



## STF scrutinizes government's modest education increase

REGINA—Let's just call this the latest version of the old budget two-step. That's where the Ministry of Education puts its best spin on the numbers enclosed in the annual provincial budget as the lead in this little dance, and then thereafter the respective partners analyze the same figures with their version and those aforementioned numbers are left to dance.

Education Minister Don Morgan addressed those at the pre-budget briefing by prefacing his comments by reminding folks of the bleak economic shortfall the province is facing after several halcyon years of resource riches. No sooner had he reiterated those comments as the backdrop before, perhaps surprising folks with the news that in fact the education Ministry would be one of those that fared best with a 7.8 percent increase to a new high of \$2.2 billion earmarked for the PreK-12 sector.

That was followed by the specifics, which were then analyzed by the respective education stakeholders, including the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, which was tepid in its reaction to the increase.

According to STF President Patrick Maze, the modest increase means education funding is not keeping pace with growth in the sector and the diverse educational needs of students.

"If our focus is on improving educational outcomes, students and teachers require the proper resources and supports to be successful. The 0.5 percent increase in the operating grant formula will likely mean school divisions will be forced to make decisions that could negatively affect teaching and learning, as well as the government's educational priorities."

Maze said the Federation is also concerned by the increased reliance on conditional funding that is tar-

geted to specific programs and projects, which he suggested does not address the growing needs across the sector.

"It feels like we are constantly at risk of losing funding for essential programs as priorities keep shifting from year to year, or those programs are not as widely available as they could be. Teachers need stability in the system—in terms of both funding and its administration—to focus on creating the quality educational experiences and relationships that lead to students' success."

While much of the pre-budget chatter had been about "transformational change," the approach Morgan was presenting was for school divisions to start with a blank piece of paper, and via a consultative approach with the other partners, to come up with "substantial savings" within what he acknowledged would be a fairly compressed timetable, expected to be early in the fall.

"I know it's a turbulent time so the sooner we can have some certainty the better," he said. "Our priority continues to be investing in students and infrastructure," he said, while stressing that this budget was an indication of the government's commitment to its ambitious 2020 goals that include improving graduation rates for First Nations and Métis students as a centrepiece.

While there had been considerable speculation about reducing the number of school divisions from its current level of 28 in the province, Morgan cited examples in eastern Canada where boards had become part of a crown corporation strategy, adding that "I have no appetite for litigation. I would rather have things settled in the boardroom than in a courtroom."

In an interview afterwards, Morgan conceded that his directive to school divisions to spearhead the process to find efficiencies is the start of a process, insisting there was no pre-determined number the government had in mind.

"At this point in time we are asking our partners to look at ways that we can do things better cost wise, perhaps in terms of administration costs. In terms of options, nothing is off the table."

Morgan pondered whether the current school division boundaries are appropriate, adding that the deputy ministers are working on that. He added that the muted possibility of school divisions being compressed to resemble the boundaries of health districts is not something he is prepared to rule out at this time, although he stressed that he doesn't have an opinion on that possibility.

As he speculated about



Education Minister Don Morgan delivers the budget highlights in Regina.

what the cost savings might look like, Morgan floated the idea of school divisions and municipalities working together to look at where there might currently be a duplication of services. He said in some cases this might mean having the school more accessible to other community events.

"We need to remember there is only one tax payer

in the province," he said, while noting that Premier Brad Wall had made the issue of no tax increases a key part of the successful re-election campaign.

Morgan also mused about the possible expansion of co-operation among ministries, although by his concession this hasn't worked as well as envisioned in the past. "I would say this hasn't

gone as well or as fast as we would like, but I believe we are making progress in breaking some of those barriers down and we need to start focusing more on not just the monetary aspects, but what's best for kids in the classroom and so we may need to expand those parameters.

"In this province we are absolutely committed to students because we realize the next generation is critical and we have to do the very best we can to support students and teachers. Our goal is to commit everything we can to the classroom teacher and to the students," he added.

Maze noted that students and teachers experience transformational change every day in their classrooms, offering that the process of teaching and learning is a process of change.

"We support system change that puts students first. Government and school divisions cannot and should not do that alone—students, parents, teachers and staff need to be involved. We trust that the compressed timelines will not compromise the quality of the consultations."

For her part, Saskatchewan School Boards Association President Connie Bailey stressed that "we need to have a little more clarity in what the process will look like, but I'm a very hopeful person and I believe we can all work together for the betterment of students in the province." ■

## Morgan asks divisions to find savings

If school divisions might have felt a sense of relief that they were spared from some of the pre-budget scenarios that had been floated, there might still be a sense of waiting for the Sword of Damocles as Education Minister Don Morgan has made it clear in conversations with mainstream media that he is not best pleased with the current levels of administrative staff as he contemplates ways for school divisions to cut costs in the next few months.

"I haven't seen from any of the school divisions a real reduction in the number of administrative staff that they have," Morgan said, adding that "school boards should certainly be having discussions about amalgamation or consolidation, or whether they can share services."

Morgan said while the Ministry appreciates the work school divisions do, he added that "we expect them to find efficiencies within their administration and make commitments to keep resources in the classroom."

Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation President Patrick

Maze echoed Morgan's comments, adding that regardless of the nature or scope of the consultations, Federation members will be asking one key question: Will the changes that emerge improve student educational experiences and outcomes?

"To be certain, finding governance and administrative efficiencies can contribute positively to the classroom experience—if those savings are wisely reinvested into improving educational opportunities and offering better services for students."

In his post-budget comments, Morgan also waded into the area of the Local Implementation Negotiations Committee agreements that he said are a big expense and need to be addressed.

He noted this is a particularly poignant consideration now as the series of nine joint-use schools will be coming on board in the future. As Morgan pointed out, "you will have teachers in the same school that will have a different contract and that's something we need to work out and that is one of the items that needs to be changed."

STF Executive Director Gwen Dueck agreed that there are inequities that exist among local agreements across the province, which she attributed largely to the significant changes that date back to the major amalgamation and later in 2009 when the government decided to remove the ability for school boards to set local mill rates.

Dueck said while the Federation is open to change, it is important that a meaningful mechanism remain for dealing with the local needs of teachers in their own school division.

"Teachers and their Federation are always open to collaboration and seeking solutions to the challenges of educating a diverse and growing student population. As partners in education we remain committed to participating in and resolving issues in collaborative processes.

"However, recent events regarding the Task Force on Teacher Time leaves us concerned about the commitment of government and school boards to meaningful and respectful consultations and inclusive decision-making." ■

# Saul calls treatment of Indigenous people as Canada's betrayal

One would arguably be hard pressed to find an individual who enjoys challenging the status quo more than celebrated Canadian author John Ralston Saul.

Speaking to those attending the Saskatchewan Association for Community Education, he was right in his element as he somewhat playfully offered his version of revisionist history, while imploring those

in the audience to seriously contemplate looking at the time-honoured version of events that have found their way into the public education curricula in this country.

As an avid supporter of First Nations and Métis culture, Saul maximized his time at the podium not only to tout his book, *The Comeback*, but also to challenge the notion that Canada's history is based on European values, whereas, as he pointed out, it is owed in large part from the very beginning to the First Nations people and their cultural practices.

Alluding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the subsequent Calls to Action by Justice Murray Sinclair, Saul said the need for restitution for First Nations peoples is the single most important issue for the country to deal with.

"It's going to cost a lot of money, and it should," he offered rather matter-of-factly. He acknowledged the lack of public appetite for such matters as raising taxes, but suggested that "it isn't a question of leadership on this subject; it's just not an acceptable position for us to be in as treaty partners."

According to Saul, education has a major role to play in the years to come, noting that public education is necessary for a civilized democracy to flourish.

In his view, however, "our curricula are still essentially stuck in a time warp of colonial mythology. It is one of the greatest weaknesses in not only the education



John Ralston Saul

system but also in society. We are stuck with the wrong narrative."

As if perhaps anticipating the disquiet that would result if the current learning materials were changed to reflect the views of how it was the First Nations culture that permeated the creation of Canada as it evolved, he said, "it can't be unpleasant enough when you consider how little we've moved on this."

"Our history is still a derivative of the British and French influences and that's very problematic and it's out of whack about our reality as a country."

Saul cited Samuel de Champlain as a poignant example, referring to how it was First Nations chiefs who showed him the way.

"We have to come to terms with how we tell the story and it has to be written in a way that is not what might be considered to be politically correct. It's what happens

when racism is allowed to form the narrative and we need to flip that narrative. Public schools are for the most part doing a fantastic job, but there is an enormous distance to go. However, we have shown we can do this," he said, drawing attention to the growth of French immersion in the country.

Saul pointed out that having a more accurate depiction of Canada's history is important not only for First Nations people but also so that the many new Canadians who have recently arrived on these shores have a better idea.

He noted the Syrian refugees specifically, musing as to how these new Canadians can potentially become allies for First Nations people, suggesting that they are very curious about the role First Nations people played in Canada's history, for example.

Calling some of the lamentable past experiences endured by First Nations people, Saul referred to it as "Canada's betrayal of Indigenous peoples."

He paid tribute to the strength and resilience of First Nations people in what he sees as a rightful re-emergence, including the Idle No More movement as a prime example.

"I think we will see in 50 years that this renewed confidence cannot be stopped and we have to be serious about First Nations people taking their rightful place," he said, wondering aloud how Canada has somehow avoided the fate of many other countries who have endured lengthy civil wars in not dissimilar circumstances.

"Canada continues to have a multiple personality disorder. People talk about the diversity of this country but that means we need to have an inclusive circle of all people and we owe that 100 percent to Aboriginal people and their history. Education is going to be the key as to when this happens, but once we truly start the process we'll see how much easier it can be."

"The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has been fantastic, but it's going to require a real commitment to put it in place and it's our job to keep reminding ourselves." ■

## Resource Connections



### Moving forward on reconciliation

Joan Elliott, Librarian/Manager  
Stewart Resources Centre

In response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action around the role education can play in actively fostering reconciliation, numerous teachers and students have had opportunities to participate in events designed to reach both hearts and minds. Walking Together: A Day of Education for Truth and Reconciliation held at the University of Regina, Project of Heart ([www.projectofheart.ca/sk](http://www.projectofheart.ca/sk)) and the KAIROS Blanket Exercise ([www.kairosblanketexercise.org](http://www.kairosblanketexercise.org)) are a few that come to mind.

What more can teachers and schools do to build upon these learnings and to move forward on the journey towards reconciliation? Many Saskatchewan curricula include entry points on the history of residential schools, treaties and the historic and contemporary contributions of Indigenous peoples to Canada. Additionally, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education's document *Treaty Education Outcomes and Indicators* ([www.education.gov.sk.ca/treaty-education-outcomes-indicators](http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/treaty-education-outcomes-indicators)) presents a K-12 continuum of approaches that can be incorporated into subject areas.

Scores of resources are available in the Stewart Resources Centre that provide background and ideas for teaching about residential schools and reconciliation. The publication, *100 Years of Loss: The Residential School System in Canada Teacher's Guide*, which was published by the Legacy of Hope Foundation, consists of six lesson plans dealing with the federal apology, how the schools were created, identity, the legacy of the schools and ways to promote healing and reconciliation.

The First Nations Education Steering Committee and the First Nations Schools Association in British Columbia have developed *Indian Residential Schools and Reconciliation Teacher Resource Guides* for grades 5, 10 and 11/12 that are focused on promoting understanding of the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people through Canada's history and on healing and reconciliation. *Stolen Lives: The Indigenous Peoples of Canada and the Indian Residential Schools*, created by Facing History and Ourselves, is a teacher resource which features a series of readings and questions that can be used with secondary students.

Deeply moving children's resources on the topic are also available. Books suitable for K-5 students include: *As Long as the Rivers Flow* by Larry Loyie and Constance Brissenden, *Fatty Legs: A True Story* by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton, and *Little Butterfly Girl: An Indian Residential School Story* by Jenny Restoule-Mallozzi. *Shin-chi's Canoe* and *Shi-shi-etko*, both by Nicola Campbell, are two other poignant books. *Shi-shi-etko* is also available as a streamed video on ROVER (Recommended Online Video Education Resources).

DVDs for middle years students include: *A Day at Indian Residential Schools in Canada* produced by Indigenous Education Press, and *An Overview of Residential Schools in Canada* produced by McIntyre Media. Profoundly memorable books at that level include: *No Time to Say Goodbye: Children's Stories of the Kuper Island Residential School* by Rita Morris, Sylvia Olsen and Ann Sam, and *A Stranger at Home: A True Story* by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton.

Powerful books at the secondary level include: *Kitoskâyiminawak Pikiskwêwak: Our Young People Speak: The Healing Edition* published by the Prairie Valley School Division, *Betty: The Helen Betty Osborne Story*, a graphic novel by David A. Robertson, *Broken Circle: The Dark Legacy of Indian Residential Schools* by Theodore Fontaine, *Indian Horse* by Richard Wagamese, *The Education of Augie Merasty: A Residential School Memoir* by Joseph Auguste Merasty and David Carpenter, and *Moving Forward: A Collection About Truth and Reconciliation*, a new anthology in the iLit series published by McGraw-Hill.

