

From the President

Mike Giffen

It's hard to believe it's November!

The first couple of months back to work comes fast and furious. Now many of you are preparing for your first term reports, whether that be reviewing notes from team meetings about how best to support the learners in your community, having professional conversations with colleagues regarding how best to share that information with caregivers, writing first term reports, or as school leaders getting ready to read those comments.

Through liaison conversations between SOTA and the Seven Oaks Superintendent's team last year, it was agreed that the division would look into how we report to families, specifically report cards. This year the Seven Oaks Administrators group had professional conversations on report cards and how we can say more with less. Then this group talked around how best to communicate this directive to their staff members. To clearly share what was to be expected on those reports. Our superintendent shared that the way report cards are being worked on has strayed from the intention. Report cards are to be clear and succinct in their language to parents, in capturing the strength, challenge, and next step for each subject.

What's important to remember is that the provincial report cards were designed to make communicating to families simple. Yes, we have a professional responsibility to share back with our



families how their children are progressing under our care, however the report card is only one way we share back to families and is a snapshot of that learner's progress at the time of writing those reports. I would expect that by the time many of you meet with families later this month, some of the report card information will need to be updated as schools and classrooms are busy places filled with learning.

The other important piece of communication in this message is to take care of yourself during this additional workload time. Work on your reports but also take time for yourself whether that be going for a massage afterwork or spending time with your friends and family.

Report cards are important, they support rich conversations with parents and caregivers during conferences. However, what is most important for the learners, is that you come into your schools, an adult that they trust and have a connection to, rested and healthy, ready to support and guide them in their education each day.

If you are not sure what this looks like, please have a conversation with your principal.

Take care of yourself and each other.

This Issue

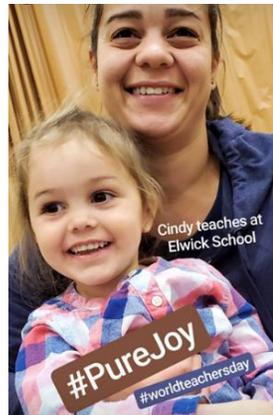
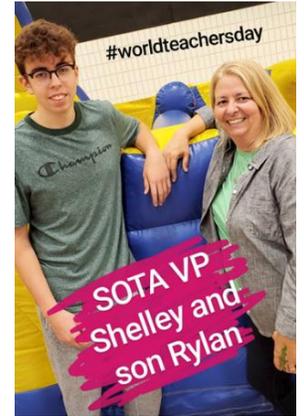
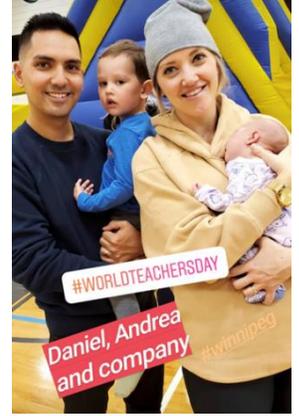
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World Teachers' Day



Honouring our SOTA members

SOTA celebrated World Teachers' Day with members and their family and friends on Saturday, October 5th at Maples Collegiate. Many enjoyed the time in bouncers, with face painting and henna, all the while relaxing among colleagues with refreshments and snacks



Thank you to our student volunteers from Garden City Collegiate and our Executive members who volunteered their personal time.

SOTA/Board Professional Development Fund

What is Your Plan for 2019-2020?

SOTA/Board PD Co-Chair—Shelley Torz

In a time filled with prepping and planning for students, members often forget to take time to plan for themselves. Professional Development (PD) plays a critical role in teacher learning. In fact, it is so important, the Code of Professional Practice states that members are responsible to make “an ongoing effort to improve professionally.” While PD Days make up part of the school-based calendar, members are reminded that these Divisional opportunities are not the only options available.

Wonderful PD opportunities are available locally and out of province. For those looking for outstanding opportunities close to home, examine the 2019-2020 PD offerings list from the Manitoba Teachers’ Society found at www.mbteach.org. As well, make a point of talking to your colleagues to discover what local resources they recommend for quality PD in the city.

These PD events need not come at a personal cost to you. To this end, the Seven Oaks Teachers’ Association (SOTA), in conjunction with the Seven Oaks School Division (SOSD) established the joint Professional Development Fund through collective bargaining. This fund exists to financially assist SOTA members in seeking out professional development opportunities that are teacher-initiated and autonomous in nature.

