



SASKATCHEWAN
TEACHERS'
FEDERATION



PROFESSIONAL
GROWTH NETWORKS

June 2024

Annual Report to the STF Executive

Professional Growth Networks Advisory Committee
2023-24

Overview of Professional Growth Networks

Professional growth networks are intended to support professional growth and lifelong learning as a teacher through networking, communications and innovative opportunities. Networks provide the opportunity to connect with like-minded teachers across Saskatchewan and share promising practices and resources related to a specialized area of practice or interest in education. Networks have been established in a variety of subject fields, service areas and interdisciplinary groups.

The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation currently supports 24 active professional growth networks. The success of these networks is measured by teacher interest in becoming members and taking an active role in their work. Membership is not limited to teachers but includes any person with a professional interest in the activities of the networks. Currently, there are approximately 2,480 teachers who belong to the networks.

Professional growth networks are subject to all Federation policies as outlined in the *Governance Handbook*. The Federation does not exercise any control over network elections or how their basic grants are spent. Professional growth networks exist as separate entities subject to the conditions outlined in policy. Professional growth networks are advised to register as charitable organizations or to incorporate if significant funding is available through lottery or other government grants.

Professional growth networks have a long history of providing professional growth opportunities as well as collaborative structures for teachers throughout Saskatchewan to be engaged in a specific topic of interest. The need for professional growth opportunities has not diminished, however, the ability for teachers to access professional growth continues to be a topic of discussion. Money to support teachers to attend professional growth opportunities of choice has often been reallocated at the school division level to support a more directed approach within the school division. Teachers have also reported that if the funds are available, it is not enough to cover expenses, or they cannot get approval for release time at the school level.

Benefits of Joining a Professional Growth Network

Included on the Federation's website is a page dedicated to professional growth networks. This page is used to communicate with members and to host a number of documents such as the PGN Toolkit, this annual report and highlights from the previous year.

The benefits of joining a professional growth network:

- Network and learn from colleagues who share similar areas of interest.
- Attend conferences and workshops to gain insight and enhance skills.
- Stay on the leading edge in areas of interest through available publications, newsletters and journals.
- Celebrate accomplishments of students, teachers and schools.
- Engage in research that contributes to the improvement of teaching and learning.

Members play a leadership role in education in Saskatchewan by being involved with networks that:

- Address issues and challenges facing schools today.
- Raise awareness and encourage discussion through submission of resolutions to the Federation's Annual Meeting of Council.
- Help develop policy in areas such as evaluation.
- Help assess and shape implementation of renewed curriculum.
- Support and enable research and facilitate projects of benefit to students, teachers and the community.
- Recognize excellence through awards and other programs.

Current Professional Growth Networks

- Association provinciale des enseignantes et enseignants des écoles fransaskoises (APEF)
- Awâsis Aboriginal Inter-Agency Education Conference (AWÂSIS) (in the process of dissolution)
- Early Childhood Education Council (ECEC)
- Literacy Educators and Resources Network (LEARN)
- Physical and Health Education Saskatchewan (PHES)
- Saskatchewan Art Education Association (SAEA)
- Saskatchewan Association of Student Council Advisors (SASCA)
- Saskatchewan Association of Teachers of French (SATF)
- Saskatchewan Association of Teachers of German (SATG)
- Saskatchewan Business Teachers' Association (SBTA)
- Saskatchewan Career and Work Education Association (SCWEA)
- Saskatchewan Drama Association (SDA)
- Saskatchewan Home Economics Teachers' Association (SHETA)
- Saskatchewan Mathematics Teachers' Society (SMTS)
- Saskatchewan Middle Years Association (SMYA)
- Saskatchewan Music Educators Association (SMEA)
- Saskatchewan Outdoor and Environmental Education Association (SaskOutdoors)
- Saskatchewan School Based Leaders (SSBL)
- Saskatchewan Science Teachers Society (SSTS)
- Saskatchewan Special Educators Network (SSEN)
- Saskatchewan Teachers of Applied Technology (STAT)
- Saskatchewan Teachers of English as an Additional Language (SKTEAL)
- Saskatchewan Teachers of Ukrainian (STU)
- Saskatchewan UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (SK UNESCO)
- Social Studies Saskatchewan (SSS)

Operational Policies

The three professional growth network operational policies include:

1. Advisory Committee – Outlines the establishment and operation parameters for the advisory committee.
2. Establishment – Outlines the establishment and operation parameters for a network.
3. Grants – Provides networks with funding as per Federation policy.

