

SASKATCHEWAN TEACHERS' FEDERATION

BULLETIN

WINTER 2025 | VOLUME 92, NO.2

Creating a Spark:

Trades offer unique teaching
and learning experience.

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Lights! Camera! Classroom!

Regina teacher combines
acting, education.

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Hockey & Horses

Sask DLC teacher shares personal
passions through teaching.



PAGE 16

Breaking New Ground

Teachers helping shape
class complexity role.

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SASKATCHEWAN
TEACHERS'
FEDERATION

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▼ STF councillors wear #Red4Ed at the Councillor Conference on October 24 in support of colleagues in Alberta.



JORDAN TRASK

President's Update

For me, the start of the school year feels like it was only yesterday, yet so much has already happened in these first few months.



The preparation phase for our next round of collective bargaining is well underway. The pre-bargaining priorities survey saw the highest completion rate in the history of Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation surveys, and we saw excellent turnout for virtual meetings over the last several months. These events are critical to our planning, making sure every teacher has their say. Thank you to STF members for fulfilling your responsibilities as part of the STF collective with remarkable commitment, on top of all the pressures of your jobs.

Relationships remain a focus of my work, and there have been many opportunities to connect with members and reconnect with education sector organizations already this year. I appreciate hearing feedback from members about the *2023-2026 Provincial Collective Bargaining Agreement*, including the new Article 17, which brought approximately 500 new classroom complexity teachers to schools across Saskatchewan.

I've also been in contact with the Minister of Education, attended the Premier's Dinner and NDP Leader's Reception, and the STF hosted an MLA reception on December 4. These events provide important opportunities to speak to Premier Scott Moe, Opposition Leader Carla Beck, numerous MLAs and community leaders about the realities of Saskatchewan's classrooms and the need for improved supports to meet the needs of all students.

On World Teachers' Day, I attended a rally at the Alberta Legislature and shared a message of solidarity as Alberta teachers began a provincewide strike the following day. After three weeks, the Government of Alberta passed legislation ordering teachers back to work, imposing a contract and halting local and provincial bargaining until 2028. The STF issued a statement condemning the decision and asserted that the use of the notwithstanding clause to override Alberta teachers' charter rights is an assault on all teachers and workers across Canada. At this fall's Councillor's Conference, we held a #Red4Ed day in support of Alberta teachers, and several local associations also organized their own #Red4Ed days.

I am proud to see this level of engagement, support and leadership for our colleagues in other provinces. This type of solidarity is what will continue to strengthen the sector and profession here in Saskatchewan and beyond. It is important to recognize that a threat to the rights of teachers anywhere is a threat to the rights of teachers everywhere.

Thank you for everything you give to your students, colleagues and profession. I wish you a happy and restful holiday season and all the best in 2026. ▲

Samantha Becotte

Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation President

Record-Breaking Response to Bargaining Priorities Survey

BY **LANCE HILTZ**, STF COMMUNICATIONS

When preparations for the next round of provincial collective bargaining kicked off, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation asked members to be informed, engaged and ready to act. Teachers answered the call in record numbers. Over the course of two weeks, more than 47 percent of STF members completed the Provincial Bargaining Member Priority Survey. This beat the previous record of 36 percent, set during the last survey in 2022.

Karen Thomson, senior manager of STF's Research and Records unit, says this is a significant response rate. "Other organizations are often happy with a response rate in the 15 to 25 percent range for surveys like this, so to reach 47 percent of members is really amazing and gives us a rich set of data from which to work. More responses mean a smaller margin of error and a more statistically accurate sample."

The bargaining priorities survey is just one of many opportunities teachers had to have their say this fall. Over a series of online meetings, members also provided feedback. This is in addition to consultations held at Labour School, with local association presidents, vice-presidents and local implementation and negotiation committee chairpersons at Local Leadership Gathering, Councillor Conference, local association annual general meetings and school staff liaison gatherings.

STF President Samantha Becotte says this level of participation showcases teachers' commitment.

"The last round of bargaining was long and tiring, but teachers know that bargaining outcomes can directly

"The priorities must come from the members. It is very encouraging to see the high level of engagement that teachers have had in this process so far."

impact the support and resources students have access to. We made important gains in the last round, but there is still more work to be done – and teachers clearly understand that."

The feedback gathered this fall will be refined with research and additional consultations early in 2026. From there, a draft of bargaining proposals will go to the STF Executive. With the Executive's approval, the document will then go before councillors at the Annual Meeting of Council in April for final approval.

"The priorities must come from the members," says Associate Executive Director, Labour Relations Patrick Maze. "It is very encouraging to see the high level of engagement that teachers have had in this process so far."

▼ A look at the pre-bargaining process



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2023-2026 PROVINCIAL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

In September, the STF shared an update with members on an additional gain from the 2023-2026 PCBA implementation phase. Substitute teachers are now guaranteed the same access to STF representation during disciplinary proceedings as contract teachers.

In addition, a grievance arbitration is scheduled for December 2025 to address sick pay for teachers during the last round's job action. If successful, this will result in some teachers receiving back pay for sick days and will also provide clarity on the matter for future rounds.

In 2024, the STF filed a grievance on the matter and won; however, the Saskatchewan School Boards Association requested a judicial review of the decision. The review upheld the initial ruling in favour of the STF and awarded some costs. This has been a lengthy process and marks a significant win for substitute teachers – and for the broader teaching profession.

The STF is also monitoring implementation of Article 17 Class Complexity, and meeting with officials from the Ministry and SSBA at a policy table on violence-free classrooms. ▲

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FRÉSK is a directory of educational resources and services from Saskatchewan's French community and organizations for cultural, linguistic and identity development for all French-speaking students in Saskatchewan.

Teacher Jon Forbes watches student Ryder Loewen set up the router table in the woodshop at Martensville High School.

Creating a Spark:

Trades Education Is Unique Learning for Teachers, Students

BY: ROD DRABBLE, STF COMMUNICATIONS

▼ Grade 10 students (left to right) Rhett Nosterud, Ken Dela Cruz, Matthew Hodgson and Corbin Bakken watch as teacher Jon Forbes demonstrates proper welding technique.



BY: **ROD DRABBLE**, STF COMMUNICATIONS

For a moment, you can hear sandpaper whispering on wood across the shop as Jon Forbes watches a student set up the router table.

“There it is, nice and tight,” Forbes says, as the student turns the wrench to lock a raised panel bit into place.

The quiet is broken by the whir of the router. Then the screaming starts as the bit carves a path along the lid of the student’s box project. Forbes indicates approval and keeps moving. He grabs a battered, paint-spattered stool and sits down at a table. Students’ eyes turn toward him for a demonstration of how to clamp the box for gluing.

“Makes sense?” he asks, looking around the table. Five heads nod together.

It’s a familiar routine for Forbes, a practical and applied arts (PAA) teacher at Martensville High School. He’s constantly on the move demonstrating, answering questions and praising the work of Grade 10 students in the woodshop and adjacent welding lab.

As a Red Seal carpenter and a teacher who majored in industrial arts while attending the University of Saskatchewan’s College of Education, Forbes brings a special skillset to teaching. Not surprisingly, he is an advocate for the benefits of PAA education for students.

“It’s a really good link between knowledge and skills,” he says. “We do a project and it takes them half a semester. There aren’t a lot of things they can do anymore that don’t give them instant gratification. It’s a good bridge for them; they get that (immediate) feedback but also the long, drawn-out satisfaction at the end.

“It’s an area where sometimes kids see a lot of success when they don’t see a lot of success in other parts of school. They just need to find something they are interested in.”

There are 35 curriculum areas beneath the PAA umbrella in Saskatchewan. There are many familiar, long-standing courses in trades and home economics, but other areas include agriculture, business, communication and design, human services, resource management, and career and life management.



▲ Abbey Hart (left) and Raylai Lint don heavy jackets and eye protection in preparation for welding. Safety is an important part of the learning for students.

Programs such as construction and carpentry and welding are examples of trades programs that are well known to generations of students but also evolving to meet today's needs.

"A lot of people still call it industrial arts or vocational but today applied technology is a perfect descriptor for the bridge between trades and technology," says Kelly McIntyre, a high school teacher in Maidstone and president of the Saskatchewan Teachers of Applied Technology. "We all know that technology plays a role in everything we do today, but how does that vary across different trades? While some tasks have been automated, in the end, we still rely on skilled tradespeople."

No matter the term you use – shop, industrial arts or PAA – teachers in trades and technology are unique within their schools. Large, urban schools may be able to designate a full-time teacher for a single subject area, but the reality is many teachers have to be proficient in several widely different areas.

"It's very broad. When you try to explain to people what you teach, it's probably easier to say what don't I teach," explains McIntyre. Often, PAA teachers offer survey courses where two, three or more areas are linked to provide students with a richer experience.

That diversity is one of the reasons why McIntyre believes in the value of STAT and its 80-plus members. She says PAA teachers across the province – whether members or not – are generous with each other. They share knowledge and experience around effective teaching as well as strategies to ensure the ongoing success of programs in their schools.

"What I love most about STAT is that I've never met a group of people so open about sharing their resources and so full of tried-and-true tips and tricks for their teaching spaces."

"We are our greatest resource," she says. "What I love most about STAT is that I've never met a group of people so open about sharing their resources and so full of tried-and-true tips and tricks for their teaching spaces. The learning at STAT is truly unique."

As a professional growth network, STAT welcomes teachers from all backgrounds. Its conferences are filled with active, hands-on learning in areas such as glass blowing, jewelry making, blacksmithing, cabinet making, 3D printing, epoxy work, Teepee Teachings and more. "You don't have to be a shop teacher to attend," McIntyre says. "Educators from all subject areas can find valuable learning here."

There are several challenges in Saskatchewan when it comes to teaching PAA and trades-related courses, according to McIntyre. First, many programs require a significant capital investment in tools and machinery and funds to maintain equipment.

"PAA programs are costly to run, so without someone who truly values them within your own school, they often go unfunded and end up being the first to be cut. When that happens, kids lose the chance to be exposed to trades early on."

Like other classrooms, trades-related classes have experienced growth in enrolment and diversity. More students means a greater focus on safety while also ensuring shops are as accessible as possible. McIntyre points to one student who was extremely noise sensitive. In the past, woodshop may not have been an option, but noise-cancelling headphones, a gradual introduction to the skills and the use of hand tools instead of roaring machines made learning possible.

"This is a life skill," she says. "If we can create something that is a life skill and make that connection, that's fantastic. We just need to have that support there."

Access to formal training is another challenge. Industrial arts certification through the University of Saskatchewan's College of Education is on pause and programs are few and far between in Canada.

Forbes' combination of a teaching degree in industrial arts and journeyman ticket offers him a special perspective. He has previously taught courses such as math and psychology in addition to PAA, but the opportunity in Martensville to focus on shop classes has strengthened his teaching practice.

