

SCHOOL FACILITIES AND ELECTIONS

In a February 4 memo to board chairs and senior administrators, association Executive Director Carolyn Duhamel reported on recent discussions with provincial education and elections officials regarding the use of school facilities as voting stations in the April 19, 2016 provincial election. Section 105 (1) of *The Elections Act* requires that “if requested by a returning officer, space in a school established under *The Public Schools Act* must be made available to operate a voting station,” a requirement that has from time to time raised concerns at the divisional level. Those concerns have related primarily to security, especially at the early and middle years levels. Support is available from Elections Manitoba to help divisions ensure student safety, while at the same time meeting their legal obligation to allow the increased public access that goes hand-in-hand with using schools as voting stations. Elections Manitoba will be contacting school divisions in the near future to seek their cooperation for 2016. In the meantime, more information, including [resources for educators](#) for teaching democracy, citizenship and participation in elections, can be found on the [Elections Manitoba](#) website.

SPEAKING OF ELECTIONS...

You can now find on our website candidate-submitted profiles for many of the trustees vying for office on the association’s provincial executive. This [document](#) will be updated as additional information or nominations are received. It will also be included in delegate kits at our convention in March, which is when all elections will be held.

WHO ARE YOU WATCHING?

The Manitoba Ombudsman has released [Video Surveillance Guidelines](#) for public bodies and trustees subject to *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)* and *The Personal Health Information Act (PHIA)*, a group which includes school boards. The guidelines set out ten considerations designed to help public bodies and trustees who may be planning to implement video surveillance, including:



- developing a surveillance system policy;
- notifying the public;
- using and disclosing surveillance records; and
- retention, security and destruction of surveillance records

These guidelines are definitely worth a read!

MERN HEADS NORTH

MERN North 2015 will be held on March 13, 2015 at the University College of the North - Thompson Campus. This forum features presentations on early learning, K - 12 and post-secondary programs that represent a range of accessible, inclusive and respectful learning opportunities in northern Manitoba. Participants will learn about education and social sciences research that is supporting community-based education and training that is fundamental to social and economic development in northern Manitoba. There is no fee to register for this event. To learn more or to register, [click here](#).

SASKATCHEWAN RURAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

This year marks the 20th installment of the [Saskatchewan Rural Education Conference](#). The theme for 2015 is Celebrating Rural Schools: Looking Back and Looking Forward. Sub-themes include diversity, partnerships, social media, and mental health, which will be examined through three keynote and more than 50 breakout sessions. Keynote speakers are Joe Clark, Pat and Fred Renihan, and Marie Wilson. The conference will be held from March 29 to 31 in Saskatoon, SK. To learn more or to register, visit the conference [website](#).

Twentieth National Congress on Rural Education in Canada



Celebrating Rural Schools: Looking Back & Looking Forward

March 29 - 31, 2015 • TCU Place
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

PARENTS' GUIDE TO BULLYING

Understanding and Responding to Bullying: A Guide for Parents has now been translated into French. You'll find [Comprendre l'intimidation et y faire face Guide à l'intention des parents](#) on the [Safe Schools Manitoba](#) website.

