

# The School Trustee

## SSBA Membership Chooses New Executive

The membership of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association has chosen a new Executive to continue leading the organization forward toward Vision 2025: that by 2025, Saskatchewan has a globally recognized education system that others wish to emulate.

The new Executive was selected during the Association's Annual General Meeting, held in November at TCU Place in Saskatoon.

The members of the new Executive are Connie Bailey (Sun West Board of Education), President; Ronna Pethick (Living Sky Board of Education), Vice-President; Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon Public Board of Education), Urban Public Constituency; Jerome Niezgoda, (Christ the Teacher Catholic Board of Education), Catholic Constituency; Élisabeth Perreault



*SSBA Executive at December meeting.*

*Back row (L-r) Larry Pavloff, William Caisse, Jerome Niezgoda, Élisabeth Perreault, Kevin Waugh, Janet Kotylak, Janine Boucher  
Front row (L-r) Connie Bailey, Ronna Pethick*

(Conseil scolaire Fransaskois), CSF Constituency; William Caisse (Ile-a-la Crosse Board of Education), Aboriginal Constituency; Janine Boucher (Northern Lights Board of Education), Northern Constituency; Larry Pavloff (Prairie Spirit Board of Education), Central Constituency; and, Janet Kotylak, (Prairie Valley

Board of Education); Southern Constituency.

"Thank you to all members of the Executive for their service. Thanks to the outgoing Executive members – Janet Foord (South East Cornerstone), Duane Favel (Ile-a-la-Crosse) and Glen Gantfoer (Light of Christ) – for the years of leadership they provided to the Association," SSBA Executive Director Darren McKee said.

"Welcome to the new Executive. Working together as a team, we can make great strides toward ensuring that every student in Saskatchewan has the support they need to succeed, regardless of where they live in the province or their personal circumstances," McKee said.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Address	2	School Year Start Legislation	8
Adopted Resolutions	3	AYEP Celebrates	9
Joint Conference Photos	4	SSBA Awards	10
2014 Premier's Award Winner	6	Teacher Regulation Legislation	11
Joint Conference Keynote C.J. Huff	7	Calendar Updates	12
Executive Meeting Highlights	8	Joint Conference Sponsors	12

# Engagement, Alignment and Leadership Highlighted

Outgoing SSBA President Janet Foord discussed engagement, alignment and leadership during her address to the membership at the organization's Fall General Assembly in Saskatoon in November.

Foord told members that the SSBA's Vision 2025 Strategic Plan asks both member boards and the Association's Provincial Executive to engage, align and lead.

"When boards work together through engagement, alignment and leadership, good things happen," Foord said. "Boards are able to do some things together more effectively than they could on their own, because of engagement, alignment and leadership."

As examples of engagement, alignment and leadership in 2014, Foord highlighted the Education Sector Strategic Plan, the Provincial Conversation on Education and resulting upcoming Education Summit, the Joint Committee on Student and Teacher Time, the



*President Janet Foord addresses delegates at the Fall AGM*

Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneurship program, the Provincial HR Data Warehouse, upcoming discussions about student data, the SSBA governance review, the SSBA-LEADS-SASBO Joint Conference and the SSBA Communications and Advocacy Strategic Plan.

"The process of engagement, alignment and leadership will

continue into 2015 and beyond," Foord said, noting efforts in 2015 will focus on advocating for K-12 education funding that adheres to principles identified by the SSBA membership in its position statement on financing, and on encouraging the development of better resources and supports to help improve outcomes for Aboriginal students.

Work will also continue to ensure member boards have increased awareness of the value for money they are receiving through the SSBA's advocacy, services and board development. Efforts will also be made to promote the work of school boards by celebrating 100 years of supporting student success during 2015, the SSBA's centennial year.

"I hope you will use this opportunity to reflect on the noble calling we all share – serving students, families and communities across this great province," Foord said about the centennial, noting a wide array of events and activities are planned to celebrate it.

In concluding her address, Foord said the good work being done by school boards in Saskatchewan is being acknowledged and modelled across the country.

"During my time as your President, and now as Canadian School Boards Association President, I have seen and heard first hand Saskatchewan school boards recognized and appreciated for your leadership and excellence," Foord said. "You should be very proud of the fact that you are seen as leaders."



