



Garden Valley Teachers' Association

# The Apple Core

February 2019

Greetings, GVTA-ers!

After the February *Apple Core* was completed, I received an 8-page *Manitoba Teachers' Society Issues Update* document with "What We Know", the "MTS Position", and "What can I do?" sections on each of:

- K-12 Comprehensive Education Review
- Provincial Bargaining
- School Division Amalgamations
- College of Teachers
- Principals and Vice-Principals
- School Board/Division Governance
- Education Finance

This document is an excellent summary of the current issues, several of which I mention in my President's Address, now on Page 2, as I've added this update to the front of this issue, and the *Issues Update* to the end.

A few other items:

- The GVSD-GVTA Professional Development Committee is once again accepting CLG applications. Applications will be accepted until March 14<sup>th</sup> to your school rep, or the committee chair. Applications will be discussed at the March 19<sup>th</sup> Committee Meeting. Applications are available on-line at the [gvteach.org](https://gvteachdotorg.files.wordpress.com/2018/06/clg-application-2018-2019.docx) website under "Forms" at: <https://gvteachdotorg.files.wordpress.com/2018/06/clg-application-2018-2019.docx>
- If you earned a day-in-lieu by attending or leading a PD session in August, please be reminded that these days cannot be carried over to the following school year. As with personal days and extra-curricular days, they are dependent upon the availability of a substitute teacher. Consider not leaving these days until the end of the school year, lest substitutes become difficult to arrange.
- Roland Stankevicius has been appointed as the General Secretary of The Manitoba Teachers' Society, effective immediately. In addition, while continuing in their respective roles as Department Heads, Tom Paci and Danielle Fullan Kolton will also serve in co-capacities of Assistant General Secretary on a 50% joint basis.

And now, back to your regularly scheduled *Apple Core*...

Joel

# The Apple Core

February 2019

## Upcoming Events

### GVTA Executive meetings:

- March 5
- April 2
- May 7
- June 4

Held at GVC and begin at 4:00.

All members are welcome

### Other Events:

- February 22nd—GVTA Bowling Night, 5-8 pm, Winkler Bowling Lanes. All GVSD employees invited!
- February 27th—Pink Shirt Day
- March 1st—K-8 Admin Day pm
- March 6th—ESJ Bookclub, 4:00 pm, CKs
- March 14th and 15th—Student Involved Conferences

Greetings, GVTA-ers!

Since the last we connected this way, the Government has announced the members of the Education Review Commission, discussed their mandate, and announced their funding for the following school year.

“This is a long-overdue opportunity to build on strengths and identify challenges to create a better education system with high standards for educators, high expectations for student achievement, relevant curriculum, governance excellence and a sustainable fiscal framework,” said Goertzen.

The minister noted the process will include extensive consultation across Manitoba and consider a wide range of topics such as student learning, teaching, accountability for student learning, governance and funding.” (Goertzen, press release “Province Announces New Commission on Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education”, Jan 23).

It was later confirmed that local taxation models would not be considered as part of the review:

While the commission’s scope is broad, it won’t include the task of developing a new funding formula for education, disappointing those who had hoped the province was prepared to examine the considerable burden of education funding faced by property owners.

"We need to figure out, first, what the system is going to look like and what we're paying for before we determine how we're going to pay for it," Goertzen said. Do you have (fewer) school divisions? Do you have school divisions at all?" he mused at a news conference, flanked by the commission’s co-chairs.” (“Province wants sweeping public-education review to ‘ignite change’”, Winnipeg Free Press, Jan 24).

There has been much hinted at, particularly from Goertzen and Pallister, along the lines of amalgamation.

Goertzen says:

"I look around at other provinces, and I know there's been effort to have less school divisions. I think we have 290 school trustees involved with running our divisions and our schools. I need to be convinced that's the right number," Manitoba Education Minister Kelvin Goertzen said last month when he announced a provincial education review that would "tackle the issue of school divisions and potential consolidation." ("Are fewer school boards an answer to what ails education in Manitoba?", CBC News, Feb 11).

While it is an "analysis" piece, it does talk about whether the previous round of amalgamations saved the province any money (hint: it didn't). In the meantime, the Commission has some obligation to act as though there are no conclusions to be drawn yet:

"[Commission co-chair Janice MacKinnon] said the commission's prime focus will be to consult Manitobans.

"The process will be open. It will be engaging and it will be accessible," she said. "I can tell you there are no predetermined outcomes here. We are initiating this task with a blank slate. We're here to listen to what Manitobans have to say to us about their education system and what is important to them about that system."

Manitobans will be able to attend public meetings, participate in online surveys and make written submissions. The consultation process is expected to begin almost immediately." ("Province wants sweeping public-education review to 'ignite change'", Jan 24, Winnipeg Free Press)

Meanwhile, the government announced its funding for the 2019-20 academic year (press release, "Manitoba Government Increases Education Funding", Jan 24). While it touts the \$6.6 million increase, this is actually an increase of only 0.5%, while inflation costs are up 2%. For a school division like Garden Valley, the increase is about \$150,000 in a year where we will be opening a new school, which brings additional staffing costs (such as cleaners, bus drivers, and support staff), additional maintenance costs (such as heating, electricity, water, property taxes, and snow clearing), and furnishings (such as tables, chairs, and the necessary equipment for Home Ec., Science, I.A., Band, Music, Phys. Ed., and C.O.Ws.).