Advisory Committee

The basic purpose of the advisory committee is to serve the interests of all networks. The committee met three times in 2023-24. The advisory committee reports to networks after each meeting. Members on this committee carry out a valuable leadership role for the networks and for the Federation as a whole. Functions of the committee include:

- Promote awareness and understanding of professional growth networks within the teaching profession.
- Support professional growth networks by providing information and responding to requests or questions about Federation policies, procedures and services affecting the networks.
- Address issues of common concern to professional growth networks.
- Take a lead role in planning programs or activities for professional growth network executives.
- Screen special project grant applications and recommend projects for approval by the STF Executive.
- Make recommendations to the STF Executive regarding the establishment or dissolution of professional growth networks.
- Make recommendations to the STF Executive regarding professional growth network bylaw and constitution amendments.
- Ensure professional growth networks meet their annual criteria for affiliation and grants.
- Review membership statistics.
- Develop recommendations on behalf of professional growth networks to the STF Executive.
- Provide an annual report to the STF Executive.

Committee Members

Teacher Members	Location	Network	Term
Laurie Colhoun (Chairperson)	Indian Head	Saskatchewan School Based Leaders	2022-25
Shawna Jurgens	Saskatoon	Saskatchewan Teachers of English as an Additional Language	2021-24
Stefanie Sweeney	Regina	Literacy Educators and Resources Network	2023-26
Tricia McEwen	Prince Albert	Early Childhood Education Council	2022-25
Staff Members			
Andrea Papouches	Administrative Assistant		
Denise Heppner	Associate Director, STF Professional Learning		
Derek Barss	Senior Administrative Staff		
Grayson Beaudin	Manager, Member Experiences and Operations		
Scott Burant	Managing Director, Member Experiences and Operations		

Thank you to all members of the committee for their time dedicated to supporting professional growth networks and to the school divisions for granting release time for teacher members to carry out their duties.

Work of the Advisory Committee

PGN Renewal

This year we continued our renewed approach in supporting the professional learning of Saskatchewan teachers and raising the status of our profession. The renewal plan included four categories:

1. Membership
2. Governance
3. Funding
4. Additional Federation Supports

The renewal plan responded to the new realities in the following ways:

- Ensure teachers can self-select networks providing access to professional growth opportunities of choice.
- Ensure teachers from across the province are connected to provincial networks and are exposed to promising practices beyond their own school division.
- Elevate the status of professional growth networks to demonstrate to the education sector and local associations the importance and usefulness of professional growth networks for the profession and for teaching and learning in education.
- Respond to any direction the SPTRB may establish regarding professional learning by building a strong and positive reputation within the sector.
- Engage and interact with a broader membership due to network membership now being a benefit of Federation membership. This may lead to increased contributions of members to the network itself.
- Establish standards of administration and assist volunteer executive members to focus efforts on supports for teachers with the change in governance structure.

Our vision for all Federation members to be a member of a professional growth network as part of the privileges of being a member of the Federation continues to be realized.

This model provides the infrastructure to encourage Federation members to be a member of a network as one of the privileges of their STF membership, and the responsibility is also shared with each network to provide quality service to retain members. This service needs to move beyond events and into the area of collegial supports.

Networks have been working on their new governance model moving from a constitution to a set of bylaws, similar to the format used by non-profit corporations in Saskatchewan. New bylaws for 20 of the networks have been finalized and approved by the STF Executive. Federation staff continue to work on the bylaws with the four other networks.

Memberships carry forward every July 1 unless members change their selection or they retire, quit teaching, etc. Membership lists are provided to networks monthly.

