



## President's Message Marcela Cabezas



Earlier this fall, I asked someone how they were managing with everything as a teacher during a pandemic. They responded by telling me how it was only the start of the year but that they were already feeling "February tired." I had never heard the expression before, but it perfectly illustrated how they felt to me.

February is another mile marker on our journey through the school year. Winter Break is now a distant memory and Spring Break is a highly anticipated blip on the horizon. The good news, I suppose is that as February is the sixth month of the school year, we are now closer to the end of the school year than we are to the beginning. The continuous cold snap that we are currently in is not helping to raise spirits, but at least the days are sunny and remaining brighter for longer than they were a few weeks ago. If you are like me, the sustained blood sugar spikes from the Valentine's Day chocolates and candies also help to ward off the February tired until the day's end.

Amid all of this, the new Minister of Education proclaimed the week of February 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week. As a language teacher, I have an odd love for things like definitions and etymology. The word *appreciation* can be defined in one of two ways: 1. *the recognition and enjoyment of the good qualities of someone or something*; and 2. *a full understanding of a situation*. The root of the word is founded in the Latin word *appretiare* meaning *to set a price*.

How timely then that the Province also chose this week to announce the price they are willing to pay for Public Education Funding for the 2021-2022 school year. For the fifth year in a row, the provincial government has failed to adequately fund public education at even the rate of inflation. As MTS has stated, this choice will have dire and long-lasting effects on the delivery of education and student outcomes for Manitoba students.

MTS President James Bedford explains, "The government boasts that this is the most funding public education has ever received, but that's only half the story. What is missing from this narrative is the fact that this funding is not enough to meet the increasing needs of Manitoba's K-12 student population."

The Division will be holding a public consultation meeting on February 23<sup>rd</sup> to present its draft budget. Perhaps you are like me and wear multiple hats when it comes to LRSD: employee, parent of students in the division, and taxpayer. I will be attending the Division's virtual Budget meeting to listen and express my concerns for the future. You too are encouraged to attend.

My thoughts also turn to the second definition of the word *appreciate* – to fully understand a situation. To this end, the MTS has launched a public awareness campaign where they are calling on members to #UseYourVoice and share the challenges we are facing in our classrooms and how this is impacting our students. The pandemic provided additional challenges to a system that was already compromised. It is vital that teachers add their voices to the mix to ensure both parents, taxpayers, and government can fully appreciate what it is like to teach in the public education system.

And so, I turn to the first definition of the word *appreciate*. It is my hope that your school communities were able to recognize and celebrate the many acts of sacrifice, devotion, and dedication you show to your students despite the many that obstacles placed in our paths due to the pandemic.

Here's hoping that the "February tired" fades away fast and that the coming days bring with them hope and hotter weather.

Yours,  
Marcela

# K-12 Education Review

Vice President Professional Development—Jay McGurran



As we manage our way through one of the coldest Februarys in history (look it up...no joke), our thoughts turn to warmer summer days ahead and the hope that respite from these frigid temperatures, and the pandemic, is closer than we think. We are also looking ahead to the much anticipated K-12 Education Review and the reveal of The Education Modernization Act. Undoubtedly, these two documents will hold a great deal of influence on the course of public education for the next 25 years. The Manitoba Teachers' Society contributed [seventeen recommendations](#) to the K-12 Education Review Committee, for their consideration. I would like to highlight the two recommendations with regard to professional learning and development;

## Recommendation 12:

That the Government of Manitoba and school divisions work together to review funding for professional learning and development (PLD) for teachers to ensure that PLD is adequately funded by Manitoba Education and Training so that teachers have ongoing opportunities to increase skills for their work in complex and diverse classrooms.

## Recommendation 13:

That the Government of Manitoba, The Manitoba Teachers' Society and school divisions work together to facilitate appropriate professional development opportunities, which is accessible to all teachers and reflective of complex and diverse classrooms. Further, that the Government of Manitoba and school divisions work together to ensure that teachers are given more autonomy to choose professional development opportunities that are reflective of their specific classroom needs.

The Personal Professional Development Fund is a shining exemplar of how well professional learning and development can be managed in an autonomous and fair system that best suits the needs of teachers and their students. It is vitally important that we advocate to keep this system in place for our members and promote a similar model for all teachers in the province. I encourage you to go on social media and share the story of how PPDF assisted your teaching and your student's learning by tagging your post with #UseYourVoice. The message needs to get out that professional learning and development is a necessary component of responsible and equitable public education.

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***The Louis Riel Teachers' Association is pleased to announce a new Social Committee initiative. Introducing the***  
**LRTA MEMBER WELLNESS GRANT**  
**2020-2021**

As part of our mission to safeguard the welfare of teachers, the LRTA is exploring new ways to promote member wellness during these unique and challenging times.

Given that the nature, needs, and composition of each workplace is distinct, the Association would like to offer the opportunity for members to put forward proposals for LRTA member wellness events that promote stress reduction, physical activity, nutrition, and life management/work-life balance.

