

# Rielity Check

Louis Riel  
Teachers' Association  
[www.lrta.ca](http://www.lrta.ca)

Nov/Dec 2009  
Editor : Deb Barry

## ARTICLE 10:00 – Meal Period

### A Common -LRSD/LRTA - Understanding



Based on queries to the LRTA Office, and a shared belief in the importance of supporting a collegial culture, the Louis Riel School Division and the Louis Riel Teachers' Association wish to ensure that all of the Division's teaching staff interpret Article 10:00 - Meal Period of the Collective Agreement appropriately:

*“Except in cases of emergency or unforeseen similar circumstances, every teacher shall be entitled to an uninterrupted meal period of fifty-five (55) minutes duration between 11:00 am and 2:00 pm daily.”*

LRTA members who, in any fashion, exert pressure on other member colleagues to attend noon hour meetings essentially propose an action that would violate the Collective Agreement. Accordingly, no member of the LRTA who abides by Article 10:00 and does not attend a noon hour meeting should be the focus of any behaviour that might be considered a reaction or repercussion for such a decision. School administrators may choose to attend such meetings that may be initiated or arranged by teachers, and for which their presence is deemed helpful, but will neither initiate them, nor request that teacher colleagues initiate them. Article 10:00 also states that:

*“Designated professional staff will be on call during the lunch period to deal with emergencies and unforeseen similar circumstances.”*

The Article includes a provision to allow the school administrator to schedule members of the teaching staff to be “on call” on a rotational basis, to address unforeseen circumstances or emergencies that might occur within the 55-minute meal period. Therefore, “on call” teachers are not assigned direct supervision duties, answering telephones, heating meals or any other active duties during the 55-minute uninterrupted meal period guaranteed by Article 10.00 because these examples are not defined as unforeseen circumstances or emergencies.

The Division and the Association concur in their understanding that, on rare occasion, the school administrator may request the assistance of a member (or members) of the teaching staff to respond to emergent matters for which a delayed response might present serious consequences, and appreciate the support of this understanding by members of the Association.

To assist further understanding, the Division and the Association negotiated and agreed to Article 10:00 to provide a 55-minute uninterrupted meal period for Association members. The Division and the Association therefore agree that members must support colleagues, and the spirit and intent of the Collective Agreement, by safeguarding the rights of members to exercise personal choice about attending any meetings that colleagues suggest to occur during the meal period.

*Terry Borys*

Superintendent and CEO  
Louis Riel School Division

*Madeline McKenzie*

President  
Louis Riel Teachers' Association

## Can You Hear Us Now?

Frank Restall Vice-President



An article in last month's *Rielity Check* encouraged the Provincial Executive (PX) to extend the contract of the Society's current Assistant General Secretary, Diane Beresford. The desire to extend Diane's contract was based upon her exemplary "record of commitment and support to the teachers of this province". This desire first originated last May at the meeting of the governing body of the Society, the Provincial Council. At that meeting, the nearly 300 delegates in attendance provided a prolonged standing ovation to the suggestion that PX consider extending Diane's contract. Unfortunately, it seems that PX chose to ignore that ringing endorsement. At the PX meeting of September 19<sup>th</sup>, the following motion was carried 9 to 4;

**That the Society begin the process of hiring for the position of Assistant General Secretary, term to begin January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010.**

The PX decision to "begin the process of hiring for the position of Assistant General Secretary" was shared with Society members at the October 24<sup>th</sup> Presidents' Council meeting (Presidents' Council is composed of presidents from all Associations). According to the minutes of the PX meeting, a roll call vote of the decision occurred. It is important to note that the PX decision to "begin the process of hiring" was not passed unanimously. Four PX members were against the decision to "begin the process of hiring". The PX members opposed were John Ehinger, Norm Gould, Paul Olson and Karen Wiebe.

The announcement of the PX decision to "begin the process of hiring" did not seem to sit well with many of the presidents in attendance at Presidents' Council. Considering that the role of the Presidents' Council is "To advise the Provincial Executive" and "To assist the Provincial Executive in determining interim policy", it was not surprising that, almost immediately, the following motion came forth;

**That the Provincial Executive reconsider their motion to start the search process for the Assistant General Secretary for 2010.**

Willets (Flin Flon) – McKenzie (Louis Riel)

Little, if any debate occurred, and when the question was put, the Presidents' Council motion to have PX reconsider was carried by an approximate 2 to 1 margin! Since, according to MTS Policy, one of the rights of the Association President is to "Be the spokesperson for the association" it was obvious that many, many teachers from around the province do not agree with the PX decision. Presidents' Council was told that PX would reconsider the decision at its next meeting.