Feedback from Networks

The advisory committee's main source of feedback is from Professional Growth Networks Day held each fall. On November 4, 2023, the committee met in person with networks. Our theme this year was



Friday Night Networking/Social

On the Friday night before PGN Day, we hosted a networking/social event at the Delta Hotel Downtown where approximately 20 network members and Federation staff connected.

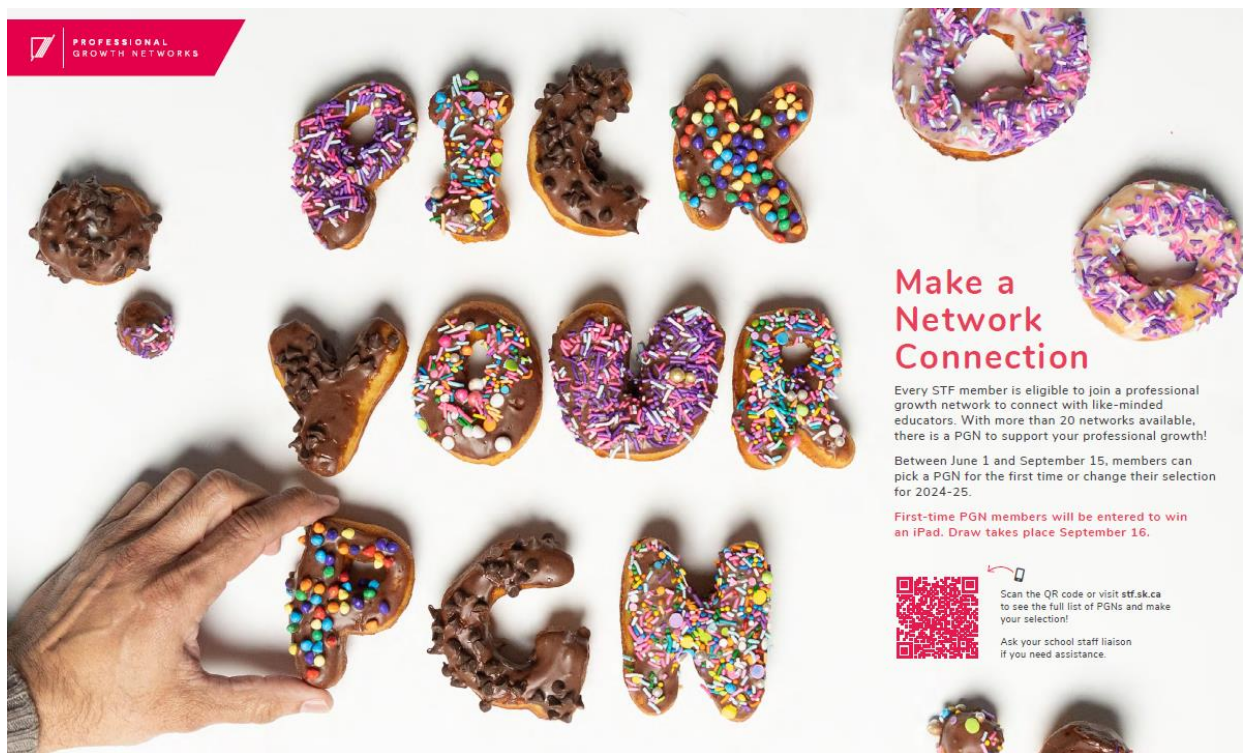
Professional Growth Networks Day

1. Grayson Beaudin, Manager, Member Experiences and Operations spoke about web services available at the Federation, networks using a website versus using Facebook, the PGN online Toolkit on our website, shared Member Survey data related to professional growth networks and spoke about member engagement.
2. Where We Are
 - Derek Barss, Senior Administrative Staff, reviewed the Innovation Eco-Cycle from last year's PGN Day presentation and asked networks to determine where they are in their cycle.
 - Leadership Development: "Navigating the Innovation Eco-Cycle Towards Collective Impact" presented by Alison Robertson, Systems Bright Consulting. A session to explore the theory and process of innovation within a complex social system. The 'infinity' eco-cycle structure will be used as a visual tool to help participants conceptualize change and better understand their own personal experiences as an innovator and change maker. Finally, they will learn how to put the theory into practice using the methodology of collective impact to collaborate across networks for a common goal.
 - Small table group conversations were facilitated by Denise Heppner, Associate Director, STF Professional Learning.
3. Celebrate Your Highlights!
 - Introduction of networks and share your highlights.
4. Where We Want to Be (Small groups)
 - Networks worked through an action/work plan template.
 - Spring Campaign
 - Q&A session around what we are asking of PGNs for the spring campaign.
 - Members asked questions about balancing all the components of a PGN and how the Federation can support them in their work in providing quality services, good communication, strong governance and value for membership.
5. Marketing
 - Rod Drabble, STF Communications Officer, spoke about the spring marketing plan.
 - The presentation provided an overview of approaches, methods and best practices for communications that inform and promote professional growth networks to current and potential members. Key areas for consideration included:

- Looking at networks from the perspective as a community and the need for formal, planned communications to inform that community; importance of determining a target audience.
- Consideration of what networks have to market or sell, including networking, conferences and learning opportunities, research, etc.
- Importance of evaluation of current human/volunteer resources, procedures and strategies and communication tools, e.g., website, social media, newsletters, etc.
- Emphasis on the importance of planning and the creation of a one- to two-year communications/marketing calendar to guide efforts and periodic review of the plan and goals.
- Information on support and resources available through the Federation.

Spring/Summer 2024 Pick Your PGN Campaign

Our Design staff used their creativity for our spring campaign:



Campaign included:

- Above poster in the May SSL mailing.
- Instructions for the SSL to talk about networks in a staff meeting in May or early June.
