The School Trustee

SASKATCHEWAN School Boards ASSOCIATION

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SSBA Reacts to 2025-26 Budget Announcement

The 2025-26 provincial budget announcement reflects recognition by government of some pressures identified by school boards, according to the SSBA.

"This is a step in the right direction," said Dr. Shawn Davidson, SSBA president.

"That said, we will work with government on greater investment to address the needs of all students," he continued.

While some details were still to be determined, Davidson on Budget Day said that allocations in the budget don't fully address the funding gap in education that boards have identified.

However, they shouldn't result in them falling farther behind, Davidson continued.

The capital announcements will help address infrastructure shortfalls, he said.

"There's always more fence than paint, but there are significant investments here," he stated. "There are major capital projects, particularly in Saskatoon, where growth is substantial."

In terms of the Preventative Maintenance and Renewal (PMR) portion of the budget, Davidson noted the increase is welcome.

"It's not at our target, but we are moving toward it," Davidson said.

The new funding level will equate to about half of one per cent of school value allocated annually.

SSBA President Dr. Shawn Davidson and Vice-President Lori Kidney attended Budget Day at the Legislative Building in March, where President Davidson addressed media.

Priorities of the Provincial Education Plan (PEP) are reflected in the budget, particularly in regard to early years literacy and mental health, Davidson said.

The SSBA will be working with school boards over the coming months to unpack the particular implications of the budget in their local contexts, he added.

DID YOU KNOW?

School boards save money by working together through the Saskatchewan School Boards Association to share services and to ensure the best value for public dollars.

LEGAL SERVICES

The SSBA offers a small team of lawyers and an employee relations and human resources consultant who are available to support school boards. This service saves school boards money and time.

GENERAL INSURANCE PLAN

School boards work together to get the most cost-effective options for insurance for school buildings and other needs through the SSBA. With so many boards participating, risk is spread, resources are shared, purchasing power is optimized, and millions of public dollars are saved.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

The SSBA supports school board members by offering governance training, professional development, and board and director evaluation services. This saves time and money while adding value by promoting the fiscal responsibility that is inherent in having good governance.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS PLAN

School boards work together through the SSBA's Employee Benefits Plan to offer benefits to non-teaching staff in divisions. The plan has been uniquely customized for the education sector and represents savings for divisions.

OTHER SERVICES

Through the SSBA, boards are able to access many services, including strategic planning, policy support and Indigenous education services. This saves money upfront and helps boards function well.

School Boards Pleased by Signing of Agreement

School boards are pleased that provincial collective bargaining with teachers has concluded with April's signing of a new collective agreement by the Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee and the Teachers' Bargaining Committee.

As part of the process, the SSBA appoints four individuals to represent boards as employers on the Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee, which also includes five representatives from the government as the funder of education.

Divisions will be working quickly to implement the new agreement in their local contexts. The province has committed to fully fund the agreement, but determinations of division-specific funding allocations had been awaiting the final agreement language.

2025 Spring Assembly (held April 3-4 in Saskatoon)

Left: Provincial Education Plan Update, Assistant Deputy Minister Charlotte Schriml
Centre: President's Address, Dr. Shawn Davidson
Right: Executive Director's Address, Darren McKee

Left: Keynote – Crafting Policies That Support Student Thriving in an AI-Driven Future, Nina Bamberg
Centre: Education Legislative Secretary Government MLA Barret Kropf and President Shawn Davidson
Right: Education Shadow Minister Opposition MLA Matt Love and President Shawn Davidson

Left: Overview: Public Section, Catholic Section and the CEF, Norm Dray, Tom Fortosky and Elizabeth Perreault
Centre: The Sask. Human Rights Code, 2018 and its impact on the Education Sector, Jolene Horejda and Maria Soonias-Ali
Right: Advancing School Food Program Policy and Governance in Saskatchewan, Kaylee Michnik

Left and Centre: Learning from Each Other | Right: A Collaborative Team – The Board and the CEO Relationship, Ben Grebinski
*Presentations are available on **our website**.*

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

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Dr. Shawn Davidson

Vice-President:
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The School Trustee is published approximately five times per year (September to June).

If you would prefer to receive *The School Trustee* by hard copy, please contact the Association at the email address above.

Calendar Update

Upcoming dates in 2025:

Sask. School Food Program Speaker Series
Ongoing and Available as *Recorded Videos*
Virtual

Annual Employee Benefits Plan Seminar
June 5-6
Moose Jaw

Canadian School Boards Association Congress and National Trustees Gathering on Indigenous Education
July 2-5
Winnipeg

Association Activity

The 2025 SSBA General Insurance Plan Seminar was held in Saskatoon on March 27. There were 16 delegates from 13 school divisions in attendance. (Attendance was lower than anticipated due to storming weather in the Saskatoon area on that date.) The seminar covered a number of areas of interest and value to the school division context including 'Mitigating Facility and Infrastructure Risks: Focus on Mechanical Systems in Schools'; 'First Response: Steps in Remediating Losses at Schools Following a Major Loss'; 'Managing the Duty to Accommodate in Schools: Mitigating Human Rights Complaint Risks and Enhancing Inclusivity'; and 'Record Keeping: Navigating Disclosure and Student Record Access for Legal Counsel'.