

MANITOBA CULTURAL
SOCIETY OF THE **DEAF**

Annual Report

2025-2026

Annual General Meeting

HYBRID: IN-PERSON AND ZOOM

May 30, 2026 10:50 am

Lecture Hall
Canadian Mennonite University
500 Shaftesbury Boulevard
Winnipeg, MB

Vision, Mission, Goals and Values Statement

Vision Statement

MCSD-DAM's vision is to integrate Deaf and non-deaf communities with complete accessibility and to empower Deaf culture, arts, and language.

Mission Statement

MCSD-DAM's mission is to identify and promote innovation initiatives and projects that focus on the contribution of the arts, heritage, and culture and to facilitate inclusive and diverse environments.

Goals

- To promote Deaf culture and signed languages.
- To raise awareness about the excellence of Deaf arts.
- To foster a collaborative and barrier-free world.
- To provide support, professional training, and education for Deaf artists.
- To develop and build relations and partnerships with art communities.
- To educate and inform the arts community, policy makers, and arts funders about Deaf artists and audiences.
- To create and support new initiatives for the creation of new Deaf arts groups.
- To increase the involvement of the Deaf community in MCSD-DAM.

Values

- Preserve and endorse the five hallmarks of the Deaf culture
- Express our value and worth as Deaf artists.
- Accommodate an ever changing and diverse environment.
- Enhance and maintain relationships and collaborations with various supporting organizations.
- Acknowledge intersectionality.

Note: the five hallmarks of the Deaf culture are: Languages, Norms, Values, Heritages and Identity.

MANITOBA CULTURAL SOCIETY OF THE DEAF

Annual General Meeting
Hybrid: In Person and Zoom
Winnipeg, MB
May 30, 2026

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Adoption of Agenda – May 30, 2026**
- 3. Approval of AGM Minutes – June 26, 2025**
- 4. Board Reports**
 - 4.1. President - Andrew Lund**
 - 4.2. Acting Treasurer - Genevieve Collins**
 - 4.2.1. Reviewed Financial Report**
 - 4.2.2. Approval of 2026 Budget**
 - 4.3. Membership - Tricia Amaro**
 - 4.4. Denise Watson-Jarigen**
- 5. Projects: 2025 & 2026 - Alice Crawford**
- 6. Old Business**
 - 6.1. 3 in 1 membership - Pending**
 - 6.2. By-Laws - Hold**
- 7. Elections**
 - 7.1. General board members**
 - 7.2 Treasurer**
- 8. New Business**
- 9. Adjournment**

Board of Directors 2025-2026

Andrew Lund, President	Denise Watson-Jarigen, Communications Coordinator
Alice Crawford, Projects Team	Genevieve Collins, Acting Treasurer
Trica Amaro, Membership Director	Evan Husack, Past President

4. Board Reports

4.1. President Report

President Andrew Lund

Good afternoon everyone,

Thank you all for attending our Annual General Meeting. Your presence and continued support are vital to the strength and future of our organization.

As I reflect on my time in this role, I would like to acknowledge that I have now completed three terms as President, in alignment with our bylaws, which establish three-year terms for board members. It has been an honour to serve in this capacity and to work alongside such a dedicated team.

Over the past term, our organization has experienced some challenges. Several board members have stepped down due to commitments with other organizations or personal reasons. As a result, we have faced difficulties in recruiting individuals to fill these important positions. This shortage of board members, along with a decline in general membership participation, has impacted our overall performance and led to delays in several planned initiatives, some of which are currently on hold.

In response to these challenges, the Board has adapted its operations. While formal procedures such as Robert's Rules of Order have been temporarily set aside, board members have continued to collaborate effectively through online platforms, engaging in regular remote meetings and discussions to support timely decision-making.

At this time, we have made the strategic decision to pause new grant applications for different projects or programs and instead focus our efforts on continuing the current on-going programs, successfully completing projects for which funding has already been secured. This approach ensures accountability and the effective use of our current resources.

One of our key initiatives, the “Looking Forward” Report, will be shared as part of a proposed 3-to-1 membership or partnership model with Arts Accessibility Network Manitoba during our upcoming business agenda. This initiative is intended to guide the organization toward a more sustainable and inclusive future.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to serve as President. It is my hope to see this organization continue to grow—strengthening its support for Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals and expanding programs that will benefit both current and future generations.

As we conclude this chapter, it is time to wrap up and look ahead with renewed focus and determination for 2026–2027.

Thank you.

Andrew Lund

4.2. Acting Treasurer - Genevieve Collins

4.2.1. Reviewed Financial Report

4.2.2. Approval of 2026 Budget

MCSD-DAM AGM (May 2026) - 2025 Treasurer's Report

- 2025 was a great year for MCSD-DAM!
- We earned \$33,520.00 in grants revenues, much of this funding is to support exciting upcoming projects in 2026.
- We organized one performance by Elizabeth Morris, earning \$275 in ticket sales.
- In 2025, our \$36,000 GIC investment was transferred to our bank account. In 2026, the board of directors will decide how to reinvest this money.
- Alice donated an incredible amount of time. Thank you for your dedication, Alice!
- MCSD-DAM is starting to work with a professional bookkeeper who will help coordinate an audit of our 2024 financial reports and prepare the required documents for an audit of our 2025 finances.
- We are currently recruiting a new Treasurer as Genevieve moves into a grant writing position on the board of directors.
- Attached you will find a report on our revenues and expenses. We had a surplus of \$16,655.33, much of this allocated for 2026 projects.
- Below you will find our unaudited 2024 financial report followed by an unaudited 2025 revenues and expenses report and statement of financial position.
- Thank you members for a fantastic year. We can't wait to see you at our 2026 programming!

