



President's Message Marcela Cabezas

Confession: I am not a runner by nature. I have never really cared for running. Unless there was pack of wolves in hot pursuit or a transit bus seconds from pulling away from the stop, I failed to recognize its value. That is until I became a teacher, a career that pushes you to become a stellar metaphorical marathon runner. Back in April, I acknowledged that our career signs us up annually for a race that spans the Tuesday following Labour Day through to June 30th. Each year, we cross the finish line arms raised sometimes with a sense of elation and victory only to collapse on the track. We lay there completely winded and motionless for a moment to take stock of the race we just ran in order to learn and prepare for the next one to come in two months' time. This repeated pattern of action is but one of the many things we learn on the job.

There are many other lessons I have learned from teaching in my seventeen-year career. In my first five years, I quickly learned that perfectionism left unchecked would be the death of me. Sometimes doing our best has to be good enough. For those who hadn't yet had that epiphany, I can only imagine how quickly that lesson was learned during this remote teaching period. Everybody did their best in taking what we do face to face in schools and making it work from a far. In learning new ways of delivering curriculum at a moment's notice and helping support students remotely, teachers went from being marathon runners to long distance sprinters in short order.

Around the ten-year mark, I learned another vital lesson: there is no shame in putting yourself first sometimes. When life throws more at you than you can possibly handle, it's okay to call a time-out and ask for help. This pandemic took our traditional marathon route and slapped an American Ninja Warrior obstacle course smack dab in the middle of it. Then just when you got thought you were getting the hang of it; the province threw in a Navy Seals Basic Training course with live ammunition and barbed wire at the end of May. Or at least that's how it felt in the days of confusion that ensued. What has made this final leg of the race manageable is the kindness shown by LRSD with the June 1st Phase Two Limited Re-opening of Schools implementation. What breaks my heart is that the common-sense approach taken



here was not shared by all teachers across the province.

I am certain that none of us signed up for that type of a race when we decided to become teachers. I know I signed up to teach because I love working with kids. The annual marathons are long, but along the path I get recharged by the laughter of students, the crazy things they come up with, the heartfelt deep conversations, and being able to bear witness to those a-ha moments when something I've taught finally clicks. Or even better yet, those moments when the student becomes the teacher. Those are but some of the joys that come with being face to face with "our kids." COVID-19 stripped us of that joy by separating us from them. And now we wait and wonder what next year's marathon route will look like.

Undoubtedly, there will be more lessons we learn because of this experience. Some will be personal and practical; others will be systemic and societal. As teachers, we often believe that our superpowers exist only within the confines of our classroom. What I hope we have learned through this is that we are mighty well beyond our classroom door; that strength, optimism, and courage come with us wherever this educational journey takes us. Listen to one and other and share what this experience has taught you. Continue to lift each other up and to amplify each other's voices. Be unafraid to speak your truth. Carpe diem.

So as this year's race draws to a close and the final strides become laborious and painful, be sure to look around you. There are 1200 LRTA runners who are also headed toward that same finish line ribbon as you. Each one of you is part of our team. Sprint hard or reach out and hold hands. You will all make it across that victory line. This race may not be a personal best time, but it will certainly be one for the history books.

On behalf of the LRTA Executive, I wish you a recharging, restful and well-deserved summer break.



Looking Backward, Looking Forward

Vice President Collective Bargaining—Scott Wood



Collective Bargaining has been an interesting world for the past few years to say the least. The LRTA Collective Bargaining Committee has worked very hard on behalf of the members; at times in public but often behind closed doors.

Our journey to where we are now began in the spring of 2017, a full year prior to the expiration of the Collective Agreement (CA). The LRTA Collective Bargaining Committee was doing their usual work—examining issues to be addressed in a new CA, creating proposals, crafting a survey to be used by membership. In other words, business as usual. In March, however, everything was disrupted by the government's introduction of *The Public Services Sustainability Act* (Bill 28), a bill designed to limit collective bargaining rights. A year later, the government suggested that teacher bargaining should be conducted at the provincial, rather than local level. The uncertainty of these two announcements led to the Division postponing bargaining with the LRTA, and the result was an application for Binding Interest Arbitration.

In the spring of 2019, the LRTA and LRSD engaged in brief negotiation meetings to examine each other's proposals. However, with questions still unanswered around Bill 28, it was determined that no further negotiations would prove fruitful. Interest Arbitration would be the mechanism to settle the CA.

