



PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS'  
ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA™

# THE ADVOCATE



## Welcome to the March 15, 2023 issue of *The Advocate*!

In this edition, you'll find a message from the PSBAA President Dennis MacNeil, updated information about the PSBAA upcoming events such as the Spring General Assembly, the August PSBC which is being hosted by Medicine Hat Public School Division, grant opportunities, a Good News story, the Word Search contest and more!



The next edition of *The Advocate* will be published on March 31, 2023.

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## PSBAA SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

**It's not too late to nominate a group or an individual!**

Do you know someone who has made a special contribution to Public Education this year? Advanced business initiatives in your school division? Promoted or advanced Truth and Reconciliation? Or maybe has just been an all around great mentor or leader?

Then nominate your fellow colleague today through the PSBAA website under [member resources](#) in the award nomination forms section. Or check your email for the special recognition awards package that was distributed today, which also includes the nomination forms.

**The Deadline for nominations is Friday, March 31, 2023 so hurry up and get your nominations in today!**

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

### It Must Be an Election Year!

As we all eagerly awaited the 2023 Alberta Budget release earlier this month, I pondered where will Public School Education land as a priority and I have to say I was pleasantly surprised. Now, the budget did not address all Public School Education needs, but what it did address was that we have the Ministry of Education's attention, they are listening to us and are willing to work alongside us.

Let's first consider the positives of the 2023 Alberta Budget release. I was pleased to see student transportation walk limits in rural areas are going to be reduced from 2.4 kilometers to 1 kilometer for K-6 students and down to 2 kilometers for grades 7-12. The budget plans to reduce transportation ride times by 9% and will provide funding for an additional 1250 drivers to be trained. Other appreciated funding allocations are educational assistant funding, capital infrastructure funding for new schools, enrolment growth funding increases as well as learning supports.

Although there is some great funding dedicated to improving education coming our direction, I can't help but think of the implications that come with them. For instance, although walk limit reduction efforts are a step in the right direction, why not reduce walk limits to 1 kilometer for all students? Walking alongside a highway at any age is a safety issue and what happens in situations where one child in the family must only walk 1 kilometer meanwhile their sibling has to walk an extra kilometer. The budget also plans to provide funds to train 1250 new bus drivers, this is great, but I ask, where are these bus drivers coming from? A large part of the problem is not being able to hire bus drivers, so will schools in fact be able to find bus drivers to fill these spots? These are all questions that will need to be addressed.

In regard to infrastructure support, Public Schools fared well overall. In fact, out of the 58 projects in the budget for pre-planning, design and construction Public Schools account for 40 of these projects. This shows me our advocacy efforts are pulling through. However, for example, Calgary or Edmonton alone could have used half of this allocation individually in their divisions due to student growth in these two cities. We also see that many of our other school jurisdictions are also in dire need of repair and rebuilds and so we will continue to advocate for this issue. Although the government is taking steps in the right direction, when we consider the significant increase in cost of living, the budget does not keep up with the cost measures of inflation which is needed for Public Schools to flourish.

Now, it is clear Public School Education could use more funding, and so it is with displeasure I see Charter Schools are receiving \$137 million over three years to create more school spaces. I also want to point out Charter Schools are also now eligible to be a part of the \$414 million dollar funding injection for transportation. I ask myself, why are Charter Schools eligible for extra funding when they are not accessible to all students, are not inclusive of the general population and charge astronomical fees.

With that said, the 2023 Alberta Budget has addressed some of the Public School needs that we have been advocating for. I am glad to see our advocacy efforts have reached the ears of the Ministry of Education and I am happy to see funding increases in many areas where we need it...It must be an election year!

The 2023 Funding Manual for School Authorities has also now been released. As you know, the details within the manual will affect each school board differently and will be interpreted as such according to each division's requirements and needs. I will be thoroughly reviewing the manual and will have more to say about the funding breakdowns in the near future.

I continue to look forward to working with the government as we build on our relationship into the future.

DENNIS MACNEIL, PRESIDENT





## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Upcoming Public School Boards' Council (PSBC) meetings

- **April 13-14, 2023**

We are looking forward to welcoming you back to the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in west Edmonton for the PSBA on April 13 and 14, 2023. Registration kicks off at 8 a.m. on April 13 and the day will start with a presentation on the Things You Didn't Know of the Indian Act from Clarice Anderson and Sheila Williams.

