

# OUTREACH

To The Superannuated Teachers  
of Saskatchewan

## President's Report

Sunil Pandila

I want to start by thanking all the Delegates who participated in the 47th and 48th Annual General Meetings of the STS. Who would have thought that we would be having these AGMs in a virtual format almost 16 months after the start of the worldwide pandemic. But such was the reality, and we did it! Forty Chapters were represented with a total of 199 registered Delegates. While I know we missed our in-person format, we need to recognize the many positives that emerged from the two days. Apart from the business content which needed to be attended to, many Delegates, who at first were reluctant, were able to learn to feel comfortable with new technology skills. This learning can now be transferred to other situations so they can possibly meet with grandkids, family or friends in a Zoom format and feel connected. We were able to complete two AGMs in one and a half days from the comfort of our own homes. One Delegate commented that it was nice to see the actual person speaking on the screen whereas in person you may not be able to see the person at the microphone. No one had to face the inherent risks of travelling long distances on the road to attend the AGM. The electronic voting format for elections was quick and smooth

and results were received within minutes.

This format would not have been possible without all the work put in by the AGM Co-Chairs, Jane Isinger and Doug Still, and the Committee members, our Executive Secretary, Murray Wall, and the STS Staff – Colleen Bailey, Heather Hase and MJ Krips. Thanks also to our digital platform operators, Data On The Spot (DOTS) for their technological support, patience, and longer hours than anticipated, and also for the technological support from Jay Salikin of the STF! It was a real team effort once again to achieve our objective of holding two AGMs back-to-back during these unusual times. Thanks especially to the Delegates for making the two days a success!

On behalf of STS, I would like to congratulate the seven Chapters on their Chapter Membership Growth Awards and nine Chapter Award Recipients for the past two years. The names are included later in this edition of *Outreach*. Special recognition is also extended to the recipients of the Honorary Life Membership awards. Congratulations to the 2020 recipients: Stella Ewanchuk (The Battlefords and District), Mike Kaminski (Assiniboine), Doris McDougall (Wakaw),

Albert Waldbauer (Yorkton), and the 2021 recipients: Clarence Becker (Okanagan Valley), Irene Norton (Moosomin), Peter Stroh (Saskatoon).

The Delegates voted for members of the 2021-22 Executive. I would like to extend congratulations to all the members you elected. Changes include Sue Amundrud (Carrot River Valley (Melfort & District)) as your Vice-President, and new Members-at-Large, Gary Boehler (Okanagan Valley), Huguette Kitchen (Lloydminster) and Diane Selby (Saskatoon). On behalf of STS, I would also like to extend the very best for those leaving the Executive. They are, Lyle Markowski (Saskatoon), Marie LeBlanc-Warick (Wakaw) and Maxine Stinka (Assiniboine). We wish you the best and thank you for your service to our organization. You will be missed around the Executive table! I would also like to recognize Helen Sukovieff for her new role as your ACER-CART representative. On a personal note, I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to the membership for allowing me to serve as your President. I am humbled and excited and look forward to leading and working closely with the new Executive to pursue the issues you have highlighted

through the resolutions process, and to continue the initiatives on which we are currently working. Once again you have selected a great team to work on your behalf!

As we wrap up another year, an unusual one at that, I would like to reflect on what we have been able to provide our members: a Governance and Handbook review that will continue through next year, an extension on the Extended Health and Dental Plan through 2022 with no premium increases along with enhancements to our Plan which are already in effect, the provision of \$250 through the Health Spending Account to Group Benefits planholders starting July 1, 2021, and available to June 30, 2023, no STS membership fee increases next year with a \$600 increased rebate to Chapters, continued advocacy work on issues related to needs of our members.

On the business side, our financials in both the Operating Fund and Extended Health and Dental Plan showed healthy surpluses due to the pandemic but we do expect things to level out as we come out of this unprecedented period of time.

Now is also a busy time as the school year nears completion and some teachers make the transition into retirement. While there is always some stress related to making the decision to retire, please help remind them that we are here to assist them in every way possible. We would like them to become a member of our STS family as they transition out of STF. The STS has much to offer for their years of retirement.

