

Tuesday, August 26th, 2025

Minister Lisa Beare MLA
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4
Email: EDUC.IndigenousEducation@gov.bc.ca

RE: Follow Up to letter to BC Métis Federation President Keith Henry Ref: 309516

Dear Minister Beare:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of Premier Eby regarding clarification on funding for the Indigenous Education Targeted Funding (IETF) which should also benefit Métis students. The BC Métis Federation is therefore responding to your letter to as we believe our concerns require your leadership to ensure the protection of cultural interests for thousands of Metis students in K-12 in British Columbia is your legal responsibility as per the School Act.

We believe as Minister it is your role to ensure school boards in British Columbia are accountable to all children and families, including Metis. In your letter you do not address the lack of recognition of Métis nor the lack of culturally-appropriate educational programs and services available to Métis students in BC through the current legislation and policy of the Indigenous Education Councils. We are surprised that you suggest BC Métis Federation should start the long process of contacting school boards throughout BC to address our concerns and seek solutions. We disagree and the issue can and must be resolved by addressing the School Act legislation.

Further to our concerns about the lack of inclusion in the IETF program for Métis students, we ask you as Minister why Métis are not once named in the current School Act's current legislation? How can this be possible in 2025 that Métis are not included in Part One of the Act entitled, Interpretation?

https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96412_00

There are interpretations/definitions for First Nations and Indians but no specific definition of Metis. In fact, there is not one mention of Métis in the School Act legislation, this despite thousands of Métis students attending K-12 throughout BC. Some of the concerns within the School Act are showcased in:

- **School Act s.87.001:** Indigenous Education Council (IEC) purposes name “the First Nations, the treaty First Nations or the Nisga’a Nation” when integrating worldviews; Métis are not included or mentioned to be included in the IEC.
- **IEC Order (M217/24):** Métis appear only in composition text—boards *may* add members “recognizing [the Indigenous student population] may include First Nation, **Métis** and Inuit students” (s.2(1)(d)); there is no Métis term in the Order’s definitions.
- **Ministerial Order M302/20 (Enhancing Student Learning):** Uses “Indigenous peoples” defined by s.35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 (which includes Métis) but does not spell out “Métis.”

- **First Nation-specific instruments:** “First nation schools of choice” (School Act s.74.2) and the **Model Local Education Agreement Regulation (MO 95/2024)** create rights/mechanisms for First Nations (including treaty and Nisga’a); there is no parallel, Métis-specific regime.

Despite B.C.’s Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (2019) and Action Plan 2022–2027, the promised distinctions-based approach, this is still not operationalized in K–12 education. Métis families and our contemporary communities are being excluded on the IEC’s which leads to unfair outcomes through the IETF. The number of Metis students in School Districts is the majority of Indigenous students in several schools throughout BC but inclusion and cultural support remains invisible and our local Metis families and organizations are dismissed in the governance of the IEC.

Therefore Minister Beare, we ask that you close this gap by publishing new Métis policy for K-12 that:

- Guarantees 1 voting seat for Métis representation on all IEC’s,
- Provides parity for local appropriate Métis community engagement,
- Enables Michif language and culture programming for Métis students, and
- Ensure Métis distinctions-disaggregated data, funding transparency, and reporting. Métis students must stop being invisible in “Indigenous-wide” averages and start benefitting from publicly funded programs tailored to their local Métis family needs.

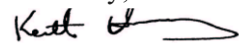
Our Métis members and Métis communities cannot accept further delays by the lack of visibility. Without explicit definitions or guaranteed roles in the School Act for Métis, Metis students will continue to feel invisible, or rather identified as a second-class Indigenous people.

Education is an extremely important concern for all Métis families and students in BC. Our Métis families deserve cultural inclusion and not exclusion under the guise of “Indigenous” while the School Act legislation is used as a tool to exclusively support First Nation students. This cultural exclusion is contributing to widespread Métis identity confusion and does not protect Métis students.

In closing BC Metis Federation is asking you to commit to action and write to all school boards throughout BC to ensure Métis inclusion on the IEC’s as a first step. Second, we urge Métis inclusion in the definitions of the School Act, Interpretation Section. Third, please add the need for 1 Metis voting seat in the role of the IEC’s described in the School Act, section 87.001.

We would be happy to meet and support you in this important work for Metis students throughout BC.

Sincerely,



Keith Henry
President
BC Métis Federation

cc: Board of Directors, Partner Communities, Staff, and Members

Encl. Provincial Correspondence dated July 23rd, 2025

Ref: 309516

Li taan paasii. Li taan ki vyayn.

From our past. For our future.