

# FNMI CONNECTOR

## UPDATES

**Mar 29-30**

**“Learning Together for Success”** FNMI Education Conference in Grande Prairie., hosted by Northwest Regional Learning Consortium Register at [www.nrlc.net](http://www.nrlc.net)

**Walking Together Digital Resource Webinar series**

Register through the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium [www.erlc.ca](http://www.erlc.ca)

- **April 18 (Worldviews)**
- **April 25 (Indigenous Pedagogy)**
- **May 2 (Aboriginal Rights and Treaties)**

**May 4 Walking Together Digital Resource Peace River Delivery**

Register through Northwest Regional Learning Consortium [www.nrlc.net](http://www.nrlc.net)

**Alberta PD Collaborative FNMI Webinar series**

Register through the Learning Network. [www.learning-network.org](http://www.learning-network.org)

- **April 17 (Student Voice)**
- **April 24 (Parent / Community Voice)**
- **May 3 (Curriculum Voice)**
- **May 8 (Teacher Voice)**

**May 16 and 17**

**“Leading in Literacy and Numeracy for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students”** at the River Cree in Edmonton. Register through the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium. [www.erlc.ca](http://www.erlc.ca)



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## ABORIGINAL EDUCATION IN CANADA

It is crucial that Aboriginal students receive a quality education. Unfortunately many of them do not. The school dropout rate for Aboriginal people in Canada is 43% and jumps to 60% among First Nation People living on reserves. This is much higher than the 9.5% dropout rate in Canada’s non-Aboriginal population. In order to start to address this inequality we need to look forward.

- The Council of Ministers Education Canada (CMEC) has recognized the importance of Aboriginal education and is looking for new ways of working with leaders of Aboriginal communities and the governments across Canada to provide better educational experiences for Aboriginal students.
- The Memorandum of Understanding for First Nations in Alberta states : “Canada, Alberta and the Assembly of Treaty Chiefs in Alberta hold a common vision for First Nation students where First Nations students are achieving or exceeding the full educational outcomes, levels and successes of all other Alberta students.”
- It is important for Aboriginal students to continue to learn about and experience Aboriginal culture and tradition, and it is important for all Canadians to learn about and understand Aboriginal culture and tradition as well. First Nations, on and off reserves, Métis and Inuit students need support to remain interested and engaged in school and to have equal financial opportunities to continue their education after high school.
- Canada’s Aboriginal population is the fastest growing of any other population in the country, and is overwhelmingly young. These thousands of children, who will soon be entering the workforce, deserve an equal chance to succeed and they deserve a quality education. Canada is the landscape of our First Nation, Métis and Inuit students. There is no other homeland where quality education is available in the mother tongue, where culture and tradition is taught as part of the mainstream. So the question is, what are you going to do to improve the outcomes for our First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.





## DID YOU KNOW

- ◆ The constitution of Canada recognizes the Métis as one of three Aboriginal peoples.
- ◆ The Métis were originally the offspring of male European fur traders (primarily Scottish or French) and First Nations females, mainly Cree and Ojibway.
- ◆ Developing their own distinct culture and language, the Métis played key roles in the fur trade economy along the trade routes between the Rockies and the Great Lakes.
- ◆ According to the 2006 census, almost 400,000 people identifies themselves as Métis in Canada.
- ◆ Métis communities were established in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories, primarily along major fur trade routes and waterways.
- ◆ Michif is the Métis language, a mixture of French, English, Cree and Ojibway languages

If you are privileged to walk back along the path of time to meet the ancestors and to pause there for an instant, hold onto the memories of the journey and value that which you learn, for the journeys are repeated only for those who are at peace with themselves and in harmony with the world around them.

Chief Dan George

## Where in the World is Red Earth and Trout Lake?

Delores Pruden–Barrie from Northlands School Division and Terry Lynn Cook and Lorianne Tenove from ARPDC set off on an adventure to be part of a PD day for the staff at Trout Lake and Peerless Lake Schools. In order to be up bright an early to make the hour and half trip to Trout Lake, they had the opportunity to stay at the Red Earth Inn overnight, enjoy some home cooking and discover what life is like in this small hamlet.

The trip to Trout Lake involved traveling on a unpaved road frequented by eighteen wheelers who work in both the oil and forestry industry.

Upon arrival, we were greeted warmly by the staff of both schools. The presentation was an interactive workshop on how to engage students and weave FNMI perspectives into the curriculum. All in all, it was a day of celebration where relationships and connections were made, best practices were shared and a deeper understanding of FNMI culture and Ways of Knowing was established.



## TEACHING MATHEMATICS In A FIRST PEOPLES CONTEXT

### Playing the Stick Game (taken from a publication of fnesc)

You will need a set of 4 sticks (e.g., popsicle sticks), coloured or patterned on one side and plain on the other. The patterned side is “up” side when you are playing the game.

Hold the sticks in one hand, and let them fall to the table. In taking turns ,play continues until the first person reaches a tally of 50 points. Keep track of the score in a table. The first person to reach 50 wins. Search and discuss: Combinations vs. Arrangements

#### Scoring

All 4 up = 5 points

1 up and 3 down =2 points

3 up and 1 down =2 points

All 4 down =5 points

2 up and 2 down =1 point

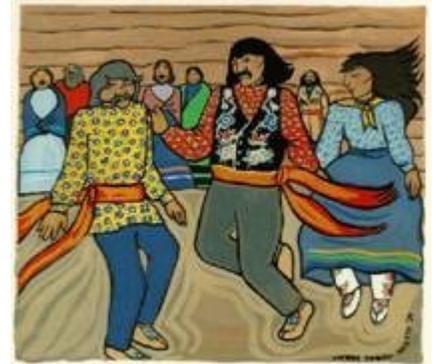
Just from experience playing the game, about how many different arrangements of the sticks did you see? Describe some of the combinations.