As we start the journey back to a new sense of normal, I am really looking forward to serving as

your President for another year. Hopefully we can begin to meet again and for many of our Chapters this may be possible with the expansion of numbers for group meetings. Please invite me to your Chapter meetings if possible. I will make every effort to attend and meet new members and reacquaint after our hibernation. As we close out this year I would like to, on behalf of the STS, wish everyone a safe and wonderful summer. Enjoy your summer passions and pursuits with your families!

Next year's first Executive meeting date is September 13-15, 2021. For more information about any of our programs, initiatives, or how we can support you in your Chapters, please do not hesitate to call the STS Office at 306-373-3879 or visit our website at [www.sts.sk.ca](http://www.sts.sk.ca). You can also contact me at [sunil.pandila@sasktel.net](mailto:sunil.pandila@sasktel.net) or 306-692-2420.

## Mindfulness During the Pandemic

Colleen Ostoforoff, McDowell Foundation

The McDowell Foundation's mandate is to provide our educators with opportunities to learn through educational research. We have heard repeatedly the impacts that COVID-19 has had on our lives, and as a result, in 2020 the Foundation decided to direct research funding specifically to COVID-19 in the classroom. We have also increased our overall research budget from \$70,000 to \$85,000 for the 2020-2021 funding year. Our research teams recognized the need to address mental health in schools targeting teacher and student mental health after self-isolation and during COVID-19.

No training tools exist to manage student learning effectively throughout or after a pandemic; however, through the research from Angela Csiki and Brent Keen, they gained some interesting results on Reducing Student Stress During COVID-19 through Mindfulness. Mindfulness refers to a state of mind characterized by awareness and attention

in the present moment by an accepting, curious, and non-judgmental attitude. The idea behind mindfulness was that the training and ongoing practice could decrease students' stress and increase well-being throughout all their relationships.

As we all struggle through the pandemic, any type of mindfulness can help not only our students but ourselves to develop healthier outlooks for life, improvements in mood, stress level, and overall quality of life that can help us feel happier.

We are grateful for the ongoing support from our donors and supporters for our research projects such as one of our many worthy projects like Brent and Angela's. If you are interested in learning more about our other pandemic research projects, visit <http://mcdowellfoundation.ca/covid-lessons-from-school-teacher-research-in-the-pandemic/> where we have more details and also how you can help us support our future projects with your donation.

# Annual General Meeting

Jane Isinger and Doug Still

The 47th and 48th Annual General Meetings of the Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan were successfully held in a virtual format on May 13 and 14, 2021. The AGM Planning Committee tried to maintain a similar format that would closely parallel previous in-person AGMs. Unfortunately, the socializing was limited to the “Chat” function on Zoom and breakfasts, coffee breaks and the lunch break on Friday were on our own. There was no social evening, ice breaker activity, banquet, door prizes and draws, entertainment or interest sessions. In the virtual format the goal was to meet the legal and governance requirements of our organization.

President Sunil Pandila called the 2020 AGM to order at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 13. AGM Co-Chairs Jane Isinger and Doug Still reviewed the conference format, thanked Executive Secretary Murray Wall and the Office Staff for their hard work, Data On The Spot (DOTS) for the Zoom and voting platform which made the AGM possible, and Jay Salikin, from the STF, for his local technical assistance. Thanks also was expressed for the support from Saskatchewan Blue Cross, ESTI (our information technology partners), TCU Financial and the Saskatoon Travelodge.

Introductory comments were made by President Sunil and the Minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting were reviewed and accepted. Voting took place for the 2020 AGM Resolutions and the 2020 AGM was adjourned, followed by a brief break.

The 2021 AGM was called to order by President Sunil. The remainder of the morning’s agenda mirrored a typical in-person AGM: “O Canada”, Invocation and Moment of Silence, Alan Laughlin; President’s address, Sunil Pandila; Executive Secretary’s Report, Murray Wall; and greetings from the STF President, Patrick Maze. Pre-taping of most of the speakers allowed for smooth transitions. Nominations for the various Executive positions were announced and Delegates were reminded that the deadline for nominations was Thursday at 4:00 p.m. Executive Secretary Murray Wall presented the budget and responded to questions. Delegates had the opportunity to submit questions prior to the AGM. The morning concluded with the announcement of the Chapter Award recipients and the Chapter Growth Awards. Citations were given in honour of the three Honorary Life Member Award recipients for 2021. Our sincere congratulations go out to Clarence Becker, Okanagan Valley Chapter; Irene Norton, Moosomin Chapter; and Peter Stroh, Saskatoon Chapter. The meeting concluded shortly before noon.

