



Connection Collaboration Celebration

61st Annual Convention March 20 – 21, 2025 Delta Hotels, Winnipeg



MANITOBA
School Boards
ASSOCIATION

Report of the 2025 Nominating Committee



<https://www.mbschoolboards.ca/about/convention/>

Report of the 2025 Nominating Committee

Candidates

President

- Alan Campbell, Interlake S.D. [Page 1](#)

Vice-President (<6000 students)

- Crystal Erickson, Rolling River S.D. [Page 2](#)
- Leah Klassen, Garden Valley S.D. [Page 3](#)

Directors

Region 2

- Ashley Lachance, Prairie Rose S.D. [Page 4](#)

Region 4

- Henk Warnar, School District of Mystery Lake [Page 5](#)

Region 5

(one position)

- Maria Santos, Seven Oaks S.D. [Page 6](#)
- Cheryl Smukowich, St. James-Assiniboia S.D. [Page 7](#)

Region 6

(appointed)

- No nomination to date

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Incumbents in the following positions are in the first year of a two-year term; these positions will be up for election in 2026:

- **Vice-President (>6000 students):** Sandy Lethbridge, St. James-Assiniboia S.D.
- **Director Region 1:** Nicole Chaske, Fort La Bosse S.D.
- **Director Region 3:** Paul Magnan, Sunrise S.D.
- **Director Region 5:** Irene Nordheim, Louis Riel S.D.

The information that follows was provided by candidates for Provincial Executive office.
The final call for nominations will be on the morning of **March 20, 2025**, at the Convention call to order.



President

Alan Campbell—Interlake S.D.

Fellow Manitoba Trustees:

In contemplation of this nomination for President of our association, I found myself reflecting on the first time I was elected to the MSBA executive, which was incredibly, a decade ago. Seeking election for my first term as Region 3 Director, the tagline for my election materials was, “Collaboration is Key.” My larger message was that the collective expertise and experience of our boards in Region 3 were indeed an untapped strength that we needed to capitalize on for the sake of our school communities.

When I ran for Vice President in 2017 and then in the by-election for President in 2018, my messaging was focused on the relatively new provincial government’s concerning foreshadowing of a “K-12 Education Review” and what that could mean for school boards, students, families, communities and democracy. If only we knew then, what the next 5 years would bring!!

The opportunity to lead MSBA through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and Bill 64 proved to offer some of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of my life.

Mindful of my vision from 2015 for more engagement between boards and regions, I am proud of the ever-increasing value we see from board collaboration both at regional meetings and at convention.

In the larger provincial context however, I would offer the observation that our association should not require an existential threat like Bill 64, to hold its ground as the leading voice for public education in Manitoba. Now more than ever before, MSBA and its member boards must capitalize on our advocacy successes, strengthen our relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Metis partners and municipal, provincial and federal governments, in order to cement our position as the locally elected governors and stewards of the most important cornerstone of our society’s foundation – the public education system. Let’s get to work.

Finally, a note of thanks to my nominators from school boards throughout Manitoba. I am very humbled by the support I’ve received from trustees in both urban and rural communities and I look forward to our continued work together in service to the students and families of our province.

Sincerely,

Alan M. Campbell





Vice-President (<6000)

Crystal Erickson—Rolling River S.D.

I am Crystal Erickson and have been a Trustee with the Rolling River School Division (RRSD) for 18 years and the Board Chair for the last 5 years. I am excited about my nomination for the MSBA executive position of Vice-President (Boards with fewer than 6,000 students).

My husband and I raised our four children in Onanole, Manitoba (my forever home) and they attended and graduated from the same schools as we did. For over 30 years I operated a home-based child-care program, providing care for over 400 families from Onanole and surrounding rural areas. My community volunteer experience spans 20 years with Veterans Affairs Canada and the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba - providing supports, guidance, and connections for people in need.

I am thankful for the experiences, challenges, and opportunities I am involved with as a Trustee of the RRSD Board. I especially appreciate the opportunities my role of Trustee has provided for me to support strong collaborative relationships within the school and larger community – relationships built on respect, communication, and dedication. I am particularly proud of supporting School Board work related to opposing Bill 64, supporting the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the 94 Calls to Action, and creating inclusive environments for the LGBTQ2S+ students and alliances in our schools. I have learned the importance of listening to all voices in the education system with the focus on children and youth thriving in their academic, social, and personal lives.

