



Manitoba Association of Parent Councils

Board of Directors External Committees Involvement

Director and Staff Biographies

The MAPC Board of Directors is a diverse group of parents who lend their time to matters important to the educational well-being of children in Manitoba. Find out more about their backgrounds and the external committees in which they are involved in throughout Manitoba and Canada's educational system.

MAPC Directors

Judith Cameron

Judith resides in Gimli, MB with her husband of 24 years, and has three children and one grandchild. She has one child attending high school in the Evergreen School Division. Her current employment includes being the Manager of Training and Development with Volunteer Manitoba and also volunteering as the Executive Director, Interlake Adult Learning Association. She is a Human Resources Consultant and Red River College Instructor and a Human Resources Consultant with a number of First Nation organizations.

Judith has over eighteen years of Parent Advisory Council involvement and twelve years involvement with MAPC, now serving as Past President. She was a trustee in Evergreen School Division. Judith's special areas of interest in education include career options and supports for high school students, inclusion issues and challenges, developing a strong Indigenous parental voice and empowering parents to be their child's champion. Judith's future goals with MAPC include providing leadership to expand services and programs, providing stronger supports and professional development opportunities to Parent Advisory Councils, increasing awareness in advocacy, nurturing and defining strong partnerships within the school community, encouraging and supporting MAPC's mission and vision to all school divisions and establishing greater ties to our educational partners and stakeholders at every level.

Nina Samu

Nina Samu is currently serving her second term on the MAPC Board of Directors, currently as Vice President. Having 10 plus years on a PAC, she has filled different positions, and assisted with lunch programs, fundraising and the well-being of all students within the education system. Nina's experience includes having worked in early years learning (daycares and preschools), as well as substitute teaching in elementary schools. She has also worked with students from outlying communities to facilitate and support their senior years learning, ensuring positive and productive experiences. All of this experience has helped to shape her broad range of knowledge and skills. Nina's formal education includes Applied Counselling, Human Resource Management and Management Development. Throughout her career and life, Nina continually focuses and encourages education and opportunities that are available to students and adults. Her vested interest in senior learning years and vocational / trades programming are in sync with the interests of her children. Nina is a strong advocate for all programs within the education system and encourages interest in all avenues of education - sports, music and the arts, academic and vocational.

Nina and her husband have two daughters, currently in grade 10 and one entering University in the fall. All actively participate in their schools and community including extra curricular activities,

coaching and mentoring others. Both children, along with Nina, volunteer within their community assisting in whatever ways they can. Nina and her family enjoy their summer home on the lake in Northern Manitoba, working and being outdoors, as well as maintaining and operating a campground. Nina is also a first aid instructor and travels throughout the Province sharing her knowledge, plus many hobbies and hidden talents. Nina and her family truly enjoy many activities and contributing to various communities and organizations. Her quest for knowledge, strong organizational abilities, and determination to assist and accomplish tasks and set goals are a wonderful asset to any organization. A genuine care and appreciation for life, education, and the future, are fine possessions in Nina's life.

Khalid Mahmood

Khalid resides in Winnipeg and has four children and one grandchild. Khalid has been involved with Parent Advisory Councils for many years and MAPC for several years. He has served as Secretary in the past and currently holds the executive position of Treasurer.

His special areas of interest in education include establishing an effective way of evaluating student's educational progress and providing early intervention to correct shortcomings, more detail in academic and social progress reporting and building strong foundations in reading and writing at all levels of schooling. Khalid also strongly believes in educational and professional development for parents in order for them to fulfil their role effectively in Parent Advisory Councils and at the school and divisional level.

Maria Fernandes

Maria Fernandes is a resident of Winnipeg and has one daughter entering grade 9 in the Winnipeg School division, in the fall. She has been a member of her PAC for nine years, at different times holding the positions of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Treasurer and volunteering with various sub-committees. She serves on three other non-profit Boards. She has been involved with MAPC for several years is currently serving in the Secretary executive position.

Maria sits on the Safe Schools Manitoba and the Child Nutrition Council as MAPC's representative, and has a special interest in higher needs and supports in high school, French Immersion and nutrition in schools. She believes every child deserves the opportunity to reach their full potential no matter what their abilities are or the manner in which they learn. Maria's future goals with MAPC include learning more about high school supports, empowering parents and providing them with the tools they need to support their children in the school environment.

