



Dear Minister McLennan,

Maarsii. Thank you for serving the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S) as Minister of Language, Culture and Heritage.

This mandate letter describes the progress made to date under your portfolio and your responsibilities and priorities moving forward. It also outlines how I expect you to conduct yourself as a Minister and work with other Ministers, members of the Provincial Métis Council (PMC), and fellow citizens. As accountability and transparency are the cornerstones of good government, I am making these letters public, so all citizens are informed of how their government is working for them.

PROGRESS TO DATE

Repatriation of Batoche

As Métis, we are proud of our culture and our forefathers and mothers who defended our values, language and way of life. Batoche is immeasurably important to Métis in Saskatchewan, which is why we gather there every year to pay homage to our brave ancestors and practice the very culture they defended.

Since a resolution was passed by the PMC in January 2018 to repatriate approximately 940 acres of the Batoche National Historic Site, we have been in active negotiations with Parks Canada Agency. Work is proceeding well, with necessary environmental assessments and consultations underway. The creation of a new cooperative management agreement between MN-S and Parks Canada Agency for the management of Batoche National Historic Site is currently being discussed.

Batoche

Over the past three years, the Back To Batoche Days have been very successful with high attendance and engagement. This celebration has continued to provide an importance opportunity for our people to connect with history, culture, community and each other. The week has also provided a symbolic venue to sign historic agreements for our Nation. In 2018, we signed the Framework Agreement with the Federal Government to recognize and implement Métis Rights. In 2019, we signed a post-secondary education agreement for \$89 million with the Government of Canada, and a steering committee representing Île-à-la-Crosse Boarding School survivors signed an MOU with the Government of Canada.



In 2020, as part of our partnership with Canadian Geographic to revitalize Michif, we worked to deliver an online cultural experience during the week of our regular Back To Batoche days. Ninety-four videos were submitted for competition in fiddling, jigging, and square dance categories. Thousands of viewers logged on to watch the four-day event on YouTube, Facebook, and a live video stream on the website. In 2019, there were approximately 10,000 people of all ages in attendance at the Batoche site. In 2020 for the online festival, there were 1900 views on Youtube, and the website had 3800 unique viewers. On Facebook, each day had an average of 3233 unique viewers, and users tuned in 12,900 times to join the festivities.

We are looking forward to celebrating the 50th anniversary of Back To Batoche in the summer of 2021.

Revitalization of Michif: Partnership with Canadian Geographic

Revitalizing the Michif language is critical to rebuilding our nation. In January 2020, our government announced a partnership with Canadian Geographic to create the Future of Michif Program. This multifaceted-educational initiative, grounded in historical and ancestral knowledge, is designed to get more Métis to speak their traditional language and celebrate Michif and Métis culture. It includes a Michif Language Speakers Bureau to promote and teach Michif, an online Michif language conversation forum, a feature story on the Michif language with an associate poster map to reach millions of Canadians, and a Michif language training program.

With COVID-19, we are working with Canadian Geographic to ensure these initiatives can be done virtually. We are currently working with Métis early learning educators to create ten videos to highlight Métis culture. The videos are in production and will be available to over 25,000 Canadian teachers and over 4 million people worldwide. We are also working on the Michif Language Speakers Bureau and have currently brought in male and female Métis citizens and Elders from the north, central and southern parts of the province. A podcast series is also under development and will highlight a variety of topics on Métis way of life and feature different guests. Finally, Elder Norman Fleury is working on text translation for the Michif Atlas.

Free Access to National Parks and Historic Sites in Saskatchewan for Métis Citizens

On July 17, 2020, our government was proud to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Parks Canada Agency to ensure that all MN-S citizens have free access to national parks and historic sites in Saskatchewan. This six-year agreement is effective immediately and will enable Métis citizens to connect with the land. There will be a specially designed pass for MN-S citizens in the near future. In the interim, citizenship cards can be presented upon arrival to a national park or historic site.



Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples (UIP)

Our government has been working hard to ensure that Regions and Locals have all the information they require to access the federal Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples. This funding stream is proposal-driven and provides resources to Métis communities within our twelve Regions. Our government has strengthened our processes around UIP, including establishing a UIP committee to oversee the formulation as approved by the PMC and creating policies and an oversight committee. We also hired a Provincial Coordinator in April 2019.

To date, Regions and Locals have focused on providing cultural awareness to Métis and non-Métis community members and delivering programming specific to traditional ways of knowing and practices. Examples of funded initiatives include the Elders Gathering in Northern Region 3, partnerships with friendship centres to bring Elders and Youth together for traditional knowledge transmission, and Michif programming.

Supporting Citizens Through COVID-19: MN-S Virtual Kitchen Party

As part of our government's aggressive and proactive response to COVID-19, we have been promoting Métis cultural activities in a safe way to limit transmission of COVID-19. In addition to hosting Back To Batoche festivities online, from April 18, 2020 to July 18, 2020 our government provided online entertainment on our Facebook page with the weekly MN-S Virtual Kitchen Party. Numerous Métis artists shared their talents with us and we thank everyone who tuned in!



MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

As Minister, you are responsible for the following areas:

- All matters relating to the heritage and culture of the MN-S, including Batoche and Louis Riel Day.
- The federal Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples program.
- Revitalization of the Michif language and the Dene language, where spoken by Métis families.
- Supporting the Minister of Veterans for Aboriginal Veterans Day.
- Serve as Chair of the UPIP Committee.
- Relationships with Language Keepers, Indigenous Services Canada, Parks Canada Agency, Canadian Geographic, the Government of Saskatchewan's Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport.
- Encouraging Métis artists of all kinds in the pursuit of their endeavors.

