

The Apple Core

September 2015

Upcoming Events

GVTA Exec meetings for the year at NPC. All meetings start at 4:00pm.

All are welcome:

- October 6
- November 3—General Meeting – Quality Inn
- December 1
- January 7
- February 2
- March 1
- April 5
- May 3
- May 24—General Meeting
- June 7

Welcome back!

Meet Your GVTA



Back Row: Carl Pfahl (GVC—ESJ), Joe Lindhorst (NPC-ESJ), Esther Klassen (WES-Social/Wellness), Scott Hiebert (JR-Ed Finance), Dale Martens (NPC-Past President), Jacqui Kusnick (ECS—PD)

Middle Row: Rhonda Peters (NPC—Treasurer), Shelley Nikkel (NPC—Social), Raffaele Bagnulo (NPC— PR), Mary Eberling-Penner (PC—Secretary), Donica Blatz (PC—PD),

Front Row: Bud Kehler (PDS-Ed. Finance), Joel Swaan (PKLD-Bargaining, VP), Sarah Quickfall (GVC—Benefits, Bargaining), Rick Schroeder (NPC—President)

Not pictured: Karla Rootsart (SWD—PR), Donna McCausland (NPC—Social/Wellness), Sarah Stepler (DO—Benefits)

Greetings from the Executive:

Welcome to the 2015-16 school year! The GVTA executive would like to wish everyone a fantastic school year. We look forward to serving you in our various roles in the upcoming months.



WELCOME BACK! FOR THE 2015-2016 SCHOOL YEAR! -

Rick Schroeder (NPC) – GVTA President

It's time to send everyone our greetings and give you a quick overview of the activities that your GVTA has participated in over the summer and our nearly completed full first month of school.

It was great to see everyone back at the First Day assembly, which was especially noteworthy for the talk presented by *Professional Development Speaker and PhD Candidate Kevin Lamoureux*. His message highlighting *Diversity*, and *Equity* versus *Equality*, are particularly important as our community continues to diversify and as we recognize all the unique and distinct individuals that comprise our classes. His expression: *Culture is what we are used to*, is the perfect fulcrum for us to connect with our students and the many ways of their being themselves. Some teachers commented favourably on the invocation by Board Chair Laurie Dyck that was globally encouraging and respectful of the views and beliefs of all the attendees. In fact, many teachers commented on the opening day as being the best they had ever attended! Thank you Vern and our School Board for bringing in a dynamic speaker on the opening day! By the way, to make sure I spelled his name correctly I did a Google search on Kevin and... it's true, the "*Other*" Kevin Lamoureux appeared.

So, to keep you up-to-date, we have now filled all our executive positions with one or two folks wearing multiple hats to serve you this school year. **Joel Swaan** of Parkland School continues as your **Vice-president** and **Collective Bargaining Chair**. We need everyone to recognize the hard work he has invested in doing the very best for teachers as our negotiation process moves forward. I have the pleasure of working with him on our **Table Team** alongside our other veteran member - **Pam Klassen-Dueck** - as we work with the Board to reach an agreement. We also have recently welcomed **Sarah Quickfall** as our **Collective Bargaining Co-chair** (she's already your **Employee Benefits Chair**). Her appointment assures us of a strong and knowledgeable team as we move forward. FYI, there will be no "spoiler-alerts" here; you'll just have to remain patient as we continue our meetings with the board.

New to the GVTA Executive:

Our **Secretary** this year is **Mary Eberling-Penner** of Plum Coulee School. She brings many years of executive experience to our group.

Bud Kehler of Prairie Dale School joins **Scott Hiebert** as our **Education Finance** Co-Chair. Bud too, has experience "running the numbers" and evaluating the contents of the provincial FRAME document.

Shelley Nikkel - NPC - is our new **Social / Wellness Committee** Chair and she will work with our new **Co-chairs Donna McCausland** (NPC) and **Esther Klassen** (WES), who may provide a few new wrinkles to the activities supported by this committee - especially since the Wellness portion is brand new to this portfolio.

Joe Lindhorst (NPC) returns as our **Equity** (formerly Equality) & **Social Justice Chair** alongside newcomer and **Co-chair** - **Carl Pfahl** (GVC). They both attended the Summer ESJ Sessions and came back with some great ideas and materials.

Rhonda Peters (NPC) returns as our very capable and efficient **Treasurer**, Sarah Stepler (DO) returns to serve as **Co-chair** on **Employee Benefits**, Jacqui Kusnick (ECS) – **Chair** and Donica Blatz (PCS) – **Co-chair** of **Professional Development** are back (Donica attended the Summer PD Seminar), as are **Chair** Karla Rootsart (SWD) and **Co-chair** Raff Bagnulo (NPC) of **Public Relations**. And finally, **Walter Fehr** (BVS) is our **Member @ Large** representing the Border Valley Unit, **Dale Martens** remains as your **Past-president** (we never want to see him leave!), and I will continue as your **GVTA President** and have added the **Workplace Health and Safety** (hard) hat to my responsibilities.

And... when we can get 'em, we also have two substitute teachers that sit on our executive as they can make it (retirement can be hectic 'ya know) **Margaret Reimer** and **Dave Stobbe**.

Now the big items...

