



EST. 1977

STUDENT SERVICES ADMINISTRATORS' ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA

INCLUSION IN ACTION: STORIES OF SUCCESS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TERESA SANHEIM



Dear Colleagues,

As the warmth of spring begins to return, we are reminded of the power of renewal—of fresh starts, growth, and the energy that longer days and brighter sunshine bring. Just as nature awakens, so too does our collective spirit, fueled by the important work we do in supporting students across Manitoba.

This time of year reflects what we, as student services administrators, do every day. Like the changing season, we help students emerge from challenges, discover new opportunities, and grow into their full potential. The work you do—whether in guidance, mental health support, accessibility services, or beyond—creates the conditions for students to thrive, much like the sun and rain nourish new life.

As we move forward into the final stretch of the academic year, may you find inspiration in the renewal of spring. Let the sunshine remind you of the light you bring to others. Let the blooming season reflect the impact of your efforts. And let the promise of longer days bring you well-deserved moments of rest and rejuvenation.

Thank you for your dedication, your passion, and your unwavering commitment to students. Your work truly makes a difference, and we hope this season brings you as much growth and renewal as you help create for others.

With appreciation,



Teresa Sanheim



You make a difference every day!

March 2025

SSAAM EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT: TERESA SANHEIM,
FORT LA BOSSE SCHOOL DIVISION

VICE PRESIDENT: ALEX PINIUTA,
LOUIS RIEL SCHOOL DIVISION

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT:
JOLENE BROWN, MYSTERY LAKE SCHOOL DIVISION

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT:
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INTERLAKE SCHOOL DIVISION

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TREASURER: ROCHELLE RANDS,
PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE SCHOOL DIVISION

ADVOCACY/PUBLIC POLICY:
JON OLAFSON, WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
TERRI OTTO,
LAKESHORE SCHOOL DIVISION

PUBLIC RELATIONS/COMMUNICATION:
BRENDA HILL-YASCHYSHYN & LISA CLARK,
RIVER EAST TRANSCONA SCHOOL

KELLY RING-WHIKLO, COORDINATOR,
STUDENT SERVICES UNIT
INCLUSION SUPPORT BRANCH

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: ELAINE LOCHHEAD

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

SEICA - ROD KEHLER, HANOVER
NORTHERN - KIMBERLY MERASTY,
FRONTIER SCHOOL DIVISION

DSFM - JESSICA BLAIKIE-BUFFIE, DSFM,
DIVISION SCOLAIRE FRANCO-MANITOBAINE

METRO - KAREN KLASSEN, RIVER EAST TRANSCONA

SOUTH CENTRAL - LESLIE NORRIE, PRAIRIE SPIRIT

WESTMAN PARKLAND - LISA BLIXHAVEN,
TURTLE MOUNTAIN

SSAAM AWARDS

2024

Congratulations To:

Jill King - Certificate of Merit

Cindy Searle - Certificate of Recognition

Joane Derksen - Certificate of Recognition

Brenda Hill-Yaschyshyn - Lifetime Member

Louise Duncan - Lifetime Member



METRO SSAAM

Will be our hosts for the
2025

Hospitality Room and Gala
at Lady of the Lake!



Thank you

Westman/Parkland
SSAAM for hosting the
Hospitality Room and
Gala entertainment at
Lady of the Lake! A great
time was had by all!



SSAAM Spring Conference and AGM

Conference:

Friday, April 25, 2025

Knowledge to Navigate the Human Rights of Our Students

Speakers include representatives from the
Legal Community (Kelsey Yakimoski),
Human Resources (Jen McGowan), Manitoba
Advocate for Children and Youth (MACY)
(Sherry Gotto),
Manitoba Association of School Business
Officials Inc. (MASBO) (Sandra Ferguson, Scott
Godard) and Paul Ilchena), Inclusion Support
Branch (ISB) (Allan Hawkins)

Link to Register:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/ssaam-2025-spring-pd-session-tickets-1267817318729?aff=oddtcreator>

Members: \$150 Non – Members: \$175

Join us for Breakfast and Networking
8:00AM – 8:45AM
Lunch & Breakfast Included!

Annual General Meeting Thursday, April 24, 2025 Canad Inn

Link to Register:

<https://SSAAM2025AGM.eventbrite.ca>

6:30PM – 9:30PM

Join other SSAAM members for an evening of
information
sharing and networking.

No cost with light supper and refreshments
available.



Celebration from Pembina Trails School

Division



Did you get to see **Olivia Steadman** sing the U.S. and Canadian national anthems at the Jets-Seattle game?

