

# The Apple Core

February 2018

## Upcoming Events

### GVTA Executive meetings:

- March 6 at Edelweiss School at 4:15 pm
- April 3
- May 1
- June 5

All members are welcome

### Other Events:

- February 27th, 7:00 pm—Public Budget Consultation Meeting, Parkland School MPR
- February 28th—Pink Shirt Day
- February 28th, 4:00pm —ESJ book club, CKs
- March 6th, 4:45—MTS Let's Talk Teaching meeting, Portage la Prairie

Greetings all;

These are interesting times.

Since you've last read my ramblings, the government has proposed some ideas about labour relations within our profession. They have created more questions than they have answered. We will see as time rolls on how the government will choose to handle this drastic change in the collective bargaining process through legislation – changes need to be made to the Labour Relations Act, the Public Schools Act, and perhaps others. Our collective agreement expires June 30, 2018, which is just around the corner. Bill 28 has not been proclaimed into law, although the government is acting as though it is mandatory and necessary, and is planning on entering into “bargaining” with four years of salary maximum caps already pre-determined.

Through all of this, it is important to remember the small “u” in the word “union”. More important than ascribing to a Union “hive mind” is the concept that we are better as professionals when we work together. This means that we may not all believe that the same things are important, but that we support those for whom those things are important. As an example, I will never qualify for maternity leave or the salary top-up that new mothers qualify for, but I would never want those benefits taken away from them, as I know that the benefit is important and necessary for those who need it so I will stand with them. It is not for me to begrudge a benefit from teachers dealing with illness, those near retirement, teachers with more or less education or experience, alternative teaching assignments, and the list goes on.

Can you imagine if you had to reapply for your job every year to stay employed? What would the impact be for you if \$465\* deducted from your paycheck every time you had a sick day (\*Maximum Class 5)? How would your family be impacted if you were required to be at school for a ten-hour work day every day? It used to be that female teachers were fired if they got married. Are you relying on your pension plan after your career has come to a close? The benefits associated with these questions are real, and exist for all teachers.

Continued on next page....

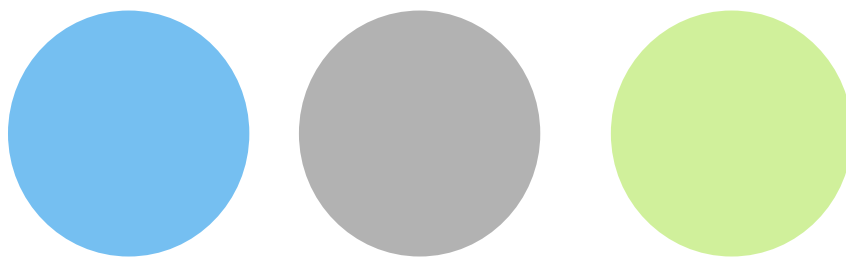
Outside of benefits, I saw a quote the other day about teacher unions: “Who fights for smaller class sizes to create a better learning environment for your children? Who fights against the overuse of standardized tests? Who fought for recess, art, and music in every elementary school? Who fights for better classroom resources so that your children can have a rich learning environment? The Teachers’ Union. Our work environment is your child’s learning environment!”

We often hear encouragement from teachers that GVTA should not have an “us vs. them” mentality with our employer. The message that GVTA been sending for quite some time is that we have working to build an excellent rapport with our board and senior administration. This doesn’t mean that we agree on everything; we have an obligation to bring certain conversations to the table, and to have a dialogue. It is in the dialogue that the relationship is built. But, there is no “us vs. them” because we all have the same goals of improving the delivery of education in Garden Valley.

Coming back to the proposed changes in our relationships with government and our employer. We don’t know what these changes will bring, nor the timeline. There is potential for improvement with every change, but it requires dialogue, time, and effort on both sides to continue the conversation. GVTA is willing to sit down at every table we are invited to, and glad to represent the members we serve. I have appreciated the feedback that I have been sent. Please continue to keep me informed as to how I can best represent you.