# Traditional Métis Music and Dance

Traditional musical instruments of the Métis include the fiddle, the concertina, the harmonica, the hand drum, the mouth harp and finger instruments such as bones and spoons.

Métis style fiddle music is an oral tradition handed down for many centuries. The fiddle plays the melody, tells the story, and many Métis legends are recorded in fiddle tunes. Rhythm is supplied by toe tapping or spoons and the uneven and irregular beats of the fiddle creates a bounce in Métis jigging that is as unique as the fiddling itself. The extra beats make the Métis jig a rapid moving dance and though similar to the Scots-Irish stepdance, the Métis jig is definitely unique in style.

The traditional dance of the Métis include the Waltz Quadrille, the Square dance, Drops of Brandy, the Duck dance, La Double Gigue and the Red River Jig which is the dance most widely known. The Red River Jig is a special piece of fiddle music that is played and danced in two sections. When the fiddle plays the high section, the dancer does a fancy jig step. Many Métis jiggers could perform up to fifty fancy steps. ( Exerpt from MCHRC by Audreen Hourie)



**“My people will sleep for one hundred years, but when they awake, it will be the artists who give them their spirits back.”**

**Louise Riel**

## Sacred Sites in Alberta - Ewan Moberly Homestead

The Ewan Moberly Homestead in Jasper National Park is one of a number of Métis dwellings which were located in the upper Athabasca river valley 100 years ago. The buildings at this site represent the skill and ingenuity of the Métis settlers who lived in the area before roads and railways were built.

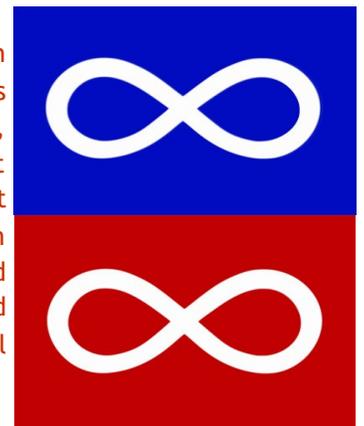
The site contains a number of historic features which include a dwelling of square dovetailed log construction and a grave site. The buildings have been partially restored and stabilized by Jasper National Park, family descendants and the Métis Nation of Alberta, who are working together to find ways to tell the story of early Métis settlement in the area.

The site will be used to increase appreciation and awareness of Métis history and as a focal point to highlight several Métis families and locations in the region. ( Métis Heritage Alliance Partners)

### THE MÉTIS FLAG

The Métis flag was first used by Métis fighters in 1816. It is the oldest Canadian patriotic flag indigenous to Canada. As a symbol of nationhood, the Métis flag predates Canada’s Maple Leaf flag by about 150 years. Both flags use a horizontal figure eight , or infinity symbol. This represents the coming together of two distinct and vibrant cultures, European and Indigenous, to produce a distinctly new culture, the Métis. It symbolizes the creation of a new society with roots in both Aboriginal and European cultures and traditions. The sky blue background emphasizes the infinity symbol and suggests that the Métis people will exist forever. The red flag may have been created by Métis employees of the Hudson’s Bay Company (red and white being the traditional colours of the fur trade giant).

[www.canadiandesignersource.ca](http://www.canadiandesignersource.ca)



# MICHIF CULTURAL AND RESOURCE INSTITUTE

## A MÉTIS MUSEUM

The Michif Cultural and Resource Institute was started by Senator Thelma Chalifoux and like-minded associates in the Métis community to preserve and celebrate their Metis history and culture.

The institute was registered under the Alberta Society Act on February 26, 2002 with the following objectives:

- \* To establish a Métis museum
- \* To research Métis history
- \* To compile a genealogical library of Métis families
- \* To compile a pictorial inventory of Métis history, culture and people
- \* To establish a Métis Sash registry
- \* To preserve and sustain the Michif language
- \* To provide resources for Métis development
- \* To conduct workshops on Métis history, culture and value systems

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**Senator Thelma Chalifoux**



**A Métis sash**

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## FNMI BOOK REVIEW

**David Bouchard**

*Order of Canada/Senior Editor for Rubicon and Pearson Publishers/Métis Author/Educator/Renown conference speaker - speaks to aboriginal students.*

With pride, aboriginal youth learn and are entertained by this celebrated, award winning Métis author as he speak about stories, music and culture. David teaches the importance and value of culture and reading. He shares this message through Native flutes and the unfortunate history behind them.

*"We played our flutes for centuries but as with our stories, languages and much of our culture, we lost them. For two hundred years, the lives of our Grandmothers and Grandfathers were consumed with survival. They did not have leisure time to make and play flutes or to tell their children the stories that should have been passed down to us."*

David teaches the history and the beauty of the flute. He speaks to the importance of stories and language. Through stories, listeners are taught the protocol of stories, telling and listening. David introduces and speaks to his books, most which include aboriginal people.

*"My books are inclusive. We can see ourselves in my books. And my books are accessible. I work hard to make sure that almost anyone can read them. I include art and music and I often write them in rhythm and rhyme so that they are more easily read. And in order to help regain many of the languages that are being lost, I try to write them in as many different languages as possible."*

David offers prizes of signed bookmarks and books and two gifts for every listener: the gift of pride and the gift of reading!

