



**Métis Nation**

## **Métis National Council**

**Written submission to the Standing Committee on  
Finance in advance of Budget 2023**

**October 7, 2022**



Métis Nation  
of Ontario 

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Recommendation 1:** That the Government of Canada provide funding in the amount of \$97 million per year over five years in Budget 2023 for Métis Capital Corporations.

**Recommendation 2:** That the Government of Canada provide funding in the amount of \$893 million over five years to establish and deliver Métis Extended Health Benefits.

**Recommendation 3:** That the Government of Canada invest \$1.17 billion over two years to support the development of a Métis K-12 education program.



## **MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL FEDERAL BUDGET 2023 STATEMENT**

The Métis National Council (MNC) is pleased to present this document to the Standing Committee on Finance for consideration during its pre-budget consultations in advance of Budget 2023. The Métis National Council (MNC) is the national and international representative of the Métis Nation that receives its mandate and direction from its Governing Members: the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan (MN-S), the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA), and the Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC).

Consistently throughout history, the Métis have acted collectively to protect and fight for our rights, lands and ongoing existence as a distinct Indigenous people and nation within the Canadian federation. This dedication continues as citizens and communities throughout the Métis Nation motherland keep the nation's culture, traditions, language, and lifestyle alive and pursue their own political, social, and economic development.

While the MNC has been recognized as one of Canada's National Indigenous Organizations, our organization, and our Governing Members, have faced challenges developing the internal capacity we need to effectively advocate on behalf of the Métis Nation. The MNC has faced decades of underfunding and was weakened by recent efforts to undermine our democratic governance. The MNC, under new leadership is ready to rebuild – together with our Governing Members, we are on the verge of realizing aspirations that for so long have seemed out of reach. However, sufficient, long-term investments from the Government of Canada are necessary to effectively bolster the internal capacity of the MNC and our Governing Members; allowing us to fulfill our mandate to Métis citizens across Canada.

The MNC remains committed to supporting the socio-economic development of the Métis Nation while ensuring our Governing Members can deliver the critical services Métis citizens rely on each day. We have been and will continue to be a partner to the Government of Canada as it works to realize its commitments to reconciliation with the Métis Nation and all Indigenous peoples. In the last few years, federal funding for programs and services has included significant distinctions-based investments for the Métis Nation. Through the *Canada-Métis Nation Accord* and the Permanent Bilateral Mechanism (PBM), federal budgets are finally addressing the needs and aspirations of the Métis Nation.

The following recommendations detailed in this submission will build on this recent progress, ensuring adequate funding to support immediate priorities in the areas of economic development through the Métis Capital Corporations, Métis Extended Health Benefits, and the development of Métis K-12 education. While these recommendations are only the beginning, they represent meaningful steps that should be taken to rectify long-standing imbalances in the resources available to the MNC and our Governing

Members. These investments are critical in protecting the health and safety of our citizens; they will allow our Métis business communities to continue to flourish and they will revitalize Métis education systems.

What the Métis Nation and Canada have been able to accomplish together is impressive. We have created measurable benefits for our citizens and their families and communities. The signing of the *Métis Nation Accord* remains a pivotal moment in the relationship between our two nations, recognizing the inherent right to Métis self-government and self-determination. Today, we continue to build on this legacy, working together to advance the rights of the Métis Nation and its citizens.

While there is always more work to be done, we recognize the steps that this government has taken, in collaboration with parliamentarians of all stripes, to support the health and vitality of the Métis Nation. We welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the needs of our governments and provide detail to the recommendations outlined in this submission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cassidy Caron". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**President Cassidy Caron**

Métis National Council





**Recommendation 1: Capitalize Métis Capital Corporations**

Métis Capital Corporations (MCC) have played an important role in supporting the growth of the Métis business community. MCCs can provide up to \$1.5 million in financing to Métis businesses or a group of related businesses, offering significantly more financing towards a project than a bank would consider at a much lower cost to borrow than a bank can offer.

As demand for financing from Métis entrepreneurs continues to grow, MCCs are concerned that they will not have sufficient capital to assist Métis businesses beyond fiscal year 2022-23. A lack of financial support through MCCs is projected to have a devastating recessionary impact on the Métis economy. This will undermine Canada's ability to meet its five per cent Indigenous procurement targets as Métis businesses will not be able to achieve the necessary scale to successfully deliver on Federal procurement opportunities.

