LEAD. SERVE. ADVOCATE. These three simple words capture the complex work of school boards. Effective boards are leaders who envision tomorrow, and work to ensure students have the skills and knowledge they’ll need to thrive. They are public servants, committed to working for all students, their families, and the community. And they are advocates who understand that everyone has a stake in public education, even if they have to remind people of that fact from time to time. Delegates to the Association’s 2018 Convention will have an opportunity to explore each of these themes, and the inter-connections between them.

### Overview

**Thursday, March 15, 2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Registration and breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Call to Order and Welcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Final Call for Nominations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:10 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Keynote Address: Jamie Vollmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:20 a.m. to 11:20 a.m.</td>
<td>Concurrent Workshops A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Concurrent Workshops B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch and presentation of Student Citizenship Awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:10 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.</td>
<td>Concurrent Workshops C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:10 p.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Student Debate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Board Chairs meeting with the Minister of Education &amp; Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Joint Hospitality (with MASS/MASBO)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Friday, March 16, 2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Registration and breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45 a.m.</td>
<td>President’s Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Regional Meetings/Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45 a.m. (approx.)</td>
<td>Resolutions debate begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch and presentation of Premier Award for School Board Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Executive Director’s Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Resolutions continue until complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:10 p.m.</td>
<td>Cash bar opens on mezzanine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Banquet with entertainment by Sierra Noble and Presentation of Presidents’ Council and Long Service Awards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Supporting a Good Cause:**

First Steps will be the recipient of monies raised by our very popular raffle. Thank you to our member boards for their generous support of this endeavour.

---

conference hashtag: #mbsba2018

*For more details about important dates, sessions, speakers, resolutions and elections, follow the convention links at mbschoolboards.ca*

Twitter & Instagram: @MBSchoolBoards
YouTube: MBSchoolboards
Welcome to the Great Conversation: Exercising your power to build support for Manitoba’s schools one community at a time—Jamie Vollmer

An award-winning advocate of public education, Jamie Vollmer has worked for the past 29 years to help schools and communities come together to remove obstacles to student learning. His goal is to energize his audiences while showing them that they have the power to create a community-wide climate that supports rising student achievement. His keynote builds on the themes presented in his book, *Schools Cannot Do It Alone*, proclaimed by the *American School Board Journal* as “One of the top ten books of the year.”

Jamie reviews his transformation from public education critic to ally. He talks about his life-changing experiences working as a teacher’s aide, and discusses his discovery of “Nostesia” – the debilitating mental disease that binds community members to archaic notions of “real school”. Most importantly, Jamie shows his audiences how they can “connect the dots” and make the case that everyone in the community benefits when they support their local schools.

At each stage, Jamie employs humour, logic, and statistics to encourage his audience to build a thoughtful, positive conversation that increases community support for schools. Participants will walk away with practical, concrete steps they can take to neutralize public criticism and overcome the resistance to change.

Concurrent Workshops A

10:20 a.m. to 11:20 a.m.

**A1: Twitter for Trustees**—Sandy Nemeth, Trustee, Louis Riel S.D. and Vice-President, Manitoba School Boards Association

This workshop is designed primarily for trustees who have a Twitter account, but who may be unsure of how to use it to its full capacity. The focus will be on using Twitter to tell your trustee ‘story’, share what is happening in your school division, and engage with other trustees and Twitter users.

Included will be an overview of how to:

- make your Twitter profile stand out.
- embed photos, and links to articles or websites in your Tweets.
- use settings to filter or capture the content you want, or want to avoid.
- retweet and reply to Tweets.
- send direct messages to other Twitter users.
- use hashtags.

Also included will be a look at what factors make a Tweet effective, engaging and noteworthy, and what to consider when Tweeting for public viewing. Feel free to arrive with a tablet or hand held device so you can Tweet as we go, and then throughout convention.

**A2: Schools Cannot Do This Alone: Student success in an age of rising expectations**—Jamie Vollmer

Both practical and energizing, this interactive session presents an inspiring call-to-arms, and a powerful case for the need to increase local support for public schools. It is designed to complement Jamie’s keynote presentation, *Welcome to the Great Conversation*.

