



**Date:** March 20, 2024  
**To:** Board of Trustees  
**From:** Stacey Buga, Trustee  
**Originator(s):** Stacey Buga, Trustee  
**Subject:** **Alberta Rural Education Symposium; March 3-5, 2024**

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**Purpose:**

For information.

**Background:**

March 3-5 at River Cree; Attended by Superintendent Shawna Warren and Trustee Stacey Buga

The Alberta Rural Education Symposium was initiated by the Minister of Education in 2012. Alberta Education organized and planned the entire one-day symposium. Since 2013, the Alberta Rural Education Symposium Planning Committee has been an example of effective collaboration between education stakeholder groups. The committee is made up of representatives from the Alberta Teachers' Association, the Alberta School Boards Association, the Alberta School Councils Association, the Alberta School Business Officials Association, the College of Alberta School Superintendents and Alberta Education.

Evening with the Minister - hosted by Andrea Holowka, CASS President

- Education Minister was interviewed and opened the floor to questions for 1.5 hours and he stayed to mingle for another hour. No other MLAs attended the MLA reception.

Reconciliation, a Message of Hope - Cadmus Delorme

- He acknowledged big issues like lobster fishing rights in the East, missing women in the landfill in Manitoba, the Oka Crisis, etc, but remained positive about moving forward together. "The greatest warrior is the one who brings peace"
- He suggested we be radically open-minded and "share your heart before you ask for a hand"

Equity, Diversity and Voice in a Rural Context - Dr. Leyton Schnellert

- He brings awareness to intersectionality and how diversity includes differences in physical abilities, socio-economic background, learning abilities, as well as ethnic background, gender identity, and lived experiences.
- "Don't get everyone to the same level, take everyone to their next level"

#### Governance - Dr. Jordan Tinney

- Interactive presentation - 4 steps Start with recognition of successes, Grieving or letting go of what you cannot change, Action - what can you do?, Vision - Where do you want to be, what does it look like?
- Interactive presentation - interviewing tablemates, 4 questions about rural education (based on above 4 steps) - at the end of the exercise, everyone came up with similar solutions to most issues being to build community and advocate for the unique opportunities in Rural Alberta.

#### Student Panel - Facilitated by Dr. Jordan Tinney

- Great to hear students being strong advocates for rural education. It's always valuable to hear those same 4 themes from the student voice. Many similar themes of community being a strength for them.

#### Education and the Survival of Rural Alberta - Dr. Ken Coates

- Some interesting stats about rural Canada. 90% of Canadians live within 150Km of the US border. In turn, this means that a large majority of decision makers also live in these spaces and may not know or understand how important rural Canada is to our culture and economic future.
- It is critical to use what we have, be creative, and share loudly the benefits of rural life.