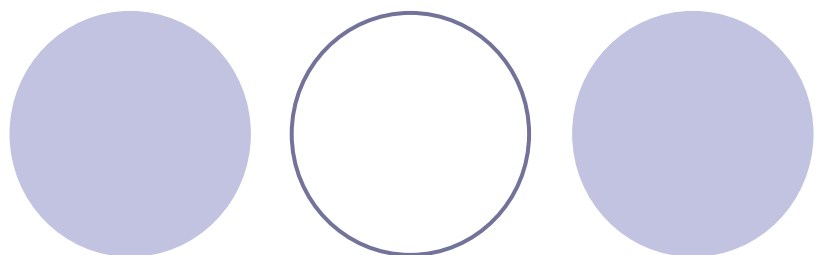
Joel, Pam and I attended the Summer Collective Bargaining Sessions and we want to remind you of the importance of supporting each other and of demonstrating our collective unity as we negotiate a new collective agreement. Please be sure to attend our **Fall AGM** on **Tuesday November 03, 2015** at the **Quality Inn - doors open at 4 pm**). We are always in need of quorum – especially as negotiations are becoming more focused.

A reminder... always inform your GVTA President if you find yourself having **questions or difficulties surrounding your teaching assignments and workplace expectations**. Do not just “Go it alone”! Many times, a simple phone call, email, or discussion can help you avoid a ton of hurt. Remember to give me a call, or send me your ideas, notions, comments, questions, whenever you need. Your information is held in strictest confidence, and your voice is necessary. Remember: Always call your GVTA President when you have questions about your workplace. Contact me – Rick Schroeder - with any professional questions / issues or comments / concerns at: gvtapresident@gmail.com or 1.204.229.5174.

Note: We started this last year and will continue moving forward – Whenever items of a sensitive nature arise, GVTA will not use Divisional Email (GVSD) to inform you directly. Instead, we will notify you through your personal email account only. If you want email updates and information from GVTA that is Not Suitable for your Work email address, please email me your alternate email where it is appropriate to send you association information - gvtapresident@gmail.com.

If you no longer want to receive email through your alternate address, please also email me at gvtapresident@gmail.com and request to have your email removed.

Well that's it for now! Be sure to create the conditions for you and your students to have an excellent and memorable school year – as a member of the Garden Valley Teachers' Association!



The ESJ Summer Seminar was filled with resources!

Just before getting back to classes a great resource we would like to share with you is the Canadian Teacher's Federation website which proves to be filled with valuable ideas on thinking Equity, thinking social justice and incorporating that awareness into you work and classroom. See below our notes taken, browse through it and bookmark this valuable resource from this national association. Thanks and all the best as you start your new year!

Joe Lindhorst ESJ Chair, Carl Pfhal ESJ Co-Chair

Canadian Teachers' Federation:

Four Pillars of CTF

Advocacy and Labour Rights (Mental Health, Poverty, Labour Rights, VOX)

Research and Analysis (Technology, Aboriginal Ed., Work-Life Balance)

Services to Francophones (PELF, Annual Symposium, Action Plan 2014-2020)

Services to the profession (International Program, Imagineaction (STTP Canada))

- a. **International Program** (Teachers' Action for... Teaching; Teacher Organizations; Gender Equality)

Values & Themes of CTF

Connect - Engage - Thrive - Lead - Live - Care

CTF on Social Media

Facebook \ Youtube \ Wordpress \ Flickr \ Wordpress \ Twitter

@canteachersfed

@CTF_FCE_PRES

@EnsigneCanada

@Cassectf_fce

Online Resources:

www.VOX.ctf-fce.ca Www.imagine-action.ca

- develop projects that address a social action in the digital world.
- School Community social action project.
- Fair Trade Schools
- “Apple of my eye” - Mental Health Initiative
- Simon Stretch

MTS Mental Health & Awareness PD www.sttpcanada.ctf-fce.ca

A message from the Equity and Social Justice Chairs:

If anyone is interested in participating in the GVTA Equity and Social Justice Committee, we are looking for a rep from each school or a rep that can represent multiple schools to help facilitate good communication from the executive committee to all members about ESJ information, PD opportunities and other related information.

The frequency of meetings won't be many, possibly 4 times a year, short and sweet, to the point, and informative. There will be some emailing to do for your school, an ESJ awareness type of event to coordinate once a school year, etc. If there are multiple teachers for one school even better, for instance if 2 want to participate that may even be better, share the load, collaborate etc...

If you are interested or if you know of anyone that may be interested in Equity and Social Justice within the parameters of education, how it translates to the classroom, to your work...please feel free to contact myself or Carl Pfahl.

Ask yourself this question, what's the difference between the terms Equality and Equity, how can the misunderstanding of these two words affect your work satisfaction? Everything equal doesn't necessarily mean everything equal.

How about this question, what is your own understanding of Social Justice? What does it mean to have Social Justice in your community of colleagues? In your classroom? When you have a good understanding of ESJ the ability to discern and identify unbalances in your educational environment can help improve your impact and help optimize the benefits of 'being in school' for your students.

If you are interested in serving on the ESJ committee, please contact us via email,

Joe Lindhorst ESJ Chair and Carl Pfahl ESJ Co-Chair GVTA

Save the Date!

The GVTA Fall General Meeting will be held Tuesday, November 3rd at the Quality Inn in Winkler. Doors open at 4:00pm Plan to attend!