



**Date:** April 24, 2024  
**To:** Board of Trustees  
**From:** Trish Murray-Elliott, Trustee  
**Originator(s):** Trish Murray-Elliott, Trustee, PSBAA Representative  
**Subject:** **PSBAA Update, April 2024**

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**Purpose:**

For information.

**Background:**

PSBAA Gift Basket Info – other boards considering \$150 range, suggested themed baskets, not swag. For example, Movie In / Movie Out or Games Night.

April 2024 PSBC – PD sessions were very interesting.

**PSBC Meeting:**

Starting to work on Election Readiness. Will be referring to it as PEP (Promote, Elevate and Protect) Have improvements over last Election Readiness to encourage more uptake:

- Non-partisan

- Earlier timing and distribution of materials

- PSBAA will work more closely with Divisions' Communications teams to provide more info ahead of time including how to utilize the materials given and how to customize to fit needs of each Board

Budget - PSBC is recommending a 5% increase in membership rates for 2025

Would like land acknowledgements from students for future meetings

PSBAA Spring General Assembly 2024 in Calgary, May 30 – June 1.

Summer PSBC meeting August 7 – 9 in Grande Prairie.

**Attachment(s):**

1. April 2024 PSBC Meeting Summary



PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS'  
ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA™

## PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS' COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY APRIL 2024

**Date:** April 19, 2024  
**From:** Troy Tait, Executive Director and CEO  
**To:** PSBC Representatives, Alternates and Board Chairs  
**Copy:** Board of Directors, Superintendents

### **Re: April 11 – 12, 2024 Professional Development and Public School Boards' Council Meeting**

The Public School Boards' Council met in person, with some delegates attending via Zoom. We are pleased to offer the following summary from the April 11-12, 2024 Professional Development and Council Meeting.

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### **Professional Learning – April 11, 2024**

Our Thursday professional learning day included the following presenters:

1. Jason Daniels, Ph.D: Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at Concordia University of Edmonton spoke on *'The Push and Pull of Technology: Understanding the Impact of the Internet, Social Media, AI and other Digital Media on our Children'*

Jason spoke about:

- the visceral reaction adults have to children using technology. “what is just different, and what is different that we need to really think about?”
- 86% of young children have a social media account before the age of 9. As well as 36% of 10-year-olds have smart phones. Every year kids gain access to technologies and phones younger and younger. Which begs the question, if the kids who don't have one, are they left out of the social environment their peers are involved in?
- Jason examined the level of connection adults have to their phones as well. 80% of people reach for their phone before doing anything else when starting their day. Discussed the “instant panic” feeling we have when we don't know where are phone is.
- Smartphones lead to anxiety and depression in multiple ways. Smartphones were introduced in 2007, and by 2015 fully 92 percent of [teens and young adults owned a smartphone](#). The rise in depressive symptoms correlates with smartphone adoption during that period, even when matched year by year - Jean Twenge.
- When we engage in face-to-face communication, social information is conveyed by vocal and visual cues in the context of the situation. Non-verbal communication is an important part of communicating and it includes facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice as well as posture, space between individuals, etc.
- Bullying through social media and smart phones allows it to happen nonstop to a child. Before technologies bullying only happened in person. You were “safe” at home or when you were physically away from the bully.

- How do we work with technologies and set healthy boundaries? Working with the facts that we know and solving and utilizing what we have available to us.
  - What is cognitive load? The volume of mental resources (including attention, perception and memory) required to complete a task.
2. Annalee Nutter, Superintendent and Malcolm Setter, Trustee for Fort McMurray Public Schools provided a presentation on ***'Powerful Connections'***

Annalee and Malcom focused on: Strategies and Ideas for connecting with Indigenous Community Members to develop relationships.

- Reconciliation requires sustained public education and dialogue, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, treaties, and Aboriginal rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canadian society.
  - Professional development for educators to increase knowledge and understanding of the histories, cultures, and perspectives of Indigenous peoples.
  - Developing and implementing curriculum and learning resources that incorporate Indigenous knowledge and perspectives.
  - Understanding cultural bias and stereotypes and how to better educate yourself on the history
  - Annalee discussed knowing protocol for greeting, for asking questions, and for creating relationships within the community. “give and take” mentality. Seeking places to connect is part of the first steps.
  - Land based learning. Experiencing the culture and learning the medicine wheel and what this interactive learning has to offer. Students do earn credit through this learning.
3. Clarice Anderson and Sheila Williams from the Edmonton Public School Board presented on ***'Strengthening Relationships'***.

Clarice and Shelia spoke about...

- Breaking down the reconciliation model framework and what that looks like (Action, Awareness, Atonement, and Acknowledgement)
- Now I know what I know, and how can we move forward? Discussing the important work of truth and reconciliation and what that looks like in the education system.
- Shelia and Clarice dove into the Indian Act of 1876 and some of the ruling and logistics of it. This included the process and obstacles for receiving land from the federal government.
- Intergenerational trauma plays out within communities. Relationship denial is a big piece of that trauma.
- **Traditional Protocol** is the presentation of tobacco or a gift to an Elder or Knowledge Keeper. Protocol represents a verbal contract between two parties, as the Elder or Knowledge Keeper is agreeing to the request and the person offering protocol is committing to respect the process. The use of protocol is dependent on the cultural practices of the Elder, Knowledge Keeper and the community.
- Shelia and Clarice presented two videos on the correct way to offer tobacco to elders and the protocol on smudging.

