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Robert Bratvold, Director of Education

September 25, 2019

RE: Letter of Transmittal

Dear Selection Committee,

Inspired by the notion of student representation on school boards, a topic of conversation at the 2011 Canadian School Boards Association (CSBA) Congress, and impacted by the bold and progressive ideas shared by students through annual student panels at the Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) assemblies, the Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Board pursued a unique and innovative way to involve students in the board's operations, discussions, and decision-making. Our board of trustees, along with a team of approximately 30 students (2-3 representatives from each of the division's high schools), have worked persistently and jointly since 2012 to implement a division-wide student council known as the Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change (SRSC). The SRSC comes together regularly to discuss challenges and opportunities in education, to take part in leadership and learning opportunities, to plan actions and events and to advocate for student learning and wellbeing. The SRSC provides advice and student perspective directly to the school board on a regular basis through two elected student trustees, with a focus on bettering student experiences in schools and improving results for the division.

In its pursuit to improve decision-making, the Board committed to a set of visionary goals; to directly involve students in the governance of the school division; to provide for a mechanism where students could share their perspectives and opinions on education with their locally elected trustees; to maximize student voice and the opportunities available for young people to engage in division-wide leadership and capacity building; and to become the first school division in the province of Saskatchewan to allow for formal representation of student trustees at the board table. What began as a board-initiated effort to allow student trustees a seat and a voice at the board table has become an invaluable part of the culture of the Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division. Amplifying student voice in the decision-making structures of the school division has also paved the way for partnership building, innovation, enhanced student engagement and a critical cultural shift in school and division culture where students are invited to lead change and affect student achievement and outcomes.

Our board's motto is *Excellence for Every Learner*. Through policy the board provides leadership and strategic direction for the school division, which serves more than 9000 students across 32 schools. We maintain that one of the core values of leadership is responsible governance and that responsible governance includes consulting directly with students. This is embedded in our foundational board policies. As a board, we have committed to bold long-range local and provincial strategic goals to improve student outcomes in the areas of literacy, credit attainment and graduation rates, among others. But, we know that in order to achieve these goals requires a shift in approach, a shift in how we do governance. What follows is an overview of a pivotal, dynamic and innovative initiative that shows

how students can be empowered to contribute to improved student outcomes by becoming directly involved in governance. Simply put, we seek to improve student outcomes by improving decision-making practices.

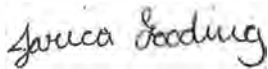
On behalf of the Saskatchewan Rivers Public Board of Education and the Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change, we are pleased to submit this nomination for the Premier's Award for Innovation and Excellence in Education, ***Empowering Students and Responding to Student Voice: A Student-led Pathway to Improve Student Outcomes***. Apart from being a worthy nomination for this award, we are proud that this initiative will become part of the strong legacy of the Saskatchewan Rivers Public Board of Education in the province.

Regards,



Barry Hollick

Chair, Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Board



Jarica Gooding

President, Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change

# **Empowering Students & Responding to Student Voice: A Student-led Pathway to Improve Student Outcomes**



## **A Joint Nomination by:**

Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division No. 119

&

Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change

## **For:**

The Premier's Board of Education Award for Innovation and Excellence  
September 2019

**Board Chair:** Barry Hollick

**SRSC President:** Jarica Gooding

**Director of Education:** Robert Bratvold

## Introduction

Several years ago, the Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Board sought to hear the direct voice of students on a regular basis and actively involve students in the discussions and decisions at the board table. Together with students, and using guidance from research and other experts, the Board pursued this goal and created the Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change (SRSC).

Briefly, the SRSC is team of approximately 30 students, 2-3 from each of the division's high schools, who come together regularly to discuss challenges and opportunities, to plan actions and events and to advocate for student learning and wellbeing. This group elects its own executive and annually elects two student trustees who join the school board at each of its regular meetings. The SRSC is self-directed and self-reliant but it has the support of an assigned superintendent of schools, as well as three school board trustees who serve on the board's committee. The SRSC has taken some time to establish and refine, but it has become a consistent source of strength and wisdom within the division and beyond.

## Board Involvement

The Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Board of Education's initiation of and sustained involvement in efforts to genuinely include students in the governance of the school division is driven by the board's fundamental beliefs about Saskatchewan Rivers students: that they are capable of becoming self-reliant and self-directed political actors; that they can influence the system that future students will inherit; that our system is made better through their direct participation in governance and the democratic process of local representation; and that by engaging students in matters of local decision making students can positively impact student achievement. The board has been involved in every aspect of this initiative.

The board has driven the goal of amplifying student voice since the first inception of the idea in 2011 (Appendix A). Board members were involved in researching various models of student-board interactions and student voice initiatives which involved liaising with trustees from outside of the province and liaising with the national student-led non-profit organizations such as Student Voice Initiative (SVI), the Vancouver District Student Council (VDSC) and the Ontario Student Trustees Association (OSTA). As part of their research trustees had to consider the legislative framework and the limitations of the current Education Act. Board members wrote and proposed a resolution to the assembly of Saskatchewan School Boards Association in order to advocate for legislative changes that would further the idea of student trusteeship, provincially (Appendix B). On an annual basis, the board strikes a committee of three trustees who meet regularly with the SRSC Executive. The board oversaw and ratified the development of an SRSC Constitution, granting formal recognition to the SRSC and student trusteeship in the division. Student trustees, elected by their fellow SRSC members, attend every regular board meeting in order to report on their initiatives and to provide student perspectives to the board of trustees. The board approved a reporting template and a change to its meeting agenda to allow for student trustees time to report to the board at each meeting. From co-presenting at provincial and national education events to co-presenting to the Pre-K to 12 Education Governance Review Panel in 2017, board members and SRSC representatives continuously seek out ways to promote and enhance student voice in school board governance. It has become common practice that the board invites the participation of student trustees to advocacy and engagement meetings with the Deputy Premier and Minister of Education, the Hon. Gordon Wyant, or to appoint a student to the division's calendar setting

committee. When meeting with Rural Municipalities, the City of Prince Albert, or the Chamber of Commerce, student trusteeship is often on the agenda of items discussed. Recently, as part of its broader public consultation, the board directly sought the perspectives of students, via the SRSC, on their vision for the future of education. Their responses, gathered at a seminar with the board, helped form the basis of the division's final report. And although the SRSC is fully self-directed, the board prioritizes this initiative as part of a larger strategic goal of increasing student engagement. The SRSC has access to the support of an assigned superintendent of schools as well as three school board trustees who serve on the Student Voice Committee.

Incorporating student voice and perspective has become embedded in the board's operations. For example, student trusteeship has been prioritized on the Board's Advocacy Plan, through budget allocation (Appendix C) and is part of the Board's Annual Work Plan (Appendix D). In its most recent policy review, in recognition of the pivotal role that the SRSC and student trustees have come to play in division governance, the Board revised its foundational policies to specifically include student consultation as part of its core values around responsible governance (Appendix E).

In sum, the board is directly involved in every aspect of actualizing this important and progressive initiative.

### **Innovative Nature of the Initiative**

The Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change initiative evolved from the Board's desire to ask new questions and gain new perspectives about student voice. Questions were posed at the SRPSD board table, to trustees around the province and across the country, as well as to other experts in education. It became clear that that new questions would be of even greater value if they were asked of people who were not normally part of the decision-making process: students.

Although a handful of other school boards in the province met with groups of student representatives on an occasional basis, in the province there was no division-wide student group that had its own constitution, meeting schedule, elected executive and annual work plan. The establishment of the SRSC provided an innovative structure for students to both ask and respond to questions and it provided significant opportunity for the generation of new ideas about how to best serve student learning needs.

An established division-wide student voice group leveraged the student creativity and innovation to provide clear benefits to the division, but the board took this initiative further. The board pursued having a student join the school board. The idea of a student as trustee was well outside the accepted boundaries and conventional wisdom in the province. Indeed, as the SRSC was developing there was concern, and even outright resistance, to having a student to become a participating member of a school board. This innovation required careful planning and courage to overcome the challenges and the Board demonstrated both.

The absence of provincial legislation related to student trustees required the board to find creative ways to fully comply with current Saskatchewan legislation while still ensuring that student trustees would have strength and substance at the board table, not simply a token presence. Several documents included in the appendices testify to the strength of the student trustees at the Board table: Student Trustee Oath (Appendix F), Board Memo Reporting Template (Appendix G) and the SRSC Constitution

(Appendix H). This constitution was vetted by external parties and legal experts to ensure legal compliance, but it was a student-driven creation guide the work of the SRSC and the role of the Student Trustees.

