

UNIT FOUR: ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

PARTICIPATING IN A REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

CHAPTERS 6 & 7



MOD

Name _____

- ☐ • I can describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens living in a representative democracy
- ☐ • I can explain the similarities and differences between direct and representative democracies
- ☐ • I can value the contributions of elected representatives in the democratic process
- ☐ • I can value the participation of citizens
- ☐ • I can describe how elected officials demonstrate accountability to the electorate
- ☐ • I can explain how ACFA and MNAA provide their members with a voice to exercise their rights
- ☐ • I can describe how individuals, groups and associations within a community participate in the decision-making process regarding current events or issues

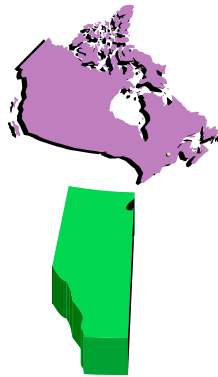
GOVERNMENT & DEMOCRACY

Government→ a person or persons ruling a country, province, city, district, etc.



CANADA HAS THREE MAIN TYPES OF GOVERNMENTS:

- **Federal**= Whole country
- **Provincial**= Each province
- **Local/Municipal**= Cities, town, or districts



We also have First Nations governments in Canada at all three levels.

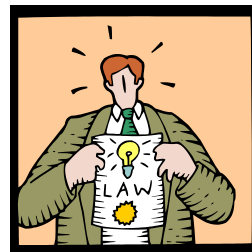


TWO TYPES OF DEMOCRACY:

- **Direct democracy**→ A way of making decisions in which everyone in a group votes on all issues (no representatives)
- **Representative democracy**→ a political system where citizens elect representatives to govern and make decisions on their behalf.



VS



VOCABULARY

Accountable: to be held responsible for decisions or actions

Candidate: a person who wishes to be voted for or chosen to represent a group of people

Role Model: someone who offers his or her own example as an inspiration for other people to imitate

Association: a group of organizations or people united for a joint purpose, who elect leaders to carry out the associations aims

ACFA: a provincial association that officially represents Francophones in Alberta

Electorate: group of qualified voters

Board of Directors: a group elected to govern an organization, such as an association

Members at Large: someone elected to represent an entire group, as opposed to part of a group

MNA: Metis Nation of Alberta; as association that officially represents the Metis in Alberta

Metis: people of mixed First Nations and European ancestry

Lobbying: seeking to influence elected representatives on behalf of a group

Injustice: treating other people in a way that is not just, fair, or equitable

Public Meeting: a meeting to discuss a topic of concern that everyone may attend

Advocate: a person who speaks to support the rights of others

Petition: a formal request to a superior or to one in authority for some privilege, right, benefit, etc.

Direct vs. Representative Democracy

Direct Democracy	Representative Democracy
<p>Pro's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You pick exactly what you want • You have a voice • Your idea is always considered • It is easy- you just vote • Not pressured • Works well in a small group • Encourages people to be involved/ informed 	<p>Pro's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your voice can be considered • Works well for large populations • Takes less time than everyone voting and less \$ • You get to choose the rep. • The rep. Should make good decisions for everyone
<p>Con's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs money and time if lots are voting- not 4 big groups • You don't always get what you want (minority) • Too many people= no time to do anything but vote 	<p>Con's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rep. may not consider your ideas • You don't get a strong voice on actual decisions • They may not agree with you • They may not take responsibilities seriously • Lots of pressure on the rep. • Some people don't stay informed or involved

Good decision making models should have the following criterion:

- allows decisions to be made in a timely and affordable manner
- leads to informed decision making by citizens
- reflects a range of perspectives and points of view
- consider needs of everyone
- Accountability for decisions
- encourages thoughtful decision making
- reflects the principles of democracy—justice, equity, freedoms, representation.



What are three functions of representatives?

1. Recognize that representatives are **accountable** for **communicating** with the people they represent.
2. Recognize that representatives **express the ideas and visions** of the people they represent
3. Recognize that representatives need to make decisions that **consider the needs of everybody**

Many representatives in Canada are members of associations. They work for specific groups of people to make their needs known to the government- like the Alberta's Teacher's Association.

How do associations represent their members?

Associations have a unique role in representing specific groups of people. We are going to look at 2 different associations to gain an understanding of the responsibilities that representatives have toward citizens.