"The province is once again directing divisions to cap increases to their local education property tax at two per cent for the 2019-20 school year and will ask divisions to continue to reduce administrative costs." (press release, "Manitoba Government Increases Education Funding", Jan 24). This doesn't mean that the division is only allowed to increase each taxpayer's mill rate by 2%. It actually means that the division is only allowed to increase the total amount that it took in this year by 2%, which means that the division is penalized where there is growth in the region. If Winkler grew by 2%, then the mill rate would not be allowed to increase at all,

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.

and if Winkler's growth was more than 2%, the division would actually be required to *lower* the mill rate to stay within this mandate – this is also a possible outcome in years where property values are reassessed. Goertzen's solution to staying within this marginal increase is for divisions to “control costs and create efficiency in the public education system” and to “make decisions that consider both students' needs and the impact on taxpayers” (press release, “Manitoba Government Increases Education Funding”, Jan 24).

In defense of the small increase, Goertzen blames the provincial debt: “Education Minister Kelvin Goertzen feels the half a per cent increase in education funding announced late last week is very fair. He says when you consider the province is still coping with a significant deficit, the additional \$6.6 million for education province-wide is appropriate.” (“Goertzen Defends .5% Increase In Funding To School Divisions”, Steinbach Online, Jan 30). In this, he is saying that due to the deficit, students will have to make do with less, and divisions will have to do more with less – and that sacrificing students' educational needs to pay down the debt is justifiable. In the same article he adds, “We spend, in Manitoba, about the second-highest in Canada per capita-per student and yet we get the worst results. So, if we're spending the second-highest amount per student and we're getting the worst results, something isn't working. And so we have to look at what it is that isn't working.”

When determining what isn't working, the opinion piece “Tories must ditch dislike for teachers” (Lett, Winnipeg Free Press, Jan 28) reminds us:

One thing no one can argue with is that Manitoba students do not rank highly on national scales in graduation or test results.

But does all that add up to a system that is, as Goertzen suggested, unaccountable and not committed to excellence in learning? That perspective ignores the fact that educational outcomes are, in general, determined by social and economic conditions.

Social scientists have repeatedly proven that more students graduate, and graduate with higher overall marks, when they have strong family support, when they are free of the ravages of poverty and where they are surrounded by peers who are motivated to do well in school. Students who live with lower socio-economic conditions and are surrounded by peers who are less committed to education do not succeed.

Not surprisingly, a province such as Manitoba that has among the highest rates of child poverty in the country is going to suffer when it comes to provincewide outcomes.

Of course, even in the face of extreme child poverty and a lack of family supports, there are strategies the system can use to produce better outcomes. Smaller class sizes, school breakfast and lunch programs and other social-service supports have helped boost performance in some of the poorest places in the province. However, these measures require funding to ensure they are applied broadly to those students who need them the most. For the time being, expanding programs to combat socio-economic forces doesn't appear to be Goertzen's priority.”

Later in this issue of *Apple Core* you will find some media releases regarding the issues of the day, including messages from MTS President Norm Gould and a 4-page MTS Round-up on the Review and the Funding Announcements.

Teachers are asked to stay informed, and to dialogue with those around them in the community. We support the review, we hope that the results are non-partisan and that they best serve the educational needs of our students. The government will be asking for feedback and input from all members of the community, and it is our duty to be informed and to provide meaningful data back to the government.

In solidarity,  
Joel  
204-384-5635 (call or text)  
gvtapresident@gmail.com

## **Wellness**

### **Family Day Activities**

With February 18<sup>th</sup> being Louis Riel Day here in Manitoba, and in other provinces Family Day, here are a few family themed facilities and classes available to you in the area. All of these places could be visited with the entire family or a small group of friends.

#### **SharpTooth Adventures (Morden)**

A gigantic play structure with slides as well as a climbing wall and bouncy castle. It is geared more towards younger children up to ages 10-12. More information can be found on their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/sharptoothadventures/>

#### **Obstacle Warriors (Winkler)**

Ninja Warrior and Parkour courses for the whole family! The main obstacles in the building were designed more for teens and adults, but there is a separate space for smaller children to play away from the regular obstacles. The overall experience is geared towards getting kids moving and playing in unique ways. More information can be found on their website <http://obstaclewarz.com/>

#### **A-Maze-in-Corn (Saint Adolphe)**

Visit A-Maze-in-Corn now and try out the snow maze that is 4200 feet long and currently competing for the Guinness Record of largest snow maze! There are also sleigh rides and a giant slide coming down from the top of the zipline tower. In Spring & Summer there are even more options for things to try out while you're there. More information can be found on their website <http://www.cornmaze.ca/>