The documents and processes resulting from the SRSC are tangible artifacts demonstrating the innovation and creativity of this process; however, the less tangible evidence of innovation and cultural shift is perhaps more meaningful. Conversations at the board table and at the Senior Admin table often have a new tone and different perspectives. The staff within the division have expressed pride in the Board taking the risk to do something that has never been done before and those staff also feel emboldened to try innovative ideas in their own schools and classrooms. Students also convey a growing sense of confidence and value in knowing that their voices, ideas and perspectives are sought and valued. As one SRSC member articulated recently, “The presence of Student Trustees gives power to students we’ve never had before and youth in the division feel represented and cared for.” One school principal describes it like this:

Our students value the opportunity to directly communicate with our senior administration and members of the Board of Education. They have told me time and again that they feel appreciated and part of a process that offers solutions and does not simply voice concerns. Our staff have noticed this belief system is becoming part of our school and that students come up with constructive ideas before they have a complaint. That has a powerful effect on not only our school, but our community. I wholeheartedly support this initiative because we are seeing tangible benefits and growth in a real life situation where young adults feel empowered to create a positive change.

Jaret Nelson, Principal, St. Louis Public School

This cultural shift was also noticed in partnerships between the school division and its neighbouring First Nations Education Authorities. As one of our partners puts it:

***“This SRSC initiative has proven to be more than just an initiative, the Board has proven able to look outside the box for ways to engage, support and retain Indigenous students. SRSC has proven to be something that has changed lives and has solidified the partnership between Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division and Wahpeton Dakota Nation.”***

***Linda Greyeyes-Highway, Education Coordinator, WDN***

This SRSC initiative is the first time in Saskatchewan that a group of students elected two of its own to join the school board and participate at all of its regular meetings. Since that first trustee was sworn in as a member of the school board, there have been many benefits, but it certainly took innovative planning and creative courage to achieve that “first in the province” accomplishment.

### **Sustainability of the Initiative**

Sustainability requires not only commitment to appropriate funding and staff allocation but also an entrenchment of the changes in practice and the individual support for the new way of operation. The funding for the SRSC is now a line item in the board's annual budget and no longer a "special allocation" for an innovative program. The board's financial commitment is made easier by the total dollar allocation of less than \$10,000 required to sustain the SRSC over the course of a year (Appendix C) and the Board has sustained this funding, even in the face of annual budget reductions over the last three years. In terms of staffing, despite a reduction in the number of Superintendents from 6 to 4 in the last few years, one superintendent still has assigned responsibility for providing division-based support for the SRSC.

Changes in practice are possibly the most obvious sources of evidence for sustainability. The SRSC practices are entrenched in the operations of the school board, the senior admin and in schools across the division. The Board has carried several motions, revised its agenda template, renewed its foundational statements and implemented other changes in practice outlined in Appendix A. Administration has adjusted its standing agendas for Admin Council meetings and meetings with Principals. Staff members who lead the Student Councils in their schools connect with the SRSC reps to ensure alignment where possible of calendars and resources while teachers who are part of the division's Joint Committee on Student and Teacher Time consult the SRSC to find alignment of opportunities.

The fiscal, staffing and change in practice evidence indicates sustainability of the SRSC in Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Divisions and there is evidence that this innovation is catching on in the rest of the province as well. Several school divisions are exploring the potential for similar groups and Regina Catholic School Board has implemented a model based upon the work in SRPSD (Appendix I). This spread of innovation is a promising indication of sustainability and broader impact.

### **Cost/Benefit Analysis**

The Board, SRSC and Senior Administration engaged in cost/benefit analysis several times as they investigated, established and monitored the SRSC initiative. Results consistently showed that the SRSC is a low cost – high impact initiative.

Some costs such as material resources, travel, meals, procuring special guest speakers, communication and advertising are simple to calculate and generally easy to predict. Other costs such as trustee, student and administrative staff time were more difficult to translate into dollar values. Benefits include helping to prevent disengaged students from leaving school but it is difficult to establish what portion of increased graduation rates is a result of this initiative. Similarly, it is difficult to assign a fiscal value to the regular and productive conversations between students and trustees that delve deeply into the student experience and identify ways to improve that experience. How does one put a dollar value on that experience for the student or the trustee?

The cost/benefit analysis was heavily informed by both parent and student impact. Parent, Connie Gooding, indicated that, "Being part of the SRSC has further boosted [our daughter's] confidence, speaking skills, and her desire to pursue a career in law. As parents, we are impressed and grateful for such a positive learning experience." (Appendix J). The SRSC students frequently shared their

perspective of the benefits and challenges of the SRSC initiative and the raw data from one of those feedback sessions is included in Appendix K.

In the end, the cost/benefit analysis took the form of several conversations over several years that identified both the clear and obscure fiscal and other costs and then compared those costs to the fiscal and social benefits identified from the various sources of data available. There was no doubt that the cost/benefit analysis strongly supported the implementation and continuation of the SRSC: this is indeed a high impact and low cost innovation.

### **Client Support for Innovation:**

One of the primary tenets of the SRSC initiative is that it be student-directed and student led. At the first gathering of representatives from the schools with trustees it became clear that students were more than willing to dig in and become leaders in this work. The Director of Education facilitated that first gathering and describes the experience in this way:

“It was a rather humbling experience. I was anticipating spending a good deal of time with ice-breakers and team building activities to help students become comfortable with each other, with trustees and with the work we hoped to do together. Students were cooperative and tolerated my efforts, but one student put it something like this, “This is OK, but we didn’t come here to play games. We came here to let our voice be heard and work with the board to get things done.” We followed the students’ lead and made sure that the future gatherings were more student directed and goal-oriented.”

Students in the division were not just engaged in this innovation, they were leaders in the design, development and refinement of the program. One example of student support and leadership is in the creation of the constitution. With the support of the trustee committee and the superintendent, the students led the work as they conducted the research, debated the articles and contents, approved the document and presented the original and later amendments to the school board for ratification. Further examples of student support for the initiative include the development of their own work plan, the running of elections for their executive, and the planning and operation of an annual division-wide talent showcase. Student engagement and direction is fundamental to the success of the SRSC.

Beyond just providing permission and transportation to events, parents have been active supporters of the SRSC’s development and implementation. Both students and principals relate the support and suggestions from parents for the SRSC, and parents have spoken to other staff about the importance of the SRSC to their child. In Appendix J, there are several parent letters written in support of the SRSC but the words of one parent are illustrative of the parent support:

***“In grade 11, Melissa joined the SRSC. Over the next two years ... her communication and social skills have grown immensely. She has become a true leader and has learned the value of teamwork...We thank you for developing a positive group for all these school students to learn so much from.”***



School administrators are also key supporters of the SRSC as many of them make arrangements for their student reps to travel with them to events and meetings and they facilitate the connection between the SRSC rep and the student body. One indicator of principals' support for the SRSC is at principals meetings: many have spontaneously shared the impact of the SRSC on a particular student or group of students in their school. Several letters of Principal support are included in Appendix J.

### **Partnerships in Support of the Innovation:**

The partnership that was most valuable to this initiative is the vibrant partnership between the Board of Education and the students in the school division. The nature of the development and strength of this partnership is conveyed throughout this document, but the importance of that partnership and the key roles that each partner played cannot be understated.



Beyond the student-board partnership, there were several relationships that were important to the success of the SRSC.

- Partnership with the Ministry of Education is conveyed in more detail in the letter from Deputy Minister Rob Currie (Appendix J) but in part his letter commends the board putting “the needs of students first by giving them a voice on your school board. This initiative is the embodiment of innovation.”
- Partnership with the City of Prince Albert has provided connection, alignment and perspective to the city’s effort to connect with youth. As Mayor Greg Dionne says in his letter “The City’s vision for our community is to find new ways to engage youth and educate them on the positive impact that dedication to their community has on themselves, their families and friends. The Sask Rivers Students for Change Initiative represents just that – they are a group of positive, intelligent, community leaders who are being inspired to address issues in their schools.”
- Partnerships with First Nations through students on the SRSC had a variety of impacts on the division and the First Nations. Recently the relationship with Wahpeton Dakota Nation has been significantly enhanced through the participation of students on the SRSC. As their Education Coordinator, Linda Greyeyes-Highway, writes in her letter, “The positive impact this initiative had, and has, on the community of Wahpeton Dakota Nation has been immeasurable.” (Appendix J)

Perhaps the most active partnership is between the SRSC and the local Chamber of Commerce. This has been a productive partnership in various ways. The presence of the SRSC has encouraged the chamber to invite local students to attend monthly chamber luncheons to hear speakers on a variety of topics. Several students have attended and expressed appreciation for that opportunity. Chamber members have also become more aware and involved in school events and activities, largely because the presence of the SRSC serves as a reminder of the opportunities for connection. Becoming partners and participants in the annual Career Fair hosted by the division is an example of this increased connection. Another significant joint activity is collaborating on the selection and hosting of a celebrity speaker every second year. The SRSC-Chamber team have hosted CFL all-star Mike “Pinball” Clemmons in 2016 and MTV celebrity Ben Nemtin in 2018. Both spent an inspirational afternoon workshop with the SRSC members to help build their leadership and other skills and then spent the evening as the guest speaker at the Chamber’s gala community event. In her letter in Appendix J, Chamber of Commerce CEO, Elise Hildebrandt, summarizes the importance of the partnership for the 2018 event, “Without this partnership neither of our groups would have benefited from hearing his message on leadership.”

