MM: Welcome to the sixth and final episode of the Conversational Métis Sash, Weaving Together. In this episode, I weave together some of the oral strands gifted by the podcast guests, including Métis scholars Dr. Jennifer Markides, Dr. Lucy Delgado, Dr. Yvonne Poitras Pratt, Dr. Laura Forsythe, and Métis teacher Dana Chaulk. Such weaving together will braid the prominent pedagogies, practices, scholarship, and experiences from their contributions that inform Métis-specific ways of approaching and addressing Truth Before Reconciliation and overall combating settler colonialism in teacher education, all in Métis-based and led ways. This episode will also put forward the possibilities and limitations of academic podcasting in educational research processes. By bringing each voice forward to advance Métis-specific findings in Truth Before Reconciliation teacher education research, we weave together our Conversational Métis Sash. Please know that this sash is not truly completed, as each strand also lies with you, the listener. We hope you will be inspired by these conversations and learn more about what you can do for your strand by participating in this transformational work.

Listeners near and far, kih-chi maarsii for taking the time to listen to Dr. Jennifer Markides, Dr. Lucy Delgado, Dr. Yvonne Poitras Pratt, and Dr. Laura Forsythe, and bear witness to their experiences of teaching mandatory First Nations, Inuit, and Métis teacher education courses, as they instruct pre-service educators across the Northwest Métis Homeland. Not only this, but kih-chi maarsii for listening to the experience of Dana Chaulk, and how listening to the podcast episodes, before their public release, to understand how each conversation impacted her pedagogical and personal teaching practices in real-time. Now, let's weave some of their strands together.

A predominant thread amongst each of the conversations was the importance of bringing forward the distinctions of Métis identity and our brilliance into each of our pedagogical practices.

Dr. Yvonne Poitras Pratt realizes that the weight of responsibility is often held by Métis teacher educators and teachers themselves, and how we, as Métis, come to our classrooms exactly as we are, and coming as we are, often leads us to tell our stories as truthfully and honestly as possible.

YPP: Because we could do all the, you know, the nice talk about safe spaces and all of that but is really a safe space and especially for we as Indigenous educators.
MM: Right.
YPP: Because who's at risk?
MM: Right.
YPP: So yeah, so in that opening, that discussion, you know, we were able to have these really tough discussions without that discussion. And yes, you know, we have to do all of the normal first day kind of activities, introduce the course and you do all that kind of thing. I thought, nope. That is just not important as setting out this space, as a space of trust and a space of support. And

so, you know, at the end of the term, that young man came to me, and he said, “I just want to thank you.” Yeah, he said, “I was tough on you.” And he said, “And you were able to respond in a way that opened up my learning. Because it carries strands. And so, what I've learned now as I enter life and reluctantly being called a Knowledge Keeper, is that what I have really learned is that we bring stories to the table that different people will take different strands from and so it's not that I have a singular bit of wisdom to pass on, but instead I, I present this tapestry of stories.

MM: Mmmmmm.

YPP: From which you might be able to draw something that will help you in your own life or that will help you help someone else.

MM: Dr. Jennifer Markides notes that as she embraces Métis-led activities via telling our stories, she does so in cross-curricular and collaborative ways, working alongside colleagues in doing so.

JM: Laura, Lucy and I are at the late stages of getting ready for publication.
MM: Right.
JM: And that's for classroom educators. And so, I'm going to share the whole activity and like, it really is like other than the preparation in advance and that's the actual like being able to the Amazing Race is really fun. And the students get like they get a lot all in a very tight compact amount of time, they can see that like it'd be really easy to put up a jig on your smart board in the classroom. And on those days when you don't get the gym, like if you need to do your daily physical activity, you can stand up a jig and you're going to get your heart rate up and your smiles on their faces. And I always do it with the students. So, I go around as each group and they can go in any order when they do this right.
MM: Mmmhmmm.
JM: So, some of them do it early, some of them do it late. But I'm always like when they have to do it all together. And, so I do it with them. So, it's kind of like takes the nervousness out or embarrassment. Our teachers doing it, we are all doing it together, we’re kinda all in this awkwardness together. We can all make it work. And teachers need to push themselves and try new things and out of their comfort zones and in those gentle, and supported ways, like no one asked to do it by themselves. And certainly no one has to teach like we're all just learning together alongside the instructors on that, whatever video they choose.
MM: That's right.
JM: And you don't have to be good at it to get exercise or to have fun so…
MM: That's right. Because I can imagine this also working too, for really cold recesses. And if (laughter from both JM/MM) they're really stuck, they can even do the jigging during recess time too.
JM: They could, they could start a club.
MM: Yeah! (Laughter from both JM/MM).
JM: There’s a lot of opportunities.
MM: The opportunities are limitless! That's brilliant.
JM: And I have to think if they have to list three Métis Nations. So that's, they're like realizing okay so maybe you people have like contributed to science and other fields by creating things and so that's good learning for them and sometimes and also, who are the famous Métis people? Right? So, that's another one. A Métis instrument and they have to draw it. So, there's art built in.