*Outgoing President Janet Foord and incoming President Connie Bailey sit down with Jeremy Dodge on CTV Morning Live to discuss the voice of the public in education*



# SSBA Membership Adopts Resolutions

The SSBA membership adopted nine resolutions during the 2014 AGM in November.

The budget resolution, a bylaw amendment and four resolutions on

position statements were passed.

Three additional resolutions were also passed, regarding amending municipal legislation, reviewing a section of education regulations and

reviewing tax processes.

The full resolutions and related work plans are available on the SSBA website under About Us/Resolutions.

## Joint Conference Highlights



*The Saskatoon Fireside Singers delighted delegates*



*Banquet Entertainment Kelly Taylor*



*Exhibitors at Monday night's Trade Show share a few words with delegates*





# Joint Conference Highlights



*The student panel was comprised of students representing four school divisions - SunWest, Ile a la Crosse, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and Saskatoon Public Schools*





# Joint Conference Highlights



*Keynote Speaker Gary Merasty*



*(L-r) LEADS President Bill Cooke introduces David Brown of Brown Governance and Dan Perrins of Johnson-Shoyama*



*Child and Family Agenda Panel participants (L-r) June Draude, MLA Kelvington-Wadena and Hon. Don Morgan, Minister of Education*



*First Nations and Métis Education Panel participants Dawne Cassell, Regina Public Schools; Carlo Hansen, Light of Christ; Kelvin Colliar, Light of Christ; Sarah Longman, Regina Public Schools*

# Urban Aboriginal High School Reform at Oskāyak

## *2014 Premier's Board of Education Award for Innovation and Excellence Recipient*

When 55 Oskāyak High School students received their Grade 12 graduation certificates in 2014, they were not just celebrating their own personal successes – they were participating in a record breaking event for the school which, five short years ago, had a graduating class of only three students.

The 2014 Premier's Board of Education Award for Innovation and Excellence was awarded to Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and Kihtōtēminawak Council for their program "Strengthening the Beat of the Drum: Urban Aboriginal High School Reform at Oskāyak High School."

Oskāyak's 2014 class is part of an amazing turnaround story in student achievement. The picture looked quite different five years ago. Attendance was at an all-time low of about 50 per cent to 60 per cent. The number of credits many students were receiving was also low, and so were graduation rates.

"Over the years, parent engagement had ebbed and flowed, and support from the community had all but disappeared," said Gordon Martell, Superintendent of Education at Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools. "There were a few dedicated people around, but the critical mass seemed to have disappeared, leaving us wondering who the voice of accountability was



*Oskāyak students busy themselves using technology in the classroom*

for these students."

The board and school administration set out to change the course for Oskāyak – but they knew if they were to have any success they must take a different approach, according to Martell. A more hands-on strategy was needed for working with stakeholders – students, parents, and the First Nations and Métis community – along with exploring and finding new and innovative ways of teaching.

While Oskāyak had always been a place of belonging for the students, that was no longer enough, said Martell. Parents and communities still wanted their children's school to be a place of belonging – but that also had to be combined with better academic outcomes.

Oskāyak put a number of programs into place to support basic needs of students – programs related to transportation, daycare,

nutrition needs and ensuring that classroom instruction and content was responsive to the needs of the learners.

Now, it is recognized that students' prior knowledge and life experiences matter greatly to them in relation to academic content. Embedded into the school culture is an attitude of ensuring that there is a strong focus on student engagement in the learning process.

"Primarily what has improved at Oskāyak is what actually happens in the classroom – in terms of student engagement, problem-based learning, the prolific use of technology and through expert pedagogical practices," said Martell. "I would argue that the teaching is better than a lot of other places simply because we have engineered a pedagogical response that matches the needs of both indigenous and contemporary students."

Oskāyak was able to get students to buy in to the process very quickly and attendance rates improved.

"The increased enrolment now demonstrates that students want a place to belong but they also want increased outcomes and improved graduation rates," said Craig Schellenberg, former principal at Oskāyak. "The students are voting with their feet now because they know they can complete school."

The Kihtōtēminawak Council now has a strong presence at Oskāyak. The council is comprised of parents, guardians and other community

Continued on Page 7...