ACFA



Associations: Representing Specific Groups of People

WHAT DOES ACFA STAND FOR? Association of Canadian Francophones in Alberta



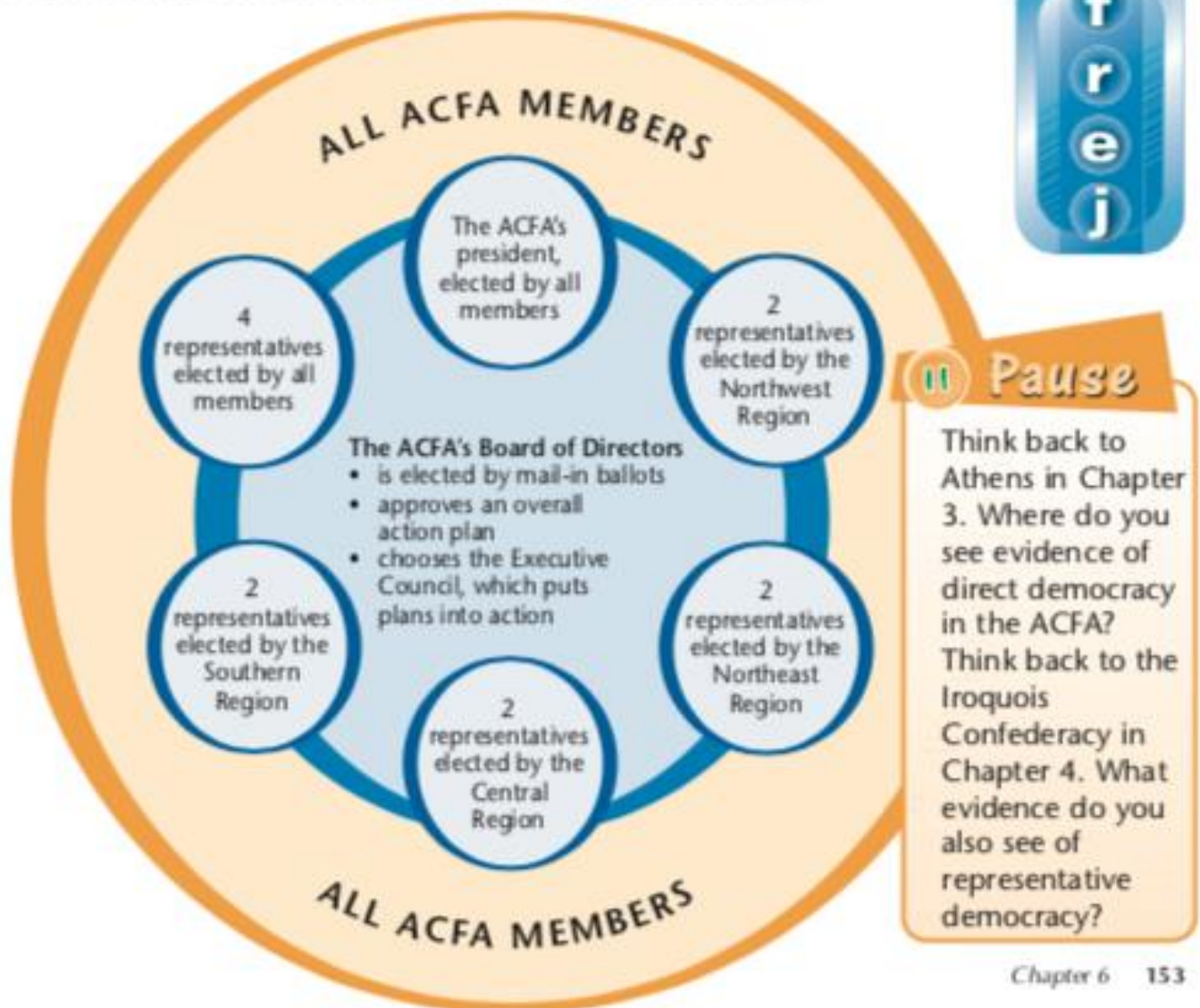
ACFA: A voice for Francophone's in Alberta PG. 152

What is the purpose of l'Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broaden vision of Francophone community• Bring together, plan, mobilize and support francophones• To defend the official language rights of francophone citizens in Alberta• To provide a voice to Francophones
How does the ACFA make decisions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members have discussions and Annual General Meetings• 16 years and older can attend meetings and vote• All votes are equal• Members elect representatives for each region, members at large, and a provincial president
How do ACFA representatives keep connected with their members?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meetings• ACFA website• Weekly newspaper Le Franco• Centres in each region• Personal contact• Information bulletins mailed to members• emails

What are other ways that the ACFA supports the Francophone community?

- Organizes events that foster and promotes francophone community
- Provides services in French language
- Supports francophone businesses and job-seekers
- Supports francophone education
- Initiates projects based on community priorities

How do ACFA members elect their representatives?