Brian Callaghan will follow discussing Everything You Wanted to Know About Superintendent Performance Reviews and SLQ's and then Sharon Friesen will discuss Teacher and Professional Staff Recruitment and Retention for Rural and Northern Alberta. Our dinner speaker, Janet Brown, will share her insights on election predictions and provide you with exclusive information you won't hear anywhere else.

[\*\*CLICK HERE For more information or to register!\*\*](#)

### PSBAA's Spring General Assembly

- **Thursday June 1 to Saturday June 3, 2023**  
**Calgary, AB**

We are looking forward to welcoming you all to the Westin Downtown Calgary on June 1-3 for the Spring General Assembly (SGA). The SGA will kick off on Thursday evening with registration starting at 5pm followed by dinner and our first guest speaker, who will be announced soon!

Highlights for Friday's Professional Learning session include Wilson Bearhead and Seneca Crowe on hope, optimism and the future from an Indigenous Perspective. Jennifer Turner on mental health in K-12 education and Heather Burke on the Kids Help Phone. We will then finish the day off with a special speaker from Franklin Covey!

On Saturday June 3, we will have Grace Oben, best seller of Don't Give Up Yet, You Can Still Get It Right!: How To Handle The Speed Bumps & Stop Signs in Your Life. Grace will discuss leadership, transformation, confidence and mindset. We will have copies of Grace's book to purchase at the event and she will be available for autographs that morning!

Saturdays Professional Learning session will include Carolyn Lewis, Superintendent of Grande Yellowhead, who will talk about the Youth Participation Action Research Project, as well as other key speakers such as Melissa Jones on foster children and education and Joni Avram on the power of positivity. Our special dinner guest speaker will be announced shortly so stay tuned!

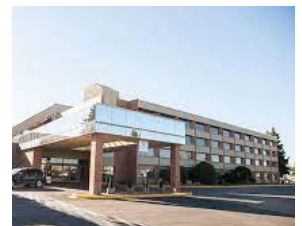
We will be presenting our special recognition awards Saturday night so be sure to submit by March 31.

[\*\*CLICK HERE for more information or to Register!\*\*](#)

### Book your hotel room for the PSBAA August 2023 PSBC Meeting in Medicine Hat!

- **August 9-11, 2023**

We will be heading to Medicine Hat August 9, 10 and 11 for our summer PSBAA. Medicine Hat will kick off the event Wednesday evening at 5pm with a casual BBQ and registration will start the next day at 8.15 am at Medicine Hat High. The professional learning day will include a discussion on trauma informed practice with Claire Peterson, followed by a tour of their state-of-the-art facilities with Boris Grisonich followed by a blanket exercise.



[\*\*Check the Events page on the PSBAA website for more information!\*\*](#)

## APRIL PSBC DINNER AND LECTURE: GUEST SPEAKER

### Janet Brown



Based in Calgary, Janet Brown is one of Alberta's most recognized pollsters and political analysts. With over 30 years of experience in polling and marketing research.

Janet is often invited to comment on political and social trends. She is a regular commentator on the CBC Calgary News at Six, Alberta Primetime on CTV2, and the West of Centre Podcast.

We look forward to welcoming Janet at our April PSBC Dinner on April 13, 2023





## THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON STUDENT WELL-BEING

Looking to understand how and why your students are using social media more than ever before? Want a better understanding of the impact on well-being that can be seen in the classroom? Then we have a course that might interest you.

Sonderly is offering a one and a half hour course from Dr. Alexandra Makos who provides a detailed history of social media, explains how the design of social media effects student well-being and gives concrete solutions to not only manage the use of social media in the classroom but also to use it in ways that will improve the well-being of students.

The course will help you better understand the role of social media in the lives of students and provide strategies to improve the impact of social media on well-being.

Learn more here <https://sonderly.io/learn-the-facts>

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

PSBAA will post career opportunity ads on the website and in *The Advocate* for members free of charge. Check out the current career opportunities on the [PSBAA website](#).

Email a PDF copy of your career ad to Troy Tait at: [executivedirector@public-schools.ab.ca](mailto:executivedirector@public-schools.ab.ca)

## JobSafe, A Free Safety Program for Junior and Senior High Schools

Looking for more ways to educate and empower youth on safety prior to them entering the workforce?

SafeGen has a great program, JobSafe, that provides young workers with accredited safety education prior to entering the workforce. The job safety course has no cost and is available to all publicly funded junior and senior high schools throughout Alberta. The program is a great fit to be used as an effective Career and Technologies Studies (CTS) resource for both teachers and students.

