

2026 MTS PD DAY PROGRAM WRITE-UP



Material submission deadline is JUNE 30, 2026

Submission of materials must be provided in a Microsoft Word document or PDF and is restricted to text only. No images or HTML coding will be used within the registration system. Your group can provide a final program PDF to be added to the website.

A. Conference Information

SAGE	Canadian Association for Young Children - MB		
Conference Title	Joyful Practices in Challenging Times		
Date(s)	October 23, 2026		
Start Time	8:15 registration 9:00 keynote	End Time	3:00
Location	O.V. Jewitt School, 66 Neville Street		
Maximum Participants			

B. Registration Information

Registration Opens On		at	
Registration Closes On	October 16	at	3 pm
Allow Cancellations	Yes Please note that registration fees cannot be refunded after October 10th. If you cancel prior to October 10th, you will be refunded of your conference fees except for \$10 which will be withheld to cover administrative expenses. We are unable to refund your CAYC membership fees.		
Cutoff Date for Cancelling	October 10		
PayPal User ID (email)	membership@cayc.ca		
Allow Pay Later	Yes		No

C. Conference Description

Program of Events

Keynote Address: When Joy Leads: Insights that can Transform Teaching and Learning **Presenter: Karen Boyd**

What if joy wasn't something we squeezed in between "real learning"—but the thing that helps real learning happen? In this keynote, we will explore what research tells us about the power of joy to boost curiosity, focus, and well-being for both students and teachers. We will take time to be reminded of the magic that drew us to teaching in the first place. Through story and evidence backed inspiration, the day will start with the reaffirmation that when joy leads, transformation follows.

Karen Boyd is the assistant superintendent responsible for educational programming in the River East Transcona School Division. In this role, she has provided and supported professional learning for K-12 teachers. She has also worked with preservice teachers and as the Language and Literacy Consultant for Manitoba Education.

Full Day Sessions (FD)

FD1

Title: The Joy of Small Sculptures: Cold Porcelain Clay in the Classroom

Description: This hands-on workshop invites teachers to explore the joy of creating small sculptures using inexpensive cold porcelain clay. Participants will learn simple techniques for building armatures and sculpting while engaging in a relaxed, creative process. The session highlights how this project can support storytelling, problem-solving, and cross-curricular learning in the classroom. Teachers will leave with a finished piece, practical ideas, and confidence to bring this engaging activity to their students.

NOTE: Participants are asked to bring a small box or container to transport their sculpture home while it is still drying.

Presenter:

Elizabeth Armstrong, Teacher, Margaret Park School

FD2

Title: Soapstone Carving – Finding the Joy in Art

Description: Participants will be guided through the process of soapstone carving by Fredrick Spence. We will begin with an introduction and smudging followed by a story of finding joy in ourselves. We then go through 3 steps to a completed sculpture.

Presenter: Frederick L. Spence was born and raised in Peguis First Nation. Growing up in the community until he moved to Winnipeg

for work at 17 years of age. This time of his life was turbulent and gone through some life challenges that led to substance abuse. He has spent the past 6 years of his life reclaiming the things he lost including his identity, culture and mental strength. This includes ceremony, language classes and therapy. Soapstone carving has been the main source of therapeutic release and working through difficult times. Sharing that through volunteering and workshops so others can have an outlet that he found helpful.

Morning Sessions (AM)

AM 1

Title: Learning Inspires Play and Play Inspires Learning

Description: In this session, we will explore the many ways to use documentation and reflective practice to plan for rich, playful, joyful learning experiences. We will take you on an inquiry journey from start to finish, highlighting the impact of teacher presence and intentional practices on the growth and learning of both teachers and students. We will invite you to reflect on your own practice and begin to design joyful learning experiences with your own students in mind.