Numerous other suggestions can be found in our collection of websites devoted to residential schools and reconciliation. They can be viewed via [www.stf.sk.ca/professional-resources/stewart-resources-centre/resources/related-links](http://www.stf.sk.ca/professional-resources/stewart-resources-centre/resources/related-links). To deepen your understanding of teaching and learning for reconciliation, why not make it your personal call to action to read and view some of these or other resources on this topic over the summer? To borrow any of them, please email [src@stf.sk.ca](mailto:src@stf.sk.ca).

## Meadows shortlisted for national award

Saskatoon author and recording artist Sally Meadows has been shortlisted for the 2016 Word Awards, a national competition that honours the best published work by Canadian Christian writers in a wide range of genres.

Meadows, a former teacher, is one of only two Saskatchewan authors shortlisted, which includes over 100 nominees in 35 categories. Also shortlisted was Ramona Lusch Johnson of Dalmeny. Meadows was nominated for her children's picture book *The Two Trees* (2015).

*The Two Trees* is about a boy on the autism spectrum as told from the perspective of his younger brother. The book raises awareness about the challenges facing families that include a child with autism in an accessible story form.

Over 2,000 elementary school children across the province have participated in Meadows' *The Two Trees* presentation, which includes an author reading, discussion about autism and bullying, and hands-on activities that delight and enlighten.

Many of Meadows' school presentations have been funded through the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild Author Readings Program.

This is the third Word Award nomination for Meadows. Her first two nominations (2013 and

2014) were for her songs *Turn the Page* and *This New Year* from her CDs *Turn the Page* and *Red & White*, respectively. Meadows is also a contributing author to a number of anthologies including the number one Canadian bestseller *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Christmas in Canada*. Her second children's book *Beneath That Star* was released in 2015.

The 28th Annual Word Awards are sponsored by the Word Guild and will be presented at a gala in Toronto, Ontario on June 24. ■



### STS Executive 2016-17

Front row (from left) Laurie Dubé, Executive Secretary Fred Herron, Past President Doug Haroldson, President Maxine Stinka, Vice-President Sunil Pandila, Helen Sukovieff, Joyce Hoffman. Back row (from left) Susan Amundrud, Doreen Rathgeber, Marie LeBlanc-Warick (ACER-CART), Mike Kaminski, Alan Laughlin, Robert Wuschenny, Calvin Bachmeier, Don Gabel, Anna Wehrkamp, Jane Isinger.

## Following Their Voices has enthusiastic supporters from all sectors

One could fill volumes with the various theories that have been pontificated by those endeavouring to get to the root of the lagging academic achievements of First Nations and Métis students in Saskatchewan.

When the provincial government, and specifically the Ministry of Education, made it a priority to have graduation rates significantly improve by 2020, one of the primary ways was to develop positive student-teacher relationships by incorporating greater cultural sensitivity as one of the cornerstones. Entitled *Following Their Voices*, it is intended to dovetail with the extensive Student First consultations concluded earlier throughout the province.

Conversations have been often and wide-ranging as the program has now been rolled out to 12 provincial schools and another five band-operated schools, which brings federal funding into the equation as well.

If you should think this all sounds complicated, listen to Pat Bugler, the director of education for Treaty Six Education Council, who bases his optimism on the fundamental commitment to more fully involve students.

"By us listening to students and letting them have voice in the school, it means there's more to the relationship piece and I'm expecting great things by us working together. When I started on this process I could see the possibilities because this is co-constructed, whereas before it wasn't across the board. With teachers' support and feedback I believe this gives us a consistent approach and



There was no shortage of discussion or note taking during the numerous consultations that have formed an integral part of the *Following Their Voices* initiative which is being touted by many.

even if it's to be expected that it will look different in various settings, the goals and the delivery is consistent," Bugler said, adding that it has to be at the grassroots level.

According to Randy Fox, director of education for Living Sky School Division, and another of those who has been integrally involved in the discussions, "this goes deeper and in my view it helps us get to the root of the teacher-student relationships that are so important.

"We need to do more in terms of making those connections with our First Nations and Métis students and if we establish that genuine respect, it's my feeling that it is something that students will want to follow because they feel more part of their own education."

Tim Caleval from the Ministry of Education reflected back on the series of meetings and how the focus throughout has been to fit the initiative within the overall Education Sector

Strategic Plan. He recognized that there is always going to be funding challenges, but stressed that there has already been significant early success since its implementation, adding that "this is the most important work we are doing right now."

Angie Caron, who has been seconded from her teaching duties to the Ministry as part of this initiative, said one of the aspects that can't be overlooked is teacher reflection and how they can support kids in the classroom.

"This presents an opportunity for teachers to think deeply about their practice with their students and to collect evidence to support them. That's really what is at the centre of this. One thing I've seen is a real agreement among all school divisions that improving the experience for our First Nations and Métis students is a shared priority."

According to Caron, the timing of the Calls to Action by Justice Murray Sinclair

at the culmination of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada only serves to make *Following Their Voices* that much more poignant given that education was highlighted as a key piece.

Bugler agreed, but cautioned that "it's not something we can expect to just happen in a year or two. It will take at least a generation. It's always been my hope that we would change the way we have done things at the division level and I'm very encouraged by this overall approach."

Among those at this meeting there is a shared optimism as to what this program can lead to in the future.

"I'm very optimistic and I've seen a shift in the level of respect when addressing First Nations and Métis students. We are taking real steps to try to make this right and we're at a critical time right now," Bugler said.

"I would say this could be a turning point and when

we look at this 60 years down the road I want this generation of teachers as grandparents to look back and see how they changed things for my people."

Caleval added his own hopes, basing his optimism on the level of co-operation and mutual understanding he has witnessed since the early days of the program. "When you see how it has evolved, there's a laser focus and I see it in schools too. This program is very closely aligned with Student First in terms of putting the student at the centre and that has a real chance for success."

Fox said the fact that work is being done in a number of facets, including treaty education in all schools, is key to what gives him hope for what lies ahead.

Maureen Taylor, a provincial facilitator, said she too is optimistic, adding that "for too long our hope has been our plan, but I think now we have a real plan and it applies to every school division and to society in general. Teachers are at a place where they are more reflective than ever and that's what is going to be the impact for the students and will provide a bright future for all kids."

"This is one of the most exciting things that has happened in my career," Caron enthused. "I view this as a tremendous opportunity to work side by side with my colleagues for the benefit of kids and that's what makes us do what it is we do when we started. This work can be foundational in building on Indigenous ways of knowing and that will be to the benefit of all our students." ■

## Arcand hopes sharing his past will help pave the way for better future

REGINA—It wasn't just his imposing physical stature that allowed Eugene Arcand to command the gymnasium full of students and teachers during the *Walking Together: A Day of Education for Truth and Reconciliation*.

Equally it was his message delivered with passion and eloquence. As Arcand shared, "I never thought I would

see this day," while in the same breath conceding that he was speaking of events that he had spent a lifetime trying to forget.

You see, Arcand wasn't always this grand figure holding the microphone. He was considerably smaller when as a youngster he was spirited away from his family and thereafter had to endure the

intolerable pain and suffering of residential school life.

Today, via his involvement with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation in Winnipeg, he uses opportunities such as this to bring this dark period in Canadian history to life so that it will be neither forgotten nor repeated, but rather understood and acknowledged.

Arcand emphasized to those in the crowd that he wasn't here looking for pity, but rather to help the Canadian populace understand to a large degree the reasons why Aboriginal people struggle in the way they have.

"It's part of all of us; it is Canada's darkest secret, and as the youth you have a chance to use it in your learning and help to be the change. When you go home, hug those around you, because we went through a generation without having that opportunity. To see what is happening here makes my heart soar. This is setting a standard and you are being leaders in helping us spread the message. You can go home and educate your parents."

In an interview afterwards, Arcand took a deep sigh and conceded that he has to get himself mentally prepared for events such as this where raw emotion and painful memories are close to the surface.

"It's my duty on behalf of my classmates back then,

but this is for everyone. What happened to us is not going to go away and so it's important for us to change attitudes and behaviours. I look at Saskatchewan [his home province] and it has been guilty of avoidance and people didn't want to admit it. At one point there were 17 residential schools operating here. We can't change that, but we can work together to create a new destiny as a people.

"What I've found in talking to other residential school survivors is that we have the same sense of shame and guilt. I've carried that all these years and it took a long time for me to understand that I had done nothing wrong. I'm not saying it was all bad, but the 15 to 20 percent of those in positions of power were so destructive. They destroyed our minds and hearts."

An accomplished multi-sports athlete, Arcand recalls how it was the only area where he felt safe and could be creative without being afraid to try.

Even to this day, Arcand swallowed hard when disclosing that he has been unable to talk to his own children about his experiences, due in large part to the pent-up anger that recounting those experiences brings. He said that in the early years as a father he was

admittedly dysfunctional due to circumstances he didn't understand at the time. His eyes lighten up at the notion that he is now getting a second chance as a grandparent.

According to Arcand, it's important for him to stray well outside his comfort zone in delivering this painful memory. "We're not doing this to hurt anyone by opening old wounds, but we have important work to do," he said, while freely admitting that he sees symbols every day of this dark period of his life.

"I'm damaged goods, and I have to put in every effort possible to try to make a difference. It scares me that the history of my country is still there in terms of racism. We need to remember that a child is innocent and when you see some of the things that go on, those are learned behaviours. It used to make me angry when people would say just get over it. But it just shows me that we have much work to do and that motivates me."

Arcand is enough of a realist to know the changes he hopes for won't happen in the immediate future. "It's going to take two or three generations, but my challenge is to try to make it happen in one generation because we can't continue to destroy our own as a people of this country." ■



Eugene Arcand shares his story as a residential school survivor at the *Walking Together: A Day of Education for Truth and Reconciliation*.

## Editorial



### Divisions asked to do the dirty work

Indulge me for a moment here while I take you on a trip down memory lane to the time when our all-knowing daughter, armed with copious research, had decided her first car would be a Toyota Echo.

At that time the basic design of this automobile was akin to this: it had the wheel base of the wagon she had when she was a child, and in their infinite wisdom, the designers of said vehicle decided to make up for the lack of length by making it as high as it was long. In other words, stick a steering wheel on it and you're driving a refrigerator.

My keen intuitive sense deduced this wouldn't be ideal in a windy Saskatchewan climate. However, on the test drive I said nothing and let her drive. Then to my everlasting gratitude, a sizeable gust of wind came along and rocked the vehicle noticeably. So predictably our daughter had made the decision this wasn't the ticket after all—and I didn't have to say a word.

It's a scenario teachers are only too aware of, particularly in the Inquiry model when you have the outcome formulated, but by working with the students they will arrive at the conclusion you had hoped for, but because they did it, then the lesson resonates that much more.

Fast-forward to this year's pre-budget briefing when Education Minister Don Morgan told those in attendance from various school divisions that he was issuing them with a blank piece of paper for them to go away with and come back within what he called "a fairly compressed time frame" to find some ways to save money and find efficiencies within their respective divisions.

When asked afterward if the Ministry had its own plan in mind in terms of how much cost saving could be accomplished, he demurred and insisted that was not the case. Understand I know Morgan to be a trustworthy sort, so I don't think he was simply not telling me the truth.

Yet at the same time, to blindly assume that somewhere in a desk drawer there isn't a figure the government folks have in mind would be rather naive.

If you or I suddenly realized the cupboard was bare and that in order to right the ship certain changes would have to be implemented in the monthly budget, it's not like we would just go with a blank sheet of paper with no intended end goal in mind.

Therefore, I am suggesting that in fact there is an "or else" scenario at play here, if the school division folks somehow figure they have dodged a bullet in what had been rumoured as sweeping changes in advance of the budget and therefore aren't as cost conscious as they might be. I would further speculate that by putting the onus on school divisions and giving them at least a chance to prune their own costs, the government is not alienating many of the very folks who vote for them come election time.

One couldn't help but wonder though, as these folks left the room in a rather buoyant mood collectively asking where they were going to grab lunch, that when this scenario comes full circle, there will in fact be no free lunches, and likely less dining partners.

## Rosthern students, teachers left beaming after time at synchrotron

Taking a break from their precious time on the beamline at the Canadian Light Source, if there was noticeable excitement from the Grade 11 students from Rosthern High School about what they had experienced, then teacher Jeff Rhinas was probably a couple steps higher up the ladder.

"This is just so great; it's a perfect example of seeing first-hand what we have been learning about in school and it's applied here. You think about light reflecting off a mirror and whatever—the most rudimentary topics we can see it all play out right here on the beamline and it brings science to life," he enthused.

Echoing the observations of a group of his students, Rhinas was also chuffed at how the work they had been doing as part of their three-day excursion to the Canadian Light Source on the University of Saskatchewan campus encompassed all areas of the science curriculum so seamlessly. "Even forensic science, you can see how the same ideas apply," he added.