- All-member email sent on June 3 with general information and a reminder that sign up reopens on June 1.
- What's New in June.
- Summer 2024 issue of the *Bulletin*.
- Collection of social media messages to share online.

Sign Up at: <https://www.stf.sk.ca/mystf/my-profile/manage-professional-growth-network/>

Operational Goals

Each year the advisory committee develops an action plan that identifies operational goals. The 2023-24 plan included:

Area of Focus	Goals	Timeline	Direction 2025
Renewal: Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with PGNs to renew their bylaws and replace current constitutions 	All year	Governance
Renewal: Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create new templates and resources for online toolkit 	All year	Operations Teacher Success
Renewal: Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create sample reports and documents 	All year	Operations
Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send a report from the advisory committee to PGN presidents Identify common themes of interest to networks – areas of concern and support Enhance awareness of Federation supports to PGNs 	All year All year All year	Operations Teacher Success
Strengthening Relationships with Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue working with the Ministry Improve status with school divisions Promote PGNs to teachers Support collaboration between PGNs Share the work of PGNs with the Ministry 	All year	Public, Member and Stakeholder Relations Teacher Success Teaching and Learning
STF Members Value PGNs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase perception of professionalism Increase awareness of PGNs Increase PGN membership Highlight PGN projects through STF Communications (articles for the Bulletin, What's New, social media, etc.) 	All year	Teacher Success Operations
Contributions to Profession/ Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise status of profession 	All year	Teacher Success Public, Member and Stakeholder Relations

Grants

Basic Grants

Basic grant funds in the amount of \$51,240 have been disbursed to 18 professional growth networks to date. This is 73 percent of the calculated grants as of April 24, 2024. The remaining six networks have until the end of June to submit their documents or their funds will be forfeited for 2023-24.

The purpose of a basic grant is to provide networks with funding. By meeting the criteria specified in Federation policies, each professional growth network receives an annual basic grant according to the funding structure:

- An annual flat grant of \$2,000 shall be provided to each professional growth network.
- In addition to the flat grant, a membership grant of \$7.50 for each Federation member or fraction thereof shall be provided to each network.

Networks receive their calculated grant when they submit the required documents:

- President's Annual Report
- Audited Financial Statement or Review Engagement Report
- Proposed Budget
- Bylaw Amendments
- Annual General Meeting Minutes
- Current Membership List of Non-Federation Members
- Policies Approved by the Network

Special Project Grants

Special project grants are intended to support three types of activities:

1. Professional Growth
Support new and innovative professional growth opportunities for their membership.
2. Resource Development
Assist a professional growth network in the development of resources.
3. Strategic Planning
Assist a professional growth network in developing a strategic plan.