MANITOBA CULTURAL SOCIETY OF THE DEAF INC.
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
as of December 31, 2024

Opening Bank Balance as of January 1, 2024

Projects funding from prior year	\$ 26 898 34
MCSD bank balance	\$ 37 723 88
Per Bank Statement Balance	\$ 64 622 22

Revenue

Government Project Grants	\$ 19 283 00
Fundraising proceeds (ticket sales)	4 819 50
Fundraising donation	1 300 00

Total Project Revenues	\$ 25 402 50
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Expenditures

Artistic fees/other professional fees	\$ 18 851 64
Production/Exhibition Expenses	400 00
Advertising/Promotion costs	
Space/equipment rental costs	2 131 55
Interpreting fees	1 631 00
Project Administration	5 087 68
10% Grant for MCSD	1 928 30

Total Project Expenditures	\$ 30 030 17
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Accumulated Surplus (Deficit) for the projects	(\$4 627 67)
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Total project funding as of December 31, 2024	\$ 22 270 67
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Revenue

Memberships	520 00
Donation	5 00

GIC	(36 000 00)
GIC Interest	
Merchandise	105 00
Bank Interest Earned	0 39
Donations/In-Kind Services (Alice's hours)	16 949 90
Admin fees Allocation Revenue (from grants)	1 928 30

Total MCSD Revenue

-\$16 491 41

Expenditures

Affiliate/membership fees/Annual Return	320 00
Insurance	
Merchandise	
Office Supplies/Website/Meeting fees	845 44
Staff	
Interpreting Fee	
Refreshments	
Bank Service charges	2 50
Donation	
Donation In-Kind Services	16 949 90

Total MCSD expenditures

\$18 117 84

Accumulated Surplus (Deficit) for MCSD

(\$34 609 25)

Total MCSD balance as of December 31, 2024

\$ 3 114 63

Ending Bank Balance as of December 31, 2024

\$ 25 385 30

MANITOBA CULTURAL SOCIETY OF THE DEAF INC.
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
as of December 31, 2025

Opening Bank Balance as of January 1, 2025

GIC Investments	\$	36,000.00
MCS D bank balance		25,385.30
Per Bank Statement Balance	\$	61,385.30

Revenues

Grants	\$	33,520.00
Memberships		325.00
Ticket Sales		335.00
Merch Sales		15.00
Donations		520.00
Interest		1,440.13
In-kind (Alice hours)		13,110.00
Total Revenues	\$	49,265.13

Expenditures

Project Costs (venue rentals, transportation)	\$	9,222.42
Artist Fees		2,895.28
Admin Costs		6,240.01
Affiliate Membership		100.00
Banking Fees		100.08
Insurance		942.01
In-Kind (Alice hours)		13,110.00
Total Expenditures	\$	32,609.80

Accumulated Surplus **\$ 16,655.33**

GIC Investment	\$	36,000.00
MCS D bank balance	\$	42,040.63

Ending Bank Balance as of December 31st 2025 **\$ 78,040.63**

MANITOBA CULTURAL SOCIETY OF THE DEAF INC.
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
UNAUDITED

ASSETS	December 31	
	2024	2025
Bank	\$ 25,385.30	\$ 42,040.63
GIC Investment	36,000	36,000
	\$ 61,385.30	\$ 78,040.63
 LIABILITIES		
Deferred Revenues		\$ 30,465.00
 NET ASSETS		\$ 47,575.63

APPROVED BY THE BOARD/MEMBERS:

Genevieve Collins (Treasurer):



Andrew Lund (Board President):



MANITOBA CULTURAL SOCIETY OF THE DEAF(MCSD) INC.

BUDGET FOR 2026

	<u>MCSD</u>
	<u>Budget</u>
Revenue:	
Government Grants	\$ 44 613 00
Memberships	300 00
Net Event revenue/fundraising proceeds	1 000 00
Donations	3 425 00
Product sales	60 00
Other miscellaneous recovery/revenue	400 00
Total revenue	<u>\$49 798 00</u>
Expenditures:	
Artistic fees	\$ 8 831 00
Production/Exhibition Expenses	7 275 00
Travel/meals/hotels	17 637 00
Advertising/Promotion costs	50 00
Space/equipment rental costs	4 500 00
Interpreting fees	1 400 00
Refreshments	600 00
Affiliate/membership fees	400 00
Office/supplies/meeting expenses/fees	100 00
Project/Communication Coordinators	4 878 00
Admin fees Allocation	3 000 00
Bank Service charges	75 00
Total expenditures	<u>\$ 48 746 00</u>
Net Revenue	<u><u>\$1 052 00</u></u>

4.3 Tricia Amaro

Membership:

2025: 14 members

2026: 13 members up to now

Tricia Amaro Manitoba Cultural Society of the Deaf: Membership Recruitment

May 18, 2026

Hello, my name is Tricia Amaro. I am on the MCSD board as the Membership Director. My goal is to recruit the Deaf, hard of hearing, DeafBLIND, CODA, hearing, hearing parents of Deaf children, ASL students, interpreters, AEITP students, DSP students, and various organizations to become members to receive discounts at the various events by one hundred percent, but I want to break the records. I am planning to repeat the announcement of the membership fee every month or every week. I want to continue in the position of Membership Director. This organization means a lot to me, and it is very valuable to me.

In 2025, we had fourteen members. In 2026, we have thirteen members so far.