## Family Yoga & Partner Yoga (Morden)

Morden Recreation Services is working to provide people in the area different options to experience yoga. As with all their fitness classes, Family Yoga and Partner Yoga will run in set blocks of classes. More information can be found on their website <http://www.mordenmb.com/city-services/recreation-services/programs/fitness/>

Family Yoga runs on Saturday afternoons, 2-3pm from March 9<sup>th</sup> to April 13<sup>th</sup> (No classes March 23<sup>rd</sup> or March 30<sup>th</sup>) and is open to children ages 6-12 and an adult. It is a fun and joyful class that begins with thoughtfully tuning in, followed by a fun, mindful, playful and meditative practice that includes postures, partner poses, and group poses. Class concludes with relaxation and guided imagery.

Partner Yoga will be a one-time class at the Access Centre during the week of May 6-12. It involves physical postures, breathing, touch, communication, and play. It focuses on interdependent movements that are mutually beneficial. It is not a class just for couples – bring anyone that you feel comfortable and able to relax with. This class is for adults only. Keep checking the website for more information as the date gets closer.

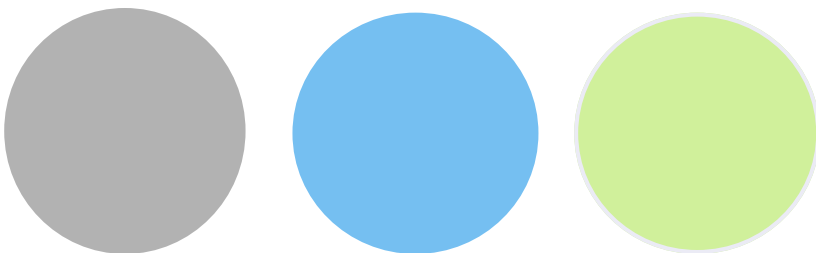
## Rush Laser Tag (Winkler)

The laser tag area is geared towards older children and adults with a 2-level themed maze and with different obstacles including an interactive arena target. The arena is filled with fog to make the lasers and flashing lights more visible; music, black and LED lighting add to an out-of-this-world experience that you won't soon forget. The facility also includes bouncy castles for younger children as well as an arcade that appeals to all ages. More information is available on their website <https://www.rushlasertag.ca/>

## Valley Bowling Lanes & Lounge (Winkler)

Hear that sound? It's not just crashing pins it's windmill high-fives, newly-minted nicknames, and memories that even time won't be able to fade. Valley Bowling Lanes & Lounge offers bowling, pool tables, a lounge, and board games. There is something for everyone in the family. For more information visit their website at <http://valleybowlinglanes.ca/> **Remember to join us on February 22<sup>nd</sup> from 5-8 for come and go bowling. Welcome to all GVSD employees and their families. Pizza, chips and pop will be provided.**

From your social and wellness committee



# **Teachers Support Thorough Review**

By: Norm Gould, From the Winnipeg Free Press, January 26th, 2019

The government of Manitoba is embarking on a comprehensive review of the K-12 public education system.

The Manitoba Teachers' Society (MTS) and its more than 15,000 members are supporters of this once-in-a-generation review and will wholeheartedly participate in enhancing the future for Manitoba students.

It has been more than two decades since a review of this magnitude has occurred, and over this time, classrooms have become far more complex. The number and needs of students have risen, as have expectations placed on teachers and other education staff. At the same time, resources and supports have failed to keep pace.

For example, with the growing demands and needs of the classroom, it is more important than ever that the issue of class size be examined to ensure that all students are given the best chance of success.

Numerous studies have shown that K-3 students who have greater access to individual attention from their teacher, due to smaller class sizes, achieve greater academic success. Furthermore, smaller classes are especially helpful for students coming from families with a lower socio-economic status, and those with learning disabilities.

In 2017, the provincial government abandoned the smaller classes initiative, which required 90 per cent of classrooms from kindergarten to Grade 3 in each school division to limit class sizes to 20 students.

The universal cap mandated by the initiative served as an equalizer because it guaranteed individualized attention for K-3 students, regardless of where they went to school.

A full school year has passed since the removal of the cap on classroom size, and according to a recent poll conducted by Viewpoints Research on behalf of MTS, teachers and students are feeling the effects.

The poll surveyed 801 public school teachers across the province and 74 per cent agreed that the removal of the cap has had a negative effect on their ability to provide individualized attention to students, and on their ability to effectively perform their job to the level they would like.

It's not surprising. It's simple math. The more students in a classroom, the less likelihood of one-on-one time with the teacher. Questions might go unanswered, simply because there are too many to answer. Students who are struggling might be overlooked in a large classroom because there is less opportunity to participate in discussions.

In a smaller classroom, teachers are able to take the time to correct or encourage students having trouble because they become more aware of the students' strengths and weaknesses.

Teachers and parents know this first-hand, without the aid of studies.

