



L'ab'ri' p'ap'p'ic'ic'ic'ic' L'ab'ri'

Maskwacîs Kiskinohtahiwew Masinahikan

Maskwacîs Curriculum Development Guide









## With Gratitude

First and foremost, Maskwacîs Education Schools Commission (MESC) acknowledges the gifts and guidance of Kise Manito. We are grateful for the traditional teachings, ceremony, and language.

It is therefore, with gratitude, that MESC recognizes and honours the contributions of past and present Maskwacîs Kehtehayak for laying the foundation and creating a path that will guide curriculum development.

MESC is grateful for the contributions and support of students, parents, guardians, teachers, educators, school leadership, education partners, and Maskwacîsak for supporting a vision and contributing to the development of a Maskwacîs Early Learning Program and Kindergarten to Grade 12 Curriculum. Our collective responsibility and commitment will benefit Maskwacîs Awâsisak today and in the future.

***“MESC gratefully acknowledges the founding and current Board of Governors who laid the foundation of MESC through the Maskwacîs Cree Declaration on Education and the Maskwacîs Education Law. Their continued support for curriculum development and consultations with all MESC stakeholders in the creation of the Maskwacîs Curriculum Development Guide is most appreciated.”***

- Brian Wildcat  
MESC Superintendent



## Kacimohtahk Kiskinwahamâto Masinahikan

Kâwîyascikâtek MESC oma mistahi mîyopayow kîyanâw Maskwacîsak titapamihtamâsoyahk ekwa tamiyopayihkoyahk kîyanâw Maskwacîsak tipahamawâkanak okiskinwahamâtowin ohci. MESC ekwa kâkîmâmeskotastawak ehisi miyopayitamâkocik Maskwacîsak ayisk pamîhtamasiwak ekwa wîyastâwak Maskwacîs kiskinwahamâtowin asocikewin ohci kiskinwahamâtowin mîcet kâsîtoskacik otîhtâwiniwâwa, kiskinwahamâtokamikwa, Maskwacîsak, awâsisak, kâkike takiskinotahikowak ekwa kasîtoskâkowak ote nîkân ehisi pepeyakocik, ekwa otîhtâwiniwâw Maskwacîsak.

Oma Maskwacîs Kiskinohtahkiwew Masinahikan ewî kiskinwahatehtamihk mayâw kapisîsicik kânîyânanopiponecik kamâci kiskinwahamâkocik isko nîsosâp kâyamîhtâcik kîkwâya okiskinwahamâwakanak, kape nôkosîcik tâkiskehitahkik, tanisitohtakik, ekwa kawaskawîtotahkik epimîsi ehayâtôhtecik kiskinwahamâtowin. Maskwacîs Kiskinohtahkiwew masinahikan nîkân mamitonehitakosiwak awâsisak kîhci kiskeyitamâwin, otîhtâwiniwâw ekwa epimîsi nânakatohkecik ohi.

Ewînikânahîcik awâsisak Maskwacîs kiskinwahamâtô masinahikan kâpimpayîhtâcik tokiskinohamâcik otîhtâwiniwâw ekwa owaskawîwiniwâw ehisi tahâpatahki ohi Kasôhkastekih Kakeskokekewina; Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, Nehiyawewin, ekwa Wâhkôtowin. Maskwacîs kiskinwahamâtô masinahikan kahkiyaw akimâwak okiskinwahamâwakanak, onîkîhkomâwak, mîna okanawâwasowak, okiskinwahamâkewak, kanîkânistahkik kiskinwahamâtowikamikwa ekwa kiskinwahamâkew apîstamâkewak.

Maskwacîs kiskinwahamâtô masinahikan aspahakeyimowina, awâsisak wahyaw ehitâpîstamâhcik, takînwesîwîyik okiskinwahamâkosiwiniwaw, esokastamâhcik kîhci Nehiyaw wiyasiwewin ekwa Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, Nehiyawewin, ekwa Wâhkôtowin, ekosi ekwa Maskwacîsak okiskinwahamâwewiniwâwa ekîsehitamahcik ekwa âhkameyimowin tawîcikocik âhâpihtaw wâyak nehiyaw ekwa moniyaw kiskinwahamakewin. Awâsisak kasohkastâwak nehiyaw ekwa moniyaw kiskinwahamâtô masinahikan.

Kehtehayak okiskinwahamâkewiniwâw ehisi kîhci sokehitâkwanîyik peci nâway, mekwâc, ekwa kâpe nokosîcik nehiyaw awâsisak tâhâsô apicîhtâcik. Ewî kakihtwâmi nanakacihtahk kayâs acimowina masinâhikewin kahkami kanitôskamihk, mekwac ita kayayahk Maskwacîs kiskinwahamâtô masinahîkan takanônamahk Kahkiyaw Kîkwây Kânehiyawemakahk.

Kiskinwahamâtô masinahikan kweyask ehisi wîhcikâtew kîhci wîyasiwewina ekwa Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, Nehiyawewin, ekwa Wâhkôtowin Maskwacîs kiskinwahamâtô masinahikan kiskinocikewin, tâpitawîwin, akameyimowin, nosawâpâtamowin (ekâya tawanikiskisihk) ekosi akamemotocikatew nehiyaw kiskinwahamâkosiwin, moniyaw kiskinwahamâtowin (pâhki mîna) pîyisk kiskinwahamâtô masinahikan tapimitisahak ekâkikewak kiskinwahamâkewin ehisi takohtahâwâsoyahk Kahkiyaw Kîkwây Kânehiyawemakahk.

## Overview

Establishment of a Maskwacis Education Schools Commission is the opportunity to shift the educational opportunities and outcomes for Maskwacisak through local control and design of education to enact the Treaty right to education. Through partnerships with home, school, and Maskwacisak, Awâsisak receive the guidance and support to create and pursue a future for themselves, their families, and Maskwacisak.

The Maskwacis Curriculum Development Guide outlines the key components for curriculum development from Early Learning to Grade 12: “what” students are expected to know, understand, and demonstrate. Teachers, with the support of Nehiyaw educators and Kehtehayak, have the flexibility to determine “how” students achieve the learning outcomes. The intended audience for this document includes students, parents and guardians, teachers, school and system administrators, board members, and Maskwacisak.

The Maskwacis Curriculum affirms commitment to what Maskwacisak value in Nehiyaw education and outlines the vision for Awâsisak as lifelong learners who are engaged in rich learning environments and experiences based on the MESC foundational values of: Îyinîw Mâmitonehickan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, Nehiyawewin, and Wâhkôhtowin.

Design of the Maskwacis Curriculum also reflects cohesion and consistency of Nehiyaw Okiskinwahamâwasowin and contemporary teachings, thereby providing a balanced education for Awâsisak who will have a strong foundation in traditional Nehiyaw teachings and the provincial curriculum. As a result, Maskwacisak will acquire the enduring knowledge and skills to apply to their chosen pathway and the lifelong journey of Kahkiyaw Kîkwây Kânehiyawemakahk; Nehiyaw traditions, Nehiyaw life, Nehiyaw thought, and Nehiyaw language.



***“Now it is our turn.  
It is our responsibility  
like it was traditionally,  
as parents, or as  
grandparents, as  
community and family  
members,  
to surround the  
individual child in an  
education atmosphere  
to support the children  
in their pursuit of  
education.”***

- Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild





## Vision and Mission

The vision of MESC is to foster competent, confident, and resilient Maskwacis Cree speaking students that is actualized through the development of a Nehiyaw Maskwacis curriculum, which is designed to engage all students through positive, enriched, experiential learning opportunities.

The mission of MESC is to govern an outstanding Maskwacis education system that ensures students attend respectful and inspiring schools. This includes understanding and respect for the Maskwacis foundational values of Îyinîw Mâmitonehicikan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, Nehiyawewin, and Wâhkôhtowin.

***“To strive with our help, to set goals and accomplish these goals, to be proud of ourselves as [Nehiyawak], and of our culture and heritage; once you understand yourself, everything seems to fall in place. Also, we must love our community, we are here... it is where we live, we must all help to improve it....”***

- Theresa C. Wildcat



## Maskwacis Kiskinwahamato Wiyasiwewin ekwa Wihtamowewin ohci Kiskinwahamâkosowin

MESC poko kweyask tãnisîsi tesi nisitawinamihk kisteyitamihk ekwa takanaweyitamihk tipahamâtowina ekwa peci nâway askîya kakicitetamahk ekota kawapahtihanawak okâwîmâw askîy, kehtehayak, Oskâyak, ekwa oki kapenokosicik. Taspwâw Maskwacis kiskinwahamato wiyasiwewin nisitawinam asocikewin ohci kiskinwahamâtowin Maskwacis awâsisak tamiyo apacitâcik.