The reasons for extending Diane's contract remain the same. "An extension of Diane's contract would ensure stability and continuity for the Society as well as provide valuable support for our new General Secretary."

Members, on two separate occasions now, have indicated their support of extending Diane Beresford's contract. Members, on two separate occasions now, have identified that the extension of Diane Beresford's contract would be in the best interests of teachers in Manitoba. Members, from all over the province, must be wondering "Can you hear us now?"

# Only As Strong As The Weakest Link!

## VP Collective Bargaining – Frank Restall



The benefits and working conditions guaranteed by the Collective Agreement are the result of many years of hard work and sacrifice by fellow teachers. Every article contained within the Agreement had to be bargained for in the collective interests of the teachers of the Association. As a teacher, your benefits and working conditions are in existence only because of teachers willing to stand as a collective and to bargain as a collective.

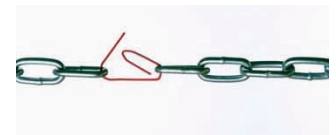
One does not have to go very far into the past to find a time when teacher agreements contained little beyond basic salary grids. When teachers began to bargain collectively in order to improve working conditions, great strides were made in terms of securing improvements and benefits. The result of the many years of bargaining collectively is the Agreement under which we currently work.

While it is not necessary for many teachers to be familiar with the history and evolution of the bargaining agreement, what must be understood by all teachers is the importance of being a collective. Being a collective means to be engaged in a “cooperative enterprise” and to stand with and support your colleagues. The gains that have been made in the past can be directly attributed to the membership standing together.

What makes the concept of a collective truly admirable is the fact that members put the concerns of the collective ahead of their own personal situations. Even though an article in the Agreement may not apply to a member (at that particular time or circumstance), the member is part of the collective and therefore stands by the Agreement. Even though a member may believe that ignoring an article might be convenient, the member adheres to the Agreement knowing that the interests of the collective far outweigh personal convenience. Individual members cannot “cherry pick” articles in the Agreement that they like and ignore other articles for, by doing so, a teacher is undermining the entire membership. A chain is indeed only as strong as the weakest link!

On a day to day basis, teachers can demonstrate commitment to the collective by ensuring that the articles of the Collective Agreement are honoured. Teacher rights and working conditions must be protected and it is the responsibility of every member to safeguard these rights and conditions!

The ramifications of ignoring articles in the collective agreement are dire! If teachers ignore a negotiated benefit it may establish a precedent that could eventually undermine the benefit. At every opportunity, members must demonstrate a commitment to their colleagues by honouring the collective and the collective agreement.



Thank you to St. Anne's Rd. and Bishop Grandin for  
supplying the refreshments for the Maternity Leave Seminar on October 28.

# FAQ's

***My online funding history says I only have \$400.00 dollars to spend this year. Is this right?***

No. The system software still reflects past policy in some instances. Regardless, everyone began this year with at least \$800.00. If your funding history reads \$400.00 it will be updated during the processing of your application.

***Where do I send my receipts after I've attended a PD activity?***

They can be forwarded to the "PPDF Secretary" (Alanna Richmond) at the board office.

***What happens when my application is denied?***

Members can always appeal the decision of the PPDF Committee. This means that the Appeals Committee will review your application and affirm or reverse the previous decision based on additional information and/or the principles embedded in the guidelines.

***Who can I contact if I have questions about my PPDF?***

Questions about the application process can be answered by Bob Gaudes at the LRTA offices (PM) at 929-5782. Questions about receipts or the status of a reimbursement can be answered by Alanna Richmond at the board office at 257-7827 (ext. 258).

## Manitoba Teachers' Society Young Humanitarian Awards

The Young Humanitarian Awards recognize students, both as individuals or groups, who demonstrate compassion, self-sacrifice, leadership, creativity – and who are involved in positive activities for their classmates, schools, communities or charitable organizations. All public school students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 are eligible.



