



January/February 2018

PEOPLE CAPACITY FOCUS

Strategic Focus

GSSD is a community of learners and believes collaborative partnerships with students, staff, families and community members will enhance educational opportunities.

Long-term Goal

- By June 2020, GSSD will demonstrate improvement in student learning and well-being through the training and development of our staff.
- By June 2020, GSSD will demonstrate improvement in student learning and well-being through the establishment of new and reaffirmed partnerships.
- By June 2020, GSSD will demonstrate improvement in staff safety and well-being through on-going training and development.

IN-SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

There are many ways that school divisions attempt to improve the learning success of its students. Improvements in curriculum, instruction, assessment, parental and community engagement, technology, governance, and many other kinds of initiatives are launched with the intention of enhancing students' learning experiences and success. Leadership offers a potentially powerful way of influencing students' learning success. As a result, GSSD spends a great deal of time working with school based leadership to provide learning

opportunities and to share effective educational practice. During the 2017-18 school year, administrators gathered together five times to reflect on topics that will enhance their situational awareness, their ability to lead the instructional program at their individual schools, and their ability to develop the people within their buildings. GSSD is very fortunate to have exceptional leaders working with staff and students in each school facility!





DISTRIBUTED LEARNING TEACHER COLLABORATION

On January 9th teachers from across Good Spirit School Division who deliver online courses through Distributed Learning, gathered to assist in setting direction for the 2018-19 school year. These teachers discussed the current course offerings available to Good Spirit students as well as their vision for new course development. The Distributed Learning teachers also collaborated on how to improve student communication, how to incorporate best practices for online learning, use of various applications associated with Moodle (web-based platform) for course development as well as assessment practices being utilized.



Good Spirit has seen tremendous growth over the past several years with the number of students accessing Distributed Learning courses. As a result, the number of teachers developing and teaching courses has increased, with teaching staff representing nine different schools from across the division. GSSD is looking forward to developing more electives to complement the 35 different courses which are currently being offered. The 2018-19 school year will ultimately see several of these new courses made available to all GSSD high school and home-based education students.

STUDENT & FAMILY



BOARD OF EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

During the Board Evaluation Process at the end of the 2016-17 school year, the Board of Education made the determination that they would like to target board development as an area of focus moving forward. As a result, board development has been incorporated into their Annual Work Plan (Policy 2 - Appendix A). GSSD Senior Administration have been directed to provide high-level overviews of topics relevant to the operation of the school division.

The board development topics covered to date have included:

- Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System;
- <u>Understanding Financial Statements and the Auditor's Report;</u>
- <u>Understanding Comprehensive School Community Health</u>; and
- <u>Understanding the Education Act</u>.

As noted in Policy 2—Appendix A, the board will receive development in the following areas this year:

- Understanding the differences between Provincial and Federal students;
- Understanding the Early Years Evaluation;
- Understanding the Duty to Accommodate;
- Understanding Graduation Requirements; and,
- Understanding Strategic Planning.

Good Spirit is led by Trustees who support and maintain a focus on student achievement and well-being, our strategic plan, and also serve as role models for our education system and communities.



Superintendents Mark Forsythe, Alisa Leidl and Lisa Wotherspoon attended the University of Regina and University of Saskatchewan career fairs



Leslea Hanson from Preeceville School

> Charlotte Raine, Literacy Coordinator, presenting at the Literacy Lead day

Math Support Day—Teachers making connections between Instrumental and Relational





Mental Health First Aid Training by Britton Houdek from Saskatchewan Health Authority

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JANUARY 31 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING DAY

January 31st brought to life the Good Spirit School Division's vision of *Learning Without Limits...Achievement For All* with a day of professional learning for many staff members.

The Literacy team hosted Pearson consultant, Moyra Bartlett who provided PD around working with struggling readers using some of the key resources that Student Support Teachers and Levelled Literacy Interventionists already have at their fingertips. Over fifty participants were provided with much inspiration and a reminder that it is the "Responsive Teaching Cycle" and explicit instruction based on assessment that really makes a difference for struggling readers.