Boris Minkevich

Boris Minkevich lives in Winnipeg in Louis Riel School Division and has been a MAPC board member since 2015. He was recently elected President for the 2017-18 year. By day he works in the media as a photojournalist. He enjoys a good conversation and has been active in his daughter's education since preschool. He truly believes that good role models, active parents, and caring educators help shape strong students and good citizens in our community.

He has been active in the roll of leadership in his daughter's school's Parent Advisory Council and has served on committees at the divisional level as well. He's invested in building stronger communities through meaningful parental involvement in schools and the education system. One of his top interests is to engaging and connecting parents to the school community by getting involved in the "School Plan", which is the road map on which school curriculum is successfully delivered to students.

Boris helps coach volleyball for the Dakota Diggers Club, is an avid outdoorsman, and is a self proclaimed BBQ champion!

Ethel Raine

Ethel Raine is from Somerset and lives in the Prairie Spirit School Division area. She has four children: a daughter who is a nursing graduate; a son who is a civil engineer graduate; a daughter who is a teacher graduate and a daughter currently attending University of Manitoba in the nursing field of study. Ethel and her husband have two grandsons and one granddaughter.

Ethel has been involved in Parent Advisory Councils for twenty years and has been a director on the MAPC board for ten years. She has been working in childcare for twenty years. Ethel and her husband are the private owners of the Lorne Theater in Somerset since 1987.

Ethel is interested in the early years development of children and is striving to obtain acknowledgment from schools and government regarding the importance of early childhood educators. Ethel has received her ECE Level III in August 2011 from Red River College in Winkler. Ethel continues to provide information to parents and local PAC members about how important it is to be involved with your child's current and future education.

Arlene Reid

Arlene joined the MAPC board in May 2016 and sits on the Student Services for an Inclusive Education external committee and the Chairpersons' Breakfast and Forums internal committees. She resides in Winnipeg with her husband and 3 boys, two with special needs. One son is in middle years (grade 7) at Elmwood, two in early years - one in grade 2 and the youngest in Nursery, both at Glenelm. Arlene was recently elected School Trustee for WSD Ward 7 in November 2016 and sits on numerous committees.

Arlene believes in being active in the community. In addition to being involved with MAPC, she is also chairperson of Together in Elmwood, a parent child coalition, as well as her own neighbourhood association. Arlene was also a driving force of Parents of Autistic Children Everywhere Inc. as Chair of the Board and as Events Coordinator until her resignation in September 2016.

Arlene is also a “hobby” cake and cookie baker with goals of opening a café/bakery to help employ those with Special Needs. As a parent of two children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Arlene believes that all children, especially those with special needs, need to be treated fairly and evenly within the school system.

Introduction of New Directors for the 2017-18 slate of MAPC Board of Directors

Brenda Brazeau

Brenda Brazeau resides in the River East Transcona School Division with her family that includes 6 children and 1 grandchild. Her children range in age from 12 to 33, with the youngest attending grade 6 in the RETSD. She currently is employed with Eyaa-Keen Healing Centre in Winnipeg.

Brenda has 15 years of Parent Advisory Council experience and held various positions including: President; Vice Chair and Fundraising Director. 2016-17 will be the first year of Brenda’s involvement with MAPC and she hopes to learn from the current Board of Directors on how she may be able to assist and where she can apply her skills.

Education interests include learning more about evaluating students in school that are struggling and find solutions to provide them with the supports they need, especially with reading and writing skills in the early years. Brenda believes building the confidence in children will improve their academic skills. One of her goals as a new director will be to encourage parents to become involved in schools and their child’s education.

Jennifer Mitchell

Jennifer Mitchell has lived her entire life in Winnipeg and within the Winnipeg School Division. She has two daughters: one in grade 4 and the other in grade 6, who are attending the same schools that Jennifer did as a child. She has been involved in her Parent Advisory Council for 4 years and currently serves as the Vice Chair. Jennifer is employed at St. Boniface Hospital and has been very involved in her workplace. She has been engaged in the Youth Committee at St. Boniface Hospital that focuses on educating young workers on their rights and has also assisted in facilitating events. She is currently co-chair for her Work, Safety & Health Committee and is a strong advocate for safety.

