

PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS'  
ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA™

# THE ADVOCATE



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

In this edition, you'll find a message from the PSBAA President Dennis MacNeil, current information on the PSBAA upcoming events and speakers, two good news stories, programs, courses and bursaries, grant opportunities and our regular features. Enjoy!



The next edition of *The Advocate* will be published on June 30, 2023.

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# PSBAA WEBINAR HOSTING SESSION



## FranklinCovey

## GREAT SCHOOL BOARDS

By Marty Schafer, EdD

Friday, June 23 from 1:00-3:30 p.m.

The Public School Boards' Association of Alberta (PSBAA) welcomes FranklinCovey to host a webinar session on *Great School Boards: Building a High Trust Team*.

The webinar will focus on developing Great School Boards and how they can support Superintendents and Board Members to intentionally build a high-trust team culture. The FranklinCovey webinar differs from other programs for school boards and school district leadership training through the designing of effective implementation processes, evidence based and research-based content and provides the supports needed to meet district needs.

The professional learning session develops the following pillars within their solution based webinar:

- Clarity around Board and Superintendent roles.
- Shared vision around student success.
- Accountability aligned to Board and Superintendent evaluations.
- Community engagement aligned to leadership development.

The course will show how a cohesive team can substantially contribute to the following outcomes: increased Superintendent tenure, how to retrain/recruit quality School Board members and how to improve community confidence in the district.

The PSBAA is hosting this session exclusively to members for **\$250 per board**. There is no restriction on how many of your members and administration can attend, so take advantage of this opportunity for such a great price right from the comfort of your city or town today.

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

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER



We wrapped up our annual Spring General Assembly earlier this month and it was a wonderful event. The turnout and interactions from the crowd were outstanding as always. To say I had a favorite would be an understatement. Over the duration of the event, we heard about topics covering joy, indigenous perspectives on current affairs, youth participation processes within education, youth in foster care, positive thinking and AI in education. I believe we will all take important lessons away from the event and back to our boards.

One point in particular that I touched on in the President's Address was the importance of trusteeship in the public school system. I whole heartedly believe it is our job to ensure trusteeship is not only protected, but that the importance of it and the public school system is valued.

I have always been very intentional in my messaging around how important it is that you as trustees promote the association whenever you get the opportunity.

***"We are stronger together."***

Soak in this message and really think about what it means for our advocacy efforts.

The messaging that you put out there, the conversations we have with our stakeholders and the messages we deliver are key to protecting and promoting public education in this province. We have always said that ***"Public schools should be the first choice in every community."*** And that ***"All schools are publicly funded, but not all publicly funded schools are public schools."*** But we now need to add to our messages that ***"In the lineup for funding, 'schools of choice' (charters, privates and independent schools) need to get in the line behind 'schools of necessity' until those schools of necessity are adequately funded"***.

I believe the message we heard from Jessica Janzen was extremely important and relevant to our cause. We can try to take giant steps to get from one place to another, but that rarely happens. So, instead let's think about what we can do right now and that is to continue taking baby steps to reach that same goal.

***One step at a time and together we will be stronger.***

There is still much work to be done, especially when it comes to building relationships with our fraternal partners. Although we thought that the Together for Students campaign was in the past some untruths were presented during the Alberta 2023 election that reopened some of the wounds felt by our Catholic counterparts. These will need to be addressed as we move forward and continue to strengthen our relationship with them, because together we are stronger.

Now, as the school year winds down, we should take the

time to reflect on the past year. Have you taken the time to demonstrate the importance of public schools and trusteeship? Is there more you can do in the years ahead to show the value and importance of the causes we advocate for? Let's take the summer to reflect on how we can each contribute to our positions within our boards, the public school system and in our day to day lives.

I hope you all have a wonderful summer and are able to spend quality time with your family and friends.

Will see you soon!