The expanded Literacy Continuum was given to each school prior to the workshop on the 31st and was the backbone of the day. Moyra tailored the workshop to the needs of our division by linking the Fountas & Pinnell assessment to instructional goals and teaching. She used the "Responsive Teaching Cycle" to help participants see how the assessment can be used to determine teaching goals for students.



Prekindergarten and Kindergarten teachers along with Educational Assistants also experienced an engaging day of professional development participating in the SPDU workshop *Connecting Curriculum to Play*. Facilitators Chris Danyluk and Connie Molnar led participants through a variety of planning templates to connect children's interests with the curriculum and the holistic development of children. They had teachers explore inquiry and project-based learning, gain ideas on how to create a learning environment, use technology to

document learning, support conversations and questioning with children, and learn about honouring students home, family, culture and community. Not only did participants gain a wealth of ideas and knowledge, they also had a chance to build a learning network of support with their colleagues throughout the division.





Over 130 Educational Assistants (EAs) participated in one of two modules that were presented by the Saskatchewan Education and Learning Unit (SELU). Module 3: Academic Supports for Learners was facilitated by Louise Phaneuf and provided an opportunity for EAs to develop an understanding of supporting students as independent learners as well as an understanding of explicit instruction to build automatic and reasoning skills. Module 4: Behavioural Supports for Learners was facilitated by Linda Stanviloff and provided an opportunity to develop an understanding of students' emotional and behavioral development within the classroom and school community.

The Saskatchewan Safety Council conducted a School Bus Defensive Driving Course to GSSDs regular bus drivers and interested substitute bus drivers. The topics covered during this course included the five elements of defensive driving, the five factors to avoid in order to have a "safe trip", eye lead time, clues for detecting unsafe conditions, six categories of driving conditions, collision avoidance, head on collisions and what to do to avoid them, as well as emergency driving techniques. The Transportation Department has received positive feedback from the drivers who attended the course.





GOOD SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

PD Event	Date	Topic / Outcome
GSSD Distributed Learning Staff Meeting	Jan. 9, 2018	A meeting for all Distributed learning teachers to engage with each other on distributed learning curriculum and materials.
Math Support Session	Jan. 19, 2018	Pilot teachers from schools in Canora, Yorkton, and Stockholm joined up for the day for a math support session which centered on the Mathology Activity Kit and Little Books with a small focus on the Learning Progression.
Level 4 Library Cataloguer's Working Group PD	Jan. 19, 2018	This in-service was for members of the library cataloguing working group.
EAL Work Day	Jan. 25, 2018	A pilot group has received funding through the Ministry to create a handbook for classroom teachers with EAL students.
Mental Health First Aid Training	Jan. 29 & 30, 2018	 This training, provided by the Saskatchewan Health Authority, involves two 8 hr days on mental health first aid. This training teaches participants how to: Engage confidently where a person may be a danger to themselves or others. Provides help to prevent the mental health problem from developing into a more serious state. Promotes the recovery of good mental health. Provides comfort to a person experiencing a mental health problem.
Connecting Curriculum to Play- Based Projects in Kindergarten	Jan. 31, 2018	Participants had the opportunity to network with other educators and engage in activities to deepen understanding of the Kindergarten curriculum and Children First: A Resource for Kindergarten.
When Readers Struggle	Jan. 31, 2018	Participants learned how to observe and analyze critical behaviours that prevent struggling readers from initiating successful problem—solving strategies. Teachers learned how to plan for intervention to assure and support reading success.
Academic Supports for Learners	Jan. 31, 2018	This module provided an opportunity to develop an understanding of supporting students as independent learners and an understanding of explicit instruction to build automatic and reasoning skills.
Behavioural Supports for Learning	Jan. 31, 2018	This presentation provided an opportunity to develop an understanding of students' emotional and behavioral development within the classroom and school community.
Literacy Lead Teacher PD Day	Feb. 15, 2018	Literacy Lead Teachers were invited to attend a professional development day on a variety of literacy topics.
Mental Health First Aid Training	Feb. 27 & 28, 2018	Description listed above
SPDU Workshop – Supporting EAL Teachers	Feb. 28, 2018	In this workshop, teachers explored a variety of instructional and assessment strategies that support EAL students in their language acquisition as they are engaged in meaningful learning tasks with their peers.