Using his own transformation as a backdrop, Jamie employs a series of Q&A periods to help his audience identify the corrosive social forces currently undermining support for schools, and he discusses a strategy to reverse this trend. He examines the threats arising from shifting demographics and media hype. In clear layman’s terms, he teaches his audiences how to effectively implement a public engagement strategy to secure the Four Prerequisites of Progress:

1. **Community understanding** of the challenges facing our children and our schools,
2. **Community trust** in their local schools to accomplish the goal,
3. **Community permission** to make the changes needed to teach all children to high levels, and
4. **Community support** throughout the complex and emotional restructuring process.
A3: Leadership and Advocacy for Student Well-Being—Roza Gray, Superintendent, and Scott Hill, Assistant Superintendent, Evergreen S.D.

In October of 2017, Roza Gray, Superintendent, and Scott Hill, Assistant Superintendent of Evergreen School Division facilitated a one-half day learning session for all of their school division’s staff. The purpose was to begin a division-wide conversation about well-being that would inform a key component of the division’s education plan. Areas of inquiry included: What is meant by “well-being”? How is a focus on mental health different than a focus on mental illness? What can we do to strengthen our well-being and the well-being of others? In this presentation, Roza and Scott will share an abbreviated version of their session, reflect on the involvement of students and staff in subsequent work on “well-being”, and engage participants in conversation about a topic that is so important to our schools and our province.

A4: The Difficult Consequences of Not Being Actively Culturally Diverse and Inclusive—Dr. Rehman Abdulrehman, Director and Clinical Psychologist at Clinic Psychology Manitoba and Diversity and Inclusion Consultant at Lead With Diversity

Our country has always been diverse, but that diversity increases by the year. Given that diversity makes up not only our values but also our demographics, the issue of making policies, practices and institutions more culturally inclusive is a necessity. Not doing so causes psychological harm in both a majority and a minority population. This in turn has a marked impact on academic performance and psychological health. This session reviews the psychology of how not being culturally inclusive can be harmful to society, but will also provide effective and actionable solutions on how to remedy this.

A5: PROMISE Years: Leaders Working Together as Advocates for Rural Children—Grant Wiesner, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Turtle Mountain S.D., Tim De Ruyck, Superintendent/CEO, Turtle Mountain S.D., Leslie Norrie, Coordinator of Student Services, Prairie Spirit S.D., Corrie Wiesner, PROMISE Years/School Division Clinician, Vicki Neufeld, Coordinator of PROMISE Years’ Parent-Child Coalitions

PROMISE Years (Partners Researching Options to Maximize Integrated Service for Early Years) is a partnership between Fort La Bosse School Division, Southwest Horizon School Division, Prairie Spirit School Division, Turtle Mountain School Division, Prairie Mountain Health Authority, Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba, Manitoba Family Services and Housing, Manitoba Health, and Healthy Child Manitoba. PROMISE Years is jointly funded by Health and Education. These organizations work together to provide quality pre-school and school-age programming for rural children through parent-child programs, pre-school speech & language programming, pre-school and school age physiotherapy programming, and pre-school and school age occupational therapy programming.

The goal of PROMISE Years is to provide services to rural children and their families through community-based partnerships. Specific objectives include increasing the number of children receiving service, improving the ability of children to successfully function within their home, community and school, enhancing the quality of parent/child relationships, enhancing the community awareness of services available, enhancing communications between parents and service providers, and improving the available therapy services for children.

Concurrent Workshops B

11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

B1: Leading in the Midst of Challenges—Floyd Martens, Trustee, Mountain View S.D., Past President, Manitoba School Boards Association, and President, Canadian School Boards Association

School trustees, by their very role, are leaders in their communities. As leaders, they are required to navigate through what can often be difficult, challenging and changing times. This workshop will focus on key components of leadership, which trustees can use in their role to lead effectively in what are often difficult environments.

