

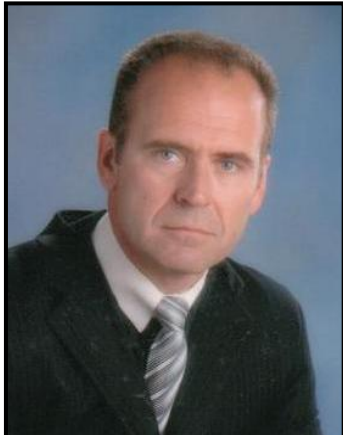


RIELITYCHECK

A publication of the Louis Riel Teacher's Association (www.lrta.ca)

OCTOBER 2013

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE President – Frank Restall

THE GATHERING STORM

On October 4, 2013, members of the LRTA Executive attended its annual retreat. **The topic of this year's retreat was focused on the Global Attack on Unions.** Norm Gould, Vice-president of the Manitoba Teachers' Society, and Kevin Rebeck, President of the Manitoba Federation of Labour, provided very informative sessions about this concerted attack upon teachers and Labour in general. While the sessions were indeed informative, they also provided possible insights for the future of Manitoba's teachers and these insights are alarming.

At Executive and Council Meetings, as well as during school visitations and individual conversations with members, I have spoken about Manitoba being an "island" amidst the attacks on unions to the east, west and south of us. Even though Manitoba has not felt the full force of these attacks, one can easily identify the gathering storm on the horizon.

In the United States, attacks on teacher unions have been very deliberate and very public. **Teaching positions have been eliminated, teacher unions have been directly attacked under the guise of "Right to Work" legislation** and there has been strong and vocal encouragement to move to a school selection "voucher system" for students.

In Canada, we have witnessed an attack on labour rights that has directly impacted the individuals for whom those rights were established to protect. This is very evident when examining the impact on teachers. To name a few, **teachers in other provinces have endured wage freezes, the elimination of sick leave entitlements and the imposition of Collective Agreements that were not freely negotiated.** As well, merit pay, standards testing and Charter Schools have reared their heads once again and are topics that governments in other provinces are considering. For many LRTA members, these actions and topics are very reminiscent of the 1990's in Manitoba.

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President's message:

As the “attack on unions”

storm continues to gain strength in other jurisdictions, teachers in Manitoba must prepare to defend their rights and battle some all too familiar foes.

Dr. Sybil Shack, a former Society President once said, “A battle never stays won. Rights and freedoms have to be constantly defended ... (and) won repeatedly. Issues once resolved have an ugly habit of reappearing as if they had never been considered before.”

The Constitution of the LRTA states that an objective of the Association is “to exercise all powers as may be within its competence in order to achieve and protect terms and conditions of employment...” Members’ rights and working conditions must be protected and it is the responsibility of every member to safeguard these rights and conditions especially considering the darkening skies.



All members must adhere to the provisions of the Collective Agreement (see the MTS Code of Professional Practice, # 9, later in this issue). The gains that have been made in benefits and working conditions can be directly attributed to the membership standing together.

These gains can only be maintained if we continue to work as a collective, bargain as a collective and support each other within the collective. What makes the concept of a collective truly admirable is the fact that members put the concerns of the



Association ahead of their own personal interests. Even though a member may believe that ignoring an article or its interpretation 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 interpretations and other articles for, by doing so, a member is undermining all members within the collective. The attack on teachers and education is expected to come from outside, not from within.



The following two

passages highlight common areas where LRTA members can support one another and protect the rights that have been negotiated for the betterment of all.

One specific area in which members can support the collective is the process of applying for Discretionary Leave (Article 6.10).

Discretionary Leave does not require a school Principal’s permission. This Leave is used to attend to personal business. No explanation of that business or conversation about the Leave’s purpose should occur. While an H.R. form must be filled out in its entirety, approval for Discretionary Leave is granted by the Superintendent.

Secondly, members can demonstrate their support for the collective by following the procedures when applying for PPDF activities. When applying for PPDF activities, a LRTA member does not need his/her school Principal’s permission.