"Having a really deep level of knowledge makes teaching in that area a lot easier," he says. "It doesn't always need to be you at the front and everyone doing things at the same time. There are a lot of teachable moments. To somebody who just walks by and looks in the classroom, sometimes it looks like absolute chaos, but I tell people when they come in, this is not going to look like a normal classroom, and that's okay."

McIntyre's best estimate is there are perhaps 100 fully certified PAA teachers in Saskatchewan schools, but there are also many teachers who recognize the value of trades and have stepped up to make sure that programs are still available for students.

"There are even a few teachers who may be hobbyist woodworkers or something and they have been gracious enough to take on the shop position in their building despite not being a shop teacher," she says. "I think that is so courageous. It is very intimidating; it is not a space that just anybody can walk into and feel comfortable."

With Canada facing a generational transition and a forecast decline in workers in trades-related professions,

skilled teachers can play an important role in introducing students to the trades and perhaps inspiring a career.

"I love it, seeing their light-bulb moments, seeing them start to piece it together," Forbes says. "I am passionate about it because I grew up in a smaller town where I had a really great shop teacher. My job as a shop teacher is not to put out carpenters or welders. My job is to show them what they can do and create interest and knowledge so when they go off to learn it for a career, or whatever it might be, they have good, solid foundational knowledge."

McIntyre believes in the value that trades and technology learning has for students. But as someone who twice left the classroom to return to a trades career and then came back, she also knows firsthand the impact that working with students has on teachers.

"I had to come back because I missed working with kids. At the end of the day my most fulfilling thing is seeing a kid who was unsure if they could build something and then they build something themselves and you see that pride. There is perhaps nothing more fulfilling than that," she says.

"Building relationships with our students is primary before any learning can ever happen. That is, hands-down, the biggest and most effective tool in education no matter what we are teaching." ▲

▼ The practical and applied arts program at Martensville High School introduces students such as George Krueckl (left) and Zachery Swanson to woodworking.





Everett Hindley Faces Complex Challenges in Education Portfolio

BY: **SARAH MACDONALD**, STF COMMUNICATIONS

Everett Hindley acknowledges there is a lot of work to do to meet the needs of Saskatchewan's schools. As Saskatchewan's Minister of Education, he oversees a sector that has been underfunded for years and where relationships between teachers and his government have been strained

Hindley, the MLA for Swift Current, received the education portfolio following the 2024 provincial election. He recognizes the last round of provincial collective bargaining was hard for all involved and since assuming the portfolio he has been working to establish better relationships with everyone in the education sector, including the STF, Saskatchewan School Boards Association, teachers and parents.

"Everyone's kind of working together trying to rebuild some of the things that perhaps were not so smooth previously," he says in a recent interview with the

Bulletin. "I think we all had some takeaways from the last round of bargaining, the things we would probably do differently next time. From my perspective, there's always going to be some give and take there. There needs to be some compromise ... but there's a way to do that in a fashion that is as respectful as possible."

He is aware of the numerous challenges teachers in Saskatchewan face, including crowded and complex classrooms, aging schools, not enough support staff, and recruitment and retention struggles in some communities. He has visited school divisions across the province and talked to many people from the sector in hopes of addressing the issues facing education.

Hindley says education is a top priority for the provincial government, along with health care and public safety. There are capital investments, with new schools being built in areas with strong population growth and older schools being replaced. He says it's a continual

challenge to stay on top of the needs, and as soon as one box is ticked off, there's another.

"I think probably one of the biggest challenges for me is sometimes – and maybe it's not specific to education – you know you're not able to say yes to everything," he says.

"Sometimes you get into some really vigorous debates about how education should be delivered. But at the end of the day, I try to remind myself [to] make sure that we're always remembering that kid at the other end and their experience."

The government is expanding its specialized support classroom initiative. In addition, approximately 500 new teachers are being hired by school divisions – a result of the binding arbitration award. Hindley acknowledges some school boards are struggling to fill the new roles. He says this reflects the overall teacher shortage in Canada, and he has met with the Minister of Advanced Education and deans of education programs at the University of Saskatchewan and University of Regina to look at how to train more teachers.

Teacher retention is another problem, Hindley admits, especially in northern school divisions that have significant challenges in recruiting and keeping teachers. He believes it's important to speak with teachers in rural and northern communities to identify not only the challenges but also the benefits of those positions and communities. Supporting teachers beginning at the recruitment stage and through their initial years in the profession will hopefully result in better retention over the long term.

"We want to try and make sure that we match those teachers up with the communities that they would best be able to succeed in," Hindley says. Providing opportunities for newer teachers to teach in communities outside of the province's largest cities may create awareness of the many professional and personal benefits of teaching in rural and northern Saskatchewan.

With the current provincial collective agreement expiring at the end of August 2026, bargaining for a new agreement could begin as soon as May. After a tumultuous round of bargaining in 2023-24, Hindley is hopeful that the next agreement can be reached collaboratively and without job action.

"We want to ensure that we're doing everything for our students to make sure they have every opportunity to succeed in our classrooms in Saskatchewan. We want to keep students front and centre because we know when we get into some of these longer, protracted negotiations, it can impact students, it impacts families, and it gets frustrating," Hindley explains.



“Education is a top priority for the provincial government, along with health care and public safety. ... It’s a continual challenge to stay on top of the needs, and as soon as one box is ticked off, there’s another.”

Hindley sees teachers and schools as central to all Saskatchewan communities, whether rural or urban, so negotiating in good faith, earnestly and honestly, to get a timely resolution at the bargaining table is a priority for him.

"I want to say to all of our teachers, no matter where they may live and where they're teaching, thank you for the amazing work that you're doing. You're community leaders. You're not just providing that leadership in the classroom Monday to Friday, but you are important people in our community," he concludes. ▲

Authentic Leadership Requires Trust, Collaboration

BY: **ROBIN HESHKA**, PRINCIPAL
WILLIAM GRAYSON SCHOOL, MOOSE JAW

Over the past few years, the director of my school division has used the words, “we are striving to be a world-class organization.” This quote made me think, “who decides what world-class actually means?” I love the idea of working for a world-class organization, but I needed to know what it truly meant to me and how I would bring the idea into my building. This is where I started diving into authentic leadership. I was able to see I needed to focus on three main areas: leaning into my strengths, committing to living strong values as a school community and using my voice especially in those challenging conversations. I believed committing to these three things would ensure my staff and students felt safe enough to take risks and even if it failed, they’d keep trying.

Authenticity builds trust. I am sure we have all done work and know the importance of vulnerability and being honest in hard times. Being authentic signals it is okay to not have all the answers. It also signals that you can show up with both a genuineness and willingness to grow. When your staff sees this in you, it helps them feel safe enough to take risks and bring their authentic selves to the table. This is where the richest, most courageous conversations happen.

For a while here, I thought I (and only I) needed to create the “world-class organization” in my building. How could I do this? After many conversations, I realized I couldn’t do this alone. Like everything in education, I needed my team! My team is made up of many amazing personalities, valuable strengths and strong leaders, so I knew I didn’t have to worry about anything. They had the core. It was up to me to empower them, to light them up and support them day to day. My goal is to support each team member to be the best world-class version of themselves because when everyone in your building is the best world-class



▲ Robin Heshka, principal at William Grayson School in Moose Jaw.

version of themselves, it helps create a world-class organization.

When I started to look at our school as a place where I wanted to nurture authenticity, trust and collaboration, I saw amazing things happen. It was less about comparing ourselves to others and more about having the readiness to show up each day and be committed to being our best selves. When everyone on staff is committed to doing this, you naturally become a part of creating a world-class organization. This is evident within the culture of the school and will always speak for itself. ▲



Inclusive Education Awards

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In collaboration with Inclusive Education Canada, Inclusion Saskatchewan is pleased to be accepting nominations for the 2026 Inclusive Education Awards. Nominations are open until January 18th. Anyone can submit a nomination, and we accept nominations for teachers, schools, community members, and groups who make a positive impact on the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in their communities. Full details and nomination forms available at InclusionSK.com/inclusive-education-awards



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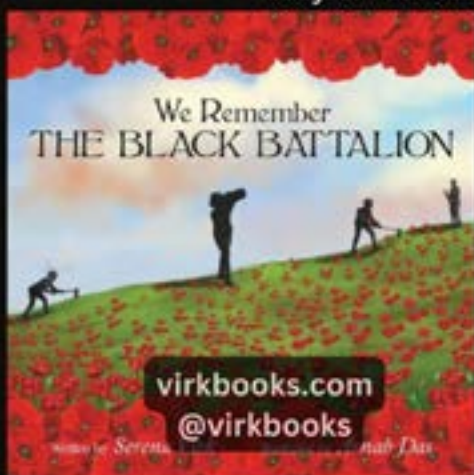
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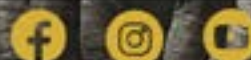
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STF and Saskatchewan School-Based Leaders Renew Modules for Principals

BY: COURTNEY FORSETH, STF COMMUNICATIONS

The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation and the Saskatchewan School-Based Leaders, a professional growth network, are working together to redevelop and relaunch a series of modules designed to support leadership development in teachers.

The previous modules ranged in topics from school culture to community-based impact to assessment and instruction. Over time, these modules were presented less often due to principals and vice-principals having less release time for professional learning. It was also a challenging undertaking for a PGN, made up of volunteers, to try to keep all the modules current.

STF Professional Learning Director Shaun McEachern says partnering with SSBL is a perfect opportunity to create meaningful professional learning for Saskatchewan teachers.

"The goal is to create three or four new professional learning sessions that align with current research and the old modules that we will deliver to leaders and aspiring leaders throughout the province," explains McEachern. "Our objective is to create impactful, engaging sessions that are created by teachers for teachers, delivered with the support of STFPL."

The collaboration goes far beyond STFPL and SSBL. The revised modules will align with the STF's four focus areas of its leadership work: Indigenous leadership, women in leadership, principals and vice-principals, and governance. Other networks of teachers are also being called on to help develop the content. For example, the STF's Principal and Vice-Principal Advisory Committee is contributing

"Our objective is to create impactful, engaging sessions that are created by teachers for teachers, delivered with the support of STFPL."

to the principal and vice-principal modules; likewise, the Indigenous Leadership Committee is creating the Indigenous leadership modules.

STF senior administrative staff and chairperson of the Indigenous Leadership Committee Angela Caron says, "Most leadership models don't include Indigenous content, perspectives and ways of leading. Having this module developed by the Committee ensures it reflects authentic approaches to leading and supports both Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders working with Indigenous communities. Being guided by voices from across the province and strengthened by the facilitation expertise of STFPL allows Indigenous leaders to focus on shaping meaningful and relevant content."

“Most leadership models don’t include Indigenous content, perspectives and ways of leading. Having this module developed by the [Indigenous Leadership] Committee ensures it reflects authentic approaches to leading and supports both Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders working with Indigenous communities.”

