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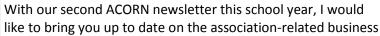
Council Dates

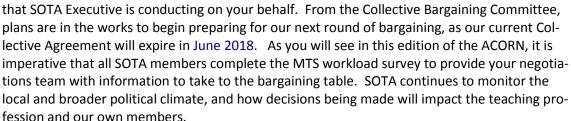
The Acorn

WINTER 2017

Message From Your SOTA President

As part of Teacher Appreciation Week, I would like to thank all teachers for the work they do everyday. It may seem some days that the work we do goes unnoticed, but rest assured that the students and their families appreciate your efforts.





SOTA continues to make Workplace Safety and Health a priority for members, including fall training for Head Councilors in regards to Harassment and Violence in the workplace.

Members are also reminded of the annual SOTA events including SOTA Executive elections in May, and recognizing our long service members and teachers who will be retiring this year.

Jeff Cieszecki

Teacher Appreciation Week Feb.12-18



Teach. Guide. Inspire.

#thankateacher

WINTER 2017 PAGE 2

#mysurveycounts: MTS Workload Survey

In the month of February, your Head Councilor will have received and distributed the Manitoba Teachers' Society's Workload Survey to all SOTA members at each worksite. This survey takes place every four years and the information gathered is extremely important to the work that MTS and SOTA does on your behalf. The survey results will provide MTS with an overview of the workloads/stressors/challenges of members provincially and other information your Society is unable to attain in other ways.

For SOTA, the survey will provide data which will be useful in preparing the Association's Collective Bargaining opening package. Our current Collective Agreement will expire June 30th, 2018 and the survey data can be used by the SOTA Bargaining Committee to create proposals to try and address the needs of our members. The survey is confidential and takes approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

For the survey results to truly represent the concerns and needs of the over 15,000 MTS members provincially and 950 SOTA members locally, it is imperative that *ALL MTS* members complete and submit the survey.



Preferred Pharmacy Program: Dispensing Fees

With the unveiling of PWI Insurance's Preferred Pharmacy Program (PPP) with Rexall/Rexall Pharma Plus/Medi Trust, members may be pondering moving their prescriptions to the new PPP. Information has been provided to SOTA members by the board office, but in case you were wondering about dispensing fees, here they are:

PHARMACY	DISPENSING FEE
Costco*	\$4.47
Rexall/Pharma Plus (non PPP)	\$12.81
Rexall (PPP)	\$8.83
ESC Pharmacy	\$9.00
Superstore	\$9.79
Medicine Shoppe	\$10.64
Sobeys/Safeway	\$11.63
Red River Co-Op	\$11.87
Shoppers Drug Mart	\$11.87
Pharma Save	\$12.27
Super Thrifty	\$14.09

^{*}A Costco membership is not required to buy prescription drugs at the pharmacy

At pharmacies not included in the PPP, your 80% medication coverage includes 80% of the dispensing fee up to a max of \$6. The new PPP with Rexall/Rexall Pharma Plus/Medi Trust will see an increase in approved medication coverage from 80% to 90%. This includes the dispensing fee coverage of 90%; however, the \$6 cap covered by our plan still applies. This means you would pay \$2.83 of the \$8.83 dispensing fee per prescription at Rexall.

Tax Information

ELIGIBLE EDUCATOR SCHOOL SUPPLY TAX CREDIT

A reminder to SOTA members of the School Supply Tax Credit by the Government of Canada. If you are an eligible educator, you can claim a 15% refundable tax credit on up to \$1,000 of supply purchases per year. To find out more, please visit: www.cra-arc.qc.ca/nwsrm/txtps/2016/tt160906-enq.html

POSSIBLE FEDERAL TAXATION OF HEALTH BENEFITS

On February 1, 2017 Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told the House of Commons during Question Period that the Liberals will not push forward with a tax on health and dental benefits provided to employees by their employers. This means that our plan is currently safe.

^{**} Source: Manitoba School Employee Benefit Plans Newsletter – January 2017

GSA PD Opportunity





Find out strategies for sustaining your school's GSA!

Creating and Supporting a STRAGE STRAGE FROM START TO SUSTAINABILITY

Friday, March 3, 2017, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Rainbow Resource Centre, 170 Scott Street, Winnipeg
Register at https://memberlink.mbteach.org/

GSAs are designed to create and provide an environment for students to meet, socialize, educate, and support one another on sexual orientation and gender identity matters. This session outlines Rainbow Resource Centre's 10 most commonly asked questions on the **GSA** development and sustainability.

Presenters are Dr. Reece Malone, Education Program Coordinator and Samara Luprypa, Youth Programs Coordinator.

Cost: \$20 (includes refreshments and lunch)

Equity and Social Justice Update

MARCH FOR MENSES



SOTA'S EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE
CHALLENGES EACH SOTA MEMBER TO MAKE A DONATION
OF MENSTRUAL HYGIENE PRODUCTS

(24 PADS OR TAMPONS, OR ONE MENSTRUAL

CUP PER SOTA MEMBER)

BY MARCH 21, 2017

THESE PRODUCTS WILL BE COLLECTED AND DONATED TO SEVEN OAKS SETTLEMENT SERVICES

DONATIONS CAN BE SENT TO THE SOTA OFFICE
PLEASE DIRECT ANY QUESTIONS TO
esj.sota@mymts.net

Questions about
March for Menses?
Contact ESJ Chair
Lindsay Brown at
esj.sota@mymts.net



Social Update

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SOTA Paint Nite

Come out for an evening of connecting and creativity!

Wednesday, April 26
Shooters Restaurant
2731 Main St.

Painting begins at 6:00 pm
Tickets \$20 or

Free for New SOTA Members
(1 or 2 years with SOTA)

Reserve your spot by emailing
sota@mymts.net

Visit

https://www.paintnite.com/about-us for more information about Paint Nite

35 spots available
First-eome, first-served
Application deadline April 12

Upcoming Events

SOTA Long Service Reception: May 30th, Garden City CanadInn, 4 pm.

SOTA Retirement Dinner: June 20th, Bailey's, 6 pm.

Council Dates

Maples Collegiate, 4:15

- February 21, 2017
- March 21, 2017
- April 25, 2017
- May 16, 2017 (Budget Vote)
- June 13, 2017