For more information, please visit <https://safegen.ca/about/>



## Elections Campaign Information

As many of you have seen, we are in full force with our Public Schools Elections Campaign. We have been busy creating email campaign content, posting on social media and writing opinion-editorial pieces for our members to distribute in their local areas.

### Campaign Schedule

- **Social Media Posts:** Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1pm. Share ours or create your own with our exclusive campaign messages in the members section of our website.
- **Email Campaign:** Members communication representatives will receive information every other Wednesday.
- **Opinion Editorials:** Members communication representatives will receive content on the other alternating Wednesday.

PSBAA will be sending campaign emails to the three main party leaders, as well as contacting major local newspapers on our opinion editorial pieces, but we need your help to get the word out on Public Schools at the local level!

If members have not already, then please join our [Private Facebook Group](#) for any internal discussions required during the elections campaign period between members.

For our non-members please stay tuned to our [public elections page](#) for more information.

We thank you all for your continued efforts to spread the word on Public School advocacy efforts!



# BACKPACK FULL OF CASH

**Narrated by Matt Damon**

Over the last few decades, we have seen Charter School numbers creep up and support for these alternative schools has gained traction and popularity. Funding cuts and privatization of education is a slippery slope, and the movie Backpack Full of Cash explores the effects of privatization in schools in America. Not only does the movie explore privatization of schools, but it also offers a model for improving schools.

Education writer David Kirp, former New York Assistant Secretary of Education Diane Ravitch and policy expert Linda Darling Hammond are among the national thought leaders who provide analysis in the film. The movie builds a case for public education as a basic civil right and we will be offering this content as part of a watch party for our members.

Join us via zoom on Thursday April 20 at 7pm or Friday April 21 at 2pm as we live stream the movie. Dennis MacNeil will be in attendance and will be available for Q&A after the movie.

[Click here to register now!](#)



## Ministry of Education's Satisfaction with Education in Alberta Surveys 2022/23

The Ministry of Education wants to hear from you! It is that time of year again when the Ministry conducts its annual satisfaction survey to collect public perceptions of Alberta's education system. The survey provides valuable information to help the ministry identify areas of strength and areas needing improvement, thus helping provide a more effective and accountable education system.

The purpose of the surveys is to determine satisfaction with the overall quality of the education system if it is meeting the needs of students and supporting our society and the economy. The survey aims to find out if schools provide a safe, caring and inclusive environment for students and if the education system has effective working relationships with system partners and leadership.

Surveys started February 15, 2023, and end in May 2023. A summary of the information obtained from the surveys will be posted on Education's website here <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/education-satisfaction-surveys-summary-report-2021>.

If you have questions about the surveys, please contact Bolaji Adeniji, Senior Manager, Performance Measures and Reporting, Corporate Planning Branch, at 780-422-1963 (toll-free in Alberta by first dialing 310 0000) or [Bolaji.Adeniji@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Bolaji.Adeniji@gov.ab.ca).



## How to Build Relationships with Students, Share Control and Teach Positive Behaviors

Looking for new ways to connect with your students and build relationships that are mutually beneficial and respectful? Then check out former teacher, Scott Ervin's workshop where he will teach attendees how to build relationships, share control and teach positive behaviors in the classroom through explicit strategy instruction. The workshop is not a "why" exercise, but rather a "how" exercise.

The two-day workshop is slated at 9:30 am – 12:30 PM on April 18 and 25, 2023.

[Click here to learn more or register for the event!](#)

## A GOOD NEWS STORY

### Vancouver Film School Partners with Grasslands Public Schools

Teachers Wendell Nelson and David Brown at [Brooks Composite High School \(BCHS\)](#) have transformed a business technology class of 5 programmers to an award winning digital media program with upwards of 150 students enrolled each year.

The skills program took off when one of our students became interested in learning about animation. That one student sparked the growth of BCHS largest skills team as the team now competes in film production, robotics, 2D and 3D animation, architectural technology, graphic design as well as piloting 3D game art for the first time ever this new year.

BCHS skills team has achieved the following in the last two years:

- 2021 Provincial Gold in 2D Animation
- 2021 Provincial Bronze in 3D Animation
- 2021 National Bronze in 2D Animation
- 2022 Provincial Bronze in 2D Animation
- 2022 Provincial Bronze in 3D Animation



Created by Brooke Potiuk

One of the largest growth factors of the digital media program is the desire to pursue digital media courses beyond high school. With multiple students enrolled in computer science, and for the first time in many years we have students heading to the top digital media programs in the country - if not the world. BCHS currently has four students going to Vancouver Film School in the next year and one going to the top game design school in the world known as Think Tank Training Center.