Research shows the inability to participate is a contributing factor in students becoming disengaged from the lesson. This should be of concern to anyone who cares about our public education system, because engaged students are more likely to do well and less likely to drop out of school.

According to the poll, the decrease in individualized time with the teacher is already affecting student engagement, especially in the early years. Since the removal of the cap, 74 per cent of K-4 teachers are reporting that student engagement has suffered.

Typically, student engagement declines as students progress through the school system, reaching its lowest levels in high school, making this increase in the early years very alarming.

Teachers reporting a negative effect on student behaviour have increased to 82 per cent from 75 per cent in 2017. Again, this is not surprising, as larger classrooms tend to be more disruptive because there are more students to manage.

This is but one major issue that will no doubt be raised before the review commission. There will be more, raised by MTS and others, carrying as much weight on the future of education in the province.

We will be watching and participating for the teachers, students and parents here now and yet to arrive. Indeed, for the future of the province.

*Norm Gould is president of The Manitoba Teachers' Society*



## **School Visits Continue**

I'm glad to have the continued opportunity to meet with members during school visits. Visits are at Lunch, unless listed otherwise. I'm be glad to address any questions you may have, to speak with you confidentially at your request, or just to chat. If you're not available on your school's date but would like to meet with me, I'm glad to set up an additional visit. - js

Blumfeld: Wed, Mar 6

Emerado: Tues, Mar 5

Hochfeld: Tues, Feb 19

Border Valley: Mon, Feb 25

FreshStart: Mar 4 @12:50

RRTVA (Altona): TBA

DO: Feb 27 @ CKs @ 4 pm

GVC: Wed, Feb 27

Southwood: Fri, Mar 8

Edelweiss: Tues, Feb 26

GVC Tec: Fri, Mar 1

Subs: Feb 28 @ CKs @ 4pm



**GVSD  
EMPLOYEES & FAMILIES**





# AUTHENTIC EQUITY:

MOVING BEYOND CELEBRATING DIVERSITY



# AUTHENTIC EQUITY: MOVING BEYOND CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

Supporting teachers and leaders to create equitable classrooms and schools and to avoid common pitfalls that create the illusion of equity while maintaining inequity. Using the equity literacy framework, participants will learn content, practical strategies, and facilitation skills to strengthen equity efforts and intervene with bias and inequity.

**TOPICS:** Creating safe and inclusive classroom environments where students can express themselves; recognizing and responding to bias; facilitating age-appropriate strategies for teaching about equity issues such as sexism and poverty; and supporting students to develop critical thinking and analytical skills to recognize bias in resources, interactions and policies.

**DATE:** March 1 & 2, 2019

## SPEAKER PAUL GORSKI

Paul Gorski is the founder of EdChange and the Equity Literacy Institute. He has spent more than 20 years working with educators around the world on strengthening their commitments to educational equity and justice. He has written more than 50 articles and written, co-written, or co-edited 10 books including *Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty*, *Strategies for Erasing the Opportunity Gap*, *Case Studies on Diversity and Social Justice Education*, and *Voices for Diversity and Social Justice*.



A CENTURY OF SOLIDARITY



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Manitoba  
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# NEWS *release*

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Facebook: manitobateachers

*For immediate release*

January 24, 2019

## **Public school funding announced against Education Review backdrop** 2019-20 funds not nearly enough to maintain programs

For the third year in a row, the Manitoba government has announced a real dollar drop in funding for public schools. And the prospect of doing more with even less next school year against the background of a major K-12 education review does not sit well with Manitoba teachers.

“No matter how you slice it, a .5% “increase” doesn’t even play catch up to roughly 2% inflation and increases in student enrollment,” says Manitoba Teachers’ Society President Norm Gould. “Teachers face more diverse student needs than ever. This announcement will not help.”

In addition, Gould says the province is once again directing divisions to cap increases to their local education property tax at two per cent for the 2019-20 school year and will ask divisions to continue to cut administrative costs.

A detailed backgrounder sheet distributed along with today’s government news release detailed winners and losers among individual divisions, “with fewer getting increases”, said Gould.

As for yesterday’s announcement of the K-12 Education Review Commission, the MTS President says the Society is onboard.

“We are pleased to see the education review getting underway and we’re hopeful that the recommendations will address funding shortfalls for public schools so that students can get the resources and help they need in every corner of the province.”

**Manitoba's Commission on Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education**  
An Independent Review of the Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education System  
Terms of Reference

**Mandate**

The commission will carry out an independent review of the kindergarten to Grade 12 education system to improve outcomes for students, ensure long-term sustainability and enhance public confidence. The commission will:

- propose a renewed vision for kindergarten to Grade 12 education;
- make bold recommendations to ignite change within existing systems, structures and programs which inspire excellence in teaching and learning; and
- consider the continuum of early learning, post-secondary education and labour market needs as part of an integrated lifelong learning approach.

