



Garden Valley Teachers' Association

The Apple Core

December 2020

Upcoming Events

Christmas Break- Monday, Dec. 21th to Jan. 1

New Year's Eve- Thursday, Dec. 31

New Year's Day- Friday, Jan. 1

Pembina Trails Arbitration hearings- Monday, Jan. 4-12

Remote Learning grades 7-12- Monday, Jan. 4-15

Pension Sustainability Seminar - 12:30pm Saturday, Jan. 9

GVTA Executive Meeting - 4:15pm Tuesday, Jan. 12

Collective Bargaining Committee meeting- 4:00pm Thursday, Jan. 14

Deadline for CLG applications - Friday Jan. 15

PD Committee Meeting- 4:15pm Tuesday, Jan. 19

Liaison Meeting (Ed Finance Presentation)- 7:00am Thursday Jan. 28

President's Address:

I remember almost a year ago, during the 2019 Christmas break, where I was joking around with my family about how 2020 would be the year of "perfect vision." As a dad, I was excited for a year that could be thematically centred around vision-based puns from which to elicit groans. However, that certainly has not been the tone of this past year.

This has been a difficult calendar year that has tested all of us: in our various roles in our workplaces, communities, families, homes, and even the various roles, narratives, and identities that we hold within ourselves. It has been challenging to face some of the public and government perceptions of public education and educators. Look no further than the most recent announcement from the Minister of Education, Kelvin Goertzen, about remote learning in January as an example of one of the discouraging moments that we have faced. We have all felt disregarded, drained, exhausted, confused, frustrated, isolated, and hopeless at various times and intensities since March. Not to mention those of us who have lost loved ones and lived through the experience of mourning in isolation. Again, 2020 has been a difficult year. We are ready for a well-deserved break.

This week we welcome the hope that comes with COVID-19 vaccinations. As the third country in the world to approve the Pfizer vaccine and with the first immunization clinic in Manitoba scheduled to open on Wednesday, Dec. 16 for select healthcare workers, it feels almost surreal to think that the constant shifting of restrictions will eventually come to an end. The announcement of the vaccine approval was like a breath of fresh air taken after a day of too many Zoom/Teams meetings. Although it is likely we will not be returning to normal any time soon; having the opportunity to use a preventative weapon aside from the current behavioural recommendations is certainly comforting. It's the sense that help is on the way.

This upcoming break, enjoy yourselves and do what you need to do to get the rest that you need. Although help is on the way, it is not here yet. We will all need this break to finish this marathon of a year. Do not accept the

burdens that you cannot carry, but support others where you can. Extend grace and do not let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Teachers and students are resilient and adaptable but not in infinite amounts. Therefore, I implore you to replenish your supply, fill your bucket, reach out to family and friends, and enjoy the outdoors. For those of you who are able: sleep in.

Thank you for your work, resilience, honesty, and communication throughout this first half of the year. I look forward to when we can be in the same room again so I can thank you for all that you are doing.

Wishing you rest and all the best,

Mike

Notice of Policy Change

During the GVTA executive meeting on December 1, a policy change was proposed and is tabled to be passed during the January 12 executive meeting. If you would like to speak to any of the motions listed below, please contact gvtapresident@gmail.com and you will be sent an invitation to speak at the meeting.

Proposed policy changes are as follows:

Topic/ Policy	Current	Proposed
Joint GVTA -GVSD events that are hosted by GVTA	B. 6. None	B. 6. For joint GVTA-GVSD events hosted by the GVTA that have a participant maximum or are subject to other resource limits, GVTA members will be given priority over other eligible participants.

Collective Bargaining Update

Over the past month, GVTA has agreed to multiple Letters of Understanding. Letters of Understanding are primarily used to resolve bargaining issues between rounds of bargaining. The letters have allowed for the following:

All members will now be able to have greater access to family medical leave days

- Past practice has allowed **5 sick leave days** to be used for family medical purposes
- The new practice will allow for **all sick leave days** to be used for personal or family medical purposes.

Substitute Teachers will have income protection if they are exposed to COVID at work

- If a sub is required to self-isolate due to a COVID exposure at work, they will receive paid

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.

administrative leave or a work from home option.

- Part-time teachers who sub would also be entitled to the paid administrative leave or work from home option for the substitute portion where applicable.

All members will be able to access extra-curricular carryover

- Unused hours from 2019-20 were carried over to this year. That carry over will extend to the 2021-22 school year.
- We are still negotiating for the ability to carry over extra-curricular days where they remain unused from 2019-20.

However, our work is not finished. Negotiations through GVTA will continue to seek support for members with low sick leave. GVTA is also ready to bargain locally and to work within the proposed provincial structure.

In January, Pembina Trails Teachers' Association begins their arbitration hearings. This is the second arbitration for teachers since Bill 28 was introduced. The award determined by the panel in this arbitration could affirm the pattern established in the Louis Riel arbitration. However, arbitration awards take some time to develop and it could take until mid-March before the results are released.

The bill that has been introduced to create Provincial Bargaining (Bill 45) is working its way through the legislature. At this time, Bill 45 has received first reading and is on track to be passed somewhere between mid-March and June 2021. Currently Bill 45 would implement single-tier provincial bargaining. Meaning there would be one bargaining table for all teachers across the province. This would be a change from the current practice where each of the school divisions and Locals negotiate individually. The language in this bill could change as it moves through the legislative process so more details will be provided as they are made available.

Holiday Jokes

- What do elves learn at school?
 - The Elf-Abet.
- Which one of Santa's reindeer has bad manners
 - Rude-Olph
- Who is Santa's favorite singer?
 - Elf-is Presley
- Why are Christmas trees bad at knitting
 - Because they're always dropping their needles!
- Where does Santa go when he is sick
 - To his local Elf-Centre
- What do angry mice send to each other in December?
 - Cross mouse cards!
- What's a snowman's favorite cereal?
 - Frosty Flakes

Indigenous Education

Submitted by Roxanne Baraniski and Ashly Dyck

At this time of year, we have many different traditions to celebrate the season. This year, we will all be thinking of creative ways of honouring our family traditions or creating new ones!

As we enter this season, let's consider an Indigenous perspective of holiday traditions. Please follow this link to read a CBC news article on this subject. The article is titled "Decolonizing Christmas: family scraps Christmas for Indigenous ceremony": <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/decolonizing-christmas-holiday-ceremony-1.4460138>

Have a safe and happy holiday season!

