



Position Statements

Association position statements address key issues for Pre-K-12 education and describe the shared beliefs that direct united action by boards of education/Conseil scolaire fransaskois and their Association.

The Saskatchewan School Boards Association represents the locally elected boards of education/Conseil scolaire fransaskois responsible for the delivery of public education in Saskatchewan. It is appropriate that boards of education/Conseil scolaire fransaskois and their Association develop reasonable and thoughtful positions on education issues for the benefit of students and to inform the public.

In Saskatchewan School Boards Association Position Statements:

“Board of Education means a board of education and Conseil scolaire fransaskois as established pursuant to *The Education Act, 1995*;

“Association” means the Saskatchewan School Boards Association.

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Other Key Documents: Board Member Code of Ethics

<p>Adopted Position 1.1: Development of Position Statements</p>	<p>Date Approved: November 2018</p>
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Association position statements address key issues for PreK to 12 education and describe the shared beliefs that direct united action by boards of education/Conseil scolaire fransaskois and their Association. Boards of education/Conseil scolaire fransaskois through their Association develop positions on education issues for the benefit of students and to inform the public. Position Statements will guide executive and staff in developing strategic plans that are consistent with and support the position statements.

A. Development of Position Statements

1. An approved resolution from a General Meeting or the Executive may identify the need for the development of a statement of position.
2. The Executive will establish a working committee to gather information, consult the membership and draft the statement of position.
3. The draft statement will be circulated to all member boards for input.
4. Position statements will be considered and voted on at a General Meeting under the sponsorship of the Executive. A vote of not less than two-thirds of the votes cast is required for adoption of a position statement.
5. The Executive may after appropriate consultation with the membership adopt an interim position on any matter under which to operate until an approved statement of position is approved by the membership at the next available opportunity.

B. Review of Position Statements

1. Each position statement will be reviewed on a five-year cycle, however, a position may be reviewed at any time upon the direction of the Executive.
2. A position will be reviewed when a resolution at a General Meeting is adopted which is inconsistent with the current position.

Adopted Position 1.2: Local Governance of Education	Date Approved: November 2019
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Locally elected boards of education/ Conseil scolaire fransaskois (CSF) act to reflect the interests and educational needs of the communities they serve.

1. Governance decisions are guided by what is in the best interest of student learning for all students in the school division within the board of education’s financial resources.
2. Boards of education/CSF operate with autonomy and authority within a legislated framework and act to fulfill their responsibilities. In addition, the CSF operates within the framework of section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* to fulfill its constitutional responsibilities and its triple mandate of academic success, cultural identity and community involvement.
3. Board of education/CSF meetings are open to the public and board information is accessible to the public within the context of the law.
4. Boards of education/CSF communicate information about the operation of the education system and establish procedures for public engagement.
5. Boards of education/CSF support students, family and community engagement in the education of students for success in school.
6. Boards of education/CSF engage and support School Community Councils/Conseils d’écoles as partners in improving student learning.
7. Board members engage in networking and learning opportunities to fulfill their responsibilities as stewards of public education.
8. Boards of education/CSF are the voice of publicly funded education in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan’s education system is best served by a partnership of provincial and local level of governance with shared responsibility for publicly funded education.

<p>Adopted Position 2.1: Student Achievement</p>	<p>Date Approved: November 2019</p>
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Facilitating the provision of high quality education is the primary mission of boards of education/ Conseil scolaire fransaskois (CSF).

1. Saskatchewan curriculum should provide lifelong learning skills, affirm each student’s individuality, and engage them in community. Saskatchewan’s curriculum creates these opportunities and promotes lifelong learning. Student achievement is defined as the attainment of the developmentally appropriate educational outcomes of Saskatchewan’s curriculum.
2. Boards of education/CSF, school community councils, Conseils d’écoles, students, families and educators must be engaged and have a voice in defining student achievement.
3. Boards of education/CSF are individually responsible for developing an accountability framework to establish standards, assess, monitor and report on student achievement. Boards of education/CSF are responsible for partnering with senior levels of government to develop strategic plans establishing province-wide objectives for education.
4. The role of boards of education/CSF is to provide leadership and allocate adequate resources to maximize student achievement.
5. Student engagement, as well as parent and community support for education are important components of student success.
6. Boards of education/CSF work as advocates for education and promote partnerships to enhance student achievement.

