



Garden Valley Teachers' Association

The Apple Core

Dec 2021

Upcoming Events

Dec. 21 - PD Committee Meeting

Dec. 22 - Last day of classes in 2021

Dec. 23 - Jan. 5 - Schools Closed

Jan. 1 - HumanaCare goes live

Jan. 1 - Health Benefit annual maximums reset

Jan. 11 - GVTA Executive Meeting

Jan. 12 - ESJ Book Club

Jan. 15 - Presidents' council

Jan. 17 - Presidents' Learning Series

Jan. 18 - PD Committee Meeting

Jan. 19 - 2021 COLA known

Jan. 19 - Early Dismissal

Jan. 20 - Liaison Meeting

Feb. 1 - GVTA Executive Meeting

Feb. 2 - ESJ Book Club

Feb. 4 - 9-12 Admin Day

Feb. 4 - K-8 PD Day

Hello GVTA Members,

In keeping with a shortened week, I have a shortened address for December's Apple Core. However, there are a few important things to consider before I write you again in January:

HumanaCare goes live on January 1, 2022. This is a counselling service available to all members and their families. It is accessible 24/7 once it goes live. While you have all received an email for this EAP replacement, it only becomes live on January 1. Currently, you are only able to use that link to make a profile for yourself.

Health Benefits reset at the start of a new calendar year and with that, our new dental premiums and benefits maximums will come into effect January 1, 2022. The dental annual maximum moves up to \$1750/person/year and the dental premium goes down by roughly 9% (not the full Blue Cross premium, just the dental premium).

T1 forms had been submitted by some members to GVSD to withhold additional tax payments from pay cheques (to correct for the low taxation on backpay). In January, if you want to stop taking off additional tax (as the withheld tax in January will not impact the backpay tax year), you need to submit another T1 form to HR. All you need to do is fill out the short form and write \$0 next to the line for additional tax taken off. That is, unless you want to keep paying additional taxes (which can be beneficial in certain circumstances).

Thank you, folks, for all the work that you are doing for one another and in supporting one another through what has been another year for the record books. As we head toward the Winter break, I wish you all a great last day with your students and colleagues and a safe, rejuvenating, and joyful next two weeks.

In Solidarity,

Mike Urichuk
204-573-6214
GVTApres@MBteach.org

Social & Teacher Wellness

Brenda Richer & Brandy Springer

Sometimes the greatest PD is the Teacher down the hall. ~ Brian Aspinall

I hope you are all proud of your hard work, dedication and effort this year. Now it is time to eat, drink and be merry with family and loved ones. Come back safe and rested in the new year, ready to tackle new challenges together. Merry Christmas to you all, and Happy New Year.

It was so good to see your smiling faces at the recent event. **Reminder:** events will be listed on our media, school bulletin board or in the Applecore.

Past Events:

- Dec. 9th GVTA Members were treated to a Virtual Paint Night hosted by Winkler Arts & Council. With brushes drawn and paint pots open wide, participants unleashed the spirit of the season! Some shy, some talented, while others giggled the night away. Thank you to all the budding Picassos for making the night a success. A special thank you to the Winkler Arts & Council for adding some cheer.
- Dec. 13 GVTA Members decked the halls with a Christmas Arrangement from New Leaf Garden Centre. A masterpiece or resemblance of the Charlie Brown Christmas Tree, participants loved the opportunity to join in. If everyone has remembered to water, the arrangement should survive the season.
- Dec. 20 was a quick exchange that had participants whisking away their treasures for Valley Bakery! The budget allowed for a guest appearance...Buddy the Elf was on site making sure that everyone was full of joy. Most of you participants were noted by Buddy to be on the good list. The Buddy-o-meter caught a few of you on the naughty list, better luck next year!

Toblerone Shortbread Cookies

By: [Anna Olsen](#)



This recipe comes from The Food Network Baker Anna Olsen. These cookies freeze very well.

Ingredients

Makes 28 cookies.

- 1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- ½ cup + 2 tablespoons icing sugar
- ¼ cup cornstarch or rice flour
- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 10 ounces of toberlone chocolate bar, chopped into ¼ inch chunks

1. Preheat oven to 350 ° F.
2. Beat butter until light and fluffy. Sift in icing sugar and beat again until fluffy, scraping down sides of bowl often.
3. Sift in cornstarch or rice flour and blend in. Sift in all-purpose flour and salt and mix just until dough comes together. Dough will be soft. Mix in vanilla extract. Gently mix in toberlone chunks.
4. Using a small ice cream scoop (about 1 ½ inches across) scoop cookies onto parchment lined cookie sheet, leaving 2 inches between cookies. You should be able to fit 12 cookies on a 12 x 18 inch cookie sheet.
5. Bake on the middle rack for 9 minutes. Rotate sheet and bake another 9 minutes, until bottom of cookies are lightly browned. Remove from cookie sheet to cool on a rack

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.

