

# The Apple Core

March 2017

## Upcoming Events

### GVTA Executive meetings:

- April 4
- May 4
- June 6

Held at NPC and begin at 4:00. All members are welcome

### Other Events:

- April 4th—Early and Mid Career Benefits Seminar, Winnipeg, 4:30–7:00 pm
- April 5th—ESJ Book Club, CKs in Winkler, 4:00 pm
- April 7th—Deadline for nominating students for Young Humanitarian Awards
- April 12th—International Day of Pink
- April 20th and 21st—MTS Human Rights Conference, Winnipeg

## President's Address

Greetings, GVTA-ers, on this – the last week of school before spring break!

GVTA hasn't had much of an on-line presence of late, but that is starting to change. We have a new website at <[gvteach.org](http://gvteach.org)>. Currently, you can go there to find our Collective Agreement, information on ERIP, GVTA's constitution and practices & procedures, PD funds form, and 2015-16 and 2016-17 editions of *Apple Core*. There is also a list of your executive and a contact form, plus a schedule of our meetings.

Coming up on April 12<sup>th</sup> is the International Day of Pink. There is a website at <[dayofpink.org](http://dayofpink.org)> where more information and resources are available. Please consider looking for meaningful ways to mark the occasion.

I've just returned from the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Mel Myers Labour Conference, which I am privileged to be able to receive as professional development for being the South Central Representative on the MTS Collective Bargaining Standing Committee. I attended sessions on Compensation for Job-Related Psychological Illness, Respectful Workplace Policies which dealt primarily with Harassment and Discrimination, and Assisting with Mental Health and Addiction Issues.

For those that had planned on attending the Early and Mid-Career Pension Sustainability Seminar hosted by MTS on Monday, March 6<sup>th</sup> in Morris which was cancelled due to poor driving conditions, it has been rescheduled for Thursday, May 18<sup>th</sup>. Registration will open soon on the <[mbteach.org](http://mbteach.org)> website.

Lastly – and this one is the most challenging to discuss – there is going to need to be an increase in awareness with regards to the current political climate. The provincial government is trying very hard to convince Manitobans that there is a need for austerity – that there is a financial crisis going on here at home – and that the only solution lies diminishing the work and the workers who are on the government's payroll, including teachers.

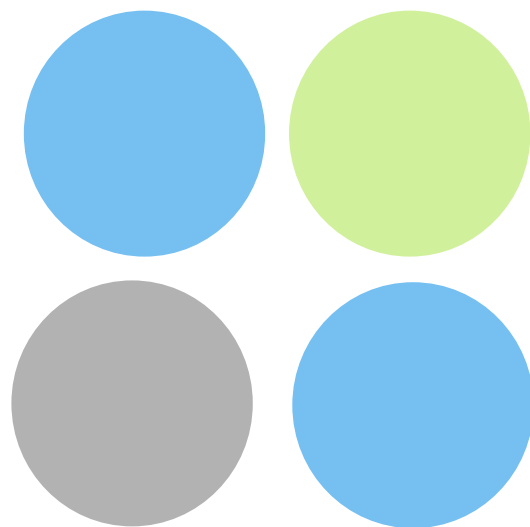
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While the government has talked about the size of the current debt, they have not talked about the fact that Manitoba has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest bond rating possible (out of 28 ratings) thus showing the strength of our current economy, and is well positioned to eliminate the debt by the end of their eight-year mandate. Small “c” conservative economists posit that governments can handle upper limit Debt/GDP ratios of 90-120%; Manitoba is currently sitting at 34% - no where near anything worthy of the label “crisis”. By the time you read this, the government will table Bill 28: The Public Services Sustainability Act, to be voted upon by June 1<sup>st</sup>. At the time of writing it is unknown what the act contains - and perhaps it won’t affect teachers directly - but it is more than likely that it will contain directives towards unionized government employees within the province. Without fearmongering, it should at least be said that we need to support and stand by the other labourers in our province, as we would want them to support us.