Take a moment to consider your professional learning needs and invest in yourself this year by seeking out something new and inspiring for PD. The fund is there for all to make use of. I challenge all members to make use of the fund at least once this year and encourage you to share your PD learning experiences with others!

See complete details of the SOTA/Board PD Guidelines on the SOTA website:

www.sotamb.org

This Month’s Q&A

SOTA/Board PD

How much funding am I eligible for this year?

You may be approved for funding for up to **TWO** activities per year not including Educational Leave and the MTS PD Day. (Out-of-Province eligibility is once every three years)

How do I apply to the SOTA/Board PD Fund?

- 1) Log into Employee Connect.
- 2) On your Profile click on Absence, then from the drop-down menu click on Leave Request.
- 3) Select from the Add Leave Type menu (choices are PD Board/SOTA Out of Province Conference, PD Board/SOTA In Province Conference, or PD Board/SOTA

or PD Board/SOTA In Province Workshop) and click on the Add button.

4) On the next screen:

- Please note that all fields with an asterisk* are mandatory fields that must be completed
- Rationale – (relevance to teaching and summary of activity)**

How do I get reimbursed for a Professional Development activity?

The expense claim form is to be submitted with your **INDIVIDUAL** conference receipts to Ali at the **SOBO** within 30 days of your PD Activity.

If you attended an **OUT-OF-PROVINCE** conference, a conference report must be submitted along with the expense claim form, in order to process your reimbursement.

MTS Catalogue of Workshops



SAVE THE DATES!

visit the MTS website:
www.mbteach.org/pdfs/pd/PLS_Catalogue_2019-20.pdf

EDUCATING FOR ACTION: OUR LEARNING JOURNEY

JOIN US TO EXPLORE:

Students as Learners:

- What are schools for?
- Who is in our classrooms?

Teachers as Learners:

- How do teachers learn collaboratively?
- How do we support all of our students?



SAVE THE DATE February 27-28, 2020
VICTORIA INN WINNIPEG, MB

INDIVIDUAL PVE REGISTRATION: SEPTEMBER 2019 | GENERAL REGISTRATION: OCTOBER 2019

Pension Sustainability Seminar—MTS

Employee Benefits Chair—Charlene Eckert

Discounts

Did you know?

MTS members can present their MTS card to access discounts from a variety of retailers and businesses. For a list of discounts offered, please visit the MTS Members' Discount Program page on www.mbteach.org.

To request a new MTS card, go to My Profile and select "Update My Info" from the "Make Changes" drop-down menu, then select "Yes" from the "Request New Card" drop-down menu at the bottom of the page.

The Pension Sustainability Seminar was recently held at West Kildonan Collegiate. Many of you may not think that this was a session for you but pension is an everybody topic. Whether you are a new teacher or are looking at which retirement plan best suits you, we all have a vested interest in our pension plan.

This event is unlike the pre-retirement seminar, which is intended only for those closing in on retirement. This session is to give everyone, especially those in early and mid-career service, pension facts. Do you know what counts as *pensionable service*? Are you aware of how the fund operates to handle our investments?

Manitoba Teacher's Society Staff Officer Glen Anderson and representatives from TRAF co-animating the presentation.

They compared the differences between Defined Benefit Plan, and others such as Defined Contribution and Target Benefit. Glen spoke to what legislation and regulations apply to the plan.

The information may be confusing at times, admittedly, which is why teachers are encouraged to come more than once during their service years or make a personal appointment to visit a TRAF officer at their Forks office. These visits can also help to identify your personal goals. Your TRAF contributions and regular updates are also available by signing up for their online profile service at www.traf.mb.ca.

If you missed the day, fear not, more sessions are coming up. Visit mbtech.org to view other seminar dates and sign up with MyProfile. You need not be member of the "host" local since we are all under the same pension plan.

Women in Educational Leadership Forum

For every woman teacher who wants to lead, read, and learn with colleagues online, the Women in Educational Leadership Forum Group is for you.

We are currently talking about Brené Brown's **Dare to Lead**, but even if you haven't read the book, there is plenty you can contribute to the discussion.

Search for us on *Facebook*, answer a couple of simple questions and jump in! We have an engaging live broadcast every Wednesday night.

If you can't be with us on Wednesday's the video is online to view at your leisure – just scroll down to the date. If you wish to catch up, all weekly videos are there.

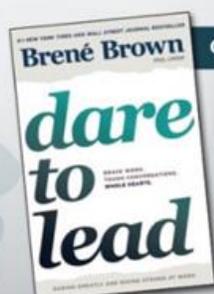


**WOMEN
IN EDUCATIONAL
LEADERSHIP FORUM**

Learning about leadership together.

