

JUNE 2023

RIELITY CHECK

A PUBLICATION OF THE LOUIS RIEL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION www.lrta.ca



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Marcela Cabezas



On June 15, the LRTA held its Retirement Reception for the class of 2023. It was a pleasure to celebrate the careers of our nineteen honoured guests. Notably amongst the retirees was Joan Stanko, a Frontenac teacher who is retiring after **fifty-eight years** of teaching in Louis Riel and its legacy school divisions. Also amongst the celebrated retirees was James Bedford, LRTA member, and former MTS President. I have much gratitude for James as I had the chance to work with him and Frank Restall when I first joined the LRTA Office in September 2014 as Vice President of Professional Development. I was fortunate to have had that year to work with both who exemplified the principles of servant leadership and were excellent mentors.

As I shared with the retirees, June is a time of closing chapters and beginning new ones. Each year we create a legacy with our students. We hope that with our help they have grown not only as learners, but as future citizens and as good human beings. It is the relationships and connections forged with students that we take with us and that remain with them long after they leave our classrooms. Similarly, it goes for those we relationships forged with our colleagues who become a source of strength and support in the tough times.

I could have never imagined the numerous challenges and obstacles we as an Association would face over four years when I shifted to the role of LRTA President in September 2019. We battled Bill 28, draconian legislation by the current government that impeded our ability to fairly negotiate our Collective Agreement. That led us to an interest arbitration which resulted in LRTA setting the standard for teacher contracts across the province for 2018-2020. Then came the pandemic that has forever changed us as teachers. The impacts continue to reverberate in the lives of our students and in our daily work. As if that wasn't enough, the provincial government launched Bill 64 at us. Together we slammed the door on it. And this year, we once again raised our voices against Bill 35 which promises to affect us as educators as we move into the future.

All these challenges came as we watched the public education system funding continue to lose pace with inflation at a time when we and our students most needed supports. Sharing your stories of challenge with folks over the summer will be critical as we head toward a provincial election this fall. Being vocal is what contributed to our victory against Bill 64. Being vocal again is what will help encourage the apathetic to go out and vote. More importantly, it will help the electorate choose MLAs who understand and value the work we do in the face of growing and evermore complex needs of the students we work with.

While these past four years have been the most challenging of my career, they have also been the most rewarding. I am thankful to the Executive members for their contributions, to Council Reps and Alternate Reps for their support, and to you the members for reaching out to us. These have not been easy times and we have been awestruck by your dedication to the students with whom we work. We are grateful for your candor and trust in sharing your lived experiences with us during school visits. Your voices have stood at the forefront of our advocacy work. We have taken our responsibility to amplify your voices seriously throughout my time in office. I have every faith that this will not change as Jay, Scott, and Jaclyn will continue this work with the same level of passion and conviction.

I am grateful to my husband, Brendan, and sons Nate and Kellan, for their sacrifices, patience, and understanding for time spent in service of the members instead of with them. My eldest who was beginning Kindergarten when I started at the LRTA Office, will go to high school this September. And I will go to school with him – me to teach, he as a Grade 9 student. (*Trust me the idea sounded cooler to him four years ago.*) I am excited to get back to a classroom (pending completion of construction at CJS) to work with young people, and to rekindle my passion for teaching and learning.

But first comes the summer break – a time for us to all rest, relax, spend time with family and friends, and to prioritize our personal wellness. The next two months are about rekindling that spark in you and refilling that proverbial bucket. Make sure to make yourself a priority.

So, with this final President's Message, I wish you good health and happiness this summer and always.

Together we are stronger,
Marcela

PROVINCIAL BARGAINING AND THE LRTA COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

Vice President Collective Bargaining—Scott Wood



On January 31, 2022, the Manitoba government proclaimed Bill 45 (The Public Schools Amendment and Manitoba Teachers' Society Amendment Act), moving almost all Manitoba teachers to a system of provincial bargaining.

Under this system, Locals (like LRTA) no longer bargain individual contracts. Instead teachers, except those in the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine, will become part of one Collective Agreement.

MTS has been meeting with the Manitoba School Boards' Association throughout the past year to negotiate a new Collective Agreement for all teachers Manitoba based on the opening package that was approved in March 2022. Needless to say, this is a long process and will take some time to complete.

For LRTA members, nothing will change in the short term with the Collective Agreement. Although our current agreement is dated to June 30, 2022, it remains in effect until a new provincial agreement is reached and ratified. Members continue to receive the salaries, benefits, rights, and working conditions as stipulated in the LRTA Collective Agreement. We are, in effect, frozen in time with the agreement until the membership is in a position to ratify a new agreement.

