



President Frank Restall

REFLECTIONS-Objects in the Mirror Are Closer Than They Appear

As the holiday season has passed and the start of a new calendar year has just occurred, it is commonplace for people to reflect upon the achievements of the past year as they prepare to embark upon the challenges of new one. This is a very important practice for teachers. Given the nature of the invaluable work teachers do, I believe that, upon reflection of the closing year, all members are amazed by the vast number of successes they achieved, the volume of events and activities they were connected to and the incalculable number of occasions where they have positively influenced the lives of young people. On a larger scale, this reflective practice is very important for your Society and your local Association as well.

For the Manitoba Teachers' Society, the year 2016 witnessed achievements by the Society that reverberated both provincially and for individual members.

In January, 2016, the Manitoba government announced a change that now permits members to get full credit for seniority and salary when they take maternity and parental leaves. The closing of the "Mommy Gap" was the result of strong advocacy by your Society for the last number of years. By closing the "Mommy Gap", the Society has ensured that teachers will no longer be penalized in pay and pension benefits to have children.

In April, 2016, the Manitoba Teachers' Society ensured that the concerns of teachers were front and centre in the provincial election campaign. "Teachers know our kids need more support" was a refrain that was shared with the public and with political parties through advertisements from the Society and local associations.

A virtual town-hall for members was hosted by MTS prior to the election and proved to be informative and enlightening for teachers. More importantly, however, the actions of the Society, local associations and individual teachers during the campaign cemented the position of the Society as being the vanguard of public education in Manitoba with the electorate.

The 97th MTS Annual General Meeting witnessed resolutions being brought forward to guide the Society in future endeavours. Of particular note was a resolution that would discourage MTS members from travelling to Mississippi or North Carolina for PD opportunities because those states have legislation that legalize discrimination. This resolution was carried unanimously by the delegates at the MTS AGM. Further to this action for equality, was the participation of hundreds of teachers in Pride Parades and other activities throughout the province over the summer. These examples underscore the belief of teachers that members embrace differences and that all people have the right to the same protections, liberties and rights.

In the autumn, MTS and individual teachers provided visible and vocal support to our educational colleagues at the University of Manitoba. The UMFA strike was the culmination of a breakdown in negotiations with the university's administration. As UMFA members took to the picket lines, MTS members walked with them. As MTS is the vanguard of public education in Manitoba, supporting UMFA members in their struggle was both natural, necessary, and hopefully, helped UMFA in reaching a deal.

More recently MTS was active in interpreting and contextualizing the PISA results from Paris based OECD. By interpreting the results, both the Minister of Education and the President of the Society were able to accurately focus the results as a reflection of the level of poverty in our province. In addition, both the Minister, Ian Wishart, and President, Norm Gould, agree that poverty must be addressed to improve outcomes in Manitoba schools. For MTS members who work in environments impacted by poverty every day, the connection between poverty and educational success cannot be overstated.

For the Louis Riel Teachers' Association, 2016 was a very busy year that posed many challenges but was marked by local achievements.



The piloting of the Special Needs Initiative in eight schools began and the equal partnership between the Association, Division and Society has been key to the implementation and the success of the initiative. This initiative and partnership will continue next year in the voluntary implementation stage.

The LRTA Council and Executive have a full complement of members representing and working on behalf of colleagues in all worksites. In addition to Council and Executive, LRTA members have volunteered their time to serve on our many committees. The strength of our Association has always been the active involvement of these types of members.

LRTA is proud to be a leader at the provincial level and many LRTA members serve on a variety of MTS Standing Committees, elected and appointed positions. At the MTS AGM, LRTA delegates are active participants and mentors.

The Association was also pleased last year to collaborate with the Division to clarify the application of Discretionary Days and Team Leader responsibilities on behalf of members. Members now have greater understanding as to the process and the availability of those days and responsibilities. As well, the lines of communication with the Division are always open and the Association appreciates the opportunity to exchange ideas, information and to advocate on behalf of members.

