

ARBOS AWARD

FAY HUMBERT'S STORY

2024 ARBOS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION



Fay Humbert's career in Saskatchewan education began as a classroom teacher in Hague High School with Saskatchewan Valley School Division in September 1991, working as a special education teacher. Fay taught there until 1995, when she transferred to Warman High School, teaching English and

math, and served as a career counsellor. In 1997, she transitioned to Saskatoon Public Schools, serving as a special education teacher at Marion M. Graham Collegiate from 1997 to 2002, later becoming a special education consultant for eight months. Fay continued her dedication as a collegiate administrator from 2002 until 2012 at Evan Hardy Collegiate, Mount Royal Collegiate and Centennial Collegiate. During this time, she was an assistant principal for five years, and a principal for five years. Just before joining the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, Fay served as the collegiate renewal facilitator for the division.

Fay's journey at the STF began in 2012 as a senior administrative staff member, later being promoted to Associate Executive Director, advocating for teachers across the province until her retirement in 2019. During her time with the STF, Fay worked closely in supporting teachers, was involved in collective bargaining and teacher discipline, and was a member of the committee providing input into the development of the Saskatchewan Professional Teachers Regulatory Board. She is currently a member of the Education Relations Board where she has served since 2021.

Fay's commitment extended beyond the classroom. Fay applied for and was awarded two McDowell grants while with Saskatoon Public Schools. The first grant, while at Evan Hardy Collegiate, focussed on ensuring literacy instruction was embedded in all subject areas. The second McDowell grant focussed on developing literacy within the English as an Additional Language

program at Mount Royal Collegiate. As the division's collegiate facilitator, Fay led the division's learning initiative with a strong focus on formative assessment. During her time with Saskatoon Public Schools, Fay was named Saskatchewan's Most Distinguished Principal for 2009-10 and one of Canada's Outstanding Principals by the Learning Partnership in 2010.

Her dedication to lifelong learning is reflected in her degrees from the University of Saskatchewan: a bachelor of education, a special education certificate, and a master of education in special education. Now retired, Fay Humbert leaves a legacy of leadership and positive impact on Saskatchewan's education system.

A CONVERSATION WITH FAY HUMBERT

What inspired you to choose a career in education?

I had some great teachers in high school; their ability to connect with students, to ignite curiosity and to impart knowledge is what inspired me to become a teacher.

What do you love most about being a teacher?

I love the connections you can make with students and the relationships that develop. I have always enjoyed working with young people, so this seemed to be a natural pathway for me. In my role as a special education teacher, I worked closely with my students and with my colleagues to ensure that students experienced a caring, understanding and encouraging classroom with the proper supports in place for those students who required different instructional strategies and assessments. As an administrator, I enjoyed working with the teachers in my school, supporting them and encouraging them to continue on their learning journey, to try new strategies and to always continue to look for ways to engage students.

Who has helped shape your life and leadership approach?

I have learned from many people over the course of my career. All have been great leaders in their own right, regardless of their position or role within the educational community – and I have learned from them all. Each of these professionals possessed the following attributes: they were good listeners, they were strong advocates, they were supportive, and they weren't afraid to ask for help or to apologize and correct their course if they were wrong; they were humble. They were also calm in the face of crisis and compassionate and empathetic in the face of tragedy.

What are some of the career accomplishments you're most proud of?

This is a difficult question to answer; the accomplishments I'm most proud of are not the ones that usually receive accolades. While I'm honoured to have been named Saskatchewan's Most Distinguished Principal for 2009-10 and one of Canada's Outstanding Principals by the Learning Partnership in 2010, I am most proud of the work I have done with students in fostering a welcoming and safe learning environment, and with classroom teachers and support staff in helping them support students with learning disabilities.

I am proud of the work I did in my role as an administrator working with and supporting teachers at Evan Hardy Collegiate to develop a math program, focussed on differentiated instruction, for new Grade 9 students who were lagging in their understanding. This program has stood the test of time and is still offered at collegiates in Saskatoon Public Schools.

I'm proud of the work I was involved in during my time at the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, supporting teachers, advocating for publicly funded public education and ensuring that policies and processes had integrity.

However, none of this would have been possible without the many dedicated and committed professionals I have worked with over the past 30 years. While teaching and learning conditions have changed and there are many obstacles and difficulties to navigate – especially now – I truly believe it is an honour and a privilege to be a teacher.



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