Her colleague, Withman Jaigobin, who leads the principal and vice-principal work at the STF, agrees. “Using the Committee to help develop these modules is a great fit and helps fulfill the purpose of the Committee and the goals of the STF to support principals. It really comes full circle.”

One module, called Leading With Purpose and Navigating Complex Challenges Through Shared Beliefs, is already complete and launched earlier this fall. Development of additional sessions is underway and will be released over the coming year.

“The sessions will be constantly re-evaluated, updated and repurposed. This work between SSBL and STFPL will be ongoing, so that we can work together to support our leaders,” says McEachern. “SSBL is a PGN, and PGNs are so important because they are communities of leaders coming together to improve practice and actualize curriculum. Research shows us that the best professional learning is grassroots, and STFPL is happy to be able to support and facilitate this.”

Modules will be delivered through STF Professional Learning both in person and asynchronously. ▲



ISTOCK

Saskatchewan's New Class Complexity Teachers

BY: LANCE HILTZ, STF COMMUNICATIONS



Krista Berzolla began her 29th year of teaching in an entirely new role at Saskatoon's Father Vachon School. She's just one of approximately 500 new class complexity teachers introduced in schools across Saskatchewan this fall. The new role is a result of a new article awarded through arbitration and included in the 2023-2026 *Provincial Collective Bargaining Agreement*. Berzolla notes that the new role is being developed as they go. Last June and again in August, she met with her school's administrative team to set priorities and create a tentative schedule for the year ahead. They worked together to create a vision for what the class complexity teacher role would look like in their school, and how it would benefit their students' unique needs. She spent time over the summer creating planning documents to help ensure that her work is student-driven and aligns with the work and needs of her colleagues.

The class complexity teacher role is described in Article 17 of the 2023-2026 PCBA with duties that "may include, but are not limited to, one-on-one behavioural/safety interventions, individual or small group programming to address specialized learning needs of students, acute learning needs, modifications or adaptations of programming, counselling services, self-regulation education, etc."

"The staff has been very supportive and accommodating of me, welcoming me into their classes. Teachers are comfortable to co-teach lessons with me and students are comfortable with me teaching them because I have been in their [class]rooms since the beginning of September," says Berzolla. "The teachers and I collaborate to build a plan that will be differentiated to help meet the varied needs of students. We then co-teach daily and function as a team to deliver instruction."

As part of her planning process, Berzolla first met with teachers in her school to get a detailed understanding of their classroom dynamics, the students and their various requirements. For the month of September, Berzolla worked with all Grades 1 to 8 classrooms, providing social-emotional learning instruction and going over school-wide rules and routines. This allowed all classes to learn the same terminology and concepts. Father Vachon School was a specialized support classroom pilot school, and the provincial funding from that program supported the development of a positive learning behaviour framework rooted in job-embedded support, strengthening positive learning behaviours through trauma-invested practices and social-emotional learning. Together, Berzolla and the teachers she works with use the positive learning behaviour framework to outline the focus and direction of her role.

"Time in classrooms has provided me the opportunity to get to know most of the students and staff in the school



"Time in classrooms has provided me the opportunity to get to know most of the students and staff in the school and observe class

complexities firsthand. I have brief weekly collaboration meetings with the teachers I work with to discuss future planning and student progress. The collaborative nature of this approach is key – we are working together to address complexities and to build a safe, enriching learning environment."

– Krista Berzolla

and observe class complexities firsthand," she says. "I have brief weekly collaboration meetings with the teachers I work with to discuss future planning and student progress. The collaborative nature of this approach is key – we are working together to address complexities and to build a safe, enriching learning environment."

From October to January, Berzolla is working with four teachers in Grades 4 to 8 classrooms. She will work with a new group of four teachers in these grades from February to June. "In addition to this, I lead a social skills group for students in need of that support, and a small weekly group focusing on executive functioning. I am also available to support students who are dysregulated and need support to help them regulate. This means I pivot quickly and sometimes need to triage my work."

Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation President Samantha Becotte sees this new role as an important first step to address complexity issues in schools. "Through the class complexity teacher role, teachers have access to additional resources to support their practice, collaborate and determine what their students need to succeed," says Becotte. "The inclusion of complexity provisions within our provincial agreement was only possible thanks to the incredible efforts of our membership, and it is very exciting to see those hard-won resources making positive impacts in classrooms."

"We are very appreciative of the additional support for class complexity in our schools this year, and very excited about the opportunity to continue learning and developing the role alongside colleagues across the



“I shared the presentation during a staff meeting last spring to get the staff’s voice, because they’re the ones who know what

the complexities are. I was able to take the data and feedback and break it into six different areas that were identified as complexities specific to our school. That gave me a great framework to get started with the role in the fall. It is a very exciting position to be in as we collaborate, build relationships and start to see results for students.”

– Rob Heppner

province,” says Terri Fradette, superintendent of education with Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools. “As the role develops, we have a chance to learn from the successes and challenges, and make sure we meet the greatest areas of need within each school’s context.”

Last spring, Fradette and her team convened a small committee of GSCS principals to help co-construct a framework for what shape the class complexity teacher role would take in their schools. Exploring the purpose, guiding principles and role of a class complexity teacher within their student learning model, the committee brought a framework forward to all GSCS principals, vice-principals and assistant principals to get feedback. From there, school principals worked with their teachers to actualize the framework to best support their students’ needs and their school’s environment.

Fradette and STF Professional Learning Associate Director Denise Heppner shared resources to design a session for GSCS class complexity teachers, based on the framework developed with GSCS principals. Heppner delivered the session to approximately 40 class complexity teachers last August.

“It was very clear early on that a one-size-fits-all solution was not going to fit,” says Fradette. “As good stewards of our schools’ resources, it is important for us to monitor the role’s impact and make sure the teachers and students in each building are getting what they need. One thing that has come to the forefront is that in some of our larger

schools, the allocation of resources can feel very stretched. At this point, though, we are very excited for the infusion of support we’ve had.”

Per the provincial agreement, every school with a student population over 150 gets one full-time certified teacher, and every school with a population of 75-149 students gets one half-time teacher, assigned to address classroom complexity.

“This is a good start, but there is more work to do,” says Becotte. “Right now, a school with 150 students and a school with 1,200 students each get one class complexity teacher. As this new role is implemented, we are learning more about what we can improve in future rounds of negotiations.”

On September 4, 275 attendees from across Saskatchewan – including class complexity teachers, principals and school division personnel – took part in an STF Professional Learning virtual session that Heppner designed and delivered, called Navigating Complexity: Launching the Class Complexity Teacher Role in Saskatchewan Schools.

“The creation of the class complexity teacher is a groundbreaking moment in the history of Saskatchewan education,” says Heppner. “Every one of the class complexity teachers in place across the province is contributing to defining and shaping the new role, which is very exciting.”

Rob Heppner took on the class complexity teacher position at Waldheim School last spring. He worked with Denise Heppner to create a PowerPoint presentation that he used in his school to help staff identify their own class complexity issues.

“I shared the presentation during a staff meeting last spring to get the staff’s voice, because they’re the ones who know what the complexities are,” says Rob Heppner. “I was able to take the data and feedback and break it into six different areas that were identified as complexities specific to our school. That gave me a great framework to get started with the role in the fall. It is a very exciting position to be in as we collaborate, build relationships and start to see results for students.”

Waldheim School principal Diana Jemieff describes the new role as a “massive success” for her school. “Prairie Spirit School Division has been guiding us with frameworks and potential ways to track the role, but I appreciate that they allow us to gather our staff’s voice and shape the role to our individual school’s context,” she says. “I would say the new class complexity support has lowered the water line for everyone in our building by taking what was once an unreasonable workload and making it feel much more manageable.”



“As class complexity teachers are figuring out what the role is within their schools, the Facebook page has been gaining momentum. My hope

is that engagement will increase as we move through the year.”

- Davina McMain

Building community among class complexity teachers has been a crucial part of the development of the role across the province. Over the summer, Davina McMain started a private Facebook group called Saskatchewan Complexity Teachers to create a space for class complexity teachers to find community, conversation and support among colleagues. McMain is in her 28th year as a teacher, now working 50 percent as a class complexity teacher, 40 percent as a student services teacher and 10 percent teaching math at Dr. Isman Elementary School in Wolseley. There are currently over 480 members in the Facebook group, including class complexity teachers, principals and school division staff.

“I felt a need to connect with colleagues who were also taking on this role,” says McMain. “Networking is essential to our success. People are using the platform to advertise opportunities for learning such as STFPL sessions. It has been a great platform for sharing ideas. As class complexity teachers are figuring out what the role is within their schools, the Facebook page has been gaining momentum. My hope is that engagement will increase as we move through the year.”

Denise Heppner has also promoted an online resource created for Saskatchewan’s class complexity teachers called the Class Complexity Connection, which was created to provide professional learning and opportunities for collaboration, learning and resource sharing among class complexity teachers across the province. In October, Denise Heppner invited class complexity teachers to join virtual guided conversation sessions in role-alike groups, meaning specific sessions for teachers in elementary, high school and kindergarten to Grade 12 schools. These sessions were an opportunity for teachers to discuss what is working well, common challenges, time and energy management strategies, useful documentation practices and collaborative supports. Similar opportunities and further professional learning sessions are being planned throughout the remainder of the year.

Specialized Support Classrooms

Announced by the Government of Saskatchewan in 2024, the specialized support classrooms are being piloted in eight schools. According to a government news release, each classroom will have a maximum of 15 students, a minimum of one teacher, two educational assistants and access to other supports as needed. The 2025-26 provincial budget included funds to expand this program and implement 50 of the 200 specialized support classrooms being added over the next four years.

“It’s important to remember that this role was created to address class complexities, and while I am working to do that, I am not a magic wand,” says Berzolla. “I am one support for my classrooms, and my hope is that as the year progresses and we reflect on the work done, there will be benefits evident.”

