A message from President Froh

International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples

The International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples is observed on August 9th each year to promote and protect the rights of the world’s indigenous populations. The Métis Nation, as one of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada, has made great contributions to this country, both past and present. On this International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples (IDWIP), we stand with First Nations, Inuit, and all Canadians in marking this important day.

The IDWIP was first pronounced by the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) in December 1994, marking the day of the first meeting of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations held in Geneva in 1982.

This year’s theme for the International Day – Indigenous Peoples and the Right to Education – provides an opportunity for all Canadians to reflect on the troubling history of Métis, First Nations and Inuit education in Canada under Canada’s colonialist policy of the past, and its lasting legacy; and the hard work that continues before us to create a stronger, more respectful and effective education system in Canada.

Last year, the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada issued its final report and 94 Calls to Action that set a path forward for advancing reconciliation and creating systemic change in the education system in Canada. More recently, the new federal government withdrew its objections to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

As we move forward in Canada in implementing those Calls to Action, as well as the UNDRIP, we must be courageous and innovative in finding new ways to approach education – for Indigenous Peoples and for all Canadians – that respects and reflects the contributions that Indigenous Peoples, including the Métis Nation, have made to Canada. We must commit to and make the necessary investments to improve educational opportunities and supports for Métis, First Nations and Inuit in Canada, and to improve the culture in places of learning.

The Métis Nation of Ontario has developed strong relationships with Ontario on matters regarding education as reflected in our MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement, and with educational institutions across Ontario. We are committed to continuing to work with our partners to improve education in Ontario through the work of the Métis public service as well as the many, many dedicated Métis citizens who volunteer on education related boards and councils across Ontario. Working together, we will continue to support Métis children and youth to be the best that they can be!

Happy International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples

Margaret Froh, President
Métis Nation of Ontario