Applications for the award will be in the schools by December. The awards will be presented at a special ceremony at the Manitoba Theatre for Young People on Monday, March 22, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

**This year the deadline for nominations will be 4:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 12, 2010.**

Please take a few moments to talk with your colleagues about the award. Teachers are encouraged to nominate worthy students. Let's celebrate the humanitarian achievements of Manitoba's students.



## Prescription Dispensing Fees

The **Extended Health Plan** caps dispensing fees at \$6.00. The average dispensing fee in Winnipeg is currently \$10.41. What follows are the dispensing fees charged by local pharmacists.

Costco	\$4.46	London Drugs	\$7.93
Walmart	\$8.59	Sobey's	\$8.76
Superstore	\$9.44	Safeway	\$9.52
Zellers	\$9.52	Pharm X	\$10.92
Pharmasave	\$11.48	Independents	\$11.52
Shoppers Drug Mart	\$ 11.62	Pharmaplus	\$11.73



### E-Service

**Have you signed up for “e-Service”?** Becoming an e-Service customer allows plan members to access personal information regarding plan coverage and refunds. Direct deposit is only available to e-Service participants.

### Blue Cross Advantage

Effective January 1, 2009 plan members will enjoy the **Blue Cross Advantage**. **This free service is available to plan members.** Various vision and medical equipment providers will give discounts of up to 30% when your Blue Cross Blue net card is shown. Check out some of the savings at

[www.blueadvantage.ca](http://www.blueadvantage.ca).

## Manitoba Teachers' Society Workshops for 2009-2010

### Social Exclusion, Poverty and the Determinants of Learning

January 18, 2010

### Appropriate Education Programming

January 21-22, 2010

Administrators' Certificate - Management and Special Education Certificate

### The 3Rs of a Successful School Counselling Program - Part I

February 18-19, 2010

School Counsellors' Certificate

### The Seven Sacred Teachings: Aboriginal Ways of Knowing - Part II

March 4-5, 2010

Administrators' Certificate - Personnel

### Strategies for Exceptional Teachers

March 19, 2010

### Making it Work! Services for English as an Additional Language (EAL) Students in Manitoba Schools - Part II

April 29-30, 2010

Administrators' Certificate - Instruction and Special Education Certificate



## ShoutOut Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Transphobia and Hereosexism



Sometime this year, Manitoba schools will receive the newest province-funded resource publication, *ShoutOut Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Transphobia and Hereosexism*. The 44-page, full-colour pocket-sized booklet was created by the Rainbow Resource Center and aims to examine the impact of the phobias and to provide context as to why youth may be vulnerable to coping strategies such as alcohol and drug use.

“*ShoutOut* aims to capture what youth currently face,” says Reece Lagartera, Education and Resource Development Coordinator at the Rainbow Resource Center. “We wanted to facilitate discussion on how homophobia does impact health and wellness.”

The booklet is the second of its kind; a federal government version was released 10 years ago, but Lagartera says there has been a definite need for an up-to-date and positive resource that celebrates people’s identities. *ShoutOut* addresses issues such as disclosing your identity; decision making around sexual behaviour; issues impacting self-esteem; and how to see a queer positive health provider.

As well as including a list of local and national resource supports, “...all the interviews, stories and artwork are from local artists and youth. It’s really true to life. We wanted to capture youth’s experiences as a gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and two-spirit.” Lagartera says the book can be a useful read for anyone, regardless of their sexuality. “*ShoutOut* shares our culture. At the same time the booklet provides hope affirmation and useful strategies for stress management.”

The Rainbow Resource Center initially aimed to print 5,000 copies of the book but Lagartera says the demand has surpassed anything they expected and agencies in and outside of Manitoba have been ordering the booklet.

## **DEBOUT!**

***Be proud, stand tall***

**Guide National D’animation Culturelle**



Building on the success of the first edition with all teachers who work in French in Canada, the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) is proud to launch the second edition of *Debout!* (translation: Be proud, stand tall), a national cultural activities handbook which celebrates the Francophone culture in minority settings.

“With its revised content, user-friendly format and specific Internet links, *Debout! 2<sup>e</sup> édition* will prove to be an invaluable tool for teachers to enhance students’ appreciation of the Francophone culture,” says CTF President Mary-Lou Donnelly.