# Keynote Speaker C.J. Huff

## Shares Emotional Story with Joint Conference

After a catastrophic tornado destroyed nearly a third of Joplin, Missouri, in 2011, Dr. C.J. Huff, Superintendent of Joplin Schools, led his community in an amazing effort to rebuild.

Huff shared his moving story, filled with personal anecdotes, with attendees at the SSBA-LEADS-SASBO Joint Conference at TCU Place in Saskatoon in November.

“It was a tremendous amount of loss and tragedy, but the thing that does my heart good is that out of something bad, so many times, you see something good happen, and the way our community pulled together, and the way our school community pulled together and the outpouring of support that came from across the country and around the world to help us get back up on our feet again is something that I’ll



*C.J. Huff*

never forget,” Huff said.

Nine schools were damaged in the tornado, including six that were destroyed, in addition to the school district’s administration building. After the late-May tornado, Huff promised that school would start on time in August – although many thought it an impossible task, the goal was achieved.

The target of starting school as

scheduled gave the community something to rally around, Huff said. Unconventional approaches and flexibility were keys to success; the biggest challenges were trying to find space, while also striving to care for families of students who lost their homes.

“It took a great deal of coordination, but everybody starting marching toward that goal,” Huff said, noting people from across the community contributed whatever “time, talent or treasure” they were able to share, to connect those in need with the resources they required.

“Don’t underestimate your ability to make a difference in the lives of students,” Huff told delegates at the conference, some of whom on Twitter described his presentation as “awesome” and “amazing”.

### Strengthening the Beat of the Drum (cont.)

Continued from Page 6... members – and they are referred to as “keepers of the vision”. The council works closely with the school to determine what works and what doesn’t. The Saskatoon Tribal Council is another voice involved in supporting the outcomes at Oskāyak.

“Oskāyak High School is a clear example how great things can be achieved when students are encouraged to believe in themselves,” said Diane Boyko, Board Chair for Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools. “The success of Oskāyak proves that when

family, community and school pull together and provide students with the supports they need for success, that student’s potential becomes limitless.”

Chris Sicotte, co-chair of the Kihitōtēminawak Council, said he and his colleagues are very pleased and humbled that Oskāyak was selected for the award.

“Over the past several years, we have worked closely with all of our partners, including Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, to provide innovative educational programs to the students of Oskāyak. Our emphasis on cultural awareness

and activities aligned with traditional First Nations and Métis values have allowed for greater academic success for our students. This work could not have been done without the hard work and dedication of the teachers, support staff and administration of Oskāyak,” said Sicotte.

The award was presented by Saskatchewan Education Minister Don Morgan during the SSBA, LEADS and SASBO joint conference in November. The \$3,000 award is sponsored by Xerox Canada and the recipient is selected by a panel that includes representation from across the province’s education sector.

# Provincial Executive Meeting Highlights

The Provincial Executive of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association met in Regina during the first week of December.

The meeting included orientation activities for new members of the Executive. The Executive discussed many topics and made numerous decisions, some of which included:

- Appointing a new External Auditor for the SSBA – Following a competitive Request for Proposals process, the SSBA's Audit and Investment Committee recommended the appointment of Deloitte as the Association's External Auditor, for a period ending with

the 2016 fiscal year. The Executive voted in concurrence with the recommendation. The appointment will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Audit and Investment Committee.

- Supporting the Saskatchewan Health and Safety Leadership Charter – The Executive received a request from Safe Saskatchewan of support for the Saskatchewan Health and Safety Leadership Charter. The Charter advocates for the continuous improvement of healthy and safe workplaces and communities. Communication will take place with boards of education to encourage

them to consider signing the Charter in support of health and safety in schools.

- Supporting the SAYCW Youth Health Survey – The Executive voted to provide a letter of support to the Saskatchewan Alliance for Youth and Community Well-being's Youth Health Survey. This initiative was presented to the SSBA membership in 2012. Trustee Cindy Anderson has kept the SSBA apprised of the developments and represented boards of education in the work on the survey. Board chairs were copied on the letter sent to the SAYCW in December.

## School Year Start Legislation Introduced

In late November, Saskatchewan's Minister of Education introduced legislation to amend *The Education Act* to allow the school year in the province to begin prior to Labour Day when required.

