

President's Bulletin

Summer 2021

CSBA Board of Directors

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CSBA, Executive Director



Summer will soon be upon us and I hope that you are all doing well as we near the end of a unique and challenging school year. I must express my continued gratitude to trustees and educators across Canada for your leadership and support of students and families.

The tragic events of late underscore the need to continue to work as hard and as quickly as possible to stop racism and to embed equity, diversity and inclusion in every aspect of our lives.

On behalf of the Board, we extend our most sincere congratulations to Mike Roberts on his retirement, recognizing his outstanding contributions to education and wishing him all the best as he embarks on travels when able and time with family. We welcome and congratulate Suzanne Hoffman as the new Executive Director for the BCSTA – she brings significant expertise to the role and we look forward to working with her at the CSBA table.

CSBA's participation and promotion of the Indigenous Leaders panel in March and the kick-off of the Canadian School Mental Health Leaders Network are examples of the valuable work being done by our committees and members. Developing Terms of Reference for each committee was a big undertaking for the Governance Work Team and will help ensure consistent processes throughout the association. A big thank you to our Governance Consultant, Judy White and Work Team Chair, Carolyn Broady for this work.

Alan Campbell and I presented at the 2021 NSBA Virtual Conference in April. The session was pre-recorded and during the airing, Alan and I were engaged with attendees through the chat feature. There is great interest from the NSBA in the work we are doing in support of Indigenous Education and through Josh's leadership as chair of the Indigenous Education Committee, we have submitted a proposal to present at the 2022 conference.

I was pleased to address delegates at the MSBA Conference through video message. It is incredible that despite the ground swell of support for trustees in Manitoba and an external report that supports school boards, the government has proposed legislation to eliminate democracy in education. The reaction in the province as details of the proposed approach are understood has been quite significant, which is a credit to the leading work MSBA has done through www.localvoices.ca. I believe that through our Advocacy Committee we need to continue our efforts proactively to preserve, protect and re-establish democratically elected school boards in all provinces and territories. I had the opportunity to speak on the Ontario show, The Agenda, to debate the value of democratically elected school boards. This was an excellent platform to share information on the role of trustees.

New Brunswick is once again facing a review of school system governance and we are already advocating to ensure democratic representation is not further eroded, working with them and their provincial council partners.

Since our meeting in May, a report was released in Newfoundland that would eliminate both English and French school board Trustees as part of a sweeping financial restructuring in the province including health and other ministries. Goronwy Price, chair of the NL English School District, is working with the Minister's office to understand the impacts going forward.

Continued on pg.2



I spoke to the delegates at the BCSTA AGM and am thankful that BC students, among others in Canada, continue to benefit from collaboration and support among multiple levels of government, and recognize their strong co-governance model in the province. The ASBA AGM also provided an opportunity for me, along with Alan Campbell, to address their delegates in June.

Thank you all for your cooperation and for allowing time at your very important gatherings to share and affirm the national voice in education through the CSBA.

Partnering with an experienced firm to develop and facilitate the 2021 Advocacy Event has progressed well with multiple virtual meetings with Federal Ministers, Senators and senior staff on areas of shared responsibility. Under the guidance of the Advocacy Committee, we look forward to sharing details.

We are looking forward to our upcoming conference and national gathering hosted by QESBA and co-hosted with the Canadian Association of School System Administrators. See details and the registration link in this Bulletin. I look forward to sharing the results of our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Audit of our internal processes with school boards as they begin to combat racism in school boards across Canada.

As always, I am grateful for the dedication and support of communities by trustees across the country, and I hope you have some time to rest and recover from the stresses of these past months.

