



MASS

Manitoba Association of
School Superintendents

CELEBRATING
MASS Members
2019 and 2020

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT



On behalf of MASS, I am pleased to extend our sincere congratulations and appreciation to our retiring members. While we may not be able to gather as we would normally do at this time of year, the joy in knowing you are moving to the next phase of your lives cannot be dimmed.

Even as retirees, you will all remain teachers at heart. Your commitment to education throughout your careers has influenced the lives of many. From teacher candidates to classroom

leaders and for most, moving into school administration before taking on the immense role of leadership in your school divisions, each of you have inspired and motivated not only students, but also teaching and non-teaching staff, so that they could achieve their highest potential.

Your careers in education are not defined by the past year of living and working through a worldwide pandemic, however, the exceptional effort of education leaders throughout this difficult time is a testament to the guidance you have brought to our province.

Thank you and best wishes as you enjoy retirement and the many advantages of simply having the time to enjoy life.

Pauline Clarke
MASS President

MASS RETIREES 2019 – 2020

Monica Biggar	Seine River School Division
Gwen Birse	Seven Oaks School Division
Randy Dueck	Hanover School Division
Cyndy Kutzer	Western School Division
Brett Lough	St. James-Assiniboia School Division
Julia McKay	Kelsey School Division
Keith Murray	Prairie Spirit School Division
Michele Polinuk	Lord Selkirk School Division

MASS RETIREES 2020 – 2021

Brad Corbett	Winnipeg School Division
Geri Harder Robson	Hanover School Division
Trish Glass	Lord Selkirk School Division
Marg Janssen	Frontier School Division
Elaine Lochhead	Seine River School Division
Elaine McFadzen	Brandon School Division
Irene Nordheim	Louis Riel School Division
Henri Péroquin	Louis Riel School Division
Mary-Anne Ploshynsky	Rolling River School Division
Chris Rhodes	Winnipeg School Division
Karin Seiler	Winnipeg School Division

MONICA BIGGAR



What an adventure! Teaching and learning has changed during the thirty years that I have worked as a teacher, resource teacher, consultant, vice-principal/principal (Transcona-Springfield/Sunrise SD), and assistant superintendent (Seine River SD). In my first year of teaching middle school, at Holy Ghost School on Selkirk Avenue, I thought I was innovative and edgy using coloured chalk, marking assignments with coloured pencils, and introducing lit circles and writers workshop. Handwritten handouts written on blue transfer paper for the

"ditto" machine, were a luxury reserved for tests and important notes. With a change of school the following year, to Collège Pierre Elliot Trudeau, the tools for teaching began a noticeable shift from the classroom of the past, to new tools and ways of teaching that have evolved into what we are using now. The tools for learning are so different, as we navigate learning at home - the possibilities amazing!

It has been my privilege to have spent the majority of my career working with adolescents, Grades 5-12, at Collège Trudeau, École Regent Park, Springfield Collegiate Institute, École Dugald School, and as a program consultant Gr. 7-12. The unpredictable adolescent insecurities, as they navigate their roles between child and adulthood, provided both absurd moments and profound wonder at their passion to make the world better and to challenge the status quo. While I am happy to leave behind writing reports, parking lot patrol, lunch duty, and developing sanitizing procedures, I will miss the "buzz" of the school and the interactions with amazing, funny, and caring young people. Teaching is a wonderful opportunity to make a difference every day in someone's life.

There have been many colleagues in my career who have been an inspiration, through their caring and passion for helping students as learners and people. Their friendship, sense of humour, mentoring and modelling have helped me to grow, seek solutions, and always maintain a forward-thinking, positive outlook. Teaching and students

are complex. I will always be grateful for their collaboration, guidance and support.

Thank you to my colleagues in Seine River SD, and in SISA and MASS, who I have learned from in my last 6 years as assistant superintendent. I wish you all the best as you continue to lead education into uncharted waters, navigating the obstacles and discovering a new future for education. I will follow your journey with interest, as I explore opportunities in the community, travel, and connect more with family and friends (all while social distancing!). Take care and keep well.