The review will be informed through extensive and transparent public consultations, supported by research and learn from best practices. The commission will seek the input of students, parents, educators, school boards, academics, Indigenous organizations, la francophonie, municipal councils, professional organizations, the business community and members of the public.

**Areas of Focus**

- Long-term vision – What should the goals and purpose of kindergarten to Grade 12 education be in a rapidly changing world?
- Student learning – What are the conditions required to achieve excellence in student achievement and outcomes in Manitoba?
- Teaching – How can teachers and school leaders become most effective?
- Accountability for student learning – How can the education system develop a stronger sense of shared accountability for student learning?
- Governance – What type of governance structures are needed to create a co-ordinated and relevant education system?
- Funding – What actions are required to ensure that the education system is sustainable and provides equitable learning opportunities for all children and youth?

## **Deliverables and timelines**

The preparatory work of the commission began in December 2018. Public engagement activities are anticipated to begin in early 2019. The commission is to submit a final report to the minister in February 2020. The report will include key findings and recommendations and is to be released publicly in March 2020.

# The K-12 Education Review and 2019/20 Funding Announcement



The  
Manitoba  
Teachers'  
Society

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

As you know, the government formally kicked off its long-awaited comprehensive K-12 education review on January 23 with a press conference introducing the Commissioners who will spearhead the review. It followed up the following day with an announcement of educational funding, a mirror image of last year's commitment which, factoring in the rate of inflation, amounts to a third annual cut in funding to Manitoba schools.

### K-12 Education Review

Here is what the Manitoba Government has shared.

The K-12 education review will be led by a nine-member Commission tasked with proposing a “renewed vision” for kindergarten-to-Grade 12 education and making “bold recommendations to ignite change” within existing systems and programs that will inspire excellence in teaching and learning.

#### What will be the focus of the Review?

1. Long-term vision – What should the goals and purpose of K-12 education be in a rapidly changing world?
2. Student learning – What are the conditions required to achieve excellence in student achievement and outcomes in Manitoba?
3. Teaching – How can teachers and school leaders become more effective?
4. Accountability for student learning – How can the education system develop a stronger sense of shared accountability for student learning?
5. Governance – What type of governance structures are needed to create a coordinated and relevant education system?
6. Funding – What actions are required to ensure that the education system is sustainable and provides equitable learning opportunities for all children and youth?

## Who are the Commissioners?

Manitoba's Commission on Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education includes Ian Wishart, legislative assistant to the minister of education and training, who will lead public consultation and stakeholder engagement. The eight other commissioners are:

- **Dr. Janice MacKinnon** (co-chair) served as a Saskatchewan cabinet minister from 1991 to 2001.
- **Clayton Manness** (co-chair) was a member of the legislative assembly for Morris from 1981 to 1995, and served as minister of finance, minister of education and training and government house leader.
- **Terry Brown** is an owner and partner of Legacy Bowes Group and the past chair of the Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce.
- **Mark Frison** is president and chief executive officer of Assiniboine Community College.
- **John Daniel** (JD) Lees is a former science teacher at Steinbach Regional Secondary School.
- **Jill Quilty** is a lawyer with Law North Law Corporation and served as a member of the Truth and Reconciliation Academic Working Group, the Ad Hoc Response Committee for Gender Discrimination and the Indigenous, Black and Mi'kmaq Standing Committee.
- **Laurel Repski** served as vice-president (human resources, sustainability and audit) at the University of Winnipeg from 2006 to 2018.
- **Denis Robert** is a retired principal with 32 years' experience in Manitoba schools. He spent the final 23 years of his career at Collège Béliveau, one of Canada's first French immersion schools.

## How can Manitobans participate?

All Manitobans are encouraged to participate in the consultation process, which will run from February to May 2019.

You can participate by attending a public meeting, submitting a written report or filling out the online survey.

MTS will participate as a stakeholder but it is especially important that teachers from across the province take the time to add their voice to this review.

The Commission will also seek input from students.

## What is the timeline?

- Online engagement and public and stakeholder meetings – February – May 2019
- Analysis and formulation of recommendations – June 2019 – January 2020



- Recommendations to the Minister of Education and Training – February 2020
- Public release – March 2020
- Provincial election – October 2020

For more information about the review visit [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/educationreview/](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/educationreview/).

## Here is how the Manitoba Teachers' Society will participate

The Manitoba Teachers' Society will be intensely involved in the Education Review, and will speak up at every opportunity and in every forum available.

We will encourage and support local associations who wish to do the same - and we'll guarantee that staff will attend every public meeting.

Count on us to keep you current on the dates and venues of public and stakeholder meetings, share the most recent developments through email and social media and the Manitoba Teacher.

We want you to know the issues and be able to communicate our position so that our collective voices cannot be ignore.

## Public Schools Funding Announcement 2019/20

This MTS News Release was shared with all Manitoba media outlets, plus provincial executive and staff, on January 24.

### Public school funding announced against Education Review backdrop

#### 2019-20 funds not nearly enough to maintain programs

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As for yesterday's announcement of the K-12 Education Review Commission, the MTS President says the Society is onboard.

