



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Métis Nation – Saskatchewan launches Dene language pilot project, fostering a new generation of Language Keepers**

**July 6, 2020 – Saskatoon, SK** – Métis Nation – Saskatchewan (MN-S) is introducing a Dene Early Learning Pilot Project (DELPP) with the Northern Lights School Division at Ducharme School in La Loche, this fall.

La Loche has a large number of adults who speak Dene. Most children understand, but only a handful can engage in a fluent discussion.

The DELPP will run parallel to the Michif Early Learning Pilot Program (MELPP) with the Royal Canadian Geographical Society announced last week. The MELPP has received overwhelming enthusiasm from our Métis citizens.

It also comes on the heels of the graduation of 21 students of the very first Dene Teacher Education Program through the First Nations University of Canada. The grads are excited and ready to apply their hard earned skills. La Loche has hired eight Dene teachers graduates to foster the next generation of Dene Language Keepers.

Prekindergarten and Kindergarten children from La Loche attending Ducharme School in the fall, are eligible to register for this unique program. The plan includes an extended school day, parent and community engagement opportunities, Dene Language Keepers providing immersion for children, and additional resources including transportation.

Dene Early Learning Pilot Project is open for student enrolment for the 2020-21 school year. Parents can contact Darcy Ahenakew at [darcyahenakew@nlsd113.ca](mailto:darcyahenakew@nlsd113.ca) or Lisa Fleming at [lfleming@mns.work](mailto:lfleming@mns.work) for more information.

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#### **FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES:**

**Julia Burns – MN-S Communications Director  
306-850-1670**