



Office of the Provincial President

August 17, 2021

Dear Minister McLennan;

Maarsii. Thank you for agreeing to serve the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S) as Minister of Culture and Heritage.

This mandate letter describes the progress made to date in this 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 four years, the Back To Batoche Days have been very successful with high attendance and engagement. This celebration has continued to provide an important opportunity for our people to connect with history, culture, community and each other.

In 2019, there were approximately 10,000 people of all ages in attendance at the Batoche site. In 2020 and 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we presented an online cultural experience during the week of our regular Back to Batoche days. Thousands of viewers logged on to watch the events on Facebook, and a live video stream on the website.

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 (UPIP)

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 UPIP, including establishing a UPIP 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 Michif language programs, Elder support programs, intergenerational projects, community partnerships, traditional land use programs, story mapping and cultural days.

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. Numerous Métis artists shared their talents with us in weekly live events between since 2019 and July 2020 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.
- Supporting the Minister of Veterans for Aboriginal Veterans Day.
- Serve as Chair of the UPIP Committee.
- Relationships with 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 endeavours.

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 and recovery 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



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.

- Support the development of a robust, distinctions-based Métis cultural promotion and education strategy in consultation with the Ministers of Tourism and Language. In particular, you will work on advancing the following projects:
 - The preliminary development and feasibility studies to create a Métis Keeping House and Language Institute. This would serve as a repository for cultural and heritage knowledge, artefacts, artistry, and interactive education on Métis language and history. It would use technology as a major source of delivery to ensure influence beyond its geographic location.
 - Development of Regional Métis Heritage Tours in regions with rich Métis histories such as the Batoche-Duck Lake-St. Louis region, South Qu'Appelle and others. Sites of historical and cultural importance would be marked and self-guided tours would allow exploration, education and promotion of the importance of Métis in those areas.
- Develop a Métis cultural strategy. Create a Council of Elders who will advise in the development of an overarching strategy for the promotion, preservation and continuity of Métis cultural activities, practices and knowledge.
- Work as co-lead with the Minister of Justice under their Duty to Consult mandate to develop and implement a process of gathering Traditional Land Use (TLU) information for all regions of Saskatchewan. Taken together, this new database of information will provide a clear historical and current picture of land use by Métis. Further, you will ensure the process allows for ongoing updates of TLU by Métis to create a dynamic picture of hunting, gathering, travel and other uses of the land.
- 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 continued infrastructure enhancements and upgrades for the Batoche grounds.
- 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 2SLGBTQQIA+ persons in Saskatchewan.
- Support the Minister of Justice in the Constitutional Reform process to update and modernize our *Constitution of the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan* and related legislation to



ensure they are grounded on our Métis laws and that we create legislative frameworks that will continue to serve our citizens and Métis Nation as we move towards self-government.

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, 2SLGBTQQIA+ 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 2SLGBTQQIA+ 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.

Much respect,



Glen McCallum
President