Yours in service,

Joel  
204-384-5635  
gvtapresident@gmail.com



## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Are you looking a volunteer opportunity? Have you ever considered volunteering with MTS? The Manitoba Teachers’ Society has numerous committees and groups that are looking for new volunteers for the upcoming term. Included in this edition of the Apple Core are two volunteer forms for 2018. One is a general volunteer form with a number of areas—you can choose one or more that interest you and apply! The other is specific to the TLLT— the Teacher-Led Learning Team. These members facilitate workshops for teachers’ associations across the province on a variety of issues, including on PD Days. Sound interesting? Fill in the application today! Or maybe you are looking to volunteer a little closer to home—GVTA is currently looking for members to serve on our executive for next year. Please see the nomination information included in the newsletter for specifics regarding each position and the application process.

Garden Valley Teachers’ Association members work on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, and the homeland of the Métis nation. GVTA respects the Treaties that were made on this territory.

Following recent provincial government announcements concerning education, as well as the presentations by MTS President Norm Gould at the Regional Meetings, MTS has received many requests for assistance in helping members write to their MLAs. The link below has several publications regarding current education issues in Manitoba, including a guide called “Speak Out” that will provide all that is needed for those wishing to write. A copy of “Speak Out” is attached to this edition of the Apple Core.

<http://www.mbteach.org/mtscms/2018/01/09/regional-meetings-set/>

Additionally you can find your MLA at the link listed below by constituency:

[http://www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/members/mla\\_list\\_constituency.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/members/mla_list_constituency.html)

## Young Humanitarian Awards

The MTS Young Humanitarian Awards are coming up Thursday, April 12, 2018.

Yes, we’ve changed our usual date and venue due to a busy pre-AGM schedule at the hotel.

This year we’re going to rock the Manitoba Theatre for Young People and we’d love to have you with us.

The family friendly show starts at 7:00 p.m. and will run for just over an hour - refreshments to follow.

Faouzia, Canada’s newest singing sensation, will join us along with other talented public school students.

The real stars? Our creative, energetic and socially conscious young humanitarians.

Join the fun and help us fête them!

Know any students who fit the bill? Of course you do.

Nominate your school’s Young Humanitarians here until March 1. And spread the word.

<http://www.mbteach.org/mtscms/2017/01/16/nominate-students-for-yha/>



# Employee Benefits Report

Did You Know..

You have many insurance options available to you as a member of the Manitoba Teacher's Society. Group Life has mandatory participation as well as optional insurances such as Family Life, Accidental Death and Optional Life Insurance are easily accessible to all members.

## Group Life Insurance

Offers peace of mind with coverage for you, your spouse and your dependents.

At the time of your employment, mandatory coverage is provided at two times annual salary.

You can increase to up to seven times your annual salary:

31 days after employment

Past 31 days with evidence on good health

Within 90 days of a major change in status (acquisition of spouse, birth or adoption of child or death of a spouse)

## Family Life Insurance

Optional insurance can be purchased with the purpose of providing a benefit in the case of the death of a spouse or child

If your spouse dies, you receive a lump sum of \$20,000

If a child dies, you receive \$10,000

## Accidental Death and Dismemberment

This optional insurance provides a lump sum in the event of death, or loss of limb, sight, hearing, etc. resulting from an accident.

This valuable benefit can help with home renovations, vehicle modifications, living aids such as wheelchair and prosthetic limbs.

You can insure yourself or yourself and your family in amounts up to \$360,000 (in units in \$18,000)

Evidence of good health is not required

## Optional Life Insurance

Helps your loved ones replace your income while they adjust to new circumstances, pay off debt and manage funeral costs.

You and your spouse can purchase up to \$250,000 (in units of \$10,000) of additional coverage

Life insurance that goes where you go - if you change jobs or retire

You are covered until the age of 70

For more information on the optional insurances please contact Gwen Heinrichs at [Gwendolyn.heinrichs@gvsd.ca](mailto:Gwendolyn.heinrichs@gvsd.ca) or Moira Porte for application forms to any of the insurances listed above.

