

**Regular Meeting of the Board  
Agenda**

Thursday, January 10, 2019

8:00 PM

Administration Office

181 Henlow Bay, Winnipeg, MB R3Y 1M7

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Comments:

The content of the Informational Reports has been reviewed by Trustees prior to the Board Meeting. The reports reflect discussions and activities of the Committees. At Board Meetings, if Trustees wish to speak or to ask questions regarding a particular report included in the Information Reports section of the Board Meeting agenda - that needs to be identified at the time the agenda is amended. Recommended motions from Committees are addressed separately in the agenda.

**2. AGENDA APPROVAL**

**3. BOARD MINUTES APPROVAL**

**4. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS, SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS AND OTHER REPORTS**

**1. Standing Committee Reports:**

- a. Report of the Committee Meeting of the Whole held on December 13, 2018;
- b. Committee Report of the Finance and Planning Committee Meeting held on December 17, 2019.
- c. Committee Report of the Communications and Community Relations Committee Meeting held on December 11, 2018;
- d. Committee Report of the Education Committee Meeting held on December 13, 2018;
- e. Committee Report of the PTTA Negotiations Meeting held on December 18, 2018;
- f. Committee Report of the Human Resources and Policy Committee Meeting held on November 26, 2018.

**2. Special Committee Reports:**

- a. Minutes of the Pembina Trails Educational Support Fund, Inc. Corporate Board Meeting held on December 13, 2018;

- b. Minutes of the Pembina Trails Educational Support Fund, Inc. Annual General Meeting held on December 13, 2018.

### **3. Other Reports:**

- a. Bereavement Report dated January 10, 2019;
- b. Teacher Contracts (Permanent and Term) as listed in the Teacher Contracts Report dated January 10, 2019;
- c. Teacher Contract Alterations as listed in the Teacher Contract Alterations Report dated October January 10, 2019;
- d. Substitute Teacher Contracts as listed in the 2018-19 Substitute Teacher Contracts Report dated January 10, 2019;
- e. Resignations as listed in the Resignations Report dated January 10, 2019;
- f. MITT Minutes March 2018 - September 2018.

#### **Purpose:**

To consider receiving the Standing Committee Reports, Special Committee Report and Other Reports as information, and

To consider ratifying Teacher Contracts (Permanent and Term) as listed in the Teacher Contracts Report dated January 10, 2019, and

To approve Teacher Contract Alterations as listed in the Teacher Contract Alterations Report dated January 10, 2019, and

To consider ratifying Substitute Teacher Contracts as listed in the 2018-19 Substitute Teacher Contracts Report dated January 10, 2019, and

To consider receiving resignations as listed in the Resignations Report dated January 10, 2019, and

To consider approving Disbursements for the period October 1 to 31, 2018.

### **5. DELEGATIONS**

### **6. EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS**

### **7. BUSINESS FROM PREVIOUS BOARD MEETINGS**

### **8. BUSINESS FROM PREVIOUS FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

### **9. BUSINESS FROM PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WHOLE**

### **10. BY-LAWS AND/OR POLICIES**

**10.1 By-Law No. 130 LTPS0256**

WHEREAS it is deemed necessary and expedient to raise by loan the sum of One Million One Hundred Sixty Three Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,163,500) on the credit of said school division for the purpose of payment for Acadia Modular Classrooms, Bairdmore Rooftop Unit, Dieppe Roof Replacement, Ralph Maybank Roof Replacement, Vincent Massey Roof Replacement.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT By-Law No. 130, being a by-law of the Board of Trustees of the Pembina Trails School Division, for the purpose of borrowing the sum of \$1,163,500, and of issuing a Debenture and/or Promissory Note (Hereinafter called the Security) therefor be given second and third reading and passed.

**10.2 By-Law No. 131**

Purpose: To consider Committee recommendation.

**11. CORRESPONDENCE FOR DISCUSSION**

**12. STANDING AND SPECIAL/ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**12.1 Buildings, Property and Transportation Committee**

**12.2 Communication and Community Relations Committee**

**12.3 Education Committee**

**12.4 Finance and Planning Committee**

**12.4.1 PowerSchool - Hiring Software**

Purpose: To consider Committee recommendation.

**12.4.2 KPMG - Pembina Trails Final Audit 2020-2024**

Purpose: To consider Committee recommendation.

**12.5 Human Resources and Policy Committee**

**12.5.1 IJOA-R Off Site Educational Programming (Field Trips)**

Purpose: To consider Committee recommendation.

**12.6 Negotiations Committee**

**12.7 Pembina Trails School Division Educational Support Fund Inc.**

**12.8 Pembina Trails Voices**

**12.9 Council of Presidents**

**12.10 Boards/Association Council on Education (B.A.C.E)**

**13. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

**13.1 Kindergarten Information Evenings**

Purpose: To update Trustees on Kindergarten Information Evenings and receive the updated Kindergarten information folders.