Asici asotamakewina esihtoskamihk pikwîte akâm askîhk United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People ekwa misaweskamik Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Calls to Action, ekwa Maskwacis Nehiyaw aspahakeyimowina kehitwemaka Nehiyawewin poko tanîkân astek ota Maskwacisihk ekota ohci kiskinwahamâtô masinahikan takistanastew.

Enîkânasteki Kakeskowehkewina ehisi sasôkahki MESC tapowakeyitamwak Kahkiyaw Kîkwây Kânehiyawemakahk.

Poko MESC takecinâhocik ewîyastahk kahkiyaw Nehiyaw kiskinwahamâkamikohk tâpacîtat Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan osam ekota ohci nehiyawak kawapahtakik ekwa kanisitohtakik misiweskamik âsonekâc enîkânastek tapacitacik Maskwacis okiskinwahamâwâkanak.

Kahkiyaw kîkwây MESC kâtôtahkik Wâhkôhtowin poko tapimitisahakik osam nehiyawak tapowakehitamwak kahkiyaw kîkwây ehâcâkowahk ewâhkohtomakahk ekwa wîcihtomakan. Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin kapimisahamihk kweyask kipimatisin. Epimitisahaman Wâhkôhtowin ekota ohci miyowîcehtowin kayispayik.

Tawapahtihwecik epaminâkik Maskwacis okiskinwahamakosiwin MESC wîwîyasitawak Maskwacis kiskinwahamato masinahikan wîhkikinamwak peci naway ekipesipayik, Kahkiyaw Kîkwây Kânehiyawemakahk ekwa nehiyawewin. Kiskinwahamâtô masinahikan tapacitawak. Nehiyaw Mâmitonehicikan tâpatan ekwa Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin ota Maskwacisihk.

MESC enohte wâpahtakik ote nîkân Maskwacis Awâsisak esohki tapowakeyimisocik, esohki mâmitonehitahkik, kiskinwahawamâkanak kanehiyawecik, tamiyopaycik okiskinwahamâkosôniyaw ekwa emiyowâsiniyik opimatisiwinawâw.

Osam ekiskehitamihk awasis pâhpîtos ehisi mamitonehitahkik okiskinwahawamakewak pâhpîtos tesapacitawak Maskwacis kiskinwahamâtô masinahikan takiskinwahamawacik awasisa. Kiskinwahamâtô Masinahikan tahâpacihiwak awâsisak tasôhki tapowakeyimisocik ekwa kanihtâweyitakik onikaniwak okiskinwahamâkosonowahk. Takaskitacik oma poko kehtehayak, onikikomawak, ekwa kahkiyaw kotahkak MESC owicitasowak kâkike tawicihacik awasisa pokwî isîsi ehisi kaskitâcik.

Apacihâyâhki Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan ekwa Wâhkôhtowin Maskwacis kiskinwahawamâkosowin kamaskawisîhtânaw ote nîkân mîna tâhâpatahk.

## Maskwacîs Education Law and Declaration on Education

MESC has a responsibility to recognize, honour, and protect Treaty and historical sites to demonstrate respect for Okâwîmâw Askîy, Kehtehayak, youth, and future generations. Therefore, the Maskwacîs Education Law recognizes that Treaty rights to education meet the needs of all Maskwacîs Awâsisak.

Additionally, Treaty rights are supported at the international level through Article 14(1) of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Central to completing this work are the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Calls to Action, and the Maskwacîs Nehiyawewin Declaration that affirms Nehiyawewin is the Official Language of Maskwacîs.

Kahkiyaw Kîkwây Kânehiyawemakahk includes Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, Nehiyawewin, and Wâhkôhtowin, which are the foundational values of MESC.

Guiding MESC's actions is Wâhkôhtowin where Nehiyawak hold true that all of creation has spirit, are related, and interconnected. Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin is living in a good way that encompasses Wâhkôhtowin, and is the practice of fostering positive relationships.

To demonstrate control of Maskwacîs education, MESC will develop a Maskwacîs curriculum that is reflective of Maskwacîs Nehiyawak through the inclusion of content that is focused on local history, culture, and Nehiyawewin.

MESC envisions a future of Maskwacîs Awâsisak who are confident and resilient, who speak Nehiyawewin, are academically successful, and live a healthy lifestyle.

In recognition of the diversity amongst Awâsisak, the Maskwacîs Curriculum will be developed to enable teachers and educators to utilize various teaching methods that encourage deep understanding and transfer of learning. The curriculum will create opportunities for Awâsisak to be confident and innovative leaders in their academic journey. To accomplish this, Kehtehayak, parents, guardians, and various MESC stakeholders will be engaged to support all aspects of Awâsisak lifelong learning and educational journey.

It is through these practices of Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan and Wâhkôhtowin that the Maskwacîs education system will be strengthened for future generations.



***“We are not giving up our treaty rights, what we are doing is figuring out how we pursue the treaty right to education from our interpretation.”***

**- Darrell Strongman**





## Natural Law

Kise Manito gifted Nehiyawak with natural laws: four directions, four elements, four seasons, four forms of life, four gifts of life, and four stages of life. Nehiyawak hold true that these laws govern Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, Nehiyawewin, and Wâhkôhtowin. Teaching and learning the tenets of the natural laws reinforce tradition, ceremony, familial teachings, and creation stories. These natural laws sustained Nehiyawak in the past, present, and will continue to develop, guide, and strengthen Nehiyaw identity, sovereignty and nationhood for future generations.

***“All Creation is sacred to us as Nehiyawak. We don’t have a religion, we have a way of life. We are governed by the natural law”***

- Kiskaw K’sayin (Gordon Lee)

















## Foundational Values

In accordance to the Creation Story, Maskwacîsak hold true that Nehiyawak are related to all of creation. First and foremost are the four elements: Okâwîmâw Askîy (Mother Earth), Ôhtin (Wind), Nipîy (Water), and Iskotew (Fire), which are the pillars of the foundational values as identified by Maskwacîs Kehtehayak. Therefore, the foundational values of Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, Nehiyawewin, and Wâhkôhtowin will be embedded throughout the Early Learning Program and Kindergarten to Grade 12 Maskwacîs Curriculum.

***“If you teach them this value when they are young/small, they will never forget. Teach them good things. Teach them to be good to each other.”***

- Flora Northwest

***“Nehiyawewin ewakoma kawe sapotakoya.”***

- George Saddleback



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## Îyiniw Mâmitonehican

Maskwacisak tapowakehitamwak  
emikosiyahk Îyiniw Mâmitonehican Kise  
Manito ehocipayik kisewatisiwin.  
Kakisewatisihk kota mîna ohi  
tapiskoc mosihtawin, kitimakehitowin,  
sakihitowin, ekwa namoya  
epeyakweyimisôhk. Nistam acimowina  
nehiyawak kakî osîhicik ekota ehocipayik  
Îyiniw Mâmitonehican ayâniskâc  
kiskehitamâwin kâkike takanonamahk.  
Nehiyaw nikamôwina, kakîsimôwîna ekwa  
kamawimosicikehk ewakonî Îyiniw  
Mâmitonehicanihk epimitisahamihk ekwa  
ekistehitamihk. Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin ekwa  
Wâhkôhtowin ekota ohci esôkihtâhk.



## Indigenous Thought

Maskwacisak hold true that Kise Manito gifted Nehiyawak with Îyiniw Mâmitonehickan, which is to have a compassionate mind.<sup>1</sup> To have a compassionate mind is to be empathetic, kind, loving, caring, and selfless. Nehiyaw thought originates from the creation stories that have been transferred intergenerationally from our ancestors since time immemorial. Îyiniw Mâmitonehickan connects Nehiyawak to Kise Manito through song, ceremony, and prayer, which is honored and expressed through Nehiyaw spirituality, traditions, practices, and beliefs. Îyiniw Mâmitonehickan and Nehiyawewin are connected, which strengthens Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin and Wâhkôhtowin.