**LRTA Member Wellness Grant Criteria**

- Funding to a maximum of \$400.
- Funding is for group events.
- Funding shall be allocated on a first come, first served basis.
- Funding can be used to offset the cost of facilitators, location rentals, event supplies, and snacks.
- Applications must be received four weeks in advance of the wellness event, exclusive of winter and spring breaks.
- One application per worksite will be considered.
- Events must be held within the City of Winnipeg and in accordance with Manitoba Public Health Protocols.
- Applications received after the wellness event will not be considered.  
Reimbursement will be paid after receipts and a completed evaluation form have been submitted to the LRTA Office.

**Applications and inquiries can be directed to [preslrta@shaw.ca](mailto:preslrta@shaw.ca). Applications will be accepted from February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 until April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021.**

***Application Forms will be available at [www.lrta.ca](http://www.lrta.ca) and forwarded by your Council Representative.***



## LRTA MEMBER WELLNESS GRANT –

### Suggested Wellness Activities

LRTA members are encouraged to put forward proposals for events that support any dimension of member wellness. Grants will be made available to groups of teachers interested in hosting or participating in wellness activities that comply with public health orders. Members are welcome to apply in school groups or in groups made up of members from multiple worksites. The following non-exhaustive list is provided to offer suggestions and spark ideas for diverse and meaningful wellness events.

PHYSICAL WELLNESS
<p>Any activity organized to support or promote the physical wellbeing of LRTA members. Suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fitness Classes (HIIT, Step, Boxing, Barre, Strength Training, Cycling, etc.)</li> <li>○ Running/Walking Clubs</li> <li>○ Fitness Coaching Sessions</li> <li>○ Outdoor Sport Lessons or Clubs</li> <li>○ Fitness Challenges</li> <li>○ Nutrition Presentations (Nutritionist, Dietician)</li> <li>○ Meal-prep Sessions</li> <li>○ Cooking Classes</li> </ul>
CREATIVE/INTELLECTUAL WELLNESS
<p>Any activity organized to support or promote the creativity of members and/or the intellectual wellbeing of LRTA members. Suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Paint Night Sessions</li> <li>○ Creative Writing Workshops</li> <li>○ Knitting or Crochet Clubs</li> <li>○ Language Classes</li> <li>○ Poetry Sessions</li> <li>○ Music Lessons</li> <li>○ Virtual Board Game Tournaments</li> </ul>
SPIRITUAL/MENTAL WELLNESS
<p>Any activity organized to support or promote the spiritual and mental wellbeing of LRTA members. Suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Meditation Sessions</li> <li>○ Yoga Classes</li> <li>○ Art for Meditation Experiences</li> <li>○ Outdoor/Nature Activities</li> <li>○ Book Clubs</li> <li>○ Presentations on Stress-reduction Techniques</li> <li>○ Journaling Sessions</li> <li>○ Activities to Promote a Healthy Work/Life Balance</li> </ul>
FINANCIAL WELLNESS
<p>Any activity organized to support or promote the financial wellbeing of LRTA members. Suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Investment Education</li> <li>○ Financial Literacy Sessions</li> <li>○ Presentations on Budgeting, Investing and/or Financial Wellness</li> <li>○ Book Studies</li> </ul>

# MTS Women in Educational Leadership Symposium



Alexa  
Joy



Dr. Betsy  
McGregor

The Manitoba Teachers' Society is proud to host the annual Women in Educational Leadership (WEL) Symposium in advance of International Women's Day.

The **2021 WEL Virtual Symposium** will feature recognized leaders representing a variety of fields including education, law, community activism, business and communications.

**Friday Evening March 5, all day Saturday, March 6**

**This year, the Society has partnered with EventMobi, a virtual conference platform, promising to provide opportunities for video-networking and more!**

Information about registration and all of the symposium's speakers and panelists will be updated on the MTS website in February.



**WOMEN  
IN EDUCATIONAL  
LEADERSHIP**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual**

# **Menses Madness**

**LRTA's Equity and Social Justice Committee challenges members to donate menstrual hygiene products during the month of March.**

• **Tampons**

• **Pads**

• **Liners**

• **Menstrual cups**

**Donations can be sent to General Vanier School  
ATTN: Charlene Sacher Products will be donated to  
Teen Stop Jeunesse and North End Women's Centre**

**If you would like to learn more about the equity issues  
surrounding menstrual hygiene, email: [charlene.sacher@lrsd.net](mailto:charlene.sacher@lrsd.net)**



**REGISTER  
NOW!**

**MARCH 5, 2021**

FAB 5 workshops are intended to build capacity, confidence, and practical strategies focused on the mental, emotional, relational and physical aspects of teachers and teaching.

FAB 5 2021 will be a real-time virtual conference on **March 5th** from **9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.** Participants can also access the work on-demand after the live event. This year we will be collaborating with Eventmobi, an online virtual conference platform. Once participants have registered for either the live stream or on-demand, they will have access to the platform for 30 days.