The underlying theme of the research was to see how fusarium would react with wheat—an area which students from a rural agricultural area such as Rosthern could easily relate to and by their own observation could share with their parents.

"Honestly I've been blown away from what I've seen, both in terms of the results and the engagement of the students," Rhinas said. "This is such a rich opportunity for the students and this is applicable to real-life situations so it brings it to life that much more."

As for how this came to happen for Rhinas and his group of 13 students, he recalled that an email had arrived at the school back in the fall indicating to teachers that they were welcome to



Teacher Jeff Rhinas and this group of engaged Grade 11 students from Rosthern High School made the best possible use of their valuable time on the synchrotron at the Canadian Light Source.

apply for beamline time at the synchrotron after completing an orientation course.

Rhinas felt the opportunity to visit such a facility close to home (it's the only one of its kind in Canada) was too good to pass up. Although the facility quite frequently hosts school groups, according to the Rosthern High School teacher it's most often out-of-province students who utilize the chance.

Zachery Hunter, one of the students who attended, freely acknowledged he wouldn't consider himself as one who is necessarily drawn to science, but as a result of this experience operating in the labyrinth of pipes and computers, "I kind of get it and for sure I have a better general idea of what they can do here and how to do it. I know it takes a lot of time to set it up and there are a lot of steps you have to follow, but it's been pretty cool and to be here seeing this and getting a chance to be part of it has been a real eye-opener."

Claudia Wall concurred that the experience had been "pretty cool," adding that previously she had not

known a whole lot about the existence of the synchrotron. "I've found the whole thing pretty interesting for sure, just to see the whole process and to see how something works first-hand. I've enjoyed it and I definitely feel like a scientist," she joked, adding that from the outset it was the students that had to come up with the questions and so they played around with some ideas along the way.

Emily Funk said she's always been interested in science and so found this exciting to be part of. "I think one of the neat things is that this has been student led all the way along and we've had a lot of control. It wasn't just like we showed up and someone else did the work. I feel like we have gained a lot of knowledge." She said that although she had definitely gained a stronger appreciation for scientists, she's not sure she would one day aspire to work at the Canadian Light Source, due in part to the amount of preparatory work involved, which she said might be tedious over time.

Brandon Wurtz said this had definitely been outside his usual comfort zone but he appreciated how all the strands of science played a role in the experiment, adding that due to the fact the students come from a small town, they all have a pretty sound idea of the agricultural application that could be culled from their findings. "You realize how it all can fit together and there's a lot to learn from doing something like this."

In the case of Rhinas meanwhile, science is still a fairly new area of expertise for the former physical education and math teacher. While now filling in as a science teacher half time, this experience whetted his appetite for more.

"As I'm starting to get deeper into the topic, I can see how it's really interesting and coming here has just opened my eyes to the many opportunities that exist. I'll definitely be back in the future and I'm already thinking of what I might do differently next time.

"This will definitely change how I teach, and will make me a more effective teacher. I would highly recommend this to other teachers," he summed up. ■

## Perreault excited by progress of conference

During a break in the Saskatchewan Business Teachers' Association conference, President Connie Perreault had a few moments to catch her breath, but typically she was thinking of a dozen things.

While she was basking in the success of the conference—and in particular the student final case competitions—she was already envisioning where this event can go in the future, as you might expect from the ubiquitous Perreault.

This year's case competition had attracted 84 students and 30 teachers from throughout the province, which as Perreault was eager to volunteer, was a

substantial increase from five years ago when the idea was first forwarded by a few University of Regina students at the time.

According to Perreault, the quality of the competition and the 18 judges, as well as the keynote speakers at the two-day event, had attracted participants from as far away as Toronto as well as numerous business leaders who came away suitably impressed that it felt not unlike the popular *Dragons' Den* television show.

"It's such an amazing experience for all those involved and the networking is something you're not able to get anywhere else at this

point. The kids feel that they can really apply what they have learned in their classroom and they can see how it is applicable and it just makes the knowledge they have acquired come alive and you can see the excitement that happens and the shoulder tapping. I know in talking to the teachers they come away pretty impressed with how the students are handling the whole thing and the pressure.

"I guess as much as anything, you can see and feel the passion they [students] have and how they are going to apply what they learn here going forward."

Perreault noted that not all the students are budding business tycoons necessarily, and some just savour the experience of having to present in front of peers and judges from the business community. She added that for some it's also a perfect sneak peek at what university life might have to offer and it gives them at least an idea of how to cope with that aspect.

"Each year it gets better

and we try new things as we learn. We're always open to how we can make it better and we're never satisfied. In a way it's like the students come here to compete; we're all trouble shooters in everyday life and you see those dynamics here."

Ever the salesperson for what financial literacy, in particular, can teach students, Perreault is hopeful that other schools and teachers in the province will take advantage of the supports that are available.

"It's a lot easier when we all work together and it's just a matter of getting started. There's no right or wrong approach, but when this is taught in the classroom there's no emotion tied to it and I think that's why a lot of parents don't have those conversations with their kids, because it might be uncomfortable. Students who are taking these classes develop a sense of what questions to ask when they are older and it's very valuable and you create good habits that stay with you." ■

### SASKATCHEWAN BULLETIN

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# Mr. Lawrence prepares to sign off after 40 years in classroom

DINSMORE—If you drive into this town of 375 souls and inquire as to where you might find Jeff Lawrence, it's not a slam dunk that you would be pointed in the right direction. Ask for Mr. Lawrence though and your chances are enhanced considerably.

You see the aforementioned Mr. Lawrence has been a fixture around here for the last four decades as an elementary school teacher at Dinsmore Composite School—and it's not like he is going anywhere, although as you read this he is winding down his teaching career: 40 years in the same school where he entered the profession at the tender age of 19.

Anyone who might think he is in any way going through the motions during the last few days would be mistaken to say the least. The day before our visit he had just returned from Saskatoon where he had taken his grades 3 and 4 students on what was his 40th field trip to the Western Development Museum.

Some of those in his last class represent the third generation of their respective families who he has taught and if you happened to run into any of those ex-students, like the bank manager or the service station operator for example, it's pretty likely they would refer to him as Mr. Lawrence. Not out of lack of familiarity, but out of respect, you understand.

It's not unlike the current crop of youngsters. So what do they think of this iconic teacher? It's not like they will blurt it out without holding up their hand—after all that's how things are done in Mr. Lawrence's class.

But in no way does that diminish the genuineness or spontaneity with which they respond when asked collectively what they like about their teacher. The responses are as varied as the students, but here's a sampling: he helps us all understand and do good work; he takes time to teach us math and he's patient; he treats us all fairly; he's really talented at the piano; he makes school fun; he's really unique.

You get the picture. As Lawrence shared, he had only just told the students of his agonizing decision to opt for retirement earlier that morning, and yes there were tears from both sides. So what will the students miss the most?

Again, they are only too happy to lend their own words: I will miss waking up and being excited to go to school; I will miss all the things we get to do together; I will miss him reading to us after lunch every day; I will miss this room; or I will miss everything.

Lawrence himself is justifiably proud of the tireless activities he has been involved in, both in the classroom, the profession at large with associations with the Saskatchewan Music Educators Association and Saskatchewan Reading Council, for example, and the community where he has in his own words been there to sign up for pretty



Jeff Lawrence leads his grades 3 and 4 students through a rousing rendition of the Cowboy Song, while he adds his skill on the venerable piano that is a fixture in his classroom.

much everything, whether it's involving his class in Junior Red Cross or regular visits to the local Prairie Manor senior's home. He's also been a member of the local Kinsmen Club and other organizations.

But for the visitor at least, it's the rapport with the students that you contemplate during the drive back. It is readily evident this is a reciprocal admiration society.

By no means is Lawrence a "soft touch" as he is adamant that his young students learn manners above all, which includes personal appearance and all that goes along with that.

"I can honestly say all my classes have been special and I've never met a student I didn't like—maybe I've not always liked what they did at certain times, but those are things we work on. I would describe my approach as firm but fair and above all consistent, and I want school to be fun for them," he said, adding that he has rarely ever had discipline issues, relying more on "the look" or maybe a slight tap on the desk to get the message across.

By now you can probably deduce Lawrence takes his teaching responsibility very seriously.

"You just need to see the bright look in their eyes and it's your job to make every day special. If it's not, then you need to help them overcome what might be going on. When all is said and done, you want to have done your

part so that when they go out in the world they have the skills and social graces that they can fit in anywhere and succeed."

As he contemplates his final days in the classroom, Lawrence says he can still vividly remember his first day 40 years ago and who sat where. He also shows a folder with the birthdays of all his former students—many of whom contact him in kind for his own birthday.

Remarkably, when he first arrived in town fresh out of university, he didn't even know where Dinsmore was. He grew up on a farm in faraway Fleming in southeastern Saskatchewan near the Manitoba border where he still has cattle that he looks after when time permits.

"I always loved school and it's been my whole life," he said, while thinking back to some of his elementary teachers such as Bernice Kay, Lorine Colledge and Reda Vold, whom he credits with first planting the seed to become a teacher.

If his love of education is profound and lasting, so too is his appreciation for his adopted hometown, which included renting a suite in the local hotel for the first six years. "This community has been wonderful to me, and they took me in like I was one of their own. I've been very lucky."

Lawrence isn't one of those who might crave anonymity, insisting that he is only too

## CTF launches tool for early childhood in minority settings

OTTAWA—The Canadian Teachers' Federation has launched a new tool for early childhood education in Francophone minority settings. The launch took place during the meeting of Tripartite Committee co-ordinated by the Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones, April 20 to 21 in Montréal.

"5 étoiles, rien de moins!" (5 stars, nothing less!) is a production of the CTF in collaboration with the Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française and the Commission nationale des parents francophones. It is meant to help define the special mission of early childhood services in Francophone minority settings in Canada.

"From a very young age, children need to be prepared for entry in French-

language schools," says CTF President Heather Smith. "This reinforces the notion that early childhood centres must aim for excellence in all aspects of their operations."

The tool, intended for administrators of early childhood services, is based on the following five principles: (1) to allow children to live their everyday life in French spontaneously; (2) to create a positive bond with the French language; (3) to play a strategic role in the community; (4) to support families; and (5) to offer an equitable access to quality services.

"We would like to thank our education partners for their ongoing trust which allows us to contribute significantly to French-language education in Canada," Smith added. ■

happy when former students and colleagues drop by the house. "I try to be the same person as at school because that's who I am," he said.

Lawrence said he doesn't feel tired, but candidly admits he's not enamoured with the trend towards blended learning. "I liked being the sage on the stage—the captain of my own ship," he smiled.

Although he doesn't discount the possibility of coming into school as a substitute—you get a feeling the weathered old piano in his classroom won't be forgotten any time soon.

By his own admission, he agonized over his decision for a long time. "I'm unsure of what lies ahead because school has been such a big part of my life and I will miss everything about it," he confided, adding that one thing he does know is he plans to be away the first day school reconvenes in the fall so he won't see the buses

driving by his house or hear the school bell.

Principal Deb de Caux noted that she had learned lots from the man who she said is just an amazing person, "and we have a lot of the same philosophies of what education should look like. He lives and breathes education and he has been such a source of wisdom for all of us and he is definitely going to be missed. I hope he seeks out other adventures and spreads his wings because now it's time to take care of himself."

So what does Lawrence think when looking back? "I feel like 40 is a nice round number and I like to think I'm going out on top and with nothing but good memories. It's amazing how the years have flown by. I would like to be remembered as a friend who always tried to instill in the students to do their best and that I believe in them. I want to thank everyone for 40 wonderful years." ■

## Tech Talk



### Minecraft, new kid on the block

By Dean Vendramin

Hi everyone,

When I was young I enjoyed playing and creating with Lego. Making planes, houses, patterns, you name it ... it was fun and I could spend hours with those little plastic blocks. Fast-forward a few years and today there is another type of block on the block. It's a brick you can feel and stick up your nose ... it's digital and like Lego, but a whole lot more. I'm talking about Minecraft. A simple-looking sandbox game has evolved and revolutionized how students play and create.

This revolution has gathered a tremendous following. Running around with a pickaxe mining, collecting a variety of minerals and other resources, and of course, staying safe from creepers and zombies ... Minecraft has become a place where kids of all ages can build their own world, make their own rules and make their own learning. I have watched and played this game with my own kids and I'm constantly amazed with the ideas, problem-solving strategies and creativity they come up with. Talking with my students at school has also helped solidify my understanding and affection for this game as they have told and shown me worlds they have made themselves and collaborated on with others.

It became obvious to me that this tool had great potential to motivate students in a wide range of ages and abilities, and redefine how students are taught and show their understanding. I would consider myself an intermediate player at best, but I was not afraid to take a risk and implement this tool in the classroom. Over the past few years, I have had students use Minecraft in social class (a cool reconstruction of the Colosseum along with a tour inside, for example), math class (creating various structures and calculating the surface area) and in projects like Genius Hour (recreating our school from a school map). I have witnessed many successful student-developed projects using this powerful tool. I look forward to improving upon my own understanding and utilization of this game changer.

