

For Immediate Release

GREATER ST. ALBERT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ENGAGE MÉTIS LOCAL 1904 ST. ALBERT - STURGEON COUNTY TO CONDUCT A TRADITIONAL LAND STUDY ON MISSION HILL.

[July 29, 2021, St. Albert, AB]

On July 20, 2021, Dr. Kisha Supernant, Director of the Institute of Prairie Archaeology, along with a team of PhD and undergraduate students, used their ground-penetrating radar to scan the lands behind the Division Services Centre in an area on the north-west corner of Mission Hill. Given the historic significance of the lands and in support of the work by Indigenous groups across the country the Division wanted to ensure the lands were free and clear of any human remains.

The Division engaged the Métis Local 1904 St. Albert - Sturgeon to conduct a Traditional Land Use Study to identify any potential graves in advance of some planned construction. Father Mérier School (commonly known as the brick school) operated as a day school and occupied lands adjacent to the parking lot expansion area. While the area of the study was not a residential school site, the superintendent indicated “due diligence should be taken on all historic sites.” The study concluded there is “no reason to suspect the area of the proposed parking lot poses any risk of unmarked graves.” The complete study is available on the school division website and provides additional information supporting the conclusions and recommendations.

“Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools’ openness to doing the right thing considering the circumstances is truly worthy of recognition. We look forward to building on the relationship based on the principles of trust, respect and understanding as a way forward in reconciliation.” commented Bruce Gladue, president of Métis Local 1904. “Our Division remains grateful for the partnerships formed throughout this process and the deeper understanding of the significance of the work being conducted by Indigenous groups across the country,” remarked superintendent, Dr. Clint Moroziuk.

Last month, the Board of Trustees furthered their commitment to work continuously, proactively, and intentionally with the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities. This will include the renaming of Vital Grandin School and a review of all other school names. The Division remains fully committed to understanding and carrying out the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada Calls to Action (2015).

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- 30 -

Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools serves 6,000 students in the communities of Legal, Morinville, St. Albert and areas of Sturgeon County. A range of programming is available including: Full and half-day kindergarten, French Immersion (K-12), International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, Sports Academy, and integrated learning for students with diverse needs.