B2: MERLIN— Members of the MERLIN Advisory Board

Today more than ever, our school systems rely on cost-effective and reliable technology solutions. Come spend an hour and learn about the services that MERLIN provides to make both the instructional and operational side of school divisions work. Whether you know it or not, your division is likely already taking advantage of many of the supports and services MERLIN provides. The partner program, provincial purchasing and licensing, consulting, internet access, hosted services, security and technical training for IT staff—MERLIN is part of the provincial education community and is here to work with you to improve educational outcomes in Manitoba. Come and learn how MERLIN is supporting innovation in Manitoba schools.
B3: From data to sustainable interventions—Louise Legal-Perrin, Curriculum Director, and Deny Gravel, Middle Years Coordinator, Division scolaire franco-manitobaine

The use of data in academic planning is evolving with the availability of tools and research. Using an approach described in Fullan’s Coherence and Wellman’s methods in *Got Data, Now What?*, the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine (DSFM) is learning how to be more efficient in its interventions. Evaluation tools, data management, systems analysis and decision-making processes are guiding us to sustainable strategies not used in the past. Success indicators point to improvement in students’ academic success and school staff culture.

*Presentation will be bilingual and information will be spoken and projected in French and English. Venez apprendre et grandir avec nous.*

B4: A trustee’s story – Who we are and what we do—Trustees from the River East Transcona S.D. Board of Trustees

At the beginning of our term, our board talked about the questions that they were getting at doors during the election campaign. The two most common questions? Who were their trustees, and what did trustees do. In doing internal interviews, we also found many of our staff didn’t know what trustees or the board did. So four years ago, the board made it a priority to improve communications with both internal and external partners in education.

We have been diligently working on how to improve our communications and get the word out to both our staff and community on who we are and what we do. Initiatives include:

- Group video (talks about why we became trustees), individual video (talks about who we are), and trustee video (talks about what we do—the role of a trustee)
- The Torch (divisional paper putting out the board’s news)
- Trustee contact information included in all school newsletters
- Meeting with our MLA’s (getting to know them, giving them information on us and what we do, how we can work together)
- Board priorities—the process by which we set them, and how we communicate them out to our internal and external public, through The Torch, the website, letters to MLA’s, letters to parent council, etc.
- An Evening of Conversation on Student Success (talking with senior years students, principals, trustees and senior administration) on what success looks like and letting students know the role we play in the division

Concurrent Workshops C

2:10 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.

C1: Refugee Realities – Working together to support newcomer students and their families—Abdikheir Ahmed (Director of IPW—Immigration Partnership Winnipeg) and Noelle DePape (Senior Project Manager at IPW), Co-chairs of the Newcomer Education Coalition Advocacy Committee

The number one area of population growth in our province comes from immigrants from around the world. Every year 16,000 new immigrants arrive in Manitoba, with approximately 10% coming from refugee backgrounds. With an influx of refugee students in our schools, cultural proficiency and an understanding of the challenges and assets of these students and their families are important keys to ensuring we have equitable and inclusive schools. School trustees play an invaluable role in ensuring the right direction and policies are in place so that young people of all backgrounds see themselves reflected in schools, educational initiatives and curriculum. This interactive workshop will be facilitated by members of the Newcomer Education Coalition (NEC), a multi-stakeholder group that seeks to support boards, schools and others in further creating welcoming and inclusive schools.

C2: Instructional Walkthroughs for the purpose of school improvement—St. James-Assiniboia S.D.

St. James-Assiniboia School Division has been working on the implementation of Instructional Walkthroughs for the purpose of school improvement and the development of collective teacher efficacy. Our process began in 2013 with the Administrative Council identifying and defining a list of “look fors” as a way to establish common beliefs around the expectations for learning in our schools. Each year our process has evolved to become more streamlined and aligned with our Divisional Strategic plans and individual school plans. Our process has involved many steps, including the creation of a Divisional Walkthrough committee, creating a bank of co-created resources, sharing celebrations of learning, planning for vertical and horizontal partnerships (K-12), and monthly sharing at Administrative Council with a focus on literacy, numeracy and student engagement in all schools. Administrators use the information collected during walkthroughs as evidence to support school plans and/or focus areas. In this session we will share our walkthrough journey, including both our successes and challenges towards collective efficacy, school improvement and ultimately improved student learning.
C3: Leadership, Service and Advocacy: National and International Perspectives—Valerie McLeod, Executive Director, Canadian School Boards Association

In Canada, education may be a provincial responsibility, but that doesn’t mean that schools—or school boards—operate in a vacuum. Whether it’s in Manitoba, another province, or the United States, school boards are being buffeted by many of the same forces: a rise in populism, expanding partisan divides, and the fallout from a growing public distrust of public institutions of all sorts, including schools. In this session, CSBA Executive Director Valerie McLeod will not only provide an overview of some of the challenges facing school boards in the present social climate, but also offer some insight into how mission-focused leadership, targeted advocacy, and an unrelenting commitment to public engagement can counter these negative forces.