Homemade Ferrero Rocher Truffles

By: [Katia](#)

These amazing homemade Ferrero Rocher truffles are stunning, super easy to make and loaded with nutrients. Just blend 5 healthy ingredients and enjoy their incredible flavors and melt in your mouth texture, they are incredible



Ingredients

Servings 12.

- 1 cup (130gr) Roasted hazelnuts* (not vegan option)
- 2/3 cup (100gr) 70% Dark chocolate bar
- 2 Tbsp maple syrup (or honey as a substitute)
- 1 Tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 pinch salt (optional)

1. **Roast your hazelnuts** if they are raw, this step will take 10 minutes more: preheat the oven to 350F and spread the whole hazelnuts, in a single layer, evenly over a baking tray.
2. Roast in the oven for about 8 minutes or until the hazelnuts are lightly colored and toasted.
3. **Melt the chopped chocolate** in the top of a double boiler or a heatproof bowl set over (not in) a saucepan of simmering water; cook gently, stirring occasionally, until melted, 2 to 3 minutes. **If you have a microwave:** Place chopped chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl and microwave in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted.
4. Keep aside 12 whole hazelnuts for the centre and add the rest into a food processor. Blend until chopped into small pieces.
5. Keep aside 2 Tbsp of these coarsely chopped hazelnuts for the coating.
6. Keep blending the rest of hazelnuts into a smooth paste. This takes 1 or 2 minutes.
7. Add cocoa powder, maple syrup, vanilla extract, 3 Tbsp of melted chocolate and a pinch of salt. Blend again until the ingredients start to stick together, you want a moist and sticky mixture.
8. Roll the paste with your hands into small balls and insert a hazelnut into the center.
9. Place the balls in the freezer for 5 minutes to harden.
10. Add the 2 Tbsp of chopped hazelnuts to the melted chocolate (just make sure the melted chocolate is still runny and melted) and mix well.
11. Once the balls are set, dip and roll them in the chocolate and hazelnut mixture and place them on a tray lined with parchment paper.
12. Freeze again for about 5-10 minutes and then you can enjoy your homemade Ferrero Rocher. **Notes:** Store in an air-tight container, in the fridge. They should keep for about 7 days.

GVTA policy changes

GVTA policy changes are distributed to the general membership prior to coming into effect so that members can express opinions on the changes. The following policy changes are slated for passage at the January 11, 2022 GVTA executive meeting (contact gvtapres@mbteach.org if you would like to attend or have questions about the policy changes):

New Teacher Outreach Policy: distributed

1. *1st Year Teachers BBQ.* Each fall, the Social & Teacher Wellness Committee organizes this event to welcome new teachers to the GVTA.
2. *Teachers New to GVTA 1st Year Teachers BBQ.* Each fall, The President in consultation with the Social and Teacher Wellness Chairs will organize a welcome package for ~~this event to welcome~~ new teachers to the GVTA.

New Teacher Outreach Policy: distributed

Removal of mandatory division-wide event Policy Changes: distributed

3. *Fall picnic.* The fall picnic is hosted and organized by the teaching staff at a different school each year according to a rotational order kept by the Social & Teacher Wellness Committee Chair. The fall picnic is open to all divisional staff.
4. *GVTA Events Open to All GVSD:* For events that have a participant maximum or are subject to other resource limits, GVTA members will be given priority over other eligible participants (GVSD employees).
- B. To 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. These events shall be relevant and serve our diverse community of needs throughout the year;

3. These packages will be distributed in person along with a lunch at each worksite with new teachers. An invitation to each lunch will include the new teachers at that school, GVTA executive members from that school, and the GVTA president.

1. ~~*Kickoff Event.* The Social & Teacher Wellness Committee Chair may organize a kickoff event for the school year. The fall picnic is hosted and organized by the teaching staff at a different school each year according to a rotational order kept by the Social & Teacher Wellness Committee Chair. The fall picnic is open to all divisional staff.~~
2. *GVTA Events Open to All GVSD: If events are made available for all GVSD employees/trustees and those events that have a participant maximum or are subject to other resource limits, GVTA members will be given priority over other eligible participants (GVSD employees).*
- b. To plan, budget for and execute a minimum of three (3) events throughout the school year - at least one (1) of these events will be near the start of the school year. -These events shall be relevant and serve our diverse community of needs throughout the year;

PAC policy: distributed

EXISTING:
MTS Policy

6.7 Political Action Committee

The primary function of the Political Action Committee (PAC) is to assist the Provincial Executive in determining the political priorities for the Society and to prepare for provincial and federal elections. The membership of the PAC will include the President, Vice President and up to three (3) other members of the Provincial Executive. The responsibilities of the PAC shall include:

- (a) reviewing and making recommendations regarding the political messaging of the Society on an ongoing basis;
- (b) reviewing current provincial government policy on public education;

NEW:

GVTA Policy (New standing committee)

Political Action Committee

The primary function of the Political Action Committee (PAC) is to assist the **GVTA** Executive in determining the political priorities for the **Local** and to prepare for provincial and federal elections. The membership of the PAC will include the President, Vice President and up to three (3) other members of the **GVTA** Executive. The responsibilities of the PAC shall include:

- (a) reviewing and making recommendations regarding the political messaging of the **Local** on an ongoing basis;
- (b) reviewing current provincial government policy on public education;

PAC policy: distributed	(c) reviewing and making recommendations on the Society’s provincial election preparedness and planning;	(c) reviewing and making recommendations on the Local ’s provincial election preparedness and planning;
	(d) reviewing and making recommendations on the Society’s federal election preparedness and planning;	(d) reviewing and making recommendations on the Local ’s federal election preparedness and planning;
	(e) reviewing and making recommendations on affiliations to support the Society’s political endeavors; and,	(e) reviewing and making recommendations on affiliations to support the Local ’s political endeavors; and,
	(f) fulfilling other duties as mandated by the Provincial Executive.	(f) fulfilling other duties as mandated by the GVTA Executive and MTS .

February 4th PD Sessions

Topic	Presenter
Numeracy	Carole Fullerton
Literacy	Adrienne Gear
The New ELA Curriculum	Val Harder
Indigenous Blanket Exercise	TBD
Autism Awareness	TBD
The GVTA Microsoft Store	Richard Peters
Teacher Wellness – Caring for yourself	Sascha Epp
Creating safe space for students part of the Rainbow Community	Ryan Schroeder
What we do and how we support you and your students	GVSD Social Work/Psych/Speech
Genesis House – Noticing families needing assistance in our classrooms and schools	Kari Kauenhofen

***Speakers and/or topics may be subject to change, additional topics are being worked on.



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COVID-19 Vaccine



COVID-19 Testing

Asymptomatic Rapid Antigen Screening for COVID-19 is available at pharmacies for the general public at Shoppers Drug Mart locations (across Manitoba)

Click [here](#) to find the nearest location and call for availability and to book an appointment.

Cost per screening: **\$40**

[Learn More / FAQs](#)

Who can get screened?

What is a rapid COVID-19 antigen screen? And what's the difference between testing and screening?



Why are we changing from our current EAP?

The mental health needs of teachers are growing and becoming more complex. The demand for EAP counselling has increased steadily for many years, resulting in lengthy wait times, program limitations and inequitable access to important services. The change to HumanaCare means more timely access to counselling services for a greater range of issues in all areas of Manitoba.

How was all this decided?

MTS engaged an external consultant to conduct a review of our EAP in 2020-2021. The process included member and staff input to assess existing services, identify gaps, and consider a strategy for enhanced, sustainable, comprehensive counselling services. In September 2021, after careful consideration of the review findings, the Provincial Executive passed a unanimous motion to engage HumanaCare effective January 1, 2022.

Is HumanaCare the same as EAP?

HumanaCare will provide counselling services—like our EAP did—and a lot more. Under HumanaCare, we're extending coverage to our members' eligible family members, and we've increased the range of services offered to include marriage and family therapy, and counselling in areas such as substance abuse, bereavement, stress management, finances, and more.

I'm seeing an MTS EAP counsellor right now. What happens to me?

Anyone who is currently in sessions with our counsellors will be able to complete the sessions available to them until March 31, 2022, at the latest. We encourage you to speak with your counsellor about your therapy plan.

What are the current EAP staff going to do next?

MTS has long recognized that educators have unique needs that require a comprehensive suite of services. Our current EAP staff will use their experience, expertise, and skills in working with our members to develop new services including mental health education programs, mental health advocacy, and research partnerships, as well as direct services to members and locals. We'll have more detail for you by the end of the school year.

So MTS wasn't dissatisfied with the EAP counsellors' service?

Not at all. Our EAP counsellors are highly skilled professionals who provided a vital service to MTS members for many years—and we still need them. They remain an essential part of the Society's focus on teacher mental health, shaping programming and initiatives that will become an integral part of our ongoing professional services to members. The challenge for the EAP was the ever-growing demand for services, lengthy wait times, and inequitable access to service for members outside of Winnipeg and Brandon. We knew change was needed in order to provide timely, comprehensive support to all MTS members. And we wanted to offer services to our members' families, too.

Who are considered "eligible" family members?

Eligible family members include an MTS member's spouse/partner and dependants under the age of 21 who reside in the home. Eligibility is also extended to dependants in the home who are between the ages of 21-25 and enrolled in post secondary schools, as well as disabled dependants of any age.