Remind yourself that the work we do is valuable to society, and that you are an important member-in-particular for the education of the children in this division. Let us continue to value the work of ourselves and others. And remember, “Just because you don’t take an interest in politics doesn’t mean that politics won’t take an interest in you” - Pericles.

As always, I look forward to hearing from you,

Joel  
[gvtapresident@gmail.com](mailto:gvtapresident@gmail.com)  
204-384-5635  
[gvteach.org](http://gvteach.org)



**GVTA wants to help you  
make Spring Break better!**

**GVTA is giving away  
5 Charley B's giftcards!**

**To enter the draw:  
e-mail your NAME and SCHOOL  
with the subject heading "APPLECORE" to  
[mike.urichuk@gvsc.ca](mailto:mike.urichuk@gvsc.ca)**

# Workplace Safety and Health Report

Submitted by Jacquie Mitchell

Joel and I attended an MTS Seminar on Saturday, February 25th in Winnipeg. The morning was a workshop presented by Jack Slessor from Safe Work Manitoba. He is a Prevention Consultant. The topic was "Introduction to Investigating Workplace Incidents in Schools." There was so much information to be presented that it did not all get covered. There are 2 types of investigations that need to be done:

- A) A serious incident (defined in Part 2.6 of the MB Workplace Safety and Health Act)
- B) An accident or other dangerous occurrence
  - i) That injures a person, and results in the person requiring medical treatment, or
  - ii) That had the potential to cause a serious incident

The WSH Act also provides every worker, including supervisors, with 4 basic rights:

1. The Right to Know—the employer must ensure that every worker is informed about hazards at work. Employees need to be trained to recognize hazards; to trained in safe work procedures and provided information to protect their safety and health.
2. The Right to Participate—in health and safety issues by being a committee member and/or electing worker members to a committee. More importantly, the right to bring safety and health concerns to that member or committee. **Documentation saves the day!**
3. The Right to Refuse Dangerous Work—work that you believe, on reasonable grounds, constitutes a danger to your safety and health or the health of another worker or person. This includes anyone in the schools such as students and school volunteers.
4. The Right to Protection from Discriminatory Action—Discriminatory action against a worker is prohibited by law as outlined in section 42(1) of the WSH Act.

What to investigate, and who does it, is also defined in the WSH Act.

- Worker safety concerns (Supervisor/Committee members)
- Serious incidents (Co-chairs and/or Designates)
- Accidents or other dangerous occurrence (Co-chairs, Committee Members)
- Right to refuse incidents (Supervisor/Committee Members)
- Violent incidents or threats (Employer, maybe co-chairs)
- Workplace Harassment (Employer)

**Remember that when a workplace is deemed to be a safe and caring learning environment, that does not just apply to the students. It applies to all people in the workplace!**

The problem is that all of the people who are supposed to do the appropriate and proper investigations are not trained appropriately or properly.



## NEW PREFERRED PHARMACY NETWORK

The Manitoba Public School Employees Health plan launched a Preferred Pharmacy Network on January 1, 2017.

### Why?

To help you **save money** on prescriptions – **you pay 10% instead of the usual 20%** when you use a Network pharmacy

Convenience of free home delivery for longer term ongoing prescriptions

No change in premiums

Use is optional

### How Does it Work?

Costco Pharmacy (only located in Winnipeg) - intended for short term prescriptions that need to be filled right away (you don't need a membership for prescriptions).

Express Scripts Canada Pharmacy (ESC) - intended for longer term medications for ongoing conditions that can be filled/refilled within 72 hours

ESC provides

free delivery in Canada

auto refills and renewal reminders

online transfer and refill requests

on call pharmacists 24/7

### How do you save?

You pay 10% of the cost, instead of the usual 20%

Lower dispensing fees than market

ESC fills 90 day supplies where appropriate, so you pay for 1 dispensing fee instead of 3

Substitute lower cost alternatives if you and your doctor approve

### How do you access the Network?

Just go to Costco to fill your prescription

For ESC, sign up on line at [express-scripts.ca/mpse](http://express-scripts.ca/mpse) - VIP code mpse (tablets and mobiles do not work), or call 1 855 550-6337. You just need your Health Plan ID card and the label of any ongoing medications you are taking.