Presenters:

Julie McGee, Divisional Literacy Support Teacher, Winnipeg School Division

Corinne McMurren, Kindergarten Classroom Teacher, Robertson School, Winnipeg School Division

AM 2

Title: Weaving Joy Through Culturally Grounded Storytelling

Description: This session explores how joy can be cultivated through culturally grounded storytelling in a Kindergarten classroom, guided by the Seven Sacred Indigenous Teachings. Students engaged in joyful literacy experiences using story vines and puppet shows. After reading selected mentor texts, students created personal joyful vines by braiding sweetgrass and adding visuals to represent what brings them joy. They then used story vines to listen to oral stories from Indigenous, Punjabi, and other cultural traditions focused on teachings such as truth, courage, and love. Students brought these stories to life through a collaborative puppet show. In this session, participants will have the opportunity to create their own braided sweetgrass story vine and puppets. This joyful, play-based process highlights how inclusive storytelling can deepen language development, cultural identity, and a joyful sense of belonging in challenging times.

Presenters:

Sheena Gurm, Teacher, Amber Trails Community School
Rajwinder Saini, Teacher, Amber Trails Community School

AM 3

Title: Intentional Joyful Practice

Description: As educators, we play a big role in shaping classroom culture. Intentional interactions with each individual child builds trust and meaning which creates a positive lasting change in children's lives. Intentionality takes time, resources and mindset. We will brainstorm and share ideas for you to take back and build on within your classroom. Encouraging you to showcase intentionality to move towards an environment that celebrates the joy of each child's voice, experience, and growth.

Co-Presenters: Gerrie Stolz, Educational Developer, Early Childhood Development Team, Red River College Polytechnic
Kyla Richie, Pedagogical Lead, Morrow Avenue Child Care- RDC

AM 4

Title: Nature Journals

Description: Join us as we share how to weave nature journals into your outdoor learning routine. Nature journaling integrates literacy, math, and science learning in an engaging way during all seasons. Discover the joy of developing your own journaling practice and take away several ready-to-use journaling prompts that you can start using with your students right away. Bring a sketchbook and dress for the weather.

Co-Presenters:

Sandra Smith, Sara Murray, Alice Sherwin, Kayla Gagnon,
Classroom Teachers, Seven Oaks School Division

AM 5

Title: Out Loud and In Time: Musical Agency and Entrainment as Collectivist Pedagogy

Description: Get ready to make music together! This hands-on, activity-based session will explore connecting to musical literacy in the classroom from two different perspectives. First, through self-guided experiences with curated exploratory materials that encourage meaningful thinking about the elements of music. Second, through encountering the joy that results from communal musicking. Participants will engage with community-building music-making activities and resources for their classrooms while playing productively with the inherent tension between

individualized and synchronized learning approaches in music, the performing arts, and early years learning generally.

Presenter:

Stacy Stockton, Early Years Music Teacher, Isaac Brock School, Winnipeg School Division

AM 6

Title: Joyful Practices with Arcade Games

Description: You are invited to an engaging professional development workshop focused on bringing joy into the classroom through arcade-style games. Learn how simple game elements can boost student motivation, participation, and positive behaviour. This session will share practical strategies you can easily apply across subject areas and grade levels. Teachers will also explore how these joyful approaches support collaboration and deeper learning. Please be ready for a hands-on experience as we build mini cardboard arcade games together and bring these ideas to life.

Presenter:

Jatinder Jaura, Learning support teacher, James Nisbet Community School

Bryce Bernshine, Classroom teacher, James Nisbet Community School

AM 7

Title: Now, Shall I Walk or Ride? “Ride”, Pleasure said. “Walk”, Joy replied. – W.H. Davies

Description:

Sample the Joy that daily walks with your students can bring; the joy in movement, in play, in relationships, in discovery, in curiosity, in engaging fully with our senses, and in learning about the natural world. As we walk through the community, we will engage in lessons in numeracy, literacy, science, social studies and art - often integrating many subjects together. We will also stop for moments of mindfulness and reflection, and journal our experience along the way. You will leave this session with many ideas for your own joy-filled classroom walks as well as having met your daily step count. Please come dressed for the weather and wear your most comfortable walking shoes.