PRIORITIES

I expect you to work constructively with your colleagues, members of the PMC, and citizens to deliver on the following priorities:

- Continue to contribute to the MN-S COVID-19 response to help ensure the health and safety of all Métis citizens. Work closely with the Minister of Health and other relevant Ministers.
- With the support of the Minister of Justice, come to an agreement with Canada to repatriate the 940 acres of the Batoche National Historic Site and create and implement a cooperative co-management model with the Government of Canada to operate and maintain the site.
- We want to increase the number of Michif and Dene speakers across the province. To accomplish this objective:
 - Support the Minister of Education and Early Learning to have Michif and Dene language learning as part of the K-12 curriculum throughout the province. Over the next year, launch, implement and monitor the success of the Michif Early Learning Pilot Project and Dene Early Learning Pilot Project. Based on the outcomes, over the next five years, expand the program across the province and throughout K-12.
 - Create a Michif language strategy focused on the prevention, promotion and preservation of the language. Work with the Minister of Youth to ensure this work includes the unique perspectives of Métis youth.
 - Work closely with Canadian Geographic to complete the deliverables set out in Year One of the Revitalization of the Michif Language Project.
 - Work with the support of Canadian Geographic to develop a set of deliverables and objectives for the Year Two of the Revitalization of the Michif Language Project.



- We want to continue to support Locals and Regions to access the federal Urban Programming for Indigenous People. Over the next year:
 - Complete an environmental scan in each Region to identify how communities are responding to UPIP programming to understand barriers and successes.
 - Work with the Minister of Youth to develop and implement programs that empower Métis youth.
 - Work to secure funding for infrastructure for the Batoche grounds and Regions.
- Consult with Regions to design an annual cultural event to be held in the southern part of the province.
- Support the Minister of Veterans in seeking approval from the PMC to hold an annual Métis-specific Veterans Day. Pending approval, plan and hold the first-ever Métis Veterans Day in Saskatchewan to commemorate and honour the sacrifice of Métis veterans, families and communities.
- Support the Minister of Veterans on commemorative events for Aboriginal Veterans Day.
- Support the Ministers of Women and Gender Equality and Justice in the development of a plan to address the situation of violence against Métis women, female Elders, girls, and LGBTQIP2SAA persons in Saskatchewan.



EXPECTATIONS FOR MINISTERIAL CONDUCT

All Members of the Executive must act with honesty and uphold the highest ethical standards in their personal and professional lives. Métis citizens' confidence and trust in the integrity of government is essential. Our Executive Handbook was updated in November 2019 by the PMC. It affirms that all Ministers must adhere to strict standards of conduct guided by the principles of integrity, accountability, responsibility, leadership, respect and openness. I encourage you to routinely consult the Executive Handbook and use it as a guiding resource in your work.

In addition to the roles and responsibilities listed above, there is also an obligation to support and advance the overall priorities of this government. Confidentiality, solidarity and collective responsibility are critical to good governance and must be the foundation of how we work together. Our Executive Handbook outlines the meaning of solidarity. Ministers may disagree and state their personal opinions during private meetings. At the same time, to the public, they must present a unified front on all decisions and support all decisions made by their fellow Ministers. Collectively, Ministers are accountable for these decisions, even if they do not personally agree with them.

All Ministers must work collaboratively with each other and all members of the PMC to establish good communication. We will ensure policies and programs reflect the needs and aspirations of Métis citizens. The unique challenges that rural and urban citizens face are considerations in decision-making. Every attempt should be made to consult with and obtain the views of Members of the PMC, local Presidents, community members, Métis women, youth, LGBTQIP2SAA persons, Elders, and other experts.

As we strengthen our working partnerships with First Nations, the Government of Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan, you are expected to conduct yourself in a respectful and cooperative manner. Delivering success for our citizens requires good working partnerships with external partners and being solutions-oriented.

Our government has zero-tolerance for unethical behaviour. All Ministers are obligated to question any request or decision that they think may be unethical or unlawful. Rules and the proper protocol for addressing alleged breaches can be found in section 7.0 of the Executive Handbook.



As we rebuild our Nation, we know we have a lot of work to do. Part of this journey must include recognizing the devastating impact colonialism and land dispossession have had on our communities, kinship, and governance. Lateral violence is endemic across the Métis Nation. We need to understand how we are going to discard colonial attitudes and re-invigorate Métis laws and ways of living together. In particular, we need to critically examine how we will reinstate the vital role Métis women, girls and two-spirit persons traditionally played in our societies. This work must include addressing and ending systemic violence against Métis women, girls and LGBTQIP2SAA persons. We must also continue to ensure equal representation of women in all levels of our government, and that these perspectives and needs be reflected in decision-making.

Our people have fought for over a century for recognition, respect, and our rightful place as a self-determining people. Over the past three years, we have made substantial progress towards realizing the visions of Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont. From signing the Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement with Canada, investing in housing, education and economic development, making real progress on the negotiation of the North-West land claim, and strengthening our internal governance, we have made momentous strides in a relatively short time. This year, our communities have faced a significant challenge to our health and safety: COVID-19. We came together to support citizens, deliver PPE and provide critical support for housing, childcare, and Métis businesses. While we must remain vigilant to ensure everyone's safety, we should all be proud of how we have supported each other during such unprecedented times.

Thank you again for agreeing to serve the MN-S and its citizens. I am here to support you in your role as Minister. Together, we will continue to carry the torch of those great leaders who came before us. We can, and we will, succeed in fully realizing the vision of a strong, self-determining, accountable government for all of us as Métis people in this province.

Sincerely,



President Glen McCallum