# FUTURE MOMS AND DADS: A PRIMER

*(Maternity and Parental Leaves, EI, SUB Plan)*

*submitted by Dale Martens – GVTA Benefits co-chair*

*Please note! This article is merely a brief overview of the benefits and procedures surrounding maternity and parental leaves – details have been omitted. A teacher considering either a maternity or parental leave is strongly urged to contact MTS Staff Officer Nancy Kerr ([nkerr@mbteach.org](mailto:nkerr@mbteach.org)) for complete information*

## Maternity and Parental Leaves

The Employment Standards Code guarantees biological mothers 17 weeks of maternity leave. It also guarantees 37 weeks of parental leave to anyone who becomes a parent, including adoptive parents. These guarantees are only in place if someone has had 7 months of continuous service with their employer.

Women have the legal right to access sick leave both pre- and post-delivery, as long as they are medically unable to work. In some cases, especially before delivery, sick leave may be appropriate instead of maternity leave.

## Employment Insurance

If a full-time teacher is on maternity or parental leave, Employment Insurance will pay them approximately \$500 per week. However, these benefits would only start after a 2 week waiting period.

## SUB Plan

Our collective agreement has a Supplemental Employment Benefits (SUB) Plan. This means that GVSD pays teachers 90% of their gross salary during the first 2 weeks of a maternity or parental leave. During the remainder of a maternity leave (15 weeks), GVSD will pay teachers the difference between 90% of their gross salary and their employment insurance benefits. (It is commonly said that the division tops up the UI benefits.)

During a parental leave, the division tops up UI benefits for 8 weeks after the initial 2 week waiting period.

## Something Else

Below is a small section of the collective agreement that is related to maternity and parental leaves:

“When a teacher requests leave from teaching duties to be with the teacher’s partner while she is having a baby or they are adopting a child, such leave, up to two additional days, shall be granted as leave with pay.”

## Other Considerations

There are a host of other things to consider when planning a maternity or parental leave, including:

Application procedure for leaves, the SUB Plan, and EI. (Is sick leave appropriate?)

Deadlines for each of the above.

Effect of summer holidays and other breaks on maternity and parental leaves.

Continuation of health and dental insurances.

Continuation of TRAF contributions.

Sharing parental leave.

**Remember, for complete information, contact Nancy Kerr ([nkerr@mbteach.org](mailto:nkerr@mbteach.org)) at the Manitoba Teachers’ Society.**



**Location:**

191 Harcourt Street, McMaster House  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

*For those requiring overnight accommodations, the  
Holiday Inn Airport West is within walking distance.  
A block of rooms will be set aside for registrants.*

**Field-led study course cost:**

\$750.00 for non-members of MTS  
\$675.00 for MTS members  
\$550.00 for MTS/COSL members,  
current principals and vice principals

*We have yet to confirm the price for the 4 day or 2  
day option but they will be less expensive due to the  
reduced hours of instruction.*

**For more information:**

Bruce Shamray, COSL Chairperson  
204-837-3044 or [cosl@mbteach.org](mailto:cosl@mbteach.org)

We are in the final planning stages of our 2017 Summer Institute. Our theme this year is *Schools as Safe Spaces*. This broad theme explores the physical and social emotional safety of everyone. We have a great lineup of speakers and some format changes from our previous Institute experience.

The final program and registration forms will be available on-line through the COSL website by the end of March 2017.

There will be different options for our 2017 conference as this is our last year to have participants both on the old and new certification programs.