4. Tim Stensland Ed.D – Former Deputy Superintendent for Northland School Division presented on the topic ***'Being Coherent with Your Priorities: From Formulation to Implementation'***

Tim's key take aways were: responding to the political context, responding to policy, responding to the many reform efforts and initiatives which create disjointedness and incoherence. As well as a predominant management priority that has a limited focus on student learning.

- Three of Tim's key findings from his work he shared were: Coherence was described as a clear strategic priority with three other necessary components. Coherence is created through enactment of the strategic plan, and there was little consistency in the way leaders described their approach to implementation and enactment of the strategic plan.
  - Themes emerged in Tim's analysis: It is a myth that strategic plans create coherence; it is a false assumption for leaders to make. Having individual district leaders agree with the strategic plan does not create coherence, and there is a disconnect between the conceptualization of coherence and the enactment of coherence.
  - A process of implementation/enactment is more effective when it is made sense of, mediated, and struggled over. (just like policy).
  - Tim gave examples of how PSBAA members can utilize this info going forward. This included; Taking advantage of your opportunity to create your personalized definition of Assurance. As well as maximizing the potential to use engagement, direct stakeholders, external stakeholders, and internal stakeholders to build out and define the strategic priorities.
  - Take advantage of your opportunity to customize your personalized definition of Assurance. For example; Balance the emphasis on specific legislative reporting requirements while at the same time taking the necessary approach for engagement/assurance to ensure you attend to what is most valuable to your board – making progress on your priorities.
5. Chris Scheetz is Co-host for CISN Country and a Five Time CCMA Major Market Personality of the Year was our dinner speaker for the evening. Chris shared his journey of coming from humble beginnings in rural Alberta, to raising millions for Edmonton throughout his career. Is presentation titled ***'Small Towns and Big Dreams'*** was both inspiring and informative.

Chris spoke about his journey through radio and how many opportunities during his career has given him valuable life lessons. Such lessons included community empathy, being vulnerable, and how communication and connection is a power tool that can be used in all parts of life.

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## **PSBC Meeting April 12, 2024**

### **Board of Directors Reports**

All Board of Directors provided written reports, included in the agenda packages, as well as verbal updates.

### **Executive Director and CEO's Report**

The Executive Director and CEO provided a written report, included in the agenda package, and a verbal update was also provided.

### **Environmental Scan / Board Sharing**

An environmental scan was presented by each attending Board representative. Each Board was requested to share on the following question:

What were the barriers to participating in the Election Readiness material for the provincial election and what can be done to overcome these barriers for the future?

### **Challenges Boards are Facing (from February PSBC Environmental Scan)**

Pat Grisonich – Co-Chair of the Political Relations Committee opened a conversation on the challenges that each board is facing. This information was discussed during the meeting and all information was requested to be submitted to the PSBAA office for the Political Relations Committee to review.

### **Election Readiness**

During the past provincial election in 2023, a large amount of material was produced by the administration for our use in our local communities. Unfortunately, the uptake of this information was less than we were anticipating.

We view the upcoming election as very important for public school trustees and during the meeting the following takeaways were concluded:

- That the work will be non-partisan
- The timing of and the distribution of materials will be done earlier
- The Association will be working more closely with your communications team, giving them more information ahead of the materials coming and it will include:
  - How to utilize the materials given
  - How it can be customized to fit the needs of your board

We will also be changing the name of the material from Election Readiness to PEP (Promote, Elevate, and Protect) seeing as that is the intention of the information. The intent is to ensure that the individuals who do get elected are committed to public education and that every individual understands the value and role of trustees.

## **Budget 2025**

The Chair of the Budget Committee gave a current report on the budget and an outlook on the budget for 2025.

After a thorough discussion, the membership recommended a 5% increase in the membership rates for 2025.

## **Call to Action**

Here are your Calls to Action:

- Watch for the NEW PEP materials (Protect, Elevate, Promote)
- Bring a land acknowledgment from students in your division

***The next PSBC meeting will be held August 7 - 9, 2024 in Grande Prairie.***

## **Online Evaluation**

The Board of Directors invites your feedback about the April 2024 PSBC meeting. Your comments, suggestions and insights inform the Association's professional development planning, programs and meeting format. If you haven't already done so, please provide your feedback by clicking on the following links:

**Professional Learning and PSBC Meeting Survey:**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PNM639N>

**SCAN the QR Code:**



As always, if you have any questions about the April 2024 meeting summary or the PSBC Meeting, please feel free to contact me at 780.479.8080 or by email at [executivedirector@public-schools.ab.ca](mailto:executivedirector@public-schools.ab.ca).

***Troy Tait***

*Executive Director and CEO*