There are many resources out there to help you get started on your Minecraft journey. Check out [education.minecraft.net/](http://education.minecraft.net/) for updates including a free release of Minecraft: Education Edition, coming soon. Here is a sway I created showing how one could use Minecraft in a math classroom ([sway.com/b8kNs42T8hzJ5DeY](http://sway.com/b8kNs42T8hzJ5DeY)). On Twitter I recommend following @immersiveminds, @pedrech and @playcraftlearn for ideas on how to use Minecraft in the classroom. Also talk to your students and many of them will have ideas, suggestions and projects. So pick up that pickaxe and dig into it!

One quick plug ... I'm facilitating a technology in education workshop this summer for the Saskatchewan Professional Development Unit on Monday, July 25. Come on out ... I'd love to share and discuss using in technology in the classroom with you in person (for more info contact me at [d.vendramin@rcsd.ca](mailto:d.vendramin@rcsd.ca) or take a look in the professional growth opportunities catalogue. Thanks for your time and feel free to follow me on Twitter @vendi55 and check out my blog at [deanvendramin.weebly.com](http://deanvendramin.weebly.com).

## Students and teachers combine to celebrate Ukrainian settlement

When one contemplates the history of immigration into western Canada, and specifically Saskatchewan, there is no doubt that those who have emigrated here from Ukraine have had a profound effect on their new homeland.

That rich legacy was celebrated at École Lakeview School by the entire student body and teaching staff of Bishop Filevich Ukrainian Bilingual School in Saskatoon.

As Greg Chatlain, director of Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, said in his opening remarks, the time period from the first wave of Ukrainian settlers to the most recent, albeit considerably smaller wave, represents an amazing milestone.

He said this historical portrayal through cultural readings, song and dance honoured that journey.

"It's a chance to stop and reflect on that journey—the great times and the times of sorrow," he said, adding that the often circuitous journey not bereft of hardship is one that should not be taken for granted.

And the students, encouraged by a near capacity crowd of beaming family

members, certainly gave every indication that the journey will not be forgotten. Students took on the persona of these intrepid souls who came here from Ukraine and brought it to life through their readings.

Scanning the list of acknowledgments in the program, it was evident how many various sources of information had been utilized in coming up with

the research depicted in the portrayals by the students.

According to Bishop Filevich principal Shelly Lord, the idea was originally put forth by staff back in August 2015 due to the significance of the anniversary. As a result it was decided to forego the Christmas concert this school year in favour of this rather more ambitious venture.

All smiles upon the

conclusion of the program, Lord acknowledged it had been a lot of work in preparation, noting that staff had started writing the script after Christmas, and rehearsals in the classrooms had been going on for at least two months before bringing all the classes together to ensure they were ready.

"I'm just thrilled at how this all came together, but that's one of the amazing things about our school, how everyone pitches in and helps out and everyone was excited to be part of it."

Lord said that extended to the students in this K-8 bilingual school, who she said are involved in a host of culturally related activities outside school anyway, "and our kids are performers so they definitely rise to every occasion such as this."

Asked how the teaching staff managed to tap into such passion from the students, Lord replied that "it's because this is their own history and it means a great deal to them."

Bohdan Zerebecky (Grade 4) and Cathy Schabel (Grade 5) were two of the teachers most integrally involved from the outset.

Zerebecky addressed the passion of the students by elaborating that "it's that sense of self that they themselves are a big part of this story and the ever-important role they have played in the life of Western Canada, and especially Saskatchewan."

"Our kids do this all the time in terms of their culture and the greatest protector of culture is language. They may not have understood everything that we learned but this has been a great teaching and learning experience for all of us. It's one of the things we have taken away from this, that we know a lot more now and we can all better understand how much Ukrainian culture and influence has played from our parents to this land that is our new home."

As the entire student body fittingly concluded the evening with a Ukrainian version of *This is Our Land* to the accompaniment of countless cellphones taking pictures and then a standing ovation, it was evident the Ukrainian culture is in good hands for the next 125 years and beyond. ■



Students from Bishop Filevich School in Saskatoon honoured the 125-year anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in the province by presenting a bilingual evening of storytelling interspersed with dancing and singing performances.

## Cultural diversity and language introduced as new policy

By Margaret Pillay, SPDU

The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Policy 1.11 (Cultural Diversity and Language) is another new policy in the Social Justice and Political Advocacy area. It was developed to update an earlier policy (culture and language, 1982) to align with current thinking. One belief identified in this policy states that "people of all cultures are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals, and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination based on their cultural

### Diversity in the Classroom



origins or identities," a statement reflective of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Cultural diversity, in the form of multiculturalism, has been a concept Canadians have been familiar with since the adoption of the multiculturalism policy in 1972. This policy recogniz-

es the inherent worth of all Canadian citizens, regardless of ethnic background. In Canada, new immigrants are encouraged to take pride in and maintain their cultural identities, as opposed to the "melting pot" approach advocated for by some other countries.

Unfortunately, over time, multiculturalism in Canada is sometimes interpreted as the need to pay more attention to the diversity of new immigrants in a way that also diminishes the status of Indigenous cultures. What results is a tendency to see Aboriginal culture as one of many in Canada instead of as the first peoples to live on this land and as a sovereign nation.

Verna St. Denis raised awareness of this issue in her article *Silencing Aboriginal Curricular Content and Perspectives Through Multiculturalism*: "There Are Other Children Here" (*Review of Education, Pedagogy & Cultural Studies*, v33 n4 p306-317 2011). St. Denis comments that "multiculturalism in schools makes it possible for non-Aboriginal teachers and schools to trivialize Aboriginal content and perspectives, and at the same time believe that they are becoming more inclusive and respectful."

Over the past two years, Saskatchewan has become home to approximately 24,000 new immigrants speaking a variety of languages and from a variety of cultural backgrounds. This can be challenging for teachers on several fronts—one being the challenge of teaching students who may not speak English and another being determining how multiculturalism, culturally responsive pedagogy and Aboriginal

content and perspectives intersect.

Kugler and West-Burns (2010) describe a culturally responsive framework as one that sees "the curriculum as flexible and adaptive to the lived experiences of students ..." (Ontario Ministry of Education, Capacity Building Series #35). Using this framework, teachers are encouraged to make connections to the background knowledge and lived experiences of all the students in their classrooms in order to deepen understanding or to broaden experiences. However, students new to Canada still need to learn about all aspects of Canadian culture and Canadian history.

This includes Aboriginal content and perspectives, treaty education, the residential school experience, and the additional impacts of colonialism and racism. Without this background, new immigrants will never fully understand the contradictions and challenges of their new home country.

The culture diversity and language policy states in its beliefs that Canada is a bilingual country, and also that "Indigenous languages are imperative to nurturing and protecting Indigenous cultures ..." Dr. Marie Wilson, commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, commented at the 2015 Saskatchewan Educational Leadership Unit, Twentieth National Congress of Rural Educators, that Canadians still refer to the English and the French as the founding nations of Canada and to English and French as the two official languages; the role of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples in the development of Canada and the importance of their languages are still being denied or minimized.

*The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Can-*

*ada: Calls to Action* (2015) Call to Action 14.1 calls upon the federal government to establish an Aboriginal Languages Act to assert that "Aboriginal languages are a fundamental and valued element of Canadian culture and society, and there is an urgency to preserve them." (2).

The link between culture and language is indistinguishable. Language allows individuals to put a voice to aspects of culture that are invisible to those who speak other languages, such as ways of thinking and making meaning of the world. Culture is spread to others in the same group through language. During the residential schools era, speaking First Nations languages was forbidden and many children lost the ability to speak their mother tongue.

Today, less than 25 percent of the Aboriginal population can speak or understand their language (Mary Jane Norris, *Aboriginal Languages in Canada: Emerging Trends and Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*, Canadian Social Trends 11-008 from: Ottawa: Department of Statistics Canada, 2007, 19). The STF policy invites teachers to "recognize the cultural importance of Indigenous languages and advocate for programs to provide Indigenous language instruction to all students wanting access."

Saskatchewan teachers have tremendous opportunities to foster a deeper understanding of First Nations and Métis cultures and ways of knowing in their classrooms. Many curricula connections support this, which has been mentioned in earlier articles. The arrival of new immigrant students provides additional opportunities for Saskatchewan teachers to share the true history of Canada so that everyone becomes aware of and can support the movement towards reconciliation. ■

## STF submits resolutions

The upcoming annual general meeting of the Canadian Teachers' Federation will include discussion on resolutions submitted by the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Executive that addresses the Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's final report and the need for sustainable and comprehensive settlement strategies for newcomer (immigrant and refugee) children within Canada.

The 94 Calls to Action contained in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report are designed to redress the legacy of residential schools in Canada and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation. Throughout the report education is identified as a key component in reconciliation and Executive feels the leadership of teacher organizations and individual teachers is important. By acknowledging, understanding and advocating for the realization of these Calls to Action, teachers can contribute to this vital step towards healing and reconciliation.

The Executive also advanced resolutions in a number of specific areas within the Calls to Action including:

- Advocating for comprehensive treaty education for all Canadians including country-wide curriculum renewal.

- Advocating for necessary funding for First Nations education both on and off reserve.

- Public endorsement and support by the CTF for a national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

The Executive also submitted a resolution calling on the CTF to advocate the Government of Canada to develop a comprehensive settlement strategy for newcomer children and youth that will include sustainable resources for their education. Recent research indicates it can take two to three years for children to gain conversational proficiency in English (or French) and five to seven years for academic proficiency. A sustainable and comprehensive settlement strategic plan would ensure the resources are available to provide these students with a fair and equitable education in Canada.

The CTF annual general meeting will take place in Montreal in July of this year. ■

# Saul calls treatment of Indigenous people as Canada's betrayal

One would arguably be hard pressed to find an individual who enjoys challenging the status quo more than celebrated Canadian author John Ralston Saul.

Speaking to those attending the Saskatchewan Association for Community Education, he was right in his element as he somewhat playfully offered his version of revisionist history, while imploring those

in the audience to seriously contemplate looking at the time-honoured version of events that have found their way into the public education curricula in this country.

As an avid supporter of First Nations and Métis culture, Saul maximized his time at the podium not only to tout his book, *The Comeback*, but also to challenge the notion that Canada's history is based on European values, whereas, as he pointed out, it is owed in large part from the very beginning to the First Nations people and their cultural practices.

Alluding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the subsequent Calls to Action by Justice Murray Sinclair, Saul said the need for restitution for First Nations peoples is the single most important issue for the country to deal with.

"It's going to cost a lot of money, and it should," he offered rather matter-of-factly. He acknowledged the lack of public appetite for such matters as raising taxes, but suggested that "it isn't a question of leadership on this subject; it's just not an acceptable position for us to be in as treaty partners."

According to Saul, education has a major role to play in the years to come, noting that public education is necessary for a civilized democracy to flourish.

In his view, however, "our curricula are still essentially stuck in a time warp of colonial mythology. It is one of the greatest weaknesses in not only the education



John Ralston Saul

system but also in society. We are stuck with the wrong narrative."

As if perhaps anticipating the disquiet that would result if the current learning materials were changed to reflect the views of how it was the First Nations culture that permeated the creation of Canada as it evolved, he said, "it can't be unpleasant enough when you consider how little we've moved on this."

"Our history is still a derivative of the British and French influences and that's very problematic and it's out of whack about our reality as a country."

Saul cited Samuel de Champlain as a poignant example, referring to how it was First Nations chiefs who showed him the way.

"We have to come to terms with how we tell the story and it has to be written in a way that is not what might be considered to be politically correct. It's what happens

when racism is allowed to form the narrative and we need to flip that narrative. Public schools are for the most part doing a fantastic job, but there is an enormous distance to go. However, we have shown we can do this," he said, drawing attention to the growth of French immersion in the country.

Saul pointed out that having a more accurate depiction of Canada's history is important not only for First Nations people but also so that the many new Canadians who have recently arrived on these shores have a better idea.

He noted the Syrian refugees specifically, musing as to how these new Canadians can potentially become allies for First Nations people, suggesting that they are very curious about the role First Nations people played in Canada's history, for example.

Calling some of the lamentable past experiences endured by First Nations people, Saul referred to it as "Canada's betrayal of Indigenous peoples."

He paid tribute to the strength and resilience of First Nations people in what he sees as a rightful re-emergence, including the Idle No More movement as a prime example.

"I think we will see in 50 years that this renewed confidence cannot be stopped and we have to be serious about First Nations people taking their rightful place," he said, wondering aloud how Canada has somehow avoided the fate of many other countries who have endured lengthy civil wars in not dissimilar circumstances.