Presenter:

Bela Ferreira, Learning Support Teacher, Collicutt School, Seven Oaks School Division

AM 8

Title: Exploring Joyful Expansive Possibility: Dramatization and Centering Student Voice

Description:

Join us as we share about our collaborative teaching journey together, focused on surfacing authentic student voice in Vicky's class of grade 1 and 2 learners. We will invite you to bring your own stories alongside, building new possibilities as we tell stories from the field... stories of collective concern and compassion for a distressed Leprechaun visiting the class back in March, stories of joy as we collaboratively built and played our own miniature neighbourhood, filling it with silly characters and narratives pulsing with community. We will weave in the embedded use of mentor texts, direct reading and writing instruction, and all the playful expressions in between. We will also touch on the explicit power and possibility that opens through collaborative learning design as we inspired one another as teachers to delight in learners and learning in new ways through this joyful lived experience.

Co-Presenters:

Vicky Elgert, Grade 1&2 teacher, Brock Corydon School, Winnipeg School Division

Sara Neufeld, Divisional Literacy Support Teacher, Winnipeg School Division

AM 9

Title: Documentation as Invitation: The Joy of (Really!) Letting Young Children In

Description: In this presentation, we will consider what it means to document learning when we change not only what is included but who does the including. Using a screen-free digital camera session participants will consider the joyful possibilities of letting children take the documentation reins in our early-years spaces. The images will change, and your perspective on what "counts" as documentation will too.

Presenter:

Catherine-Laura Dunnington, Assistant Professor, Developmental Studies (ECE), University of Winnipeg

AM 10

Title: Travel with Stories

Description:

Travel with Stories is an invitation for children (and/or their families) to explore, discover, and share reading experiences.

The work of acquiring reading skills requires both the implementation and systematization of processes and methodologies, as well as moments and spaces to enjoy learning through joyful literary play. We share simple games that can transform students' experiences and encourage connections with literature. In the first part, teachers will participate in the different Travel with Stories activities. In the second part, I will share the foundation of these activities and the importance of high-quality literature (based on my work with inner-city schools in Winnipeg and Puerto Vallarta, Mexico). Teachers will take away joyful literacy ideas for their classrooms.

Presenter:

Marcela Mangarelli, Director, Travel with Stories

Afternoon Sessions (PM)

PM 1

Title: Learning Inspires Play and Play Inspires Learning

Description: In this session, we will explore the many ways to use documentation and reflective practice to plan for rich, playful, joyful learning experiences. We will take you on an inquiry journey from start to finish, highlighting the impact of teacher presence and intentional practices on the growth and learning of both teachers and students. We will invite you to reflect on your own practice and begin to design joyful learning experiences with your own students in mind.

Presenter:

Julie McGee, Divisional Literacy Support Teacher, Winnipeg School Division

Corinne McMurren, Kindergarten Classroom Teacher, Robertson School, Winnipeg School Division

PM 2

Title: Weaving Joy Through Culturally Grounded Storytelling

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and love. Students brought these stories to life through a collaborative puppet show. In this session, participants will have the opportunity to create their own braided sweetgrass story vine and puppets. This joyful, play-based process highlights how inclusive storytelling can deepen language development, cultural identity, and a joyful sense of belonging in challenging times.

Presenter:

Sheena Gurm, Teacher, Amber Trails Community School
Rajwinder Saini, Teacher, Amber Trails Community School

PM 3

Title: Supporting Children's Reading through Joyful Literacies Practices

Description: In this session, we will provide a brief overview of our research on the MB Human Rights Commission's Right to Read report which illustrates the narrow conceptions of both literacies and of learners in the report. Then we will share some of the joyful literacies practices that we have encountered in classrooms; literacies practices that can be used daily, that reflect the diversity of our students, that instill a love for reading, and that support young children in becoming joyful readers!

Co-Presenters:

Xiaoxiao Du, assistant professor of early years literacy, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba
Melanie Janzen, professor of curriculum, former early years teacher, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba
Paige Boyd, PhD student, University of Manitoba

PM 4

Title: Nature Journals

Description: Join us as we share how to weave nature journals into your outdoor learning routine. Nature journalling integrates literacy, math, and science learning in an engaging way during all seasons. Discover the joy of developing your own journalling practice and take away several ready-to-use journalling prompts that you can start using with your students right away. Bring a sketchbook and dress for the weather.