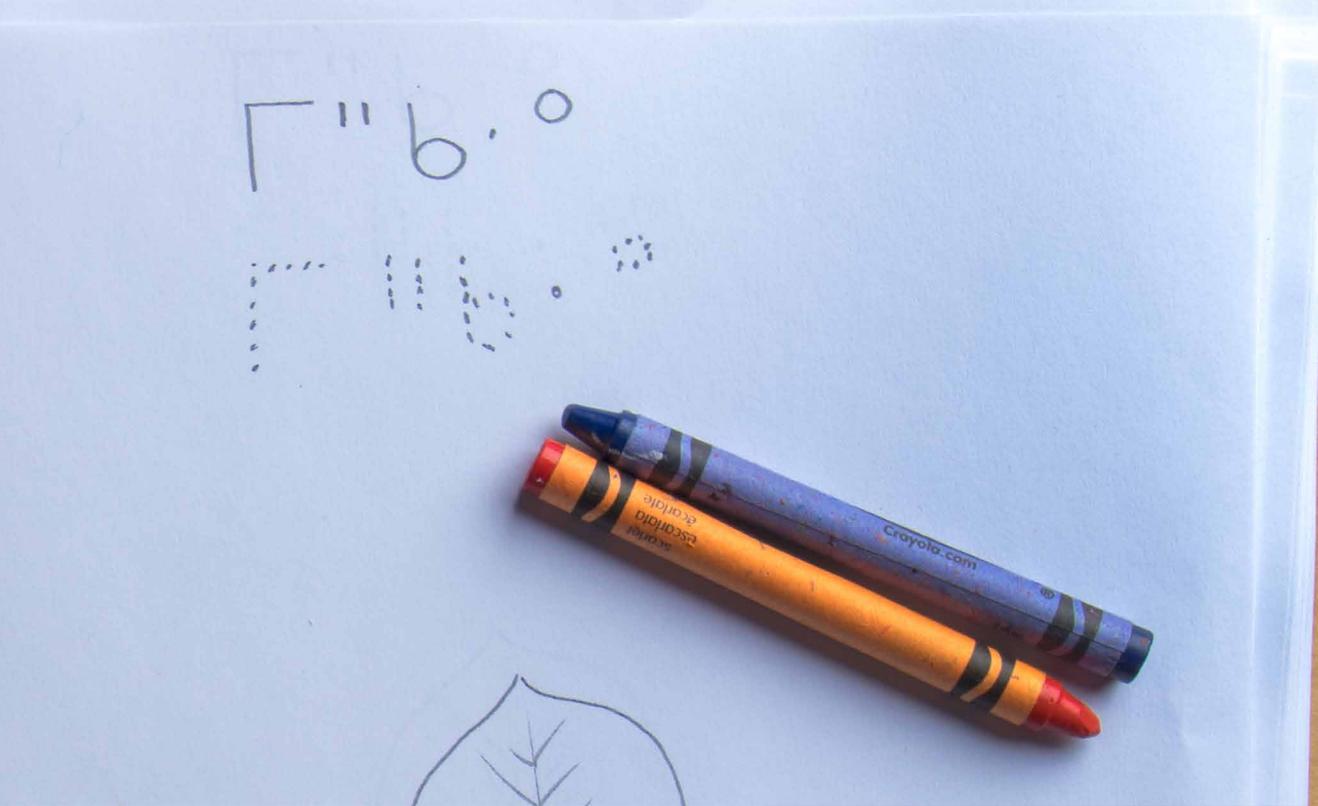
***“Cree thought encompasses everything Cree: is in all language, tradition, culture, kindness, respect, identity.”***

- Elizabeth Rowan

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<sup>1</sup>W. Lightning, 1992.





## Cree Language

Maskwacîsak hold true that Nehiyawewin is a sacred and living language that is embodied through syllabics, identity, story, song, dance, and prayer. Nehiyawewin is gifted from Kise Manito and stems from the natural laws to communicate with Okâwîmâw Askîy, ancestors, and all of creation. It is through teaching and learning that Nehiyawak promote, prosper, and preserve Nehiyawewin to honour past, present, and future Maskwacîsak. Nehiyawewin is lifelong and interconnected with Îyinîw Mâmitonehicikan which strengthen Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin and Wâhkôhtowin.

***“Learning Nehiyawewin makes me feel more grounded as a Nehiyaw Iskwehis.”***

- Chanel Morin

***“Our language is alive, it’s sacred, it’s powerful”***

- Eugene Buffalo

***“Ekwa awâsisak, mana ecikehitaman ekisikinowahamawakik kehisi nehiyawecik.”***

- Lucy Kammer





## Cree Life

Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin is the Nehiyaw way of life, which is to honor, respect, and live in relation to the tenets of the natural laws of Kise Manito. Nehiyawak understand the importance of compassion, reciprocity, and responsibility to Okâwimâw Askîy, which is honored through the intergenerational transfer of Nehiyaw protocols, traditions, and ceremonies. Through this learning, Maskwacîsak understand that Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan, Nehiyawewin, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, and Wâhkôhtowin are interconnected.

***“... pay attention to their dreams and develop their spirit”***

- Paskwaw Mostos Awasis

***“Creator gave us a great gift - our identity and our language”***

- Tony Minde





## Relationships/kinship

Gifted by Kise Manito, Wâhkôhtowin originates from the tenets of the natural laws that guide Nehiyaw governance. The teaching and learning of Wâhkôhtowin is lifelong and demonstrated through kinship, respect, and the honoring of Kehtehayak, parents, guardians, siblings, and all of creation. Wâhkôhtowin is interconnected with Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan, Nehiyawewin, and Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, which unites and strengthens Maskwacîsak.

***“It’s about loving one another, loving and respecting Elders ... It’s about Compassion”***

- Victor Bruno

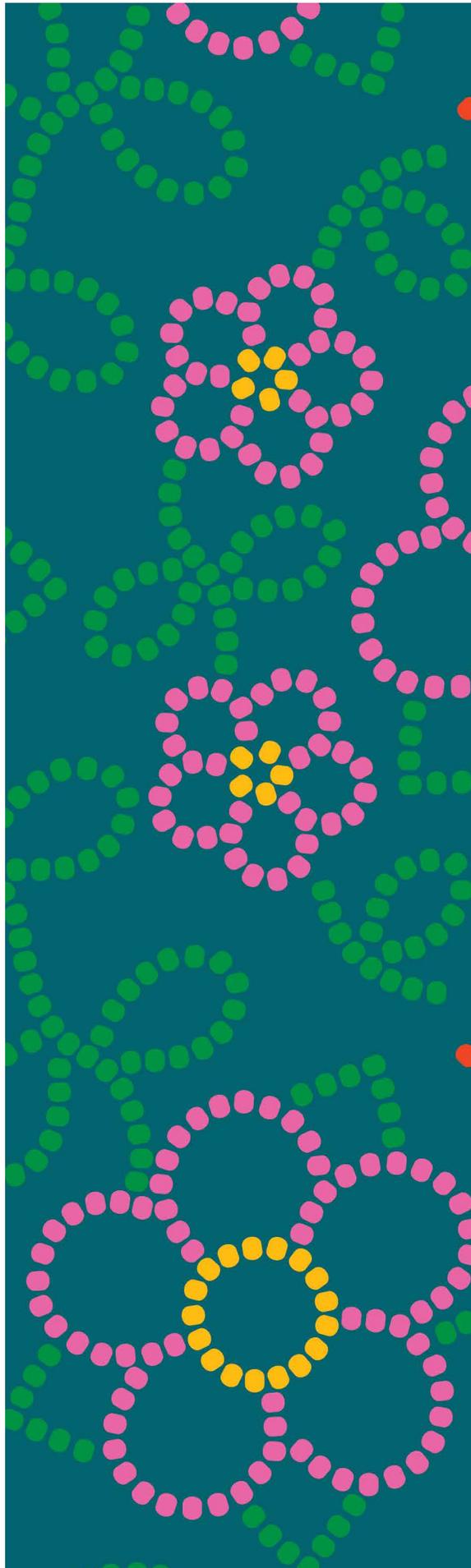


## Supporting The Learning Journey

Nehiyaw Okiskinwahamâwasowin is the foundation for building a strength-based and student-centered Maskwacîs curriculum that focuses on the foundational values: Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, Nehiyawewin, and Wâhkôhtowin.

Early Learning through to Grade 12 encompasses two stages of learning: Awâsisak and Oskâyak. The depth and progression of learning matures as Awâsisak transition to Oskâyak. The foundational values are interconnected and integral to the growth, development, and diverse learning experiences of Nehiyaw Awâsisak and Oskâyak. Throughout their learning journey, learners demonstrate an understanding and respect for Wâhkôhtowin by fostering healthy relationships through interactions with one another and their environment. Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan and Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin is fostered as Nehiyawak mature and engage in traditional teachings, protocol, and ceremony that affirm Nehiyaw identity. The acquisition of Nehiyawewin requires exposure and practice to enhance the learners' understandings and application over time.

Nurtured throughout their growth and development, the intellectual, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of Awâsisak and Oskâyak is cultivated by parents, guardians, kin, Kehtehayak, teachers, educators, and Maskwacîsak. Therefore, Maskwacîsak hold true that Nehiyaw learning is a lifelong process that embodies the tenets of the natural laws and foundational values.