GWEN BIRSE

I have been fortunate to spend my entire career with Seven Oaks School Division. It has been a place where I have been challenged, inspired, and grown as an educator, leader and as a person. I began teaching in 1981 at Ken Seaford Junior High which was a new school in the division. This was a unique experience for a new teacher. After 10 years, I moved across the link to Maples Collegiate teaching Mathematics,

Computer Science and the Sci-Tec program which provided an integrated curriculum to Grade 11 students. This collaborative approach to curriculum and the depth of student learning deeply influenced my beliefs as an educator. This led to participating in the Grade 7-12 Curriculum Development Team which provided professional development for mathematics teachers across the province and the completion of my Master of Education degree focusing on the teaching and learning of Mathematics.

Educational leadership in curriculum continued in my administrative positions as Principal of Elwick Community School and Ecole Seven Oaks Middle School and Principal of Ecole Seven Oaks Middle School and Maples Collegiate. The last 7 years of my career were as Assistant Superintendent of Personnel. The opportunity to be part of an innovative Senior Team was inspiring and I was always amazed at the possibilities which could flourish in our education system. Witnessing the incredible talents of our educators and focusing on building a staff which reflected the community of Seven Oaks was a very rewarding time in my career.

MASS has provided me with many mentorship opportunities and a collaborative spirit which is imperative in our work. As a member of the executive for 4 years and Chair of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Committee, I witnessed the passion of an association committed to the education of the students in Manitoba. As change moves forward with education in our province the need for the continuation of this ethical, passionate and committed leadership is imperative.

As I have moved into my next adventure of retirement, I marvel at the blessings of having a career where you can make a difference. It is wonderful to turn off the alarm clock, have time for family and friends and to hopefully one day travel.

RANDY DUECK



Reflections on my career

- If someone had told my Grade 11 teachers that one day I would be the superintendent of a school division they would have croaked! But here I am, retiring after thirteen years of senior leadership with Hanover School Division.

- I never really aspired to be an educational leader. So what happened? Some people whispered in my ear. I was inspired by some other people. I took some Masters courses with some amazing professors. I said yes to some jobs and

no to some other jobs. I worked in Lithuania and in India. I became a principal, and then a vice principal, then an Assistant Superintendent and a Superintendent. And it all kind of just happened. Life is like that.

- I have loved working with students! Especially the challenging ones. I loved "the dance" as we figured it out together. These are the ones who years later come up to you and tell you how you made a difference. I would say they taught me almost everything I know. Michael, Cassandra, the twins, Gary, Keanu, and Jodi come to mind.

- I have appreciated opportunities to learn from the best in the world. Parker J Palmer, Michael Fullan, Vern Hildebrand, John Wiens, Ken Klassen, Rick Ardies, Chris Gudziunas, Andy Hargreaves (who

challenged me to have a dream), the MASS Ethical Leadership Cohort, and it goes on.

- I am not done yet! I have every intention of being an educator all my life. The “career” goes on.

What matters most

- Kids. Period.
- We are all engaged in community service. We have the enormous privilege of participating in the development of every community's most valuable resources.
- We have got to keep talking about teaching and learning! This conversation is ongoing and essential. It is THE conversation.
- Learning MUST be an adventure – for both students and teacher! We can't always know the outcomes. There have to be some pleasant (and occasionally not so pleasant) surprises.
- Kids have GOT to be engaged – that is on us. There is simply no excuse for boring teaching.
- I want all students to love learning.
- I want all teachers to love teaching.
- My “five words”; faith, love, joy, wisdom and courage.

Encouragement in challenging times

- Know your North Star.
- Have some good friends.
- MASS and SISA, I thank you with all my heart for being colleagues and friends on the good days and the bad.
- “The best-kept secret of successful educational leaders is love: staying in love with leading, with the people who do the work, with what our schools produce, and with those who honour our schools by using our work. Leadership is not an affair of the head. Leadership is an affair of the heart.” Kouzes and Postner
- This is the best job in the world!!!!!!!!!!

CYNDY KUTZNER



From September 1985 to June 2020, I have been on a remarkable venture through education in Manitoba. One that would have been hard to imagine when I graduated from Queen's University with a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Physical and Health Education. Teaching wasn't something that I aspired to do, until out of necessity, I started working as an unqualified supply teacher. I automatically connected with teaching and working with children and youth and enjoyed it so much that I decided to return to Queen's for a Bachelor of Education.