**13.2 Acting Principal - Oak Park High School**

Purpose: To consider approving S. Labossiere as Acting Principal at Oak Park High School effective January 15, 2019.

**13.3 Personnel Matter**

Purpose: To receive a report from the Superintendent.

**14. NEW BUSINESS**

**15. CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION LIST**

**16. QUESTIONS FROM TRUSTEES**

**17. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE**

**18. REQUIREMENT FOR A COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WHOLE**

**19. ADJOURNMENT**



In this season of sharing and caring, we wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas, the happiest of holidays and a new year filled with love, laughter and good health.

As we reflect on 2018, and prepare for a year ahead that is certain to have no shortage of opportunities and challenges, we are thankful for the collective work, strength and voice of our member boards throughout Manitoba. We acknowledge the hard work and dedication of MSBA staff, our Executive Director and our entire Executive team who are committed to seeing public education in Manitoba remain the domain of locally elected school boards.

As your President and Vice-President, we remain dedicated and committed to doing what is needed to ensure our association and its membership remain strong, focused, proactive and respected. Be well, enjoy the break, have some fun and we will see you in 2019!



Alan Campbell,  
Manitoba School Boards Association President



Sandy Nemeth,  
Manitoba School Boards Association Vice-President

MANITOBA  
**School Boards**  
ASSOCIATION



## FALL MEETING FOLLOW-UP

Are you looking for any of the presentations from our November 29 new trustee orientation and professional development day? We've posted them [all](#) under the [trustee education](#) tab of our website. Topics covered that day included trustee code of conduct, risk management issues, whistleblower legislation, and the implications of legal cannabis for school boards. We also want to hear your thoughts about the scheduling and format of future association meetings and events. Watch for a survey that will be coming your way soon!

## PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE UPDATE



Congratulations to Interlake S.D. trustee [Alan Campbell](#), elected in the November 30 by-election to serve as association president until March 2019. The position of president was vacated when former president Ken Cameron did not seek re-election in the October 24 school trustee elections. In accordance with association by-laws, Alan's former position of vice-president from boards serving fewer than 6000 students will remain unfilled until our March convention. And congratulations also to past president Floyd Martens, who returns to the executive to fulfill that role until the close of convention 2019. Floyd did not seek re-election as a trustee in October, but was subsequently appointed to fill a post-election vacancy on the Mountain View S.D. board.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

This February, we will be offering a workshop specifically geared to assist school board chairs, both new and experienced, fulfill this important and sometimes challenging role. The session will be offered on two occasions: February 6, 2019, at the Victoria Inn in Brandon, and February 8, 2019, at the Norwood Hotel in Winnipeg. The day will include information about legal and procedural issues related to chairing a board meeting, and a look at managing some of the interpersonal challenges that can come with the role. It will also include opportunities for participants to learn from the experiences of their colleagues through informal discussion. Registration is limited, and will be restricted to current school board chairs and vice-chairs, or their designates. Watch for program and registration details in January.

## CONVENTION 2019 UPDATE



The 2019 Convention Planning Committee is pleased to announce [Mike Lipkin](#) as our opening keynote speaker on Thursday, March 14. Mike is the author of nine best-selling books on personal leadership and effectiveness, including *Dancing with Disruption* and *The Checklist of Champions*.

He is also the founder and president of Environics/Lipkin, where he uses social values research to offer a powerful blend of ideas and principles that help clients achieve remarkable results.

Convention will wrap up on March 15 with our banquet and entertainment by "The Wonderist" [Chris Funk](#). Chris has taken his acclaimed comedy-magic show to the Las Vegas strip and across the globe. He has performed on Penn and Teller's "Fool Us", "America's Got Talent", and "Masters of Illusion," but on Friday evening, he is performing just for us!



In other convention news, we still have a few openings for Thursday workshops. Why not take this opportunity to share with your colleagues success stories from your own division that speak to our central convention theme, local voices, local choices. Simply complete and submit a [workshop proposal form](#), or email [Heather Demetrio](#) with your ideas.

For all the latest convention developments, or to find information about nominations, awards, the charity raffle and more, visit our [convention page](#), and watch for the program and registration package in January.



Leadership, Service and Advocacy:  
*Local Voices, Local Choices*

Convention 2019, March 14 - 15, Delta Winnipeg, 350 St. Mary Avenue

## SURVEY REMINDER

If you haven't already completed our 2018 [school board member survey](#), please do so as soon as possible. The information you provide helps us advocate for you, by demonstrating that school boards truly are comprised of local voices, making local choices.