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President's message:

On a day to day basis,

LRTA members can

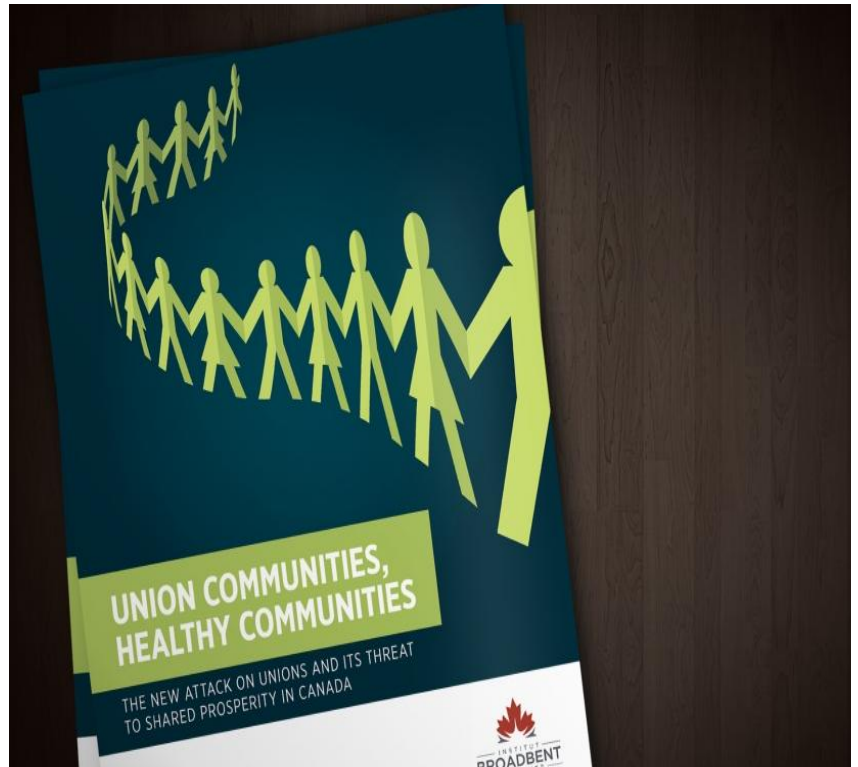
demonstrate commitment to the collective by ensuring that all articles and interpretations of the Collective Agreement are honoured. If greater information or clarity is required, please do not hesitate to contact the LRTA office. If you are aware of a violation of the Collective Agreement, contact the Association office immediately. It is each member's right to contact the LRTA office at any time. Breaches of the Collective Agreement and violations of the Code of Professional Practice will be dealt with by the Association/Society.

As well, all LRTA

members should have

Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 booked into their calendars. This is the day of the LRTA Annual General Assembly and an opportunity for all members to send a message about the future in a very demonstrative manner. Your attendance at this Assembly is always important, but this year, as the storm clouds build, it is a necessity and a professional responsibility.

“The greater the struggle, the more glorious the triumph”!



In closing, as an Association and as a Society, in the face of the gathering storm, we shall be successful if we stand together, support one another and, as the vanguards of public education, oppose those who would undermine it. “The greater the struggle, the more glorious the triumph”!

As we head toward the end of October, be sure to take care of yourself and to take care of each other.

Frank Restall

President, Louis Riel Teachers' Association

Important Out-of-Town PPDF Information

VP Development - Robert Gaudes

In preparation for an out-of-town PD event

it is strongly advised that you read the information noted below prior to travelling. These documents identify important funding exceptions to PPDF, explain its reimbursement process, and help you make the most of this invaluable resource.



Start by reviewing the “Expenditure Criteria” section of the **PPDF Guidelines** (Section V: page 6-7) to ascertain what expenses are, and are not, reimbursable (and, if reimbursable, to what amount). There is also important information pertaining to car rentals, baggage charges, and other additional costs, detailed in the “**Out-of-Town Reimbursement Form.**” This form also explains how to submit

your receipts correctly – especially in shared cost situations.