"Canada continues to have a multiple personality disorder. People talk about the diversity of this country but that means we need to have an inclusive circle of all people and we owe that 100 percent to Aboriginal people and their history. Education is going to be the key as to when this happens, but once we truly start the process we'll see how much easier it can be."

"The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has been fantastic, but it's going to require a real commitment to put it in place and it's our job to keep reminding ourselves." ■

## Resource Connections



### Moving forward on reconciliation

Joan Elliott, Librarian/Manager  
Stewart Resources Centre

In response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action around the role education can play in actively fostering reconciliation, numerous teachers and students have had opportunities to participate in events designed to reach both hearts and minds. Walking Together: A Day of Education for Truth and Reconciliation held at the University of Regina, Project of Heart ([www.projectofheart.ca/sk](http://www.projectofheart.ca/sk)) and the KAIROS Blanket Exercise ([www.kairosblanketexercise.org](http://www.kairosblanketexercise.org)) are a few that come to mind.

What more can teachers and schools do to build upon these learnings and to move forward on the journey towards reconciliation? Many Saskatchewan curricula include entry points on the history of residential schools, treaties and the historic and contemporary contributions of Indigenous peoples to Canada. Additionally, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education's document *Treaty Education Outcomes and Indicators* ([www.education.gov.sk.ca/treaty-education-outcomes-indicators](http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/treaty-education-outcomes-indicators)) presents a K-12 continuum of approaches that can be incorporated into subject areas.

Scores of resources are available in the Stewart Resources Centre that provide background and ideas for teaching about residential schools and reconciliation. The publication, *100 Years of Loss: The Residential School System in Canada Teacher's Guide*, which was published by the Legacy of Hope Foundation, consists of six lesson plans dealing with the federal apology, how the schools were created, identity, the legacy of the schools and ways to promote healing and reconciliation.

The First Nations Education Steering Committee and the First Nations Schools Association in British Columbia have developed *Indian Residential Schools and Reconciliation Teacher Resource Guides* for grades 5, 10 and 11/12 that are focused on promoting understanding of the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people through Canada's history and on healing and reconciliation. *Stolen Lives: The Indigenous Peoples of Canada and the Indian Residential Schools*, created by Facing History and Ourselves, is a teacher resource which features a series of readings and questions that can be used with secondary students.

Deeply moving children's resources on the topic are also available. Books suitable for K-5 students include: *As Long as the Rivers Flow* by Larry Loyie and Constance Brissenden, *Fatty Legs: A True Story* by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton, and *Little Butterfly Girl: An Indian Residential School Story* by Jenny Restoule-Mallozzi. *Shin-chi's Canoe* and *Shi-shi-etko*, both by Nicola Campbell, are two other poignant books. *Shi-shi-etko* is also available as a streamed video on ROVER (Recommended Online Video Education Resources).

DVDs for middle years students include: *A Day at Indian Residential Schools in Canada* produced by Indigenous Education Press, and *An Overview of Residential Schools in Canada* produced by McIntyre Media. Profoundly memorable books at that level include: *No Time to Say Goodbye: Children's Stories of the Kuper Island Residential School* by Rita Morris, Sylvia Olsen and Ann Sam, and *A Stranger at Home: A True Story* by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton.

Powerful books at the secondary level include: *Kitoskâyiminawak Pikiskwêwak: Our Young People Speak: The Healing Edition* published by the Prairie Valley School Division, *Betty: The Helen Betty Osborne Story*, a graphic novel by David A. Robertson, *Broken Circle: The Dark Legacy of Indian Residential Schools* by Theodore Fontaine, *Indian Horse* by Richard Wagamese, *The Education of Augie Merasty: A Residential School Memoir* by Joseph Auguste Merasty and David Carpenter, and *Moving Forward: A Collection About Truth and Reconciliation*, a new anthology in the iLit series published by McGraw-Hill.

Numerous other suggestions can be found in our collection of websites devoted to residential schools and reconciliation. They can be viewed via [www.stf.sk.ca/professional-resources/stewart-resources-centre/resources/related-links](http://www.stf.sk.ca/professional-resources/stewart-resources-centre/resources/related-links). To deepen your understanding of teaching and learning for reconciliation, why not make it your personal call to action to read and view some of these or other resources on this topic over the summer? To borrow any of them, please email [src@stf.sk.ca](mailto:src@stf.sk.ca).

## Meadows shortlisted for national award

Saskatoon author and recording artist Sally Meadows has been shortlisted for the 2016 Word Awards, a national competition that honours the best published work by Canadian Christian writers in a wide range of genres.

Meadows, a former teacher, is one of only two Saskatchewan authors shortlisted, which includes over 100 nominees in 35 categories. Also shortlisted was Ramona Lusch Johnson of Dalmeny. Meadows was nominated for her children's picture book *The Two Trees* (2015).

*The Two Trees* is about a boy on the autism spectrum as told from the perspective of his younger brother. The book raises awareness about the challenges facing families that include a child with autism in an accessible story form.

Over 2,000 elementary school children across the province have participated in Meadows' *The Two Trees* presentation, which includes an author reading, discussion about autism and bullying, and hands-on activities that delight and enlighten.

Many of Meadows' school presentations have been funded through the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild Author Readings Program.

This is the third Word Award nomination for Meadows. Her first two nominations (2013 and

2014) were for her songs *Turn the Page* and *This New Year* from her CDs *Turn the Page* and *Red & White*, respectively. Meadows is also a contributing author to a number of anthologies including the number one Canadian bestseller *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Christmas in Canada*. Her second children's book *Beneath That Star* was released in 2015.

The 28th Annual Word Awards are sponsored by the Word Guild and will be presented at a gala in Toronto, Ontario on June 24. ■



### STS Executive 2016-17

Front row (from left) Laurie Dubé, Executive Secretary Fred Herron, Past President Doug Haroldson, President Maxine Stinka, Vice-President Sunil Pandila, Helen Sukovieff, Joyce Hoffman. Back row (from left) Susan Amundrud, Doreen Rathgeber, Marie LeBlanc-Warick (ACER-CART), Mike Kaminski, Alan Laughlin, Robert Wuschenny, Calvin Bachmeier, Don Gabel, Anna Wehrkamp, Jane Isinger.

## Following Their Voices has enthusiastic supporters from all sectors

One could fill volumes with the various theories that have been pontificated by those endeavouring to get to the root of the lagging academic achievements of First Nations and Métis students in Saskatchewan.

When the provincial government, and specifically the Ministry of Education, made it a priority to have graduation rates significantly improve by 2020, one of the primary ways was to develop positive student-teacher relationships by incorporating greater cultural sensitivity as one of the cornerstones. Entitled *Following Their Voices*, it is intended to dovetail with the extensive Student First consultations concluded earlier throughout the province.

Conversations have been often and wide-ranging as the program has now been rolled out to 12 provincial schools and another five band-operated schools, which brings federal funding into the equation as well.

If you should think this all sounds complicated, listen to Pat Bugler, the director of education for Treaty Six Education Council, who bases his optimism on the fundamental commitment to more fully involve students.

“By us listening to students and letting them have voice in the school, it means there’s more to the relationship piece and I’m expecting great things by us working together. When I started on this process I could see the possibilities because this is co-constructed, whereas before it wasn’t across the board. With teachers’ support and feedback I believe this gives us a consistent approach and



There was no shortage of discussion or note taking during the numerous consultations that have formed an integral part of the *Following Their Voices* initiative which is being touted by many.

even if it’s to be expected that it will look different in various settings, the goals and the delivery is consistent,” Bugler said, adding that it has to be at the grassroots level.

According to Randy Fox, director of education for Living Sky School Division, and another of those who has been integrally involved in the discussions, “this goes deeper and in my view it helps us get to the root of the teacher-student relationships that are so important.

“We need to do more in terms of making those connections with our First Nations and Métis students and if we establish that genuine respect, it’s my feeling that it is something that students will want to follow because they feel more part of their own education.”

Tim Caleval from the Ministry of Education reflected back on the series of meetings and how the focus throughout has been to fit the initiative within the overall Education Sector

Strategic Plan. He recognized that there is always going to be funding challenges, but stressed that there has already been significant early success since its implementation, adding that “this is the most important work we are doing right now.”

Angie Caron, who has been seconded from her teaching duties to the Ministry as part of this initiative, said one of the aspects that can’t be overlooked is teacher reflection and how they can support kids in the classroom.

“This presents an opportunity for teachers to think deeply about their practice with their students and to collect evidence to support them. That’s really what is at the centre of this. One thing I’ve seen is a real agreement among all school divisions that improving the experience for our First Nations and Métis students is a shared priority.”

According to Caron, the timing of the Calls to Action by Justice Murray Sinclair

at the culmination of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada only serves to make *Following Their Voices* that much more poignant given that education was highlighted as a key piece.

Bugler agreed, but cautioned that “it’s not something we can expect to just happen in a year or two. It will take at least a generation. It’s always been my hope that we would change the way we have done things at the division level and I’m very encouraged by this overall approach.”

Among those at this meeting there is a shared optimism as to what this program can lead to in the future.

“I’m very optimistic and I’ve seen a shift in the level of respect when addressing First Nations and Métis students. We are taking real steps to try to make this right and we’re at a critical time right now,” Bugler said.

“I would say this could be a turning point and when

we look at this 60 years down the road I want this generation of teachers as grandparents to look back and see how they changed things for my people.”

Caleval added his own hopes, basing his optimism on the level of co-operation and mutual understanding he has witnessed since the early days of the program. “When you see how it has evolved, there’s a laser focus and I see it in schools too. This program is very closely aligned with Student First in terms of putting the student at the centre and that has a real chance for success.”

Fox said the fact that work is being done in a number of facets, including treaty education in all schools, is key to what gives him hope for what lies ahead.

Maureen Taylor, a provincial facilitator, said she too is optimistic, adding that “for too long our hope has been our plan, but I think now we have a real plan and it applies to every school division and to society in general. Teachers are at a place where they are more reflective than ever and that’s what is going to be the impact for the students and will provide a bright future for all kids.”

“This is one of the most exciting things that has happened in my career,” Caron enthused. “I view this is as a tremendous opportunity to work side by side with my colleagues for the benefit of kids and that’s what makes us do what it is we do when we started. This work can be foundational in building on Indigenous ways of knowing and that will be to the benefit of all our students.” ■

## Arcand hopes sharing his past will help pave the way for better future

REGINA—It wasn’t just his imposing physical stature that allowed Eugene Arcand to command the gymnasium full of students and teachers during the *Walking Together: A Day of Education for Truth and Reconciliation*.

Equally it was his message delivered with passion and eloquence. As Arcand shared, “I never thought I would

see this day,” while in the same breath conceding that he was speaking of events that he had spent a lifetime trying to forget.

You see, Arcand wasn’t always this grand figure holding the microphone. He was considerably smaller when as a youngster he was spirited away from his family and thereafter had to endure the

intolerable pain and suffering of residential school life.

Today, via his involvement with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation in Winnipeg, he uses opportunities such as this to bring this dark period in Canadian history to life so that it will be neither forgotten nor repeated, but rather understood and acknowledged.

Arcand emphasized to those in the crowd that he wasn’t here looking for pity, but rather to help the Canadian populace understand to a large degree the reasons why Aboriginal people struggle in the way they have.

“It’s part of all of us; it is Canada’s darkest secret, and as the youth you have a chance to use it in your learning and help to be the change. When you go home, hug those around you, because we went through a generation without having that opportunity. To see what is happening here makes my heart soar. This is setting a standard and you are being leaders in helping us spread the message. You can go home and educate your parents.”

In an interview afterwards, Arcand took a deep sigh and conceded that he has to get himself mentally prepared for events such as this where raw emotion and painful memories are close to the surface.

“It’s my duty on behalf of my classmates back then,

but this is for everyone. What happened to us is not going to go away and so it’s important for us to change attitudes and behaviours. I look at Saskatchewan [his home province] and it has been guilty of avoidance and people didn’t want to admit it. At one point there were 17 residential schools operating here. We can’t change that, but we can work together to create a new destiny as a people.

“What I’ve found in talking to other residential school survivors is that we have the same sense of shame and guilt. I’ve carried that all these years and it took a long time for me to understand that I had done nothing wrong. I’m not saying it was all bad, but the 15 to 20 percent of those in positions of power were so destructive. They destroyed our minds and hearts.”

An accomplished multi-sports athlete, Arcand recalls how it was the only area where he felt safe and could be creative without being afraid to try.

Even to this day, Arcand swallowed hard when disclosing that he has been unable to talk to his own children about his experiences, due in large part to the pent-up anger that recounting those experiences brings. He said that in the early years as a father he was

admittedly dysfunctional due to circumstances he didn’t understand at the time. His eyes lighten up at the notion that he is now getting a second chance as a grandparent.

According to Arcand, it’s important for him to stray well outside his comfort zone in delivering this painful memory. “We’re not doing this to hurt anyone by opening old wounds, but we have important work to do,” he said, while freely admitting that he sees symbols every day of this dark period of his life.