## LOCAL VOICES, LOCAL CHOICES 2.0

In response to some feedback, we've produced a [second version](#) of our local voices, local choices video. You can find both the new version and the [original](#) on our [YouTube channel](#)—just search @mbschoolboards. Decide which one you prefer, and then share the video with your colleagues, friends and neighbours . . . because schools belong to communities. #LocalVoicesLocalChoices

follow us [@MBSchoolBoards](https://twitter.com/MBSchoolBoards)



# CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

24<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL CONGRESS  
ON RURAL EDUCATION IN CANADA

**MARCH 31 – APRIL 2, 2019**

TCU Place | Saskatoon, Saskatchewan



**Conversation • Collaboration • Connection**



# Innovations in Rural Education

## FOCUS

- Supporting Innovative Leadership: Rural and remote school sustainability
- Student Engagement: Successful ways to invite and act on student voice
- Responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action: What does it look like in rural and remote schools and communities?
- Actualizing the Role of School Community Councils: Practical applications that strengthen connections between parents/caregivers and the learning community
- Developments in Information Technology: Innovative program delivery, social media engagement and cyber security
- Celebrating Award Winning Practices and Innovative Programming
- Advocacy for Rural Education
- Education Sector Strategic Plan: Innovative action plans to improve student learning and well-being in pre-K-12 schools
- Building a Culture of Safety: Inclusive environments and programs that promote health and safety in schools

## LEARNING SESSIONS AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES

We encourage diverse and innovative session presentations that spark conversation and sharing. Session length is 60 minutes. Consider submitting a proposal in the following formats:

- single presentation session
- multi-presentation session
- panel session
- conversation session
- poster session
- networking session
- workshop session
- round table discussion
- demonstration session

A description of these formats and the presentation proposal form can be found on the National Congress on Rural Education in Canada website: [www.selu.usask.ca/ruraled](http://www.selu.usask.ca/ruraled)

- Submission deadline is **January 14, 2019** with notification of acceptance by **January 31, 2019**
- A copy of your paper or PowerPoint presentation is required by **March 20, 2019** for inclusion on the National Congress on Rural Education in Canada website
- Presentation proposal must be submitted electronically
- Complete all parts of the Presentation Proposal Form and include information for each presenter

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

- Presenters will receive a \$100 reduction on their registration fee (presenter fee is \$250.00 plus GST)
- Registration includes all keynote and breakout sessions, reception, one breakfast, and one lunch
- Program features two keynote addresses and over 20 breakout sessions on topics relevant to rural education
- Education site visits will also be a part of this year's Congress

For more information contact Cecile Laprairie, Administrative Assistant,  
Saskatchewan Educational Leadership Unit (SELU)  
Department of Educational Administration  
College of Education, University of Saskatchewan  
[selu.info@usask.ca](mailto:selu.info@usask.ca) or 306.966.7634

**Watch for *INVITATION TO ATTEND***  
**with full program details and registration information at**  
**[www.selu.usask.ca/ruraled](http://www.selu.usask.ca/ruraled)**





## SUPERINTENDENT/CEO

The Board of Swan Valley School Division invites applications for the above position. Duties will commence August 1, 2019 or as mutually agreed.

### The Division

The Swan Valley School Division comprises a geographic area of approximately 80 x 120 kilometers situated within Manitoba's scenic northwest parkland region. The Division enrolment of 1,444 students is served by a Teaching and Support Staff of approximately 300 working within one Grade K-6 school; one Grade K-5 school; one Grade 5-8 School; four K-8 Schools (one housing French Immersion) and a Regional Secondary School, Grades 9-12, which offers a wide range of academic and technology vocational programs. The central office is located in the Town of Swan River. The School Division budget is approximately 21 million.

The Division has a commitment to supporting lifelong learning within our area through partnership arrangements with day care in most of our schools; a Junior Kindergarten program across the Division and with post secondary institutions and the local Adult Education Center. A University College of the North (UCN) Regional classroom center is located on the Regional school grounds.

### The Position

The Superintendent of Schools, as Chief Executive Officer shall:

- Report and be accountable to the Board of Trustees for managing the schools in accordance with its policies and direction;
- Provide leadership in developing, achieving and maintaining educational programs and services;
- Bring a sense of pride and ownership to our system and be passionate about the growth and achievements of students and staff, while ensuring that the highest quality of programs and services are delivered in the most cost-effective environment.

### The Candidate:

#### Preferred Qualifications and Experience:

- Qualify for a Manitoba teaching certificate;
- Master's degree in Education or a combination of school and system level administrative experience;
- A minimum of five years' experience in educational administration;
- Experience in educational finance;
- A working knowledge of current curriculum and educational methodology;
- Experience with Indigenous Education;
- Effective interpersonal, team building and communication skills;

### Applications

Please send a cover letter & resume by January 15, 2019 to:

Superintendent Search  
c/o ROAR Leadership Consultants  
Email: [royseidler@roarleadership.com](mailto:royseidler@roarleadership.com)

*Employment will be subject to satisfactory criminal record, vulnerable sector and child abuse registry checks. We will confirm receipt of all applicants received by Email, however only those selected for follow-up will be contacted. We thank all applicants for their interest.*

# SAFETY REPORT

CAA School Safety Patrol™ Newsletter



Patrols at Santa Claus Parade

## Santa Claus Parade

Did you catch our float at the Santa Claus Parade? The evening started out cold, but once the parade started moving we warmed right up!