EXPERIENCE THAT TEACHERS SHOULD CONSIDER

Kendra Helfrich, who is a teacher at Yorkdale Central School, submitted an article in the Saskatchewan Bulletin highlighting her experience with Project Overseas in Guyana. To read about Kendra's amazing experience, go to page 5 in the <u>Saskatchewan Bulletin</u>.



Interacting with teacher colleagues in Guyana was different and yet sin to the education setting at home in Canada.

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Strategic Plan Report



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Strategic Focus

GSSD believes that we are all accountable. Board members, students, staff, families and community members have a responsibility, both individually and as part of the learning team, to participate and to contribute positively to public education.

Long-term Goals

• By June 2020, GSSD will implement systemic approaches to find efficiencies and increase value for money allowing the division to respond to the challenges of student and staff needs.



STAFFING PROCESS

A Budget Development Process For Central Office & Professional School-Based Staff flowchart was developed to assist with the 2018-19 staffing process.

The first step in the process is to determine the projected enrollment. This information serves two purposes. First, the Ministry of Education requires school divisions to submit enrolment projections for use in their budget development process for 2018-19. Secondly, Good Spirit School Division Senior Administration uses the projected enrollments and forecasted budget projections to establish the pupil to teacher ratio (PTR) formula. The enrollment is determined by using straight-line enrollment numbers, projected enrollments from Baragar Systems Demographic Dynamics, and local knowledge collected from In-School Administrators.

During February and March, Education Council will consider professional staff transfer requests, retirement notifications, and leave requests when trying to meet the PTR targets.

The provincial budget will be announced on April 10th. Following the announcement, GSSD Senior Administration will review the PTR formula and begin working towards the final staffing allocations.

MID-SCHOOL YEAR FUNDING

Mid-school year funding has been provided to school divisions to assist in dealing with front line pressures. The Good Spirit School Division is pleased to receive a net increase of \$209,276 for this year. The funding will provide Good Spirit with the opportunity to provide additional 5.42 FTE professional staff in schools with multi-grade classroom configurations, Kindergarten to Grade 12 schools, small high schools and PTR outliers. Also, additional math and literacy resources will be purchased. For more information, you may review the media release posted on the GSSD website.



STUDENT AND FAMILY FOCUS

Strategic Focus

GSSD exists to provide the highest level of student learning & well-being. All students will experience learning environments rich in the opportunities and experiences necessary to promote intellectual, emotional and spiritual growth. Long-term Goals

- By June 2020, GSSD will reduce the number of students reporting anxiety by 10%.
- By June 2020, GSSD will reduce the number of students reporting depression by 10%.
- By June 2020, at least 85% of GSSD students will be at grade level in reading.
- By June 2020, at least 80% of GSSD students will be at grade level in writing.
- By June 2020, at least 80% of GSSD students will be at grade level in math.
- By June 2020, at least 90% of students exiting Kindergarten in GSSD will be ready for learning.
- By June 2020, GSSD will achieve an 85% three-year graduation rate.
- By June 2020, GSSD will achieve a 90% five-year graduation rate.

READING DATA ON TARGET

The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (F&P BAS) was administered to 406 Grade 1 students from January 15th to February 5th with results indicating that 70% of grade one students are currently reading at grade level according to the Winter gradient. This is up slightly from January 2016.

Overall, 72% of grade 1-6 students are currently reading at or above grade level in the Good Spirit School Division positioning us to meet our year-end target of 83% of GSSD students reading at or above grade level by June 2018.





SIGMUND BROUWER BRINGS HIS STORIES TO GOOD SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION



Sigmund Brouwer is the author of 20 novels for adults, and dozens of books for children. He visits over 150 schools per year to deliver his Rock and Roll Literacy presentation, reaching about 60,000 students per year. His recent novel, Thief of Glory was the Alberta Readers Choice Award winner, and his Young Adult novel, Deadman's Switch was an Arthur Ellis best juvenile mystery in Canada. He has also twice been a finalist in the TD Children's Literature Awards.