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# Nistam Okiskinwahamâwakanak Kapisîsicik

Nistam Okiskinwahamâwakanak kapisîsicik enîkân astamahcik tamiywâyacik waskawewinihk, mosihowinihk mîna acâhkowin ekwa mâmitonehicanihk. Ekota ohci wîkiskinohamawâwak MESC Kasôhkastekih Kakeskowehkewina, Îyiniw Mâmitonehican, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, Nehiyawewin ekwa Wâhkôhtowin.

Metawehawasiwin kâpatan ekosi tesi miyopayin nehiyâwiwin, kâkîsimowin ekwa kâpehtâkik acimowina asonekac tânite ehôciyâhk. Nehiyawewin esohkastâhk ohi enikânastâhk cahikiphehikewin, masinahikewin, acimowin, nikamowin ekwa kânehiyawecik. Awâsisak kanokohtâwak Wâhkôhtowin kanîkanastâwak ite ekiyokatocik, wetinahk kametawecik, takitimakehitocik, takîcehitocik ekwa takicehitâhkik otîhtawiniwâw.

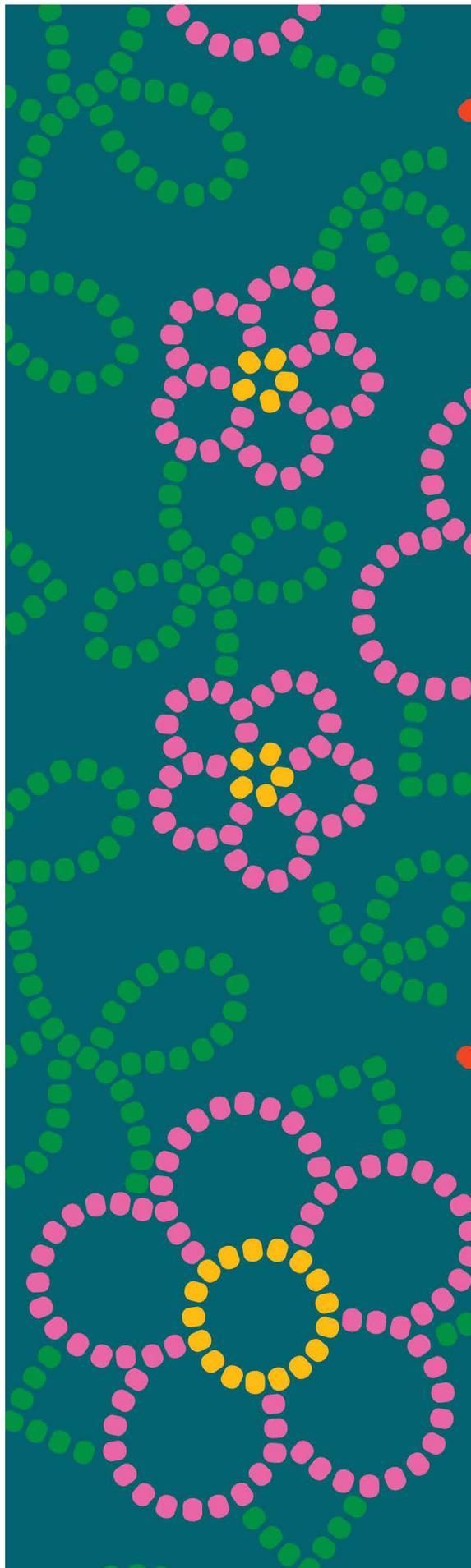
Awâsisak wîsihkiskawâwak tacîkîstahkik ekwa tanisitotahkik otîtawiniwâw. Teyisi ayisînikâhtahkik ayimâc nehiyawin ewi pitikwatâmâhcik. Kâmamawoci apisîsicik awâsisak niwî ahkamemototawânânak tamîyiwetahkik okiskinwahamokosowiniwâw. Awâsiw kiskinwahamatowasinahîkan emiskwetakwahk ohci Nehiyaw okiskinwahamâwasowin. MESC Kasôhkastekih Kakeskowehkewina ehisi sohkastek miyo kiskeyitamâwin ekwa kasihtoskahcik Awâsisak ehisi waweyîhîhcik kîkwây takakwe kiskeyitakik, kanistaweyimisocik ekwa ekaya kitapomecik.

## Early Learning Program

The Maskwacis Early Learning Program is focused on the spiritual, emotional, physical and intellectual well-being, which is a holistic approach to teaching and learning based on MESC foundational values: Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan, Nehiyawewin, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, and Wâhkôhtowin.

Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan engages Awâsisak through inquiry, play, and hands-on learning experiences. Awâsisak will experience Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin through knowing and understandings of Nehiyaw traditions, protocols, and creation stories. Nehiyawewin is strengthened through syllabics, text, storytelling, song, language acquisition, and application. Through Wâhkôhtowin, Awâsisak are exposed to nurturing environments that are interactive, safe, compassionate, respectful and welcoming.

An Early Learning Program will engage Awâsisak in a setting that encourages curiosity through participatory experiential learning opportunities that strengthen social engagement, and raise awareness and understanding of their environment. An Early Learning Program founded on the foundational values will continue to strengthen their love of learning and support Awâsisak readiness for Kindergarten as curious, confident, creative, and resilient learners.













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# Maskwacîs Cree Declaration on Education

Îyinîw Mâmitonehickan (Cree thinking) is the foundation of education for Maskwacîs people. Îyinîw Mâmitonehickan is an all encompassing way of seeing and understanding the world through the Cree perspective. Our language, ceremonies, values and understanding of good relationships all contribute to Îyinîw Mâmitonehickan. Education systems that foster the Cree way of thinking are integral to pursuing self-determination as Cree peoples and ensuring the health and happiness of Maskwacîs people. Exercising control over the formal systems of education is how we revitalize and pass on Cree ways of thought.

To guide our actions, we will follow cultural and traditional teachings, in particular Wâhkohtowin. Wâhkohtowin is s. We recognize that respect for mother earth, elders, youth, and the Treaties are paramount to planning ahead and making decisions for future generations.

We have a responsibility to honour and protect Treaty and historical sites, and share our knowledge with the world about Treaty. We recognize that in order to ensure we have strong systems of education it is important to revitalize a treaty relationship with the Governments of Canada. This relationship emanates from our sacred and historic relationship between ourselves and the Crown created through the signing of Treaty Six. Treaty Six imparted a responsibility onto the Government of Canada to help us create schools that allow us to succeed in Canadian society.

Our treaty partners have not always respected the treaty relationship between us. The imposition of residential schools damaged the relationship between us. We feel that one of the primary avenues through which this relationship can be repaired is by properly funding education systems that are under our control and design. The Crown has a fiduciary duty, obligation and responsibility to provide unencumbered funding that allows Maskwacîs to educate our children in our own ways.

We have the inherent right to operate our own schools, decide our own curriculum and determine our own outcomes. Motivated by our identity as Maskwacîs Nehiyawak, our curriculum will focus on our history, culture and language. Nehiyaw teaching methods and perspectives relevant to Maskwacîs will be included in all aspects of the education system.

All children in Maskwacîs are important, are valued and will be at the centre of our decision making regarding education. Our schools will have the ability to work with the needs and aspirations of all students. Our schools will go above and beyond to ensure the success of our children and provide a safe environment conducive to learning.

A standardized Nehiyaw language curriculum will be continually and repetitively integrated into the daily life and activities of our schools. We will ensure land based forms of education are important aspects of the learning process.

We will motivate our children and build their self-esteem and personal wellness by promoting a balanced educational system. While passing on Nehiyaw Mâmitonehickan remains the core of schools, we will also utilize various teaching methods to suit the diversity of our children. This includes being innovators and national leaders in providing special needs education and keeping current with relevant technology. We aim to prepare our children for future success in various fields of education and employment.

Parents and the community will be involved and engaged in all aspects of learning. Elders will be involved in the daily lives of students, through sharing our oral history, ceremonies, and storytelling.

We affirm that it takes strong parental, elder and community leadership to ensure the success of our children's education.

We affirm the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Truth and Reconciliation, "Calls to Action" and the Maskwacis Nehiyawewin Declaration that affirms Nehiyawewin is the Official Language of Maskwacis.

As Maskwacis Cree, we engage in a continual process of teaching and learning about how we enact our values and philosophies in the present. This includes enhancing our understanding of Treaties and Treaty laws, and the continual process of defining and practicing how we maintain respectful treaty relationships with others. It is through these practices of Íyiniw Mâmitonehickan and Wâhkohtowin that we will maintain and strengthen our education systems for future generations.