Thanks to the patrols at Clifton School and Royal School for joining us at the Santa Claus Parade on November 17, 2018. We hope you had as much fun as we did!



## Incentive Days

A big thank you goes out to the Manitoba Moose for sponsoring all hot chocolate surprises this winter.

Pizza lunch and hot chocolate surprise winners are drawn each

month throughout the winter. And who knows – Mick E. Moose could show up to meet one lucky team!

[Sign-up here](#) to make sure your patrols don't miss out on their chance to win!



Insurance  
Travel  
Roadside  
Rewards



## Supervisor change form

When a new patrol supervisor joins your team or you retire from the position, you must fill out our [supervisor change form](#) to keep us up to date.



Immanuel Christian School hot chocolate surprise.

## Toque Distribution

Many thanks to the Manitoba School Boards Association for sponsoring our toques this winter.

**Each School in Manitoba will receive 10 toques. These toques are an incentive and are not intended for each patrol.**

Toques have been sent to all Winnipeg, rural, and Brandon schools. If you have not yet received your toques, please contact us at [schoolpatrol@caamanitoba.com](mailto:schoolpatrol@caamanitoba.com).

How you distribute the toques is up to you, but we recommend you reward the patrols who have demonstrated strong leadership.

## Social Corner

Is your school on social media? We'd love to hear from you! We're always happy to see your patrols in action or showing off their School Safety Patrol swag. Tweet us [@CAAManitoba](https://twitter.com/CAAManitoba).



From all of us at CAA Manitoba,  
best wishes for safe and happy holidays  
to you and your patrol team.

Click [here](#) to contact us with questions or concerns.



## MANAGER OF END USER COMPUTING

This position is scheduled to commence January 7, 2019, or upon a mutually determined date.

**IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR:** Director of Learning and Information Technologies

### Description

Working with schools and LIT staff, the Manager End User Computing ensures the streamlined operation of the LIT Department in support of the educational goals of the Division. The Manager organizes, supervises, and dispatches Computer Technicians working in schools and coordinates division-wide hardware and software updates. In consultation with the Director, the Manager also plans, coordinates, directs, and designs LIT services used by teachers, students, parents, schools, and staff. The Manager works closely with decision makers to identify, recommend, develop, implement, and support cost-effective technology solutions for all aspects of the organization.

### Responsibilities

#### Strategy and planning

- In consultation with schools and LIT staff, develop and monitor LIT service level agreements to manage expectations and timeframes for incident and problem resolution
- Analyze LIT Department support activities, identify problem areas, and devise solutions to enhance quality of service and prevent future problems
- Support the Director in operational and strategic planning, including business requirements, projects, and allocating LIT resources
- Develop business case justifications and cost/benefit analyses for LIT spending and initiatives

#### Operations

- Oversee provision of end user services, including technical support
- Manage the processing of incoming LIT requests to ensure courteous, timely, and effective resolution of end user issues
- Design and enforce request handling and escalation policies and procedures
- Manage the deployment, maintenance, monitoring, and support of all end user hardware and software with both our own LIT team, Facilities and Operations team and vendors/contractors
- Establish best practices and policies for installing, configuring, maintaining, and troubleshooting end user hardware, software, and peripheral devices
- Manage LIT Department projects to ensure they comply with stated goals, plans, and budgets
- Benchmark, analyze, report on, and make recommendations to improve LIT infrastructure and systems
- Identify, recommend, develop, and implement end user training programs to increase computer literacy and self-sufficiency
- Practice asset management for LIT hardware, software, and equipment, including maintenance of component inventory and related documentation

#### Procurement and purchasing

- Develop bid requirements for hardware and software upgrades, review submitted bids for compliance with stated requirements, and advise the Director on the appropriate award
- Support the Director in negotiation and administration of vendor, outsourcer, and consultant contracts and service agreements

## Human resources

- Manage staffing for Computer Technicians and other LIT staff (as assigned or necessary), including recruitment, performance review, and discipline as necessary
- Organize, supervise, schedule, and dispatch Computer Technicians and other LIT staff (as assigned or necessary)
- Train, coach, and mentor Computer Technicians and other LIT staff (as assigned or necessary)