Live Now!

Join our Facebook group
to post, share and discuss



Current Book

There's plenty
you can
**contribute
to the
discussion**

SOTA Committees

The following Committee Chair positions are filled by Executive Members at Large in September, following which, there is a call for the general membership to join committees:

Economic Welfare and Employee Benefits

– Chair: Charlene Eckert

The Economic Welfare Committee liaises with the Manitoba Teachers' Society to work for improved working conditions and benefits through negotiation of the Collective Agreement. The Employee Benefits Committee chair disseminates information on available benefits.

Equity and Social Justice

– Chair: Joanne Kosheluk

The Equity and Social Justice Committee liaises with the Manitoba Teachers' Society to seek out community resources on inclusive and anti-oppressive education and create learning and networking opportunities for members.

Indigenous Education

– Chair: Carol Sawka

The Indigenous Education Committee liaises with the Manitoba Teachers' Society to connect SOTA members with resources related to Indigenous education.

Education Finance

– Chair: Daniel Buchanan

The Education Finance Committee liaises with the Manitoba Teachers' Society to monitor trends with regard to the financing of public education.

Scholarships

– Chair: Lindsay Brown

Each year, the Scholarship Committee selects graduating students who are pursuing post secondary work in Education to receive a SOTA Scholarship.

Resolutions

– Chair: Lisa Meyers

The Resolutions Committee connects with members to create resolutions (i.e., proposed policies, actions, constitutional changes, or bylaw changes) for the Annual General Meeting of MTS in May.

Nominations

– Chair: Jeff Cieszecki

The Nominations Committee shall consist of one representative chosen from early years (K– grade 5), one representative chosen from middle years (grades 6-8) and one representative chosen from senior years (grades 9-12). They will attempt to nominate at least two members for each of the Executive positions. They are responsible for informing the membership of the nomination slate, and preparing the ballot.

Policy Review

– Chair: Jeff Cieszecki

The Policy Review Committee is to meet annually to conduct a review of the Constitution and Policies, and propose amendments where necessary.

Board/SOTA Advisory

– Chair: Shelley Torz

The Board/SOTA Advisory Committee meets as a group to work with the Board on special initiatives. The current initiative is around student support.

Professional Development - Educational Leave (PD-Ed Leave)

– Chair: Shelley Torz

The Board/SOTA PD-Ed Leave Committee meets to review the PD and Ed Leave guidelines annually, reviews for approval - all professional development applications on an on-going basis, listens to presentations and approves time for Ed Leaves, twice a year.

Committee Chairs typically make a call for interested members to join at Council Meetings.

However nothing precludes you as a member from reaching out and sharing your ideas and desires to participate.

Come join us and help strengthen the SOTA community.



WHAT'S GOING ON IN EDUCATION?

On October 7, 2019, the provincial government introduced Bill 2, *The Public Services Sustainability Amendment Act*. This bill does not replace Bill 28, *The Public Services Sustainability Act*. It proposes a number of changes to Bill 28.

BILL 28

The Public Services Sustainability Act

Effect on collective bargaining:

1. Freezes salaries for public sector workers in the first two years of their next collective agreement, followed by a 0.75 per cent increase in the third year and a 1 per cent increase in the fourth.
2. Restricts the ability to bargain increases to other monetary benefits such as premiums, bonuses or allowances.
3. By 2022, this amounts to about \$222 million in foregone salary increases for Manitoba teachers.

Status: Passed but not proclaimed.

BILL 2

The Public Services Sustainability Amendment Act

Effect on collective bargaining:

1. Gives cabinet discretion to exempt a collective agreement or portions of an agreement from the law.
2. Allows the government to shorten the restraint period where a bargaining unit has already seen wage freezes and very low pay increases.
3. This bill undermines the role of arbitrators and gives ministers the authority to determine wages. The right to arbitration is a fundamental element of Manitoba teachers' right to collectively bargain.

Status: Introduced in the last session.

What is Bill 2?

On October 7, 2019, the Pallister government introduced Bill 2 (*The Public Services Sustainability Amendment Act*) in the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. This is the Pallister government's 11th hour amendment to Bill 28 (*The Public Services Sustainability Act*), it's unconstitutional and heavy-handed legislation that calls for public sector workers to have their wages frozen for two years, followed by a 0.75% increase in the third year, and a 1.0% increase in the fourth year.