Special project grants are intended to benefit as many professional growth networks and Federation members as possible. By meeting the criteria and eligibility guidelines specified in Federation policies, professional growth networks receive a special project grant according to the renewed funding structure:

- There will be three grants of \$1,000 available for each purpose annually.
- The Professional Growth Advisory Committee may reallocate unused funds from one purpose to another.
- In instances where more than one professional growth network submits an application for the same project, a grant may be awarded to each network.
- Grants are recommended by the advisory committee to the STF Executive for final approval.

To ensure consistent decision making, the advisory committee applies the following criteria to assess the merits of each grant application and monitors the progress of each project. Criteria of special project grants include the following:

1. Special project grants are only intended to support proposed initiatives. Applications shall not be accepted for projects that are either complete or, in the opinion of the Professional Growth Network Advisory Committee, substantially under way.
2. Applications must demonstrate one or more of the following characteristics:
 - Collaboration
 - Accountability
 - Identified benefits
 - Engagement with members, stakeholders and/or other partners

The following eligibility guidelines are followed to ensure maximum benefit for all networks:

1. Multiple applications by one PGN shall only be considered at the discretion of the Professional Growth Networks Advisory Committee. Joint applications, or applications in which more than one network is directly involved, are treated as separate applications.
2. Projects must be consistent with Federation policy.
3. As a non-profit organization, the Federation does not approve applications where the goal is the development or distribution of commercial resources from which networks or individual members may benefit financially. As the sponsor, the Federation retains ownership for any resources or reports generated from specific projects.
4. Special project grants are not intended to replace or subsidize network membership fees. A network must be up-to-date in providing the required documentation for all grants in order to be approved for a special project grant.
5. Resources created with special project grants must be available to be shared with other networks upon request.

There are two application deadlines – December 31 and March 31.

The allotted budget for special project grants in 2023-24 was \$9,000. This year there was one special project grant application received from professional growth networks. The amount of grant funds awarded was \$1,000.*

2021-24 Special Project Grants Awarded

Grant Year	PGN	Project Name	\$ Requested	\$ Awarded
2024	SaskOutdoors	Best Practices Guide for Engaging and Working with Indigenous Peoples on Outdoor Education in Saskatchewan	\$1,000	\$1,000*
2023	SaskOutdoors	Strategic Planning	\$1,500	\$1,500
2023	SaskOutdoors	Reconciliation Journey PD	\$1,000	\$1,000
2022	SCWEA	Virtual Career Teacher Compendium	\$9,200	\$4,400
2022	SDA	Strategic Plan Renewal	\$7,700	\$3,600
2022	SSS	Virtual and Pop-Up PD	\$1,000	\$1,000
2021	LENS/SSLA	Amalgamation	\$2,500	\$2,500
2021	SHEA/SPEA	Amalgamation	\$5,000	\$4,375
2021	SPEA/SHEA	Social Justice in Physical Education and Health	\$4,000	\$4,000

*Pending STF Executive Approval June 2024

National Conference Grant

Physical and Health Education Saskatchewan hosted a national conference on May 1 to 4, 2024 in Saskatoon. They were hoping for 400 delegates, 250 of which were expected to be from outside of Saskatchewan. During the conference there was also time for the PHE Canada Research council Forum, PHE Canada Board of Directors Meeting and the annual Council of Provinces meetings.

PHES applied for a national conference grant and requested financial support, in-kind printing of promotional assistance, and conference folders and pens. PHES was granted a sponsorship of \$2,000 and suggested promotional assistance included advertising in SSL mailings, Events Calendar, social media, What's New, media coverage at the event, post-event article in the *Bulletin* and conference support. We also provided them with 400 STF folders and pens.

Budget

Professional growth networks are funded in the General Fund. The advisory committee monitors network participation and growth to support the Federation's budget development process. The advisory committee also recognizes that future budget development will continue to balance actual and potential use. For the 2024-25 budget, we are targeting 2,770 members selecting PGN membership.