“I’m damaged goods, and I have to put in every effort possible to try to make a difference. It scares me that the history of my country is still there in terms of racism. We need to remember that a child is innocent and when you see some of the things that go on, those are learned behaviours. It used to make me angry when people would say just get over it. But it just shows me that we have much work to do and that motivates me.”

Arcand is enough of a realist to know the changes he hopes for won’t happen in the immediate future. “It’s going to take two or three generations, but my challenge is to try to make it happen in one generation because we can’t continue to destroy our own as a people of this country.” ■



Eugene Arcand shares his story as a residential school survivor at the *Walking Together: A Day of Education for Truth and Reconciliation*.

## Editorial



### Divisions asked to do the dirty work

Indulge me for a moment here while I take you on a trip down memory lane to the time when our all-knowing daughter, armed with copious research, had decided her first car would be a Toyota Echo.

At that time the basic design of this automobile was akin to this: it had the wheel base of the wagon she had when she was a child, and in their infinite wisdom, the designers of said vehicle decided to make up for the lack of length by making it as high as it was long. In other words, stick a steering wheel on it and you're driving a refrigerator.

My keen intuitive sense deduced this wouldn't be ideal in a windy Saskatchewan climate. However, on the test drive I said nothing and let her drive. Then to my everlasting gratitude, a sizeable gust of wind came along and rocked the vehicle noticeably. So predictably our daughter had made the decision this wasn't the ticket after all—and I didn't have to say a word.

It's a scenario teachers are only too aware of, particularly in the Inquiry model when you have the outcome formulated, but by working with the students they will arrive at the conclusion you had hoped for, but because they did it, then the lesson resonates that much more.

Fast-forward to this year's pre-budget briefing when Education Minister Don Morgan told those in attendance from various school divisions that he was issuing them with a blank piece of paper for them to go away with and come back within what he called "a fairly compressed time frame" to find some ways to save money and find efficiencies within their respective divisions.

When asked afterward if the Ministry had its own plan in mind in terms of how much cost saving could be accomplished, he demurred and insisted that was not the case. Understand I know Morgan to be a trustworthy sort, so I don't think he was simply not telling me the truth.

Yet at the same time, to blindly assume that somewhere in a desk drawer there isn't a figure the government folks have in mind would be rather naive.

If you or I suddenly realized the cupboard was bare and that in order to right the ship certain changes would have to be implemented in the monthly budget, it's not like we would just go with a blank sheet of paper with no intended end goal in mind.

Therefore, I am suggesting that in fact there is an "or else" scenario at play here, if the school division folks somehow figure they have dodged a bullet in what had been rumoured as sweeping changes in advance of the budget and therefore aren't as cost conscious as they might be. I would further speculate that by putting the onus on school divisions and giving them at least a chance to prune their own costs, the government is not alienating many of the very folks who vote for them come election time.

One couldn't help but wonder though, as these folks left the room in a rather buoyant mood collectively asking where they were going to grab lunch, that when this scenario comes full circle, there will in fact be no free lunches, and likely less dining partners.

## Rosthern students, teachers left beaming after time at synchrotron

Taking a break from their precious time on the beamline at the Canadian Light Source, if there was noticeable excitement from the Grade 11 students from Rosthern High School about what they had experienced, then teacher Jeff Rhinas was probably a couple steps higher up the ladder.

"This is just so great; it's a perfect example of seeing first-hand what we have been learning about in school and it's applied here. You think about light reflecting off a mirror and whatever—the most rudimentary topics we can see it all play out right here on the beamline and it brings science to life," he enthused.

Echoing the observations of a group of his students, Rhinas was also chuffed at how the work they had been doing as part of their three-day excursion to the Canadian Light Source on the University of Saskatchewan campus encompassed all areas of the science curriculum so seamlessly. "Even forensic science, you can see how the same ideas apply," he added.

The underlying theme of the research was to see how fusarium would react with wheat—an area which students from a rural agricultural area such as Rosthern could easily relate to and by their own observation could share with their parents.

"Honestly I've been blown away from what I've seen, both in terms of the results and the engagement of the students," Rhinas said. "This is such a rich opportunity for the students and this is applicable to real-life situations so it brings it to life that much more."

As for how this came to happen for Rhinas and his group of 13 students, he recalled that an email had arrived at the school back in the fall indicating to teachers that they were welcome to



Teacher Jeff Rhinas and this group of engaged Grade 11 students from Rosthern High School made the best possible use of their valuable time on the synchrotron at the Canadian Light Source.

apply for beamline time at the synchrotron after completing an orientation course.

Rhinas felt the opportunity to visit such a facility close to home (it's the only one of its kind in Canada) was too good to pass up. Although the facility quite frequently hosts school groups, according to the Rosthern High School teacher it's most often out-of-province students who utilize the chance.

Zachery Hunter, one of the students who attended, freely acknowledged he wouldn't consider himself as one who is necessarily drawn to science, but as a result of this experience operating in the labyrinth of pipes and computers, "I kind of get it and for sure I have a better general idea of what they can do here and how to do it. I know it takes a lot of time to set it up and there are a lot of steps you have to follow, but it's been pretty cool and to be here seeing this and getting a chance to be part of it has been a real eye-opener."

Claudia Wall concurred that the experience had been "pretty cool," adding that previously she had not

known a whole lot about the existence of the synchrotron. "I've found the whole thing pretty interesting for sure, just to see the whole process and to see how something works first-hand. I've enjoyed it and I definitely feel like a scientist," she joked, adding that from the outset it was the students that had to come up with the questions and so they played around with some ideas along the way.

Emily Funk said she's always been interested in science and so found this exciting to be part of. "I think one of the neat things is that this has been student led all the way along and we've had a lot of control. It wasn't just like we showed up and someone else did the work. I feel like we have gained a lot of knowledge." She said that although she had definitely gained a stronger appreciation for scientists, she's not sure she would one day aspire to work at the Canadian Light Source, due in part to the amount of preparatory work involved, which she said might be tedious over time.

Brandon Wurtz said this had definitely been outside his usual comfort zone but he appreciated how all the strands of science played a role in the experiment, adding that due to the fact the students come from a small town, they all have a pretty sound idea of the agricultural application that could be culled from their findings. "You realize how it all can fit together and there's a lot to learn from doing something like this."

In the case of Rhinas meanwhile, science is still a fairly new area of expertise for the former physical education and math teacher. While now filling in as a science teacher half time, this experience whetted his appetite for more.

"As I'm starting to get deeper into the topic, I can see how it's really interesting and coming here has just opened my eyes to the many opportunities that exist. I'll definitely be back in the future and I'm already thinking of what I might do differently next time.

"This will definitely change how I teach, and will make me a more effective teacher. I would highly recommend this to other teachers," he summed up. ■

## Perreault excited by progress of conference

During a break in the Saskatchewan Business Teachers' Association conference, President Connie Perreault had a few moments to catch her breath, but typically she was thinking of a dozen things.

While she was basking in the success of the conference—and in particular the student final case competitions—she was already envisioning where this event can go in the future, as you might expect from the ubiquitous Perreault.

This year's case competition had attracted 84 students and 30 teachers from throughout the province, which as Perreault was eager to volunteer, was a

substantial increase from five years ago when the idea was first forwarded by a few University of Regina students at the time.

According to Perreault, the quality of the competition and the 18 judges, as well as the keynote speakers at the two-day event, had attracted participants from as far away as Toronto as well as numerous business leaders who came away suitably impressed that it felt not unlike the popular *Dragons' Den* television show.

"It's such an amazing experience for all those involved and the networking is something you're not able to get anywhere else at this

point. The kids feel that they can really apply what they have learned in their classroom and they can see how it is applicable and it just makes the knowledge they have acquired come alive and you can see the excitement that happens and the shoulder tapping. I know in talking to the teachers they come away pretty impressed with how the students are handling the whole thing and the pressure.

"I guess as much as anything, you can see and feel the passion they [students] have and how they are going to apply what they learn here going forward."

Perreault noted that not all the students are budding business tycoons necessarily, and some just savour the experience of having to present in front of peers and judges from the business community. She added that for some it's also a perfect sneak peek at what university life might have to offer and it gives them at least an idea of how to cope with that aspect.

"Each year it gets better

and we try new things as we learn. We're always open to how we can make it better and we're never satisfied. In a way it's like the students come here to compete; we're all trouble shooters in everyday life and you see those dynamics here."

Ever the salesperson for what financial literacy, in particular, can teach students, Perreault is hopeful that other schools and teachers in the province will take advantage of the supports that are available.

"It's a lot easier when we all work together and it's just a matter of getting started. There's no right or wrong approach, but when this is taught in the classroom there's no emotion tied to it and I think that's why a lot of parents don't have those conversations with their kids, because it might be uncomfortable. Students who are taking these classes develop a sense of what questions to ask when they are older and it's very valuable and you create good habits that stay with you." ■

## BULLETIN

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## Mr. Lawrence prepares to sign off after 40 years in classroom

DINSMORE—If you drive into this town of 375 souls and inquire as to where you might find Jeff Lawrence, it's not a slam dunk that you would be pointed in the right direction. Ask for Mr. Lawrence though and your chances are enhanced considerably.

You see the aforementioned Mr. Lawrence has been a fixture around here for the last four decades as an elementary school teacher at Dinsmore Composite School—and it's not like he is going anywhere, although as you read this he is winding down his teaching career: 40 years in the same school where he entered the profession at the tender age of 19.

Anyone who might think he is in any way going through the motions during the last few days would be mistaken to say the least. The day before our visit he had just returned from Saskatoon where he had taken his grades 3 and 4 students on what was his 40th field trip to the Western Development Museum.

Some of those in his last class represent the third generation of their respective families who he has taught and if you happened to run into any of those ex-students, like the bank manager or the service station operator for example, it's pretty likely they would refer to him as Mr. Lawrence. Not out of lack of familiarity, but out of respect, you understand.

It's not unlike the current crop of youngsters. So what do they think of this iconic teacher? It's not like they will blurt it out without holding up their hand—after all that's how things are done in Mr. Lawrence's class.

But in no way does that diminish the genuineness or spontaneity with which they respond when asked collectively what they like about their teacher. The responses are as varied as the students, but here's a sampling: he helps us all understand and do good work; he takes time to teach us math and he's patient; he treats us all fairly; he's really talented at the piano; he makes school fun; he's really unique.

You get the picture. As Lawrence shared, he had only just told the students of his agonizing decision to opt for retirement earlier that morning, and yes there were tears from both sides. So what will the students miss the most?

Again, they are only too happy to lend their own words: I will miss waking up and being excited to go to school; I will miss all the things we get to do together; I will miss him reading to us after lunch every day; I will miss this room; or I will miss everything.

Lawrence himself is justifiably proud of the tireless activities he has been involved in, both in the classroom, the profession at large with associations with the Saskatchewan Music Educators Association and Saskatchewan Reading Council, for example, and the community where he has in his own words been there to sign up for pretty



Jeff Lawrence leads his grades 3 and 4 students through a rousing rendition of the Cowboy Song, while he adds his skill on the venerable piano that is a fixture in his classroom.

much everything, whether it's involving his class in Junior Red Cross or regular visits to the local Prairie Manor senior's home. He's also been a member of the local Kinsmen Club and other organizations.

But for the visitor at least, it's the rapport with the students that you contemplate during the drive back. It is readily evident this is a reciprocal admiration society.

By no means is Lawrence a "soft touch" as he is adamant that his young students learn manners above all, which includes personal appearance and all that goes along with that.

"I can honestly say all my classes have been special and I've never met a student I didn't like—maybe I've not always liked what they did at certain times, but those are things we work on. I would describe my approach as firm but fair and above all consistent, and I want school to be fun for them," he said, adding that he has rarely ever had discipline issues, relying more on "the look" or maybe a slight tap on the desk to get the message across.

By now you can probably deduce Lawrence takes his teaching responsibility very seriously.

"You just need to see the bright look in their eyes and it's your job to make every day special. If it's not, then you need to help them overcome what might be going on. When all is said and done, you want to have done your

part so that when they go out in the world they have the skills and social graces that they can fit in anywhere and succeed."

As he contemplates his final days in the classroom, Lawrence says he can still vividly remember his first day 40 years ago and who sat where. He also shows a folder with the birthdays of all his former students—many of whom contact him in kind for his own birthday.

Remarkably, when he first arrived in town fresh out of university, he didn't even know where Dinsmore was. He grew up on a farm in faraway Fleming in southeastern Saskatchewan near the Manitoba border where he still has cattle that he looks after when time permits.

"I always loved school and it's been my whole life," he said, while thinking back to some of his elementary teachers such as Bernice Kay, Lorine Colledge and Reda Vold, whom he credits with first planting the seed to become a teacher.

If his love of education is profound and lasting, so too is his appreciation for his adopted hometown, which included renting a suite in the local hotel for the first six years. "This community has been wonderful to me, and they took me in like I was one of their own. I've been very lucky."