Dennis MacNeil, PSBAA President



## A GOOD NEWS STORY



## Budding Science and Environmental Stewards at Westhaven!

The vision for students at [École Westhaven School \(Grande Yellowhead Public School Division\)](#) is that they **Take Chances, Make Mistakes and Get Messy** with their learning. These three guiding principles are integrated into every subject area, including science, social studies, and environmental stewardship. So how do they incorporate that? By hands-on, minds-in activities that students get involved in such as:

- Running and managing an intensive school-wide recycling and composting program led by grade 4 and 5 classes
- Nature and outdoor studies using our forested area as a teaching space and an outdoor classroom area to the south of the school
- Earth Day activities, including a school-wide litter-free lunch
- The use of hydroponic garden towers for planting and harvesting vegetables and flowers
- The incubation and hatching of chicken eggs
- Studying the life cycle of monarch butterflies by raising them from larvae through to the butterfly stage and then releasing them, and
- Working through the scientific method through teacher-guided and student-led natural and physical experiments.

The Grade 4 and 5 students presented their experiments at the school's Science Fair in May!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 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 PSBC. We will kick off the event Wednesday evening at 5pm at the Medalta with a casual BBQ dinner and a tour of the historic museum.

Event registration will start the next day at 8.30 am at Medicine Hat High, transportation from the hotel will be provided at 8am. 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.

In the afternoon we will participate in a blanket exercise which will go through the history of the past 400 years of the northern part of North America and will be held at Medicine Hat College Co-op Wellness Commons. From there we will conclude our day with a stop at the Medicine Hat Saamis Teepee for a visit and tour of the attraction, which was originally constructed for the Calgary 1988 Winter Olympics.

## AUGUST 9-10 EVENTS



### Medalta Tour and Barbeque (Wednesday, August 9)

The Medalta is an innovative, industrial non-profit museum, that houses contemporary ceramic arts, hosts an art gallery and is a community hub in Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada. Located within a converted century-old factory, it has become an exciting place where cutting-edge technologies meet historic restoration and archaeology come together.



### Blanket Exercise (Thursday, August 10)

The Blanket Exercise uses Indigenous methodologies with the goal to build an understanding of the shared history of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. This is done by walking through pre-contact, treaty-making, colonization and resistance. Everyone is actively involved as they step onto blankets that represent the land, and into the role of First Nations, Inuit and later Métis peoples. By engaging on an emotional and intellectual level, the Blanket Exercise effectively educates and increases empathy.



### Saamis Teepee Visit and Tour (Thursday, August 10)

We will conclude our day with a stop at the Medicine Hat Saamis Teepee for a visit and tour of the attraction, which was originally constructed for the Calgary 1988 Winter Olympics. The Teepee measures 215 feet, equivalent to a 20-story building, and showcases large storyboards on each of the 10 masts depicting aspects of native culture and history of Alberta's native culture and history.

[CLICK HERE for more information and to Register!](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### PSBAA's Fall Conference and AGM

• **October 18-20, 2023**

The Fall Conference and Annual General Meeting will start Wednesday October 18 and run until Friday, October 20, 2023. Wednesday evening will include the Terry Jorden and Friends jazz band and our keynote speaker will be the Honourable, David Hancock, the 15th premier of Alberta.

Thursday's Professional Learning Day will be led by Glenn Tecker and we will once again attend the Mayfield Dinner Theatre for a rendition of Musicians Gone Wild: Rock The Canyon for dinner Thursday.

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

### November PSBC Meeting

• **November 17-18, 2023**

Our November PSBC will be held on Friday and Saturday this year to accommodate for necessary changes in the schedule. More details will be coming shortly on who will be in attendance for our Professional Learning sessions.

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



The Public School Boards' Association of Alberta is now offering I ❤️ **PUBLIC SCHOOLS** T-Shirts, order yours now by downloading the order form from the [members section](#) (misc. documents) of our website, choose from 2 designs and submit your request to:

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

## PSBAA WEBINAR HOSTING SESSION



### LEADERSHIP THROUGH WHIRLWINDS AND UNCERTAINTIES

By Marty Schafer, EdD

*Friday, September 29 from 1:00-3:30 p.m.*

The Public School Boards' Association of Alberta welcomes Franklin Covey to host a webinar session on Leadership Through Whirlwinds and Uncertainties – A Focus on the Impact of Physical and Mental Wellness and Building Positive Outcomes, with Dr. Marty Schafer. The webinar will take place on Friday, September 29 from 1-3:30 p.m.

