



Garden Valley Teachers' Association

The Apple Core

March 2022

Upcoming Events

- Mar. 15– GVSD Public Budget meeting 8pm (online)
- Mar. 16- Early Dismissal
- Mar. 31- Deadline for Deferred Salary Leave Plan
- Mar. 28-April 1 Spring Break
- Apr. 4- First round of applications close at 12:00pm (Noon)
- Apr. 5- GVTA Executive Meeting
- Apr. 6- ESJ Book Club
- Apr. 14– Liaison Meeting
- Apr. 15- Good Friday (No School)
- Apr. 20– Early Dismissal
- Apr. 26– Provincial Council Binder Meeting
- Apr. 27– Early Dismissal
- Apr. 30- Resignations for teachers on a Teacher General Contract
- May 3– GVTA Executive Meeting
- May 4- Noon Dismissal (K-12)
- May 12- Advance Nominations for GVTA Executive close at 4pm
- May 18– Early Dismissal
- May 19– Liaison Meeting
- May 23– Victoria Day (No School)
- May 31- Resignations for teachers on a Form 2 Contract
- May 31– GVTA AGM
- June 15– Early Dismissal
- June 21– National Indigenous Peoples Day
- June 23– GVC grad
- June 24– NPC grad
- June 29– Noon Dismissal
- June 30– Last day of school
- August 22-24– MTS Summer Seminars

Hello GVTA Members,

This past weekend I had the honour of being a part of the creation of our first provincial opening package for bargaining. This was a moment years in the making. Moving from Local bargaining to provincial bargaining has been a desired choice of MTS for over a decade. Over the years, a list of principles was created. When the provincial government looked to listen to this suggestion, they did not adhere to all the principles we had established. However, through advocacy and hard-work, MTS has been able to achieve, almost entirely on our own terms, the creation of a bargaining protocol, table team (including our very own Joel Swaan), and now an unanimously supported opening package. I like to think of this move to provincial bargaining as one of the largest events regarding bargaining in the history of Manitoba Education. It was truly a career highlight to have served in this capacity this past weekend.

This past weekend I was also informed by our nominations chair that I have been acclaimed as GVTA president for the 2022-23 school year. I look forward to continuing in this role and working to continually improve as your advocate and liaison in the year ahead.

Now, the biggest news of today for most of you is the lifting of restrictions and what may come next as various prevention methods move from requirements to recommendations from Public Health. There are many feelings out there and I encourage you to process all of them—whatever they may be. I also hope that you extend grace to one another, masked or unmasked, knowing that there is much more that unifies us as teachers and educators than what separates us in our various risk thresholds and personal medical situations.

Even as restrictions lift, I hope that you all remember that there will still be a lengthy period of social and academic recovery. Students will not “catch up” overnight. Those who were at home may or may not have “kept up.” Achievement gaps were created because of this pandemic and the resultant school closures. But the existence of a gap does not mean we need to fret to catch up. Instead, we need to see that data as evidence that we are vital for the learning and development of our students.

Regardless of what number you put on it, our goal has been and always will be to help our students learn and grow. This goal is a thirteen plus person marathon relay-race, not a sprint. Now we all bring a new piece of a collective trauma to that team. Give yourself, your students, and your colleagues time to recover and process as we welcome one another back to more familiar classrooms with more stable rules— carrying with us what we learned from our pandemic experience.

Mike Urichuk
GVTA President
gvtapres@mbteach.org
204-573-6214

Social & Teacher Wellness

By: Brenda Richer & Brandy Springer



Spring is just around the corner and we don't know about you, but we'll be happy to say goodbye to this winter as soon as possible!

This year has been filled with trials and tribulations, but our staff has put their best foot forward and faced the challenges head on. We've seen students struggle and thought of innovative ways to help them in this ever-changing world. We've seen our classrooms and society divided by differing opinions but have managed to find ways that unite us and have open dialogue on important aspects of life and education. All of this work does not go unnoticed – you have done an amazing job this year.

With all of the work that we've put in over the past few months it now brings us to SPRING BREAK!!! (We're a little excited about it over here). Take the time to reset, recharge and reconnect – do the things that bring you joy and if that includes Netflix, sleeping in, and a few drinks... hey no one will judge you around here.