# Social and Wellness Report

There are a number of great, healthy snacks you can keep in your desk in case of too-busy-to-eat type emergencies. Instant oatmeal, seeds, popcorn, whole-ingredient, low sugar granola or protein bars, etc. One of my newest healthy snack discoveries is roasted chickpeas. If you are interested in trying out this nutrient rich, salty snack - see the recipes at <https://modernparentsmessykids.com/healthy-snack-roasted-chickpeas/>



Sesame  
Soy

Honey  
Cinnamon

Garlic  
Parmesan

Smoky  
Spice Blend

# Let's Talk Teaching:

# Taking Back the Conversation

The purpose of these consultations is to bring teachers together to talk about teaching and learning in Manitoba in a climate where innovations continue to be planned with less and less teacher input. Honouring the voices of trained and experienced educators is intended to take back the narrative.

The dialogue will focus on four topics: effective teaching practices, literacy, numeracy, and early learning. For each topic, information will be gathered on the following questions:

1. *What specific strategies are you using to make a difference?*
2. *What challenges are you experiencing?*
3. *If you could change one thing in the Manitoba education system, what would it be?*

**All regional consultations will take place from 4:45 – 6:30 pm (unless otherwise indicated). Registration is required. A meal will be provided.**



**March 3 (10 h 30 à 12 h 30) – IN FRENCH – McMaster House | Winnipeg**

**March 6 – South Central – Portage Collegiate Institute | Portage la Prairie**

**March 7 – South East – Steinbach Regional Secondary School | Steinbach**

**March 7 – Metro 1 – Kelvin High School | Winnipeg**

**March 13 – Parkland – Dauphin Regional Comprehensive Secondary School | Dauphin**

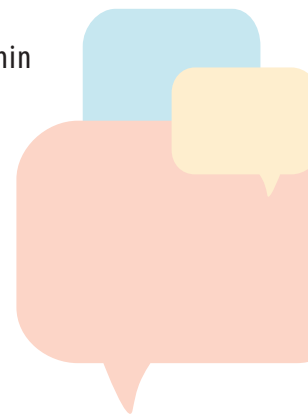
**March 14 – Metro 2 – Khartum Shrine Centre | Winnipeg**

**March 15 – South West – Vincent Massey High School | Brandon**

**March 19 – Lakewood – Stonewall Collegiate | Stonewall**

**April 3 – Northern 1 – St. Lawrence Hall | Thompson**

**April 4 – Northern 2 – Hapnot Collegiate | Flin Flon**



Please register to attend the meeting  
in your area by following the link:

<https://memberlink.mbteach.org/Events.aspx>



# Call For Nominations for GVTA Executive

It is time once again to announce our **Call for Nominations** for candidates to serve on next year's GVTA Executive!

We are looking for enthusiastic and energetic folks who are interested in learning about the Society and our Association aspects and understandings of Education and those who are willing to serve for the greater good and to the benefit of you educational colleagues.

Please contact me if you are: 1.) planning to continue in your current GVTA role (Note: GVTA does not have term limits), 2.) are considering an executive position, or 3.) if you have a person/s that you wish to nominate – just be sure that you have their prior approval with an indication of their willingness to let their name stand.

Self-nominating is always accepted if you are looking to become more involved and informed about your Society and Association activities.

We are seeking individual candidates for the following...

## **President – (Please note the specific timelines for this position)**

- **Please submit your President nominee/s by Noon – Thursday March 15, 2018.**
- **If an election is required, it will be held during the week of March 18, 2018**
- **Members shall elect the President by secret ballot before March 30, 2018.**

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## **Nominees for the following should be received by Noon – Friday May 18, 2018.**

- **Elections will be held at the GVTA Annual General Meeting on Tuesday May 29, 2018.**

Vice-President

Treasurer

Secretary

Workplace Safety & Health Liaison

Collective Bargaining & Collective Bargaining Co-Chair

Education Finance & Education Finance Co-Chair

Employee Benefits & Employee Benefits Co-Chair

Equity & Social Justice & Equity and Social Justice Co-Chair

Indigenous Education & Indigenous Education Co-Chair

Professional Development & Professional Development Co-Chair

Public Relations & Public Relations Co-Chair

Social/Wellness & Social/Wellness Co-Chair

A Nomination Chart with a brief description of each role is attached.