*** Editor’s Note:** This story was written very early into the implementation of class complexity teachers, just four weeks into the school year. ▲

ENSURING EQUITABLE ACCESS AND ENHANCED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES




Materials:
Braille texts, eTexts, large print, audio materials, braille manipulatives and games; assistive technology

Service:
Information services, reading suggestions, technical support

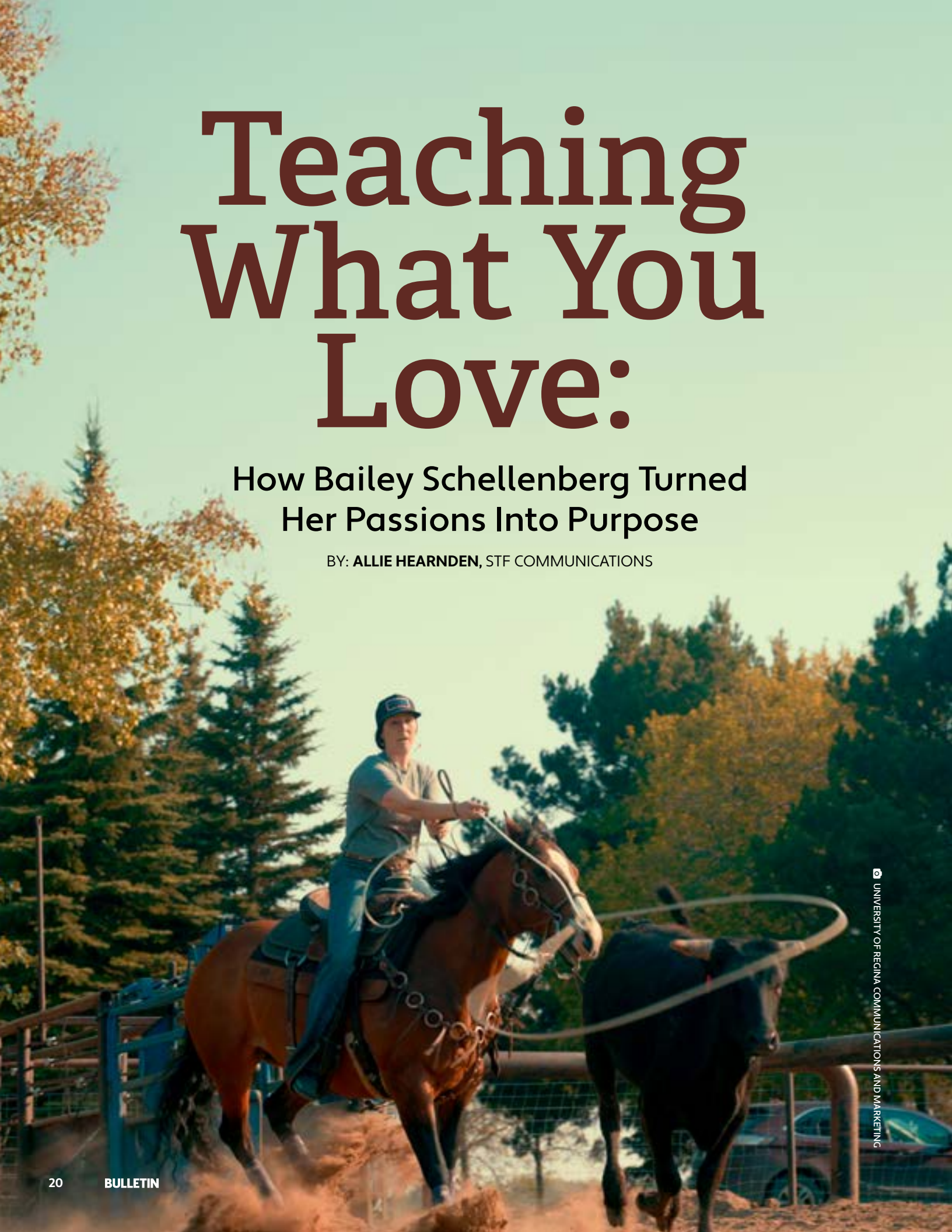
<https://library.spsd.sk.ca>

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Teaching What You Love:

How Bailey Schellenberg Turned
Her Passions Into Purpose

BY: ALLIE HEARNDEN, STF COMMUNICATIONS



◀ Faculty of Education graduate Bailey Schellenberg spends countless hours practicing her love of breakaway calf roping aboard her horse, Cindy.

“At the end of the day, if I want it, I’m going to work for it.”

That simple, powerful statement defines Bailey Schellenberg, who received her bachelor of education degree in 2019. It’s not just a motto; it’s a way of life. Whether she’s teaching equine studies and hockey skills through the Saskatchewan Distance Learning Centre, mentoring young rodeo athletes or raising her daughter Maisy on a farm full of horses, Schellenberg is living proof that when educators teach what they love, they inspire.



FROM FARM GIRL TO STUDENT-ATHLETE

Schellenberg’s story begins on a farm in rural Saskatchewan, where her love for animals and community was nurtured through 4-H and long hours spent with horses. That early connection to nature and responsibility laid the foundation for everything that followed.

“My parents will tell you that I was a big dreamer,” she says. “I always wanted to be in rodeo and be involved in that life.”

Her journey took a turn toward hockey when she moved to Melville to play competitively. There, she met two high school teachers who supported her through the challenges of leaving home and balancing sport and school.

“They played a huge role in my life,” Schellenberg recalls. “Just to be able to have their support meant the world. And I want to pay that forward.”

FINDING HER CALLING AT THE U OF R

Schellenberg initially enrolled in nursing but quickly realized her heart was in education. She transferred to the University of Regina’s Faculty of Education, where she found her place and her people.

“I dove right into education and never looked back,” she says. “I just heard so many great things about the pros and the program and the placements.”

As a student-athlete with the Cougars women’s hockey team, Schellenberg learned to juggle five classes, a part-time job and a demanding athletic schedule. It wasn’t easy, but it was formative. She laughs as she recalls relying on both a phone and wall calendar to keep her days on track. “Every part of my day was scheduled,” she says.

University taught her more than just pedagogy. It taught her resilience, grit and the value of hard work.

“All the student-athletes know that it takes a lot of work and you have to want it. You have to be gritty. You have to be resilient. You have to be able to handle those late nights.”

TEACHING WITH HEART AT SASK DLC

In 2023, Schellenberg joined the Saskatchewan Distance Learning Centre, a government-run online school offering K-12 education across the province. Her role? Teaching equine studies and hockey skills to high school students, two electives rarely found in traditional classrooms.

“It’s a different sense of teaching,” she explains. “We have asynchronous [classes] so kids can work at their own pace. My hockey kids that are playing in the WHL, they can work on assignments at night while they’re on the road.”

Schellenberg’s teaching is deeply personal. She knows what it’s like to juggle academics, athletics and life and she’s committed to helping her students succeed on all fronts.

“I think that education is so important for our kids today,” she says. “Getting a Grade 12 education and then moving on to university is so important job-wise and to be a contributing part of our society.”

Her classroom may be virtual, but her impact is real. By teaching subjects she’s passionate about, Schellenberg connects with students in ways that go beyond curriculum.

RODEO, MOTHERHOOD AND MENTORSHIP

Outside the classroom, Schellenberg is a competitive rodeo athlete, a coach and a mom. After rekindling her love for horses, she began roping in 2021 and quickly rose through the ranks. In 2023, she won the Kakeyow Cowboys Rodeo Association breakaway roping title and trained her horse, Cindy, to become horse of the year. Their success earned her a spot at the 2024 National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas.

“Her days are full: teaching, training, mentoring and raising her daughter. But Schellenberg wouldn’t have it any other way.”



Her days are full: teaching, training, mentoring and raising her daughter. But Schellenberg wouldn't have it any other way.

"This is the dream," she says. "Where we live, what we get to do every day and rid[ing] every day is incredible."

MENTORSHIP THROUGH PASSION

Schellenberg's teaching extends beyond the classroom and into the rodeo arena, where she mentors young ropers, especially girls who, like her, are looking for role models.

"I wish I had a female mentor," she says. "Girls and boys rope differently. The conversations I've had with those young girls and their parents, and I know that they look up to me. I really hope that I can be a light for them and just be a really good role model."

She finds deep joy in watching her students succeed. "To watch them rope and actually catch one, it's such an amazing feeling. It's almost better than me catching."

Her mentorship is rooted in empathy and experience. She knows the tears, the frustration, the hours of practice and she knows the triumph when it all clicks.

"I want to see those kids do better than me," she says. "I want to see them beat me in their arena."

THE POWER OF PASSION-BASED EDUCATION

Schellenberg's story is a powerful example of what happens when educators teach what they love. Her passion for horses and hockey doesn't just fuel her, it inspires her students, connects her to her community and shapes her legacy.

"I wouldn't have any of this without my university degree," she says.

She's also shaping the next generation, starting with her daughter. "I want to teach Maisy to be kind and a light in this world and to be positive."

In the classroom, on the ice and in the rodeo arena, Schellenberg is living proof that when teachers bring their whole selves to their work, they don't just educate, they empower. ▲



Watch Schellenberg's story in the University of Regina's new Beyond Campus video series and see how passion-based teaching can change lives.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iGPHbWqJVz0>



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UPCOMING EVENTS

VARIOUS
DATES

ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING

You can now take advantage of STF Professional Learning courses virtually, at your own pace. Delivered through Canvas, STF Professional Learning offers a variety of asynchronous learning opportunities. Check out the [Events Calendar](#) on STF's website for current opportunities.

JANUARY
16

HOLISTIC PLANNING FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

**STF Arbos Centre for Learning
Saskatoon**

9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

This one-day session is for all Grades 1 to 12 teachers. Attendees will learn how to make connections between the intent of core curricula, skills and learning experiences.

FEBRUARY
02

SUPPORTING WRITERS IN THE EARLY YEARS

**STF Arbos Centre for Learning
Saskatoon**

9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Explore ways to support student success through playful exploration, scaffolding from speech to print and frequent, engaging opportunities for writing across the curricula and school day.

FEBRUARY
05

CULTIVATING STUDENT WELL-BEING

**STF Arbos Centre for Learning
Saskatoon**

9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Join us for an interactive session to explore some foundational concepts of wellness and their practical applications in the classroom.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



For additional event listings and registration information, visit the Events Calendar at www.stf.sk.ca.

MARCH
10-11

SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING IN MATHEMATICS – MIDDLE YEARS

**Prairie South School
Division Board Office
Moose Jaw**

9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

This interactive two-day session will show teachers how they can authentically support Indigenous Ways of Knowing in their math classes. These sessions were developed in partnership with teachers from the provincial and First Nations systems, Elders and Knowledge Keepers.

MAY
5-8

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PRINCIPALS' CONFERENCE 2026 – GROWING LEADERS GROWING COMMUNITIES

Regina

Join principals from across Canada at the annual CAP conference. Keynote speakers include Cadmus Delorme, former chief of Cowessess First Nation, founder and partner at One Hoop Advisory Services and Flowing River Capital Group; Alec Couros, professor of educational technology and media at the University of Regina; and Joe Sanfelippo, educational leader and author.



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 University of Regina | Centre for Continuing Education

SUM CONFERENCE

presented by
 Saskatchewan Mathematics Teachers' Society

✦ ALL CANADIAN ✦ KEYNOTE PRESENTERS

Vanessa Vakharia The Math Guru

Dr. Edward Doolittle First Nations
University of Canada

Kyle Webb Co-author of Mathematics Tasks
for the Thinking Classroom, Grades 6-12.