## Other

- Keep current with the latest technologies
- Research potential technology solutions in support of new educational priorities, initiatives, and opportunities
- According to Division protocol and practices, establish and maintain regular written and in-person communications with the Director, Senior Administration, LIT staff, and schools regarding LIT activities
- Other duties as required

## Position Requirements

### Formal Education & Certification

- College diploma or university degree in computer science or seven (7) years related work experience
- IT-specific certifications such as LITIL, ISP, or MCP are highly desirable

### Knowledge & Experience

- Proven experience in IT infrastructure planning and development, project management, and policy development
- Extensive understanding and technical knowledge of current network and PC operating systems, hardware, protocols, and standards
- Experience with systems design and development from business requirements analysis through to day-to-day management
- Strong understanding of human resource management principles, practices, and procedures
- Experience working with Microsoft System Center is highly desirable
- Experience working in K-12 education is highly desirable
- Experience with project management is highly desirable

### Personal Attributes

- Strong leadership, written, verbal, and interpersonal skills
- Excellent planning, facilitating, and organizing skills
- Strong customer service orientation
- Proven analytical and problem-solving abilities
- Ability to prioritize and execute tasks effectively in a high-pressure environment
- Experience working in a team-oriented, collaborative environment
- Highly self-motivated and self-directed
- Keen attention to detail

### Other requirements

- Physical ability to move equipment weighing as much as 40 kg
- Possession of a valid driver's license and access to a reliable vehicle is a requirement

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**Applications should be submitted online by December 13<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 PM:**  
**[www.pembinatrails.ca](http://www.pembinatrails.ca) → EMPLOYMENT → MID-MANAGEMENT**  
**Competition #181204221-AO**



**Division Office**  
30 Speers Road  
Winnipeg, MB  
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**Phone:** (204) 775-9741  
**Fax:** (204) 775-9940  
**Email:** [frontier@fsdnet.ca](mailto:frontier@fsdnet.ca)

## **BIRDTAIL SIOUX FIRST NATION AND FRONTIER SCHOOL DIVISION SIGN NEW AGREEMENT**

The Frontier School Division Board of Trustees and Chief and Council for the Birdtail Sioux First Nation renewed their education agreement on Tuesday, December 11, 2018.

The signing marks the continuation of a 10-year relationship between the school division and the First Nation community.

Located approximately 50 kilometers north of Virden, Manitoba, Birdtail Sioux is a Dakota First Nation community with an on-reserve population of about 500 people. Since 2007, Chief and Council have operated their school, Chan Kagha Otina Dakota Wayawa Tipi School, in partnership with the Frontier School Division.

The school currently has a population of 137 students.

The revised agreement places emphasis on meeting the holistic needs of students, including their spiritual, emotional, physical and mental well-being.

"I am very pleased with the new agreement," says Birdtail Sioux Chief Kenneth Chalmers. "As Dakota people we needed a new and unique agreement that reflected our culture, language and history. We are confident the education to come will support our children's success so they can graduate from high school well-prepared for participation in life and life-long learning."

Chief Chalmers thanked Frontier Chief Superintendent Reg Klassen and Frontier Secretary-Treasurer Gerald Cattani, noting that he trusts they have the best interests of the community's children at heart.

"We are very proud to re-sign with Birdtail Sioux," says Reg Klassen. "Our goal is to provide every community with the best educational opportunities that reflect their individual needs. We're looking forward to continue growing with the community and providing the stability and support the students deserve."

Frontier School Board Chairperson Linda Ballantyne added, "the revised agreement speaks to the value we place, as a Division, on ensuring that the educational needs of our diverse communities are met."

The community's economic plan includes building a gaming centre and gas/convenience store in the coming year, followed by a hotel in the near future.

Chief Chalmers is confident that the education Frontier provides will ensure that there is a strong, dependable, self-sufficient labour force that will sustain the economic future of the Birdtail Sioux community.





[Left] Chairperson Linda Ballantyne and Chief Ken Chalmers signing the Education Agreement

[Bottom Centre] **Back row** (left to right): Trustee Howard Sanderson, Councillor Chris Benn, Councillor Doug Hanska, Councillor Lindsay Bunn Jr. **Front row seated** (left to right): Board Vice-Chairperson Marion Pearson, Board Chairperson Linda Ballantyne, Chief Ken Chalmers, Trustee Darlene Osborne







LEADERSHIP, ADVOCACY AND SERVICE FOR MANITOBA'S PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS

**DATE:** December 19, 2018

**TO:** All board chairs, for distribution to all trustees

**FROM:** MSBA Provincial Executive

**RE:** Recent media advocacy re: Local Voices, Local Choices Campaign

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Dear member boards:

As 2018 draws to a close, we wanted to take a moment to provide you with an update concerning recent media coverage in support of MSBA's "Local Voices, Local Choices" campaign.

