

News Release



University College of the North

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 7, 2021

Manitoba Aboriginal Language Strategy Group Set to Renew Agreement

(Winnipeg, Manitoba) – The Manitoba Aboriginal Languages Strategy (MALS) Partnership Agreement is set to be renewed by four lead organizations, including; Manitoba Education - The Indigenous Inclusion Directorate (IID), Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre (MFNERC), University College of the North (UCN), and the Indigenous Languages of Manitoba (ILM). The signing ceremony took place on October 7, 2021.

MALS was created to revitalize, retain and promote the seven Aboriginal Languages of Manitoba and is committed to sharing, developing, and promoting Aboriginal language resources throughout the province. The partnership works collaboratively with representatives and educational and cultural leaders from several First Nations, Inuit and Métis education organizations, provincial school divisions and post-secondary institutions.

“Language plays an incredible part of cultural identity and today our government has recommitted to the partnership agreement to protect and promote Aboriginal languages,” said Education Minister Cliff Cullen. “We recognize the importance of working collaboratively to provide Aboriginal language education, teacher training, education programs and services in Aboriginal languages throughout Manitoba.”

The Partnership Agreement was first signed on September 21, 2015.

“There was a sense of urgency when we first signed the agreement,” said Doug Lauvstad, University College of the North President & Vice-Chancellor. “Everyone in the room understood that language is the cornerstone of any culture.”

MALS receives ongoing guidance from the MALS Council of Grandparents. The council is comprised of fluent speakers and sacred traditional knowledge keepers. These Grandparents represent each of the seven Aboriginal language groups found in Manitoba.

For more information about MALS, visit malsmb.ca.

University College of the North provides learning opportunities to northern communities while respecting diverse Indigenous and northern values.

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