

**Louis Riel  
Teachers' Association  
Council Representative  
Handbook**



**LRTA**  
LOUIS RIEL  
TEACHERS'  
ASSOCIATION

2022-2023

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## Message from the LRTA President

Welcome to the Louis Riel Teachers' Association Council!

Thank you for agreeing to represent the members of your worksite this year in the capacity of Council Representative or as the Alternate Council Representative.

Your role is multi-faceted and crucial to the health of our organization. Our Council Representatives play a pivotal role in the Association's Communication strategy.

This handbook defines your role and responsibilities, contains resources, and practical tips to assist you.

On behalf of the LRTA, I would like to thank you for volunteering your time to serve your fellow members.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at the LRTA Office at 204-929-5782 or by e-mail at [president@lrta.mbteach.org](mailto:president@lrta.mbteach.org).

With thanks,

*Marcela Cabezas*

Marcela Cabezas  
President - Louis Riel Teachers' Association

## **What is the LRTA? What is MTS?**

We all arrive to this role at from different paths, so we would be remiss to not explain who we are and what we do.

The Louis Riel Teachers' Association represents over 1200 members and is the third largest Teacher Association in the Province of Manitoba. Our union represents the teachers, principal teachers, coordinators, and clinicians employed by the Louis Riel School Division.

The LRTA is dedicated to protecting and advancing the rights and well-being of our members. Our office is located at 121 Hazelwood Crescent inside Dr. D.W. Penner School.

Fun fact: The LRTA's legal name is the *Louis Riel Teachers' Association of the Manitoba Teachers' Society (MTS)*.

The LRTA is one of thirty-seven local Associations which belong to the Manitoba Teachers' Society. MTS is the collective bargaining and professional development organization for all of Manitoba's 16,000 public school teachers. Their headquarters is at 191 Harcourt Street, along Portage Avenue.

## **The Role of the LRTA Council**

The LRTA Council is made up of a set number of representatives from each worksite based on the number of members at that location. The Council has various responsibilities as per our Association Constitution. The Council which is made up of the council representatives and members of the LRTA Executive conduct this oversight through the monthly meetings which take place from September to June.

The responsibilities of the Council include:

1. Supervising the affairs of the Association;
2. Approving Executive appointments to vacancies as may occur during a term of office or directing that a by-election be held to fill such Table Officer vacancies as may occur during a term of office;
3. Opening negotiations with the Board and approving the opening proposals of amendments to the collective agreement for collective bargaining;
4. Naming an external auditor annually;
5. Approving the financial institution where all monies are kept;
6. Setting and approving a special membership levy in an emergency situation;
7. Establishing ad hoc committees as needed and approving guidelines;
8. Appointing committee members;
9. Approving resolutions for consideration at the Annual General Meeting of Provincial Council of the Manitoba Teachers' Society;
10. Creating interim policy; and,
11. Naming delegates to the Annual General Meeting of the MTS Provincial Council.

## **Council Representative Duties and Responsibilities**

The benefits to serving as a Council Representative are multiple. By doing so, one gains a knowledge and awareness of professional issues, fulfills a professional responsibility to support one's peers, helps to support collegial well-being, and gains the opportunity to network with colleagues from other schools.

The duties and responsibilities of a Council Representative include:

- Attending monthly LRTA Council meetings
- Presenting the LRTA report at staff meetings
- Forwarding emails from the LRTA to the members at your worksite to ensure they are informed
- Serving as a liaison between members at your worksite and Council
- Answering questions when possible or/and directing members to appropriate resources/contacts
- Contacting the LRTA Office as needed
- Voting on motions brought forward at Council meetings
- Guiding the Executive to make decisions that reflect the will of the membership
- Serving on LRTA committees as required
- Promoting LRTA events to staff
- Having the opportunity to serve as a LRTA delegate to the Manitoba Teachers' Society Provincial Council Meeting a.k.a. MTS AGM
- Supporting the Collective!

## **Am I Supposed to Be an Expert?**

Chances are that folks on your staff will approach you with questions as the LRTA Council Representative. Often people think that you are an expert on all things related to the union and to the Collective Agreement.

The truth is you do not need to be an expert. What is important is to know which questions you can help with and which ones you should refer to the LRTA or to MTS.