For those who were in attendance at the New Trustee Orientation and General Meeting at the end of November, you have been entrusted by MSBA with the task of engaging your local communities. To this end, we want to underscore what we shared with you at that time: that you are free to draw from and use any or all of the materials that MSBA had drafted as part of the "Local Voices, Local Choices" campaign.

MSBA staff remain available to support the work of boards in this responsibility, if any member would like to adapt the materials that we have produced by including your own divisional logos or identifiers, when communicating key messages to your local communities.

In terms of media engagement, we wanted to highlight three recent examples of some important work undertaken by select members. We know that this is by no means exhaustive, so if you have also had articles featured in your local media outlets, please do send those to us so that we can keep track of the most recent developments!

**December 7: Pembina Valley Online interview with Patty Wiebe, MSBA Region 2 Director**

<https://pembinavalleyonline.com/local/manitoba-trustees-look-to-inform-the-public-ahead-of-provincial-education-review#.XArTfmQMvOo.twitter>

**December 12: Portage Online article featuring the Pine Creek School Board**

<https://www.portageonline.com/local/school-divisions-appeal-for-local-choices-local-voices>

We would also like to thank Fort la Bosse School Board for drawing our attention to an editorial/opinion piece that was featured in the Manitoba Co-operator on November 19:

<https://www.manitobacooperator.ca/news-opinion/opinion/school-taxation-a-sign-of-unsustainability/>

It is very important that if any member comes across any such article, and would like MSBA to respond accordingly, to let us know as soon as possible so that we can ensure that we have sufficient time to prepare a response that remains timely.

On December 10, in response to the above Co-operator editorial, MSBA submitted our own response. While this response has not yet been published, we wish to share it with our members, so that you are aware of other recent media activities in conjunction with the Local Voices, Local Choices campaign.

*In re: school taxation a sign of unsustainability* (November 19) Burnett and Clifton state that "taxpayers and parents must pay attention to what school boards actually do". We could not agree more. School boards in Manitoba, and the property taxes they collect to support local education, is indeed a different funding model and a different level of responsibility than is true of every other province. But in contrast to Burnett and Clifton, we would suggest that therein lies the strength, not the weakness, of the Manitoba model.

Those who live in rural communities in Manitoba know how important it is to keep programming and services local. Over the years, rural and northern citizens have seen their public services diminish. Hospital beds have been closed, recruitment and retention of doctors and other healthcare staff remains a constant challenge. Bit by bit, core programming has been centralized and decisions made further away from those who depend on these vital services. But this is not so for education. And people who live in Manitoba's heartland know how important it is to ensure that community ownership of the local school remains untouched.

Sustaining the right to live in the communities of one's own choosing often comes with a cost. As policymakers in Ottawa and Winnipeg debate carbon costs and whether to tax or not tax the very breadbasket upon which we depend, the price of gas, groceries and recreational activities have skyrocketed, placing even more pressures on the pocketbook.

Amidst this same situation lies the public school: the engine that drives the skills and knowledge that will serve the needs and requirements of another generation. But gone are the days of the one room schoolhouse that once dotted the open prairies of Manitoba. Today's students have the ability to build their foundations on far more than "reading, writing and arithmetic".

These subjects remain just as important, but so too are the advanced vocational programs in the skilled trades, things like small engine repair and carpentry. Band concerts and theatre productions remain testament to the importance of music, art and drama programs. And state-of-the-art science labs ensure our kids are readied for agricultural production, plant and animal science or to become the doctors and healthcare workers of tomorrow, to name a few of the options that every Manitoba student has. Options designed to sustain the rural and northern way of life while bringing the world to their very doorstep.

Burnett and Clifton imply that such options can be made more sustainable by removing the local taxation authority of the small-town school board. Why not go the way of our neighbours to the east and the west and strip trustees of their ability to tax? But as those in Saskatchewan will tell you, the move by Regina to centralize school property tax did not come with savings for the homestead: the total amount of property tax collected before and after remained largely the same. And just ask the municipalities in Ontario what happened when Toronto capped their school property taxes twenty years ago. More room on the local tax bill for snow-clearing and water treatment? Hardly the case, as the Government of Ontario heaped responsibilities for healthcare and welfare on town councils, while subsequently redirecting billions in tax dollars from elsewhere to sustain that province's public schools.

Burnett and Clifton further argue that education costs ought to be contained at the cost of annual inflation. If local communities are willing to see schools closed, teacher positions cut, and programs taken away, then this proposal is a viable one. We do not however, believe this is what Manitobans want for their education system. The reality is that many school costs simply outpace the rate of inflation. Do Manitobans know that replacing school buses alone can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars? The truth is that comparing the costs of preparing a child's future against those of a price index designed by Ottawa to reflect general growth in living costs is hardly a tenable prospect. In fact it is very naive.

