

# STUDENT SERVICES ADMINISTRATORS' ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA



## SSAAM Continues its Focus on Mental Health

It is hard to think of a time when student and staff mental health has been more important. Individual schools, students and staff face difficult issues every year, but this year the concerns are pervasive across all schools and communities. SSAAM has always recognized that students and staff need to feel safe, respected and valued in order to learn and has built these values into their belief statements and Strategic Plan.

Last year the SSAAM conference focused on well-being and well becoming with the purpose of providing students with supports and skills that build resilience. Dr. Patrick Carney spoke on his "Well-Aware" Model which included developing and maintaining resilience as a lifelong process.

SSAAM is continuing the theme this year by providing three on-line sessions featuring Dr. Michael Ungar. Michael Ungar is the Canada Research Chair in Child, Family and Community Resilience and Professor of Social Work at Dalhousie University. He is also a practicing family therapist, the founder and Director of the Resilience Research Centre, and consults and trains with the World Bank, UNESCO, and the Red Cross.

Dr. Ungar believes that resilience lies in the people and the support systems around us, as opposed to the more common western cultural definition of resilience, where resilience is seen as an individual concept initiated and sustained by each person. He believes that people build resilience through their social-ecological network and that when families, work places, communities and governments provide the needed resources, individuals have the tools and emotional support to be resilient.

*"In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways."*

*Dr. Michael Ungar*

Dr. Ungar's most recent publication on this topic is:

Ungar, M. (2019). Change Your World: The Science of Resilience and the True Path to Success. Toronto, ON: Sutherland House. [ISBN 978-1-9994395-2-1](#)

For more information on these three on-line sessions go to:

<https://ssaam.mb.ca/uploads/annualconference-2020.pdf>

## IMPORTANT DATES

### SSAAM PD

On-line Sessions  
...November 26,  
2020  
...January 11, 2021  
...March 1, 2021

### SSAAM AGM

Portage la Prairie  
April 29 & 30, 2021  
(tentative)

### Fall Conference

December 1, 2, 3,  
2021 in Brandon

For current  
information on all  
the work of SSAAM  
check the web site  
at  
[www.ssaam.mb.ca](http://www.ssaam.mb.ca)



## Message from the President

What profound and rapid change we have been witness to in the year 2020. At the beginning of the year, the Manitoba Government's K-12 Education review was forefront in everyone's mind. Then, on March 13<sup>th</sup>, everything changed. As COVID-19 spread across the world, Manitoba went into lockdown and remote learning became a reality.

As president of provincial SSAAM, I acknowledge the bravery of our fellow educators as they "show up every day in a place where they cannot predict the outcome" (Carrington, 2019). As the pandemic continues to push us into separation and threatens our instinct of togetherness (Neufeld, 2020), there is evidence everyday of teachers staying connected and engaged with their students.

Despite challenges that are unprecedented in our lifetime, our purpose, privilege, and responsibility as educators remains the same. Parents entrust their children to us. Whether in our presence or remotely, we must help children grow, and learn, and be kept safe.

During these difficult times, SSAAM's mission remains the same. We are "committed to providing provincial leadership and informed advocacy to support appropriate educational programming for all students". As per our strategic plan, SSAAM will continue to offer professional learning opportunities, explore evidence-based practices, and build partnerships with provincial organizations.

Keep connected safely. We are better together.

Kendra Gowler

Carrington, J. (2019). *Kids these days*. Friesen Press.

Neufeld, G. (2020, April 16). *Parenting through the pandemic – Dr. Gordon Neufeld*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNnXutm7p4g>.