Also, before submitting your receipts for reimbursement you must first complete a “**PD Report Form.**” This is done by going online to the LRSD staff page “Helpful Links,” selecting the “PPDF” link, and clicking on “My Applications.” Under the heading “Attended Events” you will find a “PD Report Form” link for every PD event you’ve attended. Note that this link will not open before the end date on your PPDF application has passed.

Finally, retain copies of the documentation you send to the board office. Your original documentation is addressed to the “PPDF Secretary” and can be sent via the pony. This must be received by the board office within twenty days of the end date on your PPDF application. Please review the “Funding Reimbursement” section of the **PPDF Guidelines** (Section III: B: page 5) to ensure a timely reimbursement of your travel expenses.



Please note that before submitting a PPDF application a teacher is required to have a conversation with one’s administration notifying him/her of his/her intent to attend a PD event. The act of notification is a professional courtesy and does not imply that permission is being sought to attend. Approval to attend a PD event is granted by the PPDF Committee. All members must respect both the spirit and intent of the PPDF Guidelines.



Thank you to our Terry Fox Supporters - 2013!

On the evening of September 27th,

people gathered at Samuel Burland School to participate in the 30th annual Louis Riel Teachers' Association Terry Fox Torchlight Run.

Thank you to committee members Joe Laxdal, Steven Howes, Bob Gaudes, Karen Ross, Scott Wood, Cindy Ediger, Dallas Henson and Catherine Strifling. By all accounts the Division-wide Torchlight relay held during the school day was also a great success.

Thank you to the extraordinary efforts of this year's Torchlight School Representatives who gave so generously of their time in coordinating the many participants running and enthusiastically receiving the runners at each of the worksites.

The LRTA is proud to host and plan the Torchlight Run.

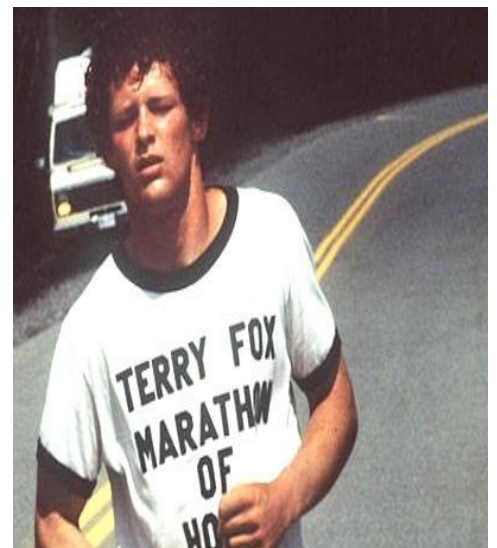
decades of support from the community and the generous donations of the Torchlight Run's supporters that ensure its success year after year.

The LRTA would like to recognize and thank the following supporters of the 2013 Terry Fox Torchlight Run:

- Busker - Dane Bjornson
- Glenlawn Co-op Education Students
- Face Painters
- First Student Bus Drivers
- Rob Monson and the Glenlawn Collegiate Senior Jazz Ensemble
- Louis Riel School Board
- Louis Riel School Division Bus Drivers
- Samuel Burland Administration
- LRSD Non-teaching Employees

- Terry Fox Foundation
- Jennifer Osborne: Crolly/Victor Mager Drummers
- Jenn Radomsky: Aerobics Instructor
- Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service

"Even if I don't finish, we need others to continue. Its got to keep going without me"
Terry Fox



ARTICLE 6.10 - DISCRETIONARY LEAVE (LRSD/LRTA Collective Agreement)