My first real teaching position was with Frontier School Division working in Grand Rapids in the fall of 1985. Grand Rapids School was a Nursery to Grade 12 School with approximately 350 students. My position was teaching Grade 7-9 Math and Science. Grand Rapids provided a setting in which I not only worked with my colleagues but lived together in the same compound with them as well. Strong friendships developed easily. I was blessed with teaching alongside many strong, enthusiastic teachers and leaders who became close friends and mentors. Frontier School Division provided me with amazing professional development, growth, and leadership opportunities.

Deciding to leave Frontier School Division was difficult but in 1997 I decided to take a teaching/principal position at Plumas Elementary School with Pine Creek School Division. I spent four years in Plumas and loved the small school and small community atmosphere.

Western School Division was my next stop. In 2001 I started working at Ecole Morden Middle School starting as vice-principal and resource teacher and ending up as principal. While working at Ecole Morden Middle School I began taking courses towards a Master of Education. In 2006 I was appointed as Assistant Superintendent and had the privilege of leaders and teachers in our division.

2006 was also the year that I joined MASS and discovered a group of supportive passionate mentors willing to share expertise and advice when needed. This organization has been unbelievably influential in both my career and my personal life. I wish all of you well in your continued leadership in education in Manitoba and thank you for your fellowship, friendship, and support.

BRETT LOUGH



Brett retired from St. James-Assiniboia School Division on December 31, 2019 after 38 years as an employee of the Division. Mr. Lough spent his entire education career – both as a student and as an educator – in St. James-Assiniboia. A John Taylor Collegiate graduate, Brett began his career as a substitute teacher for four years prior to becoming a physical educator at Brooklands School. He moved on to teach at Ness Junior High before taking on Vice Principal roles at Stevenson-Britannia, St. James Collegiate, Golden

Gate Middle School and Silver Heights Collegiate. He was appointed Principal at both Lincoln Middle School (1997) and Westwood Collegiate (1999) prior to his appointment to the role of Assistant Superintendent in 2001. He was appointed to the position of Chief Superintendent of St. James-Assiniboia School Division in 2015. Brett also served as the president of the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents in 2016-17.

Some highlights during his career that Brett feels fortunate to have been a part of in his time in the Division include: the establishment of the first French Immersion middle school in the Division, trying to more effectively meet the needs of our most vulnerable families through the establishment of and commitment to our gender diversity policies, our ongoing commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its calls to action, the implementation of the Peaceful Village Program at St. James Collegiate/George Waters, as well as our work with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, providing policy direction and mandatory professional development in this critical area for all staff. These are just a few of the significant steps in recent years, through its

local voice and choice, SJASD has invested in support of its ongoing pursuit of improving the safety and quality of the learning experiences of all students through an equity lens."

"It was a very humbling but especially rewarding experience to have had the opportunity to serve the St. James-Assiniboia community with so many thoughtful, knowledgeable and passionate staff members. Equally meaningful in my professional life was the opportunity to be a part of MASS for almost 20 years, nine of those as a member of the executive. Looking back, I feel privileged to have worked alongside so many superintendents and assistant superintendents who consistently displayed an unwavering commitment to the importance of public education in our society. These individuals stood on the shoulders of so many that went before them in order to bring voice and therefore more equity to a system that requires such in order to benefit all children. MASS's ongoing work in the areas of early childhood, Indigenous education and mental health were just a few examples where MASS demonstrated, by focusing on the root causes of the inequities many families face every day, the importance it puts on improving student learning in our schools."

Brett's plan in retirement – which he has successfully undertaken (so far!) over the past 15 months - is to continue to spend as much time with his wife of 33 years, Wendy, as well as their children, Demi and Rhett, as they will allow!

JULIA MCKAY



I am looking forward to retirement. I have been involved in Education since 1979. I started as a Teaching Assistant, became a Teacher and then moved into Administration.

I honestly never saw myself as a Superintendent but when the opportunity presented itself, I decided to apply. Four years later and a Pandemic is definitely the time to leave and let someone younger take on the challenges.

I have enjoyed all my roles and when I retired the first time, I realized I missed being in the classroom.

Fortunately, I had the opportunity to work in the Kenanow Bachelor of Education Program at University College of the North.

I have taught levels from Grade 3 to adults, and I would not trade it for the world.

Lastly, I would like to thank MASS and all its wonderful members for their assistance and support. Keep doing what you do in these very challenging times!