On January 9th, 10th and 11th, despite the terrible road conditions, Sigmund travelled to a number of schools within the Good Spirit School Division to deliver his captivating "Rock and Roll Literacy" presentation. He began the presentation by comparing great stories to great music in that they grab listeners' attention and feelings. Brouwer believes that "human beings connect through story", whether it be the everyday stories we tell each other or the stories we tell designed to entertain or evoke emotions and reactions. He wants kids to think of books as portals to great stories, not dusty pages that feel like chores to read. Brouwer wants kids to discover the thrill of reading and writing. He told students that books are boring, but stories are exciting.

Following the whole school presentations, Sigmund visited a number of grade 3 & 4 classrooms who have been participating in his Story Ninja program. Each participating classroom received a complimentary Story Ninja folder for each student containing writing tips, and is designed to house their writing projects. Sigmund also includes a free copy of a chapter book called Bird Nerd that students use in class. The program includes 21 "Story Ninja Moves", which are lessons that combine information and videos from Sigmund to give students tips on story structure, how to hook your reading audience as well as writing mechanics and conventions. These videos help students add colour and depth to their stories. Sigmund visits his Story Ninjas via 'Zoom' interactive video forum, where students can speak to him and ask live questions. The students are more than enthusiastic about this opportunity to work with a 'real' author!"





Many GSSD staff members shared that Sigmund's presentation was enjoyed by students and staff alike. He managed to engage the students from the minute they walked into the gymnasium and maintained their attention until he led them out of the gym with music blaring. Teachers reported that Sigmund's books have been flying off the library shelves.



#DRBLOVEYOURSELF DAY

On February 14th, Dr. Brass School hosted their first #DRBLoveyourself day. The goal of this day was to support the students and staff in learning about Mental Wellness and taking care of themselves to reach their goals.

All students from Kindergarten to Grade 8 rotated through breakout sessions in the morning. The community partners who presented on different topics included:

- Deb Bulitz, Good Spirit School Division Educational Psychologist—"Self-Esteem and Building Assets"
- Saskatchewan Health Authority -Mental Health—"Anxiety" and "Feelings and Body Clues"
- Kidsfirst—"The Curious Brain"
- SIGN—Life Skills "Resiliency"
- Gambling Awareness Program—"Anxiety and Gaming"
- Shelwin House—"Self-Esteem"

Two key note speakers were in attendance in the afternoon. Cory O'Soup, Saskatchewan Children's Advocate, spoke to the students about taking care of themselves and the importance of this for our youth. Kendal Netmaker,



Founder of Neechy Gear, spoke to the students about working hard for their dreams.

This is just one of the ways Dr. Brass School is supporting their students mental wellness. Each month, Dr. Brass targets a skill which will support mental wellness and assist their students in understanding and developing this skill. For example, December's skill was Breathing and Mindfulness, January was Helpful Positive Thoughts and February's skill is Understanding Our Feelings. We have engaged in many partnerships with community agencies-Saskatchewan Health Authority and the FRIENDS program, Shelwin House Outreach classroom education and after school program. As well, some of their staff have been trained in Mental Health First Aid. The school counselling program at Dr. Brass is active in supporting students with individual work as well as group work and classroom programming.

The staff of Dr. Brass School and the Good Spirit School Division would like to thank the Painted Hand Casino Community Development Corporation for their generous grant to support this day and Stefanie Davis, from CTV News, who did a great job covering this event! Click <u>here</u> to view the news report.

YORKTON REGIONAL NAMED JOSTENS 2017 NATIONAL YEARBOOK PROGRAM OF EXCELLENCE



The National Yearbook Program of Excellence recognizes engaging yearbooks that reflect a broad representation of the student body while helping students develop 21st century skills such as communication, collaboration, and information and communication technologies literacy.

The Yorkton Regional High School's yearbook program has been named a 2017 Jostens' National Yearbook Program of Excellence. They received a plaque and a banner to display in their school.

Yearbook Advisor, Miss Kreklewich, stated that "The students are continuously working throughout the school year, and into the

summer months, in order to produce a high-quality yearbook." "One of the best days of the entire school year is when the yearbooks come in! There is no better feeling than to see students' and staff eyes light up as they look at our work, and reflect on the past school year. Our goal is to highlight and acknowledge as many people as possible, so that every Raider will treasure their yearbook for many years to come."