### **Improved Student Achievement:**

When the Board first began this work, its investigating committee clarified three reasons for seeing enhanced student voice:

1. To provide additional information and perspectives for improved board decision-making
2. To enhance student knowledge of the work of the Board and democratic governance
3. To improve the student experience and student outcomes at SRPSD

There is no doubt that the first two goals have been effectively realized and SRSC student feedback indicates that they believe their student experience has been much improved (Appendix K). When asked what the impact the SRSC has on the student experience or student achievement, comments from SRSC members indicate that the SRSC

- leads to better learning environment,
- makes students want to try harder, and
- shows the School Board that students care and want to help.

There is further evidence that the student achievement is not just in the minds of the SRSC members. SRSC team members have presented at provincial and national conferences; hosted a discussion session with Deputy Minister, Rob Currie; discussed concerns with Deputy Premier/Education Minister Hon. Gordon Wyant; and delivered the only in-person student presentation to the Perrins’ Panel on Educational Governance. A selected list of other SRSC student achievements is in Appendix L

In terms of the student experience, however, the OurSCHOOL perceptual data indicates that the initiative has not yet had the anticipated impact on the full student body. Two samples of data are provided in Appendix M. Our school data indicates that despite the increasing levels of anxiety and depression the division has maintained positive student relationships and over 90% of students report positive behaviours at school.

Acknowledging that more time may realize even better results, the Board has been excited to see the quantitative provincial results, including increased credit attainment and graduation rates. To be clear, there are certainly a number of significant factors that contribute to these results, but it is reassuring to know that the SRSC is one of those factors that contributes to positive progress:

## SRPSD Credit Attainment

(% of student earning 8+ credits/year)

YEAR	FNMI Students	Over-All
2014-15	24	40
2015-16	25	41
2016-17	26	41
2017-18	32	47
2018-19	Waiting in anticipation for final data...	

## SRPSD Three-Year Grad Data

(% of student cohort graduating in 3 years)

YEAR	FNMI Students	Over-All
2014-15	40	63
2015-16	47	68
2016-17	52	69
2017-18	53	72
2018-19	Waiting in anticipation for final data...	

### Conclusion

The SRSC is low cost, high impact, student-led innovation that benefits students across the division while improving the discussions and decision-making of the governance team. The success of the SRSC is the result of innovative thinking, courage and hard work by students, trustees and staff. This success is felt in many ways that are intangible but the division is also thrilled by the positive impacts reported by members of students, parents, community members and staff. In addition, the quantifiable increase in credit attainment and graduation rates that have coincided with this initiative are exciting and promising. The future of the SRSC is even more exciting as the innovation continues to expand and support excellence for every learner.

## **List of Appendices**

**Appendix A: History of Board Involvement**

**Appendix B: SRPSD Resolution to the SSBA Assembly**

**Appendix C: Budget Allocation**

**Appendix D: Board Annual Work Plan (highlight interactions with students)**

**Appendix E: Board Foundation Statements**

**Appendix F: Student Trustee Oath**

**Appendix G: Student Trustee Board Memo Template**

**Appendix H: SRSC Constitution**

**Appendix I: Student Trustees to Join Regina Catholic School Board**

**Appendix J: Letters of Support**

**Appendix K: SRSC Student Feedback**

**Appendix L: Selected SRSC Student Achievements**

**Appendix M: OurSchool Data**

## **Appendix A: History of Board Involvement in the SRSC Initiative**

**July 7-10, 2011** – SRSD Trustees attend the Canadian School Boards Association Congress in Ottawa, Ontario, where they are introduced to the concept of student trusteeship. On return, trustee Rodney Thompson proposes that the board consider implementing a student voice initiative in the division.

**September 10, 2012** - A committee of trustees is struck to explore the concept of student trusteeship and to consider different models and research available. The committee is also tasked with exploring the legislative context of student representation on school boards. The findings are presented to the board later in the year.

**April 17, 2013** – The board invites 2 students from each of the division's 11 high schools to meet with the board of education for a full day workshop to discuss matters of mutual concern and to consider the formalization of a division wide student council that could provide more regular feedback to the board of trustees on matters that affect students. A division-wide council of students is formed and students consider the concept of student trusteeship as a way of enhancing student voice in the division.

**October 29, 2013** – The SRSC meet with school trustees to discuss available structures for student voice initiatives and to explore the supports they require to organize themselves as a division-wide student council. Trustees present a draft resolution concerning student trusteeship to the student council and earn unanimous endorsement.

**November 12, 2013** – Seeking legislative amendments to allow for student representation on the school board, the board presents a resolution at the Saskatchewan School Boards Association Fall Assembly. The resolution calls for legislative changes that would allow for student trusteeship in the province of Saskatchewan.<sup>1</sup> The resolution fails to pass, with only 8.8% of the Assembly supporting the change.<sup>2</sup>

**January to June, 2014** - Unsuccessful, but undeterred in their attempts to advocate for province wide implementation of student representation on school boards, the SRSD Board proceeds with the local implementation of a division wide student council and student trusteeship.

**July to September, 2014** - Board Chair and Vice Chair consult with student trustee and Director of Policy and Outreach at the Student Voice Initiative, Leah Bae, to access guidance, resources and support for the development of a student voice initiative for the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division.

**October 23-24, 2014** – The board invites a sitting student trustee from the Vancouver District School Board, Nicholas Milum, to visit the division, support the SRSD Board and work with the students to support the formalization of a division-wide student council, propose structures, amplify student voice, and lay groundwork for student trusteeship.

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<sup>1</sup> p. 21 2013 SSBA Annual General Meeting: Proposed Resolutions: available here: <https://saskschoolboards.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/ProposedResolutionsOct212013.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> p.6 2013 SSBA Annual General Meeting bylaw amendment and resolutions results, available here: <https://saskschoolboards.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/2013ResolutionsPassedandDefeated.pdf>

**November 2014 to June 2015** - The council wholeheartedly moves forward, elects its first Executive, approves a name and logo, creates a strategic plan, and drafts a constitution. Students of the newly organized *Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change* (SRSC) continues to share their perspectives on matters such as student leadership, teacher accreditation, and recommends policies with the board of education and make plans for division-wide student engagement activities.

**September 21, 2015** – The student council meets with board trustees, identifies priorities for the year to advance the aims of the group and agrees to strike an executive to carry forward the group's work. Trustees support the move by running elections for the group's first executive positions.

**September 21, 2015** - Students make a formal recommendation to the Board of Education to recognize National Child Rights Day in the school division.<sup>3</sup> The students proceed to work together across the division to raise awareness and funds for local early literacy initiatives in Prince Albert. This will be the first, among many division-wide initiatives that are led by the SRSC.

**September to December, 2015** – With the support of Student Voice Initiative representatives, and overseen by the board's Student Voice Committee (comprised of three trustees and a Superintendent), the SRSC drafts a formal constitution for the consideration of the board of education. This process lays important groundwork for the full realization of student trusteeship in the division.

**January 22, 2016** – At its annual meeting with the board of education, students share their perspectives on the following matters: student trusteeship, special credits and financial literacy, Day of the Child. The SRSC approves their draft constitution and prepares to present it to the board of education.

**January 25, 2016** – The board receives the draft SRSC Constitution and undertakes a legal review of the SRSC's recommendations which includes allowing for two student trustees to be elected by the SRSC on an annual basis and to sit at the board table in the capacity of student trustees.<sup>4</sup> The SRSC Constitution proposes that 1 rural student trustee and 1 urban student trustee be elected by the students to sit on the school board. The SRSC membership elects 2 student trustees that will represent them at the board table as a pilot initiative for the remainder of the year. A committee of trustees is utilized to run the election of the two student trustees.

**February 22, 2016** – The board approves the SRSC constitution, granting the organization formal roles and responsibilities in the division. From here on, elected student trustees attend and participate in every regular meeting of the board of education.

**September 20, 2016** – Trustees conduct the elections of the SRSC Executive and student trustees at the organizational meeting of the SRSC.

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<sup>3</sup> p.3 Meeting Minutes Sept 21, 2015 available here: [https://www.srsd119.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/BM\\_MIN\\_RL\\_2015\\_09\\_21reg.pdf](https://www.srsd119.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/BM_MIN_RL_2015_09_21reg.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> p.2 Meeting Minutes January 25, 2016 available here: [https://www.srsd119.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/BM\\_MIN\\_RL\\_2016\\_01\\_25reg.pdf](https://www.srsd119.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/BM_MIN_RL_2016_01_25reg.pdf)

**September 27, 2016** – Following the organizational meeting of the SRSC, two new student trustees (one urban and one rural) are sworn in at the Board’s regular meeting<sup>5</sup>, becoming the first student trustees to formally represent students on a board of education in the province of Saskatchewan.

**September, 2017** – Trustees conduct the elections for Executive and student trustees at the organizational meeting of the SRSC.

**March 26-28, 2017** – Two trustees and four SRSC members co-present at a breakout session, *Student Voice*, at the 22<sup>nd</sup> National Congress on Rural Education in Canada.