The primary responsibility of the Louis Riel Teachers' Association will always be to serve members. Our message to "call us first" has certainly been well received by teachers in Louis Riel. Your Association is here to serve you, support you and to advocate on your behalf.

2016 was a very busy year marked with many challenges, achievements and successes.

Looking to the future, 2017 will bring a new share of challenges; some expected and others not. As the New Year dawns, members need not make a resolution but rather, a commitment.

Become more active in your local Association and your provincial Society. Ensure that you are informed of issues that may impact your teaching, your class or your health. Your Society and Association need you to be participant and a supporter. No longer can Society/Association business be left to others to deal with. Every member has a responsibility to be actively engaged in your Society's/Association's business.

How can you become actively engaged in this important work? Your level of engagement will vary dependent upon circumstances. However, all members can be engaged by simply bookmarking the MTS and your local association websites and visiting them frequently. All members should read local association newsletters and the Manitoba Teacher. **All members should be followers on twitter/Facebook of MTS and your local association. All members must be registered with MTS on "My Profile". All members must complete the MTS Workload Survey next month.** In addition, where applicable, all members must attend the general meeting of your Association. Spread out over the year, these actions would amount to a few minutes per week per member. However, these few minutes per member would provide the collective with a well informed and well connected membership. The whole would indeed be "greater than the sum of its parts".

The power of collective action brings about positive change and the 15 000 members need to be involved in order that our voice is strong, that our voice resonates and that our voice is heard. We have a great responsibility as the vanguard of public education and each of us must fulfill that responsibility.

You have read just a bit of what your Society and Association have done for you last year. For 2017, what are you going to do for your Society and Association?

Take care of yourself and take care of each other.

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Professional Development—MTS

January 23 and
24, 2017

9 am—3:30 pm
McMaster House
91 Harcourt

Teacher Evaluation: From Paperwork to Peoplework

Prerequisite:
Supervision of Staff: A Toolbox for Principals

Enhancing knowledge and skills of active and aspiring principals for the evaluation of teachers.

Topics: legislative responsibilities; divisional policy and protocols; documentation of professional behaviours in formative notes; guidelines for summative reports; and effective plans of assistance.

Fee: Member \$150; Non-Member \$180

Linda Thorlakson is a Staff Officer in the Professional and French Language Services Department at The Manitoba Teachers' Society, with leadership experience at the school, divisional and provincial levels. She has also served as classroom teacher, resource teacher and school counselor. She has extensive background in formative assessment, cognitive coaching, and group facilitation.

Dr. Danielle Fullan Kolton is a licensed Crucial Conversations facilitator and Staff Officer in the Professional and French Language Services Department at The Manitoba Teachers' Society. Her work focuses on professional learning design and delivery as well as support to and connectivity with members. She has worked as a K-12 teacher, principal, educational consultant, and university instructor.

February 13 & 14,
2017

9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
McMaster House
91 Harcourt

Learning-Focused Relationships: Consulting, Collaborating and Coaching for Growth and Change

Exploring essential concepts, templates, and mediational tools for developing effective, learning-focused relationships between growth-oriented educators. Discover practical tools and strategies with high applicability for mentors, content coaches, and instructional supervisors.

Topics: establishing learning-focused relationships; navigating a continuum of interaction; inviting thinking; applying templates for learning-focused conversations; and providing feedback.

Fee: Member \$150; Non-Member \$180

Dr. Laura Lipton is an international consultant whose writing, research and seminars focus on building professional and organizational capacities for enhanced learning. She offers training in data-driven dialogue, group development, action research, and learning-focused collaborations. Her books include *Mentoring Matters*, *Pathways to Understanding*, *Learning Focused Supervision*, and *Leading Groups*.

February 27 & 28,
2017

9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
McMaster House
91 Harcourt

Developing and Managing Your School Guidance and Counselling Program

Providing school counsellors and aspiring school counsellors the tools needed to plan, design, and effectively implement comprehensive and developmentally-sound counselling programs.