On Friday, May 14, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. President Sunil called day two of the AGM to order. The Minutes of the 2020 AGM were reviewed and accepted. The Election of Officers for the STS Provincial Executive was held and the results are as follows:

**President:**

Sunil Pandila, Moose Jaw

**Vice-President:**

Sue Amundrud, Melfort

**ACER-CART:**

Helen Sukovieff, Regina (Acclaimed)

**Councillors: (Acclaimed)**

Don Gabel, Wakaw

Joyce Hoffman, Regina

Jane Isinger, Saskatoon

Alan Laughlin, Rabbit Lake

Terri Mitchell, Yorkton

Doug Still, Regina

**Members-at-Large: (Acclaimed)**

Gary Boechler, Kelowna

Huguette Kitchen, Lloydminster

Diane Marchand, Gravelbourg

Devona Putland, Moosomin

Diane Selby, Saskatoon

Anna Wehrkamp, Gronlid

Adeline Wuschenny, Regina

President Sunil and Vice-President Don presented the 2021 AGM Resolutions. Delegates had the opportunity to speak to the resolutions and this process continued into the afternoon following a short lunch break. The voting platform worked very well for most Delegates and DOTS was available to assist if required. Delegates also had the option to phone in their votes if internet access was unstable. Following the resolutions, the Delegates passed the Budget and the Fee Bylaw for 2021-22 and Deloitte was appointed as the auditor.

In President Sunil’s closing remarks, he thanked the Delegates for their patience and willingness to participate in a virtual AGM. Many Delegates had never used Zoom and the voting platform was a new experience for everyone. This has been a learning experience for all of us; however, teachers always seem ready to take on new challenges. We look forward to the future with hope and optimism that we will be meeting in-person for the 2022 AGM.

# Congratulations!



**Clarence Becker**  
*2021 Honorary Life Member  
Recipient*

Clarence Becker taught and was an administrator in small Saskatchewan country schools, northern schools and later in Saskatoon. He participated in the formation of a successful, vibrant Army Cadet Training program while in the north and headed up a multi-program Industrial Arts Department in Saskatoon. Involvement in extra-curricular activities ultimately led him to be Football Commissioner for Saskatoon High Schools.

Clarence retired from Education in 1986 and moved to Kelowna. Subsequently he has served over 20 years with the Knights of Columbus and is an outstanding member of the STS Okanagan Chapter. He is now 93 years of age and continues to be an energetic and motivated member.

Clarence is always willing to assist others. Most recently, in the STS Okanagan Chapter Clarence has been ready to step in for an Executive member who for various reasons might need to be absent. This has included social committees, nomination committees or resolutions committees. Clarence served five years as elected Vice-President and President of the STS Okanagan Chapter, including attendance at many AGMs and Chapter Presidents' Meetings in Saskatoon. Clarence always makes thoughtful and practical contributions to any committee or organization with which he's involved; he is just that kind of individual.

Now in his nineties, Clarence's contributions may not be ostentatious or pretentious but are none the less priceless. This is true not only at the Executive and Committee levels, but in all the mundane but important responsibilities involved in running a Chapter. Last year, facing the loss of our long-serving President, Clarence, at 92 years old, suggested in typical style that he share the position with any other willing member. Although eventually not needed, his willingness was simply reflective of who Clarence is.

For his many contributions and abounding energy poured into the STS and Okanagan Chapter, the Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan is proud to award Honorary Life Membership to Clarence Becker.



**Irene Norton**  
*2021 Honorary Life Member  
Recipient*

Irene Norton has been active throughout her career and her retirement. While teaching, she quickly showed leadership potential, heading the Women in Education Committee of the local STF. In an era where the majority of administrative roles were filled by men, she became Vice-Principal of Rocanville School. She became a role model for many, given her ability to work full time, take university classes by correspondence, and raise a growing family. Since retirement she has remained active in her community of Rocanville as well as in the Moosomin Chapter of the STS.