KEITH MURRAY



Forty years goes by very quickly when I enjoy what I do and have great people to work with in each of my various roles. I started my career in education working with the Manitoba Indian Education Association in downtown Winnipeg. I then spent several years in the private system at Marymount and St. Mary's Academy as a teacher. We moved out to Wawanesa to take on my first school-based administration role which then led to a divisional role as technology coordinator. I ended my career in Prairie Spirit as superintendent of schools.

Since retiring I am enjoying my time as an afd, a remarkably consistently poor golfer, and a spouse to my long-suffering wife. I started my own woodworking business, Riverstone Live Edge, which fills in the non-golfing time quite nicely.

I wish all of my former colleagues well as they navigate the future challenges our Province has set out for us. Our students are in good hands.

MICHELE POLINUK



Teaching, working in a prison and becoming a funeral director were the careers that I wanted to explore when I was "growing up". For me, it was all about helping others, making a difference and touching lives. You can do that in all three professions, but I'm sure that my family is thankful that I started with teaching and remained with education for 32 years!

My teaching experience started at Grades 1, 2 and 5 at Birds Hill School. I did not realize how much I thrived on "change" until I kept "needing" to try more grades and challenges. I took the "leap" into Junior High and flourished teaching grade 8 and 9 math and science.

I was fortunate to have several people in my career who saw leadership skills in me, providing opportunities for growth and learning. Delivering early years science and teaching workshops divisionally, chairing the RESD Regional Science Fair, leading as a Grade 8 team leader at Munroe Junior High, and developing science curriculum with the Department were skills and experiences that led me into administration.

When my husband, Gary, saw an ad in a local paper for a Vice Principal, he convinced me to apply so that I could be working closer to home and contributing to my own home community of Selkirk. In 2001 I became a vice principal at Happy Thought School K-9 in the Lord Selkirk School Division. I was challenged when I was moved two years later to the "Comp" LSRCSS High School. I had no high school background, except attending the school as a student! Working with an amazing high school administrative team led by Scott Kwasnitz, shaped my skills, belief and confidence in leading others. After six years, I was principal at Lockport Junior High and then into Senior Administration. I was Assistant Superintendent for seven years and three years as Superintendent.

I was always thankful for the regional SISA meetings and found them to be the best network for learning and support. I thrived on being engaged with various MASS committees and gaining a provincial perspective. My personal highlights include Summer Institute networking, golf, AGM bus trip to Thompson, recognition banquets and the many connections and friendships with MASS members. A special thanks to Barb for leading us through challenging times this past spring, and to Ted, Kelly and Randy, who were an important part of my Superintendent journey.

I encourage all MASS members to pursue their dreams, get involved with their region and MASS committees and continue to transform education.

When I became the Superintendent, I recognized the importance of inspiring, motivating and challenging others to continually improve to provide the best opportunities for our students. This profession is hard work, but with students always at the forefront of what we do, it is all worth it.

As I embark on my next chapter of life, I am looking forward to spending time with family and friends, while leading an active and healthy life. I will fly away to my remote cabin with my best friend, and travel the world. Who knows what else will cross my path? I will be ready for almost anything!

TRISH GLASS



I have had the privilege of enjoying my career from beginning to end! Before I started teaching, I worked in several diverse fields such as an administrative assistant, banking, as well as working with people with exceptionalities. These diverse positions served me well for my professional and personal growth but also prepared me for my career in teaching.

I began by working as an educational assistant while I went through University. As soon as I graduated, I was hired in the Lord Selkirk School Division (LSSD) as a ½ time grade 1 Teacher and ½ time Resource Teacher. LSSD is where I spent my entire career. During my years employed at LSSD, I worked as a Classroom Teacher in elementary and middle years, Resource Teacher, Vice Principal, Assistant Director of Student Services, Director of Student Services and ended my career in the position of Assistant Superintendent of Student Services.

I was fortunate that I was able to work with many amazing people. As my career evolved, my network of colleagues grew beyond my division, and I experienced being a part of exciting initiatives, professional development (both giving and receiving) and many divisional and provincial committees. The pace was fast, but even more importantly, the people I shared these experiences with became great friends.

Although I loved every aspect of teaching, my heart was always in the area of Student Services. I enjoyed learning from the clinical staff, but even more so I enjoyed supporting the students with exceptionalities because they became my best instructors. The biggest lesson I learned from my students was that if you give people what they need, they will always respond positively. Sounds so simple but was profoundly life changing for me.