In all aspects of my life, I care for people. I am a dedicated advocate for inclusion, diversity, and transparency. My experience with the School Board has helped me successfully build important skill sets such as being highly motivated to consider issues from both a global and local perspective, being unbiased and objective, and building the integral value of public education in decision making. My confidence and willingness to approach any challenge with an open mind and develop and consider a variety of solutions is what I can offer the Association. If I am a successful candidate, I will enthusiastically look forward to the commitment and responsibilities the position entails and being part of an already successful team.

I look forward to meeting new people, creating more relationships, and renewing connections with familiar colleagues at MSBA Convention 2025.

Kind Regards,

Crystal Erickson





Vice-President (<6000)

Leah Klassen—Garden Valley S.D.

With 14 years of experience as School Board Trustee in Garden Valley, 4 years as the Region 2 Director, and 2 years as the Vice President for Boards <6000, I am seeking this continued leadership position and asking for your support in the upcoming election.

In addition to these MSBA executive positions, I also serve as chair for this year's MSBA convention, am on the planning committee for the CSBA convention in July, and I am currently the GVSD Board Chair. I also served as MSBA Provincial Bargaining Advisory Group as alternate co-chair for boards <6000 for the Provincial Bargaining Table Team.

MSBA – WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

During Bill 64, regions worked together to create local campaigns to inform our public and encourage action to defeat the proposed legislation. MSBA recognized the challenges boards faced and provided funding and tools to enable boards to do their best advocacy work. MSBA connected with and supported local boards in a way I hadn't seen in my previous 12 years as a trustee. It feels like that without the threat of Bill 64 looming, we haven't continued as intentionally as we could have. MSBA needs to be the voice of all boards in public education. In order to do that, understanding differences between boards at the local level is critical to effective provincial advocacy work. During these past years I worked hard at developing and maintaining relationships with you, the member boards. You deserve that representation.

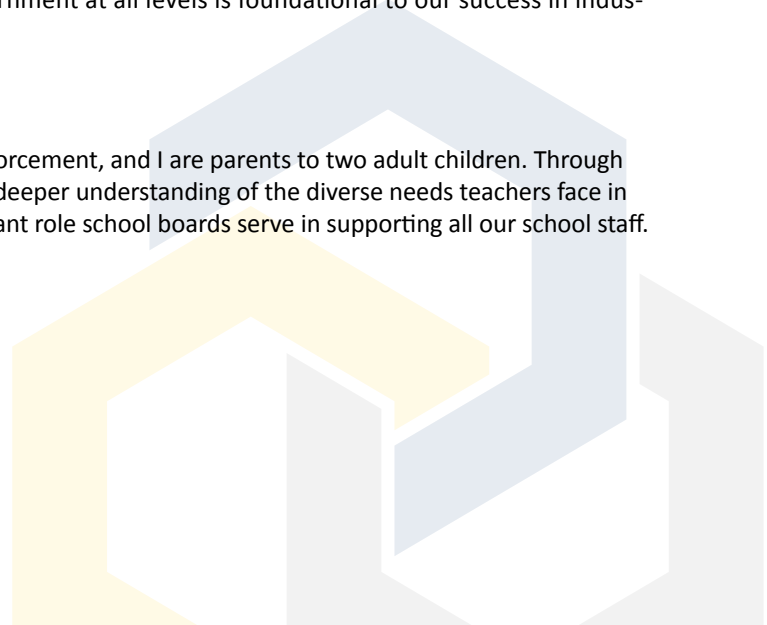
If re-elected as your VP of Boards < 6000, I commit to continued connection with you, listening to you, and advocacy on your behalf so we can effectively be the provincial voice of education. I commit to ensuring that all board voices, rural and urban, are heard.

AT WORK

Outside of school board work, I am a business partner and manager of 4 physiotherapy clinics in rural Manitoba and I chair the Winkler & Stanley Economic Development Corporation, an organization that focuses on business and labour force development initiatives including recruitment and immigration. My school board experience has been extremely beneficial in my professional life; especially in the areas of governance, policy and procedure development. Working collaboratively with government at all levels is foundational to our success in industry and education sectors.

