012 about to be distributed with updates on the Commission's purpose, as well as changes at the Commission
- All of the auditors suggestions have been implemented
- 360 evaluation is on the agenda for future Commissioners meeting for full review
- Monthly financial statements now go to all Commissioners for their review at the same time as the treasurer receives them
- Staff are now invited to board meetings and are actively solicited for their input

I am honoured to be a part of the Métis community and look forward to the renewal and challenges that lay ahead for MCCFBC. I would also like to acknowledge the sacrifices and resilience our ancestors demonstrated that made us a distinct culture that we are today.

Sincerely,
Ferne Strain, President

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From the desk of the CEO

Tansi,

My name is Eva Coles. I am the new CEO at the Métis Commission for Children and Families BC. I have received a very warm welcome from Métis Citizens, community partners and Commission staff since I started in August. It has been much appreciated. Thank you for that!

It has been a busy time here at the Commission. To start off my learning in a good way I have been interviewing Métis people everywhere I go. I have asked the following three questions:

- What does being Métis mean to you and your family?
- What is it about being Métis that is important for children to have while they are being served through the child protection system?
- What do you think the Métis Commission for Children and Families' role is in BC?

For the question about being Métis, I have had some beautiful answers about the pride, values and the belonging that comes with acknowledging Métis heritage. I have also heard about feeling part of a community and a legacy that has made Canada what it is today. This pride and feeling of Métis community has mostly come from the elders who remember the language and traditions of their own elders and families.

Question two seems to be more difficult to put into words for almost everyone. How do you instill Métis pride in a child who lives in foster care? How do you teach social workers about the importance of this identity work? The most common answers have revolved around bringing the community closer to the kids and acknowledging the child's natural connections for support.

For most people, question three has been the hardest one. Herein lies my work as your new CEO. I will be providing clarity, mandate and a work plan for MCFBC so that the Métis community and its working partners can use the Commission to its fullest potential to affect change for Métis children in need. Please see our work that has been done to date on the next page.

I would love to have the opportunity to hear from you about your thoughts on the above three questions. Phone me at the Commission office 1-877-606-3847, email me at ecoles@metiscommission.com or we can have a kitchen table talk if you are in the Kamloops or East Kootenays areas.

Eva Coles,
CEO Métis Commission for Children and Families of BC





MCCFBC Mandate and Activity Update, Fall 2014

Mandate of MCCFBC


When an Aboriginal child enters the Child Protection system in British Columbia their Aboriginal community must be served notice of this action. The Métis Commission acts as the Métis “Community” receiving court service for Métis children. Similarly a First Nation child with status would have their documents served to their band. At the Commission we review each court service, make recommendations, offer cultural Métis specific cultural planning, make referrals for Métis services and at times intervene for better service on behalf of these children. In BC there are Métis Service providers (see list at the end of this newsletter) that share this work with the Commission by way of a protocol agreement. In areas where there is no Métis agency the Commission endeavours to educate and send information packages to social workers and family support workers about what might be of help to assist Métis children and their families. At times the Commission acts as mediator and/or and advocate for Métis families involved in the Child Protection system.

At the same time the Commission acts as an advisor to the government of BC as well as Métis political organizations about changes needed to protect the rights and cultural heritage of Métis children going through the Child Welfare system. We supply statistics, policies, and training to those in political advocacy positions.

2014 Activities at the Commission

- Participation in Aboriginal Day Ceremony and Cultural Days through Heritage Canada Funding
- New CEO started August 18, 2014.
- First provincially open AGM September 20th, 2014 (15th Anniversary of Commission)
- Protocol agreement signed with Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child and Family Services (East Kootenays to serve Métis children in that area)
- Business Plan and Strategic Plan in draft
- New Human Resources (HR) policy review committee formed. Two meetings to date.
- Seat designated for staff on working committees and at board meetings.
- New policy for exiting interviews, whistle blower policy, confidentiality policy for board members, and interview criteria for new board members have been ordered by the new board.
- CEO and Financial Officer present monthly activity reports to the Board of Commissioners. The CEO is focused on relationship building across the province of BC at this time.
- Age appropriate Métis cultural packages are now being made up to send around the province. They include music, language, stories and history of the Métis.
- Commission staff has attended several ceremonies for Métis children that are either being adopted or leaving the care of the ministry (aging out) to present them with a Métis Sash and a cultural information package.
- A resource list and a research inventory for all things Métis child and family related is being updated at the Commission this fall so that we can send materials easily to anyone that needs this for their work.
- New grant funding is being sought. Both private and public funds.
- Métis specific training modules for all delegated Aboriginal Social Workers is now in development for 2015 provincial training. This includes delegation training as well as adoptions training and any on-line training.
- Meetings are scheduled or have been attended with MNBC, BC Métis Federation, MCFD, Child and Youth Advocate and Some Métis Service Providers, Adoptions Exception Committee and Aboriginal Early Childhood Committee.
- Strategic Planning session set for early 2015 for all Métis partners working with Métis Children and Families

Please call anytime if you would like more information or have questions about any of the above. We would be happy to hear from you.