Topics: program design; understanding roles and responsibilities; challenges/ dilemmas; crisis intervention; supporting newcomers; and refugee students.

Fee: Member \$150; Non-Member \$180

Seijiro Tsuchi is a high school counsellor in the Winnipeg School Division and has been a Certified Canadian Counsellor (CCC) since 2012. He received his PBDE and M.Ed in Counselling Psychology from the University of Manitoba. Seijiro also works as a contract therapist with Jewish Child and Family Services of Winnipeg and has extensive knowledge and experience in crisis counseling, suicide/self-harm, diversity issues, grief and loss, family therapy, and mindfulness based approaches. Anna-Maria Coniglio has been a counsellor for several years working on the Crisis, Suicide and Sexual Assault Lines. She has her Masters degree in Counselling and has worked in many areas including addictions, trauma, grief/loss, mental health and mindfulness working with children, adults and families. She is a teacher and guidance counselor in the St. James Assiniboia School Division.



The
Manitoba
Teachers'
Society

**MARCH
9 & 10, 2017**

9AM - 4PM

**MTS McMASTER HOUSE
(AUDITORIUM)**

FEE:

MEMBER \$150

NON-MEMBER \$180

Introducing educators to historical and contemporary understandings of colonization, decolonization and anti-oppressive education and how these concepts can lead to addressing reconciliation.

TOPICS:

Colonization; decolonization, anti-oppressive education; meritocracy; relationality and relational accountability; TRC Calls to Action; Reconciliation, including critical analysis of the concept of reconciliation.

PRESENTERS:

Dr. Alex Wilson is Swampy Cree from the Opaskwayak Cree Nation. She is an Associate Professor and the Academic Director of the Aboriginal Education Research Centre at the University of Saskatchewan. Her scholarship has greatly contributed to building and sharing knowledge about two-spirit identity, history, and teachings; Indigenous research methodologies; anti-oppressive education; and the prevention of violence in the lives of indigenous peoples. As a community activist and Idle No More organizer, her work also focuses on interventions that prevent the destruction of land, water and bodies.

Dr. Verna St. Denis is Professor of Education at the University of Saskatchewan where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in social justice education in the Department of Educational Foundations. Dr. St. Denis is a leading scholar in the field of anti-racist and anti-colonial education and has received national recognition for her outstanding groundbreaking work.

DECOLONIZING EDUCATION AS AN ACT OF RECONCILIATION

PPDF Travel Time: How to Avoid Costly Errors to You

Vice President Professional Development
Marcela Cabezas

The PPDF Committee is tasked with carefully scrutinizing all applications. One of the biggest challenges faced by the Committee is the allocation of travel time to members.

Every application is unique and as such the Committee works hard to ascertain that members' requests fall onside with what is described within the PPDF Guidelines.

The term "Travel Time" is used quite intentionally within the PPDF Guidelines. Sometimes members incorrectly perceive that "Travel Days" (full work days) as opposed to "Travel Time" are accorded to them to get to and from their destination. "Travel days" do not exist.

The understanding is as is stated in PPDF Guideline V.A.1: "Travel time may be permitted, pending the travel distance and/or flight availability, to a maximum of one (1) day immediately prior to and one (1) day immediately after a conference; travel time may require no time absent from work, a half day, or a maximum of one full day. Travel time is to be planned for in a fiscally responsible and ethical manner."

For example, when traveling to destinations where a direct flight is readily available from the Winnipeg Airport, efforts should be made to book flights in such a way that the least amount of time away from work is required.

An additional travel time challenge comes into play when members attempt to link PPDF outings with Discretionary Days. Members should bear in mind that they are *requesting* a Discretionary Day. In addition, the Division also has the right to turn down requests for Discretionary Days when linked to PPDF Applications when the number of days away from work equals five or more.

Another travel time challenge comes into play when members choose to travel on a weekend prior to or after the PD event instead of on the day of travel spelled out in the aforementioned Guideline. PPDF strongly

discourages members from purchasing flights before their applications are approved because all travel information provided to us at the time of application is purely speculative.