**January 17, 2017** – Trustees and the SRSC, represented by their president, co-present to the K-12 Education Governance Review Panel to advocate for locally elected and autonomous boards of education, the value of local representation in local governance and the importance of maintaining (and enhancing) student voice in school board governance.

**September 27, 2018** – Trustees conduct the elections for executive and student trustee positions at the organizational meeting of the SRSC and support the students’ development of a three-year strategic plan which focuses on enhancing mental health and addictions supports in the division, maintaining relationships, addressing recommends and departmental exams, and advocating for resources

**April 13, 2018** – Three board trustees, a student trustee and the president of the SRSC co-present “Student Voice to the Board Panel” at the Spring Assembly of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association.

**May 30, 2018** – The SRSC present their ideas on mental health supports for students, review and renew their constitution and discuss student voice with SRSD trustees as well as guest trustees from the Northeast Public School Division.

**December 14, 2018** – The board of education and student trustees meet with the Deputy Premier and Minister of Education, Gord Wyant to discuss a range of topics, including: vulnerable students, student trusteeship and the student-led mental health initiatives being undertaken by the SRSC.

**January 11, 2018** – At its annual meeting with the board of education, the SRSC provides feedback on setting the 2019-2020 school calendar for the division, recommends policies and school resources for learning. The students also share progress on a student-produced video that they produced, with support from The Office of the Child Advocate for Saskatchewan, among others.

**March 7, 2019** – Trustees meet with the SRSC for an “Education Visioning Session” so that students can contribute their ideas on the renewal of a provincial plan for education beyond 2020.

**May 30, 2019** – The SRSC Executive meets with the board’s Premier’s Award Committee to review student contributions to the nomination process. The parties agree to submit a joint application for the Premier’s Award for Innovation and Excellence in Education. Terms of Reference are drawn up for the joint committee and ratified by the Board of Education.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://v2.panow.com/article/597116/students-now-have-voice-sask-rivers-school-board>

## **Appendix B: SRPSD Resolution to the SSBA Assembly (Fall 2013)**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Saskatchewan School Boards Association work jointly with the provincial government to initiate changes to legislation that will allow for student representation on the school boards of the province AND that the authority of these student trustees be established and granted by legislation.

Saskatchewan Rivers S.D. No. 119

### Sponsor's Rationale:

Students shape our education systems as learners in the system, and through their individual efforts and achievements. Increasingly, Boards are also recognizing the value, benefit and potential for students to contribute to local school board governance by providing relevant input into decision-making. We believe that it is both important and beneficial to involve and engage Saskatchewan students in education governance and that student trusteeship is a viable mechanism through which that involvement can be formalized and cultivated. Many school boards in the Province of Saskatchewan have already developed informal mechanisms through which to engage in meaningful consultation and dialogue with student representatives. However, the formalization of student-trustees in education governance is currently limited/prevented by provincial legislation. The introduction of student trusteeship requires legislative change.

Other jurisdictions have successfully undertaken legislative change and/or formalized student-trusteeship in Canada:

In Ontario, student trustees have been mandated since 1998. In New Brunswick, student trustees have been part of school board governance since 2009. The Vancouver School Board is initiating a pilot student-trustee program this fall (2013). Calgary Public Schools is moving towards formalizing student trusteeship this fall (2013). In September of 2013, the Edmonton Public School Board voted unanimously to move forward with implementing a student trustee program in 2014-2015.

This initiative is consistent with Vision 2025 of the SSBA and Ministry of Education goals of enhancing student engagement and maintaining a student-centred focus going forward into significant education sector planning.

### *Cost of this resolution:*

Minimal cost to the Association.



## Appendix C: Budget Allocation

Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change Expenses 2017-2019					
School Year	Mileage	Nutrition	SRSC related events	Community Donations	Total
2017-18	\$1,180.53	\$1,670.89	\$85.87	\$522.10	\$3,459.39
2018-19	\$1,666.43	\$1,505.70	\$3414.60	\$353.50	\$6,940.23

## Appendix D: Board Annual Work Plan (highlight interactions with students)

The Board Annual Work Plan is available here: [https://www.srsd119.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/BPH\\_RL\\_Policy\\_2\\_App\\_A\\_Board\\_Annual\\_Work\\_Plan-.pdf](https://www.srsd119.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/BPH_RL_Policy_2_App_A_Board_Annual_Work_Plan-.pdf)

## Appendix E: Board Foundation Statements

Foundation Statements specifies regular consultation and communication with students as part of responsible governance. The Board's Core Values 1.4.3 are available here: [https://www.srsd119.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/BPH\\_RL\\_Policy\\_1\\_Foundations\\_Statements.pdf](https://www.srsd119.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/BPH_RL_Policy_1_Foundations_Statements.pdf)

## Appendix F: Student Trustee Oath



### STUDENT TRUSTEE OATH OF OFFICE

I, (student trustee's name), solemnly and sincerely declare that:

- I am qualified to hold office of student trustee;
- I will abide by the *Saskatchewan Education Act, 1995* and the Policies of the Division;
- I will faithfully perform the duties of my office to the best of my knowledge and ability for the full time that I hold office as a student trustee in the Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division.

Dated at Prince Albert in the Province of Saskatchewan, this 15th day of October 15, 2018.

(Name)  
Student Trustee  
SRSC

Barry Hollick, Board Chair  
Saskatchewan Rivers Public School  
Division

## Appendix G: Student Trustee Report Template

MEETING DATE: (delete these words and add date of school board meeting)

Type of Meeting	Agenda Items	Intent
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular	<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence	<input type="checkbox"/> Information
<input type="checkbox"/> Closed Session	<input type="checkbox"/> New Business	<input type="checkbox"/> Decision
<input type="checkbox"/> Committee of the Whole	<input type="checkbox"/> Reports from Administrative Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Student Trustee Report</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent Item

FROM: (delete these words and insert your name(s))

ATTACHMENTS [ ]

### BACKGROUND

#### Highlights of Recent SRSC Meeting

Delete these words and insert bullet points or a short paragraph about the last SRSC meeting. Include date, major topics discussed, decisions made, etc.)

#### Recent SRSC Activities:

Delete these words and insert bullet points or a short paragraph about the things you or the other SRSC members have been doing since the last School Board meeting – events, meetings, communications, planning, etc.)

#### Questions or Concerns from SRSC for the School Board to consider:

Delete these words and insert a list or summary of the main question(s) or concern(s) that the SRSC has asked you to bring to the board for information or discussion. (there may not be an item in this section each meeting).

#### School Highlights (2-3 schools at each meeting so each is highlighted at least once/year)

Delete these words and insert a summary of 2-4 items from each school in the rotation. This is a chance to feature the great things happening in each high school, but is also be a time to highlight a concern or issue that is specific to a single school

#### Board Directed Topics

Delete these words and insert a summary of board-directed topics. From time to time the Board may ask student trustees to connect with SRSC members to ask for their perspectives on how certain things are impacting student learning or schools. Items in the past include Bullying, Our School, Reconciliation, etc.)

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Board consider the information in this report and take appropriate action as needed.

## **Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change Constitution** (updated 10/15/2018)

### **ARTICLE 1: NAME AND MANDATE**

1. The name of the organization shall be, "*Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change*" (SRSC).
2. The SRSC shall operate under the guidance of the Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Board of Education (SRPSD).
3. The mandate of the SRSC shall be:
  - a) To provide a student perspective to the SRPSD Board of Education.
  - b) To bring forth topics concerning students in grades 9 to 12 in the SRPSD.
  - c) To connect students throughout the SRPSD, creating relationships between the schools.
  - d) To initiate projects throughout the division, in the schools, and the community.
  - e) To provide positive opportunities for students in the SRPSD.

### **ARTICLE 2: FUNCTIONS**

1. To act in accordance with the SRSC mandate.
2. To act as a liaison between SRPSD trustees and students.
3. To coordinate and assist in the building of relationships between schools within the division.
4. To sponsor and coordinate various division activities in accordance with the SRSC mandate.
5. To participate actively and regularly in SRSC general meetings.
6. To provide leadership experience for members of SRSC.
7. To associate with other organizations in accordance with the mandate.
8. To appropriately represent the SRSC at division functions.
9. To advocate for SRPSD students' achievements and successes.
10. To promote student input in the decision making process which affects their education.
11. To advocate for the SRPSD goals as well those of the SRSC.

### **ARTICLE 3: ADMISSIONS AND MEMBERSHIP**

1. All high schools under the jurisdiction of the SRPSD are members of the SRSC. Members are expected to send representatives to SRSC general meetings in accordance with Article IV.
2. All members must be appointed by their school administration or elected by his/her school students.
3. Any persons not an SRSC student may apply for observer status granted by the President.

4. An observer shall be defined as a person who may participate in discussions, but who may not move or vote on a motion.
5. Any observer who wishes to make a presentation may do so in consultation with the President and/or the Executive Representatives.
6. The President or Chair of a meeting has the ability to revoke observer status effective immediately in order to maintain decorum.