Created by Brooke Potiuk

David Brown has been able to secure a partnership with Vancouver Film School (VFS) to offer all of our [Grasslands students](#) reduced tuition costs for a period of two years based on acceptance at their premier school. VFS is known for their alumni being some of the most sought after and successful actors, artists, creators and storytellers in the world of entertainment and media. You can find their alumni working on well known films and series such as Game of Thrones, Joker, Black Panther, and The Grinch. As well as having many alumni employed by the biggest names in media such as Disney, HBO, Google, Netflix, Warner Bros. and EA Sports.

We are ecstatic to have such amazing teachers who go above and beyond to see our students succeed in school, and afterward. We hope to see many more students attend VFS and wish them all the best in the future. As the demand for digital media and technology continues, we can only see this program continuing to grow.

Do you have a good news story from your school jurisdiction that you would like to share with PSBAA member boards? Please let us know by emailing [communications@public-schools.ab.ca](mailto:communications@public-schools.ab.ca).



## The Role of Psychology Safety in Creating Future-Ready Classrooms

Many of the competencies' students need to be future-ready, like collaboration and communication, depend on classroom practices to develop them. Often those practices are hindered by hidden psychological safety concerns that limit engagement.

FranklinCovey's online Education discusses this research conversation in specific psychological ways looking at the safety impacts of it, and shares relevant research about how to remove those barriers in their webinar on March 16, 2023 at 2pm.

[Click here for more details!](#)



## INDIGENOUS CANADA ONLINE COURSE

Indigenous Canada is a 12-lesson Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) from the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta that explores the different histories and contemporary points of view of Indigenous Peoples living in Canada. From an Indigenous standpoint, this course explores complex experiences Indigenous Peoples face today from a historical and critical perspective, highlighting national and local Indigenous-settler relations.

Topics for the 12 lessons include the fur trade and other exchange relationships, land claims and environmental impacts, legal systems and rights, political conflicts and alliances, Indigenous political activism, and contemporary Indigenous life, art and its expressions.

[Click here for more information!](#)

The Public School Boards' Association of Alberta is committed to Truth and Reconciliation, has prioritized increasing awareness of Canada's history with Indigenous people and is working towards reconciliation for the future.

At the February PSBC we provided members with complementary copies of the Calls to Action mini booklet as a quick reference tool on the issues at hand. If interested, we can provide additional copies to both members and nonmembers at \$8 per booklet. Copies can be ordered for principals and teachers as quick reference guides; several school boards have already done so!

Please contact [communications@public-schools.ab.ca](mailto:communications@public-schools.ab.ca) to order your copies now.



## GRANTS



In celebration of Olympic Day, June 23, Team Canada is opening applications for the Team Canada Olympic Day Grant for all Canadian publicly funded schools with the goal of empowering students to play and stay in sport.

Sport brings communities together, teaches us leadership and fair play, and fuels our health and well-being. But often there are barriers that mean that young Canadians either “can’t” or “won’t” participate in sport. The Team Canada Olympic Day Grant aims to help change that by providing funding to increase access to sport in schools.

There are 5 grants of \$5,000 available and successful schools will also receive a 90-minute Team Canada athlete speaking engagement!

**Deadline for applications is April 4, 2023.**

**[Click here to learn more or apply!](#)**



## Language Teacher Bursary Program

Applications for the 2022/23 Language Teacher Bursary Program are now open! The program will support teachers of languages, other than English, to improve their fluency, pedagogical skills and knowledge to help Alberta School Jurisdictions enhance their language teaching capacity. The program is administered by Alberta Education and funded by Advanced Education.

There are two bursaries available:

The first is the **[International Language Teacher Bursary](#)** which provided up to 10 bursaries of up to \$5,000 each for Alberta certificated teachers of international languages. This program is a summer course at a recognized post-secondary institution outside of Canada. The deadline to apply is April 30, 2023.

The second is the **[Indigenous Languages Teacher Bursary](#)** which provides up to two bursaries of up to \$2,500 each for Indigenous language teachers, Elders or instructors to take post-secondary studies. The deadline to apply is May 20, 2023.

If you have any questions regarding the application process, please contact Alberta Education at **[EDC.LanguageBursary@gov.ab.ca](mailto:EDC.LanguageBursary@gov.ab.ca)**.



## Minister's Youth Council Recruitment

Do you know a junior or senior high school student who is passionate about their education? Wants to make a positive impact in their school and gain valuable experience? Well, we have some great information for you!