Delta Hotel, Saskatoon SK

The annual SMTS Saskatchewan Understands Math Conference is for K-12 teachers interested in curriculum, effective mathematics instruction and assessment as well as equitable learning for all students.

Pre-Conference Workshop
April 16, 2026 | 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

SUM Conference
April 16, 2026 | 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
7:00p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

April 17, 2026 | 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

REGISTRATION AND CALL FOR PRESENTERS AT SMTS.CA



EXT-00242C / 2025201 / 1020-50



Bill 137: What Teachers Need to Know

BY: LANCE HILTZ, STF COMMUNICATIONS

Even though Bill 137, also known as the “Parents’ Bill of Rights” is facing legal challenges, it is currently law in Saskatchewan. While the legal challenges regarding the Bill and the use of the notwithstanding clause work their way through our legal system, teachers are required to adhere to the amendments to the *Education Act, 1995*. The complexities of the legal challenges have left many uncertain as to the status of the law and what it means for teachers, students and school divisions.

The Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation is not supportive of Bill 137 in practice or intent, and believes it inflicts harm on youth, compels teachers to participate in those harms and creates a general environment that is contrary to diversity, equity and inclusion. Teachers and school staff are in the best position to create and provide safe and inclusive environments for all students – the laws and policies underpinning professional practice should not interfere with this important work.

“This law places educators in an impossible situation: should teachers follow the new rules and potentially risk a student’s safety or ignore the rules and put themselves at professional risk?” says STF President Samantha Becotte.

In addition to following all legal requirements and school division policy, while respecting students’ rights and privacy, teachers in Saskatchewan must also adhere to the STF Code of Professional Ethics, the STF Standards of Practice, and the Saskatchewan Professional Teachers Regulatory Board Standards of Professional Conduct and Competence. Contravention of these codes may lead to professional discipline, suspension of one’s teacher’s certificate, termination or full revocation of one’s teacher’s certificate. It is very important that teachers have a clear understanding of legislation and policy as they work with their school divisions to support their students within the laws currently in force.

A LENGTHY LEGAL CHALLENGE

If the UR Pride Centre for Sexuality and Gender Diversity challenge can proceed and is successful, the outcome may be a declaration from the courts that the law violates the charter rights of trans students. This will be a lengthy process and if the courts deem the law violates the charter, it will be a significant moral victory for supporters of the appeal but will not in itself result in the law being overturned.

HOW BILL 137 IMPACTS SCHOOLS

- It requires a parent's written consent for students under 16 to use their preferred names and/or pronouns in school.
- It restricts third-party involvement in sexual health education.

WHAT TEACHERS NEED TO KNOW

- Teachers must follow the law and their school division policies and procedures.
- 2SLGBTQIA+ clubs and gay-straight alliances provide critical support for students. School divisions have policies and administrative procedures for these activities.
- Bill 137 does not place restrictions on the materials teachers can use in developing lesson plans to actualize curriculum.
 - [Deepening the Discussion: Gender and Sexual Diversity Toolkit](#) is a government-approved resource.
- If a teacher is concerned that contacting a student's parents about their preferred pronouns might place the child at risk, they should consult with their principal. *The Education Act, 1995*, 197.4 (2), states "the principal shall direct the pupil to the appropriate professionals, who are employed or retained by the school, to support and assist the pupil in developing a plan to address the pupil's request with the pupil's parent or guardian."
- Anyone having reasonable suspicion that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been, or may be, impacted by abuse or neglect has a legal duty to report such information immediately to a local Ministry of Social Services Child Protection Office, First Nations Child and Family Services Agency or the police. If you are unsure about how to navigate a specific circumstance, please contact the STF for guidance. ▲

History of Bill 137 and the Legal Challenge

AUGUST 2023

- Bill 137, the "Parents' Bill of Rights," was introduced.

SEPTEMBER 2023

- UR Pride requested an injunction to delay implementation. The Canadian Teachers' Federation, of which the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation is a member, alongside the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, were granted intervenor status in UR Pride's case.
- The injunction was granted.
- The Government of Saskatchewan invoked the notwithstanding clause from the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in order to pass the policy.

OCTOBER 2023

- Bill 137 was passed into law through amendments to *The Education Act, 1995*.

FEBRUARY 2024

- The Court of King's Bench ruled that UR Pride may proceed with its lawsuit, despite government's use of the notwithstanding clause.

AUGUST 2025

- The Saskatchewan Court of Appeal ruled that UR Pride's legal challenge of Bill 137 can proceed.

SEPTEMBER 2025

- The Government of Saskatchewan asked the Supreme Court of Canada to appeal the ruling made by the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal.

NOVEMBER 2025

- The Supreme Court of Canada granted the Saskatchewan government permission to appeal the Court of Appeal ruling. UR Pride was granted permission to cross-appeal.



Lights, Camera, Lessons:

A Substitute's Journey
From the Classroom to
Casting Calls

BY: SARAH MACDONALD,
STF COMMUNICATIONS

The classroom is crowded. Some students struggle to focus. A few students don't speak English fluently. There's no education assistant. The teacher has a lot to handle, but she interacts warmly with the children and tries to give each one the attention they need.

This could be many a Saskatchewan classroom. It's also a scene playing out in Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation's new ad campaign, Education Works. And the teacher in the ad is not just an actor, but STF member Amy Seiferling, a substitute teacher with Regina Public Schools.

"I saw that they needed a teacher in the STF commercial, and I was like, 'I'm going to get that job. I am so motivated! This is made for me!'" Seiferling recalls.

Seiferling happened to be subbing on the day she received the call-out for the role. When school was done for the day, she shot her audition tape right in the classroom, acting as though students were still there.

"When I sent in my audition to the client, I said I'm actually a teacher in Regina Public Schools. Please choose me because you know I would be an awesome fit for the job," she says. "For both of my passions to come together in a natural and organic way, I feel like that just made the job so much better."

Seiferling currently works as a substitute teacher so that she also has time to pursue work as a model and actor. But for six years, she was a full-time teacher, first as a Grade 7 and 8 French immersion teacher at École Massey Elementary School, and then as a Core French teacher at Jack Mackenzie Elementary School.

As a child growing up in Regina, Seiferling's favourite subject was Core French, so she decided to pursue a Baccalauréat en éducation française (Bachelor of Education in French). She wasn't fluent in French, so first she had to complete the University of Regina's Certificate in French as a Second Language, which was an intensive one-year immersion program. She says she faced a lot of adversity because her French wasn't as strong as other students' French, but she persevered and had job offers upon graduating.

"When I was going through the process of what I wanted to do in life, being a teacher was one thing, and I wondered, 'how can I secure my job as an educator?' Having that French background did, in fact, secure me jobs. There's a huge demand for French-speaking teachers," she explains.

Seiferling loves teaching. Her favourite subject to teach is Core French, since she can relate very well to the students' experiences studying French. But she also loves acting and modelling, so a few years ago she decided to get back into those two passions as well.

As well as the STF Education Works ad campaign, she has acted in several other commercials, including for the Regina Co-op, Surface Hair and Saskatchewan Polytechnic. She's had background roles in a couple of movies filmed in Saskatchewan, including the recently released *Die Alone*, and has done runway modelling for bridal shows and for a YWCA fundraiser.

Modelling and acting have taken Seiferling abroad, too, including to Istanbul, Turkey and Medellin, Colombia. In the summer of 2023, when she was still teaching full-time, she spent the summer modelling and acting for a Turkish agency.

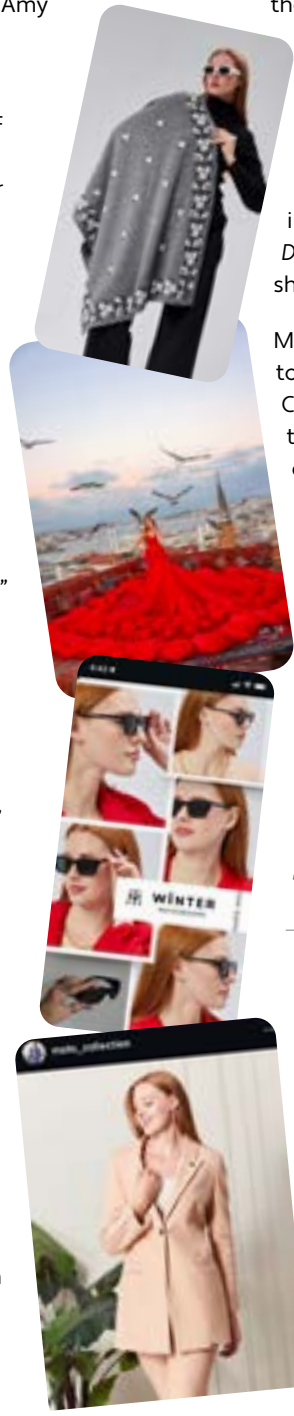
"For both of my passions to come together in a natural and organic way, I feel like that just made the job so much better."

📷 Recep Koca - @recepkoca.art
Emrah Yorulmaz - @istanbul.photoshoot
Recep Koca - @recepkoca.art
Serhat - @serhatsametryilmaz

"That I can combine travel and work is just the dream job for me," says Seiferling.

In 2024 she decided to step back from teaching full-time and returned to Turkey from September to December to model for clothing and accessory companies' websites and in some high-fashion photoshoots. She doesn't always get as much modelling work as she'd like when she is overseas, so she also puts her B.Ed. to good use and teaches English, both online and at an academy.

Seiferling loves being able to teach, act and model simultaneously. Substitute teaching allows her the flexibility to organize her day so that she can teach in the morning and do a modelling job in the afternoon. She also enjoys the variety of schools and students that she encounters, since subbing takes her all over Regina.





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-d5wapd50>

If you don't see the Education Works ad on TV or your social media, you can find it on the STF's YouTube channel. Feel free to share it!



SASKATCHEWAN TEACHERS' FEDERATION



COUNCIL

RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions to Council may be submitted by any member. Additional information, as well as the submission form, is available when logged in to MySTF at www.stf.sk.ca/about-stf/our-team/council/resolutions-notice-motion. The deadline for submissions is noon on Friday, February 6, 2026.

EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS

Councillors seeking election to the 2026-28 Executive of the Federation may announce their candidacy in the 2026 Elections and Candidate Statements Information booklet. For more information, access the Nomination and Candidate's Declaration form when logged in to MySTF at www.stf.sk.ca/resource/nomination-and-candidates-declaration-form.

Whether she is modelling, acting or teaching, Seiferling says her different jobs are complementary. They all require being confident and poised, having strong communication skills to deliver lines or lessons, and being versatile and able to improvise.

When the Education Works ad went live in September, Seiferling was back in Regina substitute teaching, as well as modelling and acting. She hopes teachers and the public liked what they saw in the ad.

"I hope STF members see the ad and are proud to see that one of their own was a chosen representative for the job," she says.

