



**November 17, 2025**

## President's Message

**Sue Amundrud**

Welcome to winter!! The snow warnings on November 6 created some interesting drives home from our week of meetings, and a few of those attending the Chapter Presidents Meeting chose to be proactive and left a bit early. However, we had a wonderful Wednesday evening gathering/activity and an extremely productive day on Thursday – thanks to all who attended.

Of course, the purpose of this particular communication is to keep you up to date on the work of our committees and executive through the regular November meeting – you will find all of that information in the individual committee reports below. Please read them – they are intended to keep you “in the loop” as to what is happening provincially.

Stay safe this winter through all of the weather, upcoming Christmas events, and any travels you have planned.

## ACER-CART Report

**Helen Sukovleff**

ACER-CART President Bill Berryman sent a letter to Prime Minister Mark Carney regarding the elimination of the standalone Minister of Seniors position from the federal cabinet. Reducing the position to that of a Secretary of State position, not a full cabinet post, raises serious questions about our government's commitment to addressing the urgent needs of Canada's ageing population.

With regard to the Federal Dental program, this article is an update: [Tens of thousands mistakenly approved for dental coverage, Health Canada says | CBC News](#).

While we had earlier learned that those (across Canada) who had been mistakenly provided with funding for dental work were to repay this money, this article indicates that no repayments will be required.

Lastly, regarding the Federal Pharmacare program: still no additional provinces or territories have signed the bi-lateral agreement to be part of the national Pharmacare program in the past few months. ACER-CART President Bill Berryman wrote a letter to Marjorie Michel, Federal Minister of Health, encouraging continued action on the National Pharmacare program. We as retired individuals in Saskatchewan are invited to contact our MLAs to encourage them to get on board with this program for the benefit of the people of Saskatchewan.

## Advocacy Committee Report

**Huguette Kitchen**

The Advocacy Committee continues to explore possible learning opportunities that would interest our members. In addition, in the context of the Budget, Finance and Audit report was discussed a possibility of further engaging Chapters to be involved in providing learning opportunities for their members as well. Committee members will research and share with the Office any webinars they believe may be of interest to members. Sue and Owen will investigate an online offering of the STS Retirement Lifestyles seminar that might to be offered to members who may not be able to attend the sessions in person.



The Committee reviewed the Advocacy Committee Guideline in the Policy Handbook and recommended a slight addition with the following motion:

That the words be added to Guideline 2.2.1 in the Policy Handbook “local and” before the words “provincial bargaining”.

## **AGM Planning Committee Report**

### **Huguette Kitchen, Anna Wehrkamp**

The Willie Sons have been booked for 2026 AGM banquet entertainment at the 2026 Annual General Meeting. The AGM dates are May 12-14, 2026, at Dakota Dunes Resort, south of Saskatoon.

The Committee discussed the Interest Sessions for 2026 AGM. Murray shared Interest Sessions that have been confirmed to date.

DOTS (Data on the Spot) will be setting up a table prior to the Thursday session to assist people with getting set up with their electronic devices.

## **Budget, Finance and Audit Committee Report**

### **Terri Mitchell**

A quarterly report for September 30, 2025, from Connor, Clark and Lunn was reviewed by the Executive. The Portfolio Summary indicates continued growth over time.

Membership is presently 12,402.

Reserve Fund and Account balances were reviewed, and the Executive approved Financial Statements for September 30, 2025. Revenues from July 1, 2025, to September 30, 2025, are \$329,402 with expenses from July 1, 2025, to September 30, 2025, being \$151,891.

The Executive had further discussion around Budget priorities, specifically regarding the development and inclusion of a Chapter Learning Grant for the 2026-27 STS budget.

The Executive also moved that the status quo be maintained regarding AGM travel expenses where travel support would be paid to the chapters at the end of February each year based on three individuals per vehicle travelling to AGM. Chapters, as always, may choose to supplement this as determined by the chapter.

## **Communications Advisory Committee**

### **Joyce Hoffman**

The Communications Committee met on November 4, 2025, and we continue to work towards a website renewal update, with the purpose of the update to ensure that the STS website is easy to use and senior friendly.

The focus of the Communications Advisory Committee will be on the website renewal going forward, until it is completed.



# Governance and Handbook Review (GAHR) Committee Report

## Terri Mitchell

The Committee reviewed the draft STS Strategic Plan, and the Executive approved the draft Strategic Plan in principle. Preliminary details of the draft were shared at the Chapter Presidents Meeting.

The Committee began discussions to address goal three, the development of a policy to guide chapters wishing to advocate directly with the government. A draft policy is now in the making and will be considered at the January meeting.

The date of our next meeting is January 13, 2025.

# Group Benefits Committee Report

## Doug Still

### Plan Participation

Membership in our Group Benefits Program continues to grow. As of November 2025, there are 9,348 members compared to 9,203 a year ago, representing a 1.6% increase. There are several categories of plan participants, but the two largest groups are members of the Teacher Superannuation Commission Plan (the 'old' plan): 5,302, and 3,817 from the Saskatchewan Teachers' Retirement Plan (the 'new' plan).