Oh, and sometimes you learn a Michif word and teach someone and then but I say, of course you can't pick something easy like "Taanishi". At least go a little further to find a word and learn it.
MM: Yeah.
JM: Yeah. Just try to incorporate as much as possible across all curriculum areas, knowing that the people we have in the class are all age ranges and curriculum areas. And for them to know that like there are Métis hockey players, artists and filmmakers, musicians and like be able to know that, that they can follow any one of these threads based on the interests of their students and the connections they're trying to make in their own classroom. So, a whole world of possibilities once they realize who Métis people are, who they are and who they are not.
MM: Yeah (Laughter of JM/MM).

MM: Dr. Lucy Delgado does the same but also ensures that Two-Spirit and Indigi-queer scholarship is centred within their course syllabus and materials.

LD: And so, I already mentioned like prioritizing Indigenous scholars and then also like, I mean, first prioritizing Indigenous women and Two-Spirit people scholars and the right.
MM: (laughter) Correct.
LD: And then black women scholars and women of color scholars and then moving on to the rest of the BIPOC community and then non-Indigenous or like white scholars after that. Really, I think it is important for everyone to see themselves seen in the classroom and dismantling that hierarchy of like only reading dead white men, which happened in a lot of my classes when I was in grad school, and I've had numerous students mention it and notice it.
MM: Mmmmmm.
LD: Just, I don't talk about it, but if you go through my syllabi, you'll see like I try to have a maximum of two non-BIPOC readings per year, like per course and the rest… Like there's people have written about it. You can find it, right? It just takes a little bit extra work sometimes. But then also like to speak to like the queer and the Two-Spirit piece of it because we get left out of a lot of the conversations around Indigenous inclusion, right? There's a lot of Elders who teach really heteronormative teachings about our people, about ceremony. And so, I really try to make sure that I'm… I'm not sure I'm quite at like actually queering my teaching practice. I think that's something I'm working towards. Dr. Alex Wilson is like, she was my PhD advisor and she's an idol obviously, so I'm working towards more like Alex, but for sure, like prioritizing the inclusion of Two-Spirit and Indigi-queer perspectives no matter, again, no matter the content of the course. It doesn't matter what course I'm teaching. If I'm teaching just introduction to qualitative research, we're going to read Two-Spirit and Indigi-queer people talking about being Two-Spirit because just representation matters, as they say, right? Just making sure people understand us a little bit better in whatever way I can.

MM: And through these threads, a key reminder of being able to work together comes forward, and it is through honouring wahkotowin and all its relational accountability that it encompasses, within and not-within educational contexts. Dr. Laura Forsythe honours this by creating spaces for Métis people to gather.

LF: In terms of how to engage with Indigenous peoples. But we also have to recognize that Métis, although have shared similarities, also have some differences. And so how do we go about creating a model, a framework, a conversation is what we're going to have here coming up in May. Around where have we been? So what is the history of how did OCAP come to be? How did the NAHO principles of Métis ethics come to be? And where do we need to go? And so we're gathering folks who will sit at the kitchen table together. There will be talking just as long as there will be listening. Because that is a big piece of reflection and to see how it will impact our actual lived lives and our lived realities. And how are we going to walk forward as a people, not as nations, but as people.
MM: As people. I love that. That's brilliant. And that, okay, that really makes me want to go (MM laugher).
LF: It's going to be a good time. It's going to be a good time. We're also going to be like recording those conversations and having a report and sharing it out. And like really saying like, unlike the NAHO Métis ethics principles, which were created in half a day. This isn't that, right? This is us having a complex conversation, talking through some of these things. What do we think that this could be, should be, who should be engaged, who should be involved? How do we, you know, adhere to our principles of wahkotowin in that, right? It begins with a keynote on the Monday night. And it will be Métis Aunties coming and talking to us about Métis ethics.
MM: I love this.
LF: How are we to walk the earth, right? Not how do we fill out the form, but how should we walk the earth when we're thinking about engaging and work with Métis families, Métis communities, and Métis individuals.