Jennifer’s future goals would be to gain knowledge and experience in advocating for improvements for all students in Manitoba, with a focus on reducing the barriers that families currently face with

regards to engagement and involvement. Jennifer also believes that youth mental health and social justice programs are important initiatives that should be kept at the forefront of schools in Manitoba.

Bernice Rempel

Bernice Rempel resides in Winnipeg School Division and although she does not have any children of her own, she has been involved in the raising of a niece and was the primary caregiver of a nephew. Bernice originally became involved with her parent council at the suggestion of her nephew while he was in her care. It was in her first year on the PAC that she was instrumental in assisting the council with the development of a constitution, which included a name change to better reflect the involvement of both parents and other community members like herself. Bernice has been Chairperson of the Parent and Community Advisory Council in a Winnipeg School Division school since 2015.

Bernice initially became interested in learning more about MAPC and the role of parent councils after attending a session where MAPC was instrumental in supporting the group's constitution development. Since then, she has been active in attending MAPC events and forums. Mind health and well-being for both children and their parents is an area of interest for Bernice.

"It takes a community to raise a child" is a statement Bernice knows to be true as her involvement continues to grow. Starting in May, she will be the parent partner and facilitator for the *Family and Schools Together* initiative at the school. Bernice would like to apply her skills to areas in need and would like to continue to make a difference in the community.

MAPC Staff

Naomi Kruse

Naomi Kruse has served as the Executive Director of MAPC for the past 10 years. She resides in the River East Transcona School Division with her family. Her son is currently enrolled at the University of Winnipeg in the Political Studies and Economics programs and her daughter is enrolled in grade 11 attending French Immersion.

Naomi has over 11 years of Parent Advisory Council experience in her children's schools. In addition to being Executive Director, she is also the Advocacy Project Coordinator for MAPC. Over the past year, Naomi has served on several committees: Anti-Racism Action Plan Committee; Safe Schools; Manitoba Education Research Network (MERN); Educating for ACTION Program Planning Group; Student Achievement Provincial Advisory; and Funding for Students with Special Needs.

Naomi recently completed her Arts degree majoring in Conflict Resolution Studies and is continuing with her course work in order to complete her Masters Degree in Education, specializing in Adult Education.

Renee Ritchot

Renee has been working with Manitoba Association of Parent Councils since September 2010 as the Administrative Assistant. She grew up in Old St. Vital and resides in River Park South with her family. Renee has a daughter who has just completed her second year of post-secondary in the Faculty of Science at the University of Manitoba. Her youngest, a son, will be graduating from high school in June. Renee has been involved in Parent Council activities for several years and served for five years as a Director on a school board in a communications and marketing capacity.

Last year, Renee completed a Digital and Social Media course through the University of Winnipeg's Professional, Applied and Continuing Education (P.A.C.E.) program which complements her current work with MAPC. Future plans include pursuing training to enhance her website maintenance and creative skills. She also has an Instructional Assistant Certificate and has extensive administrative training and experience, having worked in the insurance, call centre and human resources industries. Some of Renee's leisure time activities include travel, camping, snowmobiling and spending time with family and friends. Renee enjoys her work with MAPC and strongly believes that parental involvement is fundamentally key to student success.

External Committees Involvement

Anti-Racism Action Plan

The Anti-Racism Action Plan was created with input from each of the major education stakeholders to develop a plan, including actions, to address racism in Manitoba schools. Much of the discussion focused on the Treaty and Reconciliation Commission *Calls to Action* released in 2015 (http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf) as well as the MacLeans magazine article which declared Winnipeg to be the most racist city in Canada (<http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/welcome-to-winnipeg-where-canadas-racism-problem-is-at-its-worst/>)

As a result of these discussions, many actions were identified and highlighted by the partners in helping to combat racism in schools. The Indigenous Inclusion Directorate continues to conduct information sessions throughout the province to draw attention to understanding the impact of racism in schools. Manitoba Education and Training continues to develop resources and materials dedicated to understanding and addressing racism in schools. In 2017, as part of the education partners team facilitated by the Indigenous Inclusion Directorate, Naomi was involved in the completion of the *Critical/Courageous Conversations on Race* parent support document, which is currently on schedule to go to print at the time of this report. This document was created to assist parents in understanding the impacts of racism on children and school communities, as well as provide useful tools and resources to engage in conversations at home and in the community.