2025 membership: \$425.00

2026 membership: \$400.00

Sincerely,

Tricia Amaro



4.4. Denise Watson-Jarigen

MCS D Board Report AGM 2026-Denise Watson Jarigen

I've been asked to join workshops, and trainings to prepare myself before joining MCS D Board last year. Since then, I've learned more about MCS D, their goals, their strengths, and their concerns which has given me the opportunity to understand MCS D's perspective to have a different governance structure than Robert's Rules.

We took a workshop about different types of governance structures as most Hearing organizations have started to lean toward different Governance than using Robert's Rules have supported in this and I hope you all also support us to go toward this path.

I've experienced an amazing opportunity to meet performers personally and be able to listen to their goals and their expectations during their stays as a performer. I've become a Communication Coordinator for Magic of ASL and Gathered Series where I've received feedback and encouragement to learn new things as I grow new skills and learn something new.

I've been working with Looking Forward with the Board and Hannah-consultant on 2 different dates to ensure she understands Deaf Culture and norms as a Deaf Consultant. Great experience and looking forward to the next one.

I'm looking forward to the next opportunity with new tips I've learned that'll benefit me to use for future vlogs.

I appreciate Alice and Andrew for 'egging' me to join as they did ask me a few times over the couple of years and here I am! I've learned lots from both of them and I'm still learning new things.

Denise

5. Projects in 2025 & 2026 - Alice Crawford

2025-2026 Project Team Report

Last year I resigned as Project Director for Manitoba Cultural Society of the Deaf MCSD. In the past year, as part of the Projects Team, I'm training new board members on how to manage projects. This training is still ongoing.

Starting in September 2025, Andrew Lund and I have been training one of the new board members (Denise Watson-Jarigen) to communicate through vlogs for MCSD-DAM events. This is still ongoing.

We are dealing with under capacity of board members and volunteers so we have limited means to deliver more programming.

MCSD has tremendous value in enriching the arts communities, Deaf and non-Deaf. It is my hope that others will lead the way to make this province known for a Deaf friendly place to be a Deaf artist.

1. **Breaking the Sound Barrier Workshops:** There were no workshops in 2025. We plan on doing a different approach in the future on how to reach out to the general dance community.

On the website you can find out more about this program at: New Rhythm Dance/Performing Arts Teacher Certificate program.

Names and contact info of the dance teachers who go through the program are posted on the website for anyone with Deaf/Hard of Hearing children to access an inclusive dance or drumming class.

To receive this certificate participants, they do the program in any order. This involves watching the films and giving answers to the questions to the dance coordinator and attending the "Breaking the Sound Barrier" workshops. Attendance is taken at the workshops and emailed to the MCSD-DAM Dance Coordinator.

2. **Gathered Series: Enriching Communities Through Deaf Arts:** With the current board capacity, we are limited to two Gathered Series Events a year.

This new program started in 2024. It brings in Canadian guest Deaf Arts Creators including local Artists, to showcase their work and facilitate two workshops for the

Deaf/Hard of Hearing students in the Deaf Community. It also includes a Gathered Meet and Greet Event (interview and mingling afterwards with refreshments) to meet the guest artist usually after a show.

The Gathered Series Brand:

Deaf guest artist(s) stay at a high-quality hotel that provides many amenities. We use the Fort Garry Hotel as it is central and close to the Forks and the West End Cultural Centre. (WECC).

High quality baked cakes from a bakery (Baked Expectations and Goodies have been used) for the Meet & Greet events.

Driver/assistant services for the out-of-town artistic creators from the time they are picked up at the airport to the time they leave for home.

MCSD-DAM has pivoted to using the West End Cultural Centre (WECC) as they offer more services than the Deaf Centre Manitoba Theatre set up. The costs are a bit higher however it is offset by not having to rent equipment for the shows and it saves the board time having to pick up, set-up and drop off the equipment needed.

MCSD hires local Deaf people to be inclusive and keep our events Deaf centric. They assist with making the program a success. Leo Salgado is the wonderfully talented Deaf photographer who has taken amazing photos of our guest performers and you can see his photos on MCSD-DAM's website and social media platforms of Facebook and Instagram. Rob Phillips did a great job as the Stage Manager during the 2024 and 2026 Magic of ASL shows.

The purpose of this program is to enrich the lives of the Deaf and non-deaf communities through Deaf arts. There will be different arts genres being introduced to audiences to learn the great possibilities there are in Deaf arts. This will involve performing and visual arts.

Why? Artistic enrichment happens by using ASL to communicate new ideas and share processes of each arts genre to connect with Deaf culture. It is rare for the Deaf to engage in an art event that shows their communication as an art form. Often, there are limited choices of entertainment in our culture. We show Deaf arts is just as good as any non-deaf event.

Past experiences show Deaf Culture isn't always understood and misunderstandings can occur. Info can be changed or lost in translation.

Deaf arts use the language of ASL with movements and hands to express their experiences. Only Deaf artists can teach this form of art. Winnipeg has very few Deaf artists who can teach different genres for Deaf arts.

Deaf students are more relaxed when the artist is Deaf like them and knows Deaf culture. Inviting a Deaf artist skilled in their arts genre to Winnipeg allows seamless integration of knowledge, giving deeper meaningful learning.

Young Deaf people will be inspired to become performers by seeing and interacting with a professional Deaf performer plying their trade on stage. We are working to build a larger viable community of Deaf performers by providing this opportunity to see and learn.

2a) **Gathered Series Four:** Natasha Bacchus was to come in the fall of 2025. However, she felt she needed more time to prepare for her performance and asked to come in February of 2026. Funded by Manitoba Arts Council. \$5000.