### Member to Member Concerns:

If a member approaches you regarding a conflict between them and another member, it is best to stop them from sharing details with you as that would not be in keeping with the Code of Professional Practice. Instead, tell the member that they should call MTS (204-888-7961) and ask to speak with a staff officer in the Teacher Welfare Department.

### General Member Concerns:

Our website ([www.lrta.ca](http://www.lrta.ca)) can serve as a good resource for certain matters. That said, it is often best to encourage the member to contact the LRTA President at 204-929-5782 or via email at [president@lrta.mbteach.org](mailto:president@lrta.mbteach.org) if they have any problems pertaining to their contract, benefits, or any other complicated matters.

### Questions on Benefits:

An excellent resource is the Manitoba Public School Employee Benefits Plan website found at [www.mpsebp.ca](http://www.mpsebp.ca). You can refer members to this website where they can seek out information regarding what is and is not covered under our benefits plans. If the website does not respond to their needs, please have them contact the LRTA President.

### Questions on Leaves:

The LRSD has information available on its website in the Staff Services portal regarding the various leaves of absence and process for applying. The next section of this handbook contains additional information on leaves for you to reference. If members have any questions, please tell them to call the LRTA Office.

# Information on Leaves of Absence

## Leaves in the Collective Agreement

**Sick Leave** – This leave is used for both short- and longer-term illnesses. This leave accumulates at the rate of twenty (20) days each year to a maximum of 130 days. A member’s regular salary is paid until the number of sick days is exhausted. See Article 6.00 for details.

**Maternity and Parental Leave** – Maternity Leave for female members provides up to 85 teaching days of top-up to 90% of salary. Parental Leave is available to any member and provides up to 50 teaching days of top-up to 90% of salary. See Article 6.01 for eligibility, terms, and conditions.

If you are pregnant or planning an adoption, contact the Louis Riel Teachers' Association at 929-5782 for more information regarding this leave.

**Religious Leave** – This leave provides up to three (3) days per school year without loss of pay for a member to attend to religious holy days. Of note, for religious leave, the Human Resources Form must be submitted no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>. See Article 6.02 for details regarding notification.

**Release Time for MTS Business** – This leave is used by LRTA Executive members, AGM delegates, and MTS provincial committee members to attend to business of the Association and the Society. It also provides release time for the LRTA President and Vice Presidents. See Article 6.03 for details.

**Jury and Witness Duty** – This leave allows a member to fulfill their civic responsibilities as a juror or witness without loss of pay. See Article 6.04 for details.

**Leave of Absence** – This allows for an extended leave without pay (usually one school year). There is a requirement to have worked for four (4) years in the Division and there is a limit of three (3) such leaves in a career. See Article 6.05 for details.

**Temporary Reduction in Contract Time** – This leave without pay is used in “exceptional circumstances” and requires mutual agreement between the teacher and the Division. See Article 6.06 for details.

**Bereavement Leave** – This provides leave with no loss of pay from one (1) to five (5) days in the event of the death of a relative. Additional leave may be granted where travel is necessary. Where circumstances warrant, additional leave may be granted at no more than the cost of a substitute. See Article 6.07 for details.

**Compassionate Leave** – This provides up to two (2) days leave with pay in the event of a serious illness of a family member. See Article 6.08 for details.

**Deferred Compensation Plan (formerly Deferred Salary Leave Provision)** – Members employed for a minimum of two (2) years may apply to the division on or before March 31 to have a percentage (may not exceed one third) of salary deferred. Salary may be deferred for a maximum of six (6) years prior to the leave of absence. Money deferred is paid to the participant during the leave of absence. See Article 6.09 for details.

**Discretionary Leave** – This leave provides up to two (2) days per school year for a teacher to attend to personal business. Both discretionary days are at no cost to the member. Discretionary days can be taken in half-day increments. Members must book a sub through Absence Management AND submit



the HR leave form request to the Board Office a minimum of 5 days in advance. See Article 6.10 for details.

**Retirement Leave** – This leave provides for five (5) days paid leave upon submission of written early notice of retirement. Deadlines for giving notice are February 1<sup>st</sup> for a June retirement and September 30<sup>th</sup> for a December retirement. See Article 6.11 for details.

**Recognition of Extra-Curricular Activities** – A member may access a half-day paid leave of absence per school year for performing twenty-five (25) hours of eligible extra-curricular duties, up to a maximum of one day per year. See Article 6.12 for details.