June 13, 2017

Signed by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Irvin Bull

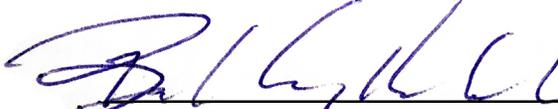
November 29, 2017  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Craig Makinaw

November 29, 2017  
Date

  
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Chief Vernon Saddleback

November 29, 2017  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
On behalf of Montana First Nation

November 29, 2017  
Date

The following declaration was collectively created and reviewed by citizens of the Maskwacis Cree in the Winter and Spring of 2017. The process was led by the Maskwacis Education Schools Commission (MESC), reviewed by a panel of elders, recommended by the Board of MESC and approved by a Maskwacis Cree motion on June 13th, 2017.



## **Maskwacîs EDUCATION LAW**

**Approved and Adopted by Maskwacîs Cree Nations Chiefs and Councils:  
Ermineskin Cree Nation, Louis Bull Tribe, Montana First Nation  
and Samson Cree Nation  
April 26, 2018**

## **Maskwacîs EDUCATION LAW**

WHEREAS the Maskwacîs Cree, in a collaborative spirit, have delegated responsibility to the Maskwacîs Education Schools Commission to operate an innovative Education Authority that is accountable to its member First Nation communities and that recognizes that parents have the right and the responsibility to make informed decisions respecting the education of their children;

WHEREAS In recognition that the educational needs of all Maskwacîs children shall always be considered first, we the Maskwacîs Cree, as represented by the Chiefs, desire to establish a single education authority for the four independent Maskwacîs Cree Nations; Ermineskin Cree Nation, Louis Bull Tribe, Montana First Nation and Samson Cree Nation, this includes Maskwacîs members that reside at Pigeon Lake;

WHEREAS Education is our Treaty Right; pursuant to the adherence to Treaty 6 signed in 1877 at Blackfoot Crossing.

WHEREAS Treaty 6 states: “Her Majesty agrees to maintain schools for instruction in such reserves hereby made, as to her Government of the Dominion of Canada may seem advisable, whenever the Indians of the reserve shall desire it”;

WHEREAS Section 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982 states: “the existing Aboriginal and Treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada are recognized and affirmed”, including the inherent right of self-government.

WHEREAS the parties are committed to implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action in manner that is consistent with the Maskwacîs Education Law;

WHEREAS Article 14 (1) of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states: “Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning”;

WHEREAS the Maskwacîs Cree envision a future where Maskwacîs Cree students speak Nehiyawewin, are academically successful, live a healthy lifestyle and are confident, resilient, know their history, language and culture;

WHEREAS, Wâhkohtowin, Îyiniw Mâmitonehikan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin and Nehiyawewin are the foundations of the Maskwacîs and are integral to pursuing self-determination as Cree peoples and ensuring the health and happiness of the Maskwacîs Cree. Exercising control over the formal system of education is how the Maskwacîs Cree revitalize and pass on Cree ways of thought. Along with supporting life-long learning;

WHEREAS nothing in this Law is intended to be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from any rights of the First Nations recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

NOW THEREFORE, the Chiefs and Councils of the Maskwacîs Cree enact the following Law, which shall govern the operation of the “Education Authority”.

WHEREAS, Wâhkohtowin, Îyiniw Mâmitonehikan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin and Nehiyawewin are the foundations of the Maskwacîs and are integral to pursuing self-determination as Cree peoples and ensuring the health and happiness of the Maskwacîs Cree. Exercising control over the formal system of education is how the Maskwacîs Cree revitalize and pass on Cree ways of thought. Along with supporting life-long learning;

WHEREAS nothing in this Law is intended to be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from any rights of the First Nations recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

NOW THEREFORE, the Chiefs and Councils of the Maskwacîs Cree enact the following Law, which shall govern the operation of the “Education Authority”.

## **1. INTERPRETATION OF TERMS AND EXPRESSIONS**

- 1.1. In this Maskwacîs Education Law and in all other organizational by-laws of the Authority hereafter passed unless the context otherwise requires words importing the singular number or the masculine gender shall include the plural number or the female gender, as the case may be, and vice versa, and references to persons shall include firms and societies.
- 1.2. This Maskwacîs Education Law or any agreement entered into for education on the Maskwacîs Reserves shall not be construed as to affect, prejudice, abrogate or derogate from any or all Constitutionally protected Aboriginal Rights or Treaty Rights as provided for through the true spirit and intent of Treaty 6, for as long as the sun shines, the grass grows and the rivers flow; nor shall this Maskwacîs Cree Nation law or related agreements or arrangements infringe or violate any inherent or human rights, privileges or freedoms of the Maskwacîs Cree Nation.
- 1.3. The Education Authority for the Maskwacîs Cree shall be known as Maskwacîs EDUCATION SCHOOLS COMMISSION (MESC) (herein called the “Authority”).

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

- 2.1. “Elders” means a person from the community who is recognized to have reached a certain level of cultural knowledge, expertise, experience and wisdom and conducted their life following the Nehiyaw Mâmitonehikan Cree ways.
- 2.2. “Board” means the Board of Governors established for the Authority.
- 2.3. “Chiefs and Councils” means the Chief and Council of each of the Maskwacîs Cree Nations duly elected from time to time in accordance with each individual Nation’s Election Law.
- 2.4. “Contractor” someone who is independent of MESC. That is not an employee of MESC. A person or organization that has a defined contract with MESC outlining all duties and tasks to be performed.
- 2.5. “Governor” means a person appointed to the MESC Board of Governors.
- 2.6. “Guardian” means a person who has legal custody of a child or primary responsibility for a child but is not necessarily the Parent of the child.

- 2.7. “Indemnity” security or exemption from liability for damages.
- 2.8. “Independent Student” means a student who is; 18 years of age or older, or 16 years of age or older and living independently or is a party to an agreement under section 57.2 of the Child Youth and Family Enhancement Act.
- 2.9. “Îyiniw Mâmitonehikan” (Cree thinking) means an overall, encompassing way of seeing and understanding the world through a Cree perspective including the Maskwacîs Cree language, ceremonies, values and understanding of good relationships (Wâhkohtowin).
- 2.10. “Liability” the state of being responsible for something.
- 2.11. “Maskwacîs Cree” refers to the Nations that are comprised of Ermineskin Cree Nation, Louis Bull Tribe, Montana First Nation and Samson Cree Nation. This includes the residents of Pigeon Lake that are members of one of the Maskwacîs Cree Nations.
- 2.12. “Maskwacîs Education Law” means the law approved by Chiefs and Councils of the Maskwacîs Cree describing the operation, functions and duties of Governors, officers, employees and identifies the delegated powers of the Board and the Authority.
- 2.13. “MESCC” - Maskwacîs Education Schools Commission
- 2.14. “Nehiyawewin” means the Cree language.
- 2.15. “Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin” means the Cree way of life, living and learning off the land.
- 2.16. “Parent” means the father or mother of a child with legal custody and includes a person who has legally adopted a child and a person who has adopted a child in accordance with the custom of a First Nation.
- 2.17. “Reserve” means the four (4) reserves that make up Maskwacîs; Ermineskin Cree Nation, Louis Bull Tribe, Montana First Nation and Samson Cree Nation.
- 2.18. “School Age” a person is of school age if he or she has not already graduated from secondary school and:
- 2.18.1. at September 1 in a school year is 3 years of age or older; and
  - 2.18.2. is younger than 21 years of age
- 2.19. “Superintendent of Schools” means the person appointed and employed by the Board as the Executive Officer of the Authority, and Education Officer of the Authority pursuant to this Law.
- 2.20. “Wâhkohtowin” means the belief that all things are related and connected, that all of existence has spirit and that living in a good way requires people to maintain good relationships with each other and other aspects of existence. The Maskwacîs Cree recognize that respect for mother earth, elders, youth, and the treaties are paramount to planning ahead and making decisions for future generations.

### **3. OBJECTIVE**

- 3.1. In recognition that the educational needs of all Maskwacîs children shall always be considered first, we the Maskwacîs Cree Nations, as represented by the Chiefs and Councils, desire to collaborate on the establishment of a single education authority for the four independent Maskwacîs Cree Nations of Ermineskin Cree Nation, Louis Bull Tribe, Montana First Nation and Samson Cree Nation. Create safe and caring schools for Maskwacîs children. Focused on learner success and increased achievement levels in Cree, Numeracy and Literacy
- 3.2. This Law will govern the administration of Education by the Authority and will govern the Board of Governors. This Law will ensure MESC is accountable to the Maskwacîs Chiefs and Councils and to the Maskwacîs Nations.
- 3.3. The Law does not give the board the power or authority to represent the Maskwacîs Cree Nations on any discussion, decisions or negotiation that may be construed as to deal with Treaty rights issues.