2b) **2026 Magic of ASL: Gathered Series Five:** Funded by Winnipeg Arts Council (WAC) and Canada Council for the Arts (CCA) grants for two Edmonton, AB performers to come to Winnipeg. Also funded Mime classes taught by the 100 Decibels: A Deaf Mime Troupe. Two Deaf MSD students took the 16 two-hour Mime classes to prepare for the show. Hired eight Deaf people (2 Performers, Photographer, Project Coordinator, Communication Coordinator, Stage Manager and 2 Mime teachers). Door prize: two coupons from Artist Emporium worth \$15 each were given out. Three different cakes and refreshments were served at the Meet & Greet. WAC and CCA Grant Funding: \$27,452.

We thank the University of Winnipeg: Asper Centre for Theatre and Film for providing free space at the last minute when the original venue booked couldn't provide the space for the classes.

Performers Connor Yuzwenko-Martin and Crystal Wolfe from The Invisible Practice (TIP) are part of an Indigenous-informed Deaf arts collective. They performed with the MSD students. Connor performed "Dorsal", and Crystal Wolfe performed ". The Vibrations school drumming group performed three songs with the Taiko Drummers.

2. **Manitoba Arts Council (MAC) grant for board training:** Completed. Funding paid for two Zoom workshops (Project Management and Governance) through Creative Manitoba. These workshops were recorded and are available for any of our members to watch. This grant also included a mentorship for the new Treasurer to be trained by MAWA financial staff for non-profit financial work. Funded by MAC. \$2460
3. **Manitoba Accessibility Fund (MAF):** Not successful in 2025. Have reapplied in February 2026 for a pilot project for ASL vlogs on our website content. Amount of funding requested: \$10,000?

4. **Looking Forward Grant: Manitoba Arts Council (MAC):** Successful in November 2025. Project start: February 2026. Funding: \$8,150. End: April 06, 2026 with Hannah's Final report (attached below). The final report on the Looking Forward project to MAC was submitted. In May.

To research what the best path forward for MCSD-DAM for future long-term sustainability, including identifying alternative funding opportunities, developing collaborations with other Deaf/disability organizations in Manitoba. This is necessary to prepare for the transition of long-time volunteer former Project Director retiring in Spring of 2027. She held the role for 10 years and has been the "acting volunteer Executive Director" for the past four years.

Funding paid for:

1. Hiring Consultant Hannah Godfrey, a well-respected Arts Administrator with deep knowledge of the Manitoba Arts Community. Paid an honorarium for board member Denise Watson-Jargien as her Deaf Culture Advisor. Hannah submitted the final report in April 2026.

2. A six-hour Deaf Cultural Workshop to mitigate audism for the Consultant, AANM board and staff and MCSD treasurer in February. Joanna Hawkins was the Facilitator. Number of participants: Seven

3. Two consulting meetings for Deaf artists, AANM board and staff, Manitoba Deaf Association and Manitoba Deaf Sports Association board (including committee heads) were held early March 2026. Number of participants: 28

4. Two On-line Surveys (written English and ASL formats) were made available to the Manitoba Deaf Community at large. This was advertised through ASL vlogs and written posts on Facebook and Instagram platforms. Number of survey participants: 34.

Looking Forward report attached at the bottom of the AGM Package.

5. **Grant Funding:**

2025 Successfully Funded:

Magic of ASL:WAC and CCA: \$27,452

Looking Forward Funding: MAC \$8,150

Board Training: MAC \$2,460

2026 Applied for Funding up to date:

Gathered Series Six: \$22,350 (WAC \$10,000, MAC \$7,500, MCSD \$4,850-ticket sales/donations/fundraising). Deadline for second grant application May 15, 2026.

Pilot project: ASL Vlogs & Image Descriptions for Website: MAF \$10,525

Looking Forward Part Two: June 15th: budget to come

Support-Strengthen MAC Grant: Professional development workshops: training to support new leadership MAC \$5000 max May 10th Membership Roles, Publicity workshops

2026: Gathered Series Six: Pending: We applied for a grant with Winnipeg Arts Council, Manitoba Arts Council and Canada Council for the Arts for the Deaf Crows of Regina to come to Winnipeg in fall of 2026. We will find out later in 2026 if we are successful. The plan is for them to perform at the West End Culture Centre. Funding request: \$22,350

6. **Creative Manitoba Arts Management Course:** On-going: The idea to have a Deaf centric credit course for non-profit Deaf arts organizations has been taken over by Creative Manitoba and Red River College to include all non-profit arts organizations in Manitoba. Red River Polytech had a series of focus groups to discuss what the program would look like. We will continue to monitor the situation and look at other Deaf organizations training examples.

6. Old Business

6.1. 3 in 1 membership: on hold

6.2. ByLaws: on hold

7. Elections

7.1. General board members

7.2. Treasurer

8. New Business

9. Adjournment

Per:

President

Per:

Treasurer

“Looking Forward Project”: MCSD-DAM Condensed Meeting Notes

Written by Genevieve Collins

Questions for Participants:

- What are your hopes for the future of MCSD-DAM and its role in the Deaf and arts communities of Winnipeg/what would you like to see from the organization in the future?
- What effect do you think each of the three options would affect you and/or your organization?

Meeting 1: March 3rd, 2026, 7PM – 9PM

Attendees: 17

Discussion

more cultural activities. cultural and language are priorities are
Partnership with AANM is good, but MCSD should be Deaf run and stay independent.
arts to the Deaf youth through their programming and increasing performance programming.
There is limited capacity for programming, so MCSD has focused on one project at a time (the cultural and language priorities have diminished)
MCSD is small because there is not many activities and with the three in one we could keep the financials separate.