As always if you have any suggestions or ideas, please feel free to reach out!

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.

Cookie Dough Energy Bites

These nutritious little energy bites taste a whole lot like cookie dough! This recipe was adapted from the Minimalist Kitchen cookbook! The major changes that I made were omitting the dried fruit, using peanut butter instead of almond butter, and swapping chia for hemp.



Ingredients

- 2 cups rolled oats
- 2 cups flaked unsweetened coconut
- 1/2 cup peanut butter (extra as needed)
- 1/2 cup honey (extra as needed)
- 1/4 cup chia seeds
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips

Instructions

- Pulse the oats and the coconut until coarsely ground.
- Add peanut butter, honey, chia seeds, salt, vanilla, and chocolate chips. Pulse again until well-mixed and the chocolate chips are cut into smaller pieces.
- Roll into balls. (If it's too dry, just add a little more honey / peanut butter and mix again – I usually just eyeball the amounts until it gets sticky enough).
- Freeze until solid. Store in freezer or refrigerator.

Occupational Spring Safety Hazards: Do you know what they are?

When you think of spring time, what comes to mind Flowers blooming? Longer, warmer days?

Yes, following the cold winter, the season of rejuvenation is always welcomed with open arms. However, it surprisingly comes with a safety hazards unique to that time of year.

Spring can also be an opportunity to revisit health and safety protocols and see what can be done to make a positive impact on the physical and emotional well-being of your team.

Extreme Weather

Yes, we mentioned how pleasant spring weather can be, however it can also be extreme and “weirder” weather events. Springtime across Canada can be unpredictable with dangerous weather such as tornados, flooding, and late snowstorms. Drive with caution! Wear footwear with good traction. Keep a warm set of clothes with you! Prepare for the worst and you will be ready for anything.

Slips, Trips & Falls

No matter what the season is, slips, trips, and falls are always a major safety concern in the workplace because they are so frequent and can happen almost anywhere. Particularly during the wet spring season, slips and falls

are more of hazard because of the increase in slippery surfaces and rails.

If you want to reduce the incidence of slips, trips, and falls, all areas of the workplace must be assessed and identified to determine if it is a safety risk. Once identified, the employer can then look at strategies to mitigate and eliminate the risk through a number of steps including warning signs around high-slip areas, resurfaced walking areas, and salt/sand on affected areas.

The Big Picture

Overall, spring is a time when employers should look at the entire picture of their team's safety and what can be done to improve it during the upcoming year.

It's a good time to review and refresh safety policies and procedures such general company safety standards, fire drills and evacuation drills.

The great news is that employers can do a lot now to increase the safety of their people down the road.

Article submitted by Mary Eberling-Penner, GVTA WSH rep, adapted from Gen Handley, [Occupational spring safety hazards: Do you know what they are?](#) - OHS Canada Magazine



For immediate and confidential help, contact your

Member & Family Assistance Program

1-800-661-8193
24 HOURS A DAY ANYWHERE IN NORTH AMERICA
humanacare.com/mts • Access code: **MTSMFAP**



Notice of Motion

At the last GVTA Executive meeting (March 1, 2022), the following policy motions were made and passed. As a member, you can speak for or against any of these motions either in-person or in-writing before these policies are approved at the Executive Meeting on April 5, 2022. Please contact gvtapres@mbteach.org for further details.

Policy Title	Description
Political Action Committee Policy edit (new wording in red)	<p>9.1. Political Action Committee:</p> <p>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 local, 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:</p> <p>9.1.1. reviewing and making recommendations regarding the political messaging of the Local on an ongoing basis;</p> <p>9.1.2. reviewing current provincial government policy on public education;</p> <p>9.1.3. reviewing and making recommendations on the Local's local election preparedness and planning;</p> <p>9.1.4. reviewing and making recommendations on the Local's provincial election preparedness and planning;</p> <p>...</p>
GVTA President's Release Policy (New policy L in the policies and procedures with renumbering of policies) (new wording in red)	<p>L. GVTA President Release Policy:</p> <p>1. The position of the Association President is a full-time position. The Association shall second the member from the Division and compensate the Division appropriately.</p> <p>2. The Association President shall experience no loss of benefits and the Association shall reimburse the Division for the President's salary, allowances when applicable, benefits and other costs related to the President's leave.</p> <p>3. The Association President will not hold a position on the Provincial Executive of the Manitoba Teachers' Society during his or her term of office.</p>