The Alberta Education Minister has created a Youth Council to include students as key partners in the education system. The program offers students the unique opportunity to share input and perspectives on provincial education programs and initiatives.

Recruitment for the 2023/2024 Ministers Youth Council has begun, and they are looking for 40 junior and senior high school students from across Alberta, between the ages of 14 and 19 and representing diverse interests, identities, backgrounds and perspectives, to join next year's council. Of the 40 council members, they will accept up to eight returning members and at least 32 new members.

The opportunity for students to join the Youth Council is priceless and will provide the opportunity to make a real impact on Alberta's education system, build their leadership skills and leave a legacy that will last for generations to come.

The deadline for students to apply is March 24, 2023. For more information, please visit **[alberta.ca/student-engagement.aspx](https://alberta.ca/student-engagement.aspx)**. On the website you will also find a printable flyer that can be displayed and promoted within schools.

If you have questions, please contact Sarah Spennath, Engagement Consultant, Strategic Engagement Branch, at **[edc.studentengagement@gov.ab.ca](mailto:edc.studentengagement@gov.ab.ca)** or 780-289-1352 (toll-free by first dialing 310 0000).



# WORD SEARCH: St. Patrick's Day!

P I D Y P I H K N  
 C C W B U R T H Z M S  
 C U L H A G A Z H I R B L  
 O G E I O M Q H E N J L M Y H  
 W O B L K V R A I N B O W N X  
 D M O L E Z E U E M E R A L D  
 Q D O N E B X R P I N C H V D  
 D Q I Z U S R S H A M R O C K  
 V N U U V A S A U F V E G E T  
 K I E A R K H I T E E X H T E  
 X S G L D E C N E M V J H  
 A I E E O B E G N S O  
 N X C Z F S O L B L A R J V E G T N  
 S C J F O H U N E E N A A G V P M K C U L T Y U U  
 R L I P D G T S Z O L B M B R M J E A P U M F Y W W P I C  
 V Z T B Y K N S I O A T P Q T N S Y X G L U D R R G S E R H P  
 E G O L D A X E H W P B C S E D E A Y Q H U U Z A M E T A I K R Y  
 S L F E Y K A E G A T O G Q A C Y I A F R B Z N O K R R M E Y D N  
 Z U Z C R C V T H L N R T R X C S N L Y L S O N A J Y Y F S Q G D  
 I A J A X I R N D R E H P E H S T T L I Y I A N C N G G Q T R X G  
 S Y O V Y R C E P E F E O H R K O Z N M S S S P K C I R E M I L H  
 V I A M M T I V N A D H S D V R N P B S T N L I E D A R A P W T Q  
 Y X B D X A H E I V T I N R Z Z E O I E M X M R L U A X M R R O C  
 R D N S I P L S N M R A L T W P L M R S N U A S E F P N I H E R  
 C G D Z P L D F H I L R S K I Y G G T C P Y V N C R C X  
 O P D Y H O Z X E T U C G R E A S M I R N Z L  
 C I G A M H R Q B N U X S W W T A U Y V  
 C N C I R B A L C Y M G K  
 H F P C Y  
 D I K K J

## Find these words:

Blarney Stone  
 blessing  
 castle  
 celebrate  
 Celtic  
 clover  
 Druid  
 Dublin  
 emerald  
 gold

green  
 harp  
 holiday  
 Ireland  
 Irish  
 jig  
 legend  
 leprechaun  
 limerick  
 luck

Maewyn  
 magic  
 March  
 missionary  
 monastery  
 parade  
 Patrick  
 pinch  
 pirates  
 pot

priest  
 rainbow  
 saint  
 seventeenth  
 shamrock  
 shepherd  
 snakes  
 symbol  
 trinity  
 vision



## PSBAA WORD SEARCH

The first person who completes the puzzle with all words accurately identified and emails to Troy Tait at ([executivedirector@public-schools.ab.ca](mailto:executivedirector@public-schools.ab.ca)) will receive a PSBAA branded stainless steel water bottle, which is awarded exclusively to our puzzle prize winners! (Those who have won a prize in this contest during the past six months are not eligible.)



**"DID YOU KNOW!"**

The Public School Boards' Association of Alberta contracts nonpartisan professional researchers to evaluate the different school programs in Alberta? Research presentations can be found in the members section of our website.

[Click here!](#)



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#### STORY IDEA? FEEDBACK?

We welcome your story ideas and suggestions!

#### CONTACT US

Please email [communications@public-schools.ab.ca](mailto:communications@public-schools.ab.ca).

Address #105, 10470 176 Street, Edmonton, AB, T5S 1L3

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