Active and Safe Routes to School

Boris Minkevich represented MAPC on the Active and Safe Routes to School committee over the past year. This year, an area of focus for the group was looking at the value of specific online/software that is currently being developed to track and promote walking to school. Community representation on the advisory committee includes members from Winnipeg Police Traffic division, Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA), MB department of Education and Training, and an independent consultant. The group seemed to be interested in the topics at hand. The presenter at one of the meetings used many examples of how kids get around in other major centers in North America and Europe.

Advisory Committee on Community Schools Legislation

Report not submitted.

Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba Board Directors

Maria Fernandes has represented MAPC on this committee that meets three times year. The goal of the council is to provide funding and information to schools about the importance of nutrition and the effects healthy eating can have on learning. The committee continues to work with schools and is currently awaiting notice from the Province about funding for the next year. Recent initiatives have included the Stone Soup fundraiser (annual), and working with schools on lunch and breakfast programs to ensure children and teens have healthy options available to them.

Children's Coalition

Report not submitted.

Educating for ACTION Planning Group

The Manitoba Association of School Superintendents, in partnership with the Manitoba Teachers Society, planned a large scale conference in April 2017 dedicated to human rights. Naomi Kruse served as a member of the planning group to assist with speaker selection and conference streams, as well as provide feedback about the two day event and its planned outcomes.

English as an Additional Language Advisory Committee (EAL)

The EAL committee provides information, advice and feedback to the department of Manitoba Education and Training with the goal of strengthening EAL education programming to meet current needs and practices in the province. Khalid Mahmood has served as MAPC's representative for the last two years, and he says the EAL has provided invaluable input and feedback that has influenced the work of the department for students and newcomer education. The inter-organizational dialogue facilitated by the meetings contributes to the broader efforts on behalf of newcomer children and their families in Manitoba.

Discussion this year also included the recommendations that: schools should devote a professional development day for provide teachers with EAL training; more funding and resources are needed for EAL teachers to support the influx of newcomers and refugees in rural schools; and the education degree should have mandatory components that include EAL training. Also discusses was the possibility of universities offering a degree in English as an Additional Language and a cross discipline post-bachelor program in EAL must be instituted.

Interorganizational Curriculum Advisory Committee (ICAC)

Report not submitted.

Manitoba Education Research Network (MERN)

The Manitoba Education Research Network (MERN) is an affiliation of partner organizations dedicated to facilitating a province wide education research community promoting, supporting, and celebrating professional learning, research connections, and research interests relevant to Manitoba. Naomi Kruse currently participates on MERN.

MERN hosts a number of forums each year which are free events open to educators, leaders, and community members. These forums serve to bring together education stakeholders interested in learning more about the theme and topic presented. During the past year forums were held in Frontier School Division (Education in the Digital Age), Brandon (MERN – Valuing Diversity), UCN Thompson (MERN North), Winnipeg (Transcultural Literacies for Inclusion and Change in Education and MERN Urban), and the University of Winnipeg (MERN Indigenous – Restorying Education – Indigenous Knowledge in Motion; Our Voices, and Our Future)

MERN coordinates the creation of the MERN Journal, MERN Monograph, and MERN Community Research to Community, as well as occasional papers from leading educators. More information about these resources can be found at www.mern.ca. MERN also coordinates the annual MERN Awards, which recognize the work being done by educators, education stakeholders, and researchers towards creating dynamic and rich education experiences and understandings for students in Manitoba.

MAPC benefits greatly from its participation in MERN by hearing and learning about engaging speakers in Manitoba's education system. As well, because of the connections made in MERN, MAPC joined in partnership with Dr. Sheri Lynn Skwarchuk this year to conduct research on parental engagement in schools, and how parents can create change in their lives and communities.

Manitoba's Excellence in Education Awards: Minister's Award Jury

Since 2006, Manitoba recognizes outstanding educators whose stimulating educational practices have a profound impact on student learning and engagement. Ethel Raine represented MAPC on this committee to review nominated educators by a rating based on a set scale and criteria. The Minister's Awards are intended to recognize outstanding achievement by Manitoba Educators and to honour creative, innovative and effective teaching practices in four categories: Teaching Excellence, Outstanding New Teacher, Outstanding Team Collaboration and Outstanding School Leader.

Three awards are presented in the Teaching Excellence category and one award in each of the remaining categories. Each award recipient receives a certificate of recognition and a \$500 cash award.