What are your hopes for the future of MCSD-DAM?

Comment: MCSD is not only arts, but also culture and language. If we merge with AANM: they have language, values, beliefs, traditions, clothing, food, music, arts etc. all of that encompasses AANM

Comment: children’s programming. drumming from a younger age with touring, recordings of ASL storybooks, we could partner with different associations. an ASL consultant to get the word out and spread information on our programs.

Comment: stories and drumming and storytelling and music, signing and drumming being included in both.

Comment:.. partner with fringe festival and share and have more exposure for hearing people, drumming and arts and our culture. other festivals. storytelling, children’s plays or theatre productions.

The goal of the magic of ASL is to have students perform.

How would these options affect you or your org?

Comment: set up ASL training for people, cultural teachings and history, info on Deaf culture, the benefits of being Deaf, empowerment, different workshops.

Comment: Shannon Guile teaches mime and works with arts orgs. She wanted to help think about how Deaf people can work in theatre and film. She would be a good person for MCSD-DAM to contact.

Comment: hiring someone to teach Deaf people how to teach ASL.

Comment: build connections. contact other arts orgs and create partnership etc. plan for sustainability and networking.

Connect with local theatres and work together with Deaf and hearing kids and do a play together,

Comment: Some theatres have accessibility money that is sitting there and not being used so we could investigate that. need a full-time staff and full-time help.

need more members and people involved.

Alice: I did speak to CCSD, they said we can support you if you have a project. I haven't met with the yet to find out what that means.

Want a cross Canadian visual arts show in Winnipeg. some orgs can provide space and workshops. We had done it previously grant writing workshops, a workshop and talk from an artist, and a show at the Irish Pavilion.

Meeting 2: March 7th, 2026 1:30PM - 3:30PM

Attendees:15

Notes from Discussion:

What are your hopes for the future of MCSD-DAM? What programs would you like to see us deliver?

- Comment: In my experience with the mime group, if it's on the weekend a lot more people can come. During the week there is less engagement.
- Alice: Often theatres are booked years in advance on the weekends and we only find out a few months before the event.
- Comment: focus on Deaf events more, maybe we can have a Deaf only event. We need more creativity and people getting involved.
- Denise: We have dance, drumming. How do we get other people involved?
- Alice: In order to get funding for our programs, we have to be more arts focused rather than languages because there is not much out there right now. We would need to argue that language is part of our identity and also part of our arts identity. If we try to apply for grants for expanding language and having Deaf teachers it would be hard to get. We would need to be more focused on art and theatre and teaching. Maybe one day we could get the language part incorporated. I am hoping that language will be more involved with the government in other areas, they are slowly improving. We are restricted by the type of funding we can do. Right now, we focus a lot on theatre.
- Comment: there is oppression within the disability community. the hearing world and the disability world, they are the same. My son was appalled by the lack of respect. How do we change that? It is encouraging to have Deaf people lead.

Do we want any different kinds of programming? Language?

- Comments: several people say 'both'.
- Comment: How are we going to keep language? People just aren't able to afford it these days with the prices. I think theatre is good, but our focus needs to be on language and keeping it going.
- Comment: Why do we need to choose language or art?
- Alice: It is hard to get funding for language right now. We can talk to leaders of funding organizations. That is work that needs to be done.
- Comment: ASL should be included, you can't separate one from the other (art and language).

- Andrew: Our first priority is ASL and then English.

SURVEY ANSWERS – Condensed by Alice Crawford

Answers are condensed and put into categories for ease of reading

PROGRAMING

- Visual/media/various arts added to the Gathered Series, workshops and shows
- Deaf Culture, Visual Artist, Indigenous art & Culture, Poetry, Music, Signed Stories, Dance and Theatre, more variety in the arts for people to enjoy and learn
- invite out of town famous Deaf social/artists to Manitoba for shows/workshops. Examples: John Maurice, John Smith, the Vich Fam, the Malow and Danny Skits.
- A seasonal calendar of professional theatre and programming
- Building arts accessibility, inclusivity, more remote access
- Culturally and linguistically accessible Mental health and wellness supports.
- More public relations or promotions
- Cultural Representation & Preservation to broader audience
- Cultural & Community Program. Sign language, storytelling circles or reading clubs

A number of entries repeated same theme:

TEACHING AND LEARNING THE ARTS

- Find Deaf/HH people with arts/crafts/media background to teach the arts in all genres to help Deaf/ HH/ Deaf and Blind members to thrive and succeed. Encourage Deaf members to participate.
- More Training: Basic art workshops for those are interested in being an artist.
- Signed Music Workshops from experienced professionals.
- a visual arts program with workshops at least twice a year with out-of-province/local Deaf artists with a visual local and/or cross-Canadian Deaf arts show in Wpg.

YOUTH

- Youth Talent Development and Recruitment
- More children's art programming
- Mentorship pairing Deaf youth with Deaf professionals building confidence and career pathways. More Youth involvement.
- Deaf Children's Festival:/Deaf Folk Festival: Concert, artists workshops with families.
- Sponsorship for Deaf youth to take workshops. Arts Camps.
- MSD: Bring in MCSD artists to liaise and coordinate students' Christmas performance. This gives students real-world experience collaborating with Deaf artists and makes the possibility of becoming an artist more tangible.
- Children's events, shows in Brandon or Westman.