Congratulations to Miss Kreklewich and the 2016-17 yearbook committee on this outstanding achievement!

DAVISON SCHOOL ACTIVITY BASED CLUBS

Davison School staff continue to focus not only on academics, but strive to create a sense of belonging and community among their students and families. They offer a number of clubs and activities for their Kindergarten to Grade 6 students to take part in during the noon hour and after school. The clubs range from activity based to clubs that center on discussions on various topics applicable to the age group involved.

Activity based clubs including Writers' Club, Choir Club, SRC, Rising Stars Reading Club, Battle of the Books, Cooking Club, Arts & Crafts, Cross-Country, Basketball, Mini-Volleyball, Badminton, Spartan Club, Yoga, and more, are offered throughout the school year.

The Girl Power Club is open to girls in grades 5 & 6 to discuss age relevant topics to strengthen the girls' self-esteem and confidence as well as empowering them to become healthy young adults in mind, body and spirit. The Lunch Bunch Club creates a positive environment to discuss issues relating to anxiety, making friends and empowering the students with a sense of belonging. Lunch Bunch is separated into a grade 1-



3 group and a grade 4-6 group of students.

The sense of belonging is further enhanced at their monthly family pep rallies where the students are cross graded and take part in activities that encourage interaction between all age groups from Pre-K to grade 6.



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SALTCOATS SCHOOL HOSTS DEBATE TOURNAMENT

On February 3, Saltcoats School hosted a Debate Tournament. They hosted 34 students, along with judges, timekeepers, coaches, and a Saskatchewan Elocution and Debate Association (SEDA) representative for the tournament. Beginner (grade 5/6) and Intermediate (grade 7/8) debaters participated in three separate impromptu debates during the day. During an impromptu debate, students are presented with the topic, or resolution, 30 minutes before the start of the debate.

Saltcoats School started their Debate Club in 2016 when they heard about another school joining SEDA. Their knowledge



about debate was minimal, but they foresaw the benefits to the students, and decided to start up their own club. The academic growth that they have seen in their students makes debate a valuable organization at their school.



When students prepare for a debate tournament, they examine moral and social issues, and then prepare arguments on both sides of the topic. By doing this, students evaluate the content of media, develop a deeper understanding of topics through inquiry, collaborate with their debate partner, and in extension, the club, organizes a multitude of ideas into the proper technical format. Furthermore, during a debate, students have the opportunity to work on public speaking skills while analyzing the arguments of the competing team and revise their positions to form an even deeper understanding of the topic.

GRAYSON SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL FUNDRAISER—A HUGE SUCCESS!

The Grayson School Community Council held a fundraiser gala in an effort to support the school's outdoor area improvement plans, an effort that consists of three phases (garden spaces, play structure and outdoor learning space). The evening involved a dinner that was prepared and served with the help of SCC, staff, parent volunteers and senior students. Entertainment highlighted the community's rich heritage in music, including a tribute show hosted by Neil Ottenbreit and Paul Kuntz and an evening of polka dancing accompanied by "Country Sunshine".

The evening was a success with about \$16,000 raised to support phase two of an outdoor improvement plan.





INTERNAL PROCESS FOCUS

Strategic Focus

GSSD is committed to providing equitable, balanced opportunities among schools, students, and staff. Long-term Goals

• By June 2020, GSSD will demonstrate improvement in services to students and staff through the development and revision of processes and administrative procedures.

SCHOOL BUS CANCELLATIONS

During the month of January, locations across the Good Spirit School Division experienced unusual weather resulting in hazardous road conditions. Freezing rain followed by extreme cold resulted in treacherous conditions on many rural grid roads. For the first time in the history of GSSD, bus routes were cancelled for three (3) consecutive days as a means to ensure student safety.

GSSD has developed a policy identifying that routes may be cancelled for the following reasons:

- **Mechanical issues** often discovered when a driver performs a circle check before the AM route. If there are any defects on the bus as outlined by SGI the bus cannot be used. If a spare bus cannot be provided in time to operate the route it will be cancelled.
- No Spare Drivers regular drivers may have medical or personal reasons that they require time away from the route, in some cases a spare driver cannot be found to operate the route.
- **Weather** in cases where the whole division is experiencing poor or deteriorating weather the Director of Education may cancel routes division wide.
- The division covers a large geographic area weather conditions can vary greatly within our division boundaries. In this case, drivers have to decide on their own or as a local group if weather conditions present a significant risk in the safe transportation of our Students to and from school, if so the route(s) are cancelled. AP 550 indicates temperature thresholds that buses should not run at, -40 Celsius or -45 wind chill.
- Illness in the event that a driver wakes up sick in the AM and there is not time for a spare driver to be arranged the route will be cancelled.