MM: Dr. Jennifer Markides offers that being Métis also means to show up for one another.

JM: Me raising kids, I try and go to events when they're hosting in the area. I can take my kids, and they can participate. I also, you know, we also participate in a ceremony that's not Métis, you know, a Cree ceremony or Blackfoot ceremony, for them to be exposed to that as well. You know, we learn about our kin.
MM: Yes.
JM: And show up for each other. So it means, it means learning and it means responsibility. And I'm lucky to be part of a pretty active Métis scholar community. And so we are, you know, we've published Métis-specific books, where we've created the first Métis journal in existence, Pawaatamihk. We worked as part of the planning committee and now we'll be hosting Mawachihitotaak, which is the first Métis conference of its kind that has had huge success in the last year and in the previous iteration when it was online as well. Huge numbers of attendees were paid by registrant and it was over, over 1500 participants in the first one. So, and then we had a cutoff and we've made 300 participants in the face-to-face gathering in Winnipeg this last year. So, you know, being part of organizing those events and organizing those opportunities and places for Métis things to exist. You know, it's not without its pitfalls. There's sometimes criticism that comes with this work of like, you know, how things are framed or who we exclude or who you include. We have to navigate the, again, the identity politics of it all sometimes deal with publishers at times that want to exclude less academic voices from publications. And there's, there's not one way to be Métis. There's not one, there's not one. That's, that's our most

recent book actually is Métis Coming Together. The whole introduction is about how we are incredibly multidimensional. And, that, you know, it's not, it's not, it's not jigging and sashes that makes us Métis.
MM: No, that's right.
JM: We are, uh, so much more than that. And, and for people to know that, that all these ways of living and being Métis are possible.
MM: Right.
JM: Like you just are, you just are Métis. And how do you, how do you enact it, uh, can you, yeah, it depends on your family and how are your community and the values that you're raised in.

MM: Such values are woven into how Dr. Yvonne Poitras Pratt addresses the ways in which Métis balance identities within the work we do and how we interact in the world, especially as we build relations.

YPP: The responses from the other, um, students in the class. Really started to open up a conversation around why this type of course, learning Indigenous perspectives was so important.
MM: Hmm.
YPP: So in that moment, I think we started to create a sense of community. And so that, you know, that moment will always remain in my mind. And of course I ham it up when I play act it and I usually get superintendents of schools to be the, the student. Um, right.
MM: Yeah.
YPP: Because, right. But it's, I think, um, you know, when you talk about, you know, what practices do I bring into my teaching? Um, I think about, um, I think about, you know, the way I was raised, um, you know, uh, I think about the ways that our people navigated difficult spaces and how the Métis, and, you know, I'm in the midst of writing this journal article right now for the Métis Futurities series. And I'm thinking about, um, our role as not only cultural mediators, but we're in a space of building relations, trusting with one another. And so that to me, in order to balance what I was feeling and seeing in the class in my sacred space, I, I, for me, my, my classroom becomes a sacred space. And so that had to be navigated. That had to be really brought to the forefront right away.

MM: Such balancing as a part of our identity as Michif was also noted by Métis educator, Dana Chaulk.

DC: It's the relationship building piece and flexibility and adaptability. Being understanding of the fact that all students are not coming to your class with the same experiences, with the same knowledge. And so, teaching in a way that allows the students to be themselves and to guide students in a caring way. So, I guess putting the, the child as a person first over the pressure of achieving your curriculum objectives and your, um, meeting all of your teaching professional goals. And this is as an experienced teacher, more easily able to balance that. As a first-year teacher, I would say it was more difficult to find that balance between all the pressures of, of

delivering the curriculum and ensuring that your students are reaching the goals and that you've assessed them appropriately to, to make sure that they're learning what they need to learn. Versus spending the time in getting to know the students as the, as, as people. So I think that's something that I didn't have a hard time with, but I did have to, I, it is a skill that you have to learn, you know, because you can't do too much of one and not enough of the other. If I had to pick one word, one word to describe my teaching philosophy, it would be balance.