Lawrence isn't one of those who might crave anonymity, insisting that he is only too

## CTF launches tool for early childhood in minority settings

OTTAWA—The Canadian Teachers' Federation has launched a new tool for early childhood education in Francophone minority settings. The launch took place during the meeting of Tripartite Committee co-ordinated by the Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones, April 20 to 21 in Montréal.

"5 étoiles, rien de moins!" (5 stars, nothing less!) is a production of the CTF in collaboration with the Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française and the Commission nationale des parents francophones. It is meant to help define the special mission of early childhood services in Francophone minority settings in Canada.

"From a very young age, children need to be prepared for entry in French-

language schools," says CTF President Heather Smith. "This reinforces the notion that early childhood centres must aim for excellence in all aspects of their operations."

The tool, intended for administrators of early childhood services, is based on the following five principles: (1) to allow children to live their everyday life in French spontaneously; (2) to create a positive bond with the French language; (3) to play a strategic role in the community; (4) to support families; and (5) to offer an equitable access to quality services.

"We would like to thank our education partners for their ongoing trust which allows us to contribute significantly to French-language education in Canada," Smith added. ■

happy when former students and colleagues drop by the house. "I try to be the same person as at school because that's who I am," he said.

Lawrence said he doesn't feel tired, but candidly admits he's not enamoured with the trend towards blended learning. "I liked being the sage on the stage—the captain of my own ship," he smiled.

Although he doesn't discount the possibility of coming into school as a substitute—you get a feeling the weathered old piano in his classroom won't be forgotten any time soon.

By his own admission, he agonized over his decision for a long time. "I'm unsure of what lies ahead because school has been such a big part of my life and I will miss everything about it," he confided, adding that one thing he does know is he plans to be away the first day school reconvenes in the fall so he won't see the buses

driving by his house or hear the school bell.

Principal Deb de Caux noted that she had learned lots from the man who she said is just an amazing person, "and we have a lot of the same philosophies of what education should look like. He lives and breathes education and he has been such a source of wisdom for all of us and he is definitely going to be missed. I hope he seeks out other adventures and spreads his wings because now it's time to take care of himself."

So what does Lawrence think when looking back? "I feel like 40 is a nice round number and I like to think I'm going out on top and with nothing but good memories. It's amazing how the years have flown by. I would like to be remembered as a friend who always tried to instill in the students to do their best and that I believe in them. I want to thank everyone for 40 wonderful years." ■

## Tech Talk



### Minecraft, new kid on the block

By Dean Vendramin

Hi everyone,

When I was young I enjoyed playing and creating with Lego. Making planes, houses, patterns, you name it ... it was fun and I could spend hours with those little plastic blocks. Fast-forward a few years and today there is another type of block on the block. It's a brick you can feel and stick up your nose ... it's digital and like Lego, but a whole lot more. I'm talking about Minecraft. A simple-looking sandbox game has evolved and revolutionized how students play and create.

This revolution has gathered a tremendous following. Running around with a pickaxe mining, collecting a variety of minerals and other resources, and of course, staying safe from creepers and zombies ... Minecraft has become a place where kids of all ages can build their own world, make their own rules and make their own learning. I have watched and played this game with my own kids and I'm constantly amazed with the ideas, problem-solving strategies and creativity they come up with. Talking with my students at school has also helped solidify my understanding and affection for this game as they have told and shown me worlds they have made themselves and collaborated on with others.

It became obvious to me that this tool had great potential to motivate students in a wide range of ages and abilities, and redefine how students are taught and show their understanding. I would consider myself an intermediate player at best, but I was not afraid to take a risk and implement this tool in the classroom. Over the past few years, I have had students use Minecraft in social class (a cool reconstruction of the Colosseum along with a tour inside, for example), math class (creating various structures and calculating the surface area) and in projects like Genius Hour (recreating our school from a school map). I have witnessed many successful student-developed projects using this powerful tool. I look forward to improving upon my own understanding and utilization of this game changer.

There are many resources out there to help you get started on your Minecraft journey. Check out [education.minecraft.net/](http://education.minecraft.net/) for updates including a free release of Minecraft: Education Edition, coming soon. Here is a sway I created showing how one could use Minecraft in a math classroom ([sway.com/b8kNs42T8hzJ5DeY](http://sway.com/b8kNs42T8hzJ5DeY)). On Twitter I recommend following @immersiveminds, @pedrech and @playcraftlearn for ideas on how to use Minecraft in the classroom. Also talk to your students and many of them will have ideas, suggestions and projects. So pick up that pickaxe and dig into it!

One quick plug ... I'm facilitating a technology in education workshop this summer for the Saskatchewan Professional Development Unit on Monday, July 25. Come on out ... I'd love to share and discuss using in technology in the classroom with you in person (for more info contact me at [d.vendramin@rcsd.ca](mailto:d.vendramin@rcsd.ca) or take a look in the professional growth opportunities catalogue. Thanks for your time and feel free to follow me on Twitter @vendi55 and check out my blog at [deanvendramin.weebly.com](http://deanvendramin.weebly.com).

## Students and teachers combine to celebrate Ukrainian settlement

When one contemplates the history of immigration into western Canada, and specifically Saskatchewan, there is no doubt that those who have emigrated here from Ukraine have had a profound effect on their new homeland.

That rich legacy was celebrated at École Lakeview School by the entire student body and teaching staff of Bishop Filevich Ukrainian Bilingual School in Saskatoon.

As Greg Chatlain, director of Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, said in his opening remarks, the time period from the first wave of Ukrainian settlers to the most recent, albeit considerably smaller wave, represents an amazing milestone.

He said this historical portrayal through cultural readings, song and dance honoured that journey.

"It's a chance to stop and reflect on that journey—the great times and the times of sorrow," he said, adding that the often circuitous journey not bereft of hardship is one that should not be taken for granted.

And the students, encouraged by a near capacity crowd of beaming family

members, certainly gave every indication that the journey will not be forgotten. Students took on the persona of these intrepid souls who came here from Ukraine and brought it to life through their readings.

Scanning the list of acknowledgments in the program, it was evident how many various sources of information had been utilized in coming up with

the research depicted in the portrayals by the students.

According to Bishop Filevich principal Shelly Lord, the idea was originally put forth by staff back in August 2015 due to the significance of the anniversary. As a result it was decided to forego the Christmas concert this school year in favour of this rather more ambitious venture.

All smiles upon the



Students from Bishop Filevich School in Saskatoon honoured the 125-year anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in the province by presenting a bilingual evening of storytelling interspersed with dancing and singing performances.

conclusion of the program, Lord acknowledged it had been a lot of work in preparation, noting that staff had started writing the script after Christmas, and rehearsals in the classrooms had been going on for at least two months before bringing all the classes together to ensure they were ready.

"I'm just thrilled at how this all came together, but that's one of the amazing things about our school, how everyone pitches in and helps out and everyone was excited to be part of it."

Lord said that extended to the students in this K-8 bilingual school, who she said are involved in a host of culturally related activities outside school anyway, "and our kids are performers so they definitely rise to every occasion such as this."

Asked how the teaching staff managed to tap into such passion from the students, Lord replied that "it's because this is their own history and it means a great deal to them."

Bohdan Zerebecky (Grade 4) and Cathy Schabel (Grade 5) were two of the teachers most integrally involved from the outset.

Zerebecky addressed the passion of the students by elaborating that "it's that sense of self that they themselves are a big part of this story and the ever-important role they have played in the life of Western Canada, and especially Saskatchewan."

"Our kids do this all the time in terms of their culture and the greatest protector of culture is language. They may not have understood everything that we learned but this has been a great teaching and learning experience for all of us. It's one of the things we have taken away from this, that we know a lot more now and we can all better understand how much Ukrainian culture and influence has played from our parents to this land that is our new home."

As the entire student body fittingly concluded the evening with a Ukrainian version of *This is Our Land* to the accompaniment of countless cellphones taking pictures and then a standing ovation, it was evident the Ukrainian culture is in good hands for the next 125 years and beyond. ■

## Cultural diversity and language introduced as new policy

By Margaret Pillay, SPDU

The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Policy 1.11 (Cultural Diversity and Language) is another new policy in the Social Justice and Political Advocacy area. It was developed to update an earlier policy (culture and language, 1982) to align with current thinking. One belief identified in this policy states that "people of all cultures are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals, and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination based on their cultural

### Diversity in the Classroom



origins or identities," a statement reflective of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Cultural diversity, in the form of multiculturalism, has been a concept Canadians have been familiar with since the adoption of the multiculturalism policy in 1972. This policy recogniz-

es the inherent worth of all Canadian citizens, regardless of ethnic background. In Canada, new immigrants are encouraged to take pride in and maintain their cultural identities, as opposed to the "melting pot" approach advocated for by some other countries.

Unfortunately, over time, multiculturalism in Canada is sometimes interpreted as the need to pay more attention to the diversity of new immigrants in a way that also diminishes the status of Indigenous cultures. What results is a tendency to see Aboriginal culture as one of many in Canada instead of as the first peoples to live on this land and as a sovereign nation.

Verna St. Denis raised awareness of this issue in her article *Silencing Aboriginal Curricular Content and Perspectives Through Multiculturalism*: "There Are Other Children Here" (*Review of Education, Pedagogy & Cultural Studies*, v33 n4 p306-317 2011). St. Denis comments that "multiculturalism in schools makes it possible for non-Aboriginal teachers and schools to trivialize Aboriginal content and perspectives, and at the same time believe that they are becoming more inclusive and respectful."

Over the past two years, Saskatchewan has become home to approximately 24,000 new immigrants speaking a variety of languages and from a variety of cultural backgrounds. This can be challenging for teachers on several fronts—one being the challenge of teaching students who may not speak English and another being determining how multiculturalism, culturally responsive pedagogy and Aboriginal

content and perspectives intersect.

Kugler and West-Burns (2010) describe a culturally responsive framework as one that sees "the curriculum as flexible and adaptive to the lived experiences of students ..." (Ontario Ministry of Education, Capacity Building Series #35). Using this framework, teachers are encouraged to make connections to the background knowledge and lived experiences of all the students in their classrooms in order to deepen understanding or to broaden experiences. However, students new to Canada still need to learn about all aspects of Canadian culture and Canadian history.

This includes Aboriginal content and perspectives, treaty education, the residential school experience, and the additional impacts of colonialism and racism. Without this background, new immigrants will never fully understand the contradictions and challenges of their new home country.

The culture diversity and language policy states in its beliefs that Canada is a bilingual country, and also that "Indigenous languages are imperative to nurturing and protecting Indigenous cultures ..." Dr. Marie Wilson, commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, commented at the 2015 Saskatchewan Educational Leadership Unit, Twentieth National Congress of Rural Educators, that Canadians still refer to the English and the French as the founding nations of Canada and to English and French as the two official languages; the role of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples in the development of Canada and the importance of their languages are still being denied or minimized.

*The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Can-*

*ada: Calls to Action* (2015) Call to Action 14.1 calls upon the federal government to establish an Aboriginal Languages Act to assert that "Aboriginal languages are a fundamental and valued element of Canadian culture and society, and there is an urgency to preserve them." (2).

The link between culture and language is indistinguishable. Language allows individuals to put a voice to aspects of culture that are invisible to those who speak other languages, such as ways of thinking and making meaning of the world. Culture is spread to others in the same group through language. During the residential schools era, speaking First Nations languages was forbidden and many children lost the ability to speak their mother tongue.

Today, less than 25 percent of the Aboriginal population can speak or understand their language (Mary Jane Norris, *Aboriginal Languages in Canada: Emerging Trends and Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*, Canadian Social Trends 11-008 from: Ottawa: Department of Statistics Canada, 2007, 19). The STF policy invites teachers to "recognize the cultural importance of Indigenous languages and advocate for programs to provide Indigenous language instruction to all students wanting access."

Saskatchewan teachers have tremendous opportunities to foster a deeper understanding of First Nations and Métis cultures and ways of knowing in their classrooms. Many curricula connections support this, which has been mentioned in earlier articles. The arrival of new immigrant students provides additional opportunities for Saskatchewan teachers to share the true history of Canada so that everyone becomes aware of and can support the movement towards reconciliation. ■

## STF submits resolutions

The upcoming annual general meeting of the Canadian Teachers' Federation will include discussion on resolutions submitted by the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Executive that addresses the Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's final report and the need for sustainable and comprehensive settlement strategies for newcomer (immigrant and refugee) children within Canada.

The 94 Calls to Action contained in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report are designed to redress the legacy of residential schools in Canada and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation. Throughout the report education is identified as a key component in reconciliation and Executive feels the leadership of teacher organizations and individual teachers is important. By acknowledging, understanding and advocating for the realization of these Calls to Action, teachers can contribute to this vital step towards healing and reconciliation.

The Executive also advanced resolutions in a number of specific areas within the Calls to Action including:

- Advocating for comprehensive treaty education for all Canadians including country-wide curriculum renewal.

- Advocating for necessary funding for First Nations education both on and off reserve.