Her acting roles are usually lighthearted, even in horror films, but the Education Works ad was more serious. She had to portray not only the joy of teaching, and the fun teachers have interacting and connecting with students, but also the struggles teachers and students in Saskatchewan face every day. Drawing on her own experience in the classroom, Seiferling tried hard to represent highs and lows of teaching, from the concern and dedication teachers have to the exhaustion they feel at the end of the day.

"I think what I want the public to take away from the ad is that teachers are very passionate and caring people and ultimately they want each student to be successful in the classroom," she says. "I also hope that the public can see that teaching is a very challenging job and that we need continued support in the classroom." ▲

Helpful Resources on GreenShield+

BY: SARAH MACDONALD, STF COMMUNICATIONS

You probably log in to your GreenShield+ account to submit claims, but have you ever checked out the other services available there? From free mental health supports to discounts on vision care to an online pharmacy, there's more to GreenShield+ than claims and benefits information. Here are a few of the services you can access:

FYIHEALTH VISION-CARE DEALS

GreenShield has partnered with FYihealth group, Canada's largest doctor-led eyecare provider, to offer savings and exclusive eye health care. GreenShield benefits include 20 percent off regular-priced glasses, including sunglasses, 10 percent off regular-priced contact lenses and 10 percent off their Lifestyle Package, which includes a complete frame and lens package for as low as \$169. Visit GreenShield+ to access FYihealth group's exclusive GreenShield plan member site.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT WITH MICHAEL LANDSBERG

Canadian sports reporter Michael Landsberg has been open about his own struggles with depression and anxiety. He joined forces with GreenShield to create a free mental health program that is relatable and accessible, since it's based on conversations and people's lived experiences. The Let's Be Real Webinar Series comprises e-learning modules that offer a non-clinical approach to building mental resilience. It aims to empower people to take the initial steps toward managing their mental health challenges. It is best suited to support individuals experiencing mild to moderate symptoms of depression and anxiety.

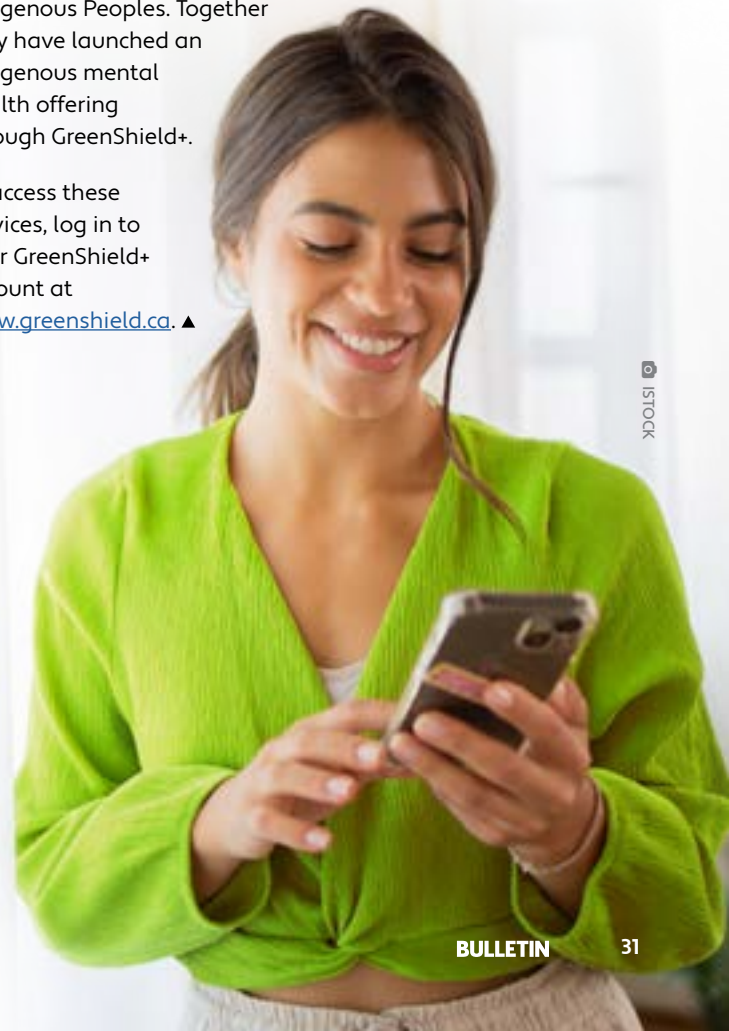
GREENSHIELD PHARMACY

Manage your prescription, set auto-refill reminders, consult with a pharmacist and get prescriptions delivered to you for free. Those are a few of the services available through the GreenShield Pharmacy. Rather than waiting in line at a pharmacy, you can manage your prescriptions, and those of your family, with just a few clicks.

NOOJIMO

GreenShield, a committed ally in supporting the wellness needs of Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) across Canada, has partnered with Noojimo, the first and only all-Indigenous virtual mental wellness clinic. Noojimo's programs honour and incorporate traditional Indigenous pathways of care through a virtual platform, highlighting the ongoing innovation and inner strength of Indigenous Peoples. Together they have launched an Indigenous mental health offering through GreenShield+.

To access these services, log in to your GreenShield+ account at www.greenshield.ca. ▲



ISTOCK

Get to Know Your

Local Leaders

BY: LANCE HILTZ, STF COMMUNICATIONS

Local associations play a critical role within the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation. Your local association presidents aren't just representatives – they're advocates, problem solvers, and the bridge between your classroom and the broader provincial voice. Their decisions and leadership directly shape your professional experience, your working conditions and the future of education in Saskatchewan.

To spotlight the people behind the role, we're sharing their stories – what drives them, how they got here and why they chose to step up. Because when you know who's speaking on your behalf, you understand the power of your collective voice.

Dave Rogers

**NORTH EAST TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION,
TEACHER AT MELFORT & UNIT
COMPREHENSIVE COLLEGIATE**

What made you want to become a teacher?

I was coaching football after I finished playing with the University of Saskatchewan Huskies and I really liked working with and coaching the kids. The only way that I could keep doing that was by becoming a teacher.

What made you want to become president of your local association?

I wanted to help the teachers that I worked with in my area and this looked like an avenue that would allow me to make an impact.

What advice would you share with people who want to become more involved with the Federation?

Take any opportunity to become involved. From school staff liaison to councillor and every opportunity in between is a great way to get involved with the Federation and learn more about our professional organization.





supplied

Brienne Seery

TRI-WEST TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION,
TEACHER AT ÉCOLE MONSEIGNEUR BLAISE MORAND

What made you want to become a teacher?

It's a family tradition. My mom was a teacher and I used to go to work with her. I loved every minute of it. I also have many relatives who are teachers.

What made you want to become president of your local association?

I am in the middle of my career, and I started thinking about leadership opportunities. I joined the local executive as a councillor in 2021. I have always been passionate about helping other teachers, whether it be in the classroom or professionally. I was empowered by the STF professional learning I got to participate in as a councillor. I also finished my master's [degree] in 2023. I then became vice-president and ultimately president.

What advice would you share with people who want to become more involved with the Federation?

Start by attending a local association meeting and becoming a school staff liaison.

Jesse Siemens

SUN WEST TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION,
TEACHER AT LUCKY LAKE SCHOOL

What made you want to become a teacher?

Working with children has always made me happy. I enjoy helping them figure things out, and seeing their excitement and energy is contagious.

What made you want to become president of your local association?

Some encouragement from colleagues convinced me to put my name forward. I had always expressed interest in learning more about the political side of this career but never made the leap. I've always liked being in leadership capacities even as a child.

What advice would you share with people who want to become more involved with the Federation?

The Federation is an amazing group to work with. They're helpful, compassionate, non-judgmental and incredibly knowledgeable. There are so many things to learn and so many avenues to pursue.



supplied



Whitney Paul-Joseph

**SOUTH EAST CORNERSTONE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION,
TEACHER AT REDVERS SCHOOL**

What made you want to become a teacher?

I had a lot of really great teachers growing up. They were definitely a big influence on me, especially when it came to creativity. When I realized I could incorporate my love for art with teaching, arts education was the perfect fit for me.

What made you want to become president of your local association?

I served on our local association for a number of years and when we had some transitions happening, it was time for me to take that next step. It was one of those moments of wondering, "Am I ready? Can I do this?" We have a great local executive, and I loved the work I was doing as vice-president, so I had a lot of support and encouragement to move forward with putting my name out there.

What advice would you share with people who want to become more involved with the Federation?

Education is so much more than the work we do in our classrooms. Being able to work with teachers from across the province so we can better understand each of our unique contexts is so uplifting. It lets us know that we are not alone in this work. We are all here for our students, our schools and our communities, and any opportunity that you have where you can work, learn and lead with others is such a rewarding experience.

Derek Armstrong

**LLOYDMINSTER TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION,
TEACHER AT LLOYDMINSTER COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOL**

What made you want to become a teacher?

I became a teacher because I enjoy working with young people and seeing them grow. I like the challenge of helping students find confidence in themselves, whether that's in the classroom or beyond. Teaching felt like a career where I could combine my interests with making a meaningful impact.

What made you want to become president of your local association?

I wanted to take on a leadership role where I could advocate for teachers, amplify their voices and support the profession as a whole. Being president gives me the opportunity to build community among colleagues, stand up for what's important in education and work collaboratively toward positive change.

What advice would you share with people who want to become more involved with the Federation?

Start small. Attend a meeting, join a committee or volunteer for an event. Every step of involvement matters. You don't need to have all the answers; just bring your curiosity and willingness to contribute. You'll find a network of supportive colleagues and plenty of opportunities to learn and grow.



Jason Steinley

CHINOOK TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION,
TEACHER AT CENTRAL SCHOOL

What made you want to become a teacher?

To be completely honest, I never really thought about it too hard. My mom was a teacher and my dad was a farmer. Farming wasn't for me, so I considered teaching. In high school I was a counsellor at a 4-H summer camp and volunteered for other kids' activities. I always had fun doing these things. So, when no one questioned my idea to apply to the College of Education, I just went with it.

What made you want to become president of your local association?

I have been a member of the local implementation and negotiation committee for 11 years. I was LINC chairperson for three years. I have been a councillor for five years. Last year I chaired our convention committee, participated in an STF committee and led our LINC through negotiations. So, when our longtime president retired, it felt like a logical progression in my involvement and leadership. Additionally, we have a strong, committed group of executive members that I knew would be there to help and support me.



What advice would you share with people who want to become more involved with the Federation?

Members don't need to go all-in when they get involved. For example, you can join a committee, be an SSL, attend your local association's AGM or take in STF virtual meetings. You will never regret the time you put in, knowledge you gain and connections you make from getting involved. ▲



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What Is the Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan?

BY: **SUE AMUNDRUD**, STS PRESIDENT

Some of you may never have heard of us, some vaguely know that we exist, and too few know any details – so, I welcome this opportunity to share more about us and our organization.