*For those completing contact hours following the previous guidelines we are offering 30 contact hours for the full 4 days or you can opt in for 2 days only the Tuesday-Wednesday or Thursday-Friday and receive 15 contact hours. You do not have to attend the whole week if you do not need many hours to complete your requirements. Please make sure you have confirmed your remaining requirements with the Certification Branch in Russell, Mb. (204-773-2998 or 1-800-667-2378). If you are on the new program and are doing the Field-led course for 3 credit hours you will be required to attend 2 additional days the following week. MTS Staff Officer Danielle Fullan Kolton will be instructor responsible for the Field-led study course and more information will be available with the registration package.*

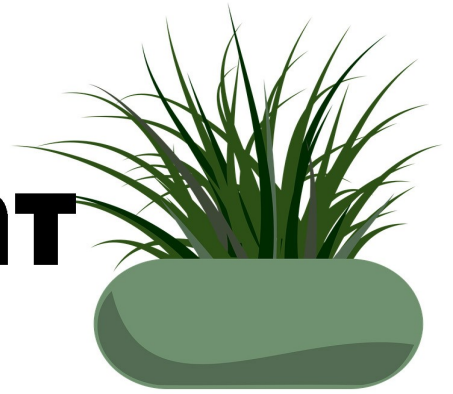
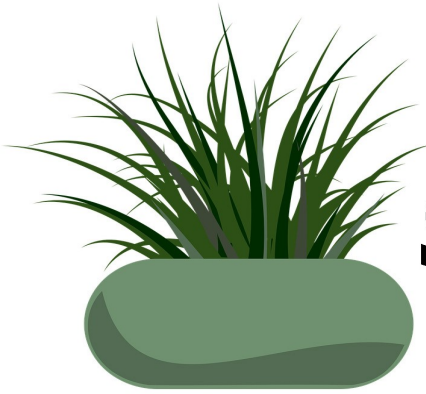
Council of School Leaders Summer Institute

# SCHOOLS

# as Safe Spaces

July 4-7, 2017





# SUCCULENT GARDEN EVENING



*Create adorable, unique succulent gardens with the help of GVC's fantastic horticulture teacher, Terena.*

*May 2nd*

*4:30-6:30 (Come and Go)*

*GVC TEC*

*Horticulture Classroom*

*359 Manitoba Road, Winkler*

*Registration is limited - no cost*

*Email [caitlin.parr@gvvsd.ca](mailto:caitlin.parr@gvvsd.ca) to Register*

*First 20 Registrants will be accepted*

*Additional registrants will be added to a waiting list*



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PC Government ignores evidence, abandons class-size cap

Latest move harmful for K-3 students

Today's announcement that the Manitoba government will abandon the Kindergarten to Grade 3 class size cap is "harmful and irresponsible," says Norm Gould, President of The Manitoba Teachers' Society.

"It ignores overwhelming evidence and common sense, and plays with the futures of every child at those grade levels," says Gould. "Any parent with a child in Kindergarten to Grade 3 should be outraged and talking to their MLA."

"Giving students more teacher attention in their early years has been proven to be successful. Dismantling a program that is still in its infancy and not fully implemented is short-sighted and damaging, period."

Gould says time for students and teachers to connect is at the heart of student success stories. "All the gains since the beginning of this program will be cast aside. As for the claim that there is no evidence to show smaller class sizes work, that is absolutely not true. There is plenty of research to back up the benefits of a class size cap. Teachers know that smaller class sizes pay dividends throughout students' lives - and parents support more attention for their children."

Gould says this latest move follows a recently announced government funding cut for the 2017-18 school year.

"First a meagre funding announcement, then prematurely throwing away the 20-student limit in early years classrooms?" What's next?"

**For more information:**

Raman Job, MTS Communications

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Email: [rjob@mbteach.org](mailto:rjob@mbteach.org)

Twitter: @mbteachers

Facebook: manitobateachers

*The Manitoba Teachers' Society and its 15,000 members are proud to  
safeguard the cause of public education in Manitoba.*



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## MTS Backgrounder

### Effectiveness of Reduced Class Sizes

A 2016 report by William J. Mathis published by the National Education Policy Center (NEPC) listed as its first recommendation: “Class size is an important determinant of student outcomes, and one that can be directly determined by policy. All else being equal, lower class sizes will improve student outcomes.”