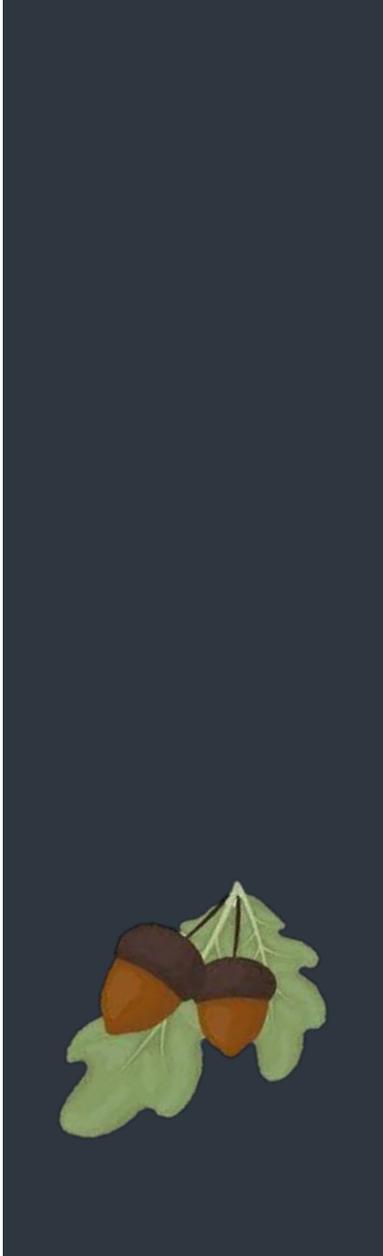
Bill 2 comes a few weeks before the commencement of the trial sought by Manitoba's public sector unions, including The Manitoba Teachers' Society, to stand up for workers and their Charter right to free collective bargaining. Bill 2 also comes mere weeks before the Louis Riel interest arbitration.

Bill 2 picks winners and losers by allowing the Pallister government to exempt any collective agreement it chooses from its heavy-handed legislation. Bill 2 also threatens to claw back any remuneration from public sector workers, including teachers, not approved by the Pallister government. **More importantly, Bill 2 attacks the independence of arbitrators and arbitration boards, and therefore attacks the interest arbitration process, a fundamental element of Manitoba teachers' right to collectively bargain.**

2019 Fall Reception

Thank you to all Executive, the Superintendents team and the Trustees that came to support and welcome our members – both new and experienced.

Greetings were also brought by MTS President, certificates were given to all new members and we 'broke bread' together - okay, it was pizza.



Wellness

The Educator Assistance Program (EAP) is a counselling and referral service made available through MTS for all members. Counselling is confidential and voluntary, and is offered in both French and English. All costs are covered through your MTS dues.



HARASSMENT
DEPRESSION
COPING WITH LOSS
ANXIETY
BURN-OUT
RELATIONSHIPS
STRESS
ABUSE
EMOTIONAL TRAUMA
DEALING WITH CHANGE

WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

Our purpose is to provide confidential and voluntary professional counselling, consultation and referral service to members.

We provide and promote Mental Health Education. When appropriate, we collaborate with other MTS services.

How to get in touch with EAP

You can contact the offices of the Educator Assistance Program at:

Winnipeg
McMaster House, 191 Harcourt Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3J 3H2
Phone: 204-837-5801
Toll free: 1-800-378-8811
Fax: 204-831-3083
Toll free fax: 1-866-713-6071
Leanne Laroche, EAP Administrative Assistant
llaroche@mbteach.org

Brandon
153 - 13th Street
Brandon, Manitoba R7A 4P4
Toll Free: 1-800-555-9336
Phone: 204-837-5802
Fax: 1-204-729-8869
Lorette Delaurier, EAP Administrative Assistant
ldelaurier@mbteach.org

Information available on many topics at:
<http://www.mbteach.org/health-benefits/eap.html>
(Click on Web and Print resources to access)
Services are available in English and French.

We are a confidential MTS service, independent of school divisions, we understand teaching and teachers.

June 2019

FRIENDLY
THOUGHTFUL
CONFIDENTIAL
HELPFUL
ACCOMMODATING
SYMPATHETIC
MINDFUL
KIND
RESPECTFUL
ACCEPTING
ACCESSIBLE
UNDERSTANDING
CONNECTED
AWARE
COMPASSIONATE
RESPONSIVE
SUPPORTIVE
CONSIDERATE

Educator Assistance Program

A Helping Hand

Every day teachers encourage students to ask for help when they need it. We at the EAP encourage teachers to do the same. That's why we're here.