MM: Embracing said balance connects to how Dr. Laura Forsythe walks alongside her Métis identity and wahkotowin, every single day.

LF: Well, I find, I always find it really interesting and challenging when people say that they are walking in two worlds, because I don't. I walk in a very Métis world every day of my life. And so, my pedagogy is a Métis pedagogy because that's really the only way that I can imagine it being right. When you adhere to the principles of wahkotowin in everything that you choose, in every action that you take, that comes through in your teaching, right? And I very much have a Métis auntie-vibe when I'm in my classroom, right? But that is unintentional. You know, that is the way that it is. So, for example, when we think about Métis aunties and how they say hard truths sometimes, I teach in inner-city programs and access programs, which means that those learners historically have been barriered, I will say purposefully, from not entering the institution, right? And so, when I talk to them about AI and I talk to them about doing the work themselves, I remind them that they are in this space when people didn't want them there and that they are there for an education. And that education is something that they're going to walk with forever. And that other folks who have always been invited to the institution, they don't actually need the piece of paper. They don't actually need that education. They're going to get that job anyway. And so it's really important for them to come to this space, the space that held them outside the door for so very long, and get every single thing that they can, which means that they have to actually learn the skills. They have to read the papers. They have to be able to write. They have to be able to cite. Because that is how they're going to move forward. Our agenda. Our collective agenda. From those who live in the inner city. From those who have been marginalized. From those who have been left out. And so, I say these things in class, right? Like, and remind them. You know what I mean? Like, we are in this position, including myself, because we lived in the inner city. Because of our hard work. Not because we are lucky. And that means that they have to continue to work hard. Right? And when they walk out, that they carry these gifts into their community. And that we have an extra responsibility. Right? As role models to those who come behind us. And these are just offhand comments that I make throughout the term. Right? Reminding them about our space and place. And so that's very much, to me, a Métis auntie standing at the front of the class. Right? And that I have high expectations of them. And they know it. Right? And they try to meet them. And to me, well, someone would say, oh, well, that's not Métis pedagogy. And I was like, well, then you don't know my aunties. Right?
MM: (laughter) You don't know my mom.
LF: You don't know where to sit at my kitchen table. Right? And so I think, you know, that's what I think of when I say, well, how, you know, how is your teaching practice? That's what comes to mind for me.

MM: And for each conversation, each guest discussed the imperative of Métis-specific gatherings, materials, books, and scholarship alongside Métis-specific contributions. They also shared what they each centred when teaching Truth Before Reconciliation and prioritizing truth-telling and story-sharing alongside accountability, inclusion, and standing up alongside First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and honouring intersecting identities when instructing students. Dr. Yvonne Poitras-Prat does just this, as she notes her thoughts about truth and reconciliation by recognizing a shift that might need to take place.

YPP: You know, when I was working with the education students, they kind of were relying on the, you know, the model of speaking at. No, no. This is going to be much more deliberate. So, when the elders entered the building September 30th, they saw these gorgeous displays of Kokum scarves. So, Elder Wanda was one of the speakers, and she saw what we did in the summer with the tying the scarves on the trees exploded into this beautiful intentionality. And she also witnessed that room was at full capacity.
MM: Beautiful.
YPP: And there were competing events right around Calgary.
MM: Yeah.
YPP: But I think we had 137 or something like that show up. And like I said, the kids on the floor eating, chatting and hugging. And it was just that, to me, is what I think when we talk about truth and reconciliation, like we've got to move from that, the heaviness and yes, the realities. Yes, they must be taught. They must be known. But then how do we bridge forward?
MM: Right.
YPP: Yeah.
MM: And enter brilliance.
YPP: Right. And honor the courage of those who are taking part in this work. Because all of that fear is resulting in apathy, right? Indifference. And we have to lift up people who are, who are doing the work, who are taking it up despite all the obstacles they are engaging in this work. So, that honoring of what they're doing, I think, is so very, very important.