“We are pleased to see the education review getting underway and we’re hopeful that the recommendations will address funding shortfalls for public schools so that students can get the resources and help they need in every corner of the province.”

Click below for **Points to Consider** on the Funding Announcement and more.

<http://www.mbteach.org/mtscms/2019/01/28/2019-20-funding-announcement/>

### **Manitoba Government News Release**

<https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/?item=44961&posted=2019-01-24>

Click below for Impact of 2019-20 funding announcement on School Divisions.

[https://news.gov.mb.ca/asset\\_library/en/newslinks/2019/01/BG-School\\_Funding-ET.pdf](https://news.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/newslinks/2019/01/BG-School_Funding-ET.pdf)

## **Media Round Up: Education Funding Announcement and K-12 Review**

There has been a flurry of media activity leading to both the Education Review and Funding Announcements. Click below to access all of it including the MTS President’s comments.

<http://www.mbteach.org/mtscms/2019/01/28/2019-20-funding-announcement/>



# **Participate in the Manitoba Government K-12 Education Review.**

## **Consultation process runs from February to May 2019.**

[www.edu.gov.mb.ca/educationreview/](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/educationreview/)

COMING SOON!

# A world-class expert right when you need one.

At The Manitoba Teachers' Society, we realize there are times we could all use extra advice, support, information or inspiration. We are excited to be bringing you LifeSpeak – a digital wellness platform that can provide MTS members and their families with instant access to expert advice and confidential information when and where they need it.

## There are over 480 expert-led video modules on topics such as:

- Mindfulness
- Eating for Optimal Health
- Better Sleep for Better Health
- Mental Health Stigma
- Parenting Topics - from Maternity to Teens
- Shifting Your Mindset to Wealth
- Stress Mastery
- Couples Relationships
- Professional Development & Leadership content
- Digital Addiction

LifeSpeak will be available 24/7 from your smartphone, laptop or tablet. Access is anonymous and confidential.

Look for emails about LifeSpeak and in your members' portal beginning in March 2019.





1. **Short Term Disability Plan:** Due to changes regarding the funding of the Short Term Disability Plan, there will be an increase in deductions. Deductions are currently 0.17% of salary; as of March 1, 2019 they are going up to 0.18% of salary – an increase of 80¢/month on a \$75,000 salary.
2. **Long Term Disability Plan:** There will also be changes for those receiving benefits from the Long Term Disability Plan, effective September 1, 2019. The change is in how the benefits are calculated, but the net result will be a 0% to 1% increase in the amount of benefits received, without a change in deductions.
3. **MTS Survey:** There will be an MTS Telephone Survey in April and May. If you receive a phone call, please take the time to answer their questions as they inform MTS and provide useful data for on-going conversations with the media, the public, and government.
4. **K-8 Professional Development Day:** Many thanks to Professional Development Chairs Raffaele Bagnulo (NPC) and Jennifer-Laura Heide (DO); JRW Vice-Principal Scott Hiebert, Principal Moyra Vallely, and PD Committee Rep Kristen Falk; as well as the rest of the GVSD-GVTA PD Committee and all those who helped make February 1<sup>st</sup> a success.
5. **GVSD Superintendent Meeting:** In their January meeting, the GVTA President and the GVSD Superintendent discussed the protocol behind the division's cold and inclement weather policies, divisional network access for substitute teachers, and the recommendation by the Summer Institute Review Committee that Summer Institute (K-8 PD Days in the last week of August) take place again in 2019. This will require the Collective Bargaining Chairs and the GVTA President to sit down with the GVSD Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer so as to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding to outline the terms.
6. **January GVSD-GVTA Liaison Meeting:** Education Finance Chairs Anny Froese (PDS) and Kirsten Carman (GVC) presented to the board on budget recommendations for 2019-20. The board's Community Connections Committee presented on their *Local Choices, Local Voices* campaign.
7. **ESJ Book Club CLG:** The next book for the CLG is *Days of Destruction, Days of Revolt* by Chris Hedges.
8. **MTS Spring Council Resolutions:** The Executive passed two resolutions to bring to Spring Council in May, one on regional representation on the Provincial Executive, and another on alternative formats for Council itself.
9. **MTS Staffing Changes:** Due to the resignation of General Secretary Bobbi Taillefer, Rolle Stankevicius is now Acting General Secretary until the hiring process for a new General Secretary is completed. There is also a new Teacher Welfare Staff Officer, Tim Breen. Teacher Welfare Staff Officers are those that advise and represent teachers with regards to contract, employment, and personnel matters.
10. **March GVTA Executive Meeting:** GVC Room S230 at 4:15pm on Tuesday, March 5, 2019. All welcome, RSVP to Joel.



# THE MANITOBA TEACHERS' SOCIETY

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## ISSUES UPDATE



A CENTURY OF SOLIDARITY



The  
Manitoba  
Teachers'  
Society

# K-12 Comprehensive Education Review



## What We Know

The K-12 education review will be led by a nine-member Commission tasked with proposing a “renewed vision” for kindergarten-to-Grade 12 education and making “bold recommendations to ignite change” within existing systems and programs that will inspire excellence in teaching and learning.