Burnett and Clifton then compare the costs associated with individual school divisions. Why are Frontier School Division's costs, as the largest geographic school division in Manitoba, almost double those of Garden Valley School Division in Winkler? Well, just ask the townspeople who are served by Frontier School Division, such as the good folks up in Churchill, why a quart of milk in that community costs \$20, and it is not difficult to understand that what Burnett

and Clifton are comparing in terms of the division with the lowest and highest operating costs, is hardly apples to apples. It is more akin to comparing soybeans to potatoes.

What solution do Burnett and Clifton propose following from their patchwork of far-flung comparisons and price indexes? Amalgamation. Creating larger school divisions by taking away local communities' right to own their public school. In this respect, they would do well to remember another study prepared by their colleagues at the Frontier Institute of Public Policy, written the last time school divisions were amalgamated in Manitoba: a decision that resulted in the elimination of twenty school boards nearly twenty years ago. In 2005, after all the dust had settled, the Frontier Institute found that amalgamation achieved virtually no savings. Instead of saving the millions targeted by government of the day, dollars were spent to save dimes. The final conclusion of that study was that rather than amalgamating school divisions, the government would have done better to focus time and effort on meaningful education reform.

So it was with this in mind that our association chose to gather a group of independent experts just last year to look at how local education funding could be meaningfully reformed for the advantage of all Manitobans. Coming from every walk of life, including agriculture, commerce, municipal and education backgrounds, the experts on that council studied many options and solutions for meaningful change. In the end, we found common agreement on one final recommendation: that this province and its people would benefit from the establishment of a formal and independent tax commission. A full study that would look at the big picture when it comes to all taxes in Manitoba, local, provincial and federal, and propose a clear path forward. In the end, we collectively agreed that when it comes to taxes, no Manitoban is served by trading a bushel for the harvest.

Burnett and Clifton however, offer no such solution. Theirs is a one size fits all recommendation that all school boards should have their taxing responsibilities taken away. They literally suggest that communities across Manitoba be forced to go hat in hand down to Broadway for funding each and every year. We would suggest however, that local voice and local choice still matter when it comes our schools and this is best left to each local community to decide. Through their vital democratic right to elect their own school board, communities in Manitoba get to decide what level of funding is sustainable when meeting the needs of their schools and students. This is because, at the end of the day, education belongs to communities.

On the heels of our provincial government's recent move to introduce a new law that would see referendums held on all future tax increases, it therefore seems counterintuitive for Burnett and Clifton to propose a removal of the best referendum that every citizen has when it comes to their local school tax. One that Manitobans have enjoyed since 1872, when local trustees were first chosen by their community to set school budgets and taxes in each of the four years for which they are elected. In the end it is therefore very true that "taxpayers and parents must pay attention to what school boards actually do", for this is your vital democratic right. With the upcoming provincial review of Kindergarten to Grade 12 education in Manitoba set for 2019, there is no better time to ensure that local voice and local choices are heard when it comes to education in your community. We invite all Manitobans to join us in setting the record straight when it comes time for this critical dialogue on Manitoba's communities and their future.

-- Manitoba School Boards Association

Lastly, below is the text of an op-ed featured in the Portage Daily Graphic on December 13, as submitted by the Portage la Prairie School Board. The op-ed was printed in its entirety:

### **Local Voice, Local Choice from Past to Present**

The Portage la Prairie School Division was established formally on April 1, 1959 by an order of the Manitoba Minister of Education, acting on a recommendation of the MacFarlane Commission on Education and the School Divisions Boundaries Commission. The Portage la Prairie School Division then became responsible for all secondary education, grades 9 to 12 in the local area. The Cochrane School was one example of a small school located within the

Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie. It was named to honour Archdeacon Cockran (Cochran) who, in 1850, established the first settlement in the area. The school was a 24 foot by 36 foot one-room white frame building, serving a small rural area north of High Bluff. Enrolment in grades one to eight ranged from eight to twenty students. According to historical archives, many students rode ponies which were sheltered in an adjacent barn. At the time of the school's establishment, it was the local trustees who governed the school and all decision making.

Today, the Portage la Prairie School division still includes rural and urban schools - 18 in total, 7 in the City of Portage la Prairie, 1 in Oakville and 10 Hutterian schools. Pending the formal approval of the Minister of Education, the Long Plain School will soon join the division, raising the student enrollment to approximately 3700 students. At the time of the MacFarlane Commission in 1959, 44 rural schools served farm families throughout the area in tiny schools like Overhill, Poplar Bluff, Rob Roy and Belcourt, but as agriculture changed, so too did demographic patterns and populations shifted from rural to urban. What has not changed over time is the local school governance model for education that has ensured that elected trustees from local communities continue to have a say in how its schools are governed.

