



November 2019

# President's Bulletin

Canadian School Boards Association / L'Association canadienne des commissions/conseils scolaires



Hoping you all had a great start to the new school year. Since my last message, the CSBA and OPSBA hosted a very successful Annual Congress and National Trustee Gathering on Indigenous Education in Toronto. More than 260 Trustees and staff attended, with an additional 65 attending a

with Dr. Gabor Maté. Highlights included an engaging session with Kevin Lamoureux, described as powerful and truthful. Delegates also had an opportunity to hear from Brian Woodland, as well as numerous presenters in breakout sessions. Students' perspective and input remains at the forefront for governance and both events included strong student voices.

Planning for 2020 is well underway. The events will be hosted by ASBA in Banff, Alberta. Check out [www.cdnsba.org](http://www.cdnsba.org) for updates on programming and registration.

An important component of Congress is the CSBA Annual General Meeting. I encourage you to read the 2018-2019 Annual Report, which provides details of the many initiatives and activities of your national association. I was proud to be acclaimed for a second term as President and most pleased to congratulate and welcome Alain Fortier as the new Vice President of the CSBA. Alain is President of the Commission scolaire des Découvreurs and President of the Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec.

The CSBA released a research paper that demonstrates the value of locally elected school boards on student outcomes – see more information and a link below.

The Board of Directors met in Quebec City in October. The full agenda resulted in a revised strategic plan about to be published, review of the budget, and continued work on Indigenous education and advocacy.

The CSBA continues to be extremely concerned with the erosion of local democratic voice in education in some areas of the country. While in Quebec City, the Board held a press conference to denounce Bill 40. If adopted, Bill 40 will significantly change the governance of English education in

Quebec, and completely eliminate local democratically elected French school boards, with no evidence as to how it will make any improvements to student outcomes.

On a positive note, there continue to be areas in the country where shared governance is alive and well. In western provinces, provincial governments and school boards work collaboratively in the name of students. CSBA anxiously awaits the report on education in Manitoba currently under review. We encourage everyone to take action locally and nationally on this vitally important issue to strengthen local education governance.

I look forward to attending many of the upcoming provincial association general meetings.

Yours in education,

Laurie French

Alberta School Boards Association  
*is looking forward to welcoming you  
to the beautiful Rocky Mountains!*

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Canadian School Boards Association  
**2020 Annual Congress**  
and  
National Trustee Gathering  
on Indigenous Education

July 2-5, 2020  
Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity

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# Quebec Press Conference

On October 7, 2019 members of the CSBA Board met with media in the Press Room at the Quebec Legislature. With the full board of directors in front of print, radio and television media, Laurie French, Shawn Davidson, Josh Watt, and Nancy Pynch-Worthylake addressed the threat of the loss of democracy because of Bill 40 and responded to questions. We will continue to advocate for the protection of governing school boards in both French and English in Quebec along with our colleagues at the Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec and the Quebec English School Boards Association.

Information highlights shared at the press conference:

- Provincial governments, school boards and educators in Canada have built an education system that is the envy of the world. We are very concerned that the major reform of the education system proposed in Quebec's Bill, through abolishing school boards, will compromise the progress made thus far in student learning.
- Recent research strongly suggests that democratically elected school boards impact student success and quality public education.
- This proposed reform in Quebec will remove focus on student success to a questionable structural redesign, which diminishes local democracy and which has not been demonstrated to improve outcomes.
- Other provinces have explored school governance reform and have made choices that they deemed appropriate for their jurisdictions. Some, such as the western provinces, have moved to a more collaborative approach between the Government and school boards, with positive outcomes for students.
- Others, such as some provinces in the Maritimes, have had to learn hard lessons from hasty decisions not informed by local voices that report a loss of accessibility and input to the system.
- Based on our collective experience, we are here to affirm that public education deserves community representation via democratically elected school boards, which are focussed on making the best decisions for their students. We urge the Government of Quebec to work **with** school boards in the months ahead so Quebec continues to ensure its high level of student success now and in the future.

Media coverage:

Montreal Gazette

<https://montrealgazette.com/news/quebec/bill-40-canadian-school-boards-association-urges-quebec-to-reconsider>



# Copyright Update

Everyone involved in Education in Canada should be concerned with copyright and access to materials at a reasonable cost. Members of Parliament tabled two sharply contrasting committee reports, which included comments and recommendations respecting education and copyright.