### **4. HEAD OFFICE**

- 4.1. The Head Office of the Authority shall be on the Reserve.

### **5. LEGAL ENTITY**

- 5.1. The Maskwacîs Cree Chiefs and Councils will establish MESC as a separate legal entity under the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act by Maskwacîs Cree Chiefs and Councils Resolution.

### **6. BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

- 6.1. The property, business and operation of the Authority shall be managed through meetings of the Board of Governors.
- 6.2. The Board of Governors builds trust and fosters positive working relationships, shares and promotes the Maskwacîs Cree values, within the Maskwacîs Education System.

### **7. BOARD OF GOVERNORS SELECTION PROCESS**

- 7.1. The Board of Governors will be appointed through three (3) selection processes. The Board Selection Committee, The Elders Circle and the Parent Advisory Circle.
- 7.2. The Board Selection Committee will select four (4) community representatives to the Board of Governors. One (1) member from each of the following Nations, Ermineskin Cree Nation, Louis Bull Tribe, Montana First Nation and Samson Cree Nation.
- 7.3. The Board Selection Committee will appoint two (2) Members at Large to the Board of Governors.
- 7.4. The Elder's Advisory Circle will appoint two (2) members from their Circle. One (1) male and one (1) female.

7.5. The Parent Advisory Circle will appoint two (2) members from the Parent Advisory Circle to the Board of Governors.

## **8. BOARD OF GOVERNORS SELECTION COMMITTEE**

8.1. A Board Selection Committee to select the Board of Governors will be comprised of;

8.1.1. Four (4) Chiefs of the Maskwacîs or their Councillor Designate;

8.1.2. Four Councillors, one (1) from each Nation within Maskwacîs;

8.1.3. One (1) Chair to appointed by Maskwacîs Chiefs and Councils, must be a current Chief or Council member of the Four Nations of Maskwacîs.

8.2. The Maskwacîs Cree Chiefs and Councils will appoint a Board Selection Committee Coordinator to assist the Board Selection Committee with its appointments. In addition the recording secretary of the Board may assist the Coordinator with administrative support.

8.3. The Board Selection Committee will select four (4) community representatives to the Board of Governors. One (1) member from each of the following Nations, Montana, Louis Bull, Ermineskin and Samson.

8.4. The Board Selection Committee will select and appoint an Elders Circle comprised of ten (10) Elders from the Maskwacîs Nations. Five (5) will be female and Five (5) will be male. Two (2) from each Maskwacîs Nation and two (2) Maskwacîs members that reside in Pigeon Lake.

8.5. The Board Selection Committee will appoint two (2) Members at Large to the Board of Governors.

8.6. Six (6) months prior to the completion of a Board Member's, Elders Circle term, the Board Selection Committee will convene and begin the selection process.

## **9. ELDERS CIRCLE**

9.1. The Board Selection Committee will select and appoint an Elders Circle comprised of ten (10) Elders from the Four Nations. Five (5) will be female and Five (5) will be male.

9.2. The Elders Circle with the assistance of the Authority will establish a Terms of Reference and governance policies.

9.3. The Elders Circle will be comprised of two (2) from each Maskwacîs Nation and two (2) that reside in Pigeon Lake.

9.4. The Elders Circle will appoint two (2) of their members, one (1) male and one (1) female to sit on the Board of Governors.

9.5. Each member appointed to the Elders Circle will hold a three (3) year term.

9.6. Elders will be in an Advisory capacity they will not have a vote or make up quorum.

## **10. MEMBERS AT LARGE**

- 10.1. The Board Selection Committee will appoint two (2) Members at Large to the Board of Governors.
- 10.2. Members at Large must be members of the Maskwacîs Cree. They are deemed to represent Maskwacîs as whole.
- 10.3. Members at Large are chosen based on their education and experience. They must be recognized as experts in their fields; Governance, Finance, Legal or Education. They must hold at least a Master's degree in their designated field or equivalent certification.
- 10.4. Members at Large will serve a three (3) year term.

## **11. PARENT ADVISORY CIRCLE**

- 11.1. Each School within the Authority will have a Parent Advisory Committees with their own terms of reference. The chair of each Parent Advisory Committee will represent that school at the Parent Advisory Circle.
- 11.2. A Parent Advisory Circle will be established with the assistance of the Education Authority.
- 11.3. A Parent Advisory Circle Terms of Reference will be created.
- 11.4. The Parent Advisory Circle will appoint two (2) members of the Circle the Board of Governors.
- 11.5. The members of the Parent Advisory Circle must have at least one student attending one of the Education Authority Schools and must be in good standing with that school.
- 11.6. If a child ceases to be enrolled in the school, the member is no longer a member of the Parent Advisory Circle or the Board of Governors
- 11.7. Parent Advisory Circle Members on the Board of Governors will have a three (3) year term.

## **12. BOARD OF GOVERNORS QUALIFICATIONS**

- 12.1. Governors must be twenty-one (21) years of age with power under law to contract.
- 12.2. A Governor cannot be a current employee or contractor of MESC.
- 12.3. Governors must be a member of one of the four Maskwacîs Nations.

### **13. BOARD OF GOVERNORS COMPOSITION**

- 13.1. The Board of Governors will be comprised of the following;
- 13.2. Two (2) Elders appointed from the Elders Circle, one (1) male and one (1) female. They will be non-voting and will not be a part of quorum.
- 13.3. Four (4) community representatives, one (1) from each reserve of Ermineskin Cree Nation, Louis Bull Tribe, Montana First Nation and Samson Cree Nation.
- 13.4. Two (2) Members at Large,
- 13.5. Two (2) Parent Representatives appointed by the Parent Advisory Circle.
- 13.6. The Board shall select a Chairperson amongst themselves, who shall act as Chair of the Board of Governors.
  - 13.7. Terms of Appointment
    - 13.7.1. Four Community Representative – three (3) year term
    - 13.7.2. Two Members at Large – three (3) year term
    - 13.7.3. Two Elders Circle Representatives three (3) year term
    - 13.7.4. Two Parent Advisory Circle Representative three (3) year term
- 13.8. The Board of Governors will be comprised of eight (8) voting members and two (2) non-voting members (Elders representative). Quorum will be five (5) voting members.
- 13.9. Current Chiefs of Maskwacîs may sit as ex-officio on the Board with no voting power. Should they appoint a proxy, the proxy must be an active member of Council and will also have no voting power.
- 13.10. Board of Governors Positions will be appointed at the Annual General Meeting of the Authority.

### **14. ONE YEAR TRANSITION PERIOD FOR BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

- 14.1. The Selection Committee may appoint Four (4) Community Members at the establishment of the new Authority and two (2) members at Large.
- 14.2. After one full school year under the new Authority the Selection Committee will call for the Elders Circle Representative and the Parents Association Representative.

### **15. TEMPORARY BOARD ADDITIONS**

- 15.1. At the discretion of the Maskwacîs Cree Chiefs and Councils a special meeting may be called for the purpose of appointing up to an additional two (2) current Council Members to act as a full voting Members of the Board at any time deemed necessary, for a term not to

exceed nine (9) months Such appointment(s) may be made pursuant to particular circumstances, including but not limited to:

- 15.1.1. The Maskwacîs Chiefs and Councils must have reason to believe and evidence that the Board is not acting in the best interest of the Maskwacîs Cree Nations; and/or
- 15.1.2. Any other appropriate and reasonable cause, which shall be specifically set out in the form of an Maskwacîs Cree Nation Chiefs and Councils Band Council Resolution.
- 15.1.3. If the Chiefs and Councils has reason to believe there is financial mismanagement of the Authority, the Council can call for a forensic audit.

## **16. REMOVAL OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEMBERS**

16.1. The office of Governors shall be automatically vacated:

16.1.1. If a Board member resigns by delivering a written resignation to the Chair or the Superintendent of Schools;

16.1.2. If he or she becomes a dependent adult under the Dependent Adults Act of Alberta, or suffers from a mental disorder that affects your capacity as a Board of Governor, confirmed by a medical physician, or has been so found by a Court of competent jurisdiction;

16.1.3. If, at a duly called special meeting of the Board, a motion is passed by three-quarters (3/4) of the Voting Members of the Board requiring that he or she be removed from office, having provided the individual with 3 days' notice of the special meeting, as well as allowing for the individual to provide information or address outstanding issues;

16.1.4. If, a Governor becomes deceased;

16.1.5. With respect to a Governor who is also a Council member, upon ceasing to be a Council Member; in which case, the Board Selection Committee may immediately appoint a replacement from the current Council of Maskwacîs Cree so as to ensure continuity.