Please contact me with your nominees - [rschroeder@mymts.net](mailto:rschroeder@mymts.net) or cell/text 1.204.229.5174

Thanks for your time, and willingness to participate,

Rick Schroeder – Chair - on behalf of the Nomination Committee

### 2018-2019 GVTA EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

GVTA positions do not have term limits so, while some persons will be letting their names stand – the following positions are annually open for nominees and subject to any subsequent election:

Position	Nominee & School (You can self-nominate too!)	
<b>Nominees by</b> → <b>Noon – Thursday</b> <b>March 15, 2018</b> →	<b>President</b>	
<b>Nominees by</b> ↓ <b>Noon – Friday</b> <b>May 18, 2018</b> ↓	Vice-President	
	Treasurer	
	Secretary	
	Collective Bargaining	Chair
		Co-Chair
	Education Finance	Chair
		Co-Chair
	Employee Benefits	Chair
		Co-Chair
	Equity & Social Justice	Chair
		Co-Chair
	Indigenous Education	Chair
		Co-Chair
	Professional Development	Chair
		Co-Chair
	Public Relations	Chair
		Co-Chair
	Social/Wellness	Chair
		Co-Chair
	Workplace Safety & Health Liaison	

**Please send your Executive Member Nominations to: [rschroeder@mymts.net](mailto:rschroeder@mymts.net)**  
**Nominations close on Friday May 18, 2018 – NOON“**  
**Nominations from the floor” will also be accepted at the**  
**GVTA General Meeting and Elections to be held on Tuesday May 30, 2018**



<u>GVTA EXECUTIVE POSITIONS</u>	<u>DESCRIPTIONS IN BRIEF</u>
President	Call, preside, provide notice, and create agendas for all Executive meetings and general meetings; attends Association Standing Committee, Garden Valley School Division Board, Society, Presidents' Council, and South Central Region President meetings as necessary; make reports at all Executive and general meetings; act as a liaison between the Association and the Society, deal with personnel issues; attend negotiation sessions between the Association and Garden Valley School Division; work with Treasurer to create the Association budget.
Vice-President	Assist the president as needed; take full charge of the affairs of the Association during the absence of the President.
Treasurer	Keep an accurate record and take charge of all funds collected; prepare a financial report for each Executive and general meeting; meet with the President in budget preparation; prepare all necessary reports for the yearly financial review; present the completed review at a general meeting; be one of the co- signers to access Association accounts.
Secretary	Keep an accurate record of all proceedings of the Association; distribute agendas and minutes of Executive meetings, special meetings, and general meetings.
Collective Bargaining	Negotiate a new collective agreement based on provincial and regional bargaining goals and the needs of the membership; and promote knowledge of the collective agreement and/or bargaining procedures amongst the Association.
Education Finance	Track trends in Education Finance; and gather information to present to local Executive and General Meetings.
Employee Benefits	Develop awareness and maintain files of all employee benefits; identify and investigate local needs for which the Employee Benefits committee can provide assistance; and organize and host Employee Benefits Seminars relative to GVTA members.
Equity & Social Justice	Develop awareness of social justice and, equity issues in classroom materials, teacher attitudes, school policies and programs; share information and resources; identify local needs for which the committee may provide assistance.
Indigenous Education	<b>DRAFT</b> - Develop awareness of indigenous education and equity issues in classroom materials, teacher attitudes, school policies and programs; share information and resources; and identify local needs for which the committee may provide assistance.
Professional Development	Initiate, organize and implement a program of in-service training to provide opportunities for the GVTA membership to continue improvement of their educational practices; inform GVTA teachers of PD opportunities; engage such resource persons as are deemed necessary for the in-service program; prepare, administer, and evaluate the GVTA PD budget; work in cooperation with the senior administration office in the planning and implementation of PD programs for the division; liaise with the Society, Manitoba Education, and the senior administration of the GVSD, recognizing them as partners in delivering professional development to teachers.
Public Relations	Purchase prizes and food for General Meetings; publish a membership newsletter; promote GVTA events for all committees; purchase and distribute an annual GVTA 'gift' for members.
Social / Wellness	Promote unity and build morale; plan, budget for and execute a minimum of three (3) events throughout the school year - at least one (1) of these events will include all GVSD employees; plan, budget and execute a recognition for retiring teachers as needed; purchase prizes for all social / wellness events; develop awareness of wellness issues in teacher attitudes, school policies and programs; share information and resources; identify local needs for which the committee may provide assistance.
Workplace Safety & Health Liaison	Promote the aims and objectives of the Association within the GVSD Workplace Safety and Health Committee; inform the Association of the activities of the GVSD WS&H committees; WS&H Liaison shall be an Association member who serves on the GVSD WS&H Committee.



