

WELCOME ABOARD!

The Executive of the Manitoba School Boards Association is pleased to announce that at its January 14 meeting, it finalized the appointment of Josh Watt as the association's next Executive Director, effective June 29, 2015.

Josh has served in the education, government (federal and provincial) and non-profit sectors. Most recently, he served as Senior Policy Advisor to the Deputy Minister of Manitoba Education & Advanced Learning. Prior to that, he was the long-time Director of Institutional Relations for the Manitoba Council on Post-Secondary Education (COPSE).



Josh holds Master's degrees in public administration (University of Manitoba/University of Winnipeg) and education (University of Manitoba), as well as a BA Honours degree in law and political science (Carleton University). He is also a graduate of both the Leadership Winnipeg Program and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (Peace Support Operations), and a volunteer trustee and treasurer with the Winnipeg Public Library Board.

AWARDS DEADLINE

January 23 is just over a week away! If you're wondering why we're drawing that rather obvious fact to your attention, here's the not-quite-so-obvious reason: January 23 is the deadline for receipt of nominations for all of our [awards and recognition programs](#). Details about the Premier Award for School Board Innovation, the Presidents' Council Award, the Student Citizenship and George Harbottle Memorial Awards, and Long-Service Trustee Awards were first distributed to school boards on November 5. You can find that same information, along with the necessary nomination forms, on our website. Questions? On those same forms, you'll also find the name and contact information for the staff member who can provide the answers you're looking for, or just call the office!



BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

Watch next week's divisional email for the full convention program and registration package. In the meantime, to find out what's happening, check out some of the links on our [convention page](#). There you'll find a sneak peak of all of this year's exciting [keynote speakers](#)—Paul LaPolice, Devon Clunis, Kevin Lamoureux, and our very own Carolyn Duhamel—as well as banquet entertainer Big Daddy Tazz. We post [nominations](#) for executive positions as they are received, and prior to the convention, we'll be posting the profiles and photos provided by these candidates. After January's regional meetings, we'll also be posting the resolutions package, for your information. And finally, each year, we ask school boards to consider donating items to be included in our raffle, proceeds of which are earmarked for a specific, child-centered charity. You can find out how to [donate](#), or learn about this year's charity of choice, [Manitoba Riding for the Disabled](#), by visiting the convention page.



CREATING SAFE SCHOOLS

Our next webinar features a special guest presenter: Dr. Mary Hall, Director of Safe Schools Manitoba. This 45-minute webinar will look at the factors that contribute to school safety, including strong leadership, sound policy, the use of discretion, staff training, parental involvement, and student empowerment. Participants will be introduced to cutting edge research, review effective practices, and discuss the issues related to safe schools. The live webinar will begin at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 11; to register, email Board Development Consultant [Janis Arnold](#). And remember—if your schedule prevents you from participating in the live version of this or any of our webinars, links to the [archived webinars](#) (along with [Division Dispatches](#) and other learning resources) can be found on our website.