The Review will concentrate on six broad areas of focus:

1. **Long-term vision** – What should the goals and purpose of K-12 education be in a rapidly changing world?
2. **Student learning** – What are the conditions required to achieve excellence in student achievement and outcomes in Manitoba?
3. **Teaching** – How can teachers and school leaders become more effective?
4. **Accountability for student learning** – How can the education system develop a stronger sense of shared accountability for student learning?
5. **Governance** – What type of governance structures are needed to create a coordinated and relevant education system?
6. **Funding** – What actions are required to ensure that the education system is sustainable and provides equitable learning opportunities for all children and youth?

The Commission will be led by Janice MacKinnon, a former Saskatchewan NDP cabinet minister, and Clayton Manness, who served as finance and education ministers under former Manitoba premier Gary Filmon. They will be joined by former education minister Ian Wishart, Terry Brown, Mark Frison, John Daniel Lees, Laura Repski, Jill Quilty and Denis Robert.

The consultation process will run from February to May 2019 and the public release of the recommendations will occur in March 2020.

## MTS Position

The Society agrees that a review of the education system is necessary and will participate fully to ensure that the voices of teachers are part of the consultation process.

## What can I do?

Stay informed on this issue and many more by connecting with MTS on social media, updating your profile in MyProfile and visiting our website. More information about the review, including profiles of the commissioners can be found on [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/educationreview/](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/educationreview/).

We encourage you to participate in this Review, whether it is speaking at a town hall, sending in an online submission or completing the survey, it's crucial that the voices of teachers are part of the conversation.

# Provincial Bargaining



## What We Know

In spring of 2019, the provincial government will introduce legislation to replace the current system of local bargaining with provincial bargaining.

This means that moving forward all collective agreements for MTS members will be negotiated at a single provincial bargaining table.

If the Bill passes through the reading and committee stages smoothly, it will become law by the date specified in the legislation.

## MTS Position

MTS supports single tier provincial bargaining with a uniform collective agreement for all teachers, subject to the following conditions:

1. Teachers remain governed under the Labour Relations Act.
2. MTS will bargain directly with the Province of Manitoba (the funder).
3. Bargaining must be free, fair and with an open scope.
4. The mechanisms for dispute resolution, whether strike or interest arbitration, must be without limitation.
5. The best provisions from existing collective agreements should be the standard for the new contract.
6. The membership of MTS will remain, as it currently exists.

## What can I do?

After the Bill has received First and Second Reading, it is referred to a Standing Committee of the House. At this stage, you may make oral presentations or offer written submissions expressing your opinions and concerns. You must register with the Office of the Clerk by calling (204) 945-3636 to make an oral presentation on a piece of legislation at Committee stage.

If you simply want to express your opinion on the Bill but do not wish to present, you can contact either your MLA or the Minister responsible for the Bill.

You can also attend a Committee Hearing to show your support for colleagues who are speaking to the Bill. You do not have to register to attend. Committee meetings are held in Room 254 and/or 255 of the Legislative Building.

We encourage you to stay informed on this issue and many more by connecting with MTS on social media, updating your profile in *MyProfile* and visiting our website.

# School Division Amalgamations



## What We Know

A major area of concern for teachers and communities today is the question of school division amalgamations. One of the main areas of focus for the upcoming Comprehensive Education Review, as indicated in the mandate of the Commission, is governance, more specifically, "what type of governance structures are needed to create a coordinated and relevant education system?" These discussions will certainly include the amalgamation of school divisions.

The minister has said on several occasions that school division amalgamations will be part of the Review. There has been no indication as to which divisions are targets for amalgamation.

The most cited report on school division amalgamations is *The Norrie Report*, commissioned by Conservative government of Gary Filmon in 1994, which recommended reducing Manitoba's 57 school divisions to 21. The former government did not adopt this report and instead encouraged school divisions to voluntarily amalgamate.

The most recent school division amalgamations occurred in 2002, when the NDP government passed legislation to reduce the number of school divisions from 54 to 38, which is where things sit today.

## MTS Position

MTS would support amalgamations with the following criteria:

1. The benefits and improvements for amalgamation must be clearly outlined.
2. There is no loss of service and no decrease in resources to the affected areas.
3. All savings from amalgamations must be reinvested into education.

## What can I do?

Stay informed on this issue and many more by connecting with MTS on social media, updating your profile in MyProfile and visiting our website.

We encourage you to participate in this review, whether it is speaking at a town hall, sending in an online submission or emailing the Commission. We will have more information on what you can do as soon as the details are announced by the province.



## What We Know

All provinces in Canada have a structure and process of regulating and monitoring the teaching profession and teachers. A small number of provinces have a College of Teachers, which oversees the teaching profession.