The  
Manitoba  
Teachers'  
Society

**SOTA**  
Seven Oaks Teachers' Association

# MTS Annual Hockey Tournament

## April 13-15, 2018

**East End Community Centre**  
(517 Pandora Ave. East—Winnipeg)

### Accommodations

Canad Inns - Transcona  
826 Regent Ave. West  
Reservation: 1-888-332-2623  
Direct: 204-224-1681

Canad Inns - Club Regent  
1415 Regent Ave. West  
Reservation: 1-888-332-2623  
Direct: 204-667-5560

Hosted by  
**Seven Oaks  
Teachers'  
Association**

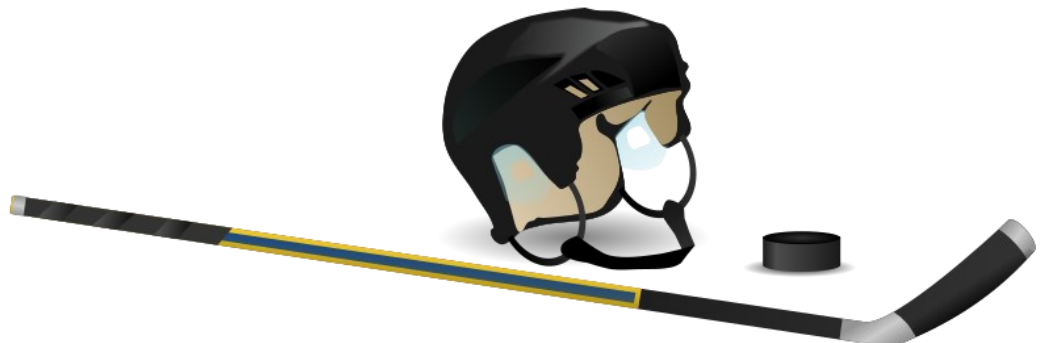
Coed  
Recreational

3 Game  
Guarantee

Dinner & Prizes

Registration is \$850  
Per Team

Entry Deadline  
**March 16, 2018**





The  
Manitoba  
Teachers'  
Society

**SOTA**  
Seven Oaks Teachers' Association

# 2018 MTS Hockey Tournament Entry Form

Teachers' Association: _____
Jersey Colour: _____
Team Contact: _____
Email: _____
Mailing Address: _____
Cell: _____ Work: _____ Home: _____
Team Level (please circle one)    Good            Alright            Working on it

Please include a **\$850 cheque** payable: ***Seven Oaks Teachers' Association***

Entries:  
Seven Oaks Teachers' Association  
375 Jefferson Ave.  
Wpg., MB R2V 0N3

Contact: Jeff Cieszcecki  
[sota@mbteach.org](mailto:sota@mbteach.org)  
(204) 470-5525

Deadline: **March 16, 2018**



# 2018 VOLUNTEER FORM

**NOTE: It is only necessary to submit this form once a year. Please complete and forward this form via email to: [icarroll@mbteach.org](mailto:icarroll@mbteach.org).**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Association: \_\_\_\_\_

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

School Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Years of Teaching: \_\_\_\_\_