Co-Presenters:

Sandra Smith, Sara Murray, Alice Sherwin, Kayla Gagnon,
Classroom Teachers, Seven Oaks School Division

PM 5

Title: Leaning Into Joy: Rewilding Learning in Challenging Times

Description: In the midst of uncertainty, rediscovering joy can transform both teaching and learning. This session shares a

personal journey of shifting to greater curiosity—embracing inquiry, outdoor exploration, and “rewilded” learning spaces. Through hop-on/hop-off field trip experiences across Winnipeg and a residency at The Leaf at Assiniboine Park, discover how centering students as co-learners reignited purpose and created deeply meaningful, joy-filled learning.

Presenters:

Monika Mueller, Curriculum and Assessment Consultant & former Early Years Teacher, River East Transcona School Division

PM 6

Title: Joyful Practices with Arcade Games

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Bryce Bernshine, Classroom teacher, James Nisbet Community School

PM 7

Title: *Now, shall I walk or ride? “Ride”, Pleasure said. “Walk”, Joy replied. – W.H. Davies*

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Presenter:

	Bela Ferreira, Learning Support Teacher, Collicutt School, Seven Oaks School Division
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D. Contact Information

Conference Contact Name	Melanie Janzen	
Conference Contact Info	P: 204-230-4775	E: melanie.janzen@umanitoba.ca
Registration Contact Name	Lisa Stewart	
Registration Contact Info	P:	E: secretary.caycmb@gmail.com
Testing Contact Name	Melanie Janzen	
Testing Contact Email	melanie.janzen@umanitoba.ca	

E. Fees (must coordinate with SAGE Membership structure)

Conference Fee	\$70 for full day conference for CAYC members* \$35 for half day conference for CAYC members* \$110 for full day conference for NON members \$75 for half day conference for NON members ADD \$20 if you would like to have lunch
Conference & Membership Fee	
Membership Fee*	\$30 for CAYC membership \$15 for CAYC student membership FREE membership for those who identify First Nations, Metis or Inuit, you can become a national member for FREE, but you must still sign up at www.cayc.ca *To become a CAYC member, you must become a national CAYC member at www.cayc.ca (\$30). Once you have your national CAYC membership you are eligible for the member rate for the conference. This membership is good for one year and allow you to attend national (online) PD sessions as well as local PD sessions for free or at discounted rates.
Student Conference Fee*	\$35 for CAYC members* \$55 for NON CAYC members ADD \$20 if you would like to have lunch

*All membership fees must coincide with your regular membership fees that you submit to MTS and should be clearly distinguished in keeping with Bylaw VI 4.13 (a) and 4.2

If you need more space, please attach a separate document with all relevant information.

F. General Questions You Want Added to Your Event		
Payment by Cheque Accepted	Yes OR: By etransfer: secretary.caycmb@gmail.com By Paypal: membership@cayc.ca	
Payable to Name and Mailing Address	Cheque payable to: CAYC-MB c/o CAYC-MB 155 Northcliff Drive Winnipeg, MB R2C 4K4	
Is Lunch Provided	Yes – for an additional cost	
Lunch Cost	\$20 optional and in addition to registration	
Dietary Concerns	N/A	
Other		

Please email program to sageevents@mbteach.org

MTS PD Day Contacts

For questions or assistance, please contact as indicated:

Communication & Contact Services	Email Blasts Membership Lists MyProfile Updates	Jennifer Nasse, Coordinator	mts-im@mbteach.org (204) 837-5705
	Website Updates MTS PD Day SAGE page changes	Matea Tuhtar, Communications Specialist	coms@mbteach.org (204) 888-7021
	Finance		mts-fas@mbteach.org (204) 831-3067
PayPal	Troubleshooting	Andy Beardsall	abeardsall@mbteach.org
Professional and French Language Services	MTS PD Day Event Setup MTS PD Day Event Changes SAGE Helpline		sageevents@mbteach.org (204) 831-3063
Privacy Officer	Human Resources		(204) 831-3060

Be sure to follow up with any registrants that have not paid before confirming that your conference list is ready to be processed. If you have additional people to add, use the SAGE membership template and email the completed spreadsheet to mts-im@mbteach.org. Any changes and/or additional people should be submitted no later than Friday, November 13, 2026.