Provincially, Irene attended the STS Stitch 'N Quilt from 2010 to 2017 and was a co-planner of the 2011 Provincial Stitch 'N Quilt hosted in Moosomin. The event served

to ignite the love of quilting in a number of Chapters. She has also represented the Moosomin Chapter as a Delegate at the STS Annual General Meeting and is always willing to share her learning.

In her local STS Chapter, Irene attends Chapter meetings and events regularly. She serves as Historian for the Moosomin Chapter, documenting the activities of the Chapter and displaying these at local events. Irene has given countless hours to the task of gathering information and photos, memorializing the Chapter's history for others to enjoy.

Irene is active in her community. She helped establish the Rocanville Thrift Store and Dial-a-Van to help provide much needed public transportation in her community. Irene schedules the volunteer drivers and receives calls for appointments. Irene is Secretary of the local Seniors' Centre and regularly assists with donations for funerals, community pot-lucks, and United Church fowl suppers. She has served on both the Lioness Club and the Rocanville Memorial Hall Board.

It is an honour to award Irene Norton Honorary Life Membership in the Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan. Her volunteerism and leadership have been shared locally, regionally, and provincially, and the benefits of her labours are enjoyed by many.



**Peter Stroh**  
*2021 Honorary Life Member  
Recipient*

Peter Stroh is an active contributor to numerous organizations since retiring from teaching in Saskatoon and his involvements in the Saskatoon Teachers' Association and the STF. Peter has been involved in the STS provincially and at the Chapter level. His many involvements also extend well into the community of Saskatoon.

Provincially, Peter is a tireless advocate for retired teachers and older adults. He has been a Delegate to AGMs since 2007, submitting resolutions and speaking to them. Peter has been active on recreation hosting committees and enjoys events such as fishing, golf and Kaiser.

At the Chapter level, Peter has been an Executive member of the Saskatoon Chapter since 2008

and has served in Vice-President, President and Past-President positions. He has contributed to numerous Chapter committees including Honorary Life Member, Service Award and Resolutions Committees. Peter has helped plan the Fall Welcome Breakfasts, Chapter banquets, socials and a variety of program presentations. He has served on the Chapter Constitution and Bylaw Committee and Ad Hoc Committees. Peter is an Honorary Life Member of the Saskatoon Chapter and is also an associate member of the Wakaw Chapter.

Peter is an active fixture in the wider community serving on the University of Saskatchewan Alumni Association, University of Regina Alumni Association Senate representative, U of S Senate as well as Vice-President and Dean Search Committees. He has chaired the Saskatchewan Literacy Foundation, been a volunteer canvasser for various organizations, has initiated a volunteer program for vaccination support and is an Elections Canada Training Officer. Peter loves recreational opportunities, is a player in the 60 Plus Hockey League and has served on the National 60 Plus Hockey League Host Committee.

For these many, many contributions to the STS and other organizations, it is an honour to award Peter Stroh Honorary Life Membership in the Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan. His volunteerism and contributions at the provincial, local and community level are truly too numerous to list.

## Chapter Membership Growth Awards 2019-20

- Humboldt and District Chapter
- Northwest Chapter
- Shaunavon Chapter

## Chapter Membership Growth Awards 2020-21

- Maple Creek-Medicine Hat Chapter
- Moose Jaw Chapter
- Souris-Moose Mountain Chapter
- Yorkton Chapter

## Chapter Award Recipients 2019-20

**Regina Chapter**  
*Awards of Merit:*  
 Debi Dittrick  
 Geri Skilnick

**Wakaw Chapter**  
*Special Recognition Award:*  
 Mel Osolinsky

**Yorkton Chapter**  
*Chapter Awards of Merit:*  
 Anne Kemp  
 Doreen Rathgeber

## Chapter Award Recipients 2020-21

**Regina Chapter**  
*Awards of Merit:*  
 David Cawood  
 Myrna Switzer

**Swift Current**  
*Chapter Award:*  
 Harold Little

**Tisdale Chapter**  
*Chapter Award:*  
 Bob Donnan



## Birthday Greetings!

Birthday Greetings to **Henry Braun**, Regina Chapter who celebrated his 90th birthday in December 2020, and **Dorothy Philpot**, Regina Chapter, who will be 91 years of age in June 2021.