16.1.6. If a Governor is appointed via the Parent Advisory Committee and their child ceases to attend an Education Authority School.

16.1.7. If a Governor becomes an employee of the Education Authority

16.1.8. For greater certainty, where a vacancy in the Board occurs with an appointed Governor and the remaining term of that Governor is less than six (6) months, no new appointments will be made and the remaining Governors shall function and operate as a full Board. The Board shall exist so long as the number of remaining Governors is not less than four (4). Where a vacancy in the Board occurs and where the remaining term of that Governor is six (6) months or greater, than the application and interview process pursuant to section 2.3.2 shall apply to finish that particular term, subject to section 2.4.

16.1.9. If a Board Member has been absent without notice for three (3) consecutive meetings in a row.

16.2. The Governors shall, receive remuneration for their services, as determined and as approved by the Board. Governors may be paid reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. The Governors Honorarium and Per Diem schedule will be developed and reviewed by the Board Chair and the Superintendent of Schools annually. The Governors shall not be paid for duties outside of their roles as Board of Governors.

## **17. MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

17.1. Meetings of the Board may be held at any time and place to be determined by the Board.

17.2. Only the Chair of the Board has the authority to call meetings.

17.3. The Chair in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools may call a special meeting of the Board so long as all Members of the Board are given notices as provided herein.

17.4. Two (2) business days' notice of such meeting shall be sent by telephone, text or email to each Board member, providing there shall be at least one (1) meeting per month of the Board.

17.5. Meetings of the Board may be held by telephone subject to the approval of the Board members physically present at the meeting place. No error or omission in giving notice of any meeting of the Board or any adjourned meeting of the Board shall invalidate such meeting or make void any proceeding taken there at. Any voting Board member shall be entitled to one (1) vote on any issue at any meeting of the Board.

17.6. The Board of Governors will have an annual engagement session with Elders Circle, Leadership Summit, Parent Advisory Circle and the Student Leadership Program.

17.7. Decisions of the Board shall require approval by a majority of votes cast on any particular matter however, in the case of a tie vote, the Chairman of the Board of Governors shall be entitled to a casting vote.

## **18. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY AND INDEMNIFICATION**

18.1. **LIMITATION OF LIABILITY** - No Governor, Board Member or Member Representative, Member of the Maskwacîs Cree Chiefs and Councils, Maskwacîs Affiliate, or Officer of the Authority shall be liable for any omissions, acts, receipts, neglects or defaults of any other Member or Member Representative, Governor, Officer, or employee of the Authority, or for any loss, damage or expense happening to the Authority through the insufficiency or deficiency of title to any property acquired by resolution of the Board of Governors, Chief and Council, or Members for or on behalf of the Authority, or for the insufficiency or deficiency of any security in or upon which any of the monies of the Authority shall be invested, or for any loss or damage arising from the bankruptcy, insolvency or tortuous act of any person with whom any of the monies, securities or effects of the Authority shall be deposited, or for any loss occasioned by any error of judgement or oversight on their part, or any other loss, damage or misfortune whatsoever which shall happen in the execution of the duties their offices or in relation thereto unless the same shall happen through their own gross negligence, wilful neglect, wilful default, wilful misconduct, dishonesty or bad faith.

- 18.2. **INDEMNITY** - Governors, former Governors, Officers and former Officers, Board Members (and Member Representatives), former Board Members (and Member Representatives), Maskwacîs Chiefs and Councils and each of them, and each of their respective heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns, shall from time to time and at all times be indemnified and saved harmless out of the assets and profits of the Authority from and against all costs, charges, losses, damages and expenses which they, or any of them, or any of their heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns, shall or may incur or sustain by or by reason of the performance of their duty or purported duty in their respective offices, except such (if any) as they shall incur or sustain by or through their own gross negligence, wilful neglect, wilful default, wilful misconduct, dishonesty or bad faith respectively. This indemnification is in addition to, but not exclusive of, any other right of indemnification to which the Governors, former Governors, Board Members, Former Board Members, Officers and former Officers, Members (and Member Representatives) and former Members (and Member Representatives) may be entitled to at law or in equity.

## **19. COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD**

- 19.1. Subject to the restrictions contained in this Maskwacîs Education Law, the Board may provide for the creation of an adhoc committee or committees who shall be appointed by the Board. Such committee shall exercise any powers as authorized and provided by the Board.
- 19.2. Each Committee will have a Terms of Reference to be adopted by the Board
- 19.3. Any committee member may be removed by a majority vote of the Board.

## **20. POWERS OF THE BOARD**

- 20.1. Subject to the restrictions contained in this Maskwacîs Education Law, the Maskwacîs Cree Chiefs and Councils hereby authorize and delegate the following rights, powers, and obligations to the Board:
- 20.1.1. The power to administer the business and activities of the Authority and ensure that every order, ordinance, decision, motion or contract as described in the Policy Manual, organizational by-laws as amended from time to time, and in this Maskwacîs Education Law, be faithfully and impartially observed and carried out;
- 20.1.2. The Board shall, select and appoint the Superintendent of Schools.
- 20.1.3. The remuneration of all officers, agents and employees shall be fixed by Board motion from time to time.
- 20.1.4. Such other functions as may be delegated to it in writing by the Maskwacîs Cree Chiefs and Councils;

20.2. For the purpose of carrying out its objects:

- 20.2.1. Ensure that policies respecting the provision of educational services and programs are developed.
- 20.2.2. The Board is responsible for the development, implementation, review, and revision of Board policies.
- 20.2.3. The Board may make or cause to be made for the Authority, in its name, any contract which the Authority may lawfully enter into on behalf of the MESC;
- 20.2.4. The Board shall have power to authorize expenditures on behalf of the Authority from time to time and may delegate to an agent of the Authority the right to employ and pay salaries to employees. The Board shall have the power to make expenditures for the purposes of furthering the objectives of the Authority.
- 20.2.5. The Board shall have the power to enter into a trust arrangement with a bank, trust company or credit union for the purpose of creating a trust fund in which the capital and interest may be made available for the benefit of promoting the interest of the Authority;
- 20.2.6. The Board shall take such steps as they deem necessary to enable the Authority to acquire, accept, solicit or receive legacies, gifts, grants, settlements, bequests, endowments and donations of any kind whatsoever for the purpose of furthering the objectives of the Authority.

20.3. The Board shall be restricted in its powers in the following respects:

- 20.3.1. The Board does not have the power or authority to represent the Maskwacîs Cree Nations on any discussion, decisions or negotiation that may be construed as to deal with Treaty rights issues.
- 20.3.2. The Board shall be required to inform the Maskwacîs Cree Chiefs and Councils on its budget each year for the next fiscal period and keep the Maskwacîs Cree Chiefs and Councils fully apprised of all financial matters at all times;
- 20.3.3. The Board shall only keep its funds and assets in such investments or accounts that are in line with principles;
- 20.3.4. It shall be prohibited from making loans to individuals or guaranteeing loans or other financial arrangements for individuals;
- 20.3.5. Unless it obtains written approval from the Maskwacîs Cree Chiefs and Councils, the Board shall not enter into any arrangements for the purpose of borrowing monies; and
- 20.3.6. It shall only function so as to further the objectives for which it has been created and shall not be empowered to carry out any act, which does not further the achievement of such objectives.

20.4. No individual Governor of the Board has the authority to make decisions or bind the Board or the Authority on any matter that should otherwise be determined by the Board sitting in its official capacity. A decision made by a Governor of the Board acting without the formality of a Board meeting and not otherwise previously approved by the Board shall be null and void. The Board may, in its discretion, take action deemed necessary to sanction any such act or future acts by a Governor of the Board.

## 21. OFFICERS

21.1. The Officers of the Board shall be: the Chair, Vice-Chair and any such other officers as the Board may determine. Officers of the Authority other than the Chair shall be appointed and replaced by motion of the Board.

## 22. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

The Chair Shall:

- 22.1. Preside over any Regular monthly, Public, Planning, and Special Meeting of the Board and in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools call and set the Board meeting agendas;
- 22.2. Change the time of, cancel, or postpone a Regular Monthly Public, Planning, and Special Meeting of the Board;
- 22.3. Be a member or ex-officio voting member of all committees of the Board as the Board may deem appropriate from time to time;
- 22.4. Serve as the spokesperson and representative of the Board at official functions;
- 22.5. Communicate to the media on behalf of the Board; and report to the Governors, Officers, employees, and public at such times as he or she deems fit or as requested by the Board;
- 22.6. Serve as the official signing officer of the Board;
- 22.7. Perform such other duties as may from time to time be approved by the Board.