My present position is:

- |                                    |                                     |   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher   | <input type="checkbox"/> Principal  | <input type="checkbox"/> Vice-Principal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clinician | <input type="checkbox"/> Substitute | <input type="checkbox"/> Other          |

Volunteer Positions Available (please ✓ select interests):

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collective Bargaining                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum and Teaching                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Disability Benefits Plan       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability Benefits Plan Investment Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Disability Benefits Plan Case Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Education Finance              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equity and Social Justice                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Group Benefits                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous Voice and Action    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outside Body Representation                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Conduct Committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Review Committee                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Education and Certification      | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher-Led Learning Team*     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workplace Safety and Health                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Young Humanitarian Awards                |   |

\* Teacher-Led Learning Team (TLLT): Information about the program, recruitment and selection information can be found on the TLLT link of The Manitoba Teachers' Society website.

Please advise which Society Committees you have previously served on and for which years.

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*The above information will be used for the purposes of processing your volunteer application i.e. sharing the information with the Provincial Executive as well as communicating with you. Should you be appointed to a committee, this personal information will be kept confidential and secure. In order to facilitate communication among committee members, this personal information may be distributed to the other members of the committee on which you are serving.*

*I agree to this usage of my personal information \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Signature*

## Interested in Facilitating Workshops? Join the Teacher-Led Learning Team (TLLT)

Members of the Teacher-Led Learning Team are leaders, learners, and collaborators who share a passion for professional learning. The work of the team attracts members who are reflective, energetic, and creative. Not only do team members develop skills in group facilitation, but they also work diligently on emotional intelligence abilities such as self-awareness, self-management, communication, social awareness, and relationship management. This commitment is intense, and team members report that the work and learning on the team enriches overall performance in their daily teaching and leadership roles.

The Manitoba Teachers' Society is seeking outstanding classroom teachers, principals, resource teachers, counsellors, clinicians, coaches, and consultants representing all grade levels and subject areas from across the province to design and deliver workshops for school and divisional professional development days.

### **OVERVIEW OF THE COMMITMENT**

TLLT is a two-year appointment, renewable to a maximum of six consecutive years. Successful candidates will deliver up to four workshops per year for which the Society covers leave time and associated expenses. TLLT members are required to attend training seminars and design days at McMaster House. Release time (for school days) and associated expenses are paid.

**Summer Seminar:** August 28, 29, 30, 2018

**Fall Seminar:** September 28 & 29, 2018

**Winter Seminar:** November 9 & 10, 2018

**Deployment Debrief & Reflection Day:** May 11, 2019

### **CRITERIA FOR TLLT CANDIDATE RECRUITMENT**

MTS members who:

- have a variety of teaching experiences;
- are willing to travel within Manitoba for deployments;
- have demonstrated leadership and communication skills;
- are in good standing, actively working in the public school system;
- have experience in the professional development of adult learners;
- have the ability to commit to a minimum two-year term, including training & design days; and

### **APPLICATION COMPONENTS**

1. **Cover Letter of Interest** including, at minimum, the following information:

- Current position;
- Reason for applying; and
- Area(s) of interest/experience

**2. Current Resume** including, at minimum, the following information:

- Name, MTS number, and contact information
- Teaching experience (grade levels and subjects taught);
- Leadership experience (this does not have to be in formal positions);
- Languages spoken;
- Academic credentials/Other certifications or highlights;
- Recent professional development (within the last five years); and
- School/Community/Association activities, committees, etc...

**3. Two Letters of Recommendation** (one of which should be from your principal/vp or superintendent), that speak to your knowledge, skills, and abilities in:

- Communication;
- Collaboration;
- Leadership;
- Facilitation skills; and/or
- Experience/expertise

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

- Advise your principal and/or superintendent that you are applying to the Teacher-Led Learning Team
- Submit your application by **March 9, 2018 @ 4:00 pm**
- Shortlisted applicants will be contacted to schedule an interview
  - Where possible, interviews occur at your school site at a mutually agreed-upon time
- Successful candidates will be notified by May 2018

Please send your cover letter of interest, resume, and letters of recommendation to:

**Dr. Danielle Fullan Kolton**

Department Head, Professional and French Language Services

The Manitoba Teachers' Society

191 Harcourt Street

Winnipeg, MB, R3J 3H2

[dfullankolton@mbteach.org](mailto:dfullankolton@mbteach.org)

Consideration is given to the appointment of people in such a manner as to reflect the diversity of Manitoba's population. We encourage all qualified individuals to apply.