The Collective Bargaining Committee focussed on the arbitration hearings through the summer and fall of 2019. Many hours were spent with MTS staff in preparing our submissions. In late November and early December the hearings were conducted, with MTS presenting over 1400 pages of evidence on our behalf in addition to four LRTA members speaking about their classroom experiences. The process was overwhelming in many ways. After waiting for several months, the arbitration panel returned its decision on April 14, 2020—a two-year deal (expiring June 30, 2020) with pay increases, new language on term contracts, and control of the PPDF going to the Association.

The LRTA Collective Bargaining Committee must now look forward to the next Collective Agreement. Even as

work continues on implementing the arbitral decision, a small group of members has met to examine the ruling and prepare for the next round of bargaining. We will once again be working under an expired contract as of June 30, 2020. The Collective Bargaining Committee needs to look to the future to understand what will best serve the membership of the LRTA. Some direction was given by the arbitration panel as to where to begin our planning; this has been our immediate focus.

Over the next several months, the Collective Bargaining Committee will put together proposed amendments to the Collective Agreement. We anticipate surveying the membership in the fall to identify areas of concern in our various worksites. We will continue to examine the issues connected to "teacher time" and the impacts of rising workloads on the memberships. Most of all, we will continue to prepare for a return to more traditional negotiation patterns.

However, there continue to be many unknowns in the world of bargaining. A recent court decision has struck down Bill 28 as an interference with public sector bargaining, but the government has the right to appeal; we must still consider the potential impacts. The government continues to discuss the idea of provincial bargaining, although no legislation has been introduced. The K-12 Commission on Education could contain proposals that affect bargaining, but the report has been delayed. A second Teachers' Association, Pembina Trails, goes into arbitration on their Collective Agreement in January. Finally, add in the unprecedented nature of COVID-19 that has upended virtually our entire world.

So, with no crystal ball or fortune tellers available, the Collective Bargaining Committee will continue to do what they always have done. They will collect information from the membership, prepare surveys on specific issues, examine the bargaining trends, and prepare proposals to take before the Board. It will continue to be business as usual, even if no one really knows what usual means any more.

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MTS AGM 2020 Highlights

President—Marcela Cabezas

Virtual AGM Held

The 101st annual general meeting was held Friday, May 22nd. President James Bedford chaired the electronic Provincial Council Meeting of 333 delegates from across the province at which the MTS budget was passed, a membership fee was set, resolutions were approved, and members of the Provincial Executive were elected. Twenty-four LRTA delegates represented our Association at the meeting.

This year's MTS fee for full members will go to \$1042 from \$1012.

New Logo Launched

Following a year-long review, the unveiling of a new logo for the Manitoba Teachers' Society was unveiled as the organization heads into its second century. <http://www.mbteach.org/mtscms/2020/05/22/new-century-new-look/>

Education Minister Addresses Virtual Assembly

Speaking from his home in Steinbach, Minister Goertzen spoke on a variety of matters including the recent announcement of the province's draft plan to open schools to limited use as of June 1st. The limited opening is intended for one-on-one assessment, planning for the upcoming school year, and giving students internet access. The minister made very clear in-class instruction is not to take place until the fall and recognized that the proposed change further adds to the workload of teachers.

He also addressed the province's proposal to start classes on August 31st on a one-time basis to provide more time for remedial learning and to help with the transition back to in-class instruction. The minister also acknowledged the improved communication between the Province and MTS, despite indications that the most recent Education announcement was made without consulting MTS in advance.

New members Added to the MTS Provincial Executive

There were six positions open for members at large. Delegates participated in an election via Election Buddy, an online election platform. Re-elected were Catherine Hart, Chris Darazsi and Kerry Enns. Three newly elected members joining the Provincial Executive this year are Joel Swaan, Kristen Fallis, and Cathy Pellizzaro.

The complete Provincial Executive for 2020-2021 is:

James Bedford, President *Louis Riel Teachers' Association*

Nathan Martindale, Vice-President *Winnipeg Teachers' Association*

Members at Large are:

Sonja Blank *Mountain View Teachers' Association*

Carla Bouchard *Pembina Trails Teachers' Association*

Jeff Cieszecki *Seven Oaks Teachers' Association*

Chris Darazsi *River East Transcona Teachers' Association*

Kerry Enns *Border Land Teachers' Association*

Kristen Fallis *Winnipeg Teachers' Association*

Catherine Hart *Seven Oaks Teachers' Association*

Kent McPherson *St. James Assiniboia Teachers' Association*

Cathy Pellizzaro *Thompson Teachers' Association*

Joel Swaan *Garden Valley Teachers' Association*

Cynthia Taylor *Louis Riel Teachers' Association*



Breaking the Habit

Reprinted with permission from Louis Riel School Division (Website May 29, 2020)

There was a time when wearing seatbelts was a foreign concept.