In order to err on the side of caution, the PPDF Committee may accord members a full day of travel time at the time of approval. However, if one chooses to travel on the weekend pre or post event, be advised that the Division is in the practice of transposing one's flight time to the designated travel date (which is the day immediately prior to or immediately after a conference and as such, travel time may be lost.)

For example, an individual who books an evening flight on a Saturday prior to an event that starts on a Tuesday actually requires a Discretionary Day on the Monday as the transposing of their flight time to the Monday would not have necessitated time away from work. This would be akin to an absence without leave which may end up costing the member a day of pay.

Another costly mistake can occur when members book return flights on the evening prior to their designated travel day and fail to report to work the next day. Remember, that while travel time may have been accorded to you by the PPDF Committee at the time of approval, it was done so according to the Guidelines. If the Division is able to establish that a member was able to report to work but failed to do so, regardless of the travel time originally accorded by PPDF, members can be charged a day of leave without pay after the fact.

If your finalized travel plans differ in any way from what you presented in your approved application, it is imperative that you contact the PPDF Chairperson to ensure that your application remains onside of the Guidelines so that you do not incur increased costs or a deduction in salary.

Please do not hesitate to contact me regarding any and all PPDF related questions by e-mail at pdlrta@shaw.ca or by calling the LRTA Office at 204-929-5782.

WELCOM Welcomes Your Input

An exciting initiative was launched at The Manitoba Teachers' Society Annual General Meeting in May as the Women in Education Leadership Commission (WELCOM) was established to examine the fact that women are under-represented in education leadership roles in our schools, our union and in the community. In Manitoba, roughly seventy percent of teachers are female, yet that number is not reflected in the percentage of women in leadership roles.

WELCOM is an arms-length body distinct and separate from the MTS Provincial Executive whose mandate is to seek input from women educators across Manitoba and develop recommendations aimed to enhance the participation of women in all aspects of educational leadership.

The Commission is composed of a Chairperson (Carmen Rohne of the Lord Selkirk Teachers' Association) and two Commissioners (Marcela Cabezas of the Louis Riel Teachers' Association and Jennifer Schlag of the River East Transcona Teachers' Association).

The coming months will be busy as the Commission will be reaching out for input from female MTS members in a variety of ways including a Telephone Townhall tentatively scheduled for late-February and a series of in-person focus groups in communities all across Manitoba.

The Commission will provide safe and secure opportunities for women members of the Society to discuss their experiences, aspirations, successes and barriers to assuming and pursuing leadership roles in their schools, school divisions, local associations and MTS and to promote awareness about the roles of women within educational settings.



WELCOM looks forward to hearing from you.

Dates for the Telephone Townhall and focus groups will be announced soon.

In the meantime, for general enquiries or to get in touch with one of the Commissioners, please send an email to WELCommission@gmail.com

Let Us Eat Cake

Vice President Collective Bargaining
Bernard Mazerolle

Let them eat Cake (Qu'ils mangent de la brioche)"

Famous words, supposedly spoken by Marie Antoinette on the eve of the French Revolution but more likely attributed to Jean Jacques Rousseau some years later, speaks to the obtuseness of the ruling class of the day.

But if one is to eat cake, one would assume that that one has the time and space in order to sit down quietly, or with friends, and enjoy the treat. For why would we eat cake if not to enjoy it?

Yet, until a duty free lunch was negotiated through arbitration by the Transcona Springfield Teachers' Association in 1989, no teachers in this province could enjoy the opportunity that so many took for granted: a guaranteed period of time in which teachers could remove themselves from their busy schedule and just rest, relax, recharge and eat a meal. Our legacy Associations soon followed suit: St Vital Teachers' Association in 1992 and St Boniface Teachers' Association in 1994.

The current LRTA/LRSD collective agreement states:

"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".

In practice what does this mean? Essentially, the spirit of the clause is that teachers are to have a dedicated mealtime period free of scheduled meetings or supervisory duties. Members are not required to participate in meetings, tutor students, or supervise extra-curricular events. What is important to uphold is that in no way members should be coerced to forsake their lunchtime period. Similarly, there are to be no retribution or consequences should a member choose to prevail themselves of their duty free lunch.