Effectively capitalizing MCCs through an investment of **\$97 million per year over five years** in Budget 2023 will ensure that MCCs can continue to provide vital financing to Métis businesses and citizens.

**Recommendation 2: Support for Métis Extended Health Benefits.**

Past and ongoing legacies of colonization including oppressive systemic policies, such as the loss of land, residential schools, sixties scoop, federal and provincial jurisdictional battles, and systemic racism have taken a significant toll on the lives of Métis. The root cause of poorer health outcomes suffered by the Métis lies in inter-generational family and individual experiences of trauma caused by these colonial policies and adversity in their childhood. To effectively respond to the negative health outcomes resulting from historic and ongoing colonialism, Canada must recognize and uphold the substantive rights held by the Métis Nation.

Métis citizens have highlighted individual, family, and community health needs as a primary concern to be addressed by the MNC and its Governing Members. Many Métis have expressed significant challenges accessing health services, supports, and supplemental health needs (vision/dental) due to the financial burden associated with these services. The top priority for Métis Citizens across all Governing Members is ensuring that Métis can access the health services and supports they need without financial or jurisdictional barriers.

However, the Governing Members are not asking to be added to the existing Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) program provided to First Nations and Inuit; rather, adhering to the principles of self-determination, sustainability, and equity, Métis governments are looking for funding to develop, implement, and evaluate their own respective benefits programming that is responsive to regional needs. Canada and the Métis Nation must jointly commit to funding extended health benefits programs that cover the costs of essential

medications and treatments for all Métis citizens through the development of tailored programs in each jurisdiction that are designed to complement existing provincial level benefits plans and close these service gaps.

To adequately support the creation of Métis Extended Health Benefits, an investment of **\$893 million will be required over five years** as follows:

2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	Total
\$136 million	\$169 million	\$193 million	\$154 million	\$241 million	\$893 million

Funding will support research, development, and improved data collection to inform programming, and will enable as internal capacity building for Governing Members to deliver Métis Extended Health Benefits. These investments will also help foster meaningful and collaborative relationships with partners, ultimately delivering barrier free access to support health services, including medical transportation and accommodations.

### **Recommendation 3: Investing in K-12 Education for the Métis Nation**

The development of a Métis-specific program for K-12 education lags far behind similar programs for other Indigenous peoples. Métis education infrastructure is almost non-existent in the major metropolitan areas within the motherland and Métis educational resources are often only made available by diverting resources away from other program areas.

Jurisdictional challenges have resulted in a history of underfunding of the Métis educational institutions – often channeling Métis students to pan-Indigenous structures. Creating a network of Métis learning centers across the Métis motherland will ensure that Métis learners see themselves reflected in their institutions and that non-Métis learners have access to quality publicly funded educational resources on the Métis - created by, with, and for Métis communities.

The development of Métis K-12 education will require resources for Métis governments to build sufficient internal capacity to plan and implement the program. This will require long-term, predictable funding that includes an escalating formula for regional funding models for elementary and secondary education. Funding must be comparable to investments made by Indigenous Service Canada for First Nations students.

Total program expenditures for the Métis K-12 education program would be **\$1.17 billion over two years**, with \$579,058,351 being provided in 2023-24 and \$591,193,804 in 2024-25. This proposed investment considers core program spending and capital spending, as well as the funding needed to create the governance structure, internal capacity, and tools to ensure the Métis K-12 education program

meets the needs of Métis learners, communities, and parents in jurisdictions across the motherland.

Program spending will support education services, partnership activities, community engagement initiatives, teacher recruitment, training and retention, student success, and other programs as determined by representative Métis education authorities. Capital spending considers that Métis education requires significant expenditures to build the infrastructure required by Métis education to achieve comparable standards with First Nations and provincial systems. Funding will assist Métis Nation governments in the planning, construction and/or acquisition, as well as operation and maintenance of community infrastructure and facilities.

This investment will allow the Métis Nation to implement a long-range K-12 education program for the Métis thereby respecting UNDRIP principles and demonstrating equity-driven considerations within Indigenous education.

A comprehensive budget submission can be found at: [www.metisnation.ca/news-and-media/budget-2023](http://www.metisnation.ca/news-and-media/budget-2023)