Currently, in years in which Labour Day falls later in September, a start date after the statutory holiday results in challenges regarding scheduling the required amount of instructional time for students.

"Hard work has been undertaken by your Saskatchewan School Boards Association, along with member boards across the province, to advocate for greater flexibility for the start of the school year. The Minister of Education,

the Honourable Don Morgan, said the changes he announced are in response to the needs of school divisions," SSBA President Connie Bailey said. "The amended legislation will allow for both flexibility and consistency across the province with regard to when the school year begins."

School divisions will continue to develop school calendars within the framework of 950 hours of instructional time and to submit their calendar plans to the Ministry and publish the information by May 1 of each year.

The amended legislation is expected to enable the 2015-16 school year to begin Sept. 1.

"We appreciate that feedback

from school divisions was taken seriously by the Ministry regarding scheduling challenges in years in which Labour Day falls later in the month," Bailey said. "Thank you to all boards of education in Saskatchewan for their work in relation to this subject."





# AYEP Success Celebrated as Second Year Launched

Enrolment in the Saskatchewan School Board Association's Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneurship Program (AYEP) in Saskatchewan has more than doubled for its second year of province-wide operation, it was announced during a celebration of the program in Saskatoon in October.

There are 360 students enrolled in the program for 2014-15, up from 146 who participated in 2013-14.

"The AYEP has been very successful," said Duane Favel, AYEP Steering Committee chair and outgoing SSBA Aboriginal Constituency Representative. "The program is aimed at Aboriginal youth to increase attendance and graduation rates. Evidence supports that the program has done just that."

Saskatchewan was first Canadian jurisdiction to launch the Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative program province-wide last year, led by the SSBA, with funding partners PotashCorp and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada,



*Drummers from Vincent Massey Community School in Saskatoon*

and support from many education and community partners, including the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan.

"The AYEP builds confidence and teaches skill sets required to meet the future," Favel said. "Thanks to the generosity of corporate sponsors like PotashCorp, we have been able to provide and expand this important program in Saskatchewan."

Scott Farmer, principal of Saskatoon's Mount Royal Collegiate, said the AYEP compliments and

supports the learning priorities of Saskatoon Public Schools by empowering and engaging Aboriginal youth and celebrating the successes of Aboriginal business ventures and Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

"While anchoring its values within Aboriginal traditions, the program invites students to access the wider community for support and guidance as they develop their own business plans. Most importantly, as students work their way through

the program, they develop a greater sense of independence and confidence," Farmer added.

The AYEP is part of the SSBA's continued focus on supporting boards in improving education outcomes for First Nations and Métis students in Saskatchewan.

"The SSBA is unwavering in its belief that all children – no matter where they live in this province or their personal circumstances – must have the resources and supports they need to achieve and succeed," Favel said.



*Mount Royal Principal Scott Farmer looks on as Duane Favel addresses those gathered at the celebration on October 7*

# SSBA 2014 Awards

## Premier's Board of Education Award For Innovation and Excellence in Education



*Chris Sicotte, co-chair of the Kihtōtēminawak Parent Council and Diane Boyko, Board Chair of Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools accept the award from Hon. Don Morgan, Minister of Education*

The Premier's Board of Education Award for Innovation and Excellence was presented to the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and the Kihtōtēminawak Council in December at the Joint Conference in Saskatoon.

This year's winning program was "Strengthening the Beat of the Drum: Urban Aboriginal High School Reform at Oskāyak High School."

The award was coordinated by the SSBA in conjunction with the sponsor, Xerox Corporation, with the support of the office of the Premier.

**Read more about this program on page 6.**

## Life Memberships, Education Scholarships and Grad Student Awards



*President Janet Foord presents the Life Membership to Sandi Urban-Hall*

Two Life Membership Awards were presented at the Joint Conference Banquet on November 18. The Life Memberships were presented to Sandi Urban-Hall, Board Member from Prairie Valley School Division and Joe Daigneault, Board Member from Northern Lights School Division.

### Graduate Student Awards

Each year the SSBA offers up to four awards of \$2,000 to graduate students. The Association offers these awards to recognize leadership in education and to advance informed decision-making in education.