**Family Medical Leave** – A member shall be entitled to use up to four (4) days of sick leave per year to attend to illness, injury or medical appointment to that member's partner, parent, child or grandchild. Such leave is non-cumulative from one school year to the next school year. See Article 6.13 for details.

## **Leaves in Divisional Policies and Practices**

*(The Division Policies and Practices can be found on the Louis Riel School Division website.)*

**Educational Leave** – Policy GCCAF/GCCBF. This leave provides a teacher who has worked five (5) years in the Division partial payment while attending to full-time studies. The teacher receives the net difference between his/her salary and the salary of a first-year teacher in the same salary classification. A maximum of twenty (20) such leaves may be allocated in a year. See the policy for details.

**Graduation Leave** – Policy GCCAB. This leave provides members half (½) day at no cost to attend the secondary or post-secondary graduation of their children or their own post-secondary graduation ceremonies. Other types of graduation ceremonies may be considered. See the policy for details.

**Critical Illness Leave** – This leave provides employees the ability to take unpaid leave to provide care and support for a family member with a life-threatening illness or injury.

**Domestic Violence Leave** – This leave can be accessed by employees to seek medical attention, obtain counselling or other services, relocate to a safe place, or to seek legal help when experiencing domestic violence.

## **Leaves in Practice**

**Funeral of a Close Friend** - The Superintendent has given assurances to the Association that the practice of giving release time with pay to a member to attend the funeral of a close friend will continue.

**Parental Days** – On the birth of child, the Division provides up to three (3) days leave in the form of one (1) compassionate leave day (Division paid) and two (2) family leave days.

**Information on leaves can also be accessed through the Staff Services Portal**  
([https://lrsdcn.sharepoint.com/sites/StaffServices/Teachers/SitePages/TCH\\_LOA.aspx](https://lrsdcn.sharepoint.com/sites/StaffServices/Teachers/SitePages/TCH_LOA.aspx) )

**A Human Resources form must be completed for all leaves excluding sick leave.**

## **Council Meeting Procedures**

Typically, the LRTA Council meets at 4:30PM on the third Wednesday of the month from September to June. We meet in person at the Louis Riel Arts and Technology Centre (5 deBourmont Ave.) Members arrive 10-20 minutes prior to sign in and grab a free meal prior to the start of the meeting.

During the pandemic, we shifted to circulating the meeting package electronically. If a council representative cannot attend, ensure the email containing the meeting package is forwarded to the alternate rep at your worksite.

Meeting participation by Council Reps is encouraged. Motions at the meeting require movers and seconders. Please share your name and school when moving and seconding a motion.

Notetaking can be done at the meetings by Council Reps. That said, 24-48 hours after the meeting, the LRTA Office will send out a copy of the LRTA Council Highlights to assist you in sharing key material at your staff meeting. This practice helps to ensure consistent information is communicated to all worksites. The email containing the Council Highlights can be shared with your staff before or after the staff meeting.

## Frequently Used Acronyms at Council

Often during an LRTA meeting, certain acronyms may be used. This page serves as a reference to assist you.

AGA: Annual General Assembly (local to LRTA)

AGM: Annual General Meeting (provincial for MTS)

CA: Collective Agreement

CB: Collective Bargaining

COSL: Council of School Leaders

CRA: Canada Revenue Agency

CTF: Canadian Teachers' Federation

DBP: Disability Benefits Plan

DPDF: Divisional Professional Development Fund

EAP: Educator Assistance Program

ÉFM: Éducatrices et Éducateurs Francophones du Manitoba

EI: Employment Insurance

ESJ: Equity and Social Justice

FIPPA: Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

LRA: Labour Relations Act

LTD: Long Term Disability

MET: Manitoba Education and Training

MPSEBP: Manitoba Public School Employee Benefit Plan

MPSEGLIP: Manitoba Public School Employees Group Life Insurance Plan

MTS: Manitoba Teachers' Society

PS: Professional Status Department at MTS

PPDF: Personal Professional Development Fund

PPE: Personal Protective Equipment

PSA: Public Schools Act

PX: Provincial Executive

SAGE: Special Area Group of Educators

STD: Short Term Disability

TRAF: Teachers' Retirement Allowance Fund

TW: Teacher Welfare Department at MTS

WHMIS: Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System

WSH: Workplace Safety and Health

YHA: Young Humanitarian Awards