#### **ARTICLE 4: COMPOSITION AND SCHEDULE**

1. Three members are to be selected from each of the 12 high schools within the SRPSD; elected by their peers or school administration to best represent the school.
2. If a member of the SRSC is to switch schools within the division, that member will remain a part of the group, however, that member's previous school would elect a new representative.
3. The SRSC is to meet as a whole a minimum of two times throughout the year at a predetermined location.

#### **ARTICLE 5: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE**

1. The Executive representatives shall be responsible for all administrative work for the SRSC, and for all details and decisions not possible or practical to be clarified or made at the general meetings in accordance with SRSC mandate and policy.
2. All official communications between the SRSC and the SRPSD must be approved by the majority of the available Executive representatives. Only under emergency situations should less than the President, Vice President and one additional Executive representative be consulted.
3. The Executive representatives should be responsible to liaise with the SRPSD.
4. The Executive representatives shall be directly responsible to the General Body.
5. All Executive representatives shall be responsible for attending Executive and General Meetings. Extenuating circumstances may be taken into account.
6. Each Executive representative is responsible for researching and analyzing any policies relevant to their position.
7. All SRSC Executive representatives must act in accordance with SRPSD policy regarding student government and student conduct.
8. All SRSC Executive representatives must act in accordance with the views of the majority of the SRSC.
9. In the absence of a student trustee at a board of education meeting, a member of the SRSC Executive will be attend as a temporary replacement.

#### **ARTICLE 6: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EXECUTIVE REPRESENTATIVES**

1. **Student Trustees:** Two Student Trustees would be elected by the SRSC; one who is elected from a rural school within the division and one who is elected from an urban school within the division. These students would be approved by the Superintendent

assigned to the SRSC. These students must have been a member of SRSC for at least one year before being elected into the position of Student Trustee. They must try to attend all required Board meetings and report back what they learned to the rest of the members of SRSC along with overseeing all functions organized by SRSC. The Student Trustees must also be willing to give much of their time and dedication to SRSC. Student Trustees will attend open sessions of regular Board meetings only. Student Trustees are not allowed to make a motion but they may suggest a motion. Student Trustees are not allowed to vote but may participate in the discussion and debate.

2. **President:** The President would be elected by the SRSC. They would organize and run most SRSC meetings under the instruction of the Student Trustees.
3. **Vice President:** The vice President would be elected by the SRSC. They must be willing to fill in and/or help the President whenever needed and must be kept up to date with all information passed between the Student Trustees and the President for these purposes.
4. **Secretary:** The secretary would be elected by the SRSC. This person must be organized and devoted to attending all SRSC meetings. They would be expected to record all important announcements, ideas and keep a record of all executive positions for SRSC. They must not be in grade 12.
5. **Media Relations Officer:** The Media Relations Officer (MRO) would be elected by the SRSC, however that officer would then form a committee for extra assistance with larger projects and tasks. The MRO would be in charge of creating/approving articles for public viewing, creating posters and pamphlets representing SRSC and updating the SRSC Facebook page. They would handle any matters that would deal with information that would be viewed by the public. All of their work would be approved by the Student Trustees or, if they are unavailable, approved by the President before being broadcasted/published for public viewing.
6. **Management of Funds:** The Executive shall ensure that all funds associated with the SRSC will be managed according to Board policy and Division Administrative Procedures.

## **ARTICLE 7: REQUIREMENTS OF EXECUTIVE REPRESENTATIVES**

1. The Trustees will:
  - a) Have served as a member of the SRSC for a minimum of one year.
  - b) Have a strong interest in promoting student issues.
  - c) Have strong communication skills.
2. The President will:
  - a) Have demonstrated leadership within the SRSC.
3. The Vice President will:
  - a) Have demonstrated leadership within the SRSC
4. The Secretary will:
  - a) Have good note taking and organizational skills.
  - b) Be computer literate.
5. The Media Relations Officer will:
  - a) Have good communication skills.
  - b) Be computer literate.

## **ARTICLE 8: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GENERAL BODY REPRESENTATIVES**

1. To be involved in discussions about school related affairs/issues.
2. Participate in events put on by the SRSC.
3. Bring forward comments or concerns from their school.
4. Work together with fellow SRSC members as well as Board of Education.
5. The President will choose the method of voting to make decisions.

## **ARTICLE 9: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SUPERINTENDENT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SRSC**

1. The Superintendent (or designate) will be fiscally responsible for SRSC.
2. The Superintendent (or designate) shall assist and advise the Executive Representatives.
3. The Superintendent (or designate) shall actively promote the role of SRSC to the high school Principals and Vice Principals, SRSPD Senior Management and Trustees.
4. The Superintendent (or designate) will report to the Board.

## **ARTICLE 10: VOTING PROCEDURES FOR POSITIONS**

1. When electing the general body members, each student in grades 9 to 12 can receive one ballot or cast one vote.
2. All voting must be by secret ballot.
3. All voting for the general body members must be done by September.
4. If there are any existing, eligible members on the SRSC, one member will be grandfathered in each year.
5. Members that want a place in the executive positions must be voted in by the SRSC members.
6. Election of SRSC positions will follow the order of:
  - a. Trustees (1 Urban and 1 Rural)
  - b. President
  - c. Vice President
  - d. Secretary
  - e. Media Relations Officer

## **ARTICLE 11: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**

1. Amendments to the Constitution are to be presented to the President, Vice President, and Secretary before being introduced to the entire group, allowing for ideas and concerns to be expressed in full.
2. After being discussed, detailed written amendments are to be submitted to the group prior to the meeting.
3. The Constitution may be amended by a vote of 60% of the members present at the meeting.
4. The Constitution may only be amended after all criteria of amendments are met.

5. Amendments to the Constitution will not take effect until approved by the Board of Education.

## **ARTICLE 12: REVOCATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

1. The Superintendent in charge of the SRSC reserves the right to revoke any position of any SRSC member.

## **ARTICLE 13: VACANCIES OF OFFICE**

1. If an Executive representative position becomes vacant between yearly elections it will be filled by a member of SRSC. The member will be chosen through an election at the following General Body meeting.
2. Candidates in the election will follow the constructed election rules outlined in the Constitution.
3. The winning candidate will take over their duties and responsibilities immediately.
4. If an Executive representative position becomes vacant after March 1st the remaining Executive representatives may choose to deem an election unnecessary.
5. In the event of a General Body Representative resigning it is the responsibility of his/her school to refill the position.

## **ARTICLE 14: LIMITATION OF AUTHORITY**

1. No member of the SRSC, SRSC Executive or elected Student Trustee shall discuss or be given access to personal confidential information about or complaints about any student, family member, or guarantor of any student, teacher, administrator, trustee or employee of the Board of Education.



# Student trustees to join Regina Catholic School Board

Student trustees will soon have a place at the Regina Catholic School Board table, following in the footsteps of the Saskatchewan Rivers School Board.

**ASHLEY MARTIN, REGINA LEADER-POST**

Updated: October 20, 2017



Student trustees will join the Regina Catholic School Board in February. TROY FLEECE / REGINA LEADER-POST

Student trustees will soon have a place at the Regina Catholic School Board table, following in the footsteps of the Saskatchewan Rivers School Board.

“They’re at the pulse of what’s happening with their peers,” said Regina Catholic director of education Domenic Scuglia.

“Having the students at the board table, to have direct access to what they’re thinking, allows the adult trustees to make sure that the decisions are aligned with things that students will actually be interested in.”

The student trustees should make their first appearance at February’s board meeting, after about a year of consideration by the school board.

Saskatchewan Rivers, a Prince Albert and area school board, hosted its first student trustees almost three years ago.

“It’s really been a positive step,” said Saskatchewan Rivers board chair Barry Hollick.

“Trustees run because we’re trying to make sure that every student gets a good education, so having two representatives of them at every table certainly underlines and emphasizes what school boards are about.”

The board drew inspiration from Ontario school boards, which are legally required to have student representation.

Hollick said the board engages with a variety of community groups — the Chamber of Commerce, Sask Polytechnic, the local Catholic school board, school community councils and rural municipalities — but never directly heard from students.

“It was always through other people’s eyes and voices,” said Hollick — through administrators’ or superintendents’ reports, for example.

Three students from each of Saskatchewan Rivers’ 11 high schools form a student council, Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change (SRSC).

Chloe Banda spent two years in the group, last year as president, as a student at W.P. Sandin School in Shellbrook.

“I really loved seeing what was going on and seeing that students could actually make a change,” said Banda, now a first-year kinesiology student at the University of Saskatchewan.

One of those changes relates to a policy that rewards students for good behaviour and good grades, allowing them to skip writing a final exam, for example.

“It was really inconsistent (among the) different schools,” said Banda. “(The board) took our advice and there actually was a policy adaptation and it is now being made division wide.”

Banda said it was nice to be taken seriously as students.

Of the SRSC, two students are elected to attend each public school board meeting.

The group of 33 students meet about four times a year, coming from schools up to 200 kilometres apart.