Child and Family Community Services Act: Child Protection Legislation regarding Service to the Métis Commission for Children and Families of BC

Timing and notice of presentation hearing about application for a supervision order

33.1 (1) No later than 10 days after the date of applying under section 29.1 for a supervision order, the director must attend court for a presentation hearing unless the court is notified that the director does not intend to proceed with the application.

(2) At least 7 days before the date set for the presentation hearing, notice of the date, time and place of the hearing must be served on

- (a) the child, if 12 years of age or over, and
- (b) the person with care of the child.

(3) The notice must be in the form of a written report described in section 33.2 (1).

(4) In addition, the director must, if practicable, inform the following of the date, time and place of the presentation hearing:

- (a) each parent, if not already served under subsection (2);
- (b) the Public Guardian and Trustee, if the parent entitled to custody of the child is under 19 years of age;

(c) the applicable aboriginal organization prescribed in the regulations for the purposes of this section, if the child is an aboriginal child, other than a Nisga'a child or a treaty first nation child;

- (d) the Nisga'a Lisims Government, if the child is a Nisga'a child, and
- (e) the treaty first nation, if the child is a treaty first nation child.

(5) The director need not inform a person under subsection (4) if that would, in the director's opinion, cause physical or emotional harm to any person or endanger the child's safety.

Duty to attend and inform others of presentation hearing

34 (1) No later than 7 days after the day a child is removed under section 30, the director must attend the court for a presentation hearing.


(2) Subsection (1) does not apply if the director has returned the child under section 33 and withdrawn from the presentation hearing.

(3) The director must, if practicable, inform the following of the time, date and place of the hearing:

- (a) the child, if 12 years of age or over;
- (b) each parent;
- (c) the Public Guardian and Trustee, if the parent apparently entitled to custody of the child is under 19 years of age;

(d) the applicable aboriginal organization prescribed in the regulations for the purpose of this section, if the child is an aboriginal child, other than a Nisga'a child or a treaty first nation child;

- (e) the Nisga'a Lisims Government, if the child is a Nisga'a child, and
- (f) the treaty first nation, if the child is a treaty first nation child.



Parties to proceeding

39 (1) If the following persons appear at the commencement of the protection hearing, they are entitled to be parties at the hearing:

(a) each parent of the child;

(b) the director;

(c) if the child is an aboriginal child, other than a Nisga'a child or a treaty first nation child, the designated representative of the Indian band or aboriginal community who was served with notice of the hearing;

(d) if the child is a Nisga'a child, the designated representative of the Nisga'a Lisims Government who was served with notice of the hearing;

(d.1) if the child is a treaty first nation child, the designated representative of the treaty first nation who was served with notice of the hearing;

(e) a person who has an interim order for custody of the child under section 35 (2) (d).

(2) If a person referred to in subsection (1) (a), (b), (c), (d) or (d.1) appears at the commencement of a protection hearing or a person becomes a party under subsection (4), that person is entitled

(a) to notice of a hearing under section 42.2, 44, 46, 49, 55, 57 or 58 relating to the child, and

(b) to be a party at the hearing if the person appears.

(3) If the court orders under section 41 (1) (b) that the child be placed in the custody of a person other than the parent or a director, that person is entitled

(a) to notice of a hearing under section 42.2, 44, 46, 49, 54.01, 55, 57 or 58 relating to the child, and

(b) to be a party at the hearing if the person appears.

(4) The court may order that a person be a party at any hearing.

Métis Prayer

Li Bon Jeu, not Creatoer, li courage miyinauwn, paray chee itayhtamawk, kwayesh kapimouhtayhk, marsee chee itwayak ka kishcheetaimoyak.

God, our Creator, give us courage, let us be of one mind, make us righteous, thankful and proud.

Lee Michif Weechihik awnsawmbl chee atoushkaychik, sourtoo lee vyeu chee awpachihayakook li zhen chee kishnamawachik pour li tawn ki vyaen.

Help the Métis to work together especially utilizing our Elders as teachers and preparing our youth for the future.