## STS Office Reminders

- STS Group Benefit Planholders who are eligible for the Saskatchewan Seniors' Drug Plan may be eligible for a reduced premium by providing the STS Office with a copy of the Seniors' Drug Plan confirmation letter.

For information on the Saskatchewan Seniors' Drug Plan, please speak with your

pharmacist or contact the Seniors' Drug Plan office at 1-800-667-7581. If you live in Regina please call 306-787-3317.

- For any changes to your address and/or Group Benefits coverage, please contact the STS Office directly at 306-373-3879 or [sts@sts.sk.ca](mailto:sts@sts.sk.ca).

- If you are on a temporary contract and wish to suspend your STS Group Benefits, please contact the STS Office via email prior to the 15th of the month to be effective the 1st of the following month.
- Please make sure that you are using the correct email address for the STS: [sts@sts.sk.ca](mailto:sts@sts.sk.ca).

# Budget, Finance and Audit

Don Gabel

The Committee provides financial oversight of all STS funds and met on May 12, 2021, prior to the AGM. The current financial position of the STS Operating Fund and the STS Extended Health and Dental Plan were reviewed as of March 31, 2021. Current year-to-date revenues in excess of expenses are \$326,895.31, compared to March 31, 2020, where revenue in excess of expenses was \$239,754.82. The surplus is due to increased revenue resulting from increased membership numbers as well as significantly decreased expenses due to COVID-19. All budget lines are operating within budget projections. Current membership as of May 12 is 11,840 – a slight drop of 13 members from March.

The Extended Health Plan has also experienced a surplus that is referenced in the Group Benefits report. The surplus has allowed your Executive to approve a Health Spending Account of \$250 per primary planholder for use between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2023.

The Contingency Plan has a balance of \$1,574,473.39 as of March 31, 2021. A resolution was passed at the AGM

to review all aspects of the Contingency Fund including the amount of money set aside as well as uses for the money in the fund.

The following resolutions were also passed:

- A membership fee of \$30 per member,
- Chapter rebates of \$1000 plus \$8 per member,
- A budget for 2021-22 (including a one-time donation to McDowell Foundation of \$10,000 and an anticipated surplus of \$31,500), and
- Appointment of Deloitte as our auditors for 2021-22.

I would like to acknowledge the members of the Committee who have served the past two years: Sue Amundrud, Joyce Hoffman, Jane Isinger, Marie LeBlanc-Warick, Diane Marchand, Lyle Markowski, Terri Mitchell, Doug Still, Maxine Stinka, Helen Sukovieff, Adeline Wuschenny, Sunil Pandila (ex-officio), Fred Herron (2019-20), Murray Wall (2020-21), and Colleen Bailey (Office Staff).

## Councillors' Report

Joyce Hoffman

The STS Provincial Executive Councillors represent the STS at the STF Meetings of Council. These representatives are elected yearly for a one-year term.

This year, at the Annual Meeting of Council, the STS was represented by Sunil Pandila, Don Gabel, Maxine Stinka, Sue Amundrud, Alan Laughlin, Doug Still, Jane Isinger and Joyce Hoffman.

All STS elected Councillors attended the virtual Annual Meeting of Council, which was held April 27-29, 2021. It was well attended by STF Delegates from across the province. Pheedloop was the provider of the technology used.

Patrick Maze welcomed everyone to the 88th Meeting of Council and introduced the new Executive Director of the STF, Bobby Taillefer. She then addressed the Delegates and gave us some of her background prior to arriving at the STF.

Very few resolutions pertained directly to STS members. Election of the new STF Executive also took place, with the following results.

Patrick Maze was acclaimed as President and Samantha Becotte was acclaimed as Vice-President. They will now serve another two-year term.

Four new candidates for Executive were elected for a two-year term. These include: Nathan Bromm, Kirsten Fritsch, Ben Goby, and Amy Korver. They join Neal Boutin, Vincent Mamer, Gwen Paul and Laura Skrumeda Sawby, to form the Executive members of the STF.

As with any virtual meeting with several delegates, there were a few glitches that Pheedloop was able to solve.

It was a successful virtual conference. As STS Councillors, we appreciated being part of it to represent our members.

# STS Resolutions

Alan Laughlin

Information regarding the disposition of resolutions pertaining to Bylaws will be sent to each Chapter President for distribution to members.

