

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Message 1

MTS Workload Survey 2

Dispensing Fees 3

Tax Information 3

GSA PD Opportunity 4

Equity and Social Justice Update 5

Social Update 6

Council Dates 6

# 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.

With our second ACORN newsletter this school year, I would like to bring you up to date on the association-related business that SOTA Executive is conducting on your behalf. From the Collective Bargaining Committee, plans are in the works to begin preparing for our next round of bargaining, as our current Collective Agreement will expire in [June 2018](#). As you will see in this edition of the ACORN, it is imperative that all SOTA members complete the MTS workload survey to provide your negotiations team with information to take to the bargaining table. SOTA continues to monitor the local and broader political climate, and how decisions being made will impact the teaching profession and our own members.

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**



The  
Manitoba  
Teachers'  
Society

# #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 30<sup>th</sup>, 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.

I'm taking  
the MTS  
Workload  
Survey.

My story.  
My profession.  
My survey.

#mysurveycounts



The  
Manitoba  
Teachers'  
Society

# 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
<b>Rexall (PPP)</b>	<b>\$8.83</b>
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

\*\* Source: Manitoba School Employee Benefit Plans Newsletter – January 2017

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.gc.ca/nwsrm/txtps/2016/tt160906-eng.html](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/nwsrm/txtps/2016/tt160906-eng.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.

# GSA PD Opportunity

*Find out strategies for  
sustaining your  
school's GSA!*



The  
Manitoba  
Teachers'  
Society



RAINBOW  
RESOURCE  
CENTRE  
SERVING MANITOBA'S GAY, LESBIAN,  
BISexual, TRANSGENDER, AND  
TWO-SPiRiT COMMUNITIES

## Creating and Supporting a **GAY STRAIGHT ALLIANCE** 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/>

**GSA**s 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

Questions about  
March for Menses?  
Contact ESJ Chair  
Lindsay Brown at  
[esj.sota@mymts.net](mailto:esj.sota@mymts.net)

## 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](mailto:esj.sota@mymts.net)



*Come out for an  
evening of connecting  
and creativity!*

### **SOTA Paint Nite**

*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-come, 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