The webinar will focus on the following:

- Understanding signals from our Brain on Burnout: Using Neuroscience to Support Wellness.
- Developing tools to keep ourselves engaged and focused as we continue to face uncertain and difficult times.
- Defining issues we should be aware of that can impact our mental health and wellness.
- How do we use trust to rebuild our relationships with our community and with our colleagues?
- What have we learned through the last three years that can help us plan better for the future as we incorporate mental wellness and mental health into our strategic planning?
- What types of wellness exercises, activities, communications, strategies should we consider around wellness issues that will help us to positively impact student achievements?
- How does our focus on our own wellness and well-being lend itself to productivity, effective governance, good decision-making and sound judgement calls?
- Key elements of a cohesive team and effective Board!

The PSBAA is hosting this session exclusively to members for **\$250 per board**. There is no restriction on how many of your members and administration can attend, so take advantage of this opportunity for such a great price right from the comfort of your city or town today.

[CLICK HERE](#)  
[for more information or to register!](#)



## A GOOD NEWS STORY: PARKLAND SCHOOL DIVISION IS BUILDING FUTURES

**P**arkland School Division is committed to our vision of our students possessing the confidence, resilience, insight and skills required to thrive in, and positively impact, the world; and we do that through providing supportive learning environments and meaningful experiences. Those experiences often require us to move beyond the traditional classroom to offer choice to our students. Many of our programs of choice are offered through our [Connections for Learning School](#), and one such program is [Building Futures](#).

Building Futures is an immersive and unique one-year program for Grade 10 students. Thanks to a generous partnership with [Coventry Homes](#), Parkland School Division students are able to earn credits towards their high school diploma while learning important skills that will serve them beyond school. This program exposes students to various Alberta trades, as well as many other vocations within the construction industry, such as design, architecture, real estate, sales, marketing and so much more.

Students Build a House - and then sell it!

Building Futures students literally go beyond the traditional classroom - they build their own classroom, and house attached to it. These students experience authentic learning from being involved with building a house, while simultaneously earning the necessary

credits outlined in Alberta's programs of study.

As the year progresses, students move on-site and into the garage of the house they built. They continue construction and their academic courses (taught by subject-specific teachers) while also contributing to the community by doing special projects.

Coventry Homes provides quality tradespeople who carefully guide students as they work. They help build students' confidence and skill set to complete work to a professional standard.

Classroom work emphasizes skills mastery involving plenty of hands-on, project-based learning. The program also allows for individualized instruction, which creates an environment where students can explore their interests.

By the end of the year, students will have proudly built a home, learned the design aspects of the house, and marketed it for sale.

We are currently finishing our third year of offering the program, and are expecting to expand it to include Grades 11 and 12 students next school year.

For more information, please contact Deputy Superintendent Mark Francis: [Mark.Francis@psd.ca](mailto:Mark.Francis@psd.ca) or 780-963-8404

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).

## PROGRAMS, COURSES AND BURSARIES



### Family Feud Teachers Edition

Do you watch Family Feud? Have you ever watched the show and found yourself shouting out the answers at the TV? Then here is your chance to be on the show!

Family Feud Canada are looking for educators from the same school to participate in their Family Feud Canada: Teachers' Week! As you may know, the host, Gerry Dee, is a former teacher and they are looking for teams of teachers wanting to school the competition and earn some cash for their school.

[CLICK HERE for more details!](#)

### 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.

[CLICK HERE for more details!](#)

### RETIREMENT NOTICE

Do you know anyone who will be retiring from your School Division? PSBAA would be happy to make an announcement and send our well wishes to the retirees.

Please email information to:

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

### Improving Student Outcomes and Teacher Efficacy

- Part 1: June 28, 9 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
- Part 2: July 5, 9 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
- Part 3: July 10, 9 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Well-functioning teachers and leadership teams are essential to the continuous improvement of schools, especially in times of change and uncertainty.