## Resolutions 2020

### Resolutions Directed to STS (A) (Non-Bylaws)

**A.2 Be It Resolved** that elections for the 2020 Annual General Meeting be deferred to the 2021 Annual General Meeting and that current Provincial Executive members have their terms extended until June 30, 2021. **Carried**

**A.3 Be It Resolved** that nominations received for the 2020 elections be considered for elections held at the 2021 Annual General Meeting. **Carried**

**A.4 Be It Resolved** that the STS annual fee for 2020-2021 be confirmed as being \$30.00 per person. **Carried**

**A.5 Be It Resolved** that the STS annual rebate to each Chapter for 2020-2021 be confirmed as being \$400.00 plus \$8.00 per member. **Carried**

**A.6 Be It Resolved** that the STS budget for July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021, be confirmed as having no changes from the approved July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020, budget. **Carried**

**A.7 Be It Resolved** that Deloitte be confirmed as the STS Auditor for 2020-2021. **Carried**

## 2021 Resolutions

### Resolutions Directed to STS (A) (Non-Bylaws)

**A.3 Be It Resolved** that the STS implement a public information and awareness program of issues affecting the STS and seniors for political parties and candidates before the provincial election using money from the Contingency Fund.

**Referred to STS Executive**

**A.4 Be It Resolved** that the STS implement a provincial public information and awareness program using money from the Contingency Fund, on issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affecting seniors, (including STS members).

**Referred to STS Executive**

**A.5 Be It Resolved** that the STS encourage its Chapters and individual members to actively support the STF campaign regarding class size and composition by registering for the STF online platform, “Tell Them Tuesday”. **Carried**

**A.6 Be It Resolved** that the STS provide access on the STS Website to information and ideas for messages that enable members to request support for teachers during this pandemic from people in positions of authority such as school boards and the Minister of Education. **Carried**

**A.7 Be It Resolved** that the STS encourage its Chapters and individual members to communicate their concerns for teachers during this pandemic, to the Minister of Education and relevant local education authorities, with a copy to the STS and STF. **Carried**

**A.8 Be It Resolved** that the STS adopt a position opposed to “Ageism” in all its forms including medical treatment by triage based on birthdates, and inadequate care for residents in long-term care facilities. **Carried**

**A.9 Be It Resolved** that the STS develop a policy to counter “ageism”. **Carried**

**A.10 Be It Resolved** that the STS undertake an extensive survey of members to determine the needs, goals and wishes of members to guide the STS in adapting and emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic. **Carried**

**A.13 Be It Resolved** that the STS investigate decreasing the Travel Exclusions Limitations in the Group Benefits Plan from three months to one month. **Carried**

**A.14 Be It Resolved** that the STS refund individual members of the Superannuated Teachers Extended Health Plan any rebate from Saskatchewan Blue Cross, beyond the negotiated 3.5% administrative commission, arising from the reduced claim experience as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. **Tabled**

**A.15 Be It Resolved** that the STS conduct a review of the appropriate uses and levels in the Superannuated Teachers Extended Health Plan Unappropriated Reserve Fund. **Tabled**



**A.16 Be It Resolved** that the STS Executive conduct a study of the representation of out of Province STS members on the STS Executive.  
**Referred to STS Executive**

**A.17 Be It Resolved** that the STS Executive review all aspects of the Contingency Fund including the amount of money set aside and uses for the money in the fund and make recommendations to the 2022 AGM.  
**Carried**

**A.18 Be It Resolved** that STS work together with the host hotel for STS events to accommodate the needs of disabled and handicapped individuals.  
**Referred to STS Executive**

#### **Resolutions Directed to STF (B)**

No resolutions have been directed to the STF.