A 2014 NEPC study by Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach entitled “Does Class Size Matter?” said that “increasing class sizes will harm student outcomes”. The study also said that not only will test scores be hurt, but in the longer run more substantial social and educational costs in the future will be incurred.

In 2011, Alberta Education’s Commission on Class Size found in reviewing literature on the effectiveness smaller class sizes that:

Class size makes a big difference. This is one of the most discussed and researched topics in education,

Parents and teachers agree it makes a big difference in student academic outcomes,

The biggest gains are for those in early years grades, especially those for poor and minority children (i.e., EAL), and

By 2002, 32 of 50 US States had implemented a class-size reduction program or introduced legislation to limit class sizes.

A 2010 study, “Reducing Class Size: What Do We Know”, published by the Canadian Education Association found that “in smaller classes, students learn more academically and socially; they are more engaged and less disruptive.”

Beginning in 1996, California was a leader in implementing wholesale class size reduction for early years learners in their public schools. A group of research institutes headed by the American Institute for Research and the RAND corporation found that:

Students in reduced class sizes received more individualized attention from teachers. Teachers were more likely and better able to know the work of students and help give feedback. Classes were more on task and better classroom management was facilitated, and

Parents liked reduced class sizes as reported through surveys of satisfaction levels.

In 2000, A PISA/OECD study of 15-years-olds found that as class sizes rose above 25 students a decline in school performance in reading, math and science could be predicted.

Tennessee’s STAR class size reduction project is the most frequently cited research study on the effects of class size limits on students. This was a long-term longitudinal study of students that used a comparison group to isolate the effects of the initiative. It reported an undisputed benefit of class size reduction for student gain.

# UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

## What is the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*?

1. In 1982, the United Nations began work on a documents to protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples globally. This work led to the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* which is an international human rights instrument that was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 13 September 2007 after more than two decades of negotiations. Canada formally endorsed the *Declaration* in November, 2010
2. The *Declaration* affirms the inherent or preexisting individual and collective human rights of Indigenous peoples. It provides a framework for justice and reconciliation, applying existing human rights standards to the specific historical, cultural and social circumstances of Indigenous peoples.

## What is Bill C-262, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*?

- Canada has stated that they would put the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission into place. Calls to Action 43 and 44 relate directly to the full implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the federal government*. Despite the commitment the Calls to Action, the federal government has not yet started to review and revise laws and policies to bring them in line with the standards set out in the *Declaration*.
- Canada now has the chance to become a world leader upholding Indigenous rights by fully standing behind the *Declaration*. Further, the *Declaration* could become the framework for reconciliation and support a new relationship between Canada and Indigenous Peoples.
- Bill C-262, therefore, calls on the Canadian government to fully adopt and implement the *Declaration* and stand up for the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

## Does the MTS support Bill C-262 *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*?

The Manitoba Teachers Society recently sent a letter to MPs from all political parties endorsing Bill C-262 the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, an “Act to ensure that the laws of Canada are in harmony with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.” Part of the rationale for the strong support of this Bill includes:

- The recognition by the Truth and Reconciliation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as “the framework” for Canadians to come together to address the appalling harms that have been inflicted on Indigenous peoples throughout Canada’s history.
- The focus of *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* on the collective and individual rights of Indigenous people as recognized by the United Nations and International law. Consequently, MTS views Bill C-262 as an important opportunity for Canada to act in harmony with our United Nations family and lead the world in the important work of advancing the human rights for our indigenous peoples.

