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## Registrar's Update

It seems as though it has been only a few weeks since we published the spring 2017 newsletter! Here is what the SPTRB has been up to since then:

Throughout the spring and summer more than 17, 000 teachers registered with the SPTRB. I would like to thank all who contributed to a successful registration period, including individual registrants, school administrators and the central office staff who monitor the progress of the registration process!

Along with this year's annual registration, each registrant was invited to provide feedback on the development of the Standards of Professional Conduct. This was the second survey created by the Standards Development Committee (SDC) to gather feedback from registered teachers. The 2739 responses to this survey informed further revisions to the draft standards. More information about the work of the SDC is included in this newsletter.

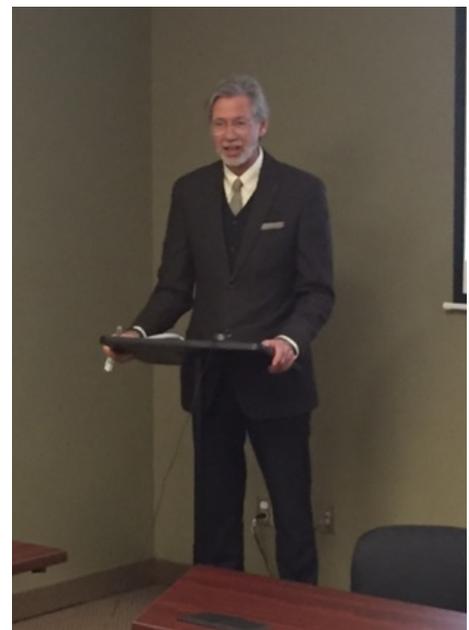
Throughout August and September, SPTRB staff worked to certify teachers for the new school year. This can be a very busy time of year due to last minute hires from out of the province and processing temporary teaching permits for school divisions who were unable to recruit certified teachers for certain positions (such as teaching special language classes).

The SPTRB's financial audit was conducted in October. This year the Provincial Auditor's Office was involved in this annual accountability measure. The final audit report appears in the SPTRB's annual report, which was presented to and approved by the Board of Directors at the SPTRB's Annual Meeting on November 30, 2017. The Annual Report, found under the About Us tab at [www.sptrb.ca](http://www.sptrb.ca), is the official source of statistical information about the SPTRB.

In order to continue our commitment to transparency and accountability, the Board of Directors invited representatives from some of Saskatchewan's education sector partner organizations to attend this year's Annual Meeting. Thank you to the representatives from the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, Saskatchewan School Boards Association, University of Regina, Gabriel Dumont Institute, Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials and Ministry of Education who were able to attend.

At the Annual Meeting the SPTRB bid farewell to two members of the Board of Directors - Tobi Tamblin and Colleen Norris. Chairperson Tom Schonhoffer thanked Tobi, Colleen and Kyle McIntyre, who stepped down from the Board earlier this year, for their service as members of the inaugural Board.

Sincerely,  
**Trevor Smith**  
*Registrar and COO*



Tom Schonhoffer delivers his Chairperson's Report at the Annual Meeting

# Update on the Work of the Standards Development Committee

The *Registered Teachers Act* tasks the Saskatchewan Professional Teachers Regulatory Board with establishing and administering the professional certification and standards of professional conduct and competence of teachers for the purposes of serving and protecting the public.

Presently the *Registered Teachers Act* and the SPTRB's Regulatory Bylaws define misconduct, however, the SPTRB does not yet have a set of standards of professional conduct for its registrants.

It is for this reason that the Board of Directors has tasked SPTRB staff with preparing a recommendation for the Board's consideration regarding standards of conduct for the teachers of Saskatchewan. To that end, the Board of Directors created the Standards Development Committee to research standards and consult the profession and educational partners to develop a draft set of standards for review by the Board.