“We have students who come from Big River, Kinistino ... We go as far up north as Elk Ridge here with populations. Some of our students live a fair distance,” said Hollick.

The student trustees don’t partake in closed discussions concerning personnel or financial issues.

Regina Catholic’s student trustees will have a similar role.

For the first four months, students from each of the division’s four high schools will take turns attending a meeting.

“They’re not representing Miller or O’Neill; they’re representing all of the schools,” said Scuglia.

Each school will choose its own student trustees.

Next school year, Scuglia said it is likely that one elected student will attend all of the meetings, representing students from all four schools.

Scuglia said there is a lot of excitement in the high schools about the initiative.

“What educational research tells us is that kids are going to be more successful in their education when they have a voice,” said Scuglia.

For more than a decade, Ontario’s education legislation has mandated a student trustee position on all school boards.

Hollick tried to garner support for the same, at a 2013 Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) general meeting.

The resolution, calling on the SSBA to work with the Ministry of Education on legislation, received the support of just nine per cent of SSBA members.

Hollick would like to revisit the subject at a future SSBA meeting.

A SSBA staff member speculated that the opposition might have been due to the resolution coming in late to the agenda, as members like to have time to consider resolutions.

He also wondered whether the rejection was due to the legislative aspect.

[amartin@postmedia.com](mailto:amartin@postmedia.com)  
[twitter.com/LPAshleyM](https://twitter.com/LPAshleyM)

## **Appendix J: Letters of Support (13 pages)**

To the Premier's Award Committee,

Before joining the Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change, I always wondered how decisions within our school division were made. I frequently asked myself questions such as: How are changes to the grading rubric debated? Who chooses when we're having a long weekend or extended break? Is student involvement in extracurricular activities tracked? As a student, I was affected by these decisions, but I often felt disconnected from the system. However, this all changed when I was asked to represent my school in the Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change. The discussions I've had with my peers from across the school division and the input we have on school policy through our student trustees makes me confident students can impact decisions made in the education system. The SRSC unites the student body, exposes students and board members to new perspectives, and empowers us to take steps towards improving the lives of students through the education system.

In high school, students often focus on their own tight-knit community. The SRSC initiative brings students from across the school division together, providing us with an opportunity to share our ideas, work towards common goals, and form new relationships. Instead of trying to address similar problems at each of the twelve high schools in our division, the SRSC allows both rural and urban students to come together, build on each other's ideas to form the best solution possible, and work together to make our visions a reality. We've been able to use the SRSC as a platform to advocate for more student representation, to improve relations within the school division, and to raise awareness of youth mental health. In addition, we've collaborated with leaders in our community such as Corey O'Sup, Scott McHenry, Ben Nemtin, and Kelli Lemstra. Most importantly, we've been able to elect two student trustees to participate in board meetings and provide board members with student perspective.

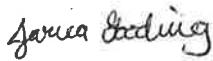
Every year, the Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change elect two student trustees to represent the general body and participate in discussions at board meetings. These trustees provide student perspective to the board of education, and act as a link between students and educators. They are provided with the opportunity to deliver a report or presentation at each meeting in addition to participating in discussions. Although both trustees are responsible for reflecting the SRSC's wishes as a whole, the SRSC elects one urban trustee and one rural trustee every school year to ensure a wide range of student perspectives are presented to the board. Both rural and urban students face unique challenges, so members of the SRSC felt it was important to have representation of both. Electing one rural trustee and one urban trustee allows the SRSC to promote collaboration between all students and reflect the diverse perspectives of students within our school division.

In addition to bringing students together and providing input to the board of education, the SRSC empowers students and encourages leadership. The activities we participate in as a group (i.e. discussions, workshops, presentations, organizing activities, etc.) allow students to take on leadership roles in their schools and their communities. By providing students with opportunities to grow, such as performing in or organizing the division-wide talent show, running for executive positions, and delivering presentations, the SRSC gives students the confidence to take charge and make change. Working together as a group allows us to address concerns, build on each other's ideas, and make long-term plans; we are also given the opportunity to

inspire or be inspired by our peers throughout our participation in the SRSC. Being part of this initiative allows students to gain skills and form connections which allow them to continue to make change in their community.

The SRSC is an extremely valuable initiative to have in the community because it provides students with the opportunity to come together and make change, to provide their perspective to the board of education, and to be leaders in their schools and community. Through the Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change, students in the Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division have been able to promote student representation, build relationships within the school division, and advocate for youth mental health. The foundation we've established will allow future generations of students to continue to come together to discuss issues they face, to build on the progress we've made in the community so far, and to provide their perspective to the board of education. Moving forward, I am sure the SRSC will continue to advocate for student representation and do their best to make our schools and community a better place.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jarica Gooding".

Jarica Gooding,  
President and Urban Trustee of the SRSC  
2018-19

June 12, 2019

To whom it may concern,

Re: The Premier's Board of Education Award for Innovation and Excellence in Education

We are writing this letter as the parents of Jarica Gooding. Jarica attends Carlton Comprehensive High School and is involved in the Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change. She was the SRSC secretary last year. Jarica enjoyed her experience so much that she decided to run for both President and Trustee this year.

In her roles as President and Trustee, Jarica is given the opportunity not only to attend meetings and represent her peers, but also to be a leader. Jarica feels that her voice is heard. She appreciates that she is part of a group that is encouraged to be 100% student run. The SRSC allows the students to create their own policies, run their own meetings, and provide feedback to the Board of Education.

Not only is the SRSC a place for students to express their opinions and work on projects that they choose, they are also guided and supported by the Division Office staff and Board of Education. Being part of the SRSC has further boosted Jarica's confidence, speaking skills, and her desire to pursue a career in law. As parents, we are impressed and grateful for such a positive learning experience for our daughter. It has been a way for her to use and advance her leadership skills.

Where else can students learn leadership skills and actually apply them? Where else can driven students contribute in such a relevant manner? In our opinion, Saskatchewan Rivers School Division has proven to be leaders in their field by giving students like our daughter a chance to be actively involved in their education, their school division, and their community.

Sincerely,

Kevin and Connie Gooding



**St. Louis Public School**  
Box 70 • St. Louis, SK • S0J 2C0  
Phone: (306) 422-8511  
Mr. Jaret Nelson, Principal  
Mr. Greg Walker, Vice-Principal

June 24, 2019

To whom it may concern,

At St. Louis Public School we are very fortunate to have three student representatives as part of the Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change initiative. These students have undoubtedly honed their leadership skills by being involved in the planning of events such as “St. Louis Has Talent” and the division wide talent show. More than that, they have built positive relationships with fellow students in a capacity that may not have occurred otherwise. They are able to connect with the whole school and community. Our school talent show brought in family and community members for an exciting event that was created by our students from the ground up. They organized committees such as the set crew, judges, MC’s, awards, and advertising. This student led event joined students together in a positive and supportive way with each other. They were able to create and problem solve on their own. This talent show has grown each year and is a fixture in our building now, and it is all student driven, not organized by staff.

Our three representatives meet regularly at the Education Center with their large group where they discuss a variety of topics that include school climate and student and staff well-being. After each general gathering they set up a meeting with myself and the vice-principal where they not only report back what they talked about but we discuss how it relates to our building. One such discussion centered on mental health. Through this meeting we came up with a plan, which included our school social worker, to address some of the issues in our building and create a support system for students who may be struggling. Again this was created by the students, for the students. There have been several occasions that I have had discussions with different board members and they always expressed how our students conducted themselves with honesty, integrity, and true concern for the topics at hand while maintaining a solution based approach.

Participation can be a challenge for our students due to our distance from Prince Albert. Our community is nearly half an hour outside of Prince Albert but between the dedication of the students and staff we are always able to make it work, even in the depths of winter. Our students value the opportunity to directly communicate with our senior administration and members of the Board of Education. They have told me time and again that they feel appreciated and part of a process that offers solutions and does not simply voice concerns. Our staff have noticed this belief system is becoming part of our school and that students come up with constructive ideas before they have a complaint. That has a powerful effect on not only our school, but our community.

I wholeheartedly support this initiative because we are seeing tangible benefits and growth in a real life situation where young adults feel empowered to create a positive change.

Sincerely,

Jaret Nelson  
Principal  
St. Louis Public School





# Wahpeton Dakota Nation

P.O. Box 128 • Prince Albert, SK S6V 5R4  
Phone: (306) 764-6649 • Fax: (306) 764-6637

July 25, 2019

To: The Premier's Board of Education Award for Innovation and Excellence in Education, selection committee

It is with pride and honor that I write this letter of reference for Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division's initiative "Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change" (SRSC).

The positive impact this initiative had, and has on the community of Wahpeton Dakota Nation has been immeasurable. The pride that Mr. Archie Waditaka and Mr. Atreyu Roberts display, when they share their experiences with the other Wahpeton students attending Sask Rivers high schools, gives all of our students the belief that they too will succeed in whatever they choose to do.