Li Bon Jeu la diresoon miyinaawn, itayha chimiyouitayhtamak, li shmaen chee oushtawyawk pour la Nawsyoon dee Michifota dans not Piyee.

Lord provide us with direction and inspiration as we build a road for the Métis Nation in this Country.

Sa prend lee famee di Michifchee shoohkshichik kispin la Nation di Michifchee shoohkaw.
We must have strong Métis families in order to have a strong Métis Nation.

Marsee d'twnanan.

Thank you and Amen.



The Daniels Decision: What does it mean?

In 1999, The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples along with Harry Daniels, Gabriel Daniels, Leah Gardiner and Terry Joudrey, representing both the Métis and non-status Indians took the federal government to court. They alleged that the Métis and non-status Indians were being discriminated against by not being considered “Indians under [section 91(24)] of the Constitution Act [of 1867]” (<http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/court-of-appeal-upholds-landmark-ruling-on-rights-of-m%C3%A9tis-1.2613834>).

“The case entitled (Daniels v. Canada) was seeking recognition of three basic principles, in that:

- Métis and Non-Status Indians are Indians under subsection 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1867,
- The Crown owes to Métis and Non-Status Indians a fiduciary duty as Aboriginal peoples,
- Canada must negotiate and consult with the Métis and Non-Status Indians, on a collective basis through representatives of their choice, with respect to their rights, interests and needs as Aboriginal peoples” (<http://bcMétis.com/wp-content/uploads/BCMF-Letter-to-Métis-People-April-21st-2014-Daniels-Case-Court-of-Appeal.pdf>).

The Courts ruled in favour of the Métis in the first declaration, stating that the Métis be considered Indians under subsection 91(24) of the Constitution Act. This ruling essentially means that the Federal government and not the Provincial government would have primary jurisdiction over the Métis. For many years the Federal and Provincial governments have passed the buck in regards to which level of government is responsible for the Métis, each stating the other had jurisdiction. This has led to the Métis being deprived of “government programs, services and intangible benefits resulting in discrimination and marginalization of the Métis” (<http://bcMétis.com/2014/09/daniels-case-update/>). The other two declarations were not granted by the Courts. It is considered a major victory that the Federal Court recognized the Métis as Indians under the Constitution, although the Court determined that recognition of non-Status Indians should be done on a case-by-case basis.

“If the s. 91(24) declaration in favour of the Métis is confirmed, this would effectively require the Federal Government to act in good faith towards the Métis with respect to negotiations relating to relevant matters. These would include programs similar to those which the Government has for the First Nations and Inuit Peoples such as education, health, housing, employment, heritage and cultural activities and other appropriate benefits and rights of the Métis people” (<http://bcMétis.com/2014/09/daniels-case-update/>)

The Federal Government appealed the original decision to the Federal Court of Appeal. The court ruled in April of 2014, upholding this landmark ruling. This decision was considered yet another victory in what has been a long legal battle with the Federal government. If the Federal government decides to appeal this newest ruling, the case would go to the highest court in the land - The Supreme Court of Canada - which would make the final ruling and decision on this matter. If this does happen and the Supreme Court upholds the previous decisions, “it would still take years before these rulings would translate into actual benefits for the Métis. The Federal government would need to reshape its policies regarding and enter into negotiations with, the Métis” (<http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/court-of-appeal-upholds-landmark-ruling-on-rights-of-m%C3%A9tis-1.2613834>).

Métis Role Models

Rene Bourque:

Rene Bourque is a professional hockey player in the NHL who currently plays for the Montreal Canadiens and is of Métis Descent. Rene Bourque was born in Lac La Biche which is located in Northern Alberta on December 10, 1981. Rene Bourque has placed a great deal of importance on his education. In his teenage years he was recruited to play for the Saskatoon Blades, a team in the Western Hockey League.



However, he turned down this offer as it would make him illegible to play for a National Collegiate Athletic Association school, and his education was of the utmost importance to him. Bourque earned a full scholarship to the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he earned a degree in Consumer Behaviour and Business. It wasn't until this point that he decided to make a career as a professional hockey player. Rene Bourque has played in the NHL for The Calgary Flames, Chicago Blackhawks and the Montreal Canadiens and has played for the Canadian National Team at the 2010 IIHF Championships. Bourque is involved with many charities in both Calgary and his home town of Lac La Biche dedicated to encouraging Aboriginal youth and helping underprivileged children in rural Northern Alberta afford the cost of playing hockey. He has also appeared as a spokesman for Aboriginal people in sport at youth symposiums. In 2010 he started a program called Bourque's Buddies, which rewards children of the Tsuu T'ina Nation who've made positive contributions to their schools with tickets to Calgary Flames games.