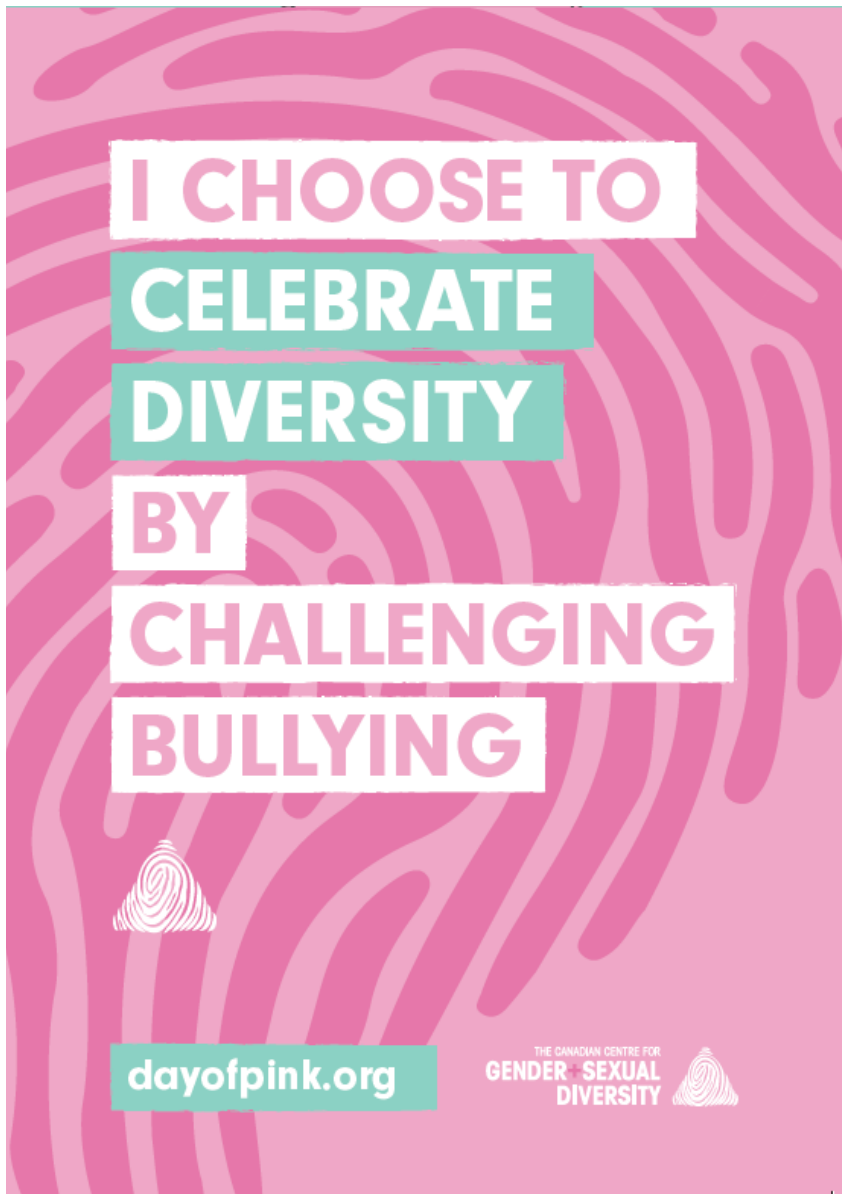
## How can I support Bill C-262 *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*?

Sign the petition and circulate this information amongst your membership encouraging them to sign as well!

**To sign the petition in support of this Bill please visit**

**<http://www.adoptandimplement.com>**

Additional information about *Bill C-262* as well as the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* are available on line at [www.adoptandimplement.com](http://www.adoptandimplement.com)



## History of the Day of Pink

The International Day of Pink was started in Nova Scotia when 2 straight high school students saw a gay student wearing a pink shirt being bullied. The 2 students intervened, but wanted to do more to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying. They decided to purchase pink shirts, and a few days later got everyone at school to arrive wearing pink, standing in solidarity. The result was that an entire school took a stand and began working together to prevent this kind of bullying.