I would like to thank MASS for supporting me.

BRAD CORBETT

Brad worked as a Director on the Senior Management team within the Winnipeg School Division. He was a MASS member from 2014 – 2020.

GERI HARDER-ROBSON



Gerri has been an HSD employee for 36 years. She joined the Hanover School Division in 1985 as a math and science teacher at Green Valley School. After finishing a post-baccalaureate diploma in inclusive education and counselling, she served as a resource teacher and school counsellor. Gerri was appointed Vice-Principal of GVS in 1995 and transferred to HSD Student Services in 1998, serving as a clinician. In 2009, after graduating with a M.Ed in educational psychology with a focus on the learning disabilities and emotional behaviour disorders, Gerri

accepted the position of Vice-Principal of Student Services, and in 2012 she was promoted to the position of Assistant Superintendent of Student Services.

Over the past 12 years, student advocacy has been the focus of her career. She has managed clinician services to students in schools and advocated for inclusion and appropriate educational programming for those students with differing abilities and those students who experience greater barriers to successful learning outcomes. Throughout her career, Gerri has been a strong advocate for equity of opportunity and access to all aspects of student learning.

MARG JANSSEN

Marg worked as an Assistant Superintendent overseeing the Academic Programs and Instruction for the Frontier School Division. She was a MASS member from 2008 – 2020.

ELAINE LOCHHEAD



The story of Elaine's journey in education began in the rural community of Erickson Manitoba. There, she attended school, grades 1 – 12, graduating and moving to Winnipeg to attend the University of Manitoba. That early chapter set the stage for her love of education and her goal to become a teacher.

Chapter two began in 1980 at the Seine River School Division, a classroom teacher at St. Nobert Collegiate for five years. She always says she learned more than the students she taught in those years, lots to learn in the first few years of teaching! During this time, she completed her studies in special education.

Chapter three was a little longer, thirteen years working as a resource teacher in Seine River. There were five schools – St. Adolphe School, Ste. Anne School, La Broquerie School, Dawson Trail School and Lorette Collegiate Institute. It was a wonderful chapter, lots of great students and families to work with. The administrators and staffs of the buildings were remarkable, always willing to share their knowledge with Elaine. One of the most exciting and rewarding challenges was when the school division chose to 'bring back' the students with exceptional needs from Winnipeg schools. That adventure started in La Broquerie School and continued with work in Lorette. Reflecting on those years (1992 – 2001) and the changes that took place in the division and the schools was truly incredible – inclusion in action!

Chapter four - the administrative journey, vice principal and principal at Ste. Anne Collegiate. Fabulous staff and families, all focused on what was best for our students. It was easy to stay there for nine years.

During this time, she completed her Masters in School Administration. In 2010 the administrative journey led to Senior Admin, Assistant Superintendent at the school board office. Elaine's interest in students with special needs, literacy and early years learning was evident in her work.

In 2007 Elaine was honoured as Teacher of the Year by the Manitoba Council for Exceptional Children and then by Canadian Council for Exceptional Children. The International Council for Exceptional Children honoured Elaine by recognizing her with the Clarissa Hug Teacher of the Year award.

Throughout the chapters of Elaine's 'book' there were many supportive organizations that provided learning and support along the way including: Manitoba Association of School Superintendents (MASS), Manitoba School Board Association (MSBA), Manitoba Association of Resource Teachers (MART), Learning Forward, Manitoba Council for Exceptional Children (MCEC), Student Services Administrators Association of Manitoba (SSAAM) and its regional group SEICA. Seine River School Division has been a wonderful educational home throughout Elaine's career. It was the people in these organizations that influenced and shaped the work Elaine was happy to be part of. Thanks to MASS for the support over the past 11 years.

The 'book' is not complete without personal acknowledgments of her family and their support over the years. Elaine's mom, Viola, once said to her, don't become a teacher, its way too much work! That said, Viola always supported Elaine's career. Elaine's three children (Andrea, Kathryn and Richard) were always there. As Elaine took courses and attended workshops, they became the practice students for Elaine's learning, assessed with every assessment she studied. Car rides often were conversations using strategies and techniques she studied, to the point at the beginning of one conversation, one sibling said to the other two in the back seat "she's been in a new course!" Good news, the four grandchildren have escaped the practice routine!

Retirement will become the next chapter, unknown as to specific content, but no less exciting.