“*DEBOUT! 2<sup>e</sup> édition* sparks ideas, provides a wealth of resources in support of proposed activities and features a calendar of events that take place in French. This resource is intended for educators in French-language schools as well as teachers of French as a second language who wish to instill cultural values in their students.

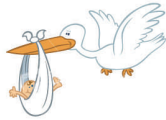
“The second edition is complemented by a Web site which, on the one hand, provides access to the entire content of *Debout!* and, on the other, will facilitate the continuous updating of proposed activities and resources,” adds Mary-Lou Donnelly.

# Dates to Remember



March 12 - 14, 2010	LRTA Ski Trip
March 19, 2010	"Rock On" Social
March 19 - 21 , 2010	MTS Bonspiel hosted by LRTA
April 21, 2010	LRTA Annual General Assembly
April 29, 2010	LRTA Appreciation Dinner
May 26-29, 2010	MTS AGM
June 17, 2010	LRTA Retirement Reception

## Birth Announcements



### Darwin School

Jennifer Kennedy and her husband, Christian welcomed their first child on October 7th. William (Liam) Alexander weighed in at 6 lbs 13 oz.

### Victor Mager School

Kelly Still (Stephens) and Jared Still had a baby girl on Saturday, October 24th. Her name is Lyla Jeannette-Mae Still.

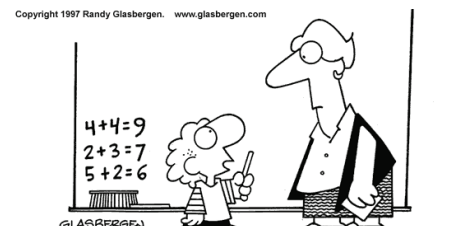
Mike and Michelle Moyes welcomed Nyah Hope Moyes on Saturday Morning. Nyah weighed 8 lbs and just under 21 inches. Both baby and mom are doing well.



"I TURNED IN MY HOMEWORK TWO DAYS LATE, BUT NORMALLY IT'S FOUR DAYS LATE, SO TECHNICALLY IT'S EARLY!"



"I used a \$3,000 computer, a \$1200 laser printer and a \$300 word-processing program—and I still got a D on my term paper!"



"My generation will be running the world soon. If we say  $4+4=9$  then that's the way it's going to be!"

## Taking Care of Teachers

### ABC's for a low-stress/ well-balanced school year!



- A - Attitude**—Nothing beats a positive attitude. If you think you'll have a great year, you will.
- B - Balance**—Equal parts of work and play make for a better day.
- C - Calm**—Count to ten before you act or speak. Take a low deep breath at the first sign of tension.
- D - Discipline**—Enforcing discipline doesn't mean you're a toughie. It means you care about kids.
- E - Escape**—Take a five minute "mental escape" to an exotic place.
- F - Flexibility**—Plan, but don't be so rigid that you can't change things if circumstances dictate.
- G - Grow**—Do something to expand your mind or tone your body.
- H - Humor**—Put something that makes you smile in your plan book or top desk drawer.
- I - Inoculate**—Protect yourself from "stress carriers" - people who gossip breed negativity.
- J - Joy**—Keep a journal by recording at least one good thing that happens every day.
- K - Knowledge**—Know yourself, the kids you teach ,and, most of all, your stress triggers.
- L - Listen**—Listen to yourself, to your body and to others.
- M - Meditate**—Take a few minutes each day for quiet reflection.
- N - Neutralize**—If you can't change the situation, change how you view or respond to it.
- O - Organize**—Use a planning calendar to organize your activities.
- P - Plan**—Have a backup plan for when , or if, your primary plan doesn't work.
- Q - Question**— If you're not sure about school rules, procedures, or practices, ask someone who is.
- R - Read**—Take time to read for pleasure.
- S - Socialize**—All work and no play makes for a dull day.
- T - Time**—Make the most of the time you have. Ask colleagues to share time-saving tips.
- U - Utilize**—Use colleagues for reflection and support.
- V - Voice**—Express your opinions. Pent-up thoughts and emotions create stress.
- W - Walk**—Get up and move. Walk around the playground or the building. Organize a walkers' club.
- X - Exercise**—Build in at least five minutes of exercise a day. Use stairs whenever possible.
- Y - Yoga**—Learn to practice relaxation techniques.
- Z - ZZZ's**—Get plenty of rest. Know how much sleep your body needs and give it that much.