MM: While uplifting the work of others, especially in the context of teaching Canada's colonial history through our perspectives, Dr. Laura Forsythe brings forward truth-telling as a pedagogical centring.

LF: And so, when I think about the truth and education part of the truth and reconciliation, I see that as why it is so important. Because when people know, when they know better, they do better, I think is the saying, right? And if we are unaware, because we have learned a different history or learned a different way of knowing and being, that that challenge is why they should care, honestly. Right? And absolutely, I appreciate that some have written and researched that it doesn't matter how much we teach people. Some people will never be on side with us. And I can appreciate that. But there are many that will be. I started my educational journey in 2011. So, a few years after the official apology at Simon Fraser University. And I saw and have witnessed, since that time, incredible leaps in terms of reconciliation, both at the institution but in education.
MM: Mmmhmm.

LF: The world that I went to do my Bachelor of Education in 2015, and the world that my students now live in as teachers, is completely different. And is everyone doing this work? No. But I'll tell you, there are far more people doing this work than there were. And I talked to my history students about what does that actually look like? What does it look like from Beverly Jacobs in 2008, standing up and saying, you can say sorry, but these are the things that you need to do. And one of the things that she said that you needed to do was to educate Canadians.
MM: Mmmhmm.
LF: And then that was, you know, echoed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report. We need to educate people. And so, when little ones now, in K-12, are learning about the seven teachings, they're getting to see how drums are made, they're talking about Louis Riel beyond just being murdered. I mean, these are all incredible steps forward in reconciliation that we, because we want immediate gratification, we dismiss. We don't recognize them as the huge accomplishments that they are.

MM: Weaving into the practices of Métis teacher Dana Chaulk, she truth-tells as she teaches her students by making such conversations local and personal to the kids, which is a way to pedagogically connect the content so that they understand how the land still tells its stories to this day.

DC: Bringing awareness to the historical events of the past has to be done in a mindful way so that the people that are hearing this, that may be, you know, the descendants of settlers or people maybe even new to Canada who aren't aware of these things happening, understand that you're not putting the blame on them, right? You're not putting blame on anyone. You're bringing awareness to this is the actual events that happened. And they weren't addressed at the time. They weren't addressed in my time in school. And I think that's another thing is we're not talking about way, way, way, way back in the past. I'm not a super old person. I'm not an elder. And my experience and what I learned in school was not the truth. It was not what actually happened. And it was ignored. In the community where I lived, there are residential schools within two hours of where I grew up. And we were not made aware of this happening. And some of it you're not aware of because how would you tell children that your so-and-so is in a foster care program because they were taken away from their parents? I knew kids that were living within foster care, but you just, oh, they're living with somebody else. Like you don't actually understand that they were removed from their family and they are living with someone else. And that's what a foster care system is. There was a lot of reasons it was done in the past that were not legitimate. So, I think through telling some of the stories and building that knowledge, you can acknowledge that some horrific things have happened. And this is why it's so important for people to be made aware of this history, you know. And it's not just about a few different things that are the high news items. There's a lot of history that is not told. So, when possible, if it can be brought to location, your space, where you are. This is where I live. This is where the school exists. And these are the Indigenous communities around the school. These are your nearby neighbours. And this is what happened. And this is how they were brought here. Right? This is how these people ended up in this place. And so, I'm more aware of what's happened in this area. But there's not a lot of resources that are available for teaching that local history of why certain families came to be in certain places. There's more happening. You know, I think Ile-à-la-Crosse in Saskatchewan,

Saint-Paul-de-Métis. There's some books about those communities. And they're very informative without being triggering of a lot of traumatic events. So, it's like, yes, there are those events that are a part of the problem. But here's the bigger picture of, you know, how these people move from this place to this place. And it wasn't a choice. And I think if you are aware of this knowledge, if you do have this knowledge, then you have a responsibility to become a part of helping that reconciliation effort.