The Manitoba Teachers' Society understands the importance of its members' privacy and the sensitivity of personal information, and it is committed to protecting privacy in its collection, use, and distribution of personal information. Please refer to our policy online for information about how the Society manages its members' personal information and safeguards privacy: <https://www.mbteach.org/inside-mts/privacypolicies.html>

## Frame your message. Points to include:

### Bill 28 - The Public Services Sustainability Act

- This bill is unconstitutional as it undermines the process of meaningful, good faith bargaining. This is an infringement on collective bargaining rights that are protected in the Charter.
- Assuming inflation continues to increase by a rate of two per cent, the net effect of this loss to purchasing power will be compounded year-over-year to the tune of 6.2 per cent at the end of the legislated wage pause. For an average teacher across this province, this translates to approximately a \$15,464 loss to every single teacher.

### Class Size

- As a teacher with more than 30 years experience, I can attest to the fact that smaller class sizes improve outcomes, reduce distraction and lead to more engaged students.
- Children learn better when they receive more personal attention. One on one time is key to helping identify strength and weakness in my students. (give an example wherever possible, without naming students)

### BEF

- A fully functioning BEF is essential to the quality of French-language education that Manitoba educators, like me, and schools provide to students.
- French language education is not a translation of the English curriculum, and it is unique and representative of the proud history of Franco-Manitobans.
- French language programming has represented the fastest growing segment of Manitoba's K-12 education system with enrolment up nearly 40 per cent. All indicators point to the need for more investment to strengthen French-language education, not less.
- I urge you to restore government funding and resources to the Bureau de l'éducation française and to reinstate an assistant to the deputy minister to ensure that French-language education remains a priority.

# THE MANITOBA TEACHERS' SOCIETY

## LETTER WRITING TIPS AND MORE





# How to Address a Politician

## PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVES

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<b>POSITION</b>	Premier
<b>ENVELOPE</b>	The Honourable Brian Pallister Premier of Manitoba
<b>SALUTATION</b>	Dear Premier
<hr/>	
<b>POSITION</b>	Minister
<b>ENVELOPE</b>	The Honourable Ian Wishart, MLA Minister of Education
<b>SALUTATION</b>	Dear Minister
<hr/>	
<b>POSITION</b>	Member of the Legislative Assembly
<b>ENVELOPE</b>	Mr. Mrs. John/Jane Smith, MLA
<b>SALUTATION</b>	Dear Mr. / Mrs. Smith

## Guidelines for your drafted letter

- 1 Use this simple structure.
  - a. *Introduce yourself. A simple phrase such as "I have spent the last 20 years teaching at Gillis School" creates a mental image which brings you and your point alive.*
  - b. *Establish yourself as a constituent when writing to your MLA or MP. "I have lived in your constituency for X number of years.*
  - c. *Use phrases like*
    - i. *In my experience...*
    - ii. *I have seen...*
- 2 Be respectful. They are more likely to listen to your point if it is not accompanied by abuse. This is not an opportunity to vent.
- 3 Be concise. It's best to write about only one issue at a time. HOWEVER, since all of these issues affect the sustainability and quality of public education, you can write about more than one issue, but keep each issue to one paragraph. Try to keep the letter to one page.
- 4 Clearly state your point/concern early in the letter. "I am concerned that the government's removal of the cap for K-12 class sizes, the passing of Bill 28...(any other issues) will negatively impact our public education system.
- 5 Request that a particular action be taken. When writing to a politician, always have a solution to the problem. In this case, "I urge you to rescind Bill 28 and to reinstate the class size cap."
- 6 Aim for the public interest. Explain why you think your request will benefit the public as a whole, not simply you and your friends.
- 7 Get the facts right. You do not have to have all of the facts (much less recite them all), but the ones you put in your letter must be correct. Do not let the fact that you are not an expert prevent you from voicing your opinion.
- 8 Express yourself naturally. Remember that this is your expressing what is on your mind. You do not have to sound like Lincoln or Churchill.
- 9 Ask for a reply. The best closing sentence is "I look forward to receiving your response". As a rule, letters sent via the mail will receive a response within 30 days.
- 10 Consider if you should send a copy of the letter to anyone else. If writing to your MLA, consider sending a copy to the Minister of Education, or the Premier.