Local schools, with local leadership is a Canadian tradition that goes back to the earliest days of Portage la Prairie and district. Very shortly, the government is set to embark on an educational review that may eliminate local voice by amalgamating school divisions. The prospect of local control being lost to greater centralization should be very concerning. The trustees of the Portage la Prairie School Division are proud to serve the needs of the local community, as has been the tradition in the province for the past century, their position is simple - local voice means local choice.

In recent years, there are countless examples where schools within the Portage la Prairie School Division have benefited greatly from having local decision making powers, examples include significant investments made in staffing, facilities, equipment and programming that would not have been possible in a centralized model.

The one room school houses of the Portage la Prairie School Division's past have been replaced by modern buildings with the latest technology that allow students to connect to a 21<sup>st</sup> century world. The majority of those investments have been funded locally, with networks and devices purchased through local property taxes and allocated based on careful decisions made at the local level. The Trustees of the Portage la Prairie School division feel those decisions should be made in Portage la Prairie, not in Winnipeg or elsewhere. The community of Portage la Prairie has unique needs and challenges that should to be addressed at the community level – amalgamation and centralized decision making remove that ability. The Portage la Prairie School Division has been an historically responsible board, spending local school taxes conservatively, but with a consistent focus that has always placed students first.

As the province begins asking for public feedback on an educational review, please consider the following facts:

**NO SAVINGS, BIGGER COSTS, DISTANT DECISIONS**  
**PUBLIC EDUCATION BELONGS TO EVERY COMMUNITY**

- LESS IS NOT MORE when it comes to providing programs, services and supports for the sake of our children.

- BIGGER IS NOT BETTER. Eliminating some school divisions means creating larger school divisions out of the rest, making it more difficult and even more costly to provide programs, services and supports.

- DECISIONS ARE FURTHER AWAY FROM LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

Fewer school boards mean decisions would become distant from the very communities that these decisions will impact.

- DOLLARS WOULD BE SPENT TO SAVE PENNIES.

In 2001-02, twenty school divisions were eliminated by Manitoba's former Government.

Their target: millions of dollars in savings... BUT in 2005, an independent study written by the Frontier Institute for Public Policy found that eliminating 20 school divisions resulted in virtually no savings. Bigger school divisions meant bigger costs. The time spent on the elimination process would have been better invested in meaningful education reform. In the end, the only real impact was to remove ownership of public schools from local neighbourhoods and small town communities.

**The Trustees of the Portage la Prairie School Division**

Hélène Hoggarth (Chairperson)   Rod Brownlee (Vice Chair)

Murray McLenehan   Tracey Asham

Yvette Cuthbert   Shauna-Lei Leslie

Debbie Citulsky   Luis Luna

Penny Verwey



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## Op-Ed

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the student enrollment to approximately 3,700 students. At the time of the MacFarlane Commission in 1959, 44 rural schools served farm families throughout the area in tiny schools like Overhill, Poplar Bluff, Rob Roy and Belcourt, but as agriculture changed, so too did demographic patterns and populations shifted from rural to urban. What has not changed over time is the local school governance model for education that has ensured that elected trustees from local communities continue to have a say in how its schools are governed.

Local schools, with local leadership is a Canadian tradition that goes back to the earliest days of Portage la Prairie and district. Very shortly, the government is set to embark on an educational review that may eliminate local voice by amalgamating school divisions. The prospect of local control being lost to greater centralization should be very concerning. The trustees of the Portage la Prairie School Division are proud to serve the needs of the local community, as has been the tradition in the province for the past century, their position is simple - local voice means local choice.

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The Portage la Prairie School Division has been a historically responsible board, spending local school taxes conservatively, but with a consistent focus that has always placed students first.

As the province begins asking for public feedback on an educational review, please consider the following facts:

- Less is not more when it comes to providing programs, services and supports for the sake of our children.

- Bigger is not better. Eliminating some school divisions means creating larger school divisions out of the rest, making it more difficult and even more costly to provide programs, services and supports.

- Decisions are further away from local communities. Fewer school boards mean decisions would become distant from the very communities that these decisions will impact.

- Dollars would be spent to save pennies.

In 2001/02, twenty school divisions were eliminated by Manitoba's former government. Their target: millions of dollars in savings. But in 2005, an independent study written by the Frontier Institute for Public Policy found that eliminating 20 school divisions resulted in virtually no savings. Bigger school divisions meant bigger costs. The time spent on the elimination process would have been better invested in meaningful education reform. In the end, the only real impact was to remove ownership of public schools from local neighbourhoods and small town communities.

Trustees of the Portage la Prairie School Division

Heileen Hoggarth, chairperson  
Rod Brownlee, vice chair  
Murray McLennan  
Tracey Asham  
Yvette Cuthbert  
Shauna-Lee Leslie  
Dobbie Citulsky  
Luis Luna  
Penny Vorwey

## Have something to say? Send letters to