Collective Bargaining – James Bedford

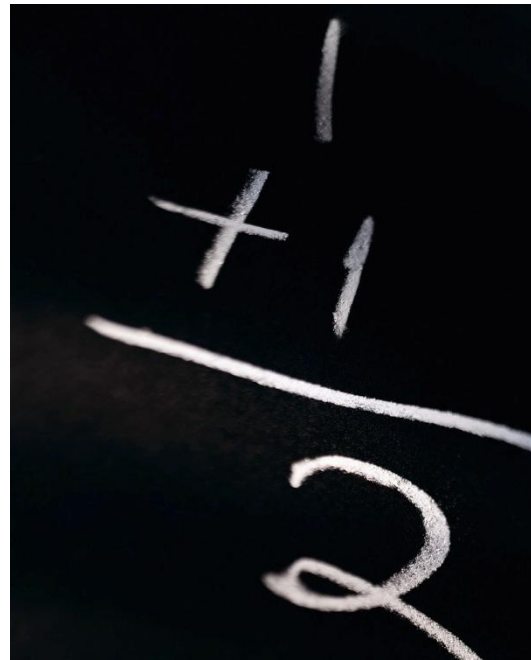
The LRTA Office has been

receiving calls regarding Discretionary Leave. This Leave provides up to two (2) days per school year for a member to attend to personal business. The first day of the Leave is at no cost to the member. The second day of the Leave is at cost of substitute. Discretionary Leave is not to be used to extend winter holidays, spring break or summer vacation. Leave may occur in increments of half-days.



To apply for Discretionary

Leave, a member must complete an HR Form including the booking of a substitute. The reason for Discretionary Leave is always "to attend to personal business." The HR Form must be signed by the school administrator before it can be submitted to the Superintendent of Schools. Members must submit their request for Discretionary Leave a minimum of five (5) working days before the date of the desired leave to the Superintendent of Schools. Timelines are important, so make the application well in advance of the intended Leave.



Discretionary Leave does not

require the permission of the school administrator as the Collective Agreement language clearly states that the request be sent to the Superintendent of Schools. Therefore, only the Superintendent of Schools can deny a request. Remember that the HR Form must be filled out in its entirety. If you have any questions please call us at the LRTA Office (204-929-LRTA).



Interested members in joining an ESJ committee please come and join us on **Wednesday, October 23rd** at 4:15 pm in the Collège Jeanne-Sauvé library. Supper is served. Please RSVP to Cheryl.bazin@lrsd.net by Tuesday October 22nd if you plan on attending.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CELEBRATIONS!

Frontenac School would like to congratulate Alison Ward and Rob Wood on their wedding that happened over the summer as well as Corinna Muzyka and Travis Fulton on their wedding that happened in the spring.

Do you have any special announcements to share? Know of any coworkers who have recently gotten married or had a baby? Please send the good news to Shannon Gibson at Shansygg@me.com

REMINDERS: If you have recently changed your personal information such as name and or address, please contact the LRTA office at 204-929-5782 and have them update your information.

MTS CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

The Code of Professional Practice establishes the required standards of conducts for all members of the Manitoba Teachers' Society. A teacher's professional behaviour must reflect the spirit as well as the letter of the Code.¹

1. A member's first professional responsibility is to her or his students.
2. A member acts with integrity and diligence in carrying out professional responsibilities.
3. A member avoids involvement in a conflict of interest, recognizes that a privileged relationship with students exists and refrains from exploiting that relationship for material, ideological or other advantage.
4. A member's conduct is characterized by consideration and good faith. She or he speaks and acts with respect and dignity, and deals judiciously with others, always mindful of their rights.
5. A member respects the confidential nature of information concerning students and may give the information only to authorized personnel or agencies directly concerned with the individual student's welfare.
6. A member first directs any criticism of the professional activity and related work of a colleague to that colleague in private. Only after informing the colleague of the intent to do so, the complainant may direct in confidence the criticism to appropriate officials through the proper channels of communication. A member shall not be considered in contravention of this section in the following circumstances:
 - a) consulting with the Society or the president of the member's local association;
 - b) taking any action that is allowed or mandated by legislation;
 - c) where the member is acting in good faith and without malice in the discharge of the legitimate duties of his or her appointed or elected position.
7. A member does not bypass immediate authority to reach higher authority without first exhausting the proper channels of communication.
8. A member makes an ongoing effort to improve professionally.
9. A member adheres to collective agreements negotiated by the professional organization.
10. A member or group of members makes only authorized representations to outside bodies on behalf of the Society or its local associations. Without the express permission of the Society, no member(s) conferring with outside bodies may explicitly or implicitly claim that they represent the Society or its local associations.

¹Violations of the Code shall be addressed through application of the Bylaws. Revised 2012