The Industry Committee Report: "*Statutory Review of the Copyright Act*" is a thoughtful analysis of the balance that needs to be struck between users and owners of copyright materials. The MPs appropriately considered fair dealing within the context of decades of jurisprudence on education and copyright, and produced a thoughtful commentary presenting both sides of the fair dealing argument.

<https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/INDU/report-16>

The Canadian Heritage Standing Committee Report: "*Shifting Paradigms*" focused on remuneration for artists and creative industries that primarily serves the interests of publishers, writers and Access Copyright. When addressing education and copyright, the Canadian Heritage Standing Committee report fails to consider the judicial history of Canadian copyright or the current teaching and learning practices relating copyright in an educational setting. The committee did not take into consideration the users' rights of educators or students.

<https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/CHPC/report-19/>

Canadian copyright commentator Professor Michael Geist has referred to the Industry Committee report as "authoritative" and "balanced" and "forward-looking."

In comparison, Geist was highly critical of the Canadian Heritage "embarrassingly one-sided" report and stated it is "the most one-sided Canadian copyright report issued in the past 15 years." Geist suggests the Industry Committee "should reject it as unhelpful, one-sided, and inconsistent with its instructions." Geist published a series of blog articles regarding the Industry Committee's "sole responsibility" for reviewing the *Copyright Act*, wholly discrediting the Canadian Heritage report and suggesting it pandered to creative industries.

Of great concern, is a proposal to increase tariffs from \$2.46 per student to \$13.00 per student. This enormous increase would have a dramatic negative financial impact on education systems. With the exception of Quebec and BC, selected school boards and ministries of education are in the midst of a mandatory discovery process that requires detailed data collection and reporting. Again, everyone involved in education should be concerned about this and should be connecting with members of parliament to advocate for continued fair dealings.

## Upcoming Association & Education Partner Events

Representatives from CSBA often attend annual provincial association and education partner events around the country. Participation ranges from attending as a special guest, to delivering presentations. Members of the CSBA Executive are always honoured to be invited to these events.

Alberta School Boards Association Fall General Meeting – November 17 - 19, 2019

Saskatchewan School Boards Association Fall General Assembly – November 18 & 19, 2019

National Gathering for Indigenous Education, November 20 – 22, 2019

EdCan Advisory Committee – November 21 & 22, 2019

Manitoba School Boards Association Fall Assembly – November 22 & 23, 2019

# Literature Review

The CSBA has published a third-party literature review, conducted by Valerie Overgaard, PhD and former Associate Superintendent in Vancouver.

The literature review examined dozens of studies and research papers to determine the relationship between a regional governance model and student success. Through this review it is clear that high functioning governing school boards support student success and quality public education.

Citing a specific study out of the United States, Ms. Overgaard writes in the executive summary, "Starting in a focused way with the *'Lighthouse Study'* in Iowa, two decades of research have consistently shown that school boards can make a difference in student achievement. Literally hundreds of studies since then, conducted in many countries around the world, have shown a significant relationship between good school board governance and student achievement.

John Malloy, Director of Education with the Toronto District School Board, the largest school board in Canada, commented, "The review correctly speaks about the authority that the Board has in all of these important matters e.g. student achievement...when good governance is operating then the Board will be effective. These key conditions of good governance can be developed in future opportunities."

The full study and executive summary are available on the CSBA website at [www.cdnsba.org](http://www.cdnsba.org)

## CSBA at CACE!

CSBA President Laurie French and Alan Campbell presented with colleagues from the Canadian Association of Communicators in Education (CACE) at their annual conference. Their presentation, "Local Voices, Local Choices: The importance of strategic communication and advocacy" reviewed efforts on provincial and national levels to raise awareness of the importance of locally governed school boards.

CSBA thanks Heather Demetriooff and Kim Hamilton for their support with this presentation.

Canadian School Boards Association

# SCHOOL BOARDS & STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

What the research tells us...

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT



Two decades of research consistently indicate that school boards can make a difference in student achievement. Literally hundreds of studies conducted in many countries around the world show a significant relationship between good school board governance and student achievement.

## COMMUNITY VALUES



School boards reflect the values of the immediate community and usually reflect the populations they serve. Their operations are transparent and through community involvement and open dialogue they build trust.