<p>Adopted Position 2.2: Assessment of Student Achievement</p>	<p>Date Approved: November 2016</p>
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The board of education/CSF, as the governing body accountable for the education of children, has a critical interest in student achievement. Boards of education/CSF require valid and reliable information concerning student achievement to inform decisions and the allocation of resources for the improvement of student learning within their school divisions.

The Association strongly supports the work of Boards of Education/CSF in strengthening the capacity of the publicly funded school divisions to establish policies and procedures to:

1. Adopt clear expectations for student achievement to focus board/CSF resources on the improvement of student learning;
2. Monitor student achievement data on a predetermined timeframe from a variety of perspectives;
3. Support professional staff in the work of appropriately assessing and reporting student achievement information.
4. Support professional staff in the planning and organization of increasingly effective programs and learning environments designed to further strengthen student learning;
5. Ensure appropriate administrative procedures are established for ethical data handling, including, collecting, analyzing, reporting and using assessment data to monitor and improve student achievement;
6. Engage parents in assessment of student achievement reporting processes to increase opportunities for student success, and ensure student achievement information is communicated to students and parents in a format that is easily understood, accurate and of practical value;
7. Ensure achievement information is reported to the public in a clearly written and illustrated format to display significant change over time.

<p>Adopted Position 2.3: Digital Literacy and Citizenship</p>	<p>Date Approved: November 2019</p>
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Digital literacy refers to fluency in the use and security of interactive digital tools and searchable networks. Digital citizenship is defined as the norms of safe, respectful, responsible and ethical behaviour when using technology.

Boards of education/Conseil scolaire fransaskois (CSF) want students to be well-prepared to be successful in an evolving society where people use digital technology regularly as an important part of connectedness. Fundamental to such success is the ability to use digital technology responsibly to access, gather, evaluate, construct, and share knowledge in a contemporary context. Students need to learn to use digital technology safely, effectively, ethically, and respectfully. More succinctly put – to think critically, be safe, and act responsibly. It is imperative that boards of education/CSF support students as learners, as well as digital citizens and creators.

Boards of education/CSF embrace digital technological innovation as an important component of educational strategy for the province of Saskatchewan, and work in partnership with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education to create a vision for digital literacy and citizenship that:

1. Focuses on engaging and inspiring students and fosters creative and innovative minds, embracing the enabling role of digital technology in expanding how, when and where learning takes place.
2. Recognizes that we exist in a connected world requiring a global set of competencies for a digital age – creativity and innovation, critical thinking, communication and collaboration, as well as safe and ethical behaviours for responsible digital citizenship.
3. Is centred within a provincial curriculum that reflects these values, aspirations, and practices.
4. Is founded on the principles of equity of access and opportunity.¹

This vision for digital literacy and citizenship is situated in a learning environment where teachers are supported to be professionally competent and appropriately fluent, embracing digital technology, resources and instructional strategies that enhance student

¹ This position statement is adapted from C21 Canadians for 21st Century Learning & Innovation – *Shifting Minds 3.0 – Redefining the Learning Landscape in Canada* (2015), as well as the Ontario Public School Boards’ Association – *A Vision for Learning and Teaching in a Digital Age*.

learning, safety, and digital fluency and engagement. Investments in education are required to enable boards of education/CSF to implement a vision for digital literacy and citizenship and keep current with changing digital environments.

<p>Adopted Position 3.1: Education Finance</p>	<p>Date Approved: November 2019</p>
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Saskatchewan’s elected boards of education/ Conseil scolaire fransaskois (CSF) require funding for education to maximize student achievement, develop the potential of all students, affirm the worth of each individual, create responsible citizens and lay the foundation for learning throughout life.