#### **Resolutions Directed to ACER-CART (C)**

**C.1 Be It Resolved** that ACER-CART investigate protocols with Health Canada, making organ and tissue donation feasible from rural and remote locations.  
**Carried**

#### **Resolutions Directed to the Government (D)**

**D.1 Be It Resolved** that the STS, subject to STF Bylaw 4.5.1 and STS Bylaw 6.2.7.5, lobby the provincial government that the Minister for Seniors has sufficient staff and funding to support the needs of seniors in Saskatchewan.  
**Carried**

**D.2 Be It Resolved** that the STS, subject to STF Bylaw 4.5.1 and STS Bylaw 6.2.7.5, urge the Government of Saskatchewan to commit financial support to Saskatchewan communities and SSM to support the Age-Friendly Communities initiative.  
**Carried**

**D.3 Be It Resolved** that the STS, subject to STF Bylaw 4.5.1 and STS Bylaw 6.2.7.5, communicate concerns for teachers during this pandemic to the Minister of Education with a copy to the STF.  
**Carried**

**D.4 Be It Resolved** that the STS, subject to STF Bylaw 4.5.1 and STS Bylaw 6.2.7.5, call upon the Government of Saskatchewan to provide high speed internet access to low-income urban neighborhoods at no charge.  
**Carried**

**D.5 Be It Resolved** that the STS, subject to STF Bylaw 4.5.1 and STS Bylaw 6.2.7.5, call upon the Government of Saskatchewan to expand internet service in rural and remote areas of Saskatchewan.  
**Carried**

**D.6 Be It Resolved** that the STS together with SSM, ACER-CART and CARP lobby the federal government to develop and enforce national standards for long-term care residences.  
**Carried**

**D.7 Be It Resolved** that the STS, subject to STF Bylaw 4.5.1 and STS Bylaw 6.2.7.5, lobby the provincial government to develop and enforce provincial standards for long-term care residences.  
**Carried**

**D.8 Be It Resolved** that the STS together with SSM, ACER-CART and CARP lobby the federal government to extend the temporary withdrawal reduction amounts for RRIFs.  
**Carried**

**D.9 Be It Resolved** that the STS Executive advocate for the inclusion of medicinal cannabis in the Saskatchewan Drug Formulary.  
**Referred to STS Executive**

**D.10 Be It Resolved** that the STS, subject to STF Bylaw 4.5.1 and STS Bylaw 6.2.7.5, lobby the Minister for Seniors and the provincial government to add the shingles vaccine, Shingrix, to the Saskatchewan Drug Plan Formulary.  
**Carried**

**D.11 Be It Resolved** that the STS, subject to STF Bylaw 4.5.1 and STS Bylaw 6.2.7.5, lobby the provincial government to increase funding for Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI).  
**Carried**

#### **Late Resolutions (E)**

**E.2 Be It Resolved** that the STS Executive urge the STF Bargaining Committee to include 100% indexing on the cost-of-living adjustment when they formulate the 2022 provincial collective bargaining proposals.  
**Carried**

**E.8 Be It Resolved** that the STS undertake a review of policies and practices for charitable donations including but not limited to scholarships and the McDowell Foundation.  
**Carried**

**E.9 Be it Resolved** that the STS, subject to STF Bylaw 4.5.1 and STS Bylaw 6.2.7.5, call upon the Government of Saskatchewan to provide free access to high-speed internet (where available) to low-income families in rural and remote areas.  
**Carried**

# Group Benefits

Maxine Stinka

The Group Benefits Committee members for 2019-21 were: Sue Amundrud, Don Gabel, Fred Herron/Murray Wall, Joyce Hoffman, Jane Isinger, Marie LeBlanc-Warick, Diane Marchand, Lyle Markowski, Terri Mitchell, Sunil Pandila (ex-officio), Doug Still, Helen Sukovieff, Anna Wehrkamp, Adeline Wuschenny, and Maxine Stinka (Chair).

The present contract with Saskatchewan Blue Cross runs from July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2022, as the original contract was extended for an additional year. The Extended Health Care premiums increased July 1, 2019, but the Dental premiums were unchanged. Premiums will remain the same until July 1, 2022. An *STS Information Booklet* summarizing the benefits is available for teacher considering retirement and a *Schedule of Benefits* for existing planholders is available upon request from the STS Office and online at [www.sts.sk.ca](http://www.sts.sk.ca).

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in fewer claims than projected as many services were unavailable during the last year and travel was restricted. The Travel Claims Ratio has been very low since August 2019. Both the second and third years of the contract with Saskatchewan Blue Cross have had larger surpluses than expected. The first nine months of the third year of the contract (July 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021) had a surplus of approximately \$1.1M in Extended Health and approximately \$0.3M in Dental for a total surplus of approximately \$1.5M. Should any

deficits result in the final year of the contract, they will be covered by the surplus which is held in the Unappropriated Reserve Fund. There have also been improvements for vision care and hearing aid coverage as well as for additional paramedical services during the term of this contract.