## COMMUNICATION & ACCOUNTABILITY



School boards offer communities the opportunity to engage directly and to participate in setting a vision for education. Communities advocate for their educational needs and hold trustees directly accountable for student achievement and equity.

## FOCUS ON GOOD GOVERNANCE



Research strongly supports working with local, democratically elected school boards to build capacity for good governance. All levels of publicly funded education - from classroom teachers to school board members - share a moral imperative to improve the performance of our systems. To ignore what the research says about the important relationship between school boards and student achievement is to potentially undermine the ability of our school systems to be responsive in ways that support continued improvements in teaching and learning.

# Federal Election & CSBA Priorities

The CSBA identified key messages for trustees to share with candidates in the federal election. Now that Canadians have chosen MPs, we encourage everyone to ensure that both new and returning members are aware of these shared priorities. Although education is a provincial and territorial mandate, there are many areas of overlap between education and federal jurisdiction.

## Local Voices, Local Choices

- Local democratically elected school boards are critical to the continued success of public education
- Supported by a recent review of the literature, it is clear that students benefit from effective local school board governance
- There is little research or evidence that alternative models positively impact students
- All MPs need to stand for democracy in Canada

## Indigenous Education

- Indigenous Education is a federal responsibility and should be a top priority for the new government
- Many Indigenous students attend public schools and the CSBA calls on all candidates to be champions for continued progress on the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Report

## Comprehensive School Health



- Investing in the well-being and mental health of children and youth is an investment in Canada's civic and economic future. Dollars invested now will save lives and be returned with interest in the years ahead.
- Gaps in services and supports are significant in the general population and even more so for Indigenous, northern and rural communities, and new Canadians.
- Canadians need a national strategy that includes a full continuum of physical and mental health service.
- A portion of revenues from cannabis should be directed to schools to support Cannabis education

## Copyright

- Effective education requires fair access to resources and materials.
- CSBA calls on candidates to support fair dealing in copyright so unreasonable tariffs do not drain money from classrooms



## CSBA Strategic Plan Update

The CSBA strategic plan was revised and approved at the October board of directors meeting. Based on the results of an on-line survey carried out in the spring of 2019, the board identified four priority areas:

- 1 Indigenous Education
- 2 Trustee Professional Development
- 3 Advocacy for Democratic Governance
- 4 Health Education

At the 2019 Congress, delegates validated the priorities and provided specific input into strategic actions related to each. Updates will continue to be provided to our membership.

## CSBA Board of Directors

Laurie French, President  
Alain Fortier, Vice - President (FCSQ)

Goronwy Price, NLSBA  
Bob Fowler, NBDEC  
Stacey Brown, NBDEC  
Christiane Barbe, FCSQ  
Dan Lamoureaux, QESBA  
Russell Copeman, QESBA

Cathy Abraham, OPSBA  
Rusty Hick, OPSBA  
Alan Campbell, MSBA  
Josh Watt, MSBA  
Shawn Davidson, SSBA  
Darren McKee, SSBA  
Lorrie Jess, ASBA  
Dr. Vivian Abboud, ASBA  
Carolyn Broady, BCSTA  
Mike Roberts, BCSTA

# Indigenous Education

Indigenous Education continues to be a core area of leadership for CSBA. A very strong sub-committee, led by Josh Watt meets at each Board meeting. With input and leadership from the Assembly of First Nations representatives on our board, we prioritize advancements for school boards in Indigenous education for all students.

CSBA pleased to announce the association is moving forward with an award in recognition of leadership in Indigenous education. The sub-committee is working on the details, which will be ready for the February Board meeting and first award next year.

The sub-committee is also working with the Congress and National Gathering committee to offer a series of professional development sessions in Banff that will provide delegates with a concentrated learning experience in the advancement of Indigenous education.



*Standing Stronger Together*  
*Soyons Plus Fort Ensemble*

With the theme **Standing Stronger Together**, this Conference will bring together leaders in education, human rights and the rights of Indigenous people.

Featuring speakers from coast to coast including:  
Lieutenant-General, the Honourable Roméo Dallaire (Ret'd)  
Stan Wesley  
Tara Teng  
Andy Hargreaves

***This is a Conference you will not want to miss!***  
For more information and how to register, please visit:  
<https://www.asba.ab.ca/>

Don't miss out! Book your accommodations now. Conference accommodations are available at the conference hotel, Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, and at the Banff Lodging Company.