2022-2023 GVTA Executive Nominations

GVTA positions do not have term limits so, while some persons will be letting their names stand, all positions are annually open for nominees (including self-nominations) and subject to any subsequent election:

Position		Confirmed Nominations as of March 14 th @ 4pm		
Acclaimed	President	Mike Urichuk (ECS)		
	Vice-President	<i>Incumbent not returning</i>		
Advance Nomination Deadline: 4:00pm, Thursday, May 12 th , 2022 Nominations can also be made at the GVTA AGM on Tuesday, May 31st, 2022	Treasurer	Anny Froese (PDS)		
	Secretary	Mary Eberling-Penner (PCS/EDW)		
	Collective Bargaining	Chair	Jessica Riddell (ECS)	
		Co-Chair		
	Education Finance	Chair	<i>Incumbent not returning</i>	
		Co-Chair	<i>Vacant 2021-22</i>	
	Employee Benefits	Chair	Kirsten Carman (GVC)	
		Co-Chair	James Driedger (NPC)	
	Equity & Social Justice	Chair	Donna McCausland (NPC)	
		Co-Chair	Val Harder (DO)	
	Indigenous Education	Chair	James Driedger (NPC)	
		Co-Chair	Jim Parry-Hill (SUB)	
	Professional Development	Chair	Alyssa Friesen (PRS)	
		Co-Chair	<i>Incumbent not returning</i>	
	Public Relations	Chair	Jonathan Cullen (NPC)	
		Co-Chair	Sarah Waldner (NPC)	
	Social & Teacher Wellness	Chair		
		Co-Chair	Brandy Springer (JRW)	
Workplace Safety & Health Liaison	Mary Eberling-Penner (PCS/EDW)			
Appointed in accordance with GVTA Bylaws	Past-President	Joel Swaan (PLS)		
	MTS Provincial Executive	Joel Swaan (PLS)		
Members-at-Large elected by the members they represent	COSL MAL			
	Administrative units qualifying for representation by Members-at-Large to be determined after GVTA Elections at the Tuesday, May 31 st AGM. Any Administrative unit not otherwise represented by an elected or appointed executive member will be eligible to elect their own Member-at-Large. Currently, BVS/BES, SUB, SWD/HES, & WES would be eligible.			

Please send all nominations, including self-nominations, to joel.swaan@gvtd.ca, chair of the GVTA Nominating Committee.

GVTA EXECUTIVE POSITIONS	DESCRIPTIONS IN BRIEF
President	Call, preside, provide notice, and create agendas for all Executive meetings and general meetings; attends Association Standing Committee, GVSD 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	Represent GVTA at all regional and provincial bargaining meetings with The Society; survey the local members when appropriate before regional bargaining seminars; promote knowledge of the collective agreement and provincial bargaining procedures, including ratification voting procedures, amongst the Association.
Education Finance	Track trends in Education Finance; gather information to present to local Executive and General Meetings; present to the Board as a part of the GVSD budget process.
Employee Benefits	Develop and promote awareness of all employee benefits; identify and investigate local needs for which the Employee Benefits committee can provide assistance; organize and host Employee Benefits Seminars relevant to GVTA members.
Equity & Social Justice	Develop awareness of social justice and equity issues in classroom materials, attitudes, school policies, and programs; share information and resources; identify local needs for which the committee may provide assistance.
Indigenous Education	Develop awareness of indigenous education and equity issues in classroom materials, attitudes, school policies, and programs; share information and resources; 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 continued improvement of GVTA membership's 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 senior administration in the planning and implementation of PD programs for the division.
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. Enhance and increase GVTA's on-line media presence.
Social and Teacher Wellness	Promote unity and build morale; plan, budget for, and execute a minimum of three (3) events throughout the school year; plan, budget, and execute a recognition for retiring teachers as needed; purchase prizes for all social and teacher wellness events; develop awareness of wellness issues in teacher attitudes, school policies, and programs.
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.