Heather Findlay won an award for her thesis entitled: "Just a Pepper in a Bunch of Salt: Aboriginal Students' Stories of School."

Heather is currently employed with the Regina Public School Division.

Vanessa Lewis won an award for

her thesis entitled: "Your Children – Our Students: Can Saskatchewan Parents and Schools Connect in Support of Career Development of Youth?"

Vanessa is currently employed with the Sun West School Division.

### Education Scholarship Awards

The SSBA also awards two \$2,500.00 scholarships yearly to graduating high school students who remain in Saskatchewan in post-secondary study: One scholarship to a student entering a Saskatchewan university and the other to a student entering an applied science and technology program.

Smith Le is the winner of the Association's 2014 Applied Science and Technology Scholarship. Smith graduated from Bethlehem



*President Janet Foord presents the Life Membership to Joe Daigneault*

Continued on Page 11..



# Teacher Regulation Legislation Introduced

The SSBA is pleased with the introduction in December of legislation to establish the Saskatchewan Professional Teachers Regulatory Board (SPTRB).

“We are appreciative of the process followed to review teacher regulation in the province and of the resulting outcome with today’s announcement,” said SSBA President Connie Bailey. “We are encouraged by the movement toward increased transparency and clarity.”

The SSBA was represented on the Teacher Regulation Transition Committee that provided input

into the development of the new legislation.

The SPTRB will be responsible for teacher certification and discipline in Saskatchewan. The change is intended to create a professionally led, self-regulated body for the teaching profession in the province and is expected to result in more open processes.

Early next year, the Ministry of Education, the STF, LEADS, the FSIN and the SSBA will establish an interim board of directors to develop bylaws and structure for the SPTRB.

Consistent with the practice of

other professionally led and self-regulated bodies, the SPTRB will be governed by a nine-person board that includes seven registered teachers and two members of the public. The permanent board of directors is expected to be in place by the spring of 2015, with the SPTRB becoming operational by the fall of 2015.

“While we still have some questions about how the SPTRB will be funded in the long-term, we are satisfied with the commitment to the best interests of students, families, teachers and the public,” Bailey said.

## Awards (cont.)



*Graduate Student Award Winner  
Heather Findlay*



*Graduate Student Award Winner  
Vanessa Lewis*

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Continued from Page 10...

Catholic High School in the Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division and he is enrolled in the Power Engineering Diploma program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic in Saskatoon.

Jordyn Leib is the winner of the Association’s 2014 University Scholarship. Jordyn graduated from Greenall High School in the Prairie Valley School Division and is enrolled in the Bachelor of Education Program at the University of Regina.



*Smith Le won the 2014  
Applied Science and Technology  
Scholarship Award*



*Jordyn Leib won the 2014  
Univeristy Scholarship Award*

*"The mission of the SSBA is to provide leadership, coordination and services to member boards of education to support student achievement."*

**President:** Connie Bailey

**Vice-President:** Ronna Pethick

**Northern Constituency:** Janine Boucher

**Aboriginal Constituency:** William Caisse

**Conseil scolaire fransaskois Constituency:**  
Élizabeth Perreault

**Urban Public Constituency:** Kevin Waugh

**Catholic Constituency:** Jerome Niezgoda

**Central Constituency:** Larry Pavloff

**Southern Constituency:** Janet Kotylak

**Executive Director:** Darren McKee

**School Board Development Services and  
Strategic Human Resources:**  
Ted Amendt

**Communications Services:** Leslie Anderson

**Insurance, Risk Management and  
Legal Services:**  
Dave Jackson

**Employee Benefits Plan:** Jeff McNaughton

**First Nations and Métis Education:**  
Jamie Lerat

**Corporate Services:** Lori Mann

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If you would prefer to receive  
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than electronically, please contact the  
Association at the email address above.

## UPCOMING EVENTS for 2015

### Members' Council

Feb. 5-6

Regina - Double Tree Hotel

### Legal Services & Strategic HR Workshops

#### \* Investigations

Feb. 25 - Saskatoon

#### \* Teacher Contracts

Mar. 25 - Saskatoon

### Spring Assembly

Apr. 16-17

Regina - Double Tree Hotel

See SSBA website under **Events** for more information.



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generous support of our conference.

