

## Student Attendance and Re-Engagement Symposium

<b>Facilitator(s):</b>	Kathy Robson, Caroline Gosling, Mardi Hardt, Jennifer Martinez, Chrissy Boone
<b>Date(s):</b>	<i>This is a multi-day event.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day 1: Oct 17, 2024 (8:30 am to 4:00 pm)</li> <li>• Day 2: Oct 18, 2024 (8:30 am to 12:00 pm)</li> </ul>
<b>Cost:</b>	
<b>Location:</b>	Edmonton (Fantasyland Hotel) 17700 - 87 Avenue
<b>Session Code:</b>	25-CP-112

### Target Audience

Teachers, Administrators, Mental Health Coaches

### About this Learning Opportunity

Chronic absences from school, defined as missing ten percent of the school year, or the equivalent of two full days a month, has risen dramatically since the pandemic. The reasons for this sharp increase are as multi-faceted and complex as the solutions to the problem will be.

Join us individually, or, ideally, as a school or division team for interactive and informative workshops that examine three specific intervention strategies related to improving student attendance:

1. Developing intentional plans to engage every family as a universal intervention
2. Managing the tension between repairing ruptured relationships and supporting the legislative demands to attend school: effective targeted interventions for those students and families already struggling with consistent attendance
3. Using Student Re-engagement Community Conferences (SRCC) as a relational approach to improving attendance for students with severe chronic absences (missing more than 20% of the school year)

Facilitated school or division-based discussion and planning opportunities will be built into each session through intentional activities and the creation of dedicated time so that all attendees can return to their work with plans unique to their setting.

### About the Facilitator(s)

#### Kathy Robson

Kathy Robson has been an educator for 34 years. She began as an elementary teacher in several rural communities in Saskatchewan.

She was a vice principal and principal for 10 years in Swift Current. She then became a Curriculum Coordinator for 10 years, where she was responsible for Literacy and Elementary curriculum within Chinook School Division. She was a lead provincially on the development of Saskatchewan Reads and Saskatchewan Reads for Administrators.

She was a Superintendent of Schools and recently retired as the Deputy Director for Chinook School Division in June. She was a co-lead on the Teaching and Assessment Priority Action of the Saskatchewan Provincial Education Plan. She served as the Family Engagement lead for Chinook and has attended several conferences and presented the work of the Chinook Family Engagement team who has been responsible for implementing several high impact family engagement strategies.

Kathy is married and lives with her husband in Swift Current. She is a mom to two grown daughters. She enjoys golf, hiking, travel, reading and spending time with her family.

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#### Caroline Gosling

Caroline retired after many years as an educator in Edmonton, Alberta. During her career, Caroline taught at elementary, junior high and senior high, was a consultant for students whose behaviour could be challenging, and a

principal of several different schools. Caroline also had the opportunity to gain a provincial perspective through secondments to Alberta Children's Services and Alberta Education. In 1998 Caroline was introduced to Restorative Practices and over the past 22 years has been able to see first-hand how a restorative approach can transform schools and lives. Caroline is an instructor and coach with International Institute for Restorative Practices.

Caroline has a BEd with a major in special education from the University of Alberta. She has also received an MEd in Educational Leadership from the University of Portland and most recently her Restorative Justice Certificate from Simon Fraser University.

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### **Mardi Hardt, Jennifer Martinez, Chrissy Boone**

As part of a Mental Health Strategic Plan for Elk Island Public School Division, Mardi Hardt, Jennifer Martinez, and Chrissy Boone formed a dynamic team committed to transforming student experiences and fostering a culture of attendance and engagement. Working in schools, and with division leaders, they built meaningful relationships with students and families facing chronic absences and supported schools to use relational strategies including restorative practices to strengthen connection and belonging.

Chrissy and Jennifer met with families in their homes, communities, and schools, as the team uncovered the many barriers preventing consistent attendance and collaborated closely with school teams and community agencies to address these challenges. The team worked to ensure every student thrived in a safe, welcoming, and respectful learning environment and had the supports needed to flourish in school. Through their empathetic approach and problem-solving expertise, Mardi, Jennifer, and Chrissy gently disrupted traditional views of education and created opportunities for every student to re-engage with their education and reach their full potential.