These 2 young men are so very confident in themselves, and when they are requested to speak at Wahpeton Dakota Nation events, they never hesitate to give back to the community. The parents of these 2 young men are forever grateful to Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Board for giving their sons the opportunity to represent Wahpeton Dakota Nation, at a table that has welcomed and supported them in their growth.

The SRSC Initiative has proven to be more than just an Initiative, the Board has proven to be able to look outside the box for ways to engage, support and retain Indigenous students. SRSC has proven to be something that has changed lives, and has solidified the partnership between Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division and Wahpeton Dakota Nation.

It is with great anticipation that in the years to come this Initiative will no longer be just an initiative it will be how Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division and Wahpeton Dakota Nation work together.

In the Spirit of Partnership

*L. Greyeyes-Highway*  
Linda Greyeyes-Highway

Education Coordinator

Wahpeton Dakota Nation



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**Jeff Court**

Principal  
Carlton Comprehensive Public High School  
Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division  
(306) 922-3115  
jcourt@srsd119.ca

10th June 2019

**Re: Premier's Board of Education Award for Innovation and Excellence in  
Education**

To whom it may concern;

Innovation in education has recently become a topic of great interest. Many educational organizations strive to improve their practice in hopes of creating greater opportunity for the students that they serve. In today's ever changing society, we as an education sector must look critically at the practices that we traditionally have upheld and explore new, creative ways of doing business. An important member for these decisions are our students. Student's having a seat at the table of decisions is crucial as we connect traditional education with the skills that our students need in today's society.

As A.J. Juliani states, "...any classroom/school that has students working on Employability, Entrepreneurship and Achievement, along with the skills that support these ideals, would be considered Innovative." The Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division (SRPSD) has created and sustainably established and extremely innovative practice that is driven by student voice. Our students have an opportunity to meet monthly with Board Trustees in what SRPSD is calling the Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change (SRSC). Each High School provides up to three student representatives to meet with the SRPSD Board trustees to discuss pressing issues in education. Among the students representatives, there are three students that are elected by the SRSC to represent the students at the Board Table. Students are actively involved in governance decisions at the school division level.

SRPSD has created an amazing opportunity for students to make a difference in their world. Opportunities that will serve the students that are directly involved well for the rest of their lives, all while sharing perspective and making a difference for their fellow classmates. The SRPSD Board of trustees have stepped forward as innovators and leaders in education with this initiative.

As an in-school administrator, I am both proud of the Board for forwarding this opportunity to our students. Most importantly, I am proud of the students that have

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taken the risk to get involved, share their stories and help make decisions for the future of education in SRPSD.

Jeff Court

SRSC Board of Directors,

Our daughter, Melissa Magnin, joined the SRC at St. Louis school when she was in grade 7. She has been room rep, senior social convener, and vice president. We have watched her confidence grow and her leadership skills improve. She was becoming more involved in the school and community activities.

In grade 11, Melissa joined the SRSC. Over the next two years we had the pleasure of watching our daughter go from a small school/community minded individual to a more worldly minded, well rounded individual. Her communication and social skills have grown immensely. She has become a true leader and has learned the value of teamwork. These new leadership skills have become very helpful in her grade 12 class planning for graduation. We have enjoyed hearing from her teachers about the commitment to not only her classes but all activities she has been involved in.

The involvement in the SRSC has also strengthened Melissa's decision making skills. Many times at home when facing a situation that needed a decision to be made we would get the "I don't know", answer. Since joining the SRSC she has learned that she can make choices for herself. Melissa has broadened her perspective, is sensitive to others, and she listens to ideas from everyone. She works well with most people to come to a well informed decision.

As a whole the SRSC has had many great impacts on our daughter. We are grateful for the time she has had on the SRSC. All that she has learned, the new friendships gained and the confidence in herself will aid her greatly when she attends college this fall. We thank you for developing a positive group for all these school students to learn so much from.

Sincerely,

Tanya and Leo Magnin



July 3, 2019

Re: Premier's Board of Education Award for Innovation and Excellence in Education

To Whom it May Concern;

Collaboration between business and students is our future, it helps bridge the gap between school and work so students can explore career opportunities, gain meaningful connections and learn valuable job skills. George Weah, said that "Education is a continual process, it's like a bicycle... If you don't pedal, you don't go forward"

Recently, the Prince Albert & District Chamber of Commerce had the privilege of partnering with the Saskatchewan Rivers Students for Change (SRSC), working together we brought a Canadian producer, writer, and speaker to Prince Albert. Without this partnership neither of our groups would have benefited from hearing his message on leadership and the importance of creating bucket lists.

Partnerships between business and education facilities also helps improve students' achievements. It is recognized that not all students are going to be Doctors, Lawyers and Accountants, some are going to be entertainers, artists, inventors and funeral directors. Working together on an initiative called Open Doors to Tomorrow Career Fair, 2500 students get to meet approximately 100 of our businesses within our region. Students are given the opportunity to talk to the business owners & managers about future careers. In addition, some of the booths are interactive giving the students an example of what the career would entail.

As the Chamber CEO, we are excited to work with the SRSC to keep our students in school and help them excel. We will continue to work together to find innovative ways for both groups to learn and connect with each other; therefore, always pedaling our "bike" forward.

Yours Sincerely,

Elise Hildebrandt  
CEO

E: [ehildebrandt@princealbertchamber.com](mailto:ehildebrandt@princealbertchamber.com)

C: 306-221-2373

Prince Albert & District Chamber of Commerce  
3700 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue West, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan S6W 1A2



June 26, 2019

Dear Sir/Madam:

**Re: Saskatchewan Rivers School Division Students for Change program**

The Advocate for Children and Youth office engages with children, youth, families, community members and professionals throughout the province. All too often we see that decisions impacting the lives of children and youth are made for them, rather than with them. The Students for Change program is challenging the traditional model by providing opportunities for young people to engage directly with school board officials and senior administration. Students are empowered to share their insight and voice to impact change not only within their local school division but also within the provincial education system. Plus, we know that positive engagement with students results in positive impacts on their overall achievement and growth.

Given the current crisis that our province faces, and the significant number of young people that are impacted, we commend the Students for Change program for taking action to address mental health challenges faced by youth.

When given a voice, children and youth are powerful resources and leaders in their communities. Thus, the Advocate for Children and Youth office supports any project that encourages youth to be change-makers in their communities. The young people involved in the Students for Change program are a perfect example of this.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Corey O'Soup".

Corey O'Soup  
Advocate for Children and Youth

COS/wg



# City of Prince Albert

June 25, 2019

Saskatchewan School Boards Association  
400 – 2222 – 13 Avenue  
Regina SK S4P 3M7

To Whom It May Concern:

**Re: Sask Rivers Students for Change Initiative – Letter of Support  
Prince Albert, SK**

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On behalf of the City of Prince Albert I am writing this letter in support of the Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division No. 119's application for this year's Premier's Board of Education Award for Innovation and Excellence in Education.

The **Sask Rivers Students for Change Initiative** is a new leadership opportunity where students have an opportunity to become regular trustees around the school board table.

Giving a voice to students at the Board level is giving them an opportunity to build relationships within teams, define their identity, and create effective communication skills. They can discuss, take action, and provide advice to the Board on issues they are facing at school or within the school system. Conflict resolution, problem solving and decision making are just a few of the benefits for our students and greater education system.

The City's vision for our community is to find new ways to engage youth and educate them on the positive impact that dedication to their community has on themselves, their families and friends. The **Sask Rivers Students for Change Initiative** represents just that – they are a group of positive, intelligent, community leaders who are being inspired to address issues in their schools.

The City of Prince Albert supports the **Sask Rivers Students for Change Initiative** as it promotes, encourages and positively reinforces the important role education, and our students (our future leaders) play in our community.

Sincerely,

**Greg Dionne**  
Mayor



Government  
— of —  
Saskatchewan

Ministry of Education  
Deputy Minister  
5th Floor, 2220 College Avenue  
Regina, Canada S4P 4V9

June 28, 2019

Robert Bratvold, Director of Education  
Saskatchewan Rivers School Division  
rbratvold@srsd119.ca

Dear Robert Bratvold:

Thank you for your email requesting a letter of support for Saskatchewan Rivers School Division's (SRSD) application for the Premier's Award for Excellence and Innovation. It is commendable that the *Students for Change* initiative puts the needs of students first by giving them a voice on your school board. This initiative is the embodiment of innovation.

I am pleased to support SRSD's application and have attached my letter of support for your use.

Thank you for taking the time to write and best of luck with your submission.

Sincerely,

J. Robert Currie

Attachment

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Government  
— of —  
Saskatchewan

Ministry of Education  
Deputy Minister  
5th Floor, 2220 College Avenue  
Regina, Canada S4P 4V9

June 28, 2019

To Whom it May Concern:

The Ministry of Education is pleased to support Saskatchewan Rivers School Division's (SRSD) application for the Premier's Award for Excellence and Innovation for its outstanding initiative, *Students for Change*.

*Students for Change* is a unique initiative that allows students to become regular trustees at school board meetings. This initiative empowers students by giving them a voice in decision making that directly affects their fellow students, teachers, schools and communities.

SRSD continues to make this initiative a priority by bringing students together from each of its 11 high schools and giving them an opportunity to liaise with school board members and senior administration. SRSD understands that its decisions directly impact students and that students' valuable insights need to be included in conversations.

Our ministry recognizes the important role that SRSD plays in the success and well-being of its students through this innovative initiative for student leaders. Through its dedication and commitment to education, SRSD is making the educational interests of students a priority.

Thank you for your consideration of this innovative initiative for this honourable award.

Sincerely,

J. Robert Currie



## Appendix K: SRSC Feedback Summary – May 2019

### Innovation and Initiatives

- forming the group
  - important to show because student voice is very under-represented
  - important to show as many cultures around the division so that students and youth in the division can feel represented and cared for
  - convince the Board to allow the formation of SRSC and give them more attention
  - created a constitution
  - important to see division coming together and students being given the opportunity to communicate
  - leadership branches us further giving us the confidence we need to continue that leadership
- supporting mental health
  - mental health - know the risks and how to get help
  - Scott Mchenry/ Red Cross talking about mental health
  - mental health app and video
  - meeting with the Deputy Minister about mental health
  - shedding light on mental health is important to remove the stigma associated with it
  - meeting with the Deputy Minister about mental health
- talent show and involvement
  - talent show raised money for the mental health charity SHARE
- forming friendships and relationships
- Presentations to others to share ideas
  - meeting with the Deputy Minister about student concerns
  - SRSC introduction/explanation of video
  - Facebook page
  - presented to K-12 governance review panel
  - presented at Spring Assembly (SSBA)
  - presented at Rural Congress Saskatoon
- getting student trustees on the Board of Trustees
  - 2 Trustees that sit at the Board table and communicate ideas
- finishing the 3 year plan

## **Appendix K: SRSC Feedback Summary– May 2019**

### **Student Involvement and Leadership – Design, Development and Implementation**

- Talent Show
  - talent show unifies our school division and show cases this province's talent
  - planning and making talent show an annual event
- creating a foundation to build on
  - 3-year plan to keep the SRSC on track
  - developed constitution
  - introduction/explanation of SRSC video
  - organization of ideas and thoughts
- Bringing people together
  - proud of their ability to bring the division together (forces you to meet students from other schools)
  - being recognized and supported
  - bringing schools together was improved this year through the talent show
  - dependent on who is here and those students get to give their opinion on what's important
  - friendships and cooperation
- Leadership within the group
  - SRSC gives us a chance to develop and use our leadership skills
  - we are student led and show that students are capable of really powerful things
- Student trustees
  - getting our Student Trustees on the Board of Trustees gives us a voice
  - Student Trustees give power to students which we've never had before
  - it is also really powerful to have a student perspective
- Influence and Leadership
  - student leadership
  - influence school calendar setting
  - departmentals and getting teachers accredited
  - resourcing the classroom
- caring of the mental health of students
- all speakers that come to speak to us have helped our motives and values

## **Appendix K: SRSC Feedback Summary – May 2019**

### **Partnerships**

- schools have collaborated with other schools, executives and others to create a better community
- worked with Corey O'Soup, Scott Mchenry, Red Cross
- kids help phone
- worked with North East School Division
- SRSC partnered with a Vancouver Trustee to create the SRSC constitution
- benefitted from each other
- students have partnered with the Board and adults (Mr. Trann) to collaborate in improving the division and having a youth voice
- partnered with Kelli Lemstra to create our mental health video and app
- partnered with many local businesses last year to make our talent show possible
- worked with Ministry of Education (Deputy Minister)
- worked with Ben Nemtin
- PA Chamber of Commerce (helped bring in speakers)
- EA Rawlinson Centre
- radio
- Pinball Clemens
- World Congress
- rural and urban

### **Improved Student Achievement**

- yes, gives perspective of students to School Board
- can bring back information to our schools
- communication, education with adults
- has potential to help, as we as students can bring forward issues we deal with
- students get the chance to trust their education
- makes students want to try harder
- shows School Board that students care and want to help
- we as a group are a voice for all the students
- we are facing those issues head on and want to solve them for our fellow peers
- we want to make changes that benefit our fellow students
- anyone can gain many skills and abilities from groups like these such as socialization, leadership, etc.
- we influence decisions made within the division
- able to plan student focused activities on a larger scale
- we could potentially influence major decisions rather than minor ones
- student input leads to better learning environment
- our Student Trustees have influence on the Board of Trustees
- gets people out of their comfort zone and helps them socialize with other people outside of their school
- gives students a sense of responsibility and maturity
- gives students' perspective on topics
- Trustees attending Board meetings gives direct contact and communication on topics

## **Appendix K: SRSC Feedback Summary – May 2019**

### **Looking Forward – Vision for Future Impact and events**

- expanding our groups capabilities by:
  - o becoming a stronger voice in the Board meetings
  - o creating an online school system with classes for students
  - o creating a good quality SRSC conference
  - o providing our group with more technology and resources to improve our efficiency/projects
  - o creating a Culture Festival/Day to promote diversity within the division
  - o promote the SRSC itself – spread awareness so more people want to join
- we would be better equipped to improve the communities and students we do this for
- make bigger projects
- bring forward new ideas
- can see it being a bigger role in the School Board
- donate back to our community
- new ipads for Trustees
- keyboards for Ipads
- do a division tour or trustees join the Board's tours
- could brainstorm charities to donate to
- get more schools involved
- spread awareness of mental health
- bring in mental health speaker
- career fair
- guidance (career wise)

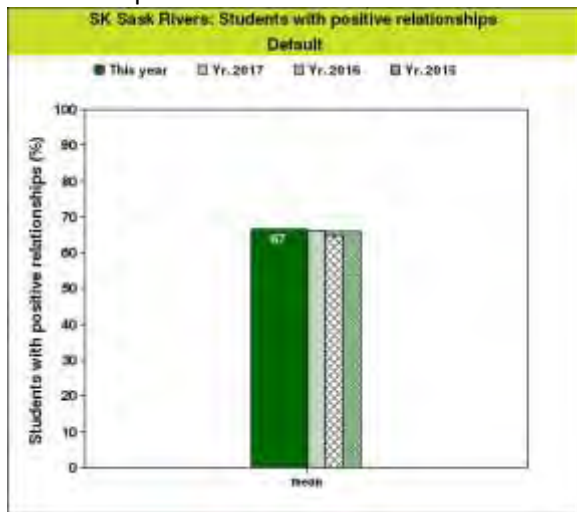
## **Appendix L: Selected Listing of SRSC Student Achievements**

- Applied and selected to be session presenter at National Congress on Rural Education
- Applied and selected to be session presenter at Canadian School Board's National gathering
- Selected to be among student panelists at Saskatchewan School Boards Association provincial assembly
- Supported the hosting of the provincial Saskatchewan Student Leadership Conference in SRPSD
- Provided the only in-person student voice to the Panel on Educational Governance Review (often referred to as the Perrins Panel)
- Presented concerns and potential solutions to Deputy Premier and Minister of Education, Hon. Gordon Wyant
- Scripted, produced and distributed Mental Health Awareness video
- Planned, organized and produced two division-wide talent showcase events
- Raised money for charitable causes
- Served Elections Canada as paid poll workers in the 2015 Federal Election
- Advocated and attained Financial Literacy courses within SRPSD
- Advocated and achieved additional resources for student wellness and mental health

## Appendix M: OurSchool Data

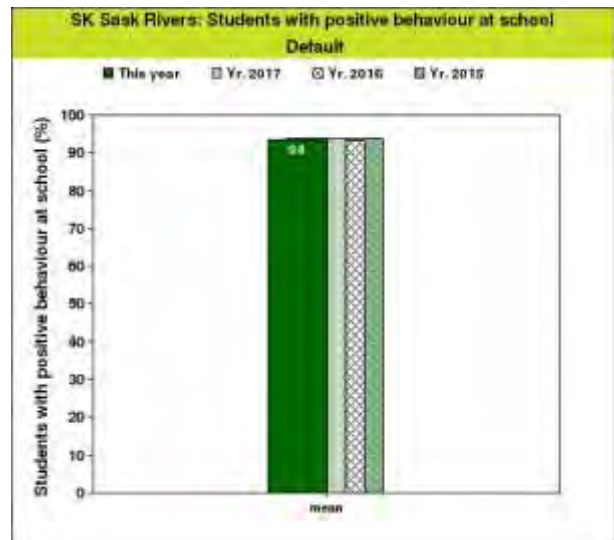
### Positive Relationships

Students respond to 4 Likert questions about their friendships at school. Responses with agree or strongly agree are reported as "the percentage of students with positive relationships".



### Positive Behaviour

Students respond to 5 questions asking how often during the past 4 weeks they have been in trouble at school. The results are reported as the 'percentage of students with positive student behaviour.'



Despite not having the full impact anticipated it is important to note that this initiative is still in its early stages. As it gains traction in schools and more students are impacted in more ways results may improve further. Innovative change sometimes takes time to realize its full impact.