## SSAAM Executive

2020-2021

President: Kendra Gowler,  
Pembina Trails

First Vice-President: Michelle  
Procter, Interlake

Second Vice President: Larissa  
Thorsteinson, River East Transcona

Immediate Past President:

Louise Duncan, Prairie Rose

Second Past President: Lars  
Feilberg, Sunrise

Secretary: Jeanne Remillard, DSFM

Treasurer: Elaine Lochhead, Seine  
River

Professional Development Co-  
Chairs:

Terri Otto, Lakeshore & Elizabeth  
Bergen, River East Transcona

Public Relations/Communication  
Chairperson: Brenda Hill-  
Yaschyshyn, River East Transcona

### REGIONAL REPS:

SEICA- Lars Feilberg, Sunrise

Northern – Cindy Allum-Searle,  
Frontier

DSFM – Jeanne Remillard, DSFM

Metro – Lindsay Lawrence, RETSD

South Central – Rochelle Rands,  
Portage la Prairie

Parkland Westman – Bonnie  
Kiliwnik

For contact information, please visit  
our web site.



## Covid-19 Information from Manitoba Education

One of the concerns that we are all dealing with is how to access valid, reliable information on Covid-19 and the protocols that affect our students, staff, parents and school communities. Sometimes there is just too much information and how to filter the information and keep it current is a challenge. One of the suggestions that emerged early in the pandemic was to pick one or two reliable sources of information and use that as the foundation of our thinking and communications.

Manitoba Education has provided school divisions with valuable information on aspects of Covid-19 related to education. The following links have been provided and include information that pertains to Student Services.

**These links are updated regularly and contain the most current information for educators.**

### **A broad scope of Covid-19 information for educators:**

Latest COVID-19 Education News

<https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/latest.html>

### **Links specifically related to students with special needs:**

- Welcoming Our Students Back: Supporting Students with Special Needs and Students at Risk as They Return to School  
[https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/welcome\\_back\\_special.pdf](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/welcome_back_special.pdf)
- Resources Supporting Students with Special Needs  
<https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/support/rsssn.html>

### **Guidelines on Supporting Students Who Require Interventions or Supports that Cannot be Delivered from a Distance:**

[https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/reopening/supports\\_non\\_distance.html](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/reopening/supports_non_distance.html)

### **Public Health advice and in response to issues raised by school divisions:**

Guidance for Mask Use in Schools

[https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/mask\\_guidance.pdf](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/mask_guidance.pdf)

### **“Circulars” distributed periodically that provide updates related to work being done in support of schools:**

<https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/schools/index.html>

### **Manitoba Education Standards for Remote Learning:**

[https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/remote\\_learn\\_standards.pdf](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/remote_learn_standards.pdf)

The following are links related to the re-opening of schools in September 2020:

<https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/reopening/index.html>

[HTTPS://WWW.EDU.GOV.MB.CA/K12/COVID/INDEX.HTML](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index.html)

**Restoring Safe Schools: August 24 - School Settings Practice Guidance and Protocols** <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/restoring/rss-practice-guidance.html>

Please check out our website at [www.ssaam.mb.ca](http://www.ssaam.mb.ca). It is best viewed in the Chrome browser. If you are a member and do not have your member login information, please go to [https://ssaam.mb.ca/forgot\\_password.php](https://ssaam.mb.ca/forgot_password.php) and enter in your email address.



## SSAAM Strategic Plan 2017-2022

Due to the many demands on Students Services Administrators, SSAAM has chosen to pause work on the Strategic Plan for the 2020-2021 school year.

SSAAM will review the plan in 2021-2022 and bring a new plan to the membership at the AGM.

### Pillars of the Strategic Plan:

Vision – completed and approved at the SSAAM AGM

Professional Development – Continuing with PD through on-line sessions

Collaboration/Partnership- to be reviewed in 2021-2022

Evidence-based Practices – work currently underway with the universities will continue but no new initiatives

## Marilyn Taylor Memorial Scholarship

At the 2019 “Yes I Can” Awards two SSAAM sponsored scholarships were awarded. Marilyn’s family presented two very deserving graduates with scholarships of \$750.00 each.

These two scholarships will continue for the next four years and can be applied for by going to the MCEC web site

<https://community.cec.sped.org/mcec/scholarships>