ELAINE McFADZEN



As a member of Manitoba Association of School Superintendents for the past three years and as an educator in the Brandon School Division for the past twenty-two years as a teacher, resource teacher, vice principal, and Assistant Superintendent of Student Achievement Support Services, I have been fortunate to work with many dedicated educators and leaders who have influenced, challenged, and guided me throughout my career. I am truly grateful.

I believe education is one of society's most important responsibilities, therefore, throughout my career, my role has been to ensure that all barriers to learning are removed so that all students have the opportunity to achieve intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth and to find the untapped potential within themselves so that they can be successful learners, life-long learners, and contributing members of society. Children are more than they seem. They are "unfinished", a work in progress, so we must continue to nurture their growth each and every day.

Inclusive education can ensure access to quality education for all students by effectively meeting their diverse needs in a way that is accepting, responsive, respectful and supportive. My work has been to ensure that students are able to participate in the education program in a common learning environment with support to diminish and remove barriers and obstacles that may lead to exclusion. Over the past three years, the highlight of my work has been developing and implementing successful system changes for students. Through system changes such as the equitable allocation of resources, a focus on accessible learning, ensuring consistency in the application of processes and supports, along with the increased opportunity for professional collaboration, our division has been able to better meet the needs of all learners. Inclusiveness needs to continue to be a focus for all schools as we must always presume competence and believe that ALL children can learn.

When I think about retirement, I think about the saying "Life is a journey." As divisional leaders we certainly have been on quite the

journey over the past year with the COVID-19 pandemic and the K-12 Education Review. However, I believe that the experiences we have as we travel through our days are what give our lives richness, meaning and purpose. As we reach certain "markers" in life, it allows us to reflect on the path travelled and to think about what lies ahead or to consider what more there is in life that could be experienced. To my fellow retirees, enjoy this next leg of your journey, cherish every moment, and have fun! To my colleagues who have many challenges ahead of them with the educational reform, remember the words of Robert H. Schuller, "Tough times never last, but tough people do." I wish you the very best as you continue down this path. Continue to stay strong together.

IRENE NORDHEIM

At the time of her retirement, Irene worked with the Senior Management Team at Louis Riel School Division as an Assistant Superintendent. She was a MASS member from 2015 – 2020.

HENRI PÉLOQUIN



For some people, the path to becoming a teacher was a short one, but for me, the decision to join the profession came later in life.

The calling came in 1985, after spending a year in Marseille, France, as a Moniteur de Langues during my undergraduate degree at Brandon University. This opportunity to work with middle school students in a large urban centre in an impoverished arrondissement of Marseille changed the direction of my life.

I returned to Canada, completed my degree, and moved on to l'Université de Saint-Boniface, where I completed my Bachelor of Education degree. I have spent the past 31 years in the service of students in both St. Boniface and Louis Riel School Divisions.

I have spent most of those years as a teacher and administrator in French Immersion (FI). I am immensely proud of the quality and breadth

of the FI program that existed in the former St. Boniface and St. Vital School Divisions before their amalgamation in 2003. The merger resulted in the creation of the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD), where the FI program continued to develop and expand. Throughout my career, I have had the privilege of working with many dedicated educational leaders. Like many of them, I have also seen several unexpected opportunities come my way over the course of my career.

In 2013, I accepted the role of principal of J.H. Bruns Collegiate, which meant moving to an English-only environment. I thoroughly enjoyed the five years I spent with the students and staff at J.H. Bruns while also gaining insight and experience in the English school system. While the transition from a fully FI environment to an English one was a bit of an adjustment, my most significant career shift was still to come.

In December 2017, Assistant Superintendent Michalik asked me if I would consider becoming the Acting Assistant Superintendent of French Immersion as he was about to become the Acting Superintendent of LRSD. I was honoured and said yes without hesitation. In January 2018, I officially became a MASS member and have greatly enjoyed my three and a half years as a member of this incredible team of dedicated educational leaders.

I am so impressed with the leadership and commitment of the people in the MASS organization. No one in 2018 could have imagined that in the next couple of years, we'd collectively have to navigate a pandemic, school closures, remote learning, and the piece de resistance, the complete upheaval of the education system in Manitoba. Did I mention this all occurred during my short time as a divisional leader?