The campaign has continued to grow; it is now an international campaign that thrives in schools, workplaces and communities. The Day of Pink and the conversations, awareness and acceptance that stems from it are making a real difference in the lives of queer and trans youth. Wear pink to spark some conversations and inspire acceptance.

This year, International Day of Pink is April 12, 2017.

## MTS Human Rights Conference

### Our Human Rights Journey

April 20 & 21, 2017

Victoria Inn, Winnipeg

MTS and MASS are joining forces to bring you *Educating for ACTION: Our Human Rights Journey*. School Divisions are invited to send teams of trustees, senior administrators, principals, teachers, parents and students to join numerous community groups on this timely journey. Keynote speakers will challenge all participants to reflect upon their lens on the society around them. Participants will be able to select from more than sixty workshops designed to build skills and understanding necessary to affect change for the society around us.

Full conference program and registration are available at <http://www.mbteach.org>



**School Visits** – Joel appreciated the welcome and the conversations that took place during the recent round of school visits. One visit remains to JRW on Thursday, March 23 at lunch. He will come around for one more visit to each site in May/June.

**Website** – the GVTA Website is up and running, in at least a basic form. It can be accessed at [gvteach.org](http://gvteach.org)

**Survey** – The Collective Bargaining and Professional Development Committees will be sending out a short survey in April to all members. Thanks also to members who completed the MTS Workload Survey.

**ESJ Book Club** – The book for the April and May book club meetings is “I Am Malala”. Meetings will be held at NPC in Room #103 for the rest of the school year, and are still at 4pm on the first Wednesday of the month.

**Portable USB Batteries** – PR delivered the annual GVTA gift to teachers-on-contract in March.

**Rink Board** – GVTA will sponsor a rink board with our logo for one last year at Winkler Arena.

**GVTA Bowling Night** – The February 24<sup>th</sup> event put on by the Social / Wellness Committee was well attended and considered to be a success.

**Succulent Garden Evening** – Terena Hantelman (GVC) will be hosting this event at GVC Tec on May 2<sup>nd</sup> from 4:30-6:30pm. Registration is limit to 20 people by contacting [caitlin.parr@gvsd.ca](mailto:caitlin.parr@gvsd.ca).

**GVSD-GVTA Liaison Meeting** – The next opportunity for teachers to meet directly with board members is Thursday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> @ 7am at DO. Teachers who would like to address the board with topics of concern should contact Joel.

**Western Teachers' Association** – Chairs and Co-Chairs of Public Relations, Professional Development, Social/Wellness, and Equity & Social Justice, as well as the president and vice-president, met with their counterparts on the Western Teachers' Association executive to look for possible areas of collaboration for the 2017-18 academic year.

**Policies & Procedures** – The GVTA Executive continues to review our current practices and procedures document. If members have any suggestions or concerns about the current policies, they should be in touch with Joel. Next month we will look at policies F.3 through J.1. This month we looked at:

B.4 GVTA reimburses half the entry fee of one GVTA team in each MTS sports event

B.5 GVTA has an Executive Training event in the fall, with partial aid from an MTS grant

C.1 GVTA sponsors two \$1,500 scholarships annually, one for each high school, for students entering Education

C.2 GVTA donates \$120 to the Stanley Agricultural Society annually for prize money

D.1 The GVTA Executive generally meets the first Tuesday of each month

D.2 GVTA usually supplies meals or snacks at its meetings

D.3 The GVTA president meets monthly with the GVSD superintendent to discuss concerns

D.4 If the division closes schools, GVTA events scheduled for that day get moved to the following week

E.1 Social / Wellness Committee has access to \$200 to provide food/refreshments at General Meetings

E.2 Public Relations Committee has access to \$300/year to provide prizes/draws at General Meetings

F.1 Substitute Teachers pay a pro-rated GVTA fee, based on the fraction of the school year they work

F.2 Part-time Teachers pay a pro-rated GVTA fee, based on the fraction of the school year they work

**Next GVTA Executive Meeting** – Tuesday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017 – NPC Room #103 @ 4:15pm; all members welcome.