Education funding is best provided unconditionally to boards of education/CSF in order to meet local needs. A balance between the following fundamental principles guides all decisions for education finance:

1. **Sufficiency:** The amount of funding provided to boards of education/CSF by the provincial government must be sufficient to respond to the actual costs of mandated provincial goals and priorities, to provide a high quality education to all students, and to accommodate opportunities for local programming, innovation and initiatives.
2. **Autonomy:** Boards of education/CSF derive their authority from *The Education Act, 1995* which gives them the authority to manage the school division in a way that reflects local needs and priorities. In addition, the CSF derives its authority from section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.
3. **Equity:** Funding is allocated so that all elected boards of education/CSF have the resources they need to provide opportunities for each student to achieve at the highest levels regardless of where they live in the province and their personal circumstances.
4. **Engagement:** Boards of education/CSF are equal partners, along with the provincial government, in meaningful decision making regarding funding formulas, accountability processes and resolving issues.
5. **Predictability:** Clearly defined, predictable, and unconditional funding formulas are needed to enable long-term and sustainable program planning by boards of education/CSF.
6. **Reciprocal Accountability:** Elected boards of education/CSF are responsible for achieving mandated provincial goals and priorities and the provincial government is responsible for providing the resources needed to achieve those goals and objectives. The funding model is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it is functioning as intended.
7. **Sustainability:** Reliable, factual data is used to establish funding.
8. **Transparency:** Straightforward information about education funding is monitored, available to the public, and the process is entirely transparent.

Adopted Position 3.2: Facilities Funding	Date Approved: November 2014
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Boards of education/Conseil scolaire fransaskois (CSF) work with the Ministry of Education to jointly develop and periodically review a transparent, sufficient, predictable and sustainable funding formula for the planning, building and maintenance of education facilities that maximize student learning. All decisions related to facilities funding should be transparent, equitable and informed by good data in support of a provincial comprehensive, multi-year capital plan.

1. The Minister of Education is responsible for providing required funding for the construction and maintenance of school facilities.

2. Facilities funding in Saskatchewan should be determined according to the five categories set out below. In addition, facilities funding for CSF schools must meet the requirements of section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*:
 - a) **Major Capital Projects:** The Ministry of Education should continue to fund major capital projects including new schools, major renovations, roofing and portable classrooms. This applies in growth areas of the province, as well as in communities with existing schools requiring modernizing where enrolments are stable and the schools are viable.
 - b) **Infrastructure Renewal:** Each year, the province should prudently allocate a sufficient budget to school divisions for the purpose of ongoing infrastructure renewal, including minor upgrades and renovations². Boards need to develop a 3 year PMR Maintenance Plan as well as a detailed annual report and reconciliation of PMR expenditures.
 - c) **Ongoing Operation and Maintenance:** The Ministry of Education should prudently allocate a sufficient budget to school divisions for the operation and maintenance of facilities including general upkeep and repairs as well as expenses incurred to keep facilities operating such as monthly utility expenses.
 - d) **Non-school Facilities:** Sufficient funding must be provided for the construction and maintenance of non-school facilities including sheds, transportation and administrative facilities, and for the CSF community spaces.
 - e) **Provincially Protected Schools:** Funding must be provided for the operation and maintenance of schools that are protected from closure. This includes the cost of decommissioning space that is no longer required.

² In 2009 it was recommended that the province annually allocate 2% of Current Replacement Value to school divisions for the purpose of ongoing infrastructure renewal. Saskatchewan School Boards Association. (2009). Facilities Funding: Working Advisory Group Recommendations.

3. **Capital Funding Backlog:** A long-term, sustainable plan must be developed to address the current capital funding backlog. A prudent and sufficient budget should be allocated annually to address the backlog.³
4. **Ministry Support:** The Ministry of Education must maintain sufficient qualified expertise to provide appropriate and adequate support for school divisions, according to their needs. This may include supports for school capital projects including project management, technical, site development and cost management.