The Chair Shall Not:

- 22.8. Extend his or her authority to implementing or making decisions that belong to the Board as a whole;
- 22.9. Supervise or direct the Superintendent of Schools in situations in which a matter could reasonably be considered at a forthcoming Board Meeting; neglect to fulfill normally accepted obligations related to signing authority and other legal requirements;
- 22.10. Or withhold from the Board any relevant information acquired during the performance of his or her duties as Chair.

The Vice Chair Shall:

- 22.11. The Vice-Chair shall assume all the duties and have all the authority of the Chair in the absence of the Chair or when there is a vacancy in the office of the Chair or in the event of the Chair's inability to act.

## **23. ROLE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

The Superintendent of Schools Shall:

- 23.1. Serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the Education Authority and shall be responsible for implementing the strategic plans and policies of the Education Authority approved by the Board of Governors and shall be responsible for the general management of the activities and affairs of the Education Authority. The Superintendent of Schools shall supervise all other employees.
- 23.2. Build trust and fosters positive working relationships, shares and promotes the Maskwacis Cree values and language, within the Maskwacis Education System.
- 23.3. Assist the Board of Governors in developing and operating a model Cree School System that is dedicated to the Cree language, Culture and Traditions and History.
- 23.4. Has the authority for and responsible to the Board for all aspects of the administration, organization, operation, and management of the Authority.
- 23.5. Develop and implement all administrative regulations and procedures and advise, assist, and work with the Board in developing objectives, programs, policies, and courses of action.
- 23.6. Has the authority for and responsible to establish the central office and to appoint the Senior Financial Officer and any other senior administrator so to effectively operate the Authority.
- 23.7. The Superintendent is the supervisor of the Senior Financial Officer and any other Senior Administrator he or she appoints.
- 23.8. He or she shall see that all orders and motions of the Board are carried into effect.
- 23.9. He or she shall perform his or her duties as prescribed from time to time in the Policy Manual, job description, and this Maskwacis Education Law.
- 23.10. He or she will develop a MESC Teacher certification program.
- 23.11. He or she will establish MESC performance measures for all schools and administration.

## **24. ROLE OF THE Senior Financial Officer**

The Senior Financial Officer shall:

- 24.1. Build trust and fosters positive working relationships, shares and promotes the Maskwacis Cree values, within the Maskwacis Education System.
- 24.2. Report directly to the Superintendent.
- 24.3. Be bondable, and shall have the custody of the funds, assets, accounts and investments of the Authority and shall keep full and accurate accounts of assets, liabilities, receipts and disbursements of the Authority in the books belonging to the Authority.

- 24.4. He or she shall deposit all monies, securities and other valuable effects in the name and to the credit of the Authority in such chartered bank, trust company, or Credit Unions or, in the case of securities, in such registered dealer in securities as may be designated by the Board from time to time.
- 24.5. He or she shall disburse the funds of the vouchers for such disbursements, and shall render to the Chairman and the Board of Governors at the regular meeting of the Board, or whenever they may require it, an accounting of all the transactions and a statement of the financial position of the Authority.
- 24.6. He or she shall perform such other duties as may be from time to time be prescribed by the Policy Manual job description and this Maskwacis Education Law.
- 24.7. Ensures the fiscal management of the Authority is in accordance with the terms or conditions of any funds received.
- 24.8. Ensures the Authority operates in a fiscally responsible manner, including adherence to recognized accounting procedures
- 24.9. Prepares the annual budget documents for consideration by the Superintendent and Board, which reflects Board Vision, Mission Goals and policies.

## **25. ROLE of DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT**

- 25.1. The Deputy Superintendent takes the place of Superintendent in his/her absence.

## **26. OFFICIAL LANGUAGE**

- 26.1. The official language of the Maskwacis Cree is Cree.
- 26.2. The official language of instruction for all schools operated by MESC will be Cree and English.

## **27. CREE CULTURE**

- 27.1. We have the inherent right to operate our own schools, decide our own curriculum and determine our own outcomes. Motivated by our identity as Maskwacis Nehiyawak, our curriculum will focus on our history, culture and language. Nehiyaw teaching methods and perspectives relevant to Maskwacis will be included in all aspects of the education system.
- 27.2. Wâhkohtowin, Îyiniw Mâmitonehickikan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin and Nehiyawewin are the foundations of our Maskwacis Schools and Administration. These foundational beliefs will be reflected through our school system and our operations.

## **28. EXECUTION OF DOCUMENTS**

- 28.1. Subject to specific direction of the Board to the contrary, contracts, documents or any instruments in writing requiring the signature of the Authority, must be:
- 28.1.1. Signed by not less than two (2) Members of the Board.
  - 28.1.2. Subject to these policies and any terms and conditions of third parties including Chiefs and Councils of Maskwacis Cree, the Board of Governors may delegate signing authority under this section to the Superintendent of Schools and Financial Controller of the Authority. Such delegation of signing authority shall be reviewed from time to time by the Board of Governors, and any instruments, agreements, contracts or similar documents executed under such delegation shall be reported to the Board at regular intervals or as necessary.
  - 28.1.3. The Board shall have power from time to time by motion to appoint an officer or agent to sign specific instruments on behalf of the Authority under the name of “Maskwacis Education Authority” and shall be considered to be contracts made on behalf of the Maskwacis Cree

## **29. MINUTES OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

- 29.1. Minutes of the meetings of the Board shall be made available for inspection to the Maskwacis Cree Chiefs and Councils of the Maskwacis Cree and shall be available upon written request to each Nation member.
- 29.2. Regular monthly Board meeting minutes shall be also available for inspection to the MESC Personnel, Parents, Students and Nation Citizens of the Maskwacis Cree and will be posted on the Authority’s website.

## **30. YEARLY REPORT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE AUTHORITY**

- 30.1. The Board shall publish and submit one Yearly Report that contain the performance result of the schools and the authority to the Maskwacis Cree Chiefs and Councils and to the Members of the Maskwacis Cree at the general meeting and will make available this same report to any interested parent or Band Member of Maskwacis Cree and others who may be interested in it.

## **31. FINANCIAL YEAR**

- 31.1. Unless otherwise ordered by the Board the fiscal year of the Authority shall be April 1 to March 31 in any year.

## **32. AUDITORS**

- 32.1. The Board shall appoint an Auditor to conduct the annual audit of the Authority accounts. The Authority will pay the auditor.

### **33. BOOKS AND RECORDS**

33.1. The Board shall see that all necessary books and records of the Authority required by the Maskwacis Education Law.

### **34. RULES AND REGULATIONS**

34.1. The Board may prescribe such rules and regulations (MESC organizational by-laws) consistent with this Maskwacis Education Law or other Maskwacis Cree Laws relating to the management and operation of the authority, as they deem expedient.

### **35. DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

35.1. The Education Authority will establish a dispute resolution process available to Maskwacis Schools that it administers to attempt to resolve disputes pertaining to the provision of Education Programs, management of education facilities, delivery of education services and any other matters that may have an impact on the operation of the Education Authority.

35.2. The dispute resolution process will flow from the foundational values that guide MESC.

35.3. In the event a dispute cannot be resolved we will follow emergency circumstance procedures as per Maskwacis Education Schools Commission Resource and Development Agreement.

### **36. PRIVACY LEGISLATION**

36.1. The Education Authority will establish and implement a privacy policy outlining data collection and information management. The policy will address but is not limited to;

36.1.1. The retention and destruction of information;

36.1.2. Maintenance of student records, including registration and attendance records.

36.1.3. How personal and confidential information will be used and disclosed; and

36.1.4. The First Nations Principles of O.C.A.P (ownership, control, access, and possession) will apply to the Education Authority's data collection, intellectual property and information management processes.

### **37. SEVERABILITY**

37.1. Any part of this law that is invalid, unenforceable, or unconstitutional shall be severed from the law and shall not affect the enforceability of other parts of the law, which shall remain in full force and effect.

### **38. REVIEW OF THE LAW**

38.1. The Maskwacîs Cree Chiefs and Councils will review the Maskwacîs Education law annually.

### **39. AMENDMENT OF Maskwacîs CREE EDUCATION LAW**

39.1. This law can be amended upon a resolution of the Maskwacîs Cree at a duly convened meeting of Maskwacîs Cree Chiefs and Councils.

### **40. COMING INTO FORCE**

40.1. This Law comes into force upon a resolution of the Maskwacîs Cree at a duly convened of Maskwacîs Cree Chiefs and Councils.







**MASKWACÎS EDUCATION SCHOOLS COMMISSION**

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