To register for the real-time virtual conference **OR** the On-demand conference please visit our website at [www.mbteach.org](http://www.mbteach.org). All conference information will be found on My Profile.



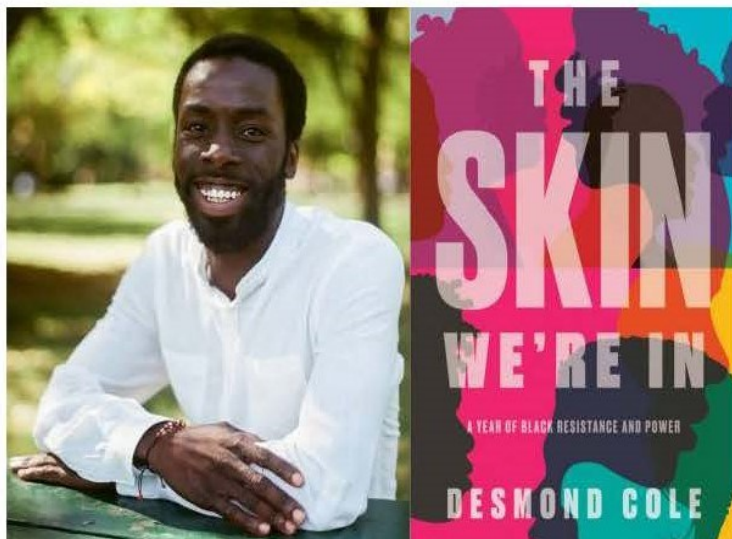
**KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Dr. Joel Westheimer**

Joel Westheimer is University Research Chair in Democracy and Education at the University of Ottawa and an education columnist for CBC Radio. Author, speaker, and education advocate, he grew up in New York City where he taught 6th, 7th, and 8th grade in the NYC Public Schools. In addition to researching the role of schools in democratic societies, Westheimer studies, writes, and speaks widely on global school reform, the standards and accountability reform movements, and the politics of education and education research. His latest book is *What Kind of Citizen? Educating Our Children for the Common Good*. Find out more at [joelwestheimer.org](http://joelwestheimer.org) and follow him on Twitter: [@joelwestheimer](https://twitter.com/joelwestheimer).

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:**

	Emotional	Mental	Relationality	Physical
<b>Slot A</b> 9:00-10:00	Dr. Joel Westheimer: Citizenship in Today's World			
<b>Slot B</b> 10:15-11:15	Teacher Resilience and Self-Compassion	Creating Thinking Classrooms	The Anti-Racist Classroom	Your Thinking Influences Your Eating
<b>Slot C</b> 11:20-12:20	Wellness and Coping	Powerful Play: Technology for Learning	Building Community: Working with Students and Families.	FISH! Food For Thought
<b>Slot D</b> 1:20-2:20	Staying Balanced: Indigenous Approaches to Wellness	Inclusion in Pandemic and Beyond	It's All about You: Planning for Teacher and Student Success	Will I Be Eaten by Bear? Teaching in Northern and Rural Settings
<b>Slot E</b> 2:30-3:30	Making Sense of Mindfulness	Learning through Gamification	Building Trust and Synergy	Yoga





## LRTA Book Club

Join the LRTA Equity and Social Justice Committee for an evening of discussion of the book *The Skin We're In* by Desmond Cole on Monday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. Please contact [charlene.sacher@lrtd.net](mailto:charlene.sacher@lrtd.net) if you need a copy of the book (limited copies are available).

RSVP to [charlene.sacher@lrtd.net](mailto:charlene.sacher@lrtd.net) and include the email you would like the virtual meeting link to be sent.

**Reminder: If you have recently changed your name, please contact the LRTA office at 204-929-5782 or [seclrta@shaw.ca](mailto:seclrta@shaw.ca)**

## Calendar of Events



### LRTA Calendar 2020-2021

#### February

Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> LRTA Executive Meeting  
Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> Pre-Retirement Seminar  
Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> LRTA Council Meeting

#### March

Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> LRTA Executive Meeting  
Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> LRTA Council Meeting  
Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> through Friday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> Spring Break

#### April

Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> LRTA Executive Meeting  
Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> United Way "Make the Month" Virtual Event  
Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> LRTA Council Meeting  
Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> Maternity/Parental Leave Seminar LRTA  
Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> Annual General Assembly  
Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> MTS AGM Binder Meeting

#### May

Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> LRTA Executive Meeting  
Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> LRTA Appreciation Dinner  
Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> MTS AGM  
Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> LRTA Council Meeting

#### June

Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> LRTA Executive Meeting  
Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> LRTA Retirement Reception  
Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> LRTA Council Meeting

## Contact Us

**LRTA Office**  
204-929-5782

**President**  
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**Professional Development**  
Jay McGurran  
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All matters will be dealt with in confidence.

**Call MTS at 204-888-7961 to request assistance from a Staff Officer**

**@preslrta**