How do I register myself and my family?

There is no need to register. In mid-December MTS will distribute an access code which will identify you and your family as eligible for services starting January 1. Watch your email and the MTS website for more information. Posters will be distributed to all schools, as well.

Do I have to keep the access code?

No. You only use the access code once, to create your personal, private profile with HumanaCare. Once that's done you can start booking services right away.

Do my eligible family members need their own access code?

No. All MTS members and those eligible use the same access code. The code connects to a HumanaCare landing page where each of you will set up your own separate profile.

Can more than one family member access HumanaCare at the same time?

Yes.

Can I contact HumanaCare now and get on a wait list or set up an appointment for January?

No. MTS members are not covered by HumanaCare until January 1, 2022. At that time, you and/or family members can contact HumanaCare any time, day or night, to request services. From there you will be connected with a counsellor. The best part: no wait list.

If I'm using my extended health benefits to see a counsellor right now, do I have to switch to HumanaCare?

Not at all. Your extended health benefits are separate and additional benefits for you use as you see fit. You can set up a profile with HumanaCare at any time.

January 1, 2022, is a holiday. Will I really be able to contact them that day?

Absolutely.

How many sessions will I have?

All counselling assistance programs—including our current EAP and HumanaCare—are intended to address emergent, short term counselling needs. Psychiatric or long-term counselling is covered under our members' extended health care plans.

Is this covered through my union dues?

It is.

Can I see a counsellor in person?

HumanaCare offers in-person counselling as well as phone, virtual and online/text services, all in multiple languages. However, not all provider specialties will be available in-person.

Will I be accommodated if I have a preference for counsellor, i.e. BIPOC, 2SLGBTQIA+, female identifying, etc.

Yes, you should ask for your preference at the time of your intake. Keep in mind, though, that your preference for counsellor may not be available in your community, or in person. However, HumanaCare has a vast network of counsellors and will work to meet your needs.

Where do I see these counsellors? Is there a HumanaCare office?

HumanaCare contracts with counsellors in communities throughout Manitoba. Services may be provided on the phone, through video conferencing, or in person at the counsellor's own office.

How many sessions will I have with a counsellor? Is there any discretion from the counsellor?

Members and their eligible family are provided with a clinically appropriate number of sessions (within the short-term nature of the MFAP). The average is from four to eight sessions, however some people may require more support and some less depending on their individual circumstances.

What if I see a counsellor, and then a year from now need counselling again. Can I see the same person?

Yes, this is an option. As long as the counsellor is still in HumanaCare's network and has maintained their credentials, individuals can be set up with the same counsellor where requested.

24/7 intake, including holidays? We are live January 1 – does that mean members will have someone answer the phone that day?

Correct. Intake is 24/7 live answer, 365 days a year. It's important to note that since phones are answered 24/7 it is recommended that if anyone is dealing with an urgent matter/crisis to call in and not use the mobile app or website to initiate support. While HumanaCare is quick to respond to inquiries via the app or web, they are not as immediate as a call in.

What if I miss the email with the access code?

No worries. In addition to the information provided by email in mid-December (watch for it in the MTS member newsletter, The Sub) you'll find information posted on the MTS website and at your school, too. Your local association will have the information as well. Remember, though, that **HumanaCare services are only available starting January 1, 2022**, and the access code will be provided in mid-December.

I can't get into EAP before January 1 and I need counselling services now. What do I do?

MTS members can access their extended health benefits for counselling services before HumanaCare goes live on January 1.

Extended health providers, such as Blue Cross, cover the following: clinical psychologist, social worker, psychotherapist, clinical counsellor and marriage/family therapist. Members can access up to \$850 per calendar year for these services, so those benefits will be renewed and can continue into the new year. Alternatively, members can switch to HumanaCare in January.

In addition, click the following links to search for counsellors/psychologists near you.

[The Psychological Association of Manitoba \(cpmb.ca\)](http://cpmb.ca)

[Find a Canadian Certified Counsellor \(CCC\) or CCC-Supervisor \(CCC-S\) – Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association \(ccpa-accp.ca\)](http://ccpa-accp.ca) Just select Manitoba, city of choice, and hit search.

The Province of Manitoba also offers some services free of charge at Province of Manitoba | Be Well

Member & Family Assistance Program (MFAP)

We can help.

Free and confidential support for eligible members and their families.



HumanaCare's supports and services can assist in the following areas:

- Relationships and Couples
- Family and Parenting
- Stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Substance Use
- Legal and Financial
- Grief and Bereavement
- Career Coaching
- Behavioural Management
- Diet and Nutrition
- Work-Related Stress
- Bullying and Harassment
- Crisis and Trauma



Coming January 1, 2022