This three-part live workshop teaches teachers how to implement a four-step collaborative protocol that fosters positive relationships, encourages responsible autonomy, and creates professionals who enthusiastically believe they can improve student outcomes through equitable learning cultures.

[CLICK HERE for more details!](#)



### 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 affects 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.

[CLICK HERE for more details!](#)

## Support for Indigenous Students Learning Program (SISLP)

The SISLP is a time-limited program available to Indigenous (First Nation, Métis and Inuit) students of limited financial resources, including Indigenous students living with disabilities. The program is a way to provide technology and technology supports to Indigenous learners to assist in improving their access and participation in education, training and lifelong learning.

[CLICK HERE for more information or to register!](#)

## Microsoft Canada - Software Class Action Vouchers

Has your School Board applied for the Microsoft software class action Volume Licensee Vouchers? Microsoft and Microsoft Canada were faced with a class action accused of being involved in a conspiracy to illegally increase prices for certain Microsoft products and a settlement was reached to distribute amongst Canadians.

All public K-12 schools are invited to submit applications for software vouchers between March 22, 2023, and August 31, 2023.

[CLICK HERE for more information or to register!](#)

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

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

**Public School Boards' Association of Alberta:  
Communications Manager**

**Lethbridge School Division:  
Associate Superintendent, Human Resources**

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

## ALBERTA INDIGENOUS GAMES



CALL FOR

# VOLUNTEERS



**Register Today**

## In the spirit of our youth!

We have an amazing opportunity for Alberta youth to gain volunteer experience.

The Alberta Indigenous Games is the largest Indigenous games held in North America. The games are held in Edmonton, AB, from August 9 - 19, 2023 and they are looking for volunteers to assist in their endeavors to successfully host the games this year. See what the games are all about in this [video clip](#) from last year's game.

[CLICK HERE for more Details!](#)



## GRANTS



### Shell

Shell Canada provides social investment programs that support the communities around their operations as well as national programs that provide lasting benefits to Canadians across the country. Shell's social investment strategy focuses on two themes: Rising Indigenous Communities and Energy Transition and Access.

The program supports Education in both adult learning and K-12 programs such as STEM and cultural retention efforts. Funding may be used for one-time projects that benefit the community and are sustainable after the conclusion of the grant.

While the program is ongoing, the next review deadline is June 15, and the following review deadline is October 16, 2023.

[CLICK HERE for more details!](#)



### Fueling Futures

Enbridge's Fueling Futures grant is a community investment program that is guided by a core set of criteria. Enbridge considers donation and sponsorship opportunities in communities where Enbridge operates that meet the following criteria:

- Located primarily within a 20-kilometer (10-mile) radius of their pipeline right-of-way or near their operations.
- The request is of prime importance to the community.
- Beneficial to the greatest possible number of people.
- Significant to the long-term interests of the community.
- Supportive of one of their three core areas that they view as integral for a sustainable community: Safe Communities, Vibrant Communities, Sustainable Communities.

[CLICK HERE for more details!](#)



### Alberta Blue Cross - Build Together Grants

Alberta Blue Cross is offering five \$50,000 grants for their Built Together grant program that is designated for healthy living infrastructure projects across Alberta.

The Built Together grant program is designed to support infrastructure projects that you and your community are passionate about. Programs such as playgrounds, adult gyms, walking paths, outdoor rinks, skate parks and more are all eligible for the grants.

[CLICK HERE for more details!](#)

### Explore – Second Language Program

Explore is an intensive language immersion program that provides opportunities for English-speaking students to study French, and for French-speaking students to study English.