Teachers face an array of issues different than those faced by people in other occupations. We understand that because we are a service supported by public school teachers, for public school teachers.

We are a confidential MTS service, independent of school divisions. We understand teaching and teachers.

Frequently asked questions:

1. Who is eligible for service?

You are eligible if the issues that you are confronting in your life are impacting your mental health to the degree that you are concerned about your ability to sustain work.

2. What types of issues are addressed through EAP counselling?

The professionally qualified team at EAP provide service to members struggling with a wide variety of issues related to work or home, such as stress and anxiety.

However, a number of member issues are better addressed by specialized services. As our goal is to provide the best and most appropriate service to members, we refer members to specialized services for the following when these resources are available in the community:

- Addictions
- Family Violence
- Parenting Skills Development
- Financial Stress
- Fertility Issues
- Chronic Pain and Illness
- Alternate Career Exploration

3. How do I access services?

Step 1: Telephone your nearest EAP office (Winnipeg or Brandon). When making contact with EAP please ensure you have your Manitoba Teachers' Society membership card number available (not your Teaching Certificate number).

Step 2: After you have provided your membership number, and your eligibility for service has been determined you will be asked to do an intake interview. This will be completed over the telephone. Once the intake interview has been completed, an appointment for service will be offered.



2019 – 2020 SOTA Dates



September

- 12-13 Executive Training
- 17 Council

October

- 1 Executive - BZERC
- 5 World Teacher Day
- 10 MTS/TRAF Pension Sustainability Seminar
- 11 Divisional Day
- 15 Council
- 22 Fall Reception
- 23 Maternity/Parental Leave Seminar
- 25 MTS PD Day

November

- 5 Executive - SOSD Boardroom
- 19 Council

December

- TBD Executive
- 17 Council (if required)

Friday 20th through
Friday Jan. 3rd WINTER BREAK

January

- 7 Executive - BZERC
- 21 Council

February

- 4 Executive - SOSD Boardroom
- 12 MTS/TRAF Pre-Retirement Seminar
- 18 Council

March

- 3 Executive - BZERC
 - 17 Council
- Friday 27th through
Friday April 3rd SPRING BREAK

April

- 7 Executive - SOSD Boardroom
- 15 Maternity/Parental Leave Seminar
- 21 Council
- 26-28 CAPSLE Conference - Ottawa

May

- 5 Executive - SOSD Boardroom
- 12 Council
- 20 - 23 MTS AGM
- 28 Long Service Wine & Cheese

June

- 2 Executive
- 16 Council (if required)
- 17 SOTA Retirement Dinner

*Executive & Council Meetings begin at 4:15pm

**Council Meetings are held at Maples Collegiate – Math Open Area

SOTA Council

Each school or workplace is allowed one councillor for each ten members or part thereof greater than four, and at least one alternate for every two councillors.

Join us at Council, typically the third Tuesday of each month. Meetings are held in the Maples Math Open Area, starting at 4:15pm.

**Get involved with
SOTA Council!**

Seven Oaks ICT PD GUIDE

14

Nov

INTRO TO GOOGLE APPS

Host: Phil Taylor
Venue: Board Office
Date: November 14th at 4:00 pm
Please bring a Chromebook

5

Dec

VR & 360 STORYTELLING

Host: Matt Henderson
Venue: BZERC Conference Room
Date: December 5th, 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Participants should bring a Chromebook

20

Nov

INTRO TO PHOTOSHOP

Hosts: Maribeth Tabanera & Ben Nein
Venue: Maples Collegiate Graphics Lab (Basement)
Date: November 20th, 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

9

Dec

INTRO GOOGLE CLASSROOM

Host: Phil Taylor
Venue: BZERC Conference Room
Date: December 9th, 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Participants should bring a Chromebook

4

Dec

CODING TO ENGAGE

Using Code to Engage All Learners:
Leveraging web-based coding platforms to ignite curiosity and passion
Host: Tech Manitoba
Venue: Maples Collegiate
Date: December 4th, 9:00 am - 3:30 pm
Subs covered

21

Jan

DIVE INTO MICROSOFT 365

Host: Mario Asta
Venue: TBA
Date: January 21st, 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Head to "Workshops" on Employee Connect to register!

Contact Us

SOTA office
204-985-6120

President
Mike Giffen
sota@mbteach.org

Vice President
Shelley Torz
vp.sota@mymts.net

All matters will be dealt with in confidence.

Manitoba Teachers' Society
Can request Staff Officer
assistance 204-888-7961