³ In 2009, it was recommended that a minimum of 10% of the shortfall be allocated annually to address the backlog. Saskatchewan School Boards Association. (2009). Facilities Funding: Working Advisory Group Recommendations.

Adopted Position 3.3: Education Equity	Date Approved: November 2017
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Education equity for students is a fundamental principle of public education. Equity is about outcomes, results, and opportunities.

1. Boards of education are proactive in defining, assessing and taking steps to achieve equity of opportunity and of outcomes for their students regardless of students' individual or family circumstances.
2. Education Equity for Saskatchewan boards of education requires the fair distribution of necessary resources to ensure all students have access to school programs, facilities and services for students to achieve to their full potential regardless of where they live in the province and their personal circumstances.
3. Education equity recognizes that some students need additional or specialized programming to achieve to their full potential.
4. Education equity recognizes that boards of education operate with very different circumstances and situations.

Boards of education are responsible to their constituents for transparency of education in Saskatchewan. Funding should be monitored for adequacy and equity and should be publicly reported on a regular basis by the Province and by boards of education.

<p>Adopted Position 4.1: Collective Bargaining</p>	<p>Date Approved: November 2017</p>
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Elected boards of education are responsible and accountable for the delivery of educational services. Boards as employers hire professional and support staff to carry out this responsibility and ensure that education is provided for all their students. As part of their governance responsibilities, boards enter into collective bargaining agreements with their employees.

As well, representing boards of education, the Saskatchewan School Boards Association has a statutory role in collective bargaining with respect to the Provincial Collective Bargaining Agreement for teachers.

B. Principles according to which collective bargaining by the Association should be undertaken, and that are also recommended to boards as they approach their collective bargaining:

1. The education interests and welfare of students must guide the collective bargaining process.
2. The collective bargaining process must respect the integrity of the board of education in its role as employer.
3. The local and provincial collective bargaining processes must provide for adequate representation of the interests of the board(s) of education.
4. There should be an effective and efficient bargaining process, characterized by the highest standard of labour relations professional practice.
5. Productive and harmonious working relationships between board of education and their employees are critical to the success of the educational endeavour, and the collective bargaining process should reflect the importance of those relationships and be directed to support and sustain them.
6. Collective bargaining must be conducted with a clear understanding of the impacts of finances on boards of education. Collective bargaining agreements must be sustainable in relation to education funding and consistent with the fundamental principles described in the Adopted Position Statement 3.1: Education Finance.
7. Collective bargaining must be done prudently, in compliance with legislated requirements, and in conformity to currently accepted labour relations practices, and professional and ethical standards.

C. In working according to these principles, the Association undertakes in particular that:

1. The Association will endeavour to have representatives on the provincial bargaining team who have experience in labour relations negotiations.
2. Representatives of boards of education on the provincial bargaining committee will utilize an effective strategy for encouraging and gathering input from boards of education in approaching the collective bargaining process, and communication with boards of education during collective bargaining, in order to provide adequate representation of board interests.
3. The Association's staff is available to support boards of education in their collective bargaining processes.
4. The Association will advocate for boards of education to be fully consulted by the Province and that the Province be transparent regarding local agreements.
5. The Association will advocate to ensure that the boards of education's representatives on the provincial bargaining committee are an effective voice on that committee.

<p>Adopted Position 4.2: Teacher Education and Certification</p>	<p>Date Approved: November 2016</p>
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Boards of education/ Conseil scolaire fransaskois (CSF) support high standards for teacher education and certification in Saskatchewan.

1. Only the Saskatchewan Professional Teachers Regulatory Board (SPTRB) is responsible for regulating teacher certification and registration, including issuing, suspending, or revoking a teacher’s certificate. Teacher education and certification requirements are approved by the Teacher Education and Certification Committee of the SPTRB, a committee of representatives from educational stakeholders including the SSBA. The Certification Decision Review Committee of the SPTRB, a committee of representatives from education stakeholders including the SSBA, hears certification decision appeals from teachers.