MM: While students need to know where and how long the Indian Residential School System lasted alongside colonial-based implications affecting First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people, even still to this day, Dr. Jennifer Markides does well to remind us that…

JM: I started my PhD in 2015, the Calls to Action were just released. And a colleague of mine, Dr. Jennifer McDonald, who's now at the University of Regina, she, we were in a course together, and we were known as the 'Jens', and she, she asked if I wanted to read through that with her, for one of our assignments. And so, we did a duo-ethnographic reading of the 94 Calls to Action and recorded each conversation. And it took us two weeks and weeks because it was like 10 hours of recorded conversation. And, you know, each one, like, I think I got into it thinking it was going to be, you know, oh, it's 94 things to read about. But each one, you know, you kind of unpack it and learn about it and, like, you know, what is Jordan's principle? What, what is that? And, you know, that was a whole day of just of, like, digging into the court case and why, why it came to be and why it needed to be. And, yeah, just a lot of learning. And so, both are published, one's in the Canadian Journal of Education and the other one that's in the Alberta Journal of Educational Research. And, you know, we've done lots of talks and presentations as well, that, you know, just personally that, that has informed everything in my personal life and in my professional life. Having that grounding of having read those 94 calls so closely and intimately and realizing that, you know, we're listening for how, what are we being called to do as individuals. But it's really calling society…
MM: Mmmmm.
JM: And in particular, different levels of government that really everyone to account. And so it's, uh, you know, hard to know what you need to do as an individual in response, but it's holding everybody to account and, in these 94 calls. And pushing for those changes to be made. And, you know, we have students that get really up in rooms that so few have been accomplished. But, you know, these, these calls were written so thoughtfully and intentionally that, that in order for them to be achieved, there has to be substantial change. There has to be a lot of effort and time and relationship building and, and reparations and change made. Uh, and so it's not an easy, quick, you know, checkbox, like a lot of things that people would anticipate, uh, a list like this would be. It's, it's really not going to take a long time and, and, and constant effort and everyone holding people to account. Each other and governments, and the world. And it's tricky because, uh, the way it's taught in schools is done in age-appropriate ways. But when we teach in the university, the Indigenous education course, we go deeper than, than typically is, is done in schools. And so then people are still upset because they, they think they've known stuff and then they learn even more and then they're more mad.
MM: Yeah.

JM: Or, or they feel guilty or they feel just like angry that this is, this has happened and they didn't learn sooner. So I don't know, I don't know how to address that necessarily, um, because it is really, really difficult learning. This is not a pitch for things I've written, but I have written about that teaching that course, uh, in a couple of articles as well, uh, reflecting like self-study. But, uh, because it is such a challenging course to teach, uh, to have to take people through all that history and context to, to, to have a better understanding of where we are now and why we're here.
MM: Right.
JM: And it's not, um, you know, just one thing. It's not just residential schools. It's the past Indian Act, and all the other oppressive structures that have led to, you know, systemic racism and having to be tacit. Like what people don't even recognize it is racism, it's just how everyone is when it comes to Indigenous people. And, and so you need all, you need to share a lot of pieces where people start to see this is a huge, huge systemic problem in order for them to feel that push to, you know, make the, make the change also systemically. And to do their part within education as educators and, and often, you know, it bleeds into the family and personal spheres as well. Because when you're faced with that much information that, uh, that disrupts, you know, those previous conceptions. And in cases, those misconceptions are disrupted. Then, people will be able to act and to help others learn.
MM: Right.
JM: What are the things that they didn't know also. So it is, it's making a difference. I think like little by little, like I see people come in with more knowledge all the time and more, um, experiences, right. Whether they're, you know, hear, the land acknowledgement, or if they, you know, have watched, uh, a series of television series on CBC, like they're learning more all the time. And so it's, you know, that progress is happening, but we still have to meet people where they are on that path. And there has to be some readiness and we still face racism, you know, in, in the teaching that the truth is important, as we say, and, you know, people deserve it. And for me, I deserve to have the truth, and Indigenous people deserve to have the truths told. And the, work I do with schools, we're creating space for culture and language to be taught in the school day as education, because it is education. And for so long, the Western, um, education systems existed and taught, and, you know, continued to, you know, recolonize, uh, through the, through the, uh, privileging of curriculum that's, you know, Eurocentric I think it's still centered around the holidays.
MM: Yeah.
JM: Like what's not the holidays. It's centred around traditional.
MM: That's right.
JM: I'm not even going to dance around it.
MM: That's right. That's right.
JM: Um, and so, uh, for us to, you know, for students to have them, to have their culture privileged within the education system, to have space for it is what's needed in reconciliation. And it's also a responsibility of the government to create space within, more space within the curriculum and within education for Indigenous teachings, Indigenous values, Indigenous languages, because they're the reason that they're in a precarity state. Right? The colonization worked in most, in many ways; it's been very effective at wiping out culture, Indigenous cultures, and language. So knowing that culture is housed in language is one of those heartbreaking things about history with residential schools and, and everything else associated with what's meant to wipe us out. So, uh, yeah, there's a responsibility in reconciliation to create more space and to

