



Garden Valley Teachers' Association

The Apple Core

October 2020

Upcoming Events

- MTS President Zoom- 4pm, Tues, Nov 3rd
- GVTA retreat- 9am, Tues, Nov 3rd
- GVTA Executive Mtg – 4pm, Tues, Nov 3rd
- Remembrance Day - Wed, Nov 11th
- CB Committee Mtg – 4pm, Thu, Nov 12th
- IE contest deadline- Fri, Nov 13th
- Comprehensive Sex Education (MTS Zoom session)- 12:00 to 1:30pm, Sat, Nov 14th
- Paint Night Registration deadline- Wed, Tues, Nov 17th
- PD Committee Mtg – 4pm, Tue, Nov 17th
- November Apple Core - Tues Nov 23rd
- Paint Night- Nov, 25th

Hello GVTA members,

Over the last month I have seen members of the GVTA community living the values of grace, trust, and honesty. In living honestly, it is clear that many of us are exhausted and pushed to our limits. Even for those that feel like they are doing well, I hear their wonder of the sustainability of our established systems.

One threat to our ability to get to the end of the year is the “perfect teacher” narrative.

In our profession there is a prevalent narrative of what a teacher should be or the “perfect teacher”. It’s a term I use when the thoughts in my head tell me that if I just spent three more hours on my 30-minute math lesson, I will change all of the lives of my students. Even as a substitute, this narrative insists that my presence within a classroom will be the event that a student identifies as when their life turned around. To emphasize the destructive nature of this narrative, this is the same voice that tells me that my orange level sub plans need to be the pinnacle of good pedagogy. To satisfy this narrative is to spend days prepping these lessons while neglecting my personal needs and the needs of my family in the process.

We do not have the luxury of entertaining the perfect teacher narrative this year.

The perfect teacher narrative fuels the fire of self-deprecation, exhaustion, and guilt. We need to give ourselves the grace to do the minimum in some areas.

The perfect teacher narrative trains us to say, “I can make this work!” with a smile regardless of the situation-- even for tasks that should not be asked of us. All of this is to say, it is okay to say no. It is okay to be imperfect (we all are). It is okay to say, I cannot make this work and provide the reasons why you cannot. It is okay to vent and talk through what you are feeling. It is okay to determine that perfection is not worth your energy. It is okay to feel like you are not doing as well as you usually do.

In referencing Brené Brown, it is okay to say that you have “10”. I recommend listening to following podcast episode if you are unaware of this reference: <https://brenebrown.com/podcast/brene-on-comparative-suffering-the-50-50-myth-and-settling-the-ball/>

With multiple reminders of COVID in our daily lives, we are frequently living within the survival tier of Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs. This hinders our creativity, impulse control, and higher-level thinking. It makes sense that we are having difficulty being our best selves. So once again, it is okay to feel like you are not at the top of your game. It is okay to need some help in “filling the gap to 100” (again referencing the podcast). I recommend making a plan for when you won’t be at 100— it will happen multiple times this year. Who will you reach out to? Where will you pull back? What supports will you need?

To communicate an inability to meet an expectation is not a complaint – it is information. This information helps decision-makers know that the system needs some adjustments.

In our work this year, GVTA has advocated for changes in sick leave, family medical leave, divisional/regional responsibility for the education of immunocompromised students, safe workspaces, better defined mask exemption protocols, LTP application efficiency, protection of non-instructional time (preps, breaks, lunch), flexibility for CLGs, and clarifying values and concepts to consider in the event of a positive COVID case within our schools.

However, none of this advocacy work can happen without first hearing these concerns from you. I encourage you to reach out and let me know how I can help fill the gap to 100.

In solidarity,

Mike Urichuk

204-573-6214

gvtapresident@gmail.com

Social & Teacher Wellness

Brenda Richer & Carmelle Gerein

This year will continue looking different from other years; however, we will do our best to offer events that build morale and promote unity, while still following the Public Health guidelines. Our first event was the new teachers’ supper at King’s Deli, and it was a great success! Please continue saying hi to new teachers and making them feel welcome. The GVSD Fall Picnic was held at The Bunker on the 1st snowy day with record numbers, never has the GVTA had such a great turnout. This event served our diverse community, which included all GVSD employees, as stated in 10.b of the GVTA Practices and Procedures.

We are excited to bring you our 1st monthly event, Paint Night!

The host location will be at the Winkler Arts & Culture November 25th at 4:30. All supplies included, and an instructor will turn you into a Picasso! * results and product not guaranteed ;) This event will follow Public Health orders and Physical Distancing protocols. Registration until November 17th with limited spaces. Look for a new event, when possible, every month in the Applecore!