### Update on Health Spending Account

The STS implemented a second Health Spending Account starting January 1, 2025, and running to December 31, 2026. This is the second time we have implemented such a program under rules established by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). Single plan members have an allowance of \$200, couple plans \$400 and family plans \$460. **Members must utilize their HSA money for health or dental expenses paid.**

HSAs allow health plan providers to return additional value to plan members where there is financial capacity to do so (for example, due to growth from investment income). **Members do not have to use the Health Spending Account on only the general health or dental services covered by the STS Group Benefits Plan.**

The HSA can be used in the following situations:

- Paying for current services that are covered by our plan in the case where a benefit has been maxed out. For example, if you purchase new lenses and frames, you can use the HSA to 'top up' beyond what our plan pays.
- Accessing a benefit that our plan might not currently cover but which is permitted by the CRA. (There is additional information below on how to access the CRA list of eligible medical expenses.)

**If you do not have any expenses covered under our plan, you can be reimbursed to the amount available in the HSA for premiums you have paid.** An annual statement for income tax purposes is mailed out in January, and this can also be used as your HSA claim up to your eligible amount. You also do not need to wait for the January statement—simply contact the STS office.

The first Health Spending Account a few years ago saw just over half of the \$2.1 million dollars claimed. The current allocation is \$2.9 million. As of October 28, around \$690,000 has been paid out. This represents about 24% of the \$2.9 million; however, we are over 42% of the way to the end of program in 14 months so the uptake is lagging. Unclaimed money will revert to the Group Benefits account in 2027.

**We want members to fully utilize their Health Spending Account funds.** If you are unsure, your Chapter President may be able to assist as information was presented at the Chapter Presidents Meeting on November 6. You can also access



information on the STS website [here](#). The site also provides a link to the CRA (click on 'Eligible Medical Expenses') where you can find additional information.

#### **Update on Saskatchewan Blue Cross**

Saskatchewan Blue Cross initiated a transition to a new digital platform in March of this year. There were significant issues for members as implementation did not come without major hiccups. After seven months, these issues have declined in number and the volume of calls to their Customer Service Centre has dropped as well.

We continue to work with Blue Cross to ensure that the system functions as it should. We ask individual members to let us know if there are continuing issues as we continue to monitor the implementation. The STS email is: [sts@sts.sk.ca](mailto:sts@sts.sk.ca).

## **Honorary Life Membership (HLM) Committee Report**

### **Doug Still**

Since our founding, the STS has recognized over 150 members who have contributed significantly to the betterment of the lives of superannuated teachers.

Chapters are encouraged to submit nominations of individuals for the Honorary Life Member Award, based primarily on contributions at the provincial level, but also reflecting nominee engagement at the chapter and community level.

To assist with nominations, a rubric has been developed which we encourage chapters to follow closely. The rubric has been provided to all Chapter Presidents, and is also available online at [FAQs 1 — Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan](#).

The deadline for submission of nominations is March 1 but we encourage you to submit prior to the deadline if possible.

## **Recreation Committee Report**

### **Helen Sukovleff, Anna Wehrkamp**

The Regina Chapter informed the office that Kaiser was being cancelled for this fall. A new request was submitted to have Kaiser on October 14, 2026 in Regina. This was approved.

A request for a new event called Cornhole was submitted from the Regina Chapter. It's possible that you've played this bean toss game and didn't realize it has an official name that is Cornhole. [Play Now | Saskatchewan Cornhole Association | Regina, SK](#)

This request was approved and will be held on March 26, 2026, at a facility called BackYard at the Saskatchewan Cornhole Association (SCA), 2363 2nd Avenue in Regina.

A request from Midlakes Chapter to hold a pickleball tournament in Elbow on June 10, 2026, was also approved.

And, as mentioned in our last report, Stitch 'n' Quilt will be held in Swift Current from September 21 to 24, 2026.

Please go to our STS Website at [Recreation — Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan](#) to find registration forms, as they're available, for the approved upcoming recreational activities.

Lastly, if your chapter would like to jump in and organize a provincial recreational event, there is lots of help for you. Just contact an Executive member and let's get started.



# Resolutions Committee Report

## Owen Sebastian

The Resolutions Committee has received no resolutions as of yet, so I would like to remind chapters and members that resolutions must be in to the office by March 1, 2026, to be included in the AGM Booklet. To submit a resolution, please use the “Submission of Resolution” form found on the website [here](#). The form explains what a resolution is and how it should be formatted. It also includes a quick checklist for resolutions and refers to STS policies and guidelines used to guide the work of the Resolutions Committee. If you have any questions, please contact me or the office.

# Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (SSM) Report

## Martin Berg, Sunil Pandlla, Sonja Susut

The Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism had a member consultation day on October 31, 2025. STS Representatives attending were Martin Berg, Sunil Pandila and Sonja Susut.

The day consisted of representatives from several organizations around the province and provided an opportunity for participants:

- to receive information about SSM’s current initiatives
- to receive information about and to offer older adult perspectives for a possible continuing care strategy
- to consider initiatives for SSM and Member Organizations to emphasize in the coming year

SSM presented an overview of the programs they are currently undertaking. These include:

- Ageism Awareness
- Age-Friendly
- Home Supports Initiative/Thrive at Home
- Facilitating Independence Grants
- Social Prescribing
- CBSS – Community Based Senior Services

The afternoon focussed on development of a Continuing Care Strategy. In groups, we discussed and were asked to provide feedback on the following questions:

1. What do you think are elements that should be included as part of that strategy?
2. What may be possible gaps in this strategy?
3. What are the barriers which need to be identified or overcome for this strategy?