WHAT DOES MNA STAND FOR?



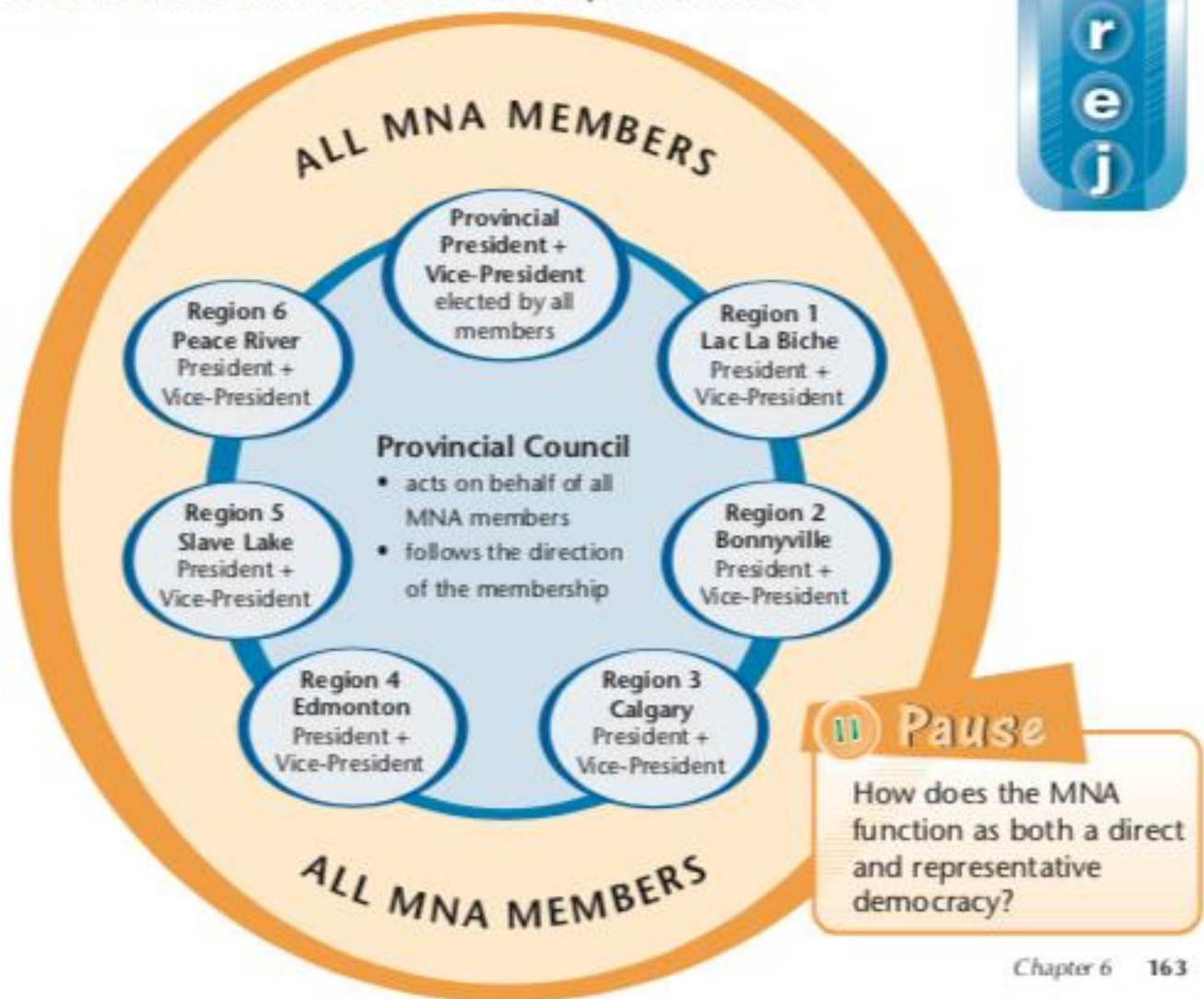
Metis Nation of Alberta

MNA: A Voice for the Métis in Alberta PG. 162

What is the purpose of the Metis Nations of Alberta?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve education, health, social and economic conditions of Alberta's metis people• Speak on behalf of metis governments, industry and communities• Promote metis rights• Apply for government grants and carry out programs
How does the MNA make decisions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All members have equal decision making power• General assembly each year discusses policies and activities• Members elect a provincial president and vice-president• Each of the 6 regions has a regional council with an elected regional president and vice-president and metis representatives• Provincial council of MNA includes the provincial president, VP, and the president and VP from each region. It has 14 members
How do MNA representatives keep connected with their members?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual and regional meetings• Website• MNA magazine Otipemisiwak• Offices in each region• Personal contact