Yours in education,



Laurie French, President

National Trustees Gathering on Indigenous Education and CSBA Congress 2021

CSBA is pleased to be working with QESBA and CASSA on the planning and development of the 2021 National Trustees Gathering on Indigenous Education and Congress. This will be a virtual event filled with professional development opportunities for members. The theme for the 2021 event is “Equity and Inclusion for Student Well-Being.” The event will take place from July 7-9, 2021. Day one will focus on Anti-Racism, day two on School Mental Health, and day three on Indigenous Education. Details are available on the [CSBA website and registration is now open!](#)

Speakers:

Kevin Lamoureux has served as Education Lead for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, Associate Vice President for the University of Winnipeg, and as Scholar in Residence for several school divisions. He is an award winning scholar with an impressive publication and research grant record, and has consulted for governments, organizations and institutions across Canada.

Mary Culbertson is a member of the Keeseekoose First Nation. She was the first member to earn a Juris Doctor from U of S Law and practice law in Saskatchewan. In January 2018 she became the Treaty Commissioner for Saskatchewan.

Cindy Finn, Ph.D. is the Director General of the Lester B. Pearson School Board, one of the largest English-language school boards in Quebec. Cindy is passionate about creating and supporting healthy learning environments for students and staff.

Nathan Ip is currently serving in his second term as a trustee with the Edmonton Public School Board. A mental health advocate, he is the Program Manager of HEADSTRONG-Alberta with the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

Jennifer McCrea is currently the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Learning Division within the Ministry of Education.

Dr. Kathy Short is a Clinical Child Psychologist with research and practice interests in school mental health promotion, knowledge mobilization, and implementation science.

Mike Ojo-Thompson is renowned as one of Canada’s foremost experts and thought leaders on equity, diversity, and inclusion. As the founder and principal consultant of KOJO Institute, she has guided public and private organizations alike towards more equitable cultures and outcomes with her signature balance of tact and honesty.

Student Panelists

CSBA Anti-Racism Work Team

CSBA Work Team and Committee Updates

Advocacy Committee:

In-person advocacy events have been postponed due to COVID-19, but the work continues! An RFP was issued to select a contractor to support advocacy work nationally. The CSBA is excited to be working with Global Communications on an Engagement Plan. All advocacy and engagement materials will be produced in French and English.

There continues to be strong public support in Manitoba for elected school boards. The Manitoba School Boards Association continues to advocate for their members and keeping the “public” in public education.

CSBA President Laurie French was a panelist on *The Agenda* to debate the pros and cons of having elected school boards in Ontario. In the segment titled “Should Ontario scrap Elected School Boards”, President French was joined by John Snobelen, a former Minister of Education, and Sachin Maharaj, an independent researcher from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. To watch the segment, visit <https://www.tvo.org/video/should-ontario-scrap-elected-school-boards>

Indigenous Education:

The Indigenous Education Committee has continued to meet virtually with work advancing by members from across the country.

The Saskatchewan School Boards Association is working towards finalizing the Saskatchewan Framework of Responsibility. Once this is complete, it will be available to all CSBA members.

Work is being done on the collaboration of resource guides from multiple provinces. This collaboration will include British Columbia School Trustees Association materials on framework governing public education and First Nation relationships, national documents produced by INAC, and local tuition and structural agreements. This will be a valuable collection of information for all members.

Anti-Racism Work Team:

The Anti-Racism Work Team is looking forward to the upcoming publication of our Acknowledgement on Equity and Diversity. The CSBA is committed to promoting equal access to opportunities for all students. Together we will achieve this by working to remove systemic barriers, address racism and adopt an intentional approach to equity, diversity, and inclusion in the work of provincial school board associations.

Health Education Work Team:

The CSBA website is currently being reviewed by members of the Health Education Work Team to ensure the material is up to date and accurate. Revisions will include the addition of a section on mental health.

The Work Team continues to be active in other national student health related groups including Canadian Healthy School Standards, Outdoor Play Canada and the Canadian School Mental Health Leaders Network. These connections allow CSBA to provide important information on student health to our members.

Governance Work Team:

At the May Board of Directors meeting the Governance Work Team presented a number of changes and a new procurement policy for the CSBA Policy Manual. Every policy has been updated on our website.