- Public endorsement and support by the CTF for a national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

The Executive also submitted a resolution calling on the CTF to advocate the Government of Canada to develop a comprehensive settlement strategy for newcomer children and youth that will include sustainable resources for their education. Recent research indicates it can take two to three years for children to gain conversational proficiency in English (or French) and five to seven years for academic proficiency. A sustainable and comprehensive settlement strategic plan would ensure the resources are available to provide these students with a fair and equitable education in Canada.

The CTF annual general meeting will take place in Montreal in July of this year. ■

# Professional Growth OPPORTUNITIES

## July

- 4** Saskatoon Summer Initial Accreditation Seminar (5 days)  
Saskatoon Summer Renewal/Second Accreditation Seminar (3 days)
- 11** Unearthing and Responding to Barriers to Adult Learner Participation
- 12** Planning and Organizing Professional Learning Experiences
- 25** Aboriginal Storytelling: Storytelling as a Teaching Tool – **NEW**  
Hack the Classroom  
Multi-Graded English Language Arts  
Using Provincially Available Technologies, Applications and Learning Resources in K-12 Classrooms – **NEW**
- 26** Educator Well-Being: You First – **NEW**  
Indigenous Understanding – **NEW**  
Planning for Instruction and Assessment in Senior Science  
RAP – Responsibility Ability Pathways (2 days) – **NEW**
- 27** Comprehension Strategies in All Subject Areas  
Walking Together: Education as Reconciliation – **NEW**
- 28** New to Early Learning: Putting the Pieces Together  
Research Skills Refresher for Teachers – **NEW**  
Structures for Differentiating Elementary Mathematics
- 29** FNMI Cultural Arts

## August

- 2** Decoding Differentiated Instruction – **NEW**  
Global Citizenship Education – Pedagogy, Methodology and Resources (3 days) – **NEW**
- 3** Introduction to Teaching Home Economics – **NEW**  
Multi-Graded Mathematics  
Victorious Vocabulary for Student Success – **NEW**
- 4** Help! How Do I Get Started?  
Pattern Fitting and Alterations (2 days)  
The Reading Brain: Reading for Literacy (2 days) – **NEW**
- 5** Building a Middle Years Art Program – **NEW**
- 8** Help! How Do I Get Started?  
New to Early Learning: Putting the Pieces Together  
Regina Summer Initial Accreditation Seminar (5 days)  
Regina Summer Renewal/Second Accreditation Seminar (3 days)  
Understanding Gender and Sexual Diversity in Our Schools – **NEW**
- 9** Differentiation: Individualizing Without Individual Lesson Plans  
School Libraries Infused With Technology  
Technology in Middle Years: ELA Teachers Transform
- 10** Crossing Curricula to Develop Better Learners  
English Language Arts: Supporting Learners in Grades 1, 2 and 3 – **NEW**  
Fostering Reading in Elementary Grades Using Technology  
Technology in Middle Years: ELA Students Innovate – **NEW**
- 11** Core French – **NEW**  
Fostering Writing in Elementary Grades Using Technology  
Instructional Leadership for Principals – Visionary Leadership
- 12** Artful Assessment and Evaluation of Creative Products of Learning – **NEW**  
Digital Badges: Learn New Technologies When and Where You Want – **NEW**
- 15** Intensive French Summer Symposium (5 days)  
Planning for Instruction and Assessment in Senior Science – **NEW**  
Post-Intensive French Summer Symposium (5 days) – **NEW**  
Structures for Differentiating Middle Years Mathematics  
Up to Code: Teaching Computation Literacy – **NEW**
- 16** Cognitive Coaching (4 days)  
Number Talks and Beyond: Building Math Communities Through Classroom Conversation – **NEW**
- 17** Playtime is Not a Break: Intentionality in Play for Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Educators – **NEW**  
Structures for Differentiating Mathematics – Part Two – **NEW**
- 18** Playtime is Not a Break: Intentionality in Play for Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Educators – **NEW**  
Using the Smart Board to Enhance Learning
- 19** Taking Environmental Science Out of the Classroom



Look for full details regarding each of these workshops in the *Professional Growth Opportunities Summer 2016* catalogue. Registration deadline is July 15.

## 52nd Annual July 4-7th, 2016 Saskatchewan Principals' Short Course



*Ethical. Instructional. Distributed. Transformational.*

The major goal of the Short Course is to provide an intensive opportunity for participants to deepen their knowledge of theory, practice, and reflection, contributing to their skills as teachers and school leaders. The activities of the course will enable participants to:

- examine the role of the principal through the lens of instructional leadership;
- extend knowledge regarding the practices of establishing a vision, influencing school culture, and stimulating the learning environment, while at the same time managing, modeling, and monitoring activities within the school;
- learn about new developments and initiatives in education;
- share experiences, insights and concerns with other practitioners, and;
- gather as a cohort to develop a support network.



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN  
College of Education  
USASK.CA/EDUCATION



Presented by: The Department of Educational Administration,  
University of Saskatchewan  
Conducted by: Saskatchewan Educational Leadership Unit (SELU)

Registration Fee: \$550.00

Registration Fee and Four Nights' Accommodation at the Travelodge Hotel: \$1,070.00

Fees Include: Breakfasts, lunches, and an evening social  
Registration form available at [www.usask.ca/education/selu](http://www.usask.ca/education/selu)

## Make someone's day brighter.

#ShareYourThanks by visiting  
[ThisIsTheClassroom.ca/shareyourthanks](http://ThisIsTheClassroom.ca/shareyourthanks)



Join us as we acknowledge the students, parents, teachers and staff in schools and communities across Saskatchewan. Thank you for learning, growing and achieving great things together!



Kerri is an elementary school teacher and **Prairie Horticulture Certificate (PHC)** graduate.

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## Taking Your Place in the Professional Community

A Conference for Teachers in Their First Years of Teaching

Monday and Tuesday  
October 17-18, 2016  
Saskatoon

### Pre-Conference Session: Technology in the Classroom

Saskatoon Sunday, October 16 7:30 - 9 p.m.	Regina Sunday, October 23 7:30 - 9 p.m.
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Monday and Tuesday  
October 24-25, 2016  
Regina

- The conference will include:
- Networking With Other Teachers (both experienced and newer to the profession)
  - Federation Focus Sessions
  - Seminar Sessions
  - Concurrent Workshops

Some sessions may be offered in French. Watch for the registration brochure being distributed in September.

For further information refer to the STF website at [www.stf.sk.ca](http://www.stf.sk.ca).





## Teachers' 2016 Hotel Rates

Hotels in Regina and Saskatoon have offered special preferred rates for 2016 to members of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.

To take advantage of these rates, teachers should contact the hotel directly and identify themselves as members of the Federation to confirm the rate and determine if any special charges apply.

A complete listing of participating hotels and their rates is available on the Federation website, [www.stf.sk.ca](http://www.stf.sk.ca).

If you experience any difficulties in obtaining the established rates, please contact:

**Lisa Chickowski**  
 Manager, Office Administration  
 Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation  
 Tel: 1-800-667-7762 or 306-373-1660




## Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Summer Hours

**July and August**  
 Monday to Friday - 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Closed July 1 and August 2

**Regular office hours will resume Monday, August 15, 2016.**



## Arbos Award

### A Call for Nominations

The assistance of teachers is being sought in selecting a recipient for the **Arbos for Contributions to Education and the Teaching Profession**.

The Arbos is the highest honour that the Saskatchewan teaching profession can bestow. Through the Arbos awards, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation draws the attention of its members and the public to individuals who have distinguished themselves through the scope, impact and significance of their educational contributions.

Nomination information is being made available to all staff liaisons and it is posted on the Federation's website at [www.stf.sk.ca](http://www.stf.sk.ca).

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

**The deadline for nominations is November 15.**



## Accreditation 2016

### Fall Accreditation Renewal

**Regina:**  
 Renewal/Second - Friday, September 23 and Friday, October 14  
 Registration Deadline - 5 p.m., Friday, September 16  
 Facility - Ron Mitchell Centre, Regina Public School Board Office, 1600 4th Avenue  
 Sessions run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Fees:**  
 Renewal/Second - \$315.00 (GST included)




## Participants Needed for Research in Makerspaces

Are you involved in a makerspace, genius hour, or a group that creates interesting things with new technologies? We would ask you to complete a short online survey.

<https://fluidsurveys.usask.ca/s/makerspaces/>

For more information about this study, please contact:

**Dr. Marguerite Koole**  
 Educational Technology and Design  
 Department of Curriculum Studies  
 University of Saskatchewan  
 Email: [m.koole@usask.ca](mailto:m.koole@usask.ca)  
 Phone: 306-966-7638



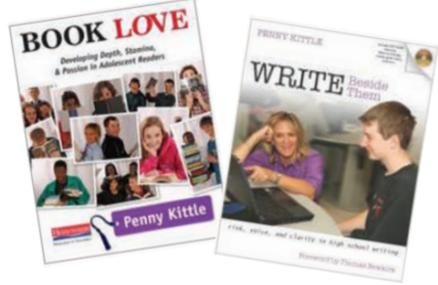


Connaught School Presents  
**Penny Kittle**

*Engaging Students in Authentic Reading and Writing*

**February 6, 2017, North Battleford – Goldridge Centre**

For further information and registration forms please contact [connaught@skysd.ca](mailto:connaught@skysd.ca)



## Planning for Retirement Seminars

The Planning for Retirement seminars are facilitated by Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation staff and provide members with support and information to assist them in preparing for retirement.

The Planning for Retirement seminars are intended for members who are retiring in the next three years. They are held in the late fall and are one to two hours in length. The three key objectives of the seminars are to:

1. Provide information that supports members with the process of retirement.
2. Provide members with contact information for their pension plans and appropriate government agencies.
3. Provide members with an opportunity to access various staff members.

The 2016 seminars will be held in the following locations: Humboldt, Meadow Lake, North Battleford, Prince Albert, Regina, Saskatoon, Swift Current and Tisdale. Specific dates, times and registration information will be posted in early fall on the Federation website, [www.stf.sk.ca](http://www.stf.sk.ca).



## Congratulations

The staff and students, past and present, of Dinsmore Composite School would like to congratulate **Mr. Jeff Lawrence** on his retirement from **40 Years** of teaching. Your dedication to the students of DCS is truly amazing!

## Teachers requested to participate in a survey on mental illness!

Bree Fiessel (PhD student) and Dr. Ron Martin (Supervisor) from the Faculty of Education, University of Regina, have requested participation from teachers to complete a 20-35 minute questionnaire on their perspectives of mental illness for a dissertation project. Upon completion of the survey, you can **enter to win a \$100 gift certificate**. Just enter [www.surveymonkey.com/r/stigma\\_mentalillness](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/stigma_mentalillness) in your web browser to participate.

## ROADWAYS TO LITERACY SUCCESS

### LINKS 2 LEARNING

#### LITERACY EDUCATION WORKSHOP

**OCTOBER 6-7, 2016**  
 WILLOWS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB - SASKATOON, SK  
 THURSDAY 9-3 - EVENING SESSION 7-9 - FRIDAY 9-3

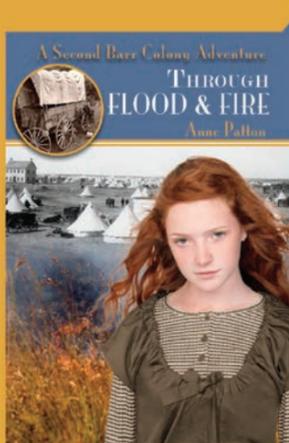
- Learn the Roadways system for putting together a literacy program that ensures success for your struggling readers
- Strategies and resources for Grade 1 - 8 students
- Expand your digital toolbox with engaging and empowering technology that supports the Roadways to Reading Program
- Special session - Raising a Reader - to provide ideas for parents to use at home to motivate and support their children
- Conference sessions applicable to resource room teachers, classroom teachers, home-school teachers

**Speakers:**  
**Sheila Erickson**  
 ROADWAYS Literacy Studio

**Heather Baptie**  
**Terry Dobson**  
 Links 2 Learning

For more information or to register: 306.717.4248  
 Regular cost \$250 Register by end of June for only \$225

[www.roadwaysconference.com](http://www.roadwaysconference.com)



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## ATTENTION SUPERANNATED TEACHERS

If you withdrew teaching services during a legal strike over the course of your career and as a consequence were required to delay your superannuation in order to accumulate additional contributory service, you may be entitled to a benefit from the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation. Applications will be received until **October 28, 2016**.

For information, please request an information package from:

Todd Pearce, Administrative Support Unit  
 Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation  
 2317 Arlington Ave  
 Saskatoon SK S7J 2H8  
 T: (306) 373-1660; 1-800-667-7762  
[admin@stf.sk.ca](mailto:admin@stf.sk.ca)



## Sciematics



October 14-15, 2016

University of Regina – Faculty of Science Building

Registration:

- Regular \$225
- Student \$50

Complete Information and Online Registration  
[www.sciematics.com](http://www.sciematics.com)