Our more than 12,000 members, all of whom taught in Saskatchewan, range in age from early 50s to late 90s. We have members who have just joined us this year, and members who have been retired longer than they taught. Each member belongs to one of our 40 chapters – local subsets of our organization that are largely autonomous but are supported by the provincial organization. Thirty-nine of those chapters are in Saskatchewan, and one is located in British Columbia in the Okanagan Valley, and they range in size from 25 or so members to almost 3,000.

Retired teachers are in demand – we bring a varied skill set that is valued by community and provincial organizations. Whatever our interests, there are clubs or service organizations that welcome us as members or volunteers, and even for part-time or periodic work if that is what we want. We have members who are on school boards, or town or city councils; we have members who volunteer at a local museum, library or SPCA; we have members who work municipal, provincial and/or federal elections in various capacities – and of course we have members who are working as substitute teachers in school divisions.

Our individual chapters offer social networking opportunities as well as the ability to become involved in our organization at the local or provincial level, if that matches your interests.

One key piece that many active teachers do not know or understand is that we are an integral part of your organization as well. The STS is considered a local association in the STF, exactly as your teachers' association in your school division is. We abide by the policies of the STF, and we are represented at Council and at local leadership meetings. One difference – our number of councillors is set, in STF bylaws, as eight rather than being determined by number of members in our association.

The STS is considered a local association in the STF ... We have a voice and a vote when resolutions come to the Annual Meeting of Council.

Our eight councillors include our past president, president, vice-president and five others (occasionally six if we don't have a past president at the time) who are elected at our Annual General Meeting. "We" are part of "You." We have a voice and a vote when resolutions come to the Annual Meeting of Council, although we abstain from any that involve things like fees you pay or what you are doing with your health plan, as they do not apply to us.

Sometimes our contribution is to provide some historical context – we've had a lot of experience that may be relevant to the discussions. We, both individually and as a collective, support public education and what teachers are campaigning for with the public and with the government. Just as individual STS members walked the picket line with you, or provided support in registration procedures during strike action, individual members can share stories about former students for whom education worked. Our provincial STS stands ready to help as possible, as we too believe that "Education Works." ▲



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The McDowell Foundation congratulates the following researchers from Regina Public Schools: **Mary Barrow** and **Jessica Madiratta**, as the winners of the 2024 McDowell Foundation Research Award of the Year.

Mary Barrow's project, *Supporting Neurodiverse Learners by Using Visual Supports as a Tier 1 Intervention*, can be [found here](#).



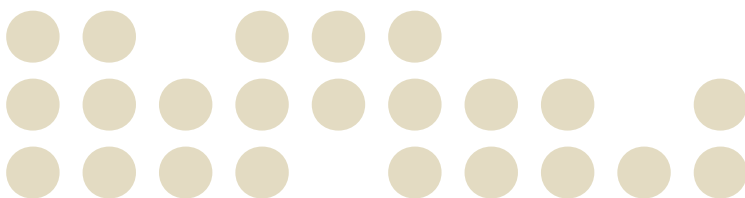
https://mcdowellfoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/STF-001750_20250702_EC_web.pdf

Jessica Madiratta's project, *A Participatory Action Research Project: Improving Teaching Practices Through Culturally Responsive Teaching*, may be [found here](#).



<https://mcdowellfoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Jessica-Madiratta-Final-McDowell-Report.pdf>

STF-001207 / 20251201



World Teachers' Day: Letters to a First-Year Me

BY: ALLIE HEARN DEN, STF COMMUNICATIONS

Every year on October 5, communities around the globe pause to celebrate World Teachers' Day. This is a day to recognize the profound impact teachers have on shaping lives and strengthening society. This year, Saskatchewan teachers marked the occasion by sharing something deeply personal: letters to their first-year selves.

These letters, written by teachers across the province, are filled with wisdom, encouragement and honest reflections. They offer guidance not just for new teachers, but also for anyone navigating the complexities of the classroom.

Here are some of the most powerful lessons shared.

LEAD WITH KINDNESS

Before students remember the lessons, they remember how they were treated. These reflections speak to the power of connection.

"You will never regret showing kindness. Even when a child tests your patience, choose connection over correction whenever you can. Those are the moments kids remember."
- Jennifer, Humboldt

"As long as they feel loved, valued and welcome, then I'm doing enough."
- Solana, Regina

"All of the time, effort and care will be worth it. Spending time building relationships with your students will make your days in the classroom easier and more meaningful."
- Natalie, Red River

"Believe you make a difference even when you can't see it. Your presence, kindness and thoughtful intentions have more impact than you know."
- Carla, Craik

"You are going to do a great job with the academics, so stress less and connect with your students. Let the students know you care and let their parents know you care."
- Kim, Swift Current

FIND YOUR CIRCLE

Teaching isn't a solo journey. Whether it's a mentor, a colleague or a community, support systems make the hard days manageable and the good days even better.

"Go to the staff room regularly. Your connection with staff will keep you afloat when the classroom, and everything that comes with it, weighs you down. The people around you, your teaching partner, your EA, your secretary, all are the connection pieces that make coming to school on those hard days worth it."
- Marina, Lloydminster

"I wish I knew how much the STF can help if you find yourself in a difficult workplace situation. Looking back, I now know that I didn't have to feel so alone."
- Jessica, Saskatoon

“Get a good mentor who makes you feel seen.”

– Amanda, Regina

“You aren’t on this journey alone. Don’t be afraid to reach out to your colleagues for support or advice. Your first year teaching is hard enough as it is; don’t make it harder than it needs to be by not asking your colleagues for help.”

– Kendra, Lloydminster

TEACHING ISN’T ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL

You don’t have to have it all figured out to make a difference. These reflections show how adaptability helps teachers meet students where they are.

“No matter how much you plan, write out lessons word for word, or make a pretty bulletin board, you will never ‘feel ready’ so trust yourself and know that you are effective and that you can do this!” – Cassandra, Yorkton

“Be flexible. Plan, plan, plan, so that when things go sideways you have something to come back to. When you choose to go away from the plan to have some fun, you know where to come back to.” – Andrew, North Battleford

“Classroom management is not mean! As a matter of fact, it will help you to build a stronger relationship with your classes. They will trust that you have their back and see that you truly want them to succeed. That rapport building with students is so important.”

– Rebecca, Saskatoon

BE KIND TO YOURSELF

You can’t pour from an empty cup. These voices remind us that caring for yourself is not just important, it’s essential to being the teacher your students need.

“Give yourself the grace you provide others. You are doing the best you can.”

– Angela, Moose Jaw

“Practice what you preach. Mental health, self-care and not being afraid to say no are things that you will teach your students day after day, but when you finally start taking your own messages to heart and practicing them, you’ll become an infinitely better teacher.”

– Bailey, Regina

“Take care of yourself. If you can’t be an effective teacher with the time and resources available to you, that’s an issue with the system and not a personal flaw.”

– Shelley, Saskatoon

“Take a deep breath and remember that boundaries between your life outside of being a teacher and work are healthy and normal. Connections matter, but connection happens with kids, so turning off your email alerts won’t hurt your connections in the classroom.”

– Tessa, Maymont

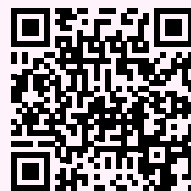
“Making mistakes doesn’t mean you’re a bad teacher; it means you’re learning.”

– Aidan, Saskatoon

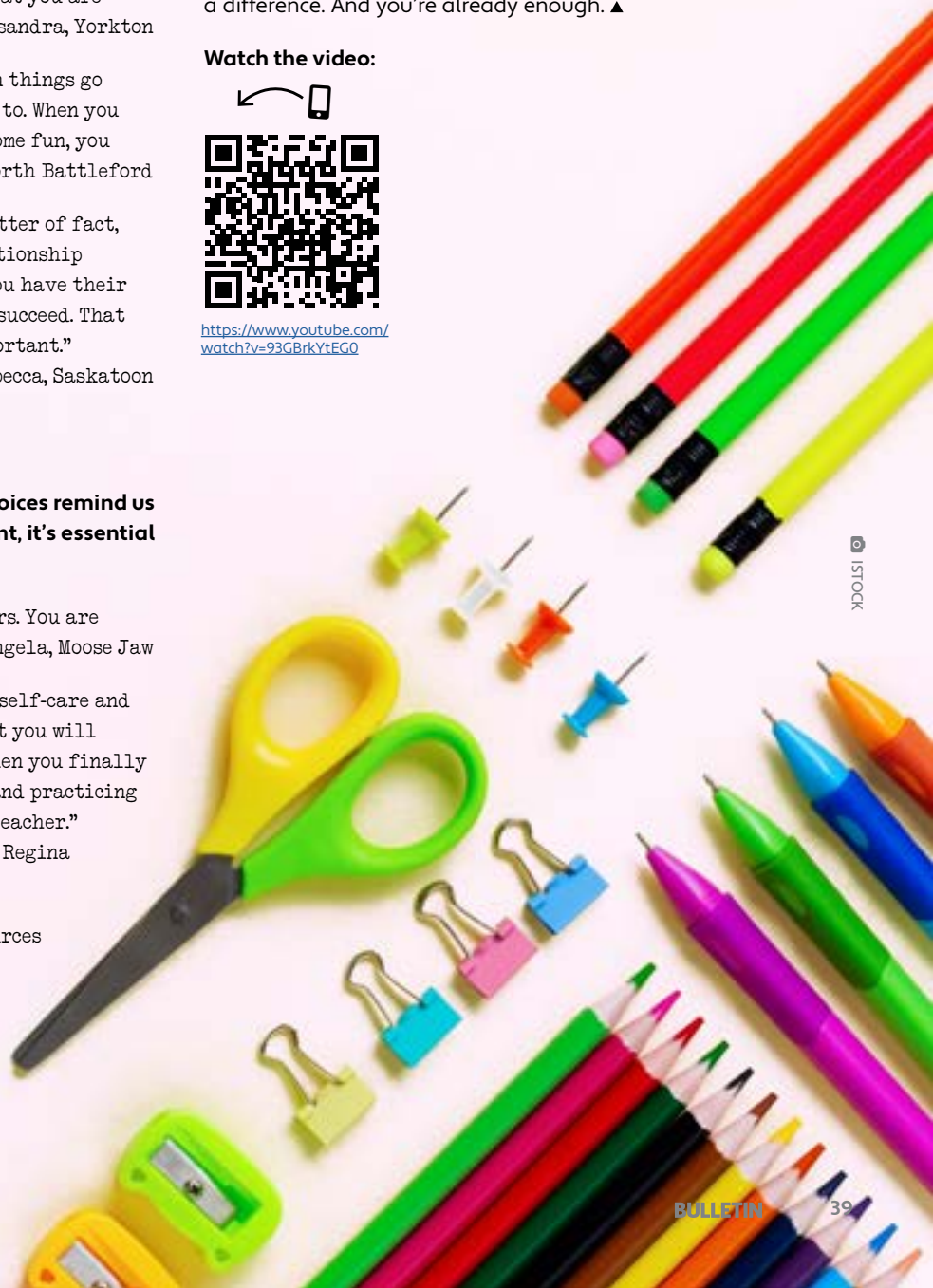
These reflections offer more than advice. They’re lived experiences from teachers who have weathered the early years and found meaning in the journey. They speak honestly about the challenges, the growth and the quiet victories that often go unseen.

