



# Media Release

## ***Local school board trustee recognized with new honour from Public School Boards' Association of Alberta***

June 4, 2021 (Edmonton, AB) ... On behalf of the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta (PSBAA), President Cathy Hogg congratulates all of the winners of PSBAA Special Recognition awards at the Association's annual Spring General Assembly (SGA).

Although the SGA is being held virtually again this year due to the pandemic, the setting has not dampened trustees' enthusiasm for this highly-anticipated event.

A total of six awards were presented. Locally, Dr. Rubi Helen Shirley was recognized as the first recipient of the new award, Promoting and Advancing in Alberta one or more of the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Dr. Nancy Spencer-Poitras, the Superintendent for Northland School Division, nominated Dr. Shirley for the award. In her nomination, Dr. Spencer-Poitras noted that "Rubi should be recognized for her outstanding thesis exploring the phenomenon of low high school graduation rates of First Nation students in Canada and the perceptions of First Nations chiefs."

Dr. Shirley interviewed 10 First Nations chiefs in two provinces, and found that First Nation people have always valued education, but from the First Nation worldview. "This study was significant because for the first time, it records the voices of the chiefs," said Dr. Spencer-Poitras in her nomination. She also stated that recommendations directing the chiefs to be involved in the educational process and provide guidance for current education systems in Canada could help increase high school graduation rates. "This research supports the importance of

including the chiefs in the education conversations for the First Nations students,” added Dr. Spencer-Poitras.

The Public School Boards’ Association of Alberta (PSBAA) is the voice of public school boards in the province. We believe public schools are the first choice in our communities, where children can go to learn and live the values of democracy together, reflecting our hope, and shaping the future of our communities.

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**Media contact:**

Troy Tait, Executive Director and CEO

Public School Boards’ Association of Alberta

[execdir@public-schools.ab.ca](mailto:execdir@public-schools.ab.ca) | 780-479-8080 | 780-999-5050 (m)