While their roles, responsibilities and structure vary from province to province, some of the main functions include some or all of the following: certification, setting and enforcing professional standards, handling conduct complaints, investigations, discipline, pre-service education and in-service education.

Governments who have mandated a College of Teachers have justified the regulatory body based on promises of improved transparency, teacher quality and accountability, and educational outcomes. Members pay a mandatory annual registration fee, which ranges from \$80-\$150.

There has been an increasing trend of austerity-focussed governments conducting comprehensive education reviews some of which have resulted in a College of Teachers being imposed as one strategy to improve education.

## MTS Position

The Manitoba Teachers' Society is committed to high quality, professional teaching as outlined in and governed by our Code of Professional Practice. The current structure provides us the authority to receive, review and resolve complaints about the conduct of a member.

MTS does not support the establishment of a College of Teachers, because it would:

1. *weaken the teacher union by stripping it of its role as a professional organization;*
2. *download the cost of teacher certification to teachers through mandatory fees;*
3. *create a parallel system of misconduct management which duplicates an existing service, potentially subjecting members to additional investigation and discipline beyond what is vetted by the employer and the union;*
4. *diminish our current involvement in teacher formation and the strong educational partnerships established with post-secondary institutions;*
5. *reduce the influence of MTS in advocating for teacher autonomy in professional development;*
6. *impose a schedule and structure of professional learning that may not align with teacher or contextual needs; and*
7. *complicate assessment of competency and separate it from employers and the union, diminishing the ability to support struggling teachers.*

## What can I do?

Stay informed on this issue and many more by connecting with MTS on social media, updating your profile in MyProfile and visiting our website.

We will share information on how to participate in the K-12 education review and any other actions deemed necessary as we navigate our way through this process.

# Principals and Vice-principals



## What We Know

In 2017, *The Avis Glaze* report, aimed at reforming education in the Province of Nova Scotia recommended the removal of principals and vice principals from the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union.

The Nova Scotia government implemented this recommendation in August 2018.

Manitoba has been closely mirroring the strategy of the Nova Scotia government, and with the upcoming K-12 education review, there is concern that a recommendation to remove principals and vice principals from The Manitoba Teachers' Society could be on the agenda.

## MTS Position

Principals and vice principals are first-and-foremost *principal teachers* and an integral part of the general body of the teaching profession.

As such, The Manitoba Teachers' Society will oppose any attempt to implement recommendations, plans or references that would remove principals and vice principals from membership in the Society.

Furthermore, any future prospects for cooperation between the government and the Society would be seriously compromised.

## What can I do?

The Society has distributed "*I am a Principal Teacher*" cards to all principals and vice principals, asking them to reaffirm their intent to remain members of MTS by signing and returning the cards. The majority of cards have been signed and returned. If you have not returned your signed card, please do so as soon as possible.

Whether you are a principal, vice principal, teacher, clinician or guidance counsellor, your participation in the K-12 review is crucial. We encourage you to participate and tell the Commission the importance of collegial interactions between all segments of our profession, that have worked collaboratively, in a unified vocation to achieve the important goals of an effective public education system and the teaching profession.

# School Board/ Division Governance



## What We Know

The Nova Scotia government, based on recommendation from the *Avis Glaze Report*, replaced its elected school boards with a single advisory council.

With the upcoming K-12 education review, the Manitoba provincial government has signaled its intent to review school board governance.

## MTS Position

Local school boards play an important role in the delivery of K-12 public school education by ensuring responsiveness to local education needs and concerns. MTS supports the continuation of school boards that are:

1. Governed democratically;
2. Locally elected; and
3. Have the ability to raise revenues for enhancing programs and services

## What can I do?

It is important that teachers participate in the consultation process for the K-12 education review and call on the government to make sure public education is adequately funded to meet the growing needs of Manitoba's classrooms.

# Education Finance



## What We Know

Manitoba's public school population has grown about another 1 per cent, and for the third year in a row, the government provided a funding increase less than the rate of inflation. In fact, the 2019/20 funding increase of 0.5 per cent, an amount equivalent to that of the previous year, together mark the two smallest funding increases since the 1990s.

On a per pupil basis, the situation is even worse when one factors in enrolment growth as well.

The provincial government also directed school divisions to limit education property tax increases to two per cent and announced the continuation of tax incentive grant phase out (over the six years) which commenced last year.

Manitoba is the only province that has district or divisional taxation authority to raise revenue and expenditures. Based on this fact, and the upcoming K-12 educational review, what we don't know is the probability that the province will remove school divisions' right to tax and replace it with a single provincial mill rate as they did in Saskatchewan some years back.

## MTS Position

The Society believes that every child in Manitoba is entitled to an education that meets the child's needs and therefore supports an education system:

1. Where the provision of funding to support the necessary programs is the responsibility of the provincial government.
2. Where funding is stable, adequate and sustainable to support student learning.

## What can I do?

It is important that teachers participate in the consultation process for the K-12 education review and call on the government to make sure public education is adequately funded to meet the growing needs of Manitoba's classrooms.