EDUCATION:TEACHING ASL/CULTURE

- ASL and Deaf culture education/classes/workshops/outreach for both Deaf and hearing communities to promote understanding and inclusion. History. Expand programs. Training Deaf people to teach ASL.
- Programs: free ASL classes for parents of Deaf children to support early communication and connection.
- Having resources, references/materials to share to enable Deaf community to successfully achieve their goals.
- Offer programs on Deaf culture & ASL, Deaf arts and theatre, community events, and outreach to hearing people. Hearing allies are important too.
- Expand ASL Teacher Training Program, Archive Deaf History and Cultural, Increase Performing Arts
- Preserve Deaf Culture, board / committee members 51 percent of Deaf to make decisions with programming, give opportunities to young people to develop talent. To remain rooted in Deaf culture, language, and lived experience.
- Deaf Awareness and accessibility for artists and networks
- More Deaf accessibility programs

INVOLVEMENT

- More Arts and Theatre events. Community Social events, getting Deaf performers / artists involved. Networking events.
- Fundraising, hosting events where Deaf/HH/Deaf Blind attend to enjoy their time with others in the community in learning different crafts/making something to take home.
- Weekend as well as weeknight events for the arts programming and workshops.
- Show Deaf artists/performers at the Folklorama to show people what Deaf arts look like. Include Deaf culture and fun ASL learning events.
- More networking/gathering opportunities. Online or in-person. If online, can create a Discord/Telegram channel for the members to foster close connections or bring someone in to give a lecture and have an open discussion with the group to brainstorm ideas or share stories on Zoom. If in-person, can be a casual, low-pressure gathering event for people to connect and share their artwork.
- Revive the Deaf Club for social, cultural networking hub
- Work with MSD, to be involved in the board, give more hands-on experience more cultural aspect in MCSD. Find training workshops for MCSD board members/artists.

MEMBERSHIP

- More members: Membership fee could be waived for Deaf artists with active artistic practice in Manitoba and Deaf people who identify as Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, or Inuit, which can free up their limited financial capacity to participate and help build this organization. Invisible Practice, an Indigenous-informed Deaf arts collective based in Alberta, offers this option for their membership and that increased their membership.

PROGRAMS OUTSIDE OF WINNIPEG

- Suggest to add Deaf members join a cultural exchange in provinces of Canada
- Children's events, shows in Brandon or Westman.

- Include accessibility for northern and rural members to remotely attend events and workshops over zoom with other Deaf Communities in Manitoba if they are unable to travel to Winnipeg.
- Deaf awareness.

COLLABORATION:

- MCSD to collaborate with other arts organizations to strengthen services, sustainability, and community-driven programming that reflects the voices and priorities to unify and support Deaf Community.
- Collaborate with Martha Street Studio provide printing workshops for the MB Deaf community.
- More Deaf arts/acting events rather than hearing events, work with hearing arts community to start so Deaf volunteers can take over. Deaf people will know they can participate, practice, etc.
- Strong leadership, clear commitment, and listening to Deaf Community needs and wants.

Decisions to reflect voices of the Deaf community.

- More connections with CCSD
- Partnerships with local arts businesses to bring in workshops

FUTURE:

- A Showcase of Deaf arts for the general public to visit, have our own Deaf Space for all Deaf to come together where we can do all kinds of activities.

OTHER:

- Two options: art or language. ASL is my primary language! I would choose art for MCSD. MDA can take care of language; it's their responsibility.
 - Firmly establish yourself as a professional arts organization and find an artistic director who has the professional experience.
- No interest in ASL classes as that takes away from deaf teachers' livelihood. More established organization could help individuals fund events/development.

Looking Forward Report

**Prepared for
MCSD-DAM**

**By Hannah Godfrey
6 April 2026**

MCSD-DAM: Looking Forward Report

A report prepared by Hannah Godfrey in consultation with Alice Crawford, Denise Watson-Jarigen, and Genevieve Collins, and informed by meetings with members of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

Delivered on 6 April 2026.

Overview

Manitoba Cultural Society of the Deaf – Deaf Arts Manitoba (MCSD-DAM) is a Deaf-led arts organization dedicated to promoting Deaf arts, supporting Deaf artists, and increasing access to arts programming for Deaf and non-deaf communities in Manitoba. The organization delivers performances, workshops, and training programs that foster artistic development, community engagement, and cultural representation.

MCSD-DAM has successfully delivered programming supported by grant funding from the Manitoba Arts Council, Winnipeg Arts Council, and Canada Council for the Arts. However, the organization is currently operating without permanent staff and relies heavily on volunteer leadership and project-based contractors.

MCSD-DAM's long-term sustainability depends on increasing organizational capacity and securing stable administrative support. Without sustainable staffing and infrastructure, the organization faces risk due to leadership transition and volunteer burnout.

This report is compiled using information gathered during conversations and emails with Alice Crawford in September and October 2025, questions sent to the MCSD-DAM board, membership and board members of the other Deaf organisations via email prior to the consulting meetings and a google form in February and March 2026, and two online meetings that took place in March 2026.

MCSD-DAM hired Hannah Godfrey to help answer 4 key questions:

- What is the current capacity of MCSD-DAM?
- What is the feasibility of your current programs and those suggested through your community consultation?
- Which of these programs are the priority to deliver?
- Should MCSD-DAM join other aligned groups, i.e. a merger between Manitoba Deaf Association, Manitoba Deaf Sports Association and MCSD-DAM or partnering with Arts AccessAbility Network Manitoba, or remain an individual organisation?

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Current Capacity of MCSO-DAM

MCSO-DAM is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors with approximately five active members and limited administrative support. The organization hires project and communications contractors on a project-by-project basis when funding allows.

Much of this work has been managed and/or undertaken by Alice Crawford who has been the Project Director and held a leadership role in the organisation for the last three years. Alice plans to step back from this role within two years.