If you didn't, you may have read about her incredibly inspiring story in the Free Press or watched clips in social media or saw her inspiring story on the news. If this is all new to you, you should know at that game, 22-year-old Olivia Steadman got to fulfill her dream of singing the national anthem at a Jets game, thanks to the kindness of Jets co-owner Mark Chipman who graciously made Olivia's dream come true; the unending support of Olivia's amazing family; the organizations (like Inclusion Winnipeg and the Movement Centre of Manitoba) that have helped Olivia and her family on their difficult journey; and the many teachers, EAs, counsellors and other supports in Pembina Trails who have nurtured Olivia's love of singing for most of her young life. Olivia's entire education has been at Pembina Trails, having attended Whyte Ridge, HGI and Vincent Massey.

Olivia is blind from birth and has other serious challenges in her life because of suffering a stroke in her mother's womb.

But last Thursday, none of that mattered. Her singing voice brought down the house. Olivia sang both anthems with confidence and a tonal quality that brought people to their feet and tears to their eyes. Olivia's uplifting story has gone viral, and that's because it was a genuinely beautiful moment.

Olivia Steadman sings Canadian national anthem [click to read Free Press Article](#)



“I was excited and happy. There were tears of happiness.”

Olivia Steadman

Olivia was given a chance and she knocked it out of the park. She has worked on her singing voice for many years, but she needed a break to showcase her beautiful singing voice. Mark Chipman gave her that break, and we are all better for it.

The reaction to Olivia's beautiful voice has been so overwhelmingly positive that Chipman wants her to sing next season when the Jets are on national TV. Well done Olivia Steadman and thank you Mark Chipman. You can find the full video of her singing here: [Youtube link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0qPLPJrBP4)<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0qPLPJrBP4>

Please Click on Youtube Links to see Olivia sing our National Anthem! So Proud!

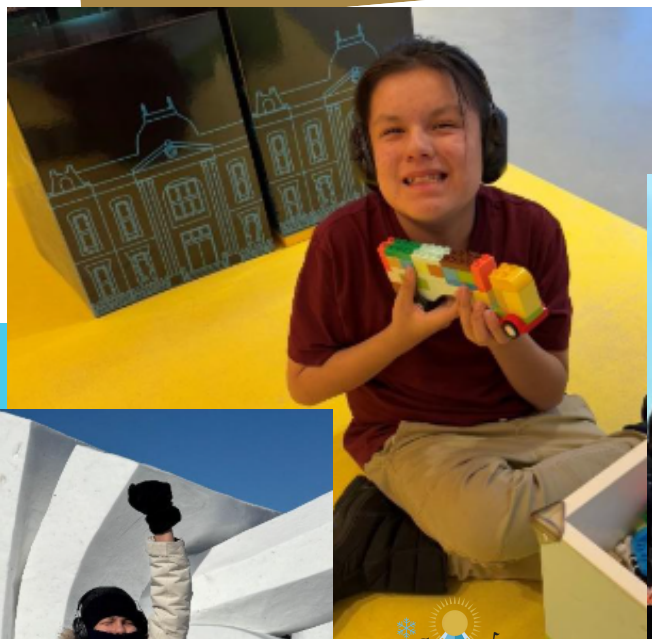
Fun at Festival Du Voyageur!



Festival du Voyageur

Xzavier, a grade 8 student at École Riverside School in Thompson, got to experience a trip to Festival du Voyageur, with his class recently. With the appropriate supports and strategies, Xzavier was able to participate in events such as drumming, Museum of Human Rights, swimming, a trip to the Lego Store at Polo Park and a horse drawn sleigh ride. His classmates are very inclusive, encouraging him to participate in all the activities with them.

His dad, as a chaperone, was able to create many memories with him, experiencing many firsts together. We are grateful his family is very supportive of his plan and finds ways to ensure he is able to participate in everything the district implements as part of his growth and success.



Official site for Festival [https://heho.ca/Du Voyageur](https://heho.ca/Du_Voyageur)
<https://heho.ca/>



An MCIE Podcast

The **Think Inclusive** podcast, hosted by Tim Villegas, explores the real-world application of inclusive education. It features conversations with educators, advocates, and experts who share insights on creating equitable and inclusive learning environments. Topics range from trauma-informed practices to the future of special education laws like the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The podcast aims to empower educators and promote systemic change towards more inclusive educational practices. Available on Spotify, YouTube, and Apple Podcasts

Submitted by: **Karen Klassen**, River East Transcona

Here are some key episodes:

"What's Next for IDEA?" - This episode explores the future of the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** amidst changing political and educational landscapes, featuring experts like Dr. Jen Newton and Eric Garcia.