To date, the Standards Development Committee has taken the following steps towards drafting a set of standards of conduct:

- Literature review and cross jurisdictional scan
- Teacher survey (2016) - 2264 respondents
- Standards Development Committee Struck
- Standards Development Committee Meetings
- Teacher survey (2017) - 2739 respondents
- Stakeholder organization feedback requested
- Standards Development Committee Meetings
- Town Hall meetings: La Ronge (cancelled), Prince Albert (November 7, 2017), Swift Current (cancelled), Regina (January 11, 2018), Saskatoon (January 18, 2018).

The standards are not intended to be detailed descriptions of teacher conduct. They are statements of principle upon which the detail can be built. Each standard includes a set of indicators which serve as examples of the ways by which a standard may be demonstrated. The standards are intended to provide a succinct overall depiction of the ways teachers behave when they uphold the public trust.

The most recent draft of the standards is provided below. The draft will be revised based upon feedback from the town hall meetings.

## 1. Registered Teachers base their relationships with learners on mutual trust and respect.

Registered teachers demonstrate this standard when they:

- ✓ maintain healthy professional expectations that place learners' interests first, both in school and in the community.
- ✓ ensure that all forms of communication with learners are kind, honest and appropriate.
- ✓ honour individual identity and circumstance without prejudice.

## 2. Registered Teachers have regard for the safety and well-being of learners in their care.

Registered teachers demonstrate this standard when they:

- ✓ act as kind and prudent educators who place learners at the forefront of decisions.
- ✓ take measures to provide a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment at school, such as:
  - o implementing appropriate, consistent, and clearly articulated rules and expectations,
  - o providing effective supervision, and
  - o ensuring emergency preparedness.
- ✓ foster a learning environment that is safe – academically, physically, spiritually, and emotionally.

## 3. Registered Teachers act with honesty and integrity.

Registered teachers demonstrate this standard when they:

- ✓ communicate openly, truthfully and respectfully with all relevant parties while maintaining necessary confidentiality.
- ✓ are accountable for their assessment, evaluation, record keeping, and classroom practices.
- ✓ maintain an inclusive classroom that promotes student learning of curricular outcomes through meaningful lessons.
- ✓ implement classroom management practices that encourage mutual respect and cooperation.

## 4. Registered Teachers take responsibility for maintaining the quality of their practice.

Registered teachers demonstrate this standard when they:

- ✓ participate in continual self-reflection and professional learning.
- ✓ seek, accept, and provide feedback to improve professional practice.
- ✓ work in a collaborative manner with other members of the learner's support network.

## 5. Registered Teachers uphold public trust and confidence in the education profession.

Registered teachers demonstrate this standard when they:

- ✓ are mindful of their responsibility as a role model in school, in the community, and online.
- ✓ maintain appropriate communication and professional relationships with learners, guardians, colleagues, and community members.
- ✓ act in a manner that reflects positively on the teaching profession.

## Use of Electronic Communication and Social Media

This September, the Ontario College of Teachers issued a practice advisory to its members. The practice advisory, which may be found in its entirety [here](#), is intended to help Ontario Certified Teachers (OCTs) understand their professional boundaries and responsibilities in the appropriate use of electronic communication and social media.

The advisory acknowledges that there are legitimate educational purposes for the use of electronic communication and social media and goes on to advise that “. . . some of the most popular social media platforms were not created specifically for educational purposes and their use can expose members to risk when it comes to maintaining professionalism. While members should be cautious when communicating electronically and online, this does not mean it must be avoided altogether. Keep interactions professional, as you would in the classroom, and build a positive online presence. Know and

respect proper professional boundaries with students, even when students initiate electronic interaction.”

The practice advisory raises another important point concerning the professional vs. private lives of teachers:

“There is a distinction between the professional and private life of a teacher. Ontario Certified Teachers are individuals with private lives; however, off-duty conduct matters and sound judgment and due care must be exercised.

Teaching is a public profession. Canada’s Supreme Court ruled that teachers’ off-duty conduct, even when not directly related to students, is relevant to their suitability to teach. Members must maintain a sense of professionalism at all times – in their personal and professional lives.”