AT HOME

My husband, who works in law enforcement, and I are parents to two adult children. Through our experience as parents I have a deeper understanding of the diverse needs teachers face in the K-12 classroom and the important role school boards serve in supporting all our school staff.





Director, Region 2

Ashley Lachance—Prairie Rose S.D.

I am honoured to have my name stand once again to represent Region 2 at MSBA. Throughout my time as a trustee I have sought opportunities for growth. Over the past 7 years I have served my home board of Prairie Rose School Division, in the capacity of committee chair for various committees, vice chair, and board chair. Through the role of Regional Director I have been able to deepen connections with trustees from our member boards, and would welcome the opportunity to continue to serve as a conduit between our Region and MSBA.

Alongside my trustee work, I am the Director of a Child Care centre in St. Eustache, MB where I live with my husband and three children. These roles combine and reinforce one another in myriad and invaluable ways: because of my Director function I have an understanding of budgets, which has deepened each year as we struggle as a school board to deliver programs that meet the needs of children, families and communities within a constrained budget provided by the government. I am able to see local trends in populations before they reach the local school and board level and bring that knowledge to the table. On the other hand, the very real lessons I have learned at that board table have allowed me to approach situations in my work regarding policy, procedure, and the roles of both the administration and the board with a keen and discerning eye.

A core value that I hold is rooted in the belief that connection is at the base of all learning: each intersecting point of connection acts as another channel for that learning. I have come to see that the decisions school boards must make at even a basic and fundamental level, must in some way, and at different points, form varied and healthy connections for students so that they may thrive.

My goal in seeking re-election as the Region 2 Director is to continue to connect with boards in the region and to understand their unique needs so that I can magnify their voice and convey their concerns to MSBA. I strongly believe in working from within a system while seeking out any and all opportunities to advocate for closing equity gaps and removing those barriers that plague the students in our region so as to help Region 2 boards do even better for their communities!





Director, Region 4

Henk Warnar—School District of Mystery Lake

I am Hendrik (Henk) M. Warnar, and I was an assistant professor with the Faculty of Arts, Business, and Science at University College of the North (UCN), where I taught from the Thompson campus in northern Manitoba. Most recently, I've taken on the role of Dean of Michet Meskanawah Teaching and Learning at UCN, as well as Director of the UCN Adult Learning Centre. I completed my Ph.D. in Canadian Studies at Trent University's School for the Study of Canada in Peterborough, ON.

I have had the privilege of working as an educator in northern Manitoba for the past fifteen years. I started by teaching middle years and mature students at Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation in Nelson House, and eight years ago, I transitioned to teaching History at UCN in Thompson. Currently, I serve as a trustee with the School District of Mystery Lake in Thompson, and I am honored to be the board's Chair.

I am a passionate advocate for public education, with a deep interest in academics, curricula, and pedagogy. My goal is to build on the efforts of the Manitoba School Boards Association to improve and increase access to public education across Manitoba. I also hope to advocate for more resources and representation for northern Manitoba to benefit the community as a whole.





Director, Region 5

Maria Santos—Seven Oaks S.D.

I am currently serving my third term (10 years) as trustee with Seven Oaks School Division and a retired teacher of 29 years with Winnipeg School Division. I am also a board member for Seven Oaks Education Foundation, serve on a liaison committee for Wayfinders and an active volunteer for Winnipeg Crime Stoppers for the last 8 years.

I am passionate about education and believe that all students regardless of race, religion, gender, or ethnic background, deserve and have access to quality education. It is equally important that we do whatever we can, to ensure that all students are provided a safe learning environment, where they can flourish and reach their full potential, helping them pave their way to become productive members of society.

I believe in transparency and accountability: This is what promotes trust, fairness and effectiveness in the work we do for our students, each other, and ultimately for our community, the people we serve.





Director, Region 5

Cheryl Smukowich—St. James-Assiniboia S.D.

PERSONAL

I have been married to my husband Scott for over 42 years. We are the proud parents of 4 children and grandparents of 12 grandchildren. We love the chaos and energy of our very busy family life.