C4: Building Your Army of Advocates—Janis Arnold, Board Development Consultant, Manitoba School Boards Association

School trustees have a lot in common with the immediate school community, including a commitment to the well-being of kids. Most external community members also share that commitment. However, some have specific interests, and they value certain indicators of well-being and success above others. This workshop will expand upon the point introduced by keynote speaker Jamie Vollmer, that there’s no need to do it alone. Using a hands-on approach, trustees will develop their own framework that identifies specific groups and people within their own division and their interests and priorities, in order to get everyone working toward a common goal. By collaborating deliberately with all segments of their communities, school boards can build an army of advocates who actively support kids and public schools.

C5: CPEF in a Métis Community—Serge Carrière, principal of École communautaire Aurèle-Lemoine, Division scolaire franco-manitobaine

L’École communautaire Aurèle-Lemoine uses part of its Community Schools Partnership Project (CSPP) funding to provide family and early learning childhood centre services to its community. The objectives include: offering activities that develop EDI competencies, facilitating transition from early learning years to school, building bridges between community and school, developing language skills when brain development is optimal, offering structures that encourage positive long term mental health, and protecting a rich Métis heritage. The school offers a Centres de la petite enfance et de la famille (CPEF) program where children are invited, with a parent, grand-parent or other caregiver, to participate in activities that promote the child’s development.

*Presentation will be bilingual and information will be spoken and projected in French and English.*

Student Debate

3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

We’ll be closing out day one of our convention with a lively, entertaining and informative debate that will get to the very heart of what it means to serve as an elected official. What should guide your decision-making: the collective will of constituents, or your own conscience and convictions? Over the course of this one-hour session, two experienced debate teams from Manitoba high schools will offer up facts and arguments designed to sway you to their way of thinking. Jordan Burg, a consultant with the Manitoba Speech and Debate Association, will moderate this session.

Entertainment

Join us on Thursday from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. for an evening of camaraderie, fun, and entertainment by jazz singer and pianist Helen White. Helen is a regular at all the main jazz venues in Winnipeg and has been a guest artist with the Winnipeg Jazz Orchestra. She has recorded three full-length studio albums, with a fourth scheduled for release in 2018. Helen is also a vocal instructor who runs regular “Variety Nights” for her students to perform with a live professional band in different venues around town. This evening is co-sponsored by our partners MASS and MASBO.
Our closing banquet entertainer will be **Sierra Noble**. Sierra has been a well-known part of the Canadian music scene since a very young age. She began her touring career when she was only 14 years old as a solo old-time fiddle player, but she has subsequently evolved as both a singer and songwriter. She debuted her new talents in a song called “Possibility,” which went on to be featured on television shows such as “One Tree Hill” and “Switched at Birth.” Sierra has performed as the opening act for international music legends Bon Jovi and Paul McCartney, but on Friday evening, she is performing just for us!

**Awards and Recognition**

In 2018, we once again will be honouring the outstanding people and programs that make Manitoba schools great, but we’ll be doing so throughout the two-day convention. The Student Citizenship and George Harbottle Memorial Awards will be presented at lunch on Thursday, and the recipient of the Premier Award for School Board Innovation will be named at lunch on Friday. The Presidents’ Council Award will be presented at the President’s Banquet on Friday evening, and long-service trustees will also be recognized at that time.

**Board Chairs meeting with the Minister**

New time, new format, but still a great opportunity for an open exchange of ideas and priorities between board chairs and Manitoba’s Minister of Education and Training! This annual meeting will take place after the last session wraps up at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 15, and will run from 60 to 90 minutes. In order to make the most efficient use of the time available, we have solicited questions from school boards in advance of the meeting. This process will enable us to consolidate those that deal with similar topics, as well as to ensure that we cover as wide a range of topics as possible.

---

**LEADERSHIP, SERVICE AND ADVOCACY**

mbschoolboards.ca