Learn Michif

Michif is the indigenous language of the Métis people of Canada. Michif emerged over two hundred years ago as a mixed language, combining Cree and French, with some additional borrowing from English and First Nation languages such as Ojibwa and Assiniboine. In general, Michif nouns (and their associated grammar) are French, while verbs (and their associated grammar) are Cree.

The Michif language is unusual among contact languages, in that rather than choosing to simplify its grammar, it chose the most complex and demanding elements of the chief languages that went into it. This suggests that, instead of haltingly using words from another's tongue, the people who devised Michif were fully fluent in both French and Cree. (<http://www.cunfi.org/?q=node/8>)

Greetings:

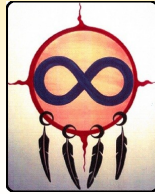
Hello- Tawnshi
Good Morning- Tawnshi kiya mataen
How are you? -Tawnshi kiya
How are you (plural)- Tawnshi kiyawow
How are they?- Tawnshi wiyawow
How is your family?- Tawnshi ta famee?
I am fine-Nimiyou ayawn
I am Métis- Niya Otipemisiwak

Saying Goodbye

Good evening-Bon swear
Good night-Bon swear
See you soon-Meena kawapimitin
Take care-Pishshapmishko
I am glad to see you-Nimeytaen ainwapimitan

Métis Commission for Children and Families of BC

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Fax—(250) 372-9111
Toll Free—1-877-606-3847



*“Advancing transformative change for the
well-being of Métis children, youth
and families.”*

**Check us out on the internet:
www.metiscommission.com**

Recipe

Gourmet Wild Rice Casserole
Li Rii Faroosh Kasarool Gormaa

Ingredients:

1 cup of Wild Rice
¼ tsp of salt
3 cups of boiling water
½ lb of mushrooms, sliced
½ chopped onion
½ cup of butter
1 cup grated old cheddar cheese
1x19oz can tomatoes
1 tsp of salt
1 cup of hot water

Instructions:

- Follow the quick soak method to prepare the wild rice for cooking
- Cook rice, covered, in boiling salted water for 30 minutes until nearly tender.
- Drain Rice if Necessary
- Sauté Mushrooms and Onions in butter, for about 5 minutes
- Mix Rice with all ingredients
- Place in Buttered 2 quart casserole
- Cover and bake 1 hour at 350° F



Recipe From: [http://www.naho.ca/
documents/Métiscentre/english/](http://www.naho.ca/documents/Métiscentre/english/)

The purpose of this newsletter is to connect individuals from across the province who promote the health and well-being of our Métis children and families.

If you have any stories, events, photos or newsworthy items that you would like to share, please email: Ashley (Cultural Safety Worker) culturalsafety@metiscommission.com

Annual Louis Riel Celebration

Lii Michif Otipemisiwak in Kamloops, BC is pleased to present their Louis Riel Celebration, on Saturday, November 15th, at 5pm at the Thompson Rivers University Grand Hall. Tickets are \$20 (Children 11 and under are free) and include a Bison and Bannock Dinner, Entertainment, a Silent Auction and a Dance. Only 225 tickets are available. Please call 250-554-9486 or visit 707 Tranquille Road to purchase your tickets!

Métis Service Providers in British Columbia

**Lii Michif Otipemisiwak Family
and Community Services**
707 Tranquille Road
Kamloops, BC V2B 3J1
(250) 554-9486

Métis Community Services Society of BC
#201-2949 Pandosy Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1W1
(250) 868-0351

Cariboo Chilcotin Métis Association
#6-160 Oliver Street
Williams Lake, BC V2G 1L8
(250) 392-4428

North Cariboo Métis Association
668 Doherty Drive
Quesnel, BC V2J 1B9
(250) 992-9722

Island Métis Family & Com. Services
345 Wale Road
Victoria, BC V9B 6X2
(250) 391-9924

Métis Family Services
13639—108th Ave.
Surrey, BC V3T 2K4
604-584-6621

Kikino Métis Children & Family Services
369 Victoria Street
Prince George, BC V2L 2J6
(250) 563-1661

Ktunaxa-Kinbasket Children & Family
7472 Mission Road
Cranbrook, BC V1C 7E5
(250) 489-4563

**Dawson Creek Aboriginal & Family
Services**
#14-1405 102nd Avenue
Dawson Creek, BC V1G 2E1
(250) 782-1169