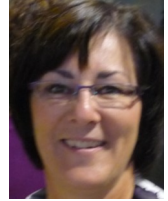




Message from the SOTA President– Leslie Deck



Amongst a group of friends on a warm summer night in the dog days of August, I was asked what I wanted my legacy to be when my term as SOTA President was fulfilled.

At the time the answer came swiftly and confidently. As SOTA President I want for all members, experienced and those new to the association, better salaries, benefits, working conditions but more than that, I want to engage and empower them. I want teachers, individually and collectively, as members of our Association, to exercise their rights as outlined in our collective agreement.

Thinking back, my answers sounded like the smooth, slick, well rehearsed answers the three political leaders provided at the MTS-sponsored Leaders' Debate. While said with integrity, my answers, admittedly, were said after a long relaxing summer, wine in hand – the craziness of work long forgotten.

Now it is mid-October, and the need for member engagement and empowerment is even more evident and challenging after six weeks of answering phone call after phone call, listening to teacher after teacher at the other end of the line telling me their stories. Some members are already exhausted, frustrated and disenchanted.

I am now six weeks into my role as SOTA President. Ask me today what I want as my legacy, and all of the answers remain the same. Your negotiations team continues to fight for better salaries, benefits and working conditions at the bargaining table. As the leader of the Association, I've come to realize that I alone cannot help you to feel engaged in your Association, and empowered in your work place. It is only when we work together, when we each see ourselves as part of the Collective that we can be powerful as an Association and as teachers.

Tom Peters, co-author of *In Search of Excellence* said, "The only magic is brute consistence, persistence, and attention to detail." My commitment is to work *with* you to create an Association with a common vision, and to be vigilant about the little things I do every day to help make that happen. The strength of our association lies in our collective voice. Let us work together to make that "magic" happen.

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Important Dates:

- October 21st– SAGE Conference
- October 27th– SOTA Fall Wine & Cheese at GCCI
- November 3rd– Maternity & Parental Leave Seminar at BZERC
- February– SOTA Dodge Ball Social



Ask Leslie

Q1- Why does SOTA not pursue a “coach’s day” at the bargaining table?

A- As a bargainer I would never advocate a member work fifty hours to get five hour day off. As professionals we volunteer our time. In addition it is essential that members feel that extra curricular is voluntary and that no additional pressures are put on them to increase their workload.

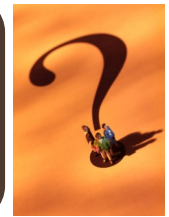
Q2- How long should staff meetings be? can they be used for PD?

A- A teacher is legally responsible for on-going professional development (sec 39 h) of the PSA) and a teacher is legally mandated to attend staff meetings. However, it has always been the Association’s and MTS’s view that staff meetings should pertain to the daily running of school business, hence the wording of meeting rather than development.. Professional development should occur at the right time, right place and right conditions because it is important and must be done in an educationally sound way.



We want to hear from you!

***Do you have a question for Leslie? Email
catherine.johnson@sotamb.org***



Economic Welfare Update

Why haven’t we settled yet?

The teachers of Seven Oaks, while performing the same job as teachers both in and out of the city who have recently settled their contracts, are working in conditions unlike in any other division; year after year of enrolment increases creating overcrowding to the point that some teachers’ classrooms are on roving carts, increased EAL student population with no recognized EAL programs, our members accessing DBP twice that of any other division, implementation of a block funding pilot project.....

Having the unanimous support of our members to go to arbitration to get the best possible negotiated settlement is the answer.

Our Arbitration dates are; June 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 2012

As of October 7th, Board representative George Copeland indicated the Division’s intention to apply for conciliation.



SOTA Booth – Divisional Day, October 7th, 2011



Back-
packs
and post-
-its and
rulers...



Executive members on a mis-
sion to give away prizes!

***Thank you to the division and the
planning committee for a
wonderful day!***



A set of happy
winners!



Some serious
SOTA swag-



Workplace Safety and Health Update

September 1, 2011

Beginning this school year, all violent incidents in schools will have to be compiled in an annual report that indicates the nature of the incidents and results of any investigations. The new requirement is part of changes to provincial Workplace Safety and Health Regulations governing a number of employers.

In public schools the bulk of the changes will fall on in-school administrators who will be expected to monitor incidents, but also implement violence-prevention policies.

The new regulations say an employer must:

- Develop and implement a violence prevention policy at the workplace;
- Train workers in the violence prevention policy, and
- Ensure that workers comply with the violence prevention policy.

In announcing the changes earlier this summer, Labour Minister Jennifer Howard said the new regulations will be a benefit to employees who are threatened. New procedures will help employees because policies will be established to clearly explain what employers should do in potentially violent situations.