TRUSTEESHIP

I have been a member of the St. James-Assiniboia School Division (SJASD) Board of Trustees since 2006. During my trusteeship, I have served on all standing committees, numerous divisional committees and gained valuable experience holding the following positions:

- Chair, Human Resources/Governance Committee (2023 – present)
- Chair, SJASD Board of Trustees (2019 – 2023)
- Vice Chair, SJASD Board of Trustees (2014 – 2018)

MANITOBA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION (MSBA)

I have served as a former Region 5 Director on the MSBA Provincial Executive and as a trustee representative on the following committees:

- Alternate Trustee (for Boards over 6,000) to the Provincial Bargaining Table Team
- Bargaining Advisory Group
- Manitoba High School Athletics Association Executive
- Resolutions & Policy Committee

I am a strong advocate for public education and for helping students achieve success. I believe that a critical role of school boards is to ensure the programming and opportunities offered to students and families reflect the needs and values of our community. Changing demographics has led to increasing differences in student backgrounds, abilities, needs and desires, creating a more diverse student population than ever before. I believe that the MSBA Provincial Executive must be the voice of all school divisions in our province, including marginalized communities (e.g., Indigenous students, newcomers/immigrants, people coming from low socio-economic backgrounds, etc.)

I enjoy collaborating, and working together, as a member of a team. I will work with the MSBA Provincial Executive towards the shared goals and the advocacy work established by our member school boards at MSBA's Annual AGM. I also hope to work with the other Region 5 Director to organize regular meetings with all Region 5 school divisions to share our successes and discuss our struggles. By working together, we can accomplish amazing things!

I'd be honoured to have your support, and serve as one of your Region 5 Directors on the MSBA Provincial Executive.

Thank you.

Rules of Procedure for Nominations and Elections

Nominations

1. In 2025, President, Vice-President (Less than 6000 students), and one Director each for Regions 2, 4, 5, will be elected and Region 6 will be appointed at the Annual Convention of the Association.
2. Every candidate for office shall be a trustee of a member board at the time of being nominated.
3. No person shall hold the same Executive position for more than two, complete consecutive terms.
4. The Nominating Committee will ensure that there is at least one qualified candidate for each position up for election. None of the Committee's nominees shall be a member of the Nominating Committee.
5. Further nominations may be made from the floor of the Annual Convention by a convention delegate with the consent of the nominee.
6. An individual trustee may submit their name to the Nominating Committee, in writing, with the support of an electorate of five (5). This will not apply to candidates nominated from the floor.
7. Nominations will be accepted by the Nominating Committee until the last call for nominations from the floor at the call to order of the Annual Convention.
8. If a candidate for President or Vice-President is not elected, that candidate is deemed to have been nominated for any other position for which they are qualified if that candidate so desires.
9. Voting shall be by ballot. Voting for President shall be by board ballots, which will be distributed in such numbers as determined by Association by-laws to a trustee authorized by each board to receive those ballots. Voting for all other positions will be by individual trustee ballots, with the Vice-Presidents elected by trustees at large, and Directors elected by the trustees of each respective region. Every trustee of a member board is eligible to register as a voting delegate at a Convention and upon registration shall be given the right to vote. Only Convention delegates and members of the Executive present at the convention shall be entitled to vote at Convention, and no person or member shall vote by proxy.
10. Prior to the elections, the President shall appoint scrutineers, none of whom shall be voting delegates or staff, and in the event that a vote is required on any election, the scrutineers shall collect and count the ballots and declare the name of the successful candidate for each office.
11. Where one officer is to be elected, a candidate, in order to be elected, must receive over 50% of the votes cast. If on the first or subsequent vote no candidate receives over 50% of the votes cast, the name of the candidate receiving the fewest votes shall be deleted and another vote taken.
12. Where two or more Directors are to be elected at one time, a candidate, in order to be elected, must receive over 50% of the ballots cast. In the event that more than one ballot is necessary, any successful candidate will be declared elected and the candidate receiving the fewest votes shall be dropped from the ballot; except where this would reduce the remaining candidates to one, in which case only the successful candidate shall be removed from the ballot.
13. Should a tie vote occur during an election which would have the effect of no change in the makeup of the next ballot, a second vote shall be taken, where possible. If the second vote again results in a tie, the successful candidates shall be determined by lot.

The final call for nominations will be on the morning of March 20, 2025, following the Convention call to order. All elections will take place on Friday, March 21, 2025, in accordance with the Convention program.