1. **Policies and Procedures:** At the February meeting, we approved revisions to several policies:
  - a. A1. Members-at-Large who sit on the GVTA Executive will now be eligible for a \$100 honorarium (all other executive members already receive an honorarium)
  - b. A3. Reimbursement for Internet for President and Treasurer at the basic level for the internet provider of their choice (“basic level” provides a cap to the amount)
  - c. A4. Reimbursement for Cell Phone for President increases from \$30/month to provide basic rate for an unlimited text, a talk, and a data plan to sufficiently serve the association
  - d. A6. Provision to allow for President or Treasurer to purchase hardware provided at its pro-rated value at the end of their final term
  - e. B2. Retirement Tea updated to Retirement Recognition
  - f. B4. GVTA will now reimburse teachers for the full entry fee in MTS-Sanctioned sporting events (Curling, Hockey, Golf, etc.), updated from paying only half of the fee.
  - g. C1. Update of GVTA Scholarship criteria to allow for one recipient of each graduating class (new wording allows for potential recipient from Edelweiss); also clarifies that Education is not typically a direct-entry program
  - h. Minor Language updates to A2, A7, D3
  - i. GVTA Delegate selection for MTS AGM revised to include local Exec members on MTS Provincial Standing Committees and the new Indigenous Education Committee Chair and Co-Chair
2. **School Visits:** Joel will be continuing his visits to schools in February/March. Due to involvement in extra-curricular activities (come see *Mary Poppins, Jr.* on April 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> at Parkland), these visits will take place during afternoon recess. Joel will bring your annual GVTA gift, provided by the GVTA PR Committee [Karla Rootsart (SWD) & Joanne Unrau (HES)]. Visits will take place on:

Feb 20: Parkland	Feb 22: Subs @ CKs @ 4pm	
Feb 26: Prairie Dale	Feb 27: Southwood	
Feb 28: WES	Mar 5: Border Valley	Mar 21: Division Office @ 12:40pm
3. **Collective Bargaining Survey:** Thanks to the 212 members who completed the GVTA Survey. This goes a long way to supporting our work on formulating an opening package for bargaining.
4. **Equity & Social Justice:** Due to the vacancy in both the ESJ Chair and Co-Chair positions, Joel has been appointed as the ESJ Chair for the remainder of this school year.
5. **Professional Development:** 145 members participated in the February 2<sup>nd</sup> PD Day. Thanks to the Raffaele Bagnulo (NPC – PD Chair), the GVSD-GVTA Joint PD Committee, Jacqui Kusnick (ECS – Poverty Simulation), the Plum Coulee School PD Committee, and the Plum Coulee PAC for all of their hard work in setting up and hosting this event.
6. **Workplace Safety & Health:** The division currently has a variance with regards to its committee structure, which allows for one division-wide committee with a secondary school sub-committee, rather than separate committees for each site with 20 or more employees. We must re-apply for the variance every three years. The executive voted to write a letter of support to continue the variance.
7. **Executive Meeting Locations:** We will be moving our future Executive Meetings around to other schools within the Division so as to see our other teaching locations. Our March 6 meeting will be at 4:15pm at Edelweiss School in Blumengart. All members (teachers, clinicians, substitutes, and those on leave who have worked at least one day this year) are invited. If you are planning on attending, please contact Joel so that he can make sure there’s enough food for supper.