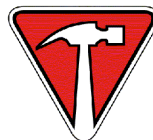
The province said in a release that violence prevention policies must now include:

- Measures to summon immediate assistance when violent or threatening situations occur.
- Procedures a worker will follow to report an incident of violence to the employer.
- Procedures the employer will follow to document and investigate any incident of violence and to put any control measures in place to eliminate or reduce the risk of further occurrence.

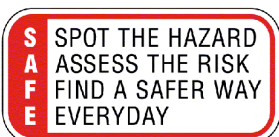
(Source: www.mbteach.org)

Visit the Seven Oaks Teachers' Association for links to the following forms:

- Workplace Safety & Health Concern Form
- Violent Incident Report Form
- Accident Report Form



SAFE WORK



<http://sotamb.org/wsh.htm>





SOTA Retreat– Lakeview Resort



Playing dress-up at Amma's tearoom



Welcome to SOTA Executive!

SOTA Executive 2011-2012

President: Leslie Deck

Past President: Jamie Krutkevich Slight

Vice President: Robert La Voie

Secretary: Elisha Dahl

Treasurer: Joyce Nault

Members at large:

-Mike Mann -Karen Mozdzen

-Catherine Johnson -Darren Roy

-Derek Sholdice -Hasmita Trivedi

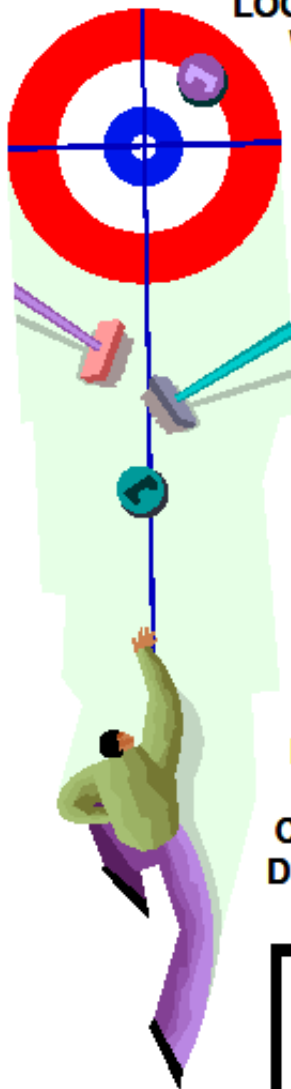
-Kerri Waldbauer -Elizabeth Walker

At our SOTA retreat we had a chance to say goodbye to our members that were leaving executive as well as welcome in our new members. We also had a chance to sit together as your new executive to set goals for the upcoming year.



PLEASE POST (FOR ALL STAFF)

Calling All Curlers or wannabe's!!!



LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO DO ON A
WEDNESDAY EVENING RIGHT AFTER
SCHOOL.....STARTING OCT. 12

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT OF GIVING
CURLING A TRY.....

EVEN IF YOU HAVE NEVER CURLED
BEFORE...

ON-ICE TRAINING AVAILABLE.....

THIS COULD BE AN OPPORTUNITY OF A
LIFETIME.....

FOR A LITTLE BIT OF EXERCISE AND A
WHOLE LOT OF FUN.....

VERY REASONABLE RATES....
FULL TIME - \$105, HALF TIME -\$65

CALL MURRAY BOYKO AT 339-5215 OR
DEB BOYKO AT MAPLES (632-6641)

WIND-UP DINNER INCLUDED





Grab life by the ball!



SOTA'S Dodgeball Social

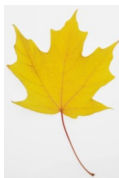
Coming Soon!

***More information
to be announced!***

Contact Mike Mann if you are interested in helping!

Mike.mann@sotamb.org or 633-5641





This Edition of the ACORN was compiled and published by :

Catherine Johnson: ACORN Editor

Do you have an idea for an upcoming ACORN article?

Contact Catherine at O.V. Jewitt: 633-1714 or catherine.johnson@sotamb.org



www.sotamb.org



SOTA Fall/New Member

Wine & Cheese:

Thursday, October 27th, 2011

Garden City Collegiate Commons Area

Guest speaker: Dan Rosin

Maternity & Parental Leave



November 3rd, 2011

Maternity & Parental Leave Seminar

@ BZERC (more details to follow)

Are you planning to take maternity and/or parenting leave?

An information Package is available from:

The Manitoba Teachers' Society

Nancy Kerr

Staff Officer

Teacher Welfare Dept.

191 Harcourt Street

Winnipeg, MB R3J 3H2

Phone: 831-3086/1-866-494-5747 (ext 216) Fax: 831-3077/1-866-799-5784

Email: nkerr@mbteach.org