While MCSO-DAM is in good financial standing and receives funding from three levels of government, its capacity is constrained by:

- Lack of permanent administrative staff
- Heavy reliance on volunteers who are burning out
- Leadership burnout and succession risks
- Limited administrative infrastructure
- Absence of charitable status, which prevents access to additional funding sources

The Board is therefore seeking to:

- Get charitable status.
- Formalise its own procedures.
- Review and update by-laws.
- Create a sustainable administrative structure to deliver programming
- Deliver programming priorities
- Decide whether to merge with other community organisations in the city
- Employ a staff person.
- Recruit more Board members and volunteers

Program feasibility and priority

MCSO-DAM is in a good financial position and has funding to deliver on projects it is committed to. Program success depends upon their administration as well as participation. Creating administrative capacity is key to this.

Through answering a series of questions, the Board prioritised three programs. Board members noted many other programs and initiatives they and the community want to see, but the emphasis in this report is on what can be delivered while also creating a sustainable administrative structure.

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The programs identified as priorities are:

- Gathered Series: Community Enrichment Through Deaf Arts
- Magic of ASL (delivered every two to three years as part of the Gathered Series)
- New Rhythm Dance Teacher Certificate Program

Joining other aligned groups

MCSD-DAM is exploring potential partnerships or structural alignment with other community organizations which may provide administrative support while maintaining MCSD-DAM's Deaf-led identity and artistic focus. Below is a summary:

Remain Independent

Advantages:

- Maintain autonomy
- Preserves focus on Deaf arts

Concerns:

- Lack of capacity may cause organization to collapse after current leadership leaves
- Difficult to sustain funding and operations

Merge with Manitoba Deaf Association (MDA) and Manitoba Deaf Sports Association (MDSA)

Advantages:

- Access to a larger pool of volunteers
- More funding from fees from a larger membership pool.

Concerns:

- Risk of losing Deaf arts focus and autonomy
- Risk of losing financial stability
- Larger organizations may overshadow MCSD-DAM

Join or Partner with AANM (Arts AccessAbility Network Manitoba) — Preferred Option

Advantages:

- Access to existing staff, infrastructure, and programming support
- Strong arts and accessibility focus
- Alignment with organizational goals

Concerns:

- Potential risk of audism bias
- Potential loss of independence

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- Uncertainty about grant eligibility and funding structure

Of all three, the Board prefers the partnership model with AANM, similar to the C2 model (the partnership between Manitoba Craft Council and Manitoba Craft Museum and Library). This model may allow MCSO-DAM to retain its identity while sharing administrative support. However, further discussion with AANM is required to determine feasibility, as AANM also has limited capacity.

Community Consultation

MCSO-DAM held two online community meetings and sent out a survey (the same survey on two different dates) informed by the first half of this report to their community members. The goals were

- To explain the current structure and challenges of the organisation
- To discuss three possible options for the organisation i.e. autonomy, partnering with AANM, forming a 3 in 1 group of Deaf organisations in the city.
- To conduct an informal vote on the three options
- To give members the opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas, feedback, and hopes for MCSO-DAM and learn what they would like to see happen with the organization.

The online meetings were well attended and demonstrated the commitment of Deaf and Hard of Hearing folks to their community.

An appendix which contains the minutes from the two meetings and the responses to the survey is included with this report.

The online survey

The survey received thirty-four responses, which was another demonstration of good engagement.

General trends in the survey are that people want varied arts programming in the form of workshops, training, entertainment, and events. There is also a desire to support youth with events and activities. Generally increasing opportunities to gather and socialise is also a notable want. There was concern about losing independence or being overshadowed and also sustainability.

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Response to the question: *Which option would you prefer? Check one.*

Remain Independent	6
Merge with Manitoba Deaf Association (MDA) and Manitoba Deaf Sports Association (MDSA) (3-in-1)	13
Form a partnership with Arts AccessAbility Network Manitoba	15

Although the option of merging with AANM had more votes, the 3-in-1 option was a close runner-up, signalling there may need to be more discussion about these two options.

The online meetings

These had a combined total of nineteen attendees (excluding board of MCSD-DAM) with good engagement from folks.

It was clear that people need to know the work that is currently involved in running MCSD-DAM. An effective way of communicating this would be through job descriptions of current roles being undertaken by the board, volunteers, and contractors.

People also wanted to know in clear terms what would be offered by AANM or by entering a 3-in-1 model in terms of administration and shared workload as well as the effect on organisational identity, by-laws, and members’ rights. There was also a wish to know the financial implications, both organisational as well as membership fees.

There was a strong sense that the membership should ultimately decide on the direction MCSD-DAM takes.

The great importance of Deaf language was also noted. (note from MCSD-DAM: *Current arts funding models for languages only applies to French and Indigenous languages. Advocacy work needs to be done to include ASL in this category of arts grants. In the past ASL interpreting was not considered as an eligible expense, we did advocacy work with all three funding bodies and after 2016 we were able to use that as an expense*).

Staff and board from AANM attended both online meetings and answered questions and gave perspectives. There seemed to be a general leaning towards AANM as being the preferred option in both these meetings.

Conclusion from the meetings and survey

It is clear MCSD-DAM is valued by the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. It is also clear that the community really wants more art and culture opportunities and sees MCSD-DAM as key to delivering them.

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Participating community members gained insight into the challenges faced by the board of MCSD-DAM. But there is still a gap between members' aspirations for the organisation and their understanding of the current capacity to deliver programming and operations, much of which is undertaken largely voluntarily by the small board. Sharing job descriptions and associated work hours may help clarify this for the community.