French Teacher Shortage in Canada: A panel discussion

School systems administrators, trustees and partners in education joined forces May 20th, to take a closer look at the challenges experienced by school systems in the areas of French Second Language teacher shortage, recruitment, and retention as part of an initiative targeting the creation of a sustainable and accessible pan-Canadian data infrastructure to document and track FSL program and teacher workforce needs for every school system in Canada.

On May 25, La table-ronde focused on the recruitment, hiring and retention of French Minority Language teachers. This project is funded by Patrimoine Canadien/Canadian Heritage, and is a joint effort between the CSBA and the FNCSF in close collaboration with CASSA and the RNDGE.

Guest panelists shared how they experienced the French language teacher shortage in their own province or territory and how access to nation-wide data would serve them in their workforce planning, in the development of home-grown solutions and in fostering open dialogue with their ministries, post secondary institutions and professional associations. School jurisdictions would be supported in addressing challenges and safeguarding existing programs.

This data framework will:

- aid in teacher recruitment, immigration, certification and mobility
- support access to federal funding for related initiatives
- provide opportunity for benchmarking and comparative analysis of data
- contribute to developing a pool of qualified teachers well equipped to respond to the needs of language learners

To access the current webpage for this project: <https://fnscf.ca/notre-reseau/penurie-denseignants/>

If you missed the events, you can watch a recording on our [YouTube channel](#).



Être bilingue : c'est enrichissant!

Vos élèves veulent
continuer leurs études
postsecondaires en
français?

It's rewarding to be bilingual!

Are your students
interested in pursuing
their postsecondary
studies in French?

Bourses de 3 000 \$ disponibles

\$3,000 bursaries available

Plus d'info : ACUFC.CA/boursesFLS

More info: ACUFC.CA/FSLbursaries



BOURSES
D'ÉTUDES
POSTSECONDAIRES
EN FRANÇAIS
LANGUE SECONDE

Canada

Patrimoine canadien / Canada Heritage Project

The Emerging Issues Work Team is providing governance support to the Patrimoine canadien /Heritage Canada (PCH) project, along with a number of other matters including student voice, and the value of public education. This, along with other national partnerships, point to the increased awareness of the importance of the work of democratically elected school boards.

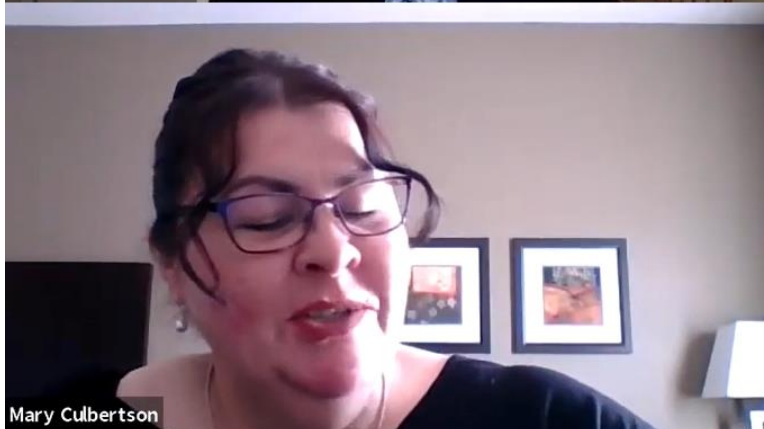
CASSA and CSBA Collaboration

The collaboration between CASSA and CSBA that started through the Alliance for School Health and expanded in response to COVID challenges has continued to grow. There is great strength in combining system governance and system administration at the national level. You will hear about the advanced planning for our joint Conference/Congress and Gathering from QESBA as the official CSBA host for what is looking like an excellent event July 7-9, 2021.