The Supreme Court decision referred to in the OCT’s practice advisory is [Ross v. New Brunswick School District No. 15](#). At

paragraph 45 Justice La Forest states:

It is on the basis of the position of trust and influence that we hold the teacher to high standards both on and off duty, and it is an erosion of these standards that may lead to a loss in the community of confidence in the public school system. I do not wish to be understood as advocating an approach that subjects the entire lives of teachers to inordinate scrutiny on the basis of more onerous moral standards of behaviour. This could lead to a substantial invasion of the privacy rights and fundamental freedoms of teachers. However, where a “poisoned” environment within the school system is traceable to the off-duty conduct of a teacher that is likely to produce a corresponding loss of confidence in the teacher and the system as a whole, then the off-duty conduct of the teacher is relevant.

## Notice of Administrative Bylaw Amendment

This fall, the Board of Directors amended the SPTRB’s Administrative Bylaws in order to formally establish the Appointments Committee, a sub-committee of the Board. The new bylaw is number AB3.02(vi.):

vi. The Appointments Committee

- A. The Appointments Committee is established for the purposes of:

- I. Reviewing applications for and making recommendations to the Board of Directors for appointments to the:
  1. Professional Conduct Committee Panel; or
  2. Discipline Committee Panel
- II. Appointing members of the Professional Conduct Committee Panel to a Professional Conduct Committee.

- III. Appointing members of the Discipline Committee Panel to a Discipline Committee.
- B. The Appointments Committee shall consist of at least two members of the Board of Directors.

The SPTRB’s Bylaws may be viewed at [www.sptrb.ca](http://www.sptrb.ca).



## Teacher Education

### Bridging to Teaching in SK

Both the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan have begun developing “Bridging to Teaching in Saskatchewan” programs in support of newcomer teachers seeking teacher certification in Saskatchewan. Because many teacher education programs in other countries are one-year after-degree programs, newcomer teachers must often complete additional teacher education coursework in order to meet Saskatchewan’s teacher certification requirements.

The Bridging to teaching in Saskatchewan programs will assist already experienced internationally educated teachers (IETs) to become familiar with Saskatchewan’s education system and will provide them with an opportunity to develop a network by working with a mentor teacher in a Saskatchewan school.



Dr. Xia Ji (center) and Julie Machnaik (right), from the University of Regina’s Faculty of Education, present to the SPTRB’s Teacher Education and Certification Committee about action research into the experiences of Internationally Educated Teachers seeking teacher certification in Saskatchewan.

### Additional Qualification Certificates

Additional Qualification Certificates (AQC’s) were created to help fulfill the demand for teachers with expertise in the following areas of need: secondary mathematics, physics and chemistry; practical and applied arts; computer science; in-school administration; special needs education; and Aboriginal education, including Native Studies and languages. The areas of need have been updated to include French, school librarianship, early childhood education, English as another language, and career counselling.

Once granted an AQC, registered teachers may qualify for a salary re-classification.

There are four routes one may take to earning an AQC:

**Certificate Program** – a teacher education program designed by a university and approved by the SPTRB’s Teacher Education and Certification Committee.

**Technical/Vocational Program** – a program of study, relevant to the Saskatchewan curriculum, completed at Saskatchewan Polytechnic or an other similar institution.

**Journeyperson’s Certificate** – a Red Seal Endorsed Journeyperson’s certificate in a trade that is relevant to the Saskatchewan curriculum.

**Integrated Program** – a self-designed course of study, approved by the Registrar, in an area of provincial or local need.

More information about AQC’s may be found under the **Certification and Registration** tab at [www.sptrb.ca](http://www.sptrb.ca).