2. Boards of education/CSF expect teacher education programs that reflect the requirements of publicly funded school systems and that are based on current educational research and effective practices that develop teachers to focus on the skills and knowledge students need to succeed in work, life and citizenship.

3. Boards of education/CSF co-operate with teacher education programs to facilitate practice teaching and internship programs.

4. Boards of education/CSF, as employers, have high expectations of teachers as professionals and therefore have a critical interest in defining and supporting the development of competencies for effective teaching including:
 - a) Teachers value and care for the whole child by developing positive relationships and acting in the best interests of their students.
 - b) Teachers facilitate the engagement and support of parents and the community.
 - c) Teachers are committed to education as a profession and to engaging in ongoing professional development to remain current and effective, and apply these learnings in their work.
 - d) Teachers demonstrate specialized knowledge in the level and subject area of their teaching as directed by the Saskatchewan curriculum.

Adopted Position 5.1: Public Engagement	Date Approved: November 2016
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Boards of education/CSF value and support meaningful parent, school community council/conseil des ecoles and public engagement to enhance schools in Saskatchewan and higher levels of student achievement.

1. Parents and guardians are acknowledged as the child’s first teacher and play a significant role in student success.
2. School community councils/conseil des ecoles are supported as valued partners in education to mobilize their communities to strengthen student achievement.
3. Locally elected boards provide a strong mechanism for the public to be engaged in public education.
4. Boards engage in constructive partnerships with public stakeholders (e.g. business, local municipalities, non-profit organizations, etc.) to enhance student achievement.

Adopted Position 5.2: Partnership Agreements	Date Approved: November 2017
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Individual Boards of Education and the Association can work effectively with partners from the education sector and from the community to create opportunities for furthering board of education capacity to enhance student achievement.

1. Partners will include those agencies and organizations whose goals and objectives are compatible with the goals of the boards of education or the Association.
2. Partnership agreements will be consistent with the strategic plans of the board of education or the Association.
3. Allocation of resources to partnerships will not compromise the standards of services and administration of the boards of education or the Association.
4. Partnership agreements will be transparent and clearly defined and committed to in writing.

Code of Ethics	Date Approved: November 1993
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The commitment of each board member to high ethical standards is required to ensure that the school board can responsibly fulfill its obligations and discharge its duties.

As a school board member.

1. I will be motivated by an earnest desire to serve my school division to the best of my ability to meet the educational needs of all students.
2. I will recognize that the expenditure of school funds is a public trust, and I will endeavour to see that the funds are expended efficiently, in the best interests of the students.
3. I will not use my position for personal advantage or to the advantage of any other individual apart from the total interest of the school division, and I will resist outside pressure to so use my position.
4. I will act with integrity, and do everything possible to maintain the dignity of the office of a school board member.
5. I will carry out my duties objectively, and I will consider all information and opinions presented to the board in making my decisions, without bias.
6. I will work with other board members in a spirit of respect, openness, co-operation and proper decorum, in spite of differences of opinion that arise during debate.
7. I will accept that authority rests with the board and that I have no individual authority outside the board, and I will abide by the majority decisions of the board once they are made, but I shall be free to repeat the opinion that I upheld when the decision was made.
8. I will express any contrary opinion respectfully and honestly, and without making disparaging remarks, in or outside board meetings, about other board members or their opinions.
9. I will communicate, and conduct my relationship with staff, the community, other school boards and the media in a manner that focuses on facts.

10. I will not divulge confidential information, which I obtain in my capacity as a board member, and I will not discuss those matters outside the meetings of the board or the board's committees.
11. I will endeavour to participate in trustee development opportunities to enhance my ability to fulfil my obligations as a school board member.
12. I will not conduct myself in a manner which is intended to be to the detriment of another school board.
13. I will support the value of public education, and will endeavour to participate, and encourage my board to participate, in activities that support or promote public education in Saskatchewan.