Through it all, I have witnessed a team of committed and visionary leaders work tirelessly to benefit all learners and all employees under their charge. I couldn't possibly be prouder than when a student, staff, parent or community member sends us a note expressing their thanks for our division's work to ensure their safety, continued learning, and well-being.

I thank you all for welcoming me into this elite group, and I wish you all the best as you continue to ensure quality education for Manitoba's children.

MARY-ANNE PLOSHYNSKY



My career as a teacher began when I was in grade 1. I remember not fully understanding the lesson because English was not my primary language, and I remember the day I learned to read. I remember kindness and the joy of learning. I wanted to be just like my grade 1 teacher. At the end of the school day I would get off the school bus and run down our rural lane to set up my classroom in an empty grain bin. I would coerce my younger brother and sister to "play school" with me. When they didn't return from recess, I would place

stuffed animals or dolls on the chairs and practice drawing stars and making big checkmarks with red pen on home-made worksheets. On weekends, I would watch my Aunt Marion who was a teacher mark papers, or I would help her color a picture for her lesson the following week. From age 6 to the present, I feel I won the lottery with the teachers in my life. May my reflection be a tribute to my colleagues, and for those in the education profession who nurture and make a difference in the lives of our youth. Take care of yourselves during this challenging time as you continue to navigate the pandemic and the K to 12 review.

My teaching career started 36 years ago at Ebb and Flow School in Frontier School Division. This was a good place to start. We were a young vibrant staff, we laughed a lot, we supported each other, and we took many trips to the Eddystone General Store to buy treats for our students for the next school day. As I started my teaching career, I was mentored by a classroom management consultant, and a curriculum consultant. This first experience provided a solid foundation throughout my career as a Classroom Teacher, Resource Teacher, Guidance Counsellor, Acting Principal, Student Services Coordinator, Provincial Education Consultant and Superintendent. As my career progressed, I worked in Birdtail River School Division, and Pelly Trail School Division which became Park West School Division through amalgamation. The last 6 years of my career have been in Rolling River School Division.

The years have gone quickly. I feel blessed for my many experiences. I'm appreciative of the many students who re-oriented me through

daily experiences and fueled my need to understand and learn more. This led to my pursuing a masters program in Special Education and Administration. As it turns out, these were the students who also taught me how to teach.

I'm grateful for the collection of shared experiences with colleagues. They include planning PD into the late hours, passionate conversations, and much laughter. I have worked with so many dedicated people who give it their all to ensure our schools run smoothly, and help our young people achieve their potential.

Thank-you to my husband Bob and my 3 children Bailee, Zach and Jake for your understanding and patience on the many nights I worked late. Thank-you to my Mom for the many pots of homemade soup and buns to support our busy lives. In my retirement, I'm looking forward to spending more time with my family and enjoying the simple pleasures in life such as long walks, playing with a puppy, gardening, reading, and sleeping through a snowstorm.

Thank-you to MASS for your friendship, shared wisdom and guidance to help make my day-to-day work less challenging and arduous.

CHRISTINE RHODES

Chris held the position of Director on the Senior Management team within the Winnipeg School Division. She was a MASS member from 2008 – 2020.

KARIN SEILER

Karin was engaged as Superintendent of Education Services with the Winnipeg School Division. She was a MASS member from 2009 to 2020.

SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES 2019-2020

20 YEARS

Ted Fransen
Roza Gray

15 YEARS

Celia Caetano-Gomes

10 YEARS

Angela Bartlett
Krista Curry
René Déquier
Jane Friesen
Elaine Lochhead
Michele Polinuk
Jason Young

5 YEARS

Karen Boyd
Mathew Gustafson
Scott Hill
Darren Kinden
Irene Nordheim
Mary-Anne Ploshynsky
Cathy Tymko
Mike Wake
Dan Ward

Special Note: Robert Chartrand should have been acknowledged for 15 years as a MASS member in the previous year. We apologize for this oversight!

SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES 2020-2021

15 YEARS

Lisa Aitken
Mike Borgfjord
Christian Michalik
Stephen Ross
Bev Szymesko

10 YEARS

Colleen Clearsky
Jason Drysdale
Lorie Henderson
Leanne Peters
Geri Harder Robson
Ron Sugden

5 YEARS

Eric Barnaby (Associate)
Todd Cuddington
Krista Reynolds
Jonathan Toews
Grant Weisner
Jon Zilkey



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