To every first-year teacher: You’re not alone. You’re making a difference. And you’re already enough. ▲

Watch the video:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93GRkYtEGQ>



Teachers Have Valuable Role in Guiding Ethical AI Use

BY: ROD DRABBLE, STF COMMUNICATIONS

Artificial intelligence is already a part of students' daily lives and learning experience. That's why Patricia Ives believes now is the time for teachers to make AI a part of their knowledge base, even if they don't plan to use it in their professional practice.

"Teachers are already aware that AI usage has become widespread. Many are learning more about it and embracing its possibilities in diverse ways," she says. "Even if some prefer not to utilize it themselves, it is important that they develop their AI literacy and understand how and when it can be used ethically."

Ives, a high school teacher in Kamsack, believes in the potential value of AI to support student learning, differentiate instruction, streamline planning and enhance engagement. She evaluates and uses AI tools for lesson planning and applies that knowledge to guide students in daily learning and in building overall AI literacy.

When teachers take the opportunity to explore a range of AI uses for themselves, they are in a better position to have age-appropriate conversations with students.

"I think like anything else, we want to give them the proper structure so they are using it in ways that are ethical, that are not stifling their own creative thinking and in ways that are pushing their critical thinking," she explains, emphasizing that initiating discussion is the best route for both teachers and students.

"We could spend hours trying to chase after misuse or we could spend time meaningfully talking. We want to be able to confidently speak to students about AI, not just as people who are saying 'no,' but as knowledgeable users who say, 'I'm really good at using this; let me teach you how to use it in a responsible manner.' I think we need to plan how to have critical conversations and incorporate them throughout the courses we teach."

One of the ways Ives assists teachers in becoming comfortable with AI is through the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Professional Learning workshop entitled From Curiosity to Competence: Guiding Students Toward Ethical and Critical AI Use. The recent workshop for Grade 10 to 12 teachers was a chance to consider strategies for

"Even if some [teachers] prefer not to utilize [AI] themselves, it is important that they develop their AI literacy and understand how and when it can be used ethically."

introducing AI tools in a safe and ethical way and explore examples of classroom projects that keep students in control of thinking and decision making.

Ives explains the importance that teachers do not view AI as an easy solution; instead, consider it as one of many tools available to support learning. It's not a replacement for a teacher's knowledge or experience, and professional autonomy should be exercised when it comes to how, or if, AI is used in the classroom.

"It's just another helper. How can we use it in the best possible way to be a very effective tool?" she says.

"Teachers who deeply understand their subject content and materials are going to be the strongest at assessing what AI produces for them as there is the potential for flaws or inaccuracies in what is initially developed."

If teachers are considering whether an AI tool can assist in planning or as an instructional support, Ives suggests experimentation and patience. It's important to assess the potential benefits, test its capabilities and use it for a period of time to discover how it may benefit both teachers and students.

“With colleagues, I definitely talk about how I am using it and how I structure my prompts because it takes a while to develop that expertise,” Ives says. “People who are starting out with their experimentation may find that prompt writing can be a challenge, which makes it more difficult and frustrating when trying to get the desired output. There are resources that can help teachers craft effective prompts, which I do recommend checking out. There are rich potential and time-saving benefits when we learn how to become adept users.”

The STF is exploring how emerging technologies including AI impact teaching and learning. A think tank on technology and teacher working conditions held earlier this year included teachers from across the province and resulted in the creation of a working committee that has been tasked with developing policy recommendations.

A wide range of tools used by teachers, including familiar platforms such as Google Classroom, that now integrate AI features have been identified. One of the key messages coming out of the discussion is that teachers need time and professional learning to use AI tools effectively and acquire the knowledge needed to guide students as critical consumers.

At the heart of the issue is recognition that teaching is rooted in relationships. While AI can be useful in supporting learning, teacher-student interaction remains essential for success.

Some school divisions have developed administrative policy that addresses responsible, ethical and effective use of AI among students and staff. Policies set expectations for use

and encourage AI literacy with a goal to responsibly manage the risks and benefits of AI tools.

While AI can't replace effective classroom instruction, Ives says it can serve as a bridge to learning. For example, students who may be reluctant to ask for help in class may benefit from an alternative when it comes to understanding difficult concepts, breaking down material or identifying resources.

One frequent concern is the possibility of students passing off AI-generated content as their own work. Ives acknowledges the issue but believes open discussion and providing students with guardrails for use can go a long way to addressing that concern.

“If a student is misusing AI, I want to know why,” she says. “Is it that they didn't understand the assignment and got scared? Did they run out of time? What can I do as a teacher? We can have those conversations and invite them to talk about it. We think students want to cheat ... but I think ultimately, they want to impress us. They want to do well; they have a sense of pride and ownership over their own content and material.” ▲

“There are resources that can help teachers craft effective prompts, which I do recommend checking out.”

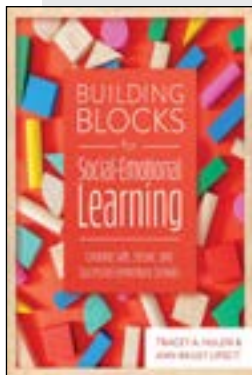


Resources for Complex Classrooms

BY JOAN ELLIOTT, ESRC MANAGER

The Emma Stewart Resources Centre has a wealth of resources that can assist you in meeting the needs of students in your complex classroom, whether through differentiating literacy and numeracy instruction, fostering social and emotional learning, developing positive behavioural interventions or teaching executive function and self-regulation skills.

Resources can be sent to your school or home with all postage paid by us. Contact us at esrc@stf.sk.ca or request materials directly from the [Online Catalogue](#).



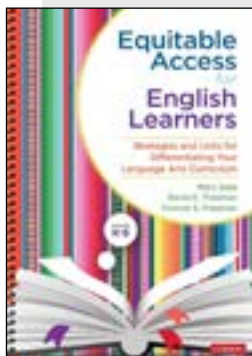
Building Blocks for Social-Emotional Learning: Creating Safe, Secure, and Successful Elementary Schools

Learn how to incorporate social-emotional concepts into teaching strategies, lesson planning, assessment and the classroom environment through this practical resource by Tracey A. Hulen and Ann-Bailey Lipsett. Suggestions to meet social-emotional learning needs at schoolwide, classroom and individual levels are included.



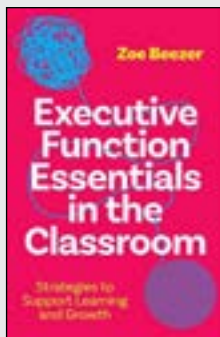
Everyday SEL in High School: Integrating Social-Emotional Learning and Mindfulness Into Your Classroom, Second Edition

Explore numerous intrapersonal and interpersonal practices designed to improve teacher-student connections and relationships. Author Carla Tantillo Philibert describes how to use yoga, mindfulness and other well-being activities to combat stress and anxiety and strengthen students' communication and social-emotional competencies.



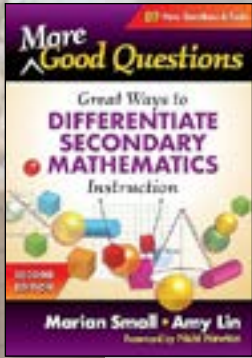
Equitable Access for English Learners: Strategies and Units for Differentiating Your Language Arts Curriculum, Grades K-6

Units of study on seeds and plants, habitats, oceans and natural disasters focus on helping English language learners develop academic language proficiency, content knowledge and text comprehension. Authors Mary Soto, David E. Freeman and Yvonne S. Freeman also illustrate how to differentiate through using an inquiry approach and creating a multilingual and multicultural environment that draws on students' home languages and cultures.



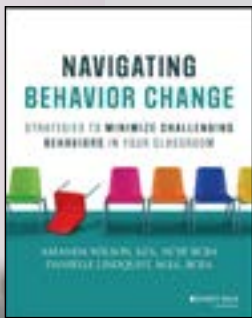
Executive Function Essentials in the Classroom: Strategies to Support Learning and Growth

Author Zoe Beezer discusses effective strategies for improving executive functioning skills in areas such as response inhibition, flexibility, organization, time management and working memory are presented in a step-by-step approach in this guidebook for K-12 teachers. Checklists, planning templates and worksheets for students and teachers are included.



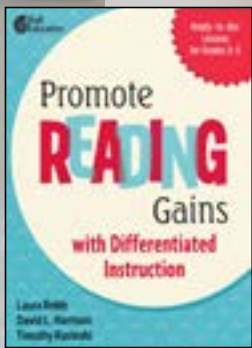
More Good Questions: Great Ways to Differentiate Secondary Mathematics Instruction

Authors Marian Small and Amy Lin illustrate how to use inclusive conversations to increase student participation and formatively assess student understanding. Teaching tips, organizing templates and numerous open questions are included. An equally valuable book for K-8 classrooms by Marian Small is *Good Questions: Great Ways to Differentiate Mathematics Instruction in the Standards-Based Classroom*.



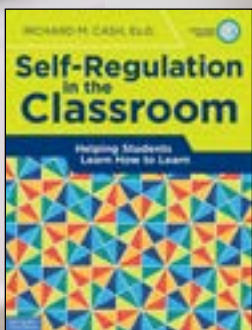
Navigating Behavior Change: Strategies to Minimize Challenging Behaviors in Your Classroom

A comprehensive, proactive approach aimed at preventing challenging behaviours is presented in this volume by Amanda Wilson and Danielle Lindquist. Suitable for K-12 teachers, the authors describe how to manage and organize the classroom and to create an environment that encourages student cooperation and opportunities to respond. Strategies for dealing with challenging behaviours through regulating, reflecting, restoring and re-engaging are clearly outlined.



Promote Reading Gains With Differentiated Instruction: Ready-to-Use Lessons for Grades 3-5

This resource, by Laura Robb, David L. Harrison and Timothy Rasinski, features strategies for improving comprehension and fluency across a wide range of reading levels. Engaging questions for student discussion, writing prompts and word ladders are included in each differentiated lesson plan.



Self-Regulation in the Classroom: Helping Students Learn How to Learn

Delve into this user-friendly guide by Richard M. Cash that is designed to support K-12 teachers in fostering self-regulation skills such as engaging in learning, developing habits of thinking, setting and achieving goals, maintaining focus, and reflecting and relaxing.





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