Upon the determination that a route is being cancelled, GSSD families can expect that our Division bus drivers will:

- Contact the families on his/her route with the cancellation information. This can be done by voice call, texting or with the automated messaging system Synernvoice.
- Contact the Transportation Manager who will update the website and social media with cancellation information
- Contact GX 94 radio with cancellation information
- Contact the school(s) that they students attend with the cancellation information.

All bus cancellations are tracked, with the data being reported to the Board of Education quarterly throughout the year.



VISIT WITH MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OFFICIALS

The Good Spirit Administrative Council had the opportunity to collaborate with Ministry of Education officials on February 14. Members of the Deputy Ministers Office engaged in conversation with school division leadership around the educational priorities of the Ministry and the GSSD<u>Strategic</u><u>Plan</u>.

Director Robertson and the GSSD Team shared the progress made in achieving the targets of the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP). Likewise, the corrective action plans which GSSD has implemented ensuring we achieve the 2020 goals of the Ministry were shared.



STUDENT & FAMILY Lois Smandych, Board Chair

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIF

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Students Come First Building Strong Foundations to Create Bright Futures Belonging, Respect, Responsibility, Learning, Nurturing, and Perseverance Learning Without Limits...Achievement For All

Strategic Plan Report

in the summer of 2016.

Photo above:

Deputy Director Donna Kriger, Director

Smandych and Administrator of LCS Mick

Langenburg Central School grand opening

Our Motto

Our Mission

Our Values Our Vision

Quintin Robertson, Board Chair Lois

Parmar take in the celebrations of the

Focus

motto "Students Come First".

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GSSD FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS

Lois credits success to being able to adapt to change - "To say the least, the last few years have been a challenge with reduced budgets. One of the secrets of success is being able to turn challenges into opportunities. We must always remember to celebrate our many accomplishments." If you ask anyone, they will tell you that Lois enjoys her time as a trustee and she loves being connected to the

communities who vote the board in—parents and taxpayers.



Photo above: (current Board of Education) Back left to right: Jade Anderson, Shannon Leson, Steve Variyan, Jaime Anderson, Gilda Dokuchie, Chris Balyski Front left to right: Robert Simpson, Lois Smanduch, Florence Stachura

Photo above: Lois MCing the 10th Staff Appreciation Awards Banquet

Photo above:

Photo above:

Lois signing the Ensuring that the Board engages in regular assessments of its effectiveness as a Board. Community Threat Assessment and Support

Lois was elected a School Board Trustee in the fall of 2000—beginning with the

In 2006, following the amalgamation of four school divisions, school board members worked together with staff and central office administration to establish a division capable of "Building Strong Foundations to Create Bright

Yorkdale School Division. In 2004 Yorkdale and Yorkton School Divisions joined to become York School Division. During the years from 2000-2005, Lois had the the eastern part of Saskatchewan.

Futures"- the Good Spirit School Division. Lois truly believes Good Spirit has lived up to its

Lois plays a key role in the school division, as Board Chair some of her duties include: Presiding over all board meetings and ensuring that meetings are conducted in

Bringing to the Board all matters requiring a corporate decision of the Board.

accordance with the Education Act and Board policies and procedures. Keeping informed of significant developments within the Division.

the 27 schools in our division, volunteering in Palliative/Pastoral Care at in on ... the Yorkton Regional Hospital, or at Central Office in her role as Board Chair of the Good Spirit School Division.

Lois has always had a passion for education; having been a librarian for 20 years, literacy has a special place in her heart.

privilege of serving on the Provincial School Board Association (SSBA), representing

Chances are you have seen Lois Smandych before, either visiting one of

GOOD SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION BOARD OF EDUCATION CHAIRPERSON