create more supports for these teachings to happen as education. It can't fall on the communities to do this outside of the school day and evenings, weekends, that kind of thing. It's not, we're not an event and you're not a special day or a week or, you know, an extracurricular. Like, this is learning, this is education, this matters to, to, to Indigenous communities and to the youth in particular. We want to learn these things. And so, that is truth before reconciliation, research, and hopefully leading into action and change.

MM: And such accountability is also what Dr. Lucy Delgado speaks about, and how all teachers can still use their positions and power as forms of responsibility and accountability. Dr. Lucy Delgado also questions how teachers can move forward to true allyship and enactment of responsibilities to respond to the Calls to Action as a school-wide community.

LD: I mean, I hope they're learning about meaningful inclusion. I hope they're learning about how to include us, not just as tokens, not just in September and June, as week units, mini-units, but throughout the courses, throughout the year. Not just in social studies and English and art, but every course throughout the year. And in ways that are not tokenistic, but are empowering to those who hear it. I hear a lot of times, oh, I don't have any Indigenous students in my class, or I won't. But like, you might not know. You might not have any idea if you have Indigenous students. And even if you don't, you have students that are going to meet Indigenous people. So how can you better help them understand the context that we're living in? I also hope that they're learning not just to be an ally, but to be an accomplice, right? Like moving from just bland allyship where you're like, oh, I observe Truth and Reconciliation Day. And I go to National Indigenous Peoples Day. Okay. But like, how are you using your position of power, again, to serve Indigenous communities, to help leverage work that they're doing, to, make sure people know that it's not just Indigenous people asking for something or demanding rightfully the truth. Like, how do you push for the truth to come out? How do you work with your principal, your superintendent, to prioritize that, to make sure they know they can't just have one poster at the end of September? But like, there needs to be more and just more than just that in a grad pow wow, right? Like, there needs to be meaningful inclusion. What are you going to do if you bring in a community member to the school who says transphobic or homophobic things? How are you going to be an accomplice and stand up for the kids that are hearing that and being told they don't belong in their community, right? It's like, what are you doing to put yourself on the line for people who might need you to? It's hard work, right?
MM: It is, it is.
LD: It's absolutely. And it's taking on that hard work yourself, too, right? Leaning into it, knowing, like, it's uncomfortable to not know how to do something as well as you know other things. Sure. But the only way you'll learn more is by doing it, by being in community, by building relationships, by showing up over and over and over again until people know you. Like, then you'll start to get it. But if you're not doing that work, you're not going to get it. You're always just going to be an ally, self-proclaimed, probably. But that doesn't count. That's not enough. Right? So, like, how do you do that hard work yourself?

MM: To weave the Conversational Métis Sash together by sharing the final thoughts of each guest on the conversational Métis Sash. It is important to begin with Dana Chaulk, as Dana was the first podcast listener. And Dana wants to remind everyone to not just listen to the podcast once, but to listen to each conversation multiple times.

DC: I am not a person who listens to podcasts. So, the first thing to take away is the value of listening to a podcast. So, that basic thing of, oh, I really took a lot away from this, of listening to this conversation. Listening to you and other Métis women talking about these different topics. And using them to inspire what I'm doing. And things to think about. I think I would continue to look for podcasts that are related to Métis content. And First Nations content, too. Because it's different than what I thought it would be. Because you're listening to that engagement between two people that is more fluid, I guess. Like, it's not transcribed. Like, you're not reading from something. But it's a peek into this reality. I think sharing your understanding provides other people with, like, that inspiration to engage in similar work. Or to avoid the pitfalls of their experiences. Where, you know, signing up for too many things. Or not acknowledging when someone is going against what your beliefs are. Yvonne had described a story about an attitude that she had seen in one of her classes. And she addressed it head-on. Like, let's stop the problem before it starts.
MM: Right.
DC: Right. So, you know, like, these little parts of the conversation can have a, like, have an impact on how you're thinking about things. And how you might handle things in the future. And listening to them more than once, I think, is important. Because you're, I took different things away from listening to the conversations more than once. And I think it also has to do with whatever frame of mind you're in. You know, like, if you're, I found it very positive to be listening while I'm preparing what I'm going to be doing.
MM: Right.
LD: Right. So, you know, like, I can see referring back to, to these podcasts when I'm working on my own research. Again, not a one-and-done (laughter).