The idea of a partnership with either AANM or 3-in-1 is generally supported and merits pursuing research into both options. This would ideally include how governance, membership, and finances would function in each scenario in order to give members a clear sense of what they are choosing for MCSD-DAM.

Actions

Below are suggestions that may help MCSD-DAM reach its goals. They are based on consulting with the board and participating community membership. The current board are best placed to assign the tasks to specific people.

The following tasks are recommended to be completed by the end of September 2026 in order to have clarity about roles and responsibilities of the Board, contractors, and volunteers. The aim is to put the Board in a strong position for applying for funding and to begin the process of transition for Alice to step down from a leadership role. It will also enable information to be clearly communicated with MCSD-DAM members. Use your Board meeting as deadlines for these tasks so you can report on them.

✓ April 2026

- Create a survey for the general Deaf Community based on the questions on this report.

By May 2026

- ✓Charitable number: go onto the MCSD-DAM's CRA account and see what stage you are at. Consult former President Evan Husak. Are you able to pick up where you left off or do you need to begin again?
- Begin process again to get a charitable number
- Create a meeting schedule with AANM for next three months to discuss partnering.
- Assign people to each of the tasks listed here.

By June 2026

- Write Looking Forward grant due 15 June 2026.
- Hire someone to complete application for Charitable number.
- Decide on a regular meeting date for the Board, e.g. the last Thursday of every month.

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- Decide who will take minutes (take it in turns or will there be a designated person?)
- ✓ Research models for Board interaction and structure.
- Decide whose name can replace the former president's on official documents
- Create actions and timeline for New Rhythm Teacher Certificate program.
- Ask to meet with C2 to discuss their model or see if they have any related documents they can share with you.
- List the programs to be delivered and their dates for 2026 and 2027.

By July 2026

- Create realistic job descriptions for volunteer Board roles
- Alice lists of all the work she does in a job description along with key dates for program delivery
- Genevieve creates a list of key dates in the financial year (e.g. year end, grants, sending finances for audit etc)
- Ask the Deaf and HH community for recommendations for a person to hire as a Chartered Accountant. If someone within the community cannot be found, seek recommendations from other arts and culture groups such as AANM (the MARCC listserv would be also be a useful resource here).
- If not done already, Denise aligns the work she is doing with the program priorities.

By August 2026

- Write a realistic job description for a staff position for MCSO-DAM. It would be advisable to write one for a full time position and an alternative one for a part time position. Establish the absolute musts you would want this person to do.
- Research grants and funding that could fund the staff position.
- Decide if MCSO-Dam partnering with AANM then create a list of tasks on a timeline to make it happen this happen within 12-24 months.
- If partnerships is agreed upon, find a lawyer or equivalent to review and update MCSO-DAM By-Laws

By September 2026

- Create a list of ways to connect with members and what you want to communicate i.e. programs, fundraising, volunteer opportunities. Put them on a timeline and assign actions to specific people.
- Identify funding
- Identify training opportunities for Board in fundraising, website management, membership recruitment and retention.

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Main Conclusion

Below is a summary of the answers to the questions posed at the beginning of the report.

What is the current capacity of MCSO-DAM?

Capacity is seriously stretched. Key members of MCSO-DAM—Alice Crawford, Genevieve Collins, and Denise Watson-Jarigen—work extremely hard to make MCSO-DAM a functioning organisation but burnout is a real threat. Directing board and staff resources and energy towards creating organisational stability should be prioritised.

What is the feasibility of your current programs and those suggested through your community consultation?

The board are committed to delivering existing programs; however, there is not capacity to deliver new programs. Again, administrative stability is the priority, as without it new programming could fail.

Which of these programs are the priority to deliver?

The board were clear about the priorities, which are informed by funding and partner commitments, as well as capacity:

- Gathered Series: Community Enrichment Through Deaf Arts
- Magic of ASL (delivered every two to three years as part of the Gathered Series)
- New Rhythm Dance Teacher Certificate Program

Should MCSO-DAM join other aligned groups, i.e. a merger between Manitoba Deaf Association, Manitoba Deaf Sports Association and MCSO-DAM or partnering with Arts AccessAbility Network Manitoba, or remain an individual organisation?

The consultations with the Board and the Community, suggest general agreement that partnering with another organisation could benefit MCSO-DAM greatly. More participants favoured partnering with Arts AccessAbility Network Manitoba.

AANM was positive about this possibility and emphasised their respect for AANM's autonomy, which is very important, and understood the concerns voiced by the community regarding audism. AANM is embedded in Winnipeg's art and culture community and could provide a useful entry into their network. They are effective and successful arts administrators, which could be very beneficial for MCSO-DAM to utilise.

Based on the information available to Hannah Godfrey, it is her recommendation that MCSO-DAM undertake research into what a partnership with AANM would involve. Key questions include, but are not limited to:

- How could MCSO-DAM remain autonomous while in a partnership?
- How would audism be prevented and addressed?
- How would work and responsibilities be shared?
- How would respective bylaws be affected?

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- How would paid memberships for each organisations be affected?

Other questions will arise during discussions between the organisations.

The research should also look to other organisations who have undertaken partnership models, for example, the Manitoba Crafts Council and the Manitoba Crafts Museum and Library who developed the entity C2 to house them both and appears to be contributing to the success of both parties.

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MCSD-DAM is a valuable organisation and its longevity has real implications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community in Manitoba. There is a lot of potential for Deaf-led arts and culture—including language—to achieve greater prominence in the city and province, not least because the community demonstrated a fierce passion for it. With solid administrative and organisational structures, MCSD-DAM could deliver programming that its community wants to experience and share, without burning out staff and board.

To be added:
Hannah's Report next page