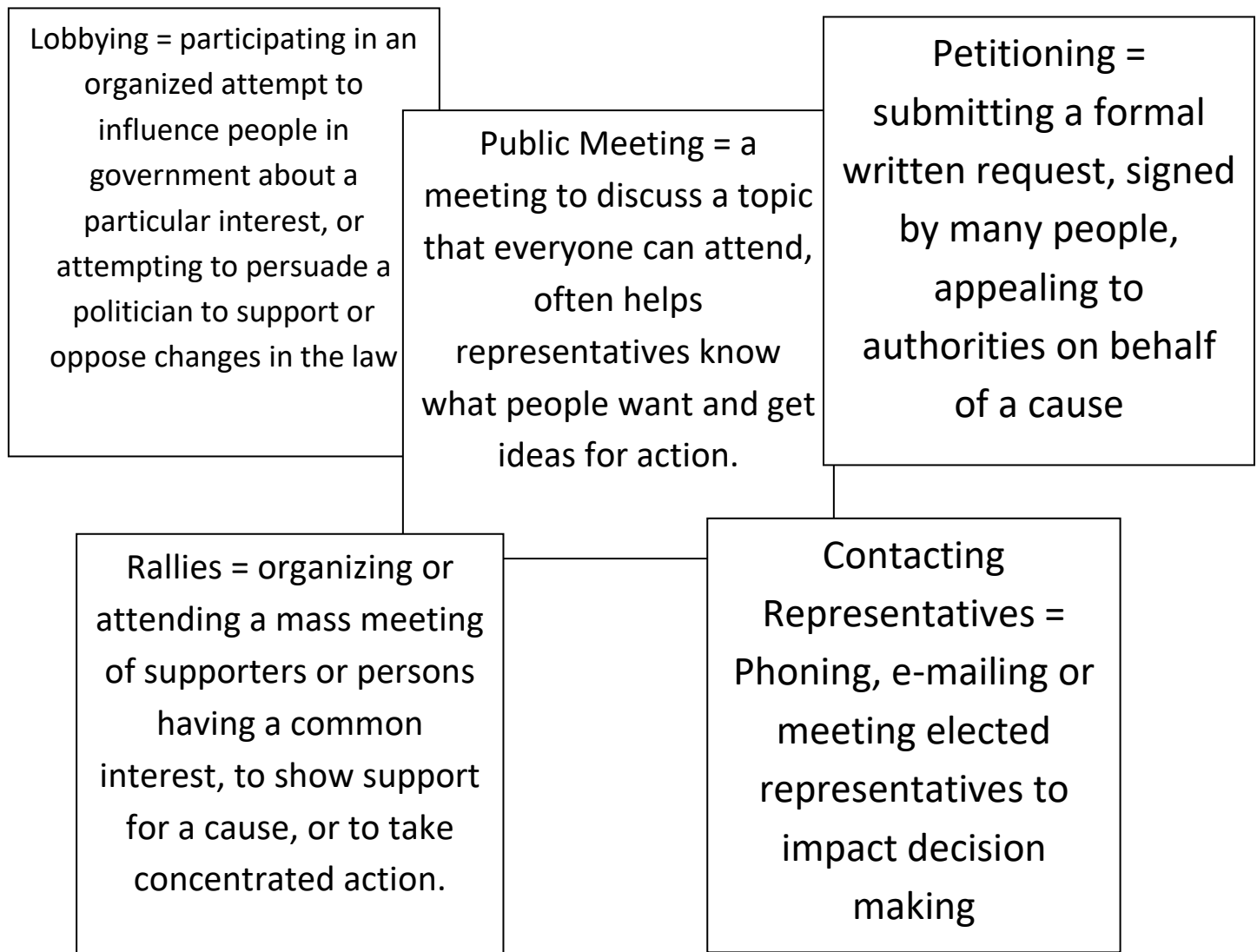
What are other ways that the MNA supports the Metis people?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs in the areas of health, education, families, housing and justice • MNA supported programs and events • Support of Metis businesses and employment

How do MNA members elect their representatives?



5 WAYS TO PARTICIPATE IN GOVERNMENT TO INFLUENCE DECISION MAKING

So, let's say that you are part of an association. You want to make your voice heard. You talk with your representatives about what you want. Here's what you and your representatives can do to make the government listen and try to get what you want.



Associations, lobby groups and other “specific citizen groups” participate in all 5 ways to influence decisions making. Often, they use the 5 ways to draw attention to situations of injustice so governments know what is happening and that they need to do something!

Trying to Influence Government = ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP