

**SASKATCHEWAN TEACHERS' FEDERATION**

# **BULLETIN**

FALL 2024 | VOLUME 91, NO. 1

PAGE 5

## **VOTE FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION**

In this fall's elections.

PAGE 9

## **TREATY LEARNING JOURNEY - LET'S TALK TRUTH**

Treaty education for teachers.

PAGE 12

# **Leadership and Community Through Coaching**

Ken Parker's decades of service to sport in Unity, Saskatchewan.



PAGE 38

**GET TO KNOW THE  
STF EXECUTIVE**

ISSN 2816-3885 (Print)  
ISSN 2816-3893 (Digital)

The *Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Bulletin* is published four times during the school year and is distributed both electronically and in print.

**Have a story idea or a topic you would like us to include?** We'd love to hear from you. Reach us at [stfcommunications@stf.sk.ca](mailto:stfcommunications@stf.sk.ca).

For our current advertising rate card or to book an advertisement, please contact [stfcommunications@stf.sk.ca](mailto:stfcommunications@stf.sk.ca).

**Editor:** Courtney Forseth,  
Managing Director of  
Communications and  
Public Relations

[www.stf.sk.ca](http://www.stf.sk.ca)

@     @SaskTeachersFed

©2024. For permission to reprint, please contact the editorial office. Indexed in the Canadian Education Index ISSN 0036-4886.

Member of the Canadian Educational Press Association and the Educational Press Association of America.

All images by Brittany Bellamy, unless otherwise noted.



SASKATCHEWAN  
TEACHERS'  
FEDERATION

# Table of Contents

<u>President's Update</u>	4	<u>School Teepee Offers Learning, Community, Connection</u>	16
<u>Provincial and Trustee Elections: Vote for Public Education</u>	5	<u>In the Classroom With STF Professional Learning – Nurturing Emergent Literacy in Play-Based Outdoor Education</u>	20
<u>Working for You – Pressing Forward on Pivotal Issues for a Better Public Education System</u>	7	<u>Upcoming Events</u>	22
<u>Reconciliation in Action – Treaty Learning Journey – Let's Talk Truth: New Perspectives, New Ways of Thinking</u>	9	<u>Food to Learn Campaign Provides Nourishment for Students to Excel</u>	24
<u>Teachers Inspire – For the Love of Sport</u>	12	<u>Teachers Solidify Their Right to Privacy With Recent Supreme Court Decision</u>	26





For You and Your Family –  
Portaplan as an Affordable Mortgage  
Insurance Alternative Explained 29

Collective Wisdom –  
Mentoring New Teachers 30

Principals' Notes – STF Offers  
Information Sessions on Legal  
Issues and Microaggressions for  
Educational Leaders 32

Emma Stewart Resources Centre  
Bookshelf – Resources for a  
New School Year 34

Your Voice, Our Future: Transforming  
the STF Digital Experience 35

Purpose-Driven Leadership the  
Focus of 60th Annual Course for  
School Administrators 36

Meet Your Executive 38

Introducing the New President of  
the Superannuated Teachers of  
Saskatchewan, Sue Amundrud 42





About a year ago, at the start of a new school year and in the midst of a contentious bargaining session with government, I asked Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation members for two things: to buckle up and to show up. Still, I could not have imagined that 2023-24 would play out as it did. STF members listened and showed up ready to fight for our profession beyond what I could have ever expected. I cannot thank you enough for your trust and support during this time.

I know this year has taken its toll on our membership – the uncertainty, the financial hit, the marching in the cold for hours – the sacrifices were real. Not only that, but our opponents were incredibly adversarial. Relationships were fractured and trust with our partners in the sector was eroded. As we begin a new school year, it's time to look forward and find ways to rebuild these relationships and work together for the benefit of teachers and public education in Saskatchewan.

After we reached an impasse and moved to job action and sanctions, I repeated another phrase: it shouldn't have to be this hard to create meaningful change and invest in our children's futures. It shouldn't be a hard sell to restore our per-student funding to what it once was, or to advocate for having fewer than 40 students in a classroom, or to increase teachers' purchasing power while acknowledging their increasing workload.

As we near the provincial and school trustee elections, we are overwhelmingly hearing that education is a top issue – and after the past year, how could it not be? Without the actions and advocacy of teachers, this likely would not have been the case. But now, there is an unmistakable shift. Parents and guardians are tuned in to what's going on in their kids' classrooms. They're tired of the over-capacity classes, of having to wait months or pay out-of-pocket for specialists that were cut, of the violence happening in schools, and tired of inaction from government and school boards to make meaningful changes to address these concerns.

Education is now an issue that can't be ignored by elected officials. The people of this province understand the issues and support our cause – and you did that. We have solidarity and strength in numbers. Your actions created real change this year, and I am so grateful for your engagement – let's keep it going outside of negotiations!

Your STF Executive and I thank you for your dedication during this incredibly challenging year. I continue to be inspired by STF members and am honoured to serve as your President. All the best for another successful school year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S Becotte". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Samantha Becotte**  
Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation President



PROVINCIAL AND TRUSTEE ELECTIONS:

# VOTE FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

BY: STAFF WRITER

**With a provincial election to take place on or before October 28 and school board elections set for November 13, Saskatchewan teachers are asking voters to cast their ballot for public education.**

As a non-partisan organization, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation will not endorse candidates or parties; however, it wants to ensure voters are aware of the issues in public education and understand that their votes can make a real difference. After a year of bargaining, many of those issues remain critical.

"Throughout the bargaining process we saw how strong the support is for public education. Parents, students, teachers and concerned citizens came together to draw attention to the issues in education and press the provincial government and trustees for solutions," says STF President Samantha Becotte. "The issues still exist, but with provincial and trustee elections this fall, people have two big opportunities to make their voices heard through conversations with candidates and at the ballot box."

The STF's Vote for Public Education campaign focuses on informing voters and asking them to vote for candidates who are committed to improving public education in Saskatchewan. Information, toolkits, downloadable graphics and printable posters are available on the STF's website and on [www.tellthemtuesday.com/elections](http://www.tellthemtuesday.com/elections). The campaign also includes advertisements and lawn signs.

## TRUSTEES: THE CASE FOR COMPETITION

Saskatchewan, along with many other provinces across Canada, has experienced a decline in the number of individuals running to become a trustee. As a result, there is less competition among candidates, less debate and less diversity of perspective and ideas.

Across Saskatchewan's 28 school boards, 58.75 percent of school board trustees won by acclamation during the 2020 election.

"Elected school board trustees play an essential role in public education," says Becotte. "They are responsible for ensuring educational supports and services meet local students' needs."

The Saskatchewan School Boards Association echoes those comments and has launched an information package for those interested in running.

"Local community voices on school boards are so important in helping to ensure kids get the best education possible," says SSBA Executive Director Darren McKee. "In support of the school board elections taking place this year, the SSBA has updated information and provided a complete 2024 School Board Elections package on our website for reference and use. Elections take place on November 13, and the deadline for nominations is October 9."

---

## Do you know someone who supports public education and would make a great trustee? Find out more at [www.stf.sk.ca](http://www.stf.sk.ca) or from the Saskatchewan School Boards Association.

---

### CAST YOUR VOTE

With voter turnout at only about 53 percent in the last two provincial elections, the STF is encouraging each and every one of its 13,500 members to cast their vote. Becotte underscores the importance of voting for public education in Saskatchewan.

“Public schools are funded solely by the provincial government and locally elected school division trustees then approve how that money will be spent,” says Becotte. “The state of public education – specifically increasing class size and complexity accompanied by insufficient classroom and specialized supports – is a direct result of the policy and political choices of elected officials. We have a chance to help shape those decisions by voting for candidates who value public education.”

Elections Saskatchewan says it’s working to ensure voting is accessible to all eligible voters.

“I believe ensuring every eligible voter has convenient and easy access to casting their ballot is fundamental to a free and fair election. For that very reason, broadening access to the vote is the foundation of my election modernization initiative. In May, we launched our public campaign to raise awareness of the importance of voter registration. We’re expanding the vote-by-mail option this election, in which any voter can apply for this option. And we’re formalizing ‘voting week’ that will offer six full days of voting, with more hours that voting locations are open. The creation of voting week is a crucial step in acknowledging the need to place the voter at the centre of our system,” says Chief Electoral Officer of Saskatchewan Dr. Michael Boda.

For more information on how, where and when to vote, check with your municipality for municipal and trustee elections and Elections Saskatchewan for the provincial election. ▲



### DID YOU KNOW?

- The number of students in Saskatchewan continues to increase while the number of teachers has essentially remained status quo for more than 10 years. From 2016-17 to 2023-24, the student population grew by 15,875 but the number of classroom teachers only increased by 10.
- The portion of the provincial budget allocated to education is dropping, despite the fact that enrolment is growing and student needs are more complex. According to Government of Saskatchewan budget reports, K-12 school operating funding was 15.3 percent of total budgetary expenses in 2012-13 but dropped to 11 percent in 2024-25.
- According to Statistics Canada, in 2015-16 Saskatchewan had the highest per-student funding in the country. By 2021-22, it had fallen to eighth place, representing a 20.7 percent reduction after adjusting for inflation. Based on the province’s 2024-25 budget, the STF projects Saskatchewan will fall even further to 10th place.

# Pressing Forward on Pivotal Issues for a Better Public Education System

## Binding Arbitration Set for December 16 to 20

BY: STAFF WRITER

**Nearly a year and half since negotiations began, dates have been set to move into the next phase of securing a new provincial collective bargaining agreement. In August, it was announced that binding arbitration has been scheduled for December 16 to 20 in Saskatoon.**

### THE MOVE TO BINDING ARBITRATION

The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation has been working to secure a new collective agreement for its 13,500 members that will begin to address some of the biggest challenges teachers and students face each day. As enrolment increases and per-student funding decreases, the lack of resources, large class sizes, and incidents of classroom violence have reached a crisis point.

In June, after more than a year of contentious negotiations and the most job action ever taken by Saskatchewan teachers, the Teachers' Bargaining Committee and Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee agreed to send the two most difficult issues – class complexity-accountability framework and wages – to arbitration. The decision to move to arbitration came after five days of consultation by the STF with teachers, including an online townhall meeting attended by more than 5,700 members and meetings with member advisory panels.

"The inclusion of the class complexity-accountability framework within our joint arbitration request with the Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee was only possible because of the incredible solidarity of our membership throughout the past year and the continued pressure that teachers, allies and the public have placed on government and the GTBC to address these issues," says STF President Samantha Becotte.

### THE BINDING ARBITRATION PROCESS

According to *The Education Act, 1995*, in a joint request for arbitration the two parties must agree on the items to be considered during arbitration. These items serve as terms of reference for the arbitration board. During the process, each side presents arguments, rationale and documentation to support their position. The arbitration process can also examine trends such as other union or teacher collective agreements and relevant precedents.

According to legislation, each party appoints a representative to the board and both parties then agree on an arbitrator. With an arbitrator and panelists confirmed, a

## FACT:

**In 2017, *The Education Act, 1995*, was amended so that binding arbitration was not an option if only requested by one party. The Act now requires both parties to request and agree to binding arbitration.**

# The decision to participate in binding arbitration means STF members will not vote on a collective agreement. In June, the STF put a call out to members working in all school sizes, communities and areas of the province inviting them to submit their experiences related to class complexity in the 2023-24 school year. This information will be part of the STF's arbitration submission.

hearing will offer both parties the opportunity to present their positions over several days. Arbitration will take place December 16 to 20 in Saskatoon. Following the hearing, the arbitrator will prepare a final report with his binding ruling on the matters.

The decision to participate in binding arbitration means STF members will not vote on a collective agreement. In June, the STF put a call out to members working in all school sizes, communities and areas of the province inviting them to submit their experiences related to class complexity in the 2023-24 school year. This information will be part of the STF's arbitration submission.

The arbitrator's decision on the two issues under arbitration is legally binding and will be incorporated into the final provincial collective bargaining agreement along with all other matters agreed upon during negotiations.

## THE ARBITRATION PANEL

In July, a three-member arbitration panel was announced: one nominated by the TBC, one by the GTBC, and one mutually agreed upon by both committees.

The Teachers' Bargaining Committee nominated Dawn Harkness for the panel. Harkness spent 25 years with Saskatoon Public Schools as a classroom teacher, special education teacher, vice-principal and principal prior to retiring in 2023. During that time, she served on the school division's budget advisory and assessment/literacy committees. She has continued her involvement in education as a sessional lecturer for the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program at the University of Saskatchewan, an intern supervisor for university programs and a substitute teacher. Her extensive professional background means Harkness will speak with authority on the experiences of teachers and students in Saskatchewan classrooms.

The Government-Trustee Bargaining Committee nominated Greg Chatlain to the panel. Chatlain is a former director of education with Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools. His experience includes more than 32 years with GSCS in various leadership roles until he retired in 2022. He recently served as the GTBC nominee for the conciliation board in 2023-24.

Both parties agreed to nominate Daniel Ish as arbitrator for the proceedings. Ish is professor emeritus at the University of Saskatchewan College of Law. He was professor of tax and labour relations law, director of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives and served three terms as dean. After retiring, Ish served as chief adjudicator of the Indian Residential Schools Adjudication Secretariat.

## STAYING INFORMED


STF members can expect to be informed on the progress of arbitration as new information becomes available. Information will be provided to members in *Provincial Collective Bargaining Updates*, through email and on the STF website. ▲

### DID YOU KNOW?

A summary of the history and significant events from past provincial collective bargaining is available on the Federation website. Search ["bargaining history"](#) to find the document.







# Treaty Learning Journey – Let’s Talk Truth: New Perspectives, New Ways of Thinking

BY: STAFF WRITER

**Elaine Sutherland is on a mission to change people’s views of Indigenous people in Saskatchewan. The director of treaty education for the Office of the Treaty Commissioner is part of a team behind an innovative new public education program called the Treaty Learning Journey – Let’s Talk Truth.**

Sutherland is a proud Willow Cree woman, from the Beaudy's and Okemasis First Nation in Treaty 6 Territory. "I always introduce myself by saying I am nehiyaw-iskwew, meaning Cree woman," she says.

For almost 25 years, Sutherland taught prekindergarten to Grade 4 students. After retiring, she joined the Office of the Treaty Commissioner as its director of treaty education.

"Two years ago, I was asked to work on a massive project. For six weeks I ate, slept and dreamt treaties," she recalls. "At the time, the OTC had, and still has, Teaching Treaties in the Classroom, and were wanting a phase two. With all the information, I created the Treaty Learning Journey – Let's Talk Truth."

In her research, Sutherland discovered that the adverse effects of treaties on Indigenous populations, such as loss of land, cultural disruption and socioeconomic challenges,

were frequently omitted or downplayed in educational materials. She also learned that Indigenous perspectives and voices were often absent from the curriculum.

"According to the Indian Act, I was born an 'Indian,' and I will die an 'Indian.' Growing up, I received \$5 a year as a status treaty Indian. But I didn't know what the Indian Act really meant until I took on this project," Sutherland says.

A four-part series, Treaty Learning Journey – Let's Talk Truth, takes a new approach to treaty education for teachers and the public that is honest, caring and safe. It begins with **before treaty** which challenges your worldview and discusses Indigeneity from a Willow Cree perspective. From there it travels to **at treaty** with an overview of treaties before European arrival, the peace and friendship treaties and the historical numbered treaties and their purpose. Arriving at **after treaty**, participants learn about the breaches of treaty, and at its final destination, **today**, there is a discussion about contemporary treaty issues.

Sutherland describes some of the topics covered in the workshops, including the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Jordan's Principle, as well as myths and misconceptions about treaties. Time is dedicated to learning about the mandatory residential school system and the ongoing epidemic of violence against Indigenous women and girls.

"At the very beginning of the journey, we're upfront and honest, no matter if it's three people or 400," Sutherland says. "We create a safe space where any questions that are asked are good questions and any comments are good comments. These are difficult discussions, and we take great care of our participants' mental health. We bring an Elder with us to provide that support. Where locations permit, we will have a traditional smudging ceremony.

"When we offer this program for teachers, we give them tips and tools to teach it to a four-year-old all the way up to Grade 12 and post-secondary," Sutherland says. "We have also developed a digital resource guide for them to be able to access resources and tools for themselves, as well as providing ideas for their classrooms after they complete the program."

Sutherland and her colleagues have offered more than 28 workshops to educators, schools, RCMP, parishes, chief and councils, university students, non-profit organizations and the general public, and the list continues to grow.

In February 2024, the OTC hosted its inaugural Treaty Learning Journey – Let's Talk Truth conference for educators virtually with practical application on how to teach treaties in the classroom.

## Participant Comments

"I'm the first generation in my family to not attend residential school and I just want to say thank you. I appreciate all the work you are doing for all of us. Thank you for sharing your knowledge and experience. It is appreciated and I will carry your lessons with me. Hiy hiy."

"What did I gain from the treaty education series? I think that reconciliation involves turning, conversion, change. These sessions helped me to turn more toward the truth. I felt a positive shift and more openness within my being as a result of attending the sessions. This is a real plus in terms of relationships with Indigenous Peoples."

"As a non-Indigenous employee, I cannot expect the Indigenous employees to carry the reconciliation load. It is up to me to educate myself in ways that I can further reconciliation not only at work, but in my personal life as well."

On October 24 and 25, 2024, the Treaty Learning Journey – Let’s Talk Truth conference for the general public will be held in Saskatoon, where participants will have the opportunity to keep the conversation going. Facilitators will be on hand to speak with participants and answer their questions. For educators who attend, there will be additional content and resources.

“We will have Elders present, we will have people available if participants want to smudge and we will have counsellors available,” Sutherland says.

Sutherland says participants share that they have been deeply impacted by their learning. “A lot of people will tell us: ‘I didn’t know,’” Sutherland says. “They also share how the workshops have truly changed their thinking, which is important because then they can have the conversation with their family and friends.”

For Sutherland, the learning journey is deeply personal. “If I can make the change to where, hopefully one day, I don’t have to fear that my sons are in danger when they leave their homes just because they are Indigenous. If I can make the change for my future grandchildren so they don’t have to fear being Indigenous because of 150 years of misconceptions and miseducation about First Nations and Indigenous people. If I can make the change so that one day we will live in a world where we are treated as equals, then I will have done my job.”

To inquire about hosting a Learning Journey workshop for your school board or local community organization, contact the Office of the Treaty Commissioner at 306-244-2100 or email [receptionist@otc.ca](mailto:receptionist@otc.ca). ▲

**“If I can make the change to where, hopefully one day, I don’t have to fear that my sons are in danger when they leave their homes just because they are Indigenous. If I can make the change for my future grandchildren so they don’t have to fear being Indigenous because of 150 years of misconceptions and miseducation about First Nations and Indigenous people. If I can make the change so that one day we will live in a world where we are treated as equals, then I will have done my job.”**



## DID YOU KNOW?

The Office of the Treaty Commissioner was launched in 1989 by the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations and the Government of Canada to guide both parties through their differing views on [treaties](#). The Honourable Judge David M. Arnot was appointed Treaty Commissioner in January 1997. For the next 10 years, the phrase “we are all treaty people” was coined and treaty education was added to the Saskatchewan curriculum. In 2007, the Honourable Bill McKnight became the Treaty Commissioner and worked to advance the First Nations treaty right to livelihood – prosperity, economic self-sufficiency and independence. In 2012, George E. Lafond became Treaty Commissioner and has since focused on reconciliation as a key theme for the work to build a common understanding of the treaty relationship. In 2018, Mary Musqua-Culbertson became the first Indigenous female Treaty Commissioner of Saskatchewan. The Treaty Learning Journey: Let’s Talk Truth was created with her support and encouragement.





# For the Love of Sport

BY: STAFF WRITER



For 22 years, the Saskatchewan High Schools Athletic Association has recognized leadership in high school athletics. At its 2024 annual general meeting, Ken Parker of Unity, Saskatchewan, was one of two deserving candidates presented with the Merit Award, the organization's highest honour for outstanding leadership and service to the SHSAA and the promotion of high school athletics in the province.



TEACHERS INSPIRE

“I started working with these kids at Unity 29 years ago, and they’ve shaped my perspective into something my district and my colleagues felt worthy of recognizing,” Parker says. “I have watched this award being presented at 22 years of Merit Award banquets, but I never thought it would come in my direction.”

Parker’s relationship with sport goes back to his childhood in Harris, Saskatchewan, where he participated in nearly every sport offered. He later attended the University of Saskatchewan, where he earned his bachelor of education, and moved to Nipawin for his first teaching position at Cumberland Community College. A few years later, he accepted a teaching position at Unity Composite High School, where he eventually became vice-principal.

Parker has coached sports at the junior level and at the senior level, where he combines continued development with elite play.

“These student athletes have helped me create a philosophy that I share with every team when I give out my schedule at the start of the sports season,” Parker says. “Regardless of whether we win or lose, my goal is for all athletes to have an appreciation for their sport and possess a basic skill set so that, after they leave high school, they can continue with their sport at either a recreational or competitive level. This includes coaching, officiating or cheering for their own children in school sports.”

---

**“That’s the influence school sports can have on a young person’s life – those kids keep coming back and giving back. We’re educating them to become good people, good citizens and good neighbours.”**

---

Evidence of Parker’s values and integrity in developing high-performing athletes can be seen at the UCHS school gym, where many sportsmanship banners hang for all to see. Parker says his philosophy stems from the many great relationships he has created through school sport.

“It comes from those conversations between the competitions at tournaments and the athletic meetings – even the meetings that ran very late into the evening. I’ve appreciated every single one of them, and I’ve learned a great deal from the people who were there,” he says.



**“Ken Parker has been ‘the guy’ at Unity Comp for longer than most can remember. Whether doing the splits on the sidelines during one of his boys’ volleyball matches, hustling onto the court to coach a badminton player from a neighbouring school because their coach is busy, or retrieving javelins at the district track meet, Ken embodies the SHSAA values of student-athlete welfare, fair competition and personal development. He is a great example and mentor to coaches, athletic directors and officials in his school, the district, and indeed the whole province. Ken has sacrificed much for the betterment of school sport and lives education through athletics in a multi-sport environment.”**

*– Greg Mamer, Battle West District*



▲ Ken (right) with his wife Anita (left) and their children Kasey, Layne and Kyle.

## A LIFE OF LEADERSHIP

At the provincial level, Parker has been involved in hosting volleyball, badminton and curling events. He has been a volleyball official for many years, officiating everything from local tournaments to provincial championships. Parker is also a certified national badminton official and acts in this capacity for the Battle West District, SHSAA regionals and provincials. He runs officiating clinics and mentors beginner and intermediate referees.

Parker also lends his experience and passion for sport to the SHSAA board of directors, serving as the officials’ representative for the past two years. As a board member, Parker is involved in decision-making at the provincial level and serves as the lead of the volleyball Sport Advisory Group. He is also part of the Finance and Management Committee and ad-hoc committees for doubles curling and player/coach/spectator conduct.

Parker’s interest and engagement in sport extend to his family and community. He is married to Anita, and they



# WARRIOR WALL OF FAME



▲ The leadership of teacher and coach Ken Parker is reflected in the number of student-athletes recognized on Unity Composite High School's Wall of Fame.

have three children, Kyle, Layne and Kasey. "I coached my two sons for six years when they were younger. Because I coached boys' teams, I couldn't coach my daughter, but I was in the stands cheering her on," he says.

"At the end of the day, my philosophy is that the sun will shine tomorrow, and 'what did you take away from this?' I'm very proud of how my kids have adopted that philosophy," Parker says. "As adults, each one of my kids has gone back and officiated or coached. That's how I know I've done my job.

"Even if we have a bad game or lose a championship, I look at that and ask what the kids got out of their experience," Parker says. "Did they have a good play? Did they make a connection with a kid on the other side of the court that someday might help them get a job interview, or they will meet again in university?"

Parker describes how some of the boys he had coached came to him with the idea of organizing an alumni volleyball tournament. "I suggested holding it on the

Thanksgiving weekend in October when everyone comes home," he remembers. "I said they could use the school gym, and they organized the entire event themselves."

Eight years later, the tournament has grown to about 130 graduate players and 25 teams. After one of our students tragically died, they turned it into the Tyler Zunti Memorial Volleyball Tournament in his honour and raised awareness and funds for mental health.

"That's the influence school sports can have on a young person's life – those kids keep coming back and giving back. We're educating them to become good people, good citizens and good neighbours," Parker says.

To other educators, Parker offers this perspective: "I would say that if you truly want to get to know your students, let them get to know you outside of the classroom. It could be sports or drama. Building those relationships and that trust will make your job a lot easier when you're inside the classroom. As an administrator, I've seen the results of this firsthand," Parker says. ▲





# School Teepee Offers Learning, Community, Connection

BY: LANCE HILTZ,  
STF COMMUNICATIONS

**For** the 2023-24 school year, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation and the non-profit student leadership organization Passion2Action partnered to offer teachers a new microgrant program, called Connect. The Connect program delivered microgrants of \$500 to 12 teachers across the province for projects that focus on building student leadership skills and helping to connect schools to their communities.

Joanne McLeod was one of the 12 teachers who received the Connect microgrant for 2023-24. McLeod teaches Grade 9 Indigenous Studies at St. Michael School in Weyburn. Her Connect project fundraised, sourced and purchased a teepee for the school, so that St. Michael students for years to come could use it as a learning tool. The teepee was purchased from Cree Star Gifts, a 100 percent Indigenous-owned business based in Swan River, Manitoba.

The \$500 Connect microgrant acted as the "seed money" for the project, with a number of Weyburn's community businesses – including Whitecap Resources, TS&M Supply, The Weyburn Oilwomen Association and the Weyburn Oilfield Technical Society – also donating to the project. This allowed McLeod and her students to raise a total of approximately \$3,000 needed to buy the teepee.

"If I had not received that microgrant, I would have been hesitant to keep going. It was the encouragement that we needed to say, 'ok, somebody thinks this is a good idea.'" It got the ball rolling and gave us the validation we needed to continue with our fundraising," McLeod says.

On May 28, 2024, the school celebrated their new teepee with a day of learning, activities and community. In attendance for the day were the school's priest to bless the teepee, the project's community sponsors, school division leadership and Knowledge Keeper Lyndon J.





▲ (Back left) Joanne McLeod, Indigenous studies teacher, and Gwen Keith, Holy Family Catholic School Division director of education, join students and community partners for a group photo in front of their new teepee to commemorate the first time it was raised at the school.

Linklater. Linklater led the day's proceedings by sharing his traditional teepee teachings.

Linklater has been working with Holy Family Roman Catholic Separate School Division for about eight years. For the past three years, he has been the division's Knowledge Keeper. He has worked closely with the division and supported their schools in many ways, taking time to meet with students in each school at least once a year.

Linklater says he was honoured to join St. Michael School to share his knowledge and teach them how to raise their new teepee. "As you can see, the students are just so engaged and really hungry to learn. What I do is I come in and share some teachings and understandings. In terms of Truth and Reconciliation, that allows for appreciation and respect," he says. "Between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, we never had that growing up as children. We read from books that were outdated, based on misunderstandings and misinterpretations. Thankfully, it's so different today. That truly gives me hope.

"My father was a formal teacher, he taught for many years. He was a product of the residential school system, and like many Indigenous people, he really suffered. But he turned his life around and began to heal by going back to his traditional Ojibway ways. His ceremonies, his teachings, his language. He was very instrumental for me and my six siblings, doing that for us. My mom could always speak her Plains Cree language, so we had that direction from them, and we went back to our ways. I went to university in

---

**"... the students are just so engaged and really hungry to learn. What I do is I come in and share some teachings and understandings. In terms of Truth and Reconciliation, that allows for appreciation and respect."**

---

Saskatoon in '83, and that's when I started to learn more and more from Elders and others who taught me. Because of my mom and dad, we went in that direction. These students are going to have a much better understanding of Indigenous Peoples, and that's what I really love about this."

"Talking to Lyndon helped me appreciate why this was important for treaty education, and he's empowering us to raise this teepee ourselves when he's not around," McLeod says. "It gives us a special place for learning and community and connection; that was very evident on the day when we saw all these little kids running up and wanting to be around and sitting and listening."





▲ Grade 9 Indigenous studies students welcome attendees at the first St. Michael School teepee raising event on May 28, 2024.

Throughout the morning of the first teepee raising, Grade 8 and 9 students, along with community sponsors, helped [raise the teepee](#) with Linklater’s instruction. Throughout the rest of the day, students took the teepee down and raised it again several times to practice and demonstrate for students from the younger grades. This gave the students a sense of ownership and leadership within the project and engaged them with community members and younger students.

---

**“Talking to Lyndon helped me appreciate why this was important for treaty education, and he’s empowering us to raise this teepee ourselves when he’s not around.”**

---

Three Grade 9 students – Elizabete, Chloe and Tori – welcomed and introduced the morning’s guests. These students were also heavily involved in the Connect microgrant application process. “Ms. McLeod always empowers us to use our voices for whatever we can and take every opportunity to get experience, learn, expand our knowledge and express how we feel,” Elizabete says.

“This whole process was really exciting because we were able to work hard and get this teepee that will help expand our understanding of culture and tradition, and how impactful it is,” says Chloe. “We had Lyndon telling everyone how to tie the knots, how to place the poles, which direction to walk around the teepee in tradition. We set it up and took it down a couple times throughout



the day with the Grade 8 class. Now they can set it up by themselves too, which is great.”

“I think the experience really shows that sometimes you just have to take the initiative and go for what will, you know, better your school and community,” Tori says. “It was great that we were able to be a part of something like this and to watch so many sponsors and people and grades be able to come together.”

The plan for the school’s teepee is to have students pass on the knowledge of how to raise it to the next year’s students as they get ready to enter the Grade 9 Indigenous Studies class. Students raised the teepee for Weyburn’s Indigenous Peoples Day celebrations and plan to do so at many more school and community events in the future.

“I really enjoyed watching this play out, because the whole goal of this from the beginning was to have it be a community/school venture,” McLeod says. “I thought that was super, super cool. When I saw everyone coming together, I went ‘yeah, that’s exactly why we’re doing this.’ It made me really, really happy.”

More information about the Connect microgrant program can be found at [www.passion2action.ca/connect](http://www.passion2action.ca/connect). Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation members can watch for more information coming this fall about how to apply for the 2024-25 cohort of Connect microgrants. ▲

## Call for Research Grant Applications



The McDowell Foundation invites PreK-12 teachers and other educators to submit a Notice of Intent to begin the grant application process for research projects funded for the 2025-26 school year. Foundation grants provide funding, guidance and release time to support recipients' project goals and activities. The McDowell Foundation provides research grants to explore new and innovative ways to meet the educational needs of students in Saskatchewan.

Visit [www.mcdowellfoundation.ca/grants](http://www.mcdowellfoundation.ca/grants) for more information.



SIF-001207 / 20240909

## CERTIFICATE IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

HELP YOUR STUDENTS THRIVE.



This program meets the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education requirements for an Additional Qualification Certificate (AQC) for certified teachers.



[uregina.ca](http://uregina.ca)



University  
of Regina

Centre for  
Continuing Education

# Nurturing Emergent Literacy in Play-Based Outdoor Education

BY: DENISE HEPPNER, STF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

**M**any aspects of authentic literacy learning can be fostered by participation in outdoor educational activities. Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Professional Learning's new asynchronous online offering (with optional monthly virtual gatherings) is designed to inspire educators to explore ways literacy can be developed within a play-based outdoor learning context and provides examples of the teacher's role specifically in supporting students' emergent literacy skills.

## ORAL LANGUAGE AND STORYTELLING: THE ROOTS OF LITERACY

At the heart of literacy lies the power of oral communication. Young children develop the language skills necessary for reading and writing through conversations and storytelling. As Curenton and Lucas (2007) noted, "Children who have good narrative skills have better emergent literacy skills and better reading abilities than those who do not." Storytelling is deeply embedded in many cultures, including Indigenous traditions, where it forms the cornerstone of teaching and learning. In outdoor play, children engage in rich oral storytelling, building their narrative skills and laying a strong foundation for literacy.

## THE POWER OF PLAY: A NATURAL CONTEXT FOR LITERACY

Play is a fundamental vehicle for language development. It offers numerous opportunities for children to hear, practice and learn language in an engaging, student-led

context. Dramatic play, in particular, facilitates narrative construction and emergent literacy development. In the outdoor classroom, children create play-worlds filled with stories, experimentation, conflict and negotiation. As Wright (2016) observed, the natural materials in these settings require children to collaboratively attribute meaning, integrate these elements into their stories and expand their vocabulary in the process.

## PLACE-BASED LEARNING: CONNECTING LAND, CULTURE AND LITERACY

Recognizing the importance of place enriches the educational experience. Place-based learning embeds education within relationships, culture, family, community and the land itself. Nature-based education is inherently place-based, bringing the history and significance of the location into the learning process. This connection between land and knowledge is particularly strong in Indigenous cultures, where learning is deeply intertwined with the environment.



## KEY ASPECTS OF EMERGENT LITERACY

Emergent literacy is a gradual process, starting from birth and continuing until a child can read and write conventionally. Cooper's (2005) research identified six essential tasks for developing emergent literacy, all of which are evident in outdoor learning (Heppner & Reilkoff, 2021):

- 1 **ORAL LANGUAGE**  
During outdoor play, children engage in conversations that expand their vocabulary, sentence structure and expressive abilities.
- 2 **NARRATIVE FORM**  
Through dramatizing stories, children learn about plot development, character creation and the narrative process.
- 3 **CONVENTIONS OF PRINT**  
Teachers guide children in understanding print through playful writing activities, such as creating signs and writing stories.
- 4 **CODE**  
Children begin to grasp the alphabetic code, learning to encode and decode written language through context-rich activities.
- 5 **WORD STUDY**  
Engaging in word play and studying words helps children develop spelling and phonics skills.
- 6 **READING FOR MEANING**  
Creating and telling stories enhances children's ability to search for and derive meaning from text.

## THE TEACHER'S ROLE: FACILITATING LITERACY THROUGH PLAY

Teachers play an important role in facilitating literacy in outdoor education. By respectfully joining in children's play, educators can model literacy skills, introduce new vocabulary and guide narrative development. The roles teachers assume can vary, from onlookers and stage managers to co-players and play leaders, depending on the learning intentions and the children's interactions (Victoria State Government, 2022).

Outdoor, play-based learning environments can effectively nurture essential literacy skills. This approach underscores the relevance of integrating outdoor education, early childhood literacy, and culturally responsive pedagogy into our curricular frameworks. By embracing these methods, educators can intentionally facilitate literacy development in engaging and meaningful ways.

Visit the STF Events Calendar to register for [Nurturing Emergent Literacy in Play-Based Outdoor Education](#) and join our community of educators engaging in a deeper exploration of literacy development in outdoor education. ▲

### Sources:

- Cooper, P.M. (2005). Literacy learning and pedagogical purpose in Vivian Paley's storytelling curriculum. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 5(3), 229-251.
- Curenton, S. M., & Lucas, T. D. (2007). Assessing young children's oral narrative skills: The story pyramid framework. In K. L. Pence (Ed.), *Assessment in Emergent Literacy* (pp. 377-419). Plural Publishing.
- Heppner, D. & Reilkoff, T. (2021). *Nurturing emergent literacy in play-based outdoor education: An exploration of the learning journey of a Kindergarten/Grade 1 class in Forest School*. McDowell Foundation. <https://mcdowellfoundation.ca/nurturing-emergent-literacy-in-play-based-outdoor-education-an-exploration-of-the-learning-journey-of-a-kindergarten-grade-1-class-in-forest-school/>
- Victoria State Government. (2022). *Sociodramatic play (emergent literacy)*. <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/learning/ecliteracy/emergentliteracy/Pages/sociodramaticplay.aspx>
- Wright, J. (2016). *Reading the landscape: Early literacy in the outdoor classroom*. <https://naturalstart.org/feature-stories/reading-landscape-early-literacy-outdoor-classroom>

# UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

24

## SASKATCHEWAN SCHOOL BASED LEADERS ADMINISTRATORS' CHAT

**Online**  
**4:15 p.m.**

Principals, assistant principals and vice-principals are invited to join in a conversation with colleagues from across the province.

OCTOBER

08

## SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING IN MATHEMATICS – MIDDLE YEARS

**October 8-9, North Battleford**  
**9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

In this interactive two-day session, teachers will explore how to authentically support Indigenous Ways of Knowing as they experience traditional teachings alongside reflections on educator practices in mathematics.

Additional sessions for middle years and elementary are being held this fall. Check the online event calendar for details.

OCTOBER

## PLANNING FOR RETIREMENT SEMINARS

**October 8, 17 or 23, Online**  
**6:30 – 8 p.m.**

Are you thinking of retiring? Join one of these virtual retirement seminars to get support and information about the retirement process, including the process of applying for your pension, tools to help you make retirement decisions, health insurance options and other important considerations.

OCTOBER-  
DECEMBER

## TRAUMA-INFORMED/TRAUMA-SENSITIVE PEDAGOGIES AND PRACTICES MICRO-CERTIFICATE

**Online**

Delivered through a partnership of the STF, University of Regina and the Child Trauma Research Centre, this micro-certificate consists of two required courses and a choice between two elective courses. Participants will explore the nature and implications of trauma-sensitive practice in schools, analyze current practices and apply practices to support personal wellness.

OCTOBER

24

## COUNCILLOR CONFERENCE

**October 24-26, Saskatoon**

Event details and information will be shared with councillors directly. Visit the website at [www.stf.sk.ca](http://www.stf.sk.ca) > About the STF > Our Team > Council for more information.

VARIOUS  
DATES

## ACCREDITATION SEMINARS

**Regina, Humboldt, Saskatoon**

Seminars will be held for those who are renewing their accreditation and those who are seeking their initial accreditation. Participants only need to attend two days, depending on their current accreditation status. STF Professional Learning staff will confirm your dates upon registration.



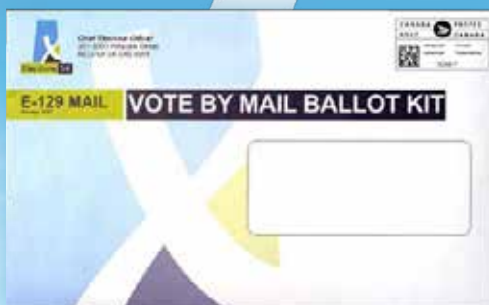
## FOR MORE INFORMATION

For additional event listings and registration information, visit the Events Calendar at [www.stf.sk.ca](http://www.stf.sk.ca).

# Now's the time to vote by mail.

Any voter can apply today.

Elections Saskatchewan is now accepting vote by mail applications for the October provincial election.



Scan the QR code or visit [elections.sk.ca/votebymail](https://elections.sk.ca/votebymail) to apply.

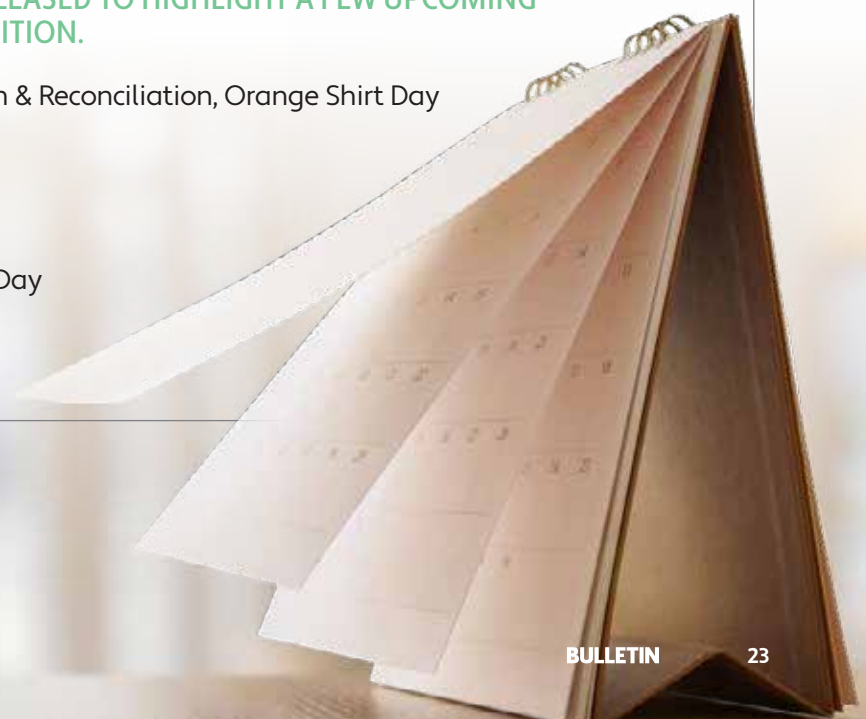
1.833.419.0141 | [elections.sk.ca](https://elections.sk.ca)



Your vote counts.

AS PART OF OUR COMMITMENT TO TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION, AND PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION, WE ARE PLEASED TO HIGHLIGHT A FEW UPCOMING CELEBRATIONS AND DAYS OF RECOGNITION.

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| September 30 | National Day for Truth & Reconciliation, Orange Shirt Day |
| October 12   | Yom Kippur  |
| October 14   | Thanksgiving Day  |
| November 8   | Indigenous Veterans Day                                   |
| November 11  | Remembrance Day   |





# Food to Learn Campaign

## Provides Nourishment for Students to Excel

BY: STAFF WRITER

**More and more Saskatchewan families are struggling to make ends meet as the costs of food and daily living continue to rise. It is a sad reality and one that the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation is trying to tackle through its [Food to Learn](#) campaign in partnership with Food Banks of Saskatchewan.**

"Research tells us there is a clear link between access to nutritious food and student learning outcomes," says STF President Samantha Becotte. "During the school year, it is not uncommon to hear of teachers buying students breakfast or lunch out of their own pockets. While this is a kind gesture, it shouldn't be the norm. No child should ever have to learn on an empty stomach."

### FOOD TO LEARN HELPS TO FILL THE GAP

Now in its second year, Food to Learn raises funds to make sure those children who rely on school nutrition programs continue to have access to food when school is out for the summer. In addition, it raises much-needed funds for Food Banks of Saskatchewan to buy food when their donations typically dwindle in July and August.

The Food to Learn fundraising goal this year is \$44,000, representing the 44,000 people who use food banks in Saskatchewan each month – 43 percent of whom are children. To kick off the campaign, the STF donated \$20,000.

Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation staff supported the campaign by filling donation bins in the office and by volunteering at the Saskatoon Food Bank Garden Patch. The Garden Patch is a 1.5-acre urban farm in Saskatoon. Since 2010, it has grown almost 200,000 pounds of food for emergency food hampers, but the impact of the program doesn't stop there. Thousands of people have visited, taken a tour, volunteered, attended workshops and participated



▲ STF staff volunteer in the Garden Patch.

in its programs. The Garden Patch hosts school groups and offers ideas to teachers on how to connect curriculum with topics surrounding food security in the classroom.

In its first year, the Food to Learn campaign helped raise over \$71,000 for food banks in 36 communities across the province, and STF staff donated over 900 pounds of food and contributed 65 volunteer hours at the Saskatoon Food Bank.

"We know families are facing challenges putting food on the table. Food banks across Canada are anticipating further increases in food bank usage due to ever-rising food prices," says Michael Kincade, executive director for Food Banks of Saskatchewan. "We are grateful to partner with the STF again to raise awareness of the growing need for donations and food bank services for students and families in our communities."

**"Food Banks of Saskatchewan is the provincial association of food banks working together to build, support and strengthen relationships with the community to better serve and advocate on behalf of hungry and food insecure people across Saskatchewan. Donations are distributed to the 36 registered food banks across the province. Funds are used to purchase and distribute the most urgently needed items quickly with bulk purchasing power, alongside the delivery of education programs."**

– Food Banks of Saskatchewan website

For more information or to donate, visit [skfoodbanks.ca](http://skfoodbanks.ca). ▲

# You are the

# ECON\$MY



See the economy  
from a whole  
new perspective

FREE LESSON PLANS AND  
ACTIVITIES FOR GRADES 7-12



Bank of  
Canada | Musée de  
la Banque  
Museum | du Canada



WEB RENEWAL

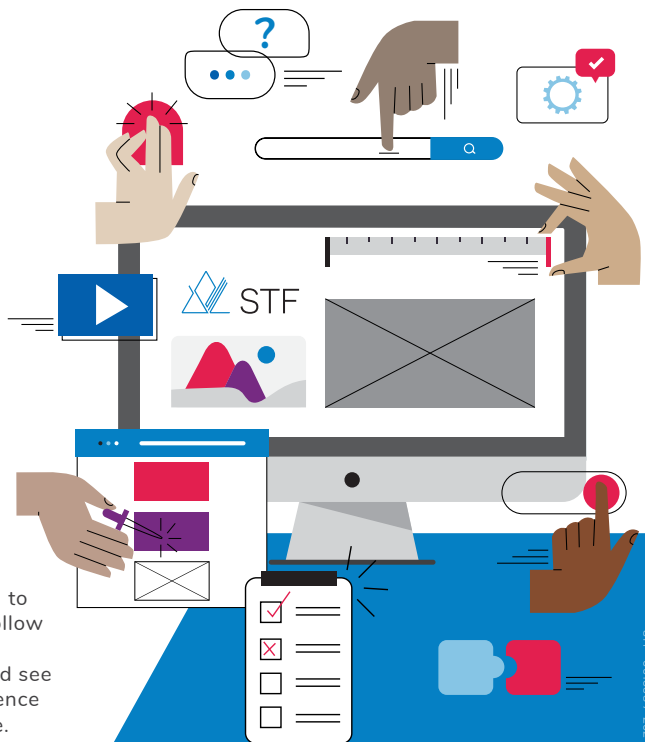
## Help build the new STF website!

We're on a mission to transform our digital services, and we want YOU to be part of the journey!

Help us build a website that caters to YOUR needs and YOUR priorities.



Scan the QR code or visit [www.stf.sk.ca/website-renewal](http://www.stf.sk.ca/website-renewal) to learn more about the project, follow along with results from our consultations with members and see how you can make a real difference in the future of the STF website.



STF-001638 / 20240430

**RULING: CHARTER  
APPLIES TO SCHOOL  
BOARDS IN ONTARIO**

# Teachers Solidify Their Right to Privacy With Recent Supreme Court Decision

BY: **COURTNEY FORSETH**, STF COMMUNICATIONS

This summer, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled on a matter stemming from a 2014-15 grievance in an Ontario school. Prior to this, the SCC had not provided a definitive ruling on whether the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* applied to school boards. While the SCC's decision clearly stated its ruling applies to Ontario boards and Ontario teachers, it still provides important guidance and relevance to Saskatchewan boards of education and teachers. The following article is based on a legal analysis provided by STF's in-house legal counsel, Will Collins.

## 2014-15 ELEMENTARY TEACHERS' FEDERATION OF ONTARIO GRIEVANCE

Two ETFO teachers, the grievors, employed by the York Region School District, felt that one of their fellow teachers was not effective and was receiving preferential treatment from the principal. On the advice of ETFO, the grievors began keeping a log in a Google Docs file. The Google Docs was connected to personal Gmail accounts and not saved on the workplace drive nor on the employer's laptop.

The principal learned from other staff that the log existed and discussed it with the board superintendent, human resources and IT services. An IT search was conducted, but no log was found. Following this search, the principal went to one of the grievors' classrooms to return teaching materials after classes ended. The

griever was not present, but the board laptop used by the griever was open. The principal touched the mousepad, and a document called "Log Google Docs" opened on the screen. The principal read what appeared on screen, scrolled through the document and took pictures with his cellphone before shutting down the laptop.

The principal then told the superintendent and provided the photos he had taken of the documents. The laptop was seized, and an investigation was completed. Both the grievors were given reprimands for failing to conduct themselves in accordance with the Ontario College of Teachers' Standards of Practice.

## LEGAL PROCEEDINGS BEGIN

ETFO grieved the teachers' discipline, claiming the search violated the grievors' right to privacy at work. At this time, no *Charter* breach was alleged. The arbitrator dismissed the grievance, finding there was no breach of the grievors' reasonable expectation of privacy when balanced against the school board's interest in managing the workplace.

ETFO then sought judicial review. The majority of the Divisional Court upheld the arbitrator's decision, taking the position that no *Charter* issue arose because an employee does not have the right under Section 8 of the *Charter* to be secure against unreasonable search or seizure in a workplace environment, unlike in a criminal context.



However, the dissent found that the *Charter* applied, and the arbitrator's decision was unreasonable because she misunderstood the nature of Section 8 of the *Charter*.

ETFO's next step was to appeal the matter to the Ontario Court of Appeal, which unanimously supported ETFO's appeal and quashed the arbitrator's decision. It also ruled that the majority of the Divisional Court erred in concluding that Section 8 did not apply.

## THE SUPREME COURT OF CANADA'S RULING

York Region School District then appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada, which upheld the Ontario Court of Appeal's decision ruling that Ontario school board teachers are protected by Section 8 of the *Charter*. Section 8 states "Everyone has the right to be secure against unreasonable search or seizure."

In its decision, the SCC reviewed Section 32 of the *Charter*, which speaks to its application to the legislature and government of each province in respect of all matters within the authority of the legislature of each province.

## WHAT THE RULING MEANS

While the SCC stated that its analysis relates specifically to Ontario public school boards and left the question of the applicability of the *Charter* to public schools in other provinces for another day, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation believes that given the similar degrees of governmental control exercised by both governments over their respective boards of education, this decision and the SCC's reasoning provides teachers of Saskatchewan with optimism for asserting *Charter* rights protection.

"While there is no certainty regarding the applicability of York Region School District School Board v. ETFO to Saskatchewan school boards and teachers until the decision is tested here, its potential application is encouraging for STF members considering the Supreme Court's reasoning and the Saskatchewan government's control over Saskatchewan boards of education," says Will Collins, STF in-house legal counsel.

The STF also appreciates ETFO's work and commitment in this matter.

"Both STF and ETFO are affiliated with the Canadian Teachers' Federation, and this case is a reminder that our collective strength as teachers extends beyond provincial

borders," says STF President Samantha Becotte. "While the ruling is specific to Ontario, the work of ETFO is a step forward to extend the rights of all teachers in Canada."

The STF recommends members review the terms of provincial and local bargaining agreements, as well as school division procedures and policies. Members can contact the STF with any questions or concerns. ▲

---

**"Both STF and ETFO are affiliated with the Canadian Teachers' Federation, and this case is a reminder that our collective strength as teachers extends beyond provincial borders," says STF President Samantha Becotte. "While the ruling is specific to Ontario, the work of ETFO is a step forward to extend the rights of all teachers in Canada."**

---



ISTOCK



## A SASKATCHEWAN WHERE EVERYONE BELONGS AND HISTORIES MATTER



Foster curiosity, critical thinking skills and empathy by learning about Saskatchewan's diverse histories through WDM exhibits, artifacts, archival material, curriculum-connected inquiry-based learning opportunities and hands-on experiences.

For information on visiting a WDM, in-Museum school programs, teacher-led experiences, virtual programs, resources for your classroom and an opportunity to **save 10% on your next trip to the WDM** visit [wdm.ca/education](http://wdm.ca/education)

Book today using discount code **STF2024**



What is history?

How do we know what really happened in the past?

How does history shape our present-day realities?

MOOSE JAW

NORTH BATTLEFORD

SASKATOON

YORKTON



WDM.CA



# BONNE RENTRÉE À TOUS !

Visitez notre site web pour découvrir les **ressources** et **ateliers** disponibles pour les élèves.

**FRÉSK**  
inscription  
infolettre



[fresk.ca](http://fresk.ca) | [info@fresk.ca](mailto:info@fresk.ca)

Répertoire bilingue des ressources et activités culturelles, éducatives et récréatives offertes en français.

# Portaplan as an Affordable Mortgage Insurance Alternative Explained

BY SARAH MACDONALD, STF COMMUNICATIONS

You've probably heard that Portaplan, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation's Optional Life Insurance plan, is a great alternative to traditional mortgage protection insurance, but what does that really mean?

When you buy a home, you may want to consider what happens to your mortgage if you pass away so that your loved ones are not left paying off your mortgage. Banks and mortgage companies commonly encourage you to buy mortgage protection insurance to cover outstanding mortgage debt in the case of your death.

If you purchase mortgage protection insurance, the mortgage company or bank owns the policy. They are also the beneficiary. Mortgage protection insurance only covers your outstanding mortgage when you pass away. The mortgage protection insurance premium with the bank will typically stay the same, but the amount you are insuring goes down each month as you pay off your mortgage, so the payout shrinks. As a result, the bank benefits instead of your beneficiaries.

Portaplan can be a more affordable and more flexible alternative to mortgage protection insurance. Portaplan life insurance claims can be put towards anything you choose, including your financial institution to secure your mortgage. A big benefit of Portaplan is that as the mortgage loan goes down, your policy provides more to your beneficiaries.

What does this mean in practice? If you purchase mortgage protection insurance on a \$400,000 mortgage, your coverage in the first year will be \$400,000. If you still owe \$100,000 on your mortgage when you pass away, the mortgage protection insurance will pay out \$100,000, not \$400,000. With Portaplan, you may purchase a \$400,000 policy to cover your mortgage and if you still owe \$100,000 when you pass away, your claim will pay out \$400,000, not

just the \$100,000 to cover the remainder of the mortgage. That leaves \$300,000 for your other beneficiaries.

Unlike mortgage protection insurance, which only covers the outstanding balance of your mortgage, once Portaplan has covered the mortgage, your beneficiaries can use the remaining life insurance payout to cover other debts you may have, pay the funeral costs, spend it on whatever else they choose, or save it.

---

**Having insurance of some kind to cover your mortgage and protect your loved ones in the event of your death is a smart decision.**

---

If you already have mortgage protection insurance, you can cancel it. It's not mandatory to have mortgage protection insurance, unlike Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation insurance which is required if your downpayment is less than 20 percent of the purchase price. But having insurance of some kind to cover your mortgage and protect your loved ones in the event of your death is a smart decision. You just need to find an affordable and flexible option, like Portaplan.

To learn more about Portaplan and apply, visit [www.stf.sk.ca](http://www.stf.sk.ca) > Pension & Benefits > Teacher Benefits > Life Insurance > [Optional Life Insurance](#). ▲





BY: JUSTIN OLNHOFF

*Olnhoff is a senior science and phys-ed teacher at Aberdeen Composite School. This article is based on his presentation at the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation's 2024 Leadership Symposium.*

# Mentoring New Teachers

**Think back to what your first years of teaching were like. I love my profession, but I am the first to admit that those first few years were really, really difficult. I remember the stress and frustration of struggling to keep up, often feeling like I was barely doing enough.**

I know I am not alone in this experience. New teachers, fresh out of university often feel overwhelmed. The university experience is often rarely able to fully prepare education students for their internships, and while the internship provides important experiences, teachers are often still not quite prepared for the day-to-day realities of being in the classroom.

I believe Saskatchewan would see significant benefits from a provincial framework for new teacher mentorship. This would ensure beginning teachers

are supported through some of the most difficult times in their career, increase job satisfaction and engagement for mentor teachers, and ultimately reduce teacher burnout and turnover.

While many principals, vice-principals and assistant principals do their best to mentor new staff, there is only so much they can do with their already heavy workload. In the absence of a provincial framework we, as teachers, must rely on one another to build strong collective efficacy amongst the newest members of our profession.



## 5 TIPS FOR PRINCIPALS AND EXPERIENCED TEACHERS

- 1 Reach out to new teachers. Support them with managing expectations, logistical questions, and the emotional struggle they're going through.
- 2 Relate to them. Share your experiences with them and offer guidance on situations you've navigated before.
- 3 Offer informal mentorship. Show them little tricks to save time. If they don't seem to connect well with you, introduce them to a colleague who might be a better fit.
- 4 Don't assume they're fine – check in with them. Celebrate their efforts, not just their accomplishments.
- 5 Create a culture that supports beginning teachers. I would actively avoid suggesting they coach or run a club, and certainly don't pressure them into it.

## 5 TIPS FOR NEW TEACHERS

- 1 Don't be afraid to say no to extras. Principals and other professionals will respect you for knowing your limits and being honest about what you can handle. This includes the administrators that might decide if your contract becomes permanent.
- 2 Give yourself some slack. You don't need to be creating the most amazing lessons ever conceived. Teach authentically for you, but don't expect immediate perfection.
- 3 Focus on relationships. No teacher has ever been recognized or applauded for how much of the curriculum they got through, but we all see who connects with kids.
- 4 Reach out for support and advocate for yourself. Ask your principal or another teacher for help or resources. They shouldn't ever look down on you for seeking guidance.
- 5 Clock out from work. Maybe you don't work after 6. Maybe you don't do any work on Saturdays. Allow yourself to have time to avoid feeling guilty for not working. And yes, I know these tips are easier said than done. ▲



**27<sup>th</sup> Annual**  
**see your future**  
 EDUCATION & CAREER FAIR

<p><b>SASKATOON</b>  <b>NOVEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2024</b>  <b>TCU Place</b>  <b>9:45am – 3:00pm</b></p>	<p><b>REGINA</b>  <b>NOVEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup>, 2024</b>  <b>REAL District</b>  <b>9:45am – 3:00pm</b></p>
---	--

Visit [seeyourfuture.ca](https://seeyourfuture.ca)  
to register your school today!



# STF Offers Information Sessions on Legal Issues and Microaggressions for Educational Leaders

BY: **STAFF WRITER**

At this summer's Principals' Short Course, Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation staff led a session focusing on legal issues for educators. The session was facilitated by William Collins, in-house legal counsel for the STF, as well as Withman Jaigobin and Rob Lehne, both senior administrative staff with the STF.

"The learning goals for this session were to provide principals and future principals with information that would help guide and assist them in their work with employers, fellow teachers, staff and students," says Collins. "One of the objectives was to provide a legal context to legislation, policies and practical circumstances that principals could encounter. Another goal was to remind principals of the STF's roles and how the STF is always available to provide support and representation."

Collins emphasized the importance of principals being attentive to a range of legal issues. "The information we provided in the course was designed to give them a broad awareness and understanding of legal issues that they may face or be required to address in some fashion," says Collins. Some of those issues include policy and procedure, legislation, human rights, local agreements, occupational health and safety, legal precedence, roles and responsibilities, Duty to Accommodate, the *Children's Law Act 2020*, the *Registered Teachers Act*, the Provincial Collective Bargaining Agreement, the *Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, and the Student Violence Threat Risk Assessment.

Lehne says participants in the session were invited to work in groups through six different hypothetical scenarios. One of those scenarios addressed relationships with students and their parents/guardians, parental complaints and

---

**The learning goals for this session were to provide principals and future principals with information that would help guide and assist them in their work with employers, fellow teachers, staff and students.**

---

parental rights, responsibilities to investigate, and privacy obligations with respect to students' personal information. Another scenario involved teacher off-duty conduct, use of social media, complaints and investigations, employer responsibilities, teacher regulation and involvement of the Saskatchewan Professional Teachers Regulatory Board. Group participants also worked through scenarios involving violence at school, safety and investigation, student privacy, employer and possible police involvement, as well as the Duty to Accommodate disabilities.

"The participants would ask questions and provide their views and suggestions on how to address the issues they raised. Then Withman, Rob and I provided our feedback and suggestions for dealing with those issues from a legal and practical perspective," explains Collins.



Jaigobin facilitated another Impact Session called Did They Really Just Say That? Addressing Microaggressions to Create Stronger and More Inclusive Teams. The session was designed to help participants discover the power of leading with courage to effectively build a stronger and more inclusive workplace.

**The session was designed to help participants discover the power of leading with courage to effectively build a stronger and more inclusive workplace.**

Through practical scenarios and interactive exercises, Jaigobin explored with participants the impact of microaggressions on workplace culture, team cohesion and productivity. He defined microaggressions and described how they manifest, offering practical tools and advice on how to recognize and respond in a way that fosters respect, understanding, growth and belonging. Participants also learned useful strategies to build capacity among their staff to be able to recognize and address microaggressions.

Feedback on the sessions was very positive, with participants describing what they valued most:

**“Bringing people together and building connections and relationships.”**

**“Throughout the variety of topics, there were common messages of the power of relationships, leaning into policy and people first!”**

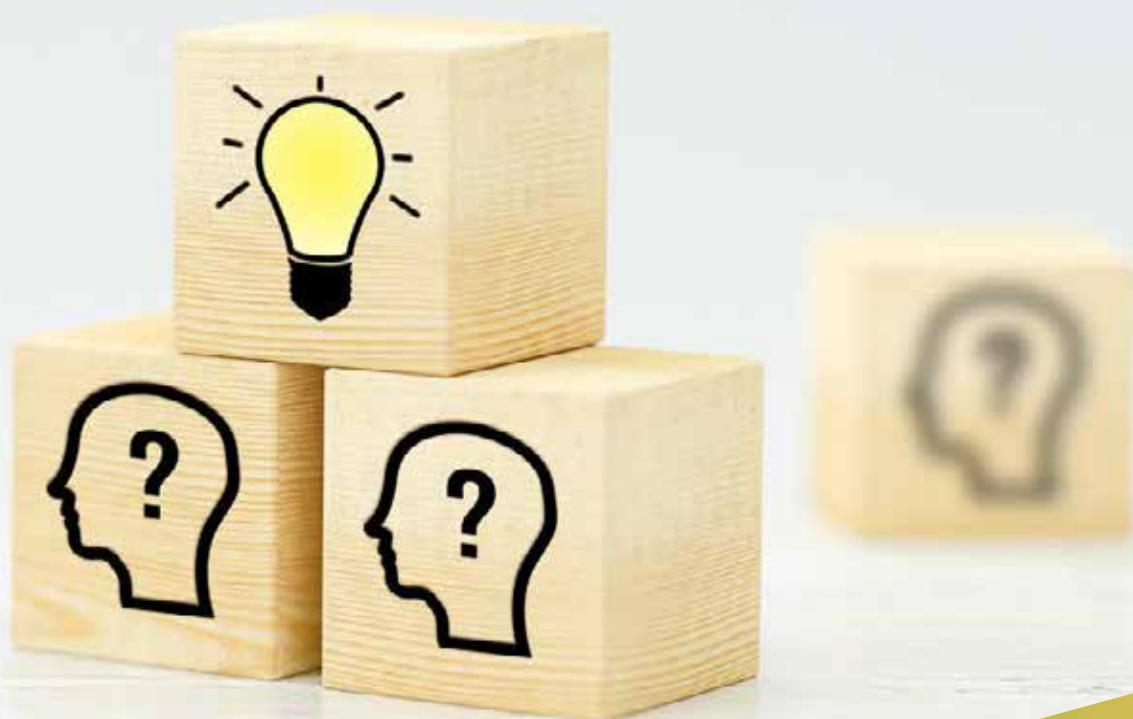
**“Wide variety of topics with very knowledgeable and practical leaders who have the hands-on experience to make everything relatable to real-life content.”**

Supporting the principalship and developing new leaders for the role is a priority objective of the STF. While all senior administrative staff members can provide assistance to members, Jaigobin is the dedicated lead for principals, vice-principals and assistant principals. The STF also has the Principal and Vice-Principal Advisory Committee, which provides advice to the organization to ensure support from the STF meets principals' needs. ▲



**DID YOU KNOW?**

Members of the Principal and Vice-Principal Advisory Committee serve three-year terms. Recruitment for committees takes place in the spring.



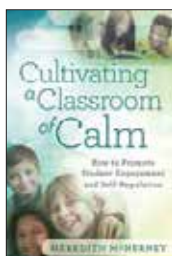
# Resources for a New School Year

BY JOAN ELLIOTT, ESRC MANAGER



The Emma Stewart Resources Centre has an exciting array of teaching resources. Visit in person or contact us to request materials. The mailout service is free anywhere in the province, and we prepay the return postage.

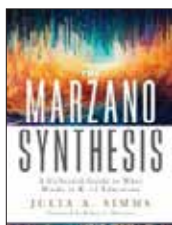
Here are some professional titles to consider as you embark on a new school year.



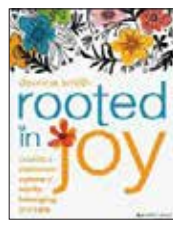
Mindfulness coach and former principal Meredith McNERney applies neuroscience research to provide teachers with tools to understand the characteristics of a calm classroom, keep learners engaged, support students who have experienced trauma, balance empathy with accountability, and regulate emotions and stress with mindfulness.



Five key principles for building relationships with students including know your why, understand context beyond compliance, foster meaningful interactions, design high-quality learning environments, and partner with key stakeholders, are discussed in this book by Marcela Andrés. Strategies, case studies and reflection questions are provided for each principle.



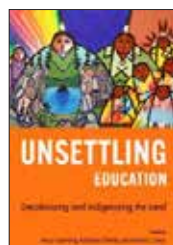
Author Julia A. Simms integrates Robert Marzano's work with additional research in this comprehensive overview of important concepts in education. Topics covered include: the self, metacognitive, nature of knowledge and cognitive systems, in addition to curriculum, instruction, measurement and leadership.



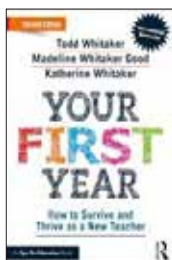
Discover author Deonna Smith's approach for intentionally creating joyful and inclusive classrooms in this inspirational new book. Many ways for working with challenging students and combatting inequity and racism are described.



Explore numerous mental, emotional and physical strategies for supporting your well-being in this handbook by Tina H. Boogren. Thought-provoking questions for reflecting on each week are included.



Edited by Dr. Anna-Leah King, Dr. Kathleen O'Reilly and Dr. Patrick J. Lewis, faculty and former faculty at the University of Regina and the First Nations University of Canada, this collection by Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars provides important insights on how we can collectively overcome colonialism and foster reconciliation by addressing injustices faced by Indigenous Peoples and respecting their rights. Chapters on inspiring success in Indigenous education, decolonizing land-based education, and relationships and reciprocity in mathematics education are examples of the many approaches in this volume that provide guidance for unsettling teaching practices. ▲



In this practical guide, authors Todd Whitaker, Madeline Whitaker Good and Katherine Whitaker offer suggestions for organizing your classroom, developing procedures, lesson planning and instruction, classroom management and working with peers, administrators and parents.

# Your Voice, Our Future: Transforming the STF Digital Experience

## WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF A WEBSITE?

This question has been echoing through the halls of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation as we embark on the journey to revamp our digital presence with a brand-new website.

The project kicked off last spring with a comprehensive survey aimed at gauging members' satisfaction with the current website and identifying key usability issues. With nearly 2,000 teachers responding, it was clear that there is room for improvement.

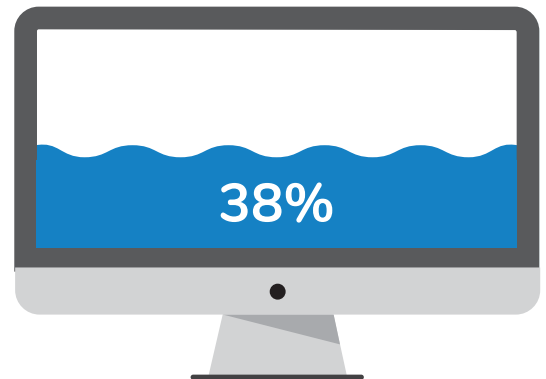
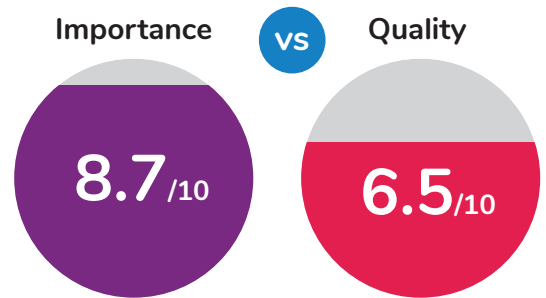
Now, as we enter the second phase of our consultations, we are launching a new survey to delve deeper into what teachers believe the STF website should be. This survey will run until September 20, after which the results will be analyzed to guide the design of the new site.

"Providing quality service to teachers is one of the STF's core values, and our website can do so much more to enhance the overall member experience," says project sponsor and Managing Director of Public Relations & Communications Courtney Forseth. "Our goal with the new site is to prioritize members' needs, which is why we're emphasizing this initial phase of the project – listening to our members and understanding their needs is crucial."



Members can participate in the survey by visiting the [Website Renewal Project](#) web page or scanning the provided QR code. Additionally, they can join the Website Renewal Community by entering their email at the end of the survey or through the project page. This gives access to project updates, sneak peeks at the new features, and exclusive opportunities to contribute to the STF's digital transformation.

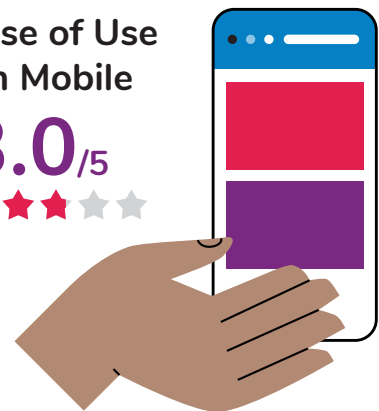
Rest assured, survey results will be kept confidential and will directly inform the new website design. The entire project is expected to take two to three years. ▲



Say the website doesn't meet their needs and expectations.

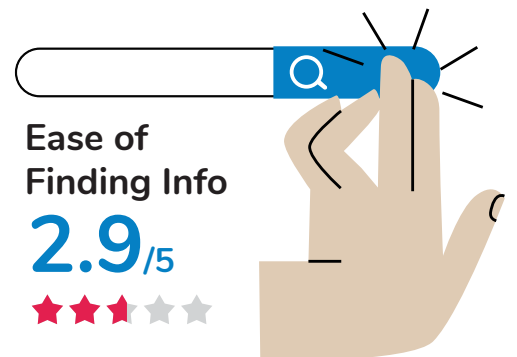
## Ease of Use On Mobile

3.0/5



## Ease of Finding Info

2.9/5





# Purpose-Driven Leadership the Focus of 60th Annual Course for School Administrators

**Saskatchewan Principals' Short Course highlights ways collaborative, moral and innovative leadership enhances student engagement and learning.**

BY: **MEAGAN HINTHER**, MANAGER, COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS, UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Hosted by the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan (USask), the Saskatchewan Principals' Short Course (SPSC) takes place annually the first week of July for newly appointed principals and vice-principals in provincial and First Nations schools across Saskatchewan and beyond. This year, participants joined in-person and online for the 60th edition of the professional learning week, held July 2 to 5. The conference was organized and coordinated by the Saskatchewan Educational Leadership Unit in the Department of Educational Administration.

SPSC Director Dr. Gordon Martell (PhD), assistant professor in educational administration, offered insight into the theme chosen for the week – engagement, leading and learning – which opened with a panel exploring ways leaders can navigate complexity through collaboration and moral purpose.

"This week is not necessarily about resolving complexity in education, but rather understanding that we live in social flux. And that's really a part of the experience of leadership that will be a persistent influence on schools, now and into the future," says Martell.

Martell invited participants to explore a framework for leadership that focuses on engagement with the education profession, their communities, and lifelong learning. He shared that a growth mindset can help administrators develop the knowledge and skills to figure out how schools can best support the aspirations of society.

"If you think of leadership in these ways, then, ultimately, leaders are purveyors of hope, growth, and the values and attributes of a healthy and responsible, social-democratic society," shares Martell.

The week's activities included keynote speakers, breakout sessions and networking opportunities. Topics were varied over the four days and included how innovation can help administrators navigate change, how harnessing

creativity and technology can help student success in the age of Artificial Intelligence, and how to grow a cohesive school culture through relationships. School leaders from across Saskatchewan presented many of the sessions and facilitated small group "fireside" reflections to guide participants through the week.

"The design of the short course really focuses on networking and building relationships," says Martell. "Fireside chats are an integral part of the conference, and we encouraged attendees to engage fully and use them as opportunities to build relationships."

Jackie Durocher, an educator from Buffalo Narrows, member of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band and superintendent with Northern Lights School Division, participated as a small-group facilitator and presenter. This is her sixth time joining the course in this role and she sees it as an important opportunity to use her voice as an Indigenous leader in Saskatchewan.

"It's a way to build connections. In my Indigenous ways of knowing, we need to share what we have – it's my way to share, learn and give back," Durocher says.

What she is most proud of with the short course is the growth and change that has occurred with Indigenous participation. When she first participated as a facilitator, she recalls there was one other Indigenous facilitator and not many Indigenous participants. Now there are many First Nations participants – about one-third of the registered participants are administrators from First Nations education authorities.

"Those in my group are so open and they feel so accepted, and as an Indigenous person it makes me feel that we are on the right path – we've done what we set out to do to make them feel comfortable in this space," shares Durocher. "[Indigenous people] need to see themselves reflected in doing this kind of work – in leadership. I'm



▲ SPSC opening panelists Brad Nichol (League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents), Ian Krips (Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation), Jill Welke (Saskatchewan School Boards Association), and Dr. Gordon Martell (University of Saskatchewan) discuss how to navigate complexity through collaborative leadership and moral purpose with moderator Greg McJannet (Saskatchewan Educational Leadership Unit).

hoping that one day some of the participants come back as facilitators, which we are seeing.”

“We need to inspire and empower each other to be able to do this,” she adds.

Following feedback received from facilitators like Durocher and participants, the course hosted “Kohkom’s Corner” for the first time and had Elder Corine Eyahpaize join SPSC each morning with open availability for visiting and guidance.

**“It’s a way to build connections. In my Indigenous ways of knowing, we need to share what we have – it’s my way to share, learn and give back.”**

“Elder Corine brings a wealth of knowledge, and she has such a calming effect on people. It was so important for us to defer to the wisdom of the Elders when we’re discussing leadership as Elders inspire our communities as guides and teachers,” says Martell. “Corine demonstrated care for all our delegates and contributed to a meaningful and relational learning environment.”

For many participants, the week was full of insightful content as they assume new or different leadership positions. Andrew Gallagher with Prairie South School Division has joined École Palliser Heights School in Moose Jaw as the new vice-principal.

“[I feel] truly inspired, from beginning to end. Not only did I learn something, but also every single breakout, every fireside session, every keynote led me to question deeply the ‘why’ of what is going on in leadership,” shares Gallagher. “Some of it was reaffirming, some of it was brand new, and some of it was paradigm shifting. It was a powerful week.”

The idea of spending the first week of the summer in professional development may have been daunting for educators exhausted by the past year of teacher job action and uncertainty; however, for Gallagher, it was a refreshing week and one that left him recharged and ready for the year ahead.

“In the 32 years I’ve been in this profession, I’ve never been at such a dynamically charging – not just dynamically charged – but dynamically charging professional development,” Gallagher says. “Because it’s the first week of the summer, it’s a choice to be here. It doesn’t matter if we’re all tired or exhausted – we’re all here to learn and we’re all here to grow.”

“Every single vice-principal, new principal, experienced or aspiring principal in Saskatchewan should do this course once every five years,” adds Gallagher.

As Martell closed the conference, he reiterated the networks and support the week provides and emphasized his confidence in the newest leaders joining school administration.

“It’s not easy in the sector sometimes; there are a lot of pressures in First Nations education and in public education that need to be worked out,” says Martell. “But you’ll be the change agents. You’re kind and intelligent, and you’re born leaders. You’ll get better over time. Give yourself permission to grow. You won’t know it all, and the SPSC has given you a network of experts at your disposal to reach out to anytime.” ▲

# Meet Your Executive

*The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Executive is elected from the ranks of councillors to manage and regulate the activities of the Federation. Executive members must ensure the organization acts in accordance with its legislated mandate and fiduciary commitments. Executive responsibilities include the establishment and appointment of members to the benefit plan boards and various committees.*

**Elections for four member-at-large positions took place during the Annual Meeting of Council held in April. Chris Kampman and Amy Orth were elected to their first term while Micheal Hagel and Crystal Schindel were re-elected. Members-at-large serve two-year terms.**



## Samantha Becotte

The work of STF President Samantha Becotte is inspired by the way teachers show up for each other. Whether through professional practice, support on work/life issues or their collective action during

the past year, STF members personify the best of the profession.

**"The STF isn't something separate from teachers; it is the collective - #WeAreSTF. The STF Executive members are teachers elected by teachers, and we all care deeply about public education and the teaching profession. The messages shared with me from members are highly valued, whether they are supportive, offering feedback or sharing concerns - they are important for me to hear."**

Her focus is to have public education as a top priority during this fall's provincial and school board elections. The call for improved supports for teachers and students needs to be answered instead of seeing school divisions try to maintain status quo.

Continuing the work to ensure public education is a top priority for upcoming provincial and school board elections, elected officials must be pressed to answer to the call for improved supports for students. Teachers and students cannot continue to be left struggling while school divisions strive to maintain the status quo for supports and services.

Prior to becoming STF President in 2022, Samantha taught at Lloydminster Comprehensive High School in the Lloydminster Public School Division. She lives northeast of Lloydminster.



## Nathan Bromm

STF Vice-President Nathan Bromm is proud of how the Federation's evolution during the past decade has made it a leader among teacher organizations and a strong advocate for the voice of

teachers and public education in Saskatchewan.

Over the last year, he says the collective will of teachers and the solidarity among STF membership, combined with public support for education across the province, has been uplifting.

**"Teachers, parents and those from many different positions and roles have inspired me by showing their resolve and a willingness to learn and understand the issues that have plagued our schools and classrooms. They have all rallied and made their voices heard by making public education not only a news headline, but also a priority for our province. This movement has been motivating for me to continue in my leadership role to support our members and public education."**

Nathan lives in Moosomin and is a principal and teacher at Rocanville School in Southeast Cornerstone School Division.





## Kirsten Fritsch

Kirsten Fritsch saw how involvement in her local teacher association had a significant impact on a small community of teachers. Now, as a member of the STF Executive, she is enthusiastic about how

the work of the Federation and her Executive colleagues benefits all Saskatchewan teachers.

**“Serving members is the most rewarding aspect of being part of the STF. It is rewarding when we make decisions that positively impact membership, our pension and benefits and public education in our province. I am an STF member, and I am served by the incredible work that is done by our organization and the dedication and involvement of teachers from across the province.”**

She appreciates the influence of a “very engaged membership” and the efforts that have helped influence the discussion about education on a national stage to make classroom complexity and the needs of students and teacher topics familiar to parents and the public.

Fritsch lives in Creighton where she is a resource teacher at Creighton Community School in Creighton School Division.



## Micheal Hagel

Micheal Hagel appreciates the opportunity to put his commitment to education to work in both the classroom and as a member of the of the STF Executive.

**“We [Executive members] are teachers. We are in the classroom. We are passionate about education, and we want the best for teachers and education. I appreciate being part of an organization that is member focused and does so much for its members. The STF is the organization in Saskatchewan fighting for the education system that students and our province deserve.”**

His path to a leadership role includes service as school staff liaison and local association president. Micheal’s hope for the coming year includes a conclusion to binding arbitration that sees the beginning of long-term, impactful improvements to education in Saskatchewan, along with the recognition of education as a primary issue in fall elections.

Micheal lives in Luseland and teaches Grade 7 to 12 students at Luseland School in the Living Sky School Division.



## Chris Kampman

As a new member of the STF Executive, Chris Kampman looks forward to adding his voice, perspectives and efforts to the collective causes of the Federation.

**“Members should know that STF leadership is made up of teachers, most of whom are currently working in classrooms and schools. We are all part of a collective, working towards improving teacher working conditions and student learning conditions in the province of Saskatchewan. The camaraderie that comes from working towards meaningful aspirations and change with passionate colleagues from around the province is special.”**

Chris has served several roles with the Regina Catholic Schools Teachers’ Association, including three years as president, and has participated in STF governance as a councillor and a member of several committees.

He lives in Regina where he is vice-principal of Deshaye Catholic School in the Regina Catholic School Division.



## Amy Korver

Amy Korver’s path to leadership roles in school and the Federation required some prompting.

**“I was the classic, ‘have to be shoulder tapped several times.’ I love the feeling that I’m making a difference to the teaching profession. Whether it’s decisions related to advocating for teachers’ working conditions or looking critically at how to improve diversity and representation, I can see the fingerprints of our Executive’s work all over the organization.”**

As a member of the STF Executive, Amy appreciates how members embrace the spirit and importance of working as a collective, particularly during the past year. Seeing teachers join together to raise their voice demonstrated the importance of publicly funded, publicly delivered education.

Amy is a vice-principal and teacher at Delisle Elementary School in the Prairie Spirit School Division. She lives in Saskatoon.



## Amy Orth

Amy Orth believes making connections with teachers across the province offers opportunities to understand what teachers have in common and how they can support each other.

Amy, who is principal at Aberdeen Composite School in the Prairie Spirit School Division, was elected in April to a two-year term on the STF Executive. She appreciates the opportunity to represent teachers in a role where her efforts can have an impact on ensuring a strong, publicly funded education system.

**“I’ve benefitted from being a facilitator with STF Professional Learning and it has helped me develop a better understanding of the contexts in which we work and learn about what matters most in adult learning. I have had the chance to learn and work alongside incredible educational leaders who all shared, and continue to share, different strengths and perspectives.”**

She sees the year ahead as an opportunity to seek out the voices of members as the STF works to capitalize on the momentum created during the provincial collective bargaining cycle in order to influence educational policy decisions.



## Whitney Paul-Joseph

Whitney Paul-Joseph sees the work of the STF Executive and the Federation as a reflection of the incredible work being done in schools and communities each day by members. She says the strength

of teacher voice, the solidarity of members and an out-of-this-world commitment to education by Saskatchewan teachers served as inspiration during her first term on the Executive.

Whitney, who teaches at Redvers School in Southeast Cornerstone School Division and lives in nearby Sinclair, Manitoba, says her leadership contributions are the result of “nudges” from others.

**“I have always been interested in various leadership roles but thought I wasn’t ready yet or it would be something I would do later on in my career path. I have been surrounded by such incredible colleagues during the past two years as an Executive member. These individuals have helped me grow as a leader, strengthen my voice, and evolve so much as a learner and leader.”**

She looks forward to continuing to work with members on both the local and provincial level in order to support

and celebrate teaching colleagues in their commitment to students and public education.



## Crystal Schindel

For Crystal Schindel, being a member of the STF Executive is an opportunity to share the challenges and celebrations of teachers not only with members, but also with people across the province and the nation.

Challenges such as the commitment of teachers who have been dedicated professionally and personally to fight for children and youth, and celebrations such as a hoped-for collective agreement that provides teachers with the supports needed to ensure a sustainable and positive learning environment for their students and themselves, highlight the ongoing efforts and hopes in the educational community.

**“I believe that the most rewarding aspect of being part of the STF is the collaboration with teachers and leaders from across the province. No matter where you are from, or what stage of your career you are in, being part of the STF binds us together and provides us with support and solidarity.”**

Crystal lives in North Battleford and is principal at Englefeld School in Horizon School Division.



## Peggy Welter

Peggy Welter’s contributions as an Executive member are inspired by the Federation’s involvement and actions in demonstrating the importance of properly funded education.

**“The STF is more than just an organization – it is a group of people who are dedicated to a cause. The way that members have come together to make education a topic of discussion, while continuing to dig deep in the classroom every day, makes me proud to be part of the membership. It was inspiring to be part of thousands of teachers taking a stand and having their voices heard.”**

Looking to the year ahead, her hope is to see a fair agreement for teachers through arbitration. The coming year will provide opportunities to strengthen the membership and build on momentum generated during the past year in order to keep education in the forefront of people’s minds as they vote in this fall’s provincial and school board elections.

Peggy teaches high school students at Cupar School in the Prairie Valley School Division. She lives in Regina. ▲

# FREE ONLINE TRAINING

Enhance student resumes with **Career Safety Education**, a series of **FREE** online safety certifications that align with high school curriculum outcomes in the areas of career, wellness, health, and trades.

Career Safety Education increases student awareness of workplace hazards and injury prevention strategies to prepare for employment.

Program components are specifically designed by industry safety **experts** to address the most common injuries to new workers in their respective fields.



## The program includes **four** universally applicable foundation-building courses:



**New Worker Readiness Program**



**Mental Health Wellness Resiliency**



**WHMIS 2015**



**Hearing Protection Training**

## and **One or More** of the following optional programs:



**Fall Protection Training**



**Retail Safety Training**



**Respiratory Protection Training**



**Safe Trailing**



**Ground Disturbance for Saskatchewan Workers**



**Online Agriculture Training System**

Other optional third-party programs are also available such as WAVE (Workplace Assessment and Violence Education) for healthcare, for participants under 21 years of age, and SCOT (Safety Construction Orientation Training) available for students enrolled in the K-12 Educational System.

## We would like to **thank** the following program supporters and multi-year organizational sponsors:

CAA Saskatchewan - Crescent Point Energy - Heavy Construction Safety Association of Saskatchewan K + S Potash - Meridian Surveys - Saskatchewan Association for Safe Workplaces in Health Saskatchewan Common Ground Alliance - Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association SaskEnergy - Weyerhaeuser - WorkSafe Saskatchewan





# Introducing the New President of the Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan, Sue Amundrud



BY: STAFF WRITER

Congratulations to Sue Amundrud of Melfort, who is the new president of the Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan effective July 1, 2024. After 30 years of working in Saskatchewan's public education system and eight years serving on the STS executive, Amundrud is excited about her new role and the many opportunities ahead.

"I believe in the work of the STS. We've got a great team of people with unique skills, backgrounds and interests," Amundrud says. "Our delegates are very engaged and share ideas and suggestions with us. Having the opportunity to brainstorm those ideas with other people who are equally committed to our organization and public education in schools excites me."

Amundrud earned her arts degree from Queen's University in Ontario. It was there that she met her husband, Jim Amundrud. After graduating, he accepted a teaching position in his home province of Saskatchewan and Amundrud joined him, working as a part-time school secretary.

She credits the school's principal, Fred Herron, with what happened next. "Fred knew I had a university degree and he asked if I would do some substitute teaching if he requested a probationary certificate for me," Amundrud recalls. "Then he invited me to speak at an STF meeting where they were talking about expanding the membership to include support roles. It was the 1970s and that was my first exposure to the STF, but definitely not my last!"

After their two sons were born, Amundrud decided to pursue a teaching degree at the University of Regina and began teaching full time in 1981. She completed a masters in education from the University of Oregon in 1989.

"I think I've seen the school system from all sides," she says. "I've been a teacher in a small K-12 school, a superintendent, a secretary, and I have held different roles with the STF including councillor and LINC chair and was a member of the LEADS discipline committee. After that I worked for the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education as a director of learning technology and then executive director of e-learning and associate executive director of curriculum and e-learning before retiring in 2011."

Looking ahead, Amundrud says she and the STS team are focused on several key issues. "We did a survey a few years

ago and two things emerged as priorities for our members. The first was our group benefits plan and the second was our advocacy efforts. So that's what we continue to focus on," she says.

Currently, the STS is negotiating a new group benefits contract for its more than 12,000 members. "The plan is self-funded and managed by the STS and it's important we keep premiums affordable for our members. That means taking a balanced approach to hearing suggestions from members to add new benefits and ensuring it remains affordable and sustainable," Amundrud says. The organization is also exploring the possibility of offering a modified health spending account to members after an earlier version post-COVID met with some success.

Amundrud and her team are also taking some time to reflect on the organization's governance structure and the possibility of developing a strategic plan to support its future growth and evolution. At the same time, the STS is working to ensure something positive happens for public education in Saskatchewan in the upcoming provincial and municipal elections.

"We know that binding arbitration is just one step toward making the changes that are necessary in our public education system," Amundrud says. "Together with the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, we are educating and informing our members and the public about the issues in advance of the provincial and municipal elections this fall."

Information about issues that may be of concern or interest to retired teachers will be communicated to all members in the form of a brochure as well as additional supporting information on the STS website.

"We'll also be sending out information to our membership to encourage people to let their names stand for the various school boards," Amundrud says. "Our members understand what education can and should be. We need more people with that knowledge and insight seated at the table and making decisions."



For more information about the STS and its work to promote the welfare of retired teachers, visit [www.sts.sk.ca](http://www.sts.sk.ca). ▲

# A CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

## ARBOS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION AND THE TEACHING PROFESSION

The assistance of teachers is requested to select this year's recipient for the Arbos for Contributions to Education and the Teaching Profession.

The Arbos award is the highest honour that the Saskatchewan teaching profession can bestow. Each Arbos recipient receives an honorary life membership in the STF and is presented with an artistic replica of the Arbos symbol at the Annual Meeting of Council banquet. Through the Arbos awards, the STF draws the attention of its members and the public to individuals who have distinguished themselves through the scope and significance of their educational contributions.

The Arbos for Contributions to Education and the Teaching Profession honours teachers who have made outstanding contributions to education and the teaching profession that are broad and significant in their scope and impact.

Nomination information is posted on the Federation website at [www.stf.sk.ca](http://www.stf.sk.ca) > Professional Resources > [Awards, Grants & Scholarships](#).

Please consider nominating a teacher from your area who has made an outstanding contribution to education and the teaching profession.

The deadline for nominations is November 15.



SASKATCHEWAN  
TEACHERS'  
FEDERATION

### CONNECT WITH US

@SaskTeachersFed [www.stf.sk.ca](http://www.stf.sk.ca)

# VOTE FOR EDUCATION



CUT ME OUT AND PUT ME IN YOUR WINDOW



SASKATCHEWAN  
TEACHERS'  
FEDERATION

RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:

**SASKATCHEWAN TEACHERS' FEDERATION**

2317 Arlington Avenue  
Saskatoon SK S7J 2H8  
**Tel:** 306-373-1660/1-800-667-7762  
**Fax:** 306-374-1122

PUBLICATIONS MAIL  
AGREEMENT # 40064493