This is a difficult time for students as well as educators, and we must remember to take time for our-

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.

selves. One way to do that is through meditation. Meditation can reduce stress, improve sleep, aid in developing self-awareness, and benefit your overall mental and emotional health. There are many free apps available for meditating (for example, “Calm” and “Headspace”), as well as YouTube videos featuring guided meditations - or, you can simply meditate by yourself! Meditation is a great way to unwind at the end of a stressful day.

“Education should light a fire within us to improve us and help our world.” - Sarah Joseph

PD CLGs

Keep handing in those CLG applications. The next round of approvals will be in January, but it is good to turn them in early lest you forget. If you have already been approved, try to finish up your CLG by the end of December

MTS President James Bedford with GVTA members



**UPDATE AND Q&A:
MTS PRESIDENT**

NOVEMBER 3, 2020 @ 4PM OVER ZOOM

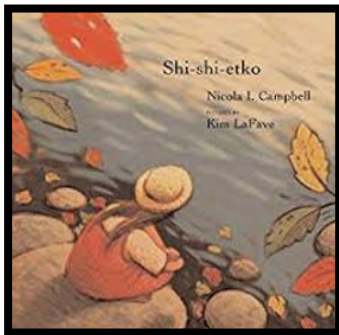
EMAIL QUESTIONS TO GVTAPRESIDENT@GMAIL.COM

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Submitted by Ashly Dyck and Roxanne Baraniski

Orange Shirt Day

Staff and students across the division honoured Orange Shirt day on September 30. Claire Goertzen from Plum Coulee School won our giveaway by sharing pictures of how she teaches reconciliation through education in her classroom! Claire won an Orange Shirt pin crafted by artist Lynette La Fontaine of British Columbia. A honourable mention goes to Rhonda Friesen of Pine Ridge for sharing the book Shi-shi-etko with her students to help them connect origin stories of Indigenous Peoples to Orange Shirt Day. A display from Claire's classroom is pictured below. Also pictured below– Claire with her pin, NPC staff, Shi-shi-etko, a display of orange shirts at Pine Ridge, GVSD school administrators. Thank you for helping us reinforce the message that "Every Child Matters".



Remembrance Day

Our goal is to encourage teachers to consider Indigenous perspectives on curriculum topics and consider this perspective as you engage in teaching and learning throughout the year. In November, we encourage members to acknowledge the contributions of Indigenous peoples during war times. Here are two ideas, and a chance to win a little gift:

- Study an Indigenous veteran like Sergeant Tommy Prince. Originally from Manitoba, Prince served in the Canadian army in World War II and in the Korean War. Learn more about his bravery and courage by researching his contributions with your class
- Follow this link to a Historica Canada lesson plan on Canada's forgotten soldiers: http://education.historicacanada.ca/files/160/Forgotten_Soldiers.pdf



»»» Giveaway «««

Email a picture and caption to ashly.dyck@gvzd.ca and roxanne.baraniski@gvzd.ca showing your learning about Canadian Indigenous perspective on War for a chance to win a \$10 gift card for Tim Horton's! ENTER BY FRI. NOV. 13

Group Life Insurance Changes

Effective September 01, 2020

- No longer considered a “new employee” when transferring from one division to another. (Can no longer re-elect Group Life options in this circumstance.)

More Information on Health Benefits or Group Life Insurance

Manitoba School Employee Benefits Plans

<https://mpsebp.ca>

Effective January 01, 2021

- Discontinue 6x and 7x Group Life benefit options.
- Implement \$1 million maximum Group Life benefit.
- **Plan members have until November 30, 2020 to apply for 6x or 7x benefit option. Medical evidence must be approved by Canada Life.**
- Plan members with 6x or 7x at December 31, 2020 will be grandfathered. If the maximum benefit of a member at December 31, 2020 is more than \$1 million, it will be grandfathered and frozen at that amount (future salary increases will not be applied).

Not sure of your current Life Insurance Benefits?

Contact the Division Office

Shayne Thomson

shayne.thomson@gvds.ca

or

Janet Mulholland

janet.mulholland@gvds.ca

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS CHANGES

Health Plan Changes

Effective January 01, 2020

- Message Therapy: reasonable and customary maximum changed from \$80 per visit to \$80 per hour.
- Vaccines: implemented \$1000/person/year

More Information on Health Benefits or Group Life Insurance

**Manitoba
School Employee Benefits Plans**
<https://mpsebp.ca>

Effective July 01, 2020

Clinical Psychology benefit expanded to include:

- Social worker
- Psychotherapist
- Clinical counsellor
- Marriage or family therapist

Effective September 01, 2020

Travel Health:

Blue Cross removed restriction that invalidated first 90 days of travel health coverage when a person was travelling for longer than 90 days.

**EMPLOYEE
BENEFITS
CHANGES**