New this year: *Premier's Award for Excellence in Education*. The recipient of this award will be selected from among all the nominees for the above-mentioned categories. An award reception is held in honour of the recipients.

Prime Minister's Teaching Award

Report not submitted.

Safe Schools Manitoba

Maria Fernandes and Naomi Kruse have been involved on Safe Schools Manitoba committee this year that typically meets approximately 3 times per year. It provides a forum for identifying emerging issues related to safe schools and communities. The Council makes recommendations concerning the direction, goals and services for Safe Schools Manitoba with the understanding that all groups share the responsibility of creating safe schools and communities.

Some of the initiatives this year included meeting with various schools to develop anti-bullying initiatives and working with the Winnipeg Police and other departments to develop resources and offer supports. The committee also reviewed information about the ALICE program (safety procedures and protocols for students in schools during school shootings), PREVnet (programming, resources, and supports for students regarding their wellbeing in the areas of bullying, mental health, and violence), and future funding for Safe Schools Manitoba.

Social Justice Coalition

Social Justice Coalition is a group of individuals and organization interested in promoting a sustainable conversation about education for democracy. The coalition acknowledges the role of public schools in contributing to a just society and support social justice as a primary aim of public education. The Social Justice Coalition facilitates with colleagues, students and the public at large to gain deeper understanding of social justice issues (cultural, social, educational and religion related).

Khalid Mahmood has represented MAPC on this committee for the last two years. Following are some recent topics discussed. The Social Planning Council made a presentation entitled, "*Towards Equity in Education*", which was a project completed with the partners of Manitoba Education and Training, Manitoba Association of School Superintendents, and Manitoba School Boards Association. The goal of the study was to assist partners across the province to mitigate the effect of poverty and inequality within the education system, on student success and on well-being. Other topics this year included: health, housing and education of newcomers (immigrants and refugees); truth and reconciliation report; transgender issues in education; and issues regarding Islam and newcomer education.

Student Achievement Provincial Advisory Committee

The Student Achievement Provincial Advisory Committee (SAPAC) formed in the spring of 2015 in response to ongoing discussions resulting from the implementation of the Manitoba provincial report card and the student assessment practices.

This group is served by Naomi Kruse from MAPC, as a result of her work with the Report Card Oversight Committee as well as her understanding of the provincial education system and the role that parents play within it. The group met throughout the year to review assessment practices being used throughout Canada and what benefits and challenges these best practices present if applied in a Manitoba provincial context. One outcome from these conversations is the *K - 12 Framework for Continuous Improvement*, which can be viewed at:

<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/ssdp/framework.html>.

Student Services Inclusive Education Advisory Committee

The Student Services Inclusion Committee meets four times per year to discuss and work on issues or concerns affecting students with diverse needs. It also provide consultation and recommendations to the government regarding policies, procedures, and initiatives affecting inclusive programming.

During the past year, with Arlene Reid's participation, this committee is continuing to discuss the Standards for Student Services document and what changes may be needed regarding language and human rights legislation. Completion of this document is soon expected.

Task Force on Special Needs Funding in Schools

The Task Force on Special Needs Funding in Schools was created to review the funding application process required for level two and three students requiring additional funding for their education experience in schools. Naomi Kruse represents MAPC on this group, which consists of representatives from each of the major education stakeholders and Manitoba Education and Training. From these meetings, a report which included a list of recommendations was presented to the Minister of Education in November 2015 outlining the need for change in the funding application process to address the barriers students and their families, as well as school teams, often face when additional supports and resources are required. The full report, as adopted by Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, can be viewed online at

http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/edu/docs/spec_needs_fund_report.pdf

Over the past year, the Task Force met to learn about the success and challenges experienced in a pilot project conducted in Louis Riel School Division, where a new special needs funding process is being explored. The report can be viewed at:

<http://www.ssaam.mb.ca/uploads/2017%20Irsd%20sn%20fund%20rpt.pdf>

For more information about funding for students with special needs in Manitoba schools, please visit: <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/funding/index.html>

MAPC has requested, and will continue to request, feedback on key questions relating to this committee's work from interested MAPC members. If you are interested in participating in feedback opportunities relating to this topic, as well as other items, please contact the MAPC office.

*If you are interested in learning more about MAPC's involvement
in any of the committees described herein,
please contact the MAPC office or take a moment to
speak with the appropriate MAPC Director during the conference.
Thank you.*