For years, it was considered normal to drive without one and a look around at others behind the wheel only confirmed that it was common practice among many.

But that changed 33 years ago when the mandatory seatbelt law came into effect and now the change in people's habits and perception has made driving safer.

The new mantra is that seatbelts save lives.

A similar change now needs to happen in schools.

With the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic and the science showing how it is transmitted, the safety of our community begins with the individual.

Truth be told, it always has been, but the importance of self-screening, and self-isolation, if showing symptoms, is now more important than ever.

It would be fair to assume many of us may have woke up in the morning with a cough, a runny nose or sore throat and rationalized that going into work would be OK because it wasn't a big deal. Or that taking some cold medication would help us, or our kids, get through the day.

There are myriad reasons why it was done, but it's a habit we need to break to protect the people close to us, staffing our schools and living in our community.

The last few months have made poignantly clear that staying home when you're unwell is the best way to protect others. While we recognize that many careers come with daily deadlines that are important, the new normal we need to establish, and rigorously follow, is one that puts the emphasis on safety and well-being. LRSD will do everything we can to minimize the risk in our schools, but without your help, it won't be enough.

The government of Canada also recognizes the importance of staying home when unwell and is currently discussing the possibility of giving 10 days of paid sick leave for all workers.

In LRSD, all staff have been instructed to self-assess or use the [online screening tool](#) before coming to work. As per the government of Manitoba recommendations, the following infection prevention measures will also be present in all LRSD schools:

- Individual screening will occur at the start of each day.
- The [workplace screening poster](#) will be posted at the entrance(s).
- Anyone (staff, volunteers, and participants) with visible symptoms will not be allowed into the building.

- Appropriate accessibility and accommodations will be in place to ensure that all students can be screened and be meaningfully informed of new procedures.
- If an attendee—including staff, volunteers, and participants—or a member of their household is being investigated by Public Health for COVID-19 infection, they should not attend. Regional Public Health officials will provide direction to attendees.
- If an attendee develops symptoms while at the school, they will be isolated in a predetermined isolation space. Where a separate room is not available, they should be kept at least two metres away from others.
- If the attendee is a child, their parent/guardian will be notified to come and pick them up immediately.
- Maintain physical distance of at least two metres (six feet) to the greatest extent possible, except for brief exchanges and when providing or receiving service.
- We will install signage outlining physical distancing protocols and floor markings where any lines may form, both inside and outside the facility.
- We will prominently display signs and posters highlighting the importance of hand hygiene, physical distancing, and staying home when sick. The following websites have posters that can be printed and used:

[Shared Health Manitoba](#)
[Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living](#)

- We will encourage hand hygiene and make hand sanitizer available at all building access points.
- We will encourage staff, volunteers, and participants to frequently wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds at the following times:
 - ◇ at the start of the day and before going home
 - ◇ after going to the washroom
 - ◇ before preparing food
 - ◇ before eating
 - ◇ after getting hands dirty
 - ◇ after wiping noses or handling dirty tissues
 - ◇ after coughing, sneezing, or blowing nose
 - ◇ after cleaning tasks (staff)





As we embark on a much-needed summer vacation, I would like to highlight some of the exciting changes that are on the horizon for the PPDF in the coming school year. As I have written in a previous article, the entirety of the PPDF system will be in the hands of the LRTA come July 1, 2020. This means that there are a few operational issues which will need to be adjusted.

The process for submitting receipts to the PPDF for reimbursement will remain the same however, beginning in September, all receipts will now need to be sent to the LRTA office at Dr. D.W. Penner School at 121 Hazelwood Crescent.

While the PPDF will still be funded by the LRSD to the amount of four times a class seven salary, the Guidelines that govern the PPDF, will be solely administered by the LRTA. This will allow Louis Riel teachers to have autonomous control over the system that funds our professional development. At the May LRTA Council meeting, the PPDF Review Committee suggested a few changes to the PPDF that were approved at the June LRTA Council meeting. In September 2020, the PPDF will begin to offer funding for post-secondary course work to the amount of \$200 per 3 credit hour course and \$400 per 6 credit hour course. By offering this form of support, the PPDF will fall in line with three other Metro associations who do the same. Further, to expedite the vetting of applications and to ensure that all applications can reach quorum, the PPDF Committee will increase in size from 14 members to 16 members. Interested members who wish to apply for these 2 new spots should visit www.lrta.ca and apply through the PPDF Committee Member Candidate Information Form.