MM: And through all of their stories, one thing rings true for all guests is how much we need to work alongside community to do this work in good ways. Each scholar and educator does well to remind listeners that we are never alone as we do the work of Truth Before Reconciliation education. And we need to take good care of ourselves so that we can continue to support our students in the best ways we possibly can.

LD: Well, I tell those Métis teachers to hang on, hang in there. I know it's hard work. I know it's isolating work. Lots of folks are the only Métis teacher in their school or their division, even in some places. And there's a lot of misinformation about us out there and untruths that are told. And it's really, it can be really difficult to be that one person. But the work that you're doing is so meaningful for our people in our community and our kids who are going to hear you in that classroom. So, like, just know that the work is really important and that you're valued and appreciated by lots of us, even if it doesn't feel like it sometimes. Yeah, keep fighting the good fight.

LF: Yeah. I think that the work that we have all collectively signed on to do is difficult. And although there are some really incredible highs, there are going to be some lows as well. And that if we create networks of support and people we can speak to, that we can get through those low times when there is pushback from administration, when there is pushback from community members or classroom, other educators. You need to create, like, an epicenter of support for yourself to be able to do this work, because there will be some debrief needed on some of the things that you're hoping to do. But that our responsibility, our obligation to our children and our communities is beyond our personal feelings about the pushback, right? And so, it is more important to continue to do that work and to find a support system than stop doing it altogether.

YPP: Yeah, it's a big question. But I think for fellow Métis educators, nothing makes me happier than being in a space with fellow Métis educators, right? We're united in this struggle, but we're also united in the joy of who we are and understanding our histories. And you know what? The creative imaginations of our people always blows me away. I just get so excited when I hear from fellow Métis educators what they're doing and their determination to keep going despite great odds. You know, all of those things, I think we have to keep those as our most cherished items because the days are going to be rough, that you're going to feel hopeless. But I think when we come together, we understand that we're stronger and braver together.

JM: You know, we've had to fight really hard to have publishers say, well, why do you need a Métis book or some institutions for a Métis course to exist? And they're saying, well, you know, well, why? Why do you need this? Why? Who will come? Will it be read? Will it be bought? Will it be, you know, will people sign up? And as soon as you offer it, it's full. And I'm in the witness. And as soon as you create it, it's sold out. Like it's, there's a, there's a real need. We're, we're very numerous. And just to be able to connect with each other, we need to, to know that each other are out there.

Keep finding ways to, to be part of this large Métis community that is really thriving, I would say now. We're across the homeland. There's sometimes Zoom gatherings, sometimes in-person gatherings. It's not just the, like the once-a-year homeland visits. There's stuff going on year-round that people can become part of. And yeah, being in those places, I think just will make you more well-connected and, and all the richer in your, you know, in your heart. I just touched my heart and you can't see that on the mic, but all the richer in your heart. And that's something you can share with your students and pride of our current existence and, and the knowledge of the generations that have fought really hard to continue to exist in this country. Despite so many challenges, hardships, and intentional pursuits to make Métis disappear or envelop into other, into other groups. That we're still here. There's a lot of us. So, yeah. Just look around and connect to each other (laughter).

MM: I cannot be more grateful and thankful for the contributions of Dr. Yvonne Poitras Pratt, Dr. Jennifer Markides, Dr. Lucy Delgado, Dr. Laura Forsythe, and Dana Chaulk. Kih-chi maarsii with my whole heart for making the conversational Métis Sash podcast with me. For my own continuing thoughts. I am more inspired to be proudly me as I teach pre-service teachers about Canada's history and our lived experiences and contributions within it. Through sharing space

with these brilliant and dedicated academic aunties. I feel like I'm not alone. My hope is that all listeners know that they are not alone too.

Now that you have heard our perspectives on teaching truth before reconciliation, education, and Métis-specific matters, how will you respond?