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SSBA AWARD OF DISTINCTION NOMINATION FORM

Board Member's Name: **Duane Favel**
Nominating School Board: **Ile-a-la-Crosse School Board 112**

BACKGROUND

The Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division is one of three school divisions in northern Saskatchewan. It is a community-based school division, created in 1975 in response to a strong and highly publicized movement for local control of education.

As the second oldest community in the province (234 years), Ile-a-la-Crosse has a rich cultural history - from its First Nations heritage to the Metis voyageurs and fur traders to the mission and boarding schools of subsequent years. The village has evolved into a modern, progressive community of 1600 people, nearly all of whom are Metis.

Duane's pride in this heritage is evident at the local and provincial level: *"He promotes Ile-a-la-Crosse always. He is clearly proud of his community and culture."*

Duane also takes great pride in the accomplishments of the school division. We have two schools: Rossignol Elementary (K-6) and Rossignol High (7-12), with a total student population of 450. The introduction of a complete program of high school courses and credits was a direct result of local control of education in 1975. Before that time, students had to leave the community to complete their Grade 12, which rarely occurred. We now graduate about 20 students each year.

Duane plays a key role in promoting school programs. He is ever-present at school events, always encouraging students to succeed, always encouraging parents to be involved. As well, he has played a significant role in numerous education initiatives: Pre-kindergarten for both 3 and 4 year olds, full-time Kindergarten, Adult 12, Pre-Employment Welding, and (this year) a new Storefront Program. As Duane has said: *"We want to provide schools of opportunity for all students - to engage those who attend and invite those who do not."*

Much of our programming involves partnerships - with the Friendship Center, Aboriginal Headstart, Pewapan Child Care, Dumont Technical Institute, Northlands Regional College, Northern Career Quest and Keewatin Yathe Health Region (KYRHA). With KYRHA, we operate a state-of-the-art integrated facility that is essentially a community center - with health services, child care, long-term care, adult education and our high school. Duane sees "relationship" as the key to building and sustaining all of our partnerships. He serves as vice-chair of the KYRHA board and is also chair of Sakitiwak Group Home, which is building a home for cognitively disabled adults – the first in the north.

Duane is also Mayor of Ile-a-la-Crosse, and he ensures that municipal goals blend with school division goals. One example of this is the simultaneous construction of two new buildings in the community – a building for trades-training (school division) and a building for youth recreation and performing arts (municipal). The intent of both buildings (and their programs) is to provide opportunities for youth who might otherwise be at risk. Duane is determined to create a positive future for our young people.

ILE-A-LA-CROSSE SCHOOL BOARD

Duane has been the Chair of the Ile-a-la-Crosse Board of Education 2006. He provides strong, inclusive leadership; he draws out the thoughts and opinions of all board members with sensitivity, encouragement and humor: *"He has the ability to create an atmosphere that is inviting and comfortable."* Our meetings are punctuated with laughter, often as a result of some humorous twist or jest from Duane. And yet, when it comes to matters of accountability or controversy, he will zero in on the issue and ensure that it is clarified for all board members: *"He is a great communicator. He questions everything. He listens closely, but he's always questioning."*

Duane clearly understands our responsibility as board members and ensures that we operate as a collective - in an atmosphere of trust and understanding. Every meeting begins with a prayer: *"I really appreciate when he speaks to the higher power in such a way that I feel the higher power is with us."* And every meeting ends with a roundtable.

Duane has a strong, sensitive leadership style that we deeply appreciate.

SASKATCHEWAN SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION

He is a strong advocate and activist for the SSBA. He serves on the SSBA Executive and is often called to serve as a chairperson at meetings - at the branch, regional or provincial level. He devotes an incredible amount of time to the SSBA. Every meeting in Regina requires two days of driving. *"He is so gung-ho to learn all about what is happening in the province with the school board association. It gives me an opportunity to see it all from his point of view – a feeling that I'm involved."*

He has helped to create a climate of inclusion in the SSBA. He tells us *"it's important to get out there"* - to play more of a role - and we do. At SSBA conferences, we feel welcome. We're more confident. *"Duane has helped us to mix in with other trustees and feel like we're a part of the provincial scene."*

Similarly, as chair of the Aboriginal Council, he has been a catalyst for bringing First Nations and Metis trustees together from across the province and giving them a strong voice within the SSBA. This has become a special cause for Duane.

Under his leadership we have signed an AEDP agreement, which confirms our commitment to the employment of First Nations and Metis employees in our school division and across the province. (Over 50% of our teachers are Aboriginal, and 83% of support staff.)

Duane co-facilitated the Northern Response to the Panel on Student Achievement and, recently, presented to the Senate Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples (Oct. 7, 2010).

At public events, local and provincial, we know that people admire Duane's abilities as an orator (in fluent Michif, as well as English); they trust his leadership as a facilitator; they appreciate his sincerity. And they certainly enjoy his sense of humour, which he intentionally uses to bring people together.

What others may not know is that Duane is, in private, a very spiritual person, and he draws on that spirituality all of the time. We see this in his positive and patient manner with everyone he meets, from parents to politicians, and his genuine interest in what others have to say.

We believe that Duane's service to his community (as Mayor), to the SSBA (as an Executive member), to his school division (as Chair) make him an exemplary citizen of this province. We are proud to nominate Duane Favel for the SSBA Award of Distinction.

Board of Education, Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division 112

Members: Andrew Bouvier, Mike Bouvier, Dorothy Dubrule, Peter Durocher, Barb Flett