Of course, we are still living in a COVID-19 world and the PPDF's start up in September will need to reflect the current practices recommended by Health Officials. Therefore, the PPDF will continue to support applications where the content is delivered online. As for in-town events that occur in person, the PPDF will only approve applications where appropriate health and safety recommendations are being respected by the event organizers. While we are hoping for a return to business as usual in the Province of Manitoba, we are anticipating that other jurisdictions may not be ready come the fall. Thusly, the PPDF will not approve out-of-town applications should there be any kind of mandatory self-isolation period upon returning to Manitoba or where the Federal Government has issued a travel warning. Hopefully, come September, these restrictions will be a distant memory and we can all return to focussing on our professional practices in a way that we are more accustomed to.

Before I sign off, let me take these last few sentences to thank the PPDF Committee for the wonderful job they have done this past year. Each of you are exceptionally valuable in the process that takes place as we review and approve members' applications. Your dedication and attention to detail is rarely seen but will always be noticed by the increased capacity of our membership to deliver quality pedagogy to their students. Thank you!

Have a wonderful and relaxing summer break!



CONGRATULATIONS

LRTA RETIREMENT CLASS OF 2020

Valerie Allard

Louise Allard-Li

Faye Barsy

Monique Bourrier

Lynne Braun

Lisa Bunkowsky-Russell

Norm Châtel

Jacqueline Cuthbert

Marc Desloges

Karen Desrochers

Cindy Ediger

Nicholas Fergus

Valerie Froese

Patricia Gerwing

Laurie Gorman

Patricia Gould

Reid Hartry

Norm Hiebert

Tracy Kremski

Joanne Lofto

Lise Marcoux

Joel Marquis

Lori Miller

Alain Nault

Christine Peers

Monique Renaud Bauch

Susan Rinn

Hélène Savard

Lynne Syrenne-Habeck

Della Takeuchi

Allen Vilar

LRTA Calendar for 2020-2021



LRTA Calendar 2020-2021

September

Tuesday, 8th Opening Day
Wednesday, 16th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 23rd LRTA Council Meeting @ATC
Wednesday, 30th LRTA New Member Celebration

October

Friday, 2nd LRTA New Rep Orientation
Thursday, 8th to Friday, 9th LRTA Executive Retreat
Thursday, 15th Maternity/Parental Leave Seminar
Wednesday, 21st LRTA Council Meeting @ATC
Friday, 23rd MTS PD Day

November

Wednesday, 4th LRTA Executive Meeting
Thursday, 5th Pension Sustainability Seminar @ATC
Wednesday, 18th LRTA Council Meeting @ CJS

December

Wednesday, 2nd LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 16th LRTA Council Meeting @ATC
Monday, 21st through Friday, Jan. 1st Winter Break

January

Wednesday, 6th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 20th LRTA Council Meeting @ATC
Wednesday, 27th LRTA Volunteer Night

February

Wednesday, 3rd LRTA Executive Meeting
February, 4th Pre-Retirement Seminar @ ATC
Thursday, 11th LRTA Trivia Night
Wednesday, 17th LRTA Council Meeting @CJS

March

Wednesday, 3rd LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 17th LRTA Council Meeting @ATC
Monday, 29th through Friday, April 2nd Spring Break

April

Wednesday, 7th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 14th LRTA Council Meeting @ATC
Thursday, 15th * Maternity/Parental Leave Seminar
Wednesday, 21st LRTA Annual General Assembly @ ATC

May

Wednesday, 5th LRTA Executive Meeting
Thursday, 6th LRTA Appreciation Dinner @ATC
Wednesday, 19th LRTA Council Meeting & Binder Meeting @ATC
Wednesday, 26th through Saturday, 29th MTS AGM

June

Wednesday, 2nd LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 9th LRTA Retirement Reception
Wednesday, 16th LRTA Council Meeting @ATC

Updated March 3 2020

CONTACT US

LRTA OFFICE
204-929-5782

President
Marcela Cabezas
preslrta@shaw.ca

Collective Bargaining
Scott Wood
cblrta@shaw.ca

Professional Development
Jay McGurran
pdlrta@shaw.ca

ALL MATTERS WILL BE DEALT WITH IN
CONFIDENCE.

MANITOBA TEACHERS' SOCIETY
Can request Staff Officer assistance
204-888-7961

www.lrta.ca

@preslrta