## When is a complaint about a registered teacher made public?

There has been some misunderstanding about when the SPTRB makes public a complaint about a registrant. **Complaints and employers' notices are not made public.** However, if, after a thorough investigation of the complaint or employer's notice the Professional Conduct Committee believes that

misconduct or incompetence is more likely than not to have occurred, the PCC will either attempt to resolve the matter with a consensual complaint resolution agreement (CCRA) or it will lay a formal complaint against the registrant with the Discipline Committee. In the case of a CCRA, the completed agreement becomes

public knowledge. In the case of a formal complaint the sections of the *Registered Teachers Act* and Bylaws that the registrant is accused of violating, also known as the charges, are made public in the notice of hearing. Notices are posted on the SPTRB website at least two weeks prior to the date of the associated hearing.

## Costs vs. Fine

During a discipline hearing, the Discipline Committee (DC) must determine whether a registrant of the SPTRB is guilty of professional misconduct or incompetence. If there is a finding of guilt, the DC is also responsible for making a discipline order. It has been incorrectly reported that registrants of the SPTRB were fined by the DC in 2017 for having been found guilty of professional misconduct. In fact, the registered teachers were ordered to pay a portion of the costs associated with the investigation and hearing.

### What is the difference between an order for a fine and an order for costs?

The purpose of cost orders in professional self-regulation is to allocate costs appropriately amongst the involved parties. This is further explained in the following Court of Queen's Bench decision regarding a disciplinary matter involving a pharmacist and her regulatory body:



*As a member of the pharmacy profession the appellant enjoys many privileges. One of them is being part of a self-governing profession. Proceedings like this must be conducted by the respondent association as part of its public mandate to assure to the public competent and ethical pharmacists. Its costs in so doing may properly be borne by the member whose conduct is at issue and has been found wanting (Hoff v. Pharmaceutical Assn. (Alberta), 1994 CanLII 8950 (ABQB)).*

The public interest is protected through self-regulated professional discipline hearings, and with the privilege of being a professional comes upholding the public trust. Discipline hearings result from a breach in this trust, and costs associated with discipline should not be borne solely by the regulator. Fines, on the other hand, are a financial penalty intended to serve as both a specific and general deterrent to future repeat of the behaviour.

To date, the Discipline Committee has made orders for a portion of the costs associated with investigations and hearings. There have been no orders for fines.

Factors taken into consideration when the Discipline Committee makes a disciplinary order include:

- The nature and gravity of the conduct;
- The age and experience of the teacher;
- The age of the student and the impact on the student;
- The number of times the offence occurred;
- Whether the teacher suffered from other serious consequences;
- The presence or absence of mitigating circumstances;
- The need to promote a specific or general deterrence;
- The need to protect the public confidence in the profession;
- The range of sanctions in similar cases.

**Mission of the SPTRB**

The SPTRB serves the public interest by ensuring registered teachers meet professional standards for certification, conduct and competence.

**Vision of the SPTRB**

- In Saskatchewan:
- Registered teachers are qualified, competent and trustworthy;
  - The public has confidence in the teaching profession;
  - Students achieve their highest learning potential.

**Values of the SPTRB**

- Integrity
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Fairness
- Timeliness

## Second Anniversary of SPTRB

SPTRB Staff pose for a picture in celebration of the SPTRB's second anniversary on October 19, 2017.



Back L-R:  
 Brenda Hildebrandt, Lawyer;  
 Janice Krietemeyer, Certification Analyst;  
 Becky Wock, Policy Analyst/Writer;  
 Jason Vogelsang, Assistant Registrar;  
 Trevor Smith, COO/Registrar;  
 Yuan Liu, Record Clerk

Front L-R:  
 Anabelle Gonzalez, Administrative Assistant/Accounting Clerk;  
 Brenda Holowatuk, Certification Analyst;  
 Laura Weisgarber, Executive Coordinator;  
 Crystal Kowalski, Certification Analyst;  
 Kelsie Konecni, Record Clerk



204 - 3775 Pasqua Street  
 Regina, SK, Canada S4S 6W8

Phone: 306.352.2230  
 Fax: 306.352.0022  
 Email: [general@sptrb.ca](mailto:general@sptrb.ca)  
[www.sptrb.ca](http://www.sptrb.ca)