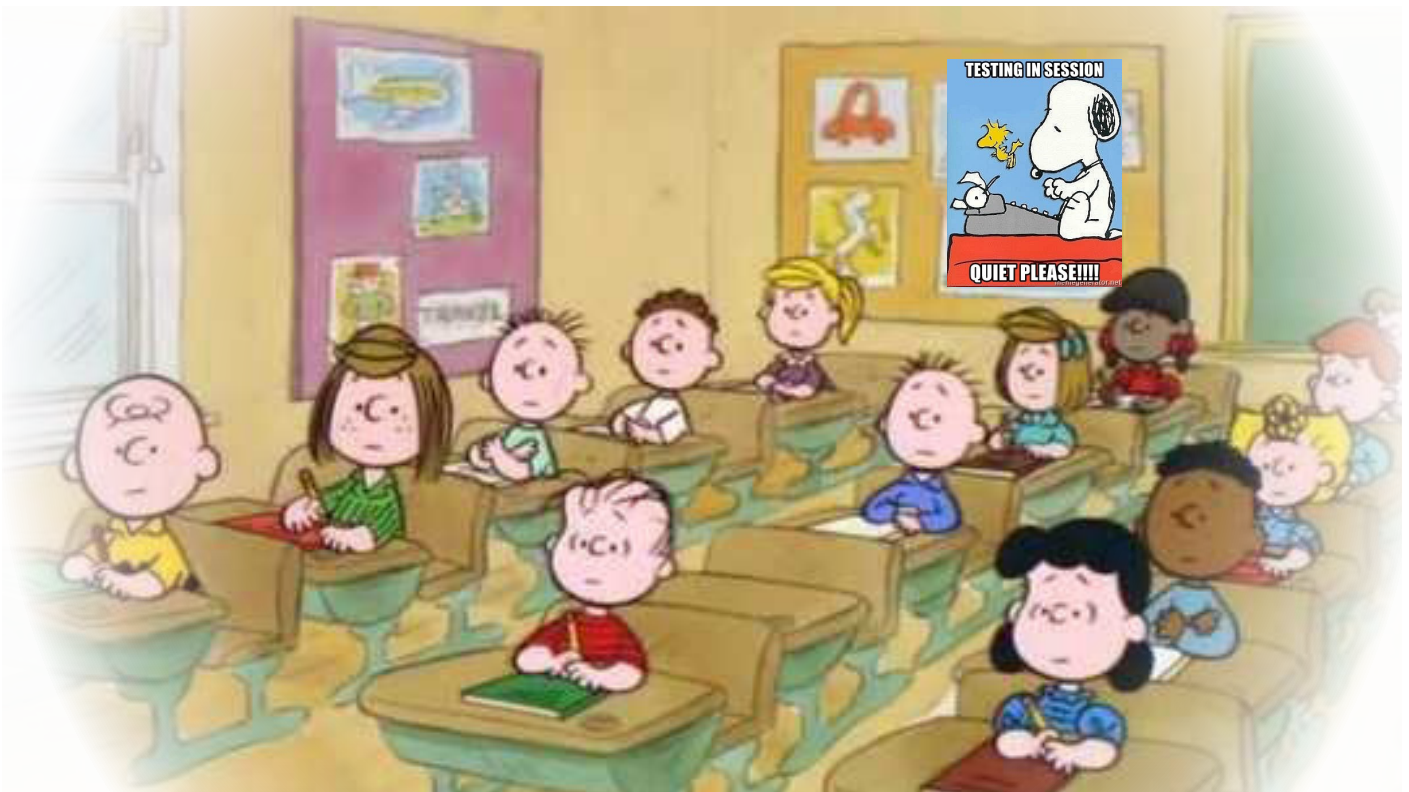
The program has two categories one for ages 13-15 and the other for 16, 17, or 18+. For the 13-15 year-olds, three-week summer sessions are available. Some virtual Explore sessions are offered for those who are unable to participate in person. For participants 16 and older, Explore sessions are offered during the spring or summer, which last between 31 and 33 days.

The program contributes \$2,400 for each participant 13-15 years old and \$3,350 for each participant 16 years and older. This covers the costs of tuition, instructional materials, meals, and lodging.

[CLICK HERE for more details!](#)

**“DID YOU KNOW!”**

Did you know you can find speaker presentations from our events in the members section of the PSBAA website?



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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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