Indigenous Leaders Panel

In March, the CSBA was pleased to host another virtual Indigenous Leaders Panel. Trustees from across the country participated in an interesting and informative virtual panel discussion with Indigenous leaders on building strategic relationships. Indigenous leaders shared how organizations and school boards can build authentic connections that support all students.

We would like to thank everyone who attended as well as our panelists. If you missed the panel, you can watch it on our [YouTube channel](#).



Statement on Public Education

What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must the community want for all of its children. Any other ideal for our schools is narrow and unlovely; acted upon, it destroys our democracy. All that society has accomplished for itself is put, through the agency of the school, at the disposal of its future members. All its better thoughts of itself it hopes to realize through the new possibilities thus opened to its future self.

John Dewey "The School and Social Progress", 1907

The Canadian School Boards Association believes in the importance of public education, its role in a democratic society and its future in Canada. Public education has, since its inception, been considered the very foundation of a democratic society.

Public education promotes overall development, academic achievement and well-being for all students. Equally as important, public education helps to build an educated citizenry. These qualities of public education are fundamental to building democratic communities:

- Public education is publicly funded. It follows that accountability to public authorities is fundamental. This accountability ensures the system is responsive and responsible.
- Having school boards, elected by the local community, ensures the accountability is direct and that there is a focus on the needs of all students in that community.
- Access to public education is assured for all students. Families do not need financial or social capital to take advantage of public education. Schools in the public system are inclusive: students of diverse backgrounds and abilities are welcomed.
- The values of society are core to public education and its democratic structure ensures this will always be the case. Equal opportunity and equitable outcomes, for examples, are fundamental to the purpose of public schools.

Any erosion of public education through the growth of schools that operate privately and independently is a potential problem for our democracy.

- Private interests do not necessarily serve the greater good. There is the potential for private schools to undermine democracy.
- Limiting access, focusing on values that may not be shared and operating in the absence of co-ordination and unity, privately operated schools have the potential to undermine unity in our society and the tenets of democracy.
- Viewing education as a consumer good where families are encouraged to shop around for a school for their child is antithetical to the role of schooling in building democratic communities.
- When public funds are diverted to support private schools, the resources for public schools are diluted.

Public education must be strongly supported throughout the country. The Canadian School Boards Association invites citizens to join in the advocacy required to maintain a robust system, accountable to the public, effective in achieving success for all students, and focused on the values of a democratic community.

Statement on Student Voice in the Governance of School Boards

The Canadian School Boards Association supports student voice in the governance of school boards through authentic participation and input of students into the decision-making at the school board level, and empowering students to be involved in matters that affect their education. Students have the greatest stake in their education and provide important perspectives into decisions about their education and how it is delivered.

Student voice must be inclusive and engage and represent a broad range of students in the community, including those who are not traditionally engaged in school leadership roles. Hearing from multiple voices is important: those who may be marginalized, those learning English as an additional language, those with disabilities, and those who tend not to be engaged. Input should not be reduced to tokenism. Seeking authentic voice needs to be intentional, with effective structures put in place. Some ways to ensure authentic student voice:

- Be clear about the school board's vision and commitment for student voice.
- Support schools to be involved in encouraging student involvement. Ask them to provide information about school boards, their purpose, and the role of a trustee. Ask them to seek out diverse candidates.
- Offer training for students so they can effectively participate in the governing structures and develop as young leaders.
- Assist students who become involved in governance to conduct surveys seeking input from a variety of voices.
- Make use of student advisory groups where students are selected to represent a range of voices in decisions that influence policy.
- Include more than one student representative on board committees or other governing bodies.
- Support student conferences, associations, and professional development opportunities, where input from a larger number of students can be solicited.

The Canadian School Boards Association believes the benefits of student voice in the governance of education offer great value and enhance the delivery of education to meet student's needs. All school boards in the country are encouraged to find ways to embed student voice in their decision-making to demonstrate their commitment to student-centered education.



Check us out online!



www.cdnsba.org