Over the last number of years, members have indicated a desire for a variety of improvements using the surplus that has accumulated, most recently due to the pandemic. The Executive decided to use a portion of this surplus to provide a Health Spending Account of \$250 for each planholder of the Extended Health and Dental Plan. This amount can be used by members of the Plan as of July 1, 2021, on any medical expenses allowed by Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2023. Examples include the shingles vaccine, items presently not fully covered on the STS Plan, and Plan premiums. The list of eligible expenses is lengthy and available on the CRA website. The STS website provides additional information under the Health

Spending Account section of the Group Benefits FAQs.

Saskatchewan Blue Cross has one or more representatives attending all the STS Group Benefits Committee meetings. This provides an opportunity for Committee members to ask questions regarding clarification and issues that may arise. In addition, the STS Office Staff has direct contact with a representative of Saskatchewan Blue Cross so that member questions and difficulties can be handled in a quick and professional manner.

Thank you to our Saskatchewan Blue Cross representatives for their continued support over the years. Thank you to our Office Staff (Colleen, Heather, and MJ), and Executive Secretaries Fred Herron and Murray Wall for all their hard work and professionalism in keeping our Group Benefits Plan running smoothly. Finally, thank you to the Plan members for your ownership and prudent use of our Extended Health and Dental Plan and the members of the Group Benefits Committee for their diligent oversight of the Plan.



# Health Spending Account (HSA)

Members of the STS Extended Health and Dental Plan recently received information through the mail regarding the STS Provincial Executive's authorization of a \$250 Health Spending Account (HSA) to be utilized between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2023.

We recognize Extended Health and Dental Plan members may have many questions about the Health Spending Account and we encourage you to read the Memo from the STS Executive dated May 1, 2021, and to also visit the Health Spending Account section of the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the STS website ([www.sts.sk.ca](http://www.sts.sk.ca)).

A Health Spending Account allows for reimbursement of

medical expenses beyond what is covered by our Group Benefits Plan, as long as it is allowed by Canada Revenue Agency. This may include items that are already partially covered by our Group Benefits Plan or it may include additional items such as vaccines or various products and services. Even premiums that are paid for the Group Benefits Plan are an eligible expense that can be claimed on your HSA.

To utilize the \$250 allocation, submit your claim using a Saskatchewan Blue Cross Extended Health Benefits claim form and indicate that payment should come from your Health Spending Account by checking the box for "Health Spending

Account". If you would like to submit for reimbursement of premiums paid, you will need to include a pension statement or a statement of premiums. The statement of premiums is available from the STS Office upon request.

If claiming online or using the Blue Cross App, please include the Saskatchewan Blue Cross claim form with the Health Spending Account box checked.

The Memo to STS Extended Health and Dental Plan participants dated May 1, 2021, as well as the Frequently Asked Questions are available on the STS website ([www.sts.sk.ca](http://www.sts.sk.ca)).

## Did you know

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Yes, I'd like to start receiving *Outreach!* electronically!

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# From The Editor's Desk

Joyce Hoffman

The first two-year AGM was held virtually, on May 13-14, 2021. We were lucky to have DOTS as our provider, handling all the technical areas. They were very capable and provided assistance to those who needed it.

All Delegates attending either had a new learning experience or have worked in this environment before this meeting. As life-long learners, it was challenging for some but we all got through the AGM.

We now have a bit of time to enjoy the sun and finish off our gardening. With all that extra time to fill, please consider spending a bit of it writing and submitting an article for "Superannuates Make a Difference" and/or "Spotlight on Superannuates", for further editions of *Outreach*. These can be submitted directly to the STS Office. Also consider receiving *Outreach* online and indicate that request to the office.

The *Outreach* Committee and I hope you all have an enjoyable summer, and look forward to seeing some of you in person next year.

## STS Executive 2020-21

President/Councillor:	Sunil Pandila, Moose Jaw Chapter	<b>Councillors:</b> Sue Amundrud	Carrot River Valley (Melfort & District) Chapter
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