A truism in collective bargaining is that what was won yesterday will be fought for again tomorrow. Duty free lunch has been in place in our Division for close to a

quarter century and the collective memory is fading as to how it used to be. According to the Manitoba Teachers' Society, seventy percent of all Manitoba Teachers have been hired since 1999. So it becomes imperative upon us to remind ourselves that what we seem to take for granted was in fact negotiated over a long period of time and at great cost. In order to secure duty free lunch for our members, other demands and concerns had to be put aside. Would it not be a waste if we were to see our privilege of a duty free lunch eroded by our own neglect and indifference?

As members, we all bear the responsibility of preserving what has been gained through collective bargaining. The best means at our disposal in maintaining the integrity and continued application of the duty free meal clause is to prevail ourselves of that time allotted to us, by being vigilant and vocal when professional duties encroaches upon our mealtime and, more importantly, by making time to see to our own well being and that of others. For, in its essence, the duty free mealtime clause is one that addresses the well being of our members.



So please, for yourselves and for your fellow members, make a point of taking that time. You can even have a piece of cake and eat it too.

Our (HUMAN RIGHTS) Journey

EDUCATING
FOR ACTION



MTS PD Opportunity
April 20 & 21 2017 Winnipeg, MB
For more info www.mbteach.org

Reminder:

If you have recently changed your name, please contact the LRTA office at (204)929-5782 or seclrta@shaw.ca and have your file updated.

Contact Us

LRTA office
204- 929-5782

President
Frank Restall
preslrta@shaw.ca

Collective Bargaining
Bernard Mazerolle
cblrta@shaw.ca

Professional Development
Marcela Cabezas
pdlrta@shaw.ca

All matters will be dealt with in confidence.

Manitoba Teachers' Society
Can request Staff Officer assistance
204-888-7961

Calendar of Events



LRTA Calendar 2016 – 2017

September

Tuesday, 6 th	Opening Day
Wednesday, 14 th	LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 21 st	LRTA Council Meeting
Wednesday, 28 th	LRTA New Member Celebration
Friday, 30 th	Terry Fox Community Event

October

Friday, 7 th am	LRTA Executive Retreat
Friday, 7 th pm	New Council Rep Orientation
Wednesday, 19 th	LRTA Council Meeting
Friday, 21 st	SAGE
Wednesday, 26 th	Maternity/Parental Leave Seminar

November

Wednesday, 2 nd	LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 9 th	Early Mid-Career Pension Seminar
Wednesday, 16 th	LRTA Council Meeting

December

Wednesday, 7 th	LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 21 st	LRTA Council Meeting
Friday, 23 rd through	
Friday, Jan. 6 th	Winter Break

January

Wednesday, 11 th	LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 18 th	LRTA Council Meeting
Wednesday, 25 th	LRTA Benefits Seminar

February

Wednesday, 1 st	LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 8 th	Pre-Retirement Seminar – ATC
Wednesday, 15 th	LRTA Council Meeting

March

Monday, Feb 27 th through	
Friday, March 3 rd	Operation Donation
Wednesday, 1 st	LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 15 th	LRTA Council Meeting
Monday, 27 th through	
Friday, March 31 st	Spring Break

April

Wednesday, 5 th	LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 12 th	LRTA Council Meeting
Thursday, 13 th	Maternity/Parental Leave Seminar
Wednesday, 19 th	LRTA Annual General Assembly – ATC
Thursday, 27 th	LRTA Appreciation Dinner

May

Wednesday, 3 rd	LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 10 th	LRTA AGM Binder Meeting
Wednesday, 17 th	LRTA Council Meeting
Wednesday, 24 th through	
Saturday, 27 th	MTS AGM

June

Wednesday, 7 th	LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 14 th	LRTA Retirement Reception
Wednesday, 21 st	LRTA Council Meeting

Subject to change.