"Debunking Myths About Inclusive Education Funding" - Jamie Sowers from BlazerWorks joins Tim Villegas to discuss the cost and logistics of inclusive education, debunking common myths about the funding required for inclusive practices.

"The Transformative Power of Alternative Communication" - **Danny and Tara Whitty** discuss the impact of alternative communication methods like spelling to communicate, highlighting their transformative power

"The Other Kids": A Conversation about Inclusion, Trauma, and Behavior with Alex Shevrin Venet - This episode discusses the importance of trauma-informed and equity-centered education, and how educators can become change makers.

Janice Fialka & Sara Jo Soldovieri What to Say When Families Think Segregated Special Education Classrooms Are Best - This episode explores the challenges and strategies for advocating inclusive education to families who prefer segregated special education settings.

SSAAM WEBSITE

<https://ssaam.mb.ca/>

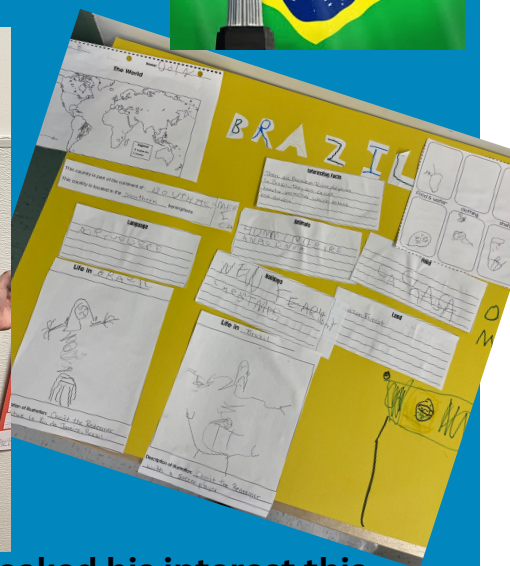
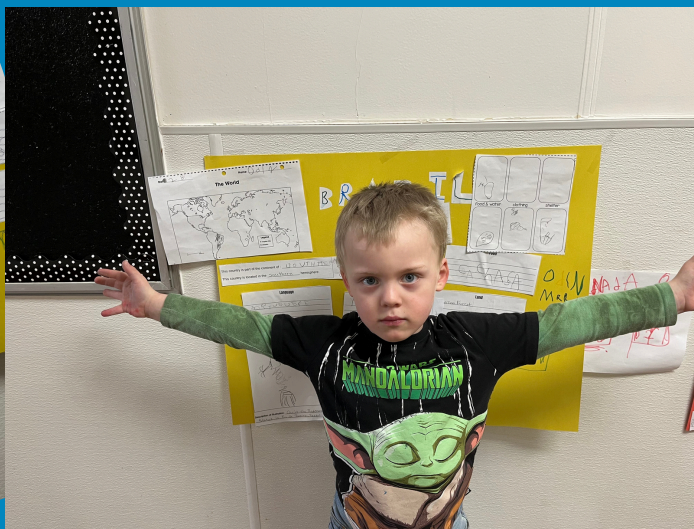


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Mission: SSAAM is committed to providing provincial leadership and informed advocacy to support appropriate educational programming for all students.

Brazil

Submitted by: **Leslie Norrie**
Prairie Spirit School Division



Here is Odin (Kindergarten) and the grade 3 assignment that peaked his interest this week. He researched and made his own poster with some assistance from Mrs. A. He is posing as the “Christ the Redeemer monument “

Book Recommendation: The Anxious Generation By Jonathan Haidt

Submitted by: **Rod Kehler** - Hanover School Division

I recently read *The Anxious Generation*, and I can't recommend it highly enough. This book provides valuable insights into the increasing levels of anxiety seen in children and adolescents today, shedding light on the societal, technological, and familial factors that contribute to this phenomenon. One of the highlights of the book is its in-depth exploration of the unique pressures faced by this generation, from the pervasive influence of social media to the impact of heightened academic and social expectations. The author delves into why these stressors affect children so profoundly and offers practical strategies to support them. As school staff, understanding the roots of anxiety is essential for fostering an environment where all students can thrive. The book includes numerous recommendations on how educators can create safe, supportive spaces in schools, build stronger relationships with students, and integrate mindfulness and resilience practices into daily routines. I found *The Anxious Generation* to be not only insightful but also incredibly actionable. The suggestions provided can help staff identify signs of anxiety, respond to students with empathy, and collaborate effectively with families to support children in navigating their challenges. This is a must-read for anyone working with children today. It offers a compassionate perspective and equips educators with tools to better understand and address the anxiety impacting so many of our students. I thoroughly enjoyed this book and would encourage you to pick up ***The Anxious Generation***.