Looking to the future, LRTA members will continue to be employed by the Louis Riel School Division even in the new provincial agreement, and LRSD will continue to be bound by terms of a Collective Agreement whether local or provincial. The LRTA will continue to exist to provide support to the membership and will monitor the implementation of Collective Agreement language locally. This will be done in the knowledge that almost all teachers in Manitoba will be working under the same contract terms for the first time since MTS was founded more than 100 years ago.

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LRTA Congratulates the 2023 Retirees

GUY ANDERSON
THIERRY ANJOUBAULT
CAROL BITCHOK
DIANE BURKE
WAYNE DAVIES
KIMBERLY EARL
DARLENE KASKOW
DIANE LAMOUREUX
BERNARD MAZEROLLE
PAULA MEYER
WENDY NAROZNIAK
CINDY PETRIW
JOAN STANKO
SHANNON TIMLICK
PATTI VADEBONCOEUR
DEAN WILSON

HEATHER ANDERSON
JAMES BEDFORD
DAVID BLAIR
BRIAN CAMERON
MONIQUE DITTER
RON HARDER
BERNICE KOZODY-SCOTT
ANDREA LÉGER
VERONICA MCBRIDE
CAROLE MORIN
RENÉ PERRIN
MICHEL ROY
TANNIS STEIMAN
KAREN TOLE-HENDERSON
CHERILYN WILSON
ELAN WOODS

*List includes members who have given permission to print
name as of May 31, 2023

The objective of the PPDF is to support autonomous personal professional growth and provide financial assistance for as many members as possible. The PPDF is committed to supporting professional growth opportunities that reflect the diverse community in which we teach.

Thank You!

This space is usually reserved for important information regarding the parameters, process, and benefits of our Personal Professional Development Fund. But today I would like to use it to highlight some of our achievements and to express my deep gratitude for your support during my tenure in the position.

Over my time as Vice President, Professional Development, the PPDF has experienced unprecedented change and growth. We have implemented a new online system, created a new accounting system, and improved clarity in the PPDF Guidelines, all while maintaining the same level of efficiency and consistency in reviewing member applications. As PPDF transitions to a new year in the fall of 2023, we are excited to announce that Direct Deposit for your reimbursements will become a reality!

Of course, all these accomplishments are impossible without a great team to support our collective effort. So, thank you to all who served on the PPDF Committee over the past four years. Your dedication and volunteerism to the membership is greatly appreciated. Thank you to Gisele, our Admin Secretary, for the countless hours spent on matters that revolve solely around PPDF. The immense amount of work does not go unnoticed, and the implementation of these new systems could not have been achieved without your ability to learn and adapt in an ever-evolving environment. Thank you to Marcela and Scott for being supportive and collaborative colleagues, who helped troubleshoot and navigate the obstacles that popped up along the way. Your voices were integral to the transition over the past four years.

Finally, thank you to the membership. You have confirmed, without a shadow of a doubt, how important this fund means to your journey as an educator. You have demonstrated that self-directed learning experiences are integral to the ever-changing needs in your classrooms. You have proven that an autonomous system run solely by teachers, administered solely by teachers, and monitored solely by teachers works efficiently, effectively, and can be sustained for many years to come. Please take the time in the coming months and years to amplify your voices on how important this fund is to your pedagogy, to your ability to stay current in the evolution of education, and ultimately to how vital your learning is to your student's learning.

Have an excellent summer!

Jay McGurran, Vice President, Professional Development

Contact Us

LRTA Vice President, Professional Development
121 Hazelwood Crescent
Winnipeg, MB R2M 4E4

204-929-5782

vp-pd@lrrta.mbteach.org



2023/24 Opening Dates

Term	Dates	Opens
1	Sep 5 – Dec 31	September 5
2	Jan 1 – Feb 29	October 15
3	Mar 1 – Apr 30	November 15
4	May 1 – Aug 31	February 15

New for 2023/24!

(Pending approval at LRTA Council on June 21)

- ✓ A standalone program for Tuition Fees!
- ✓ A standalone program for MTS PD Day!
- ✓ Events from May to August are combined into one Term!
- ✓ Per Diem for Out-of-Town events is raised to \$100 per full day!

FAQs

How do I know which term to apply in?

The application term corresponds with the opening date of your event, exclusive of travel.

I've used some In-Town funding this year. Can I use the rest for an Out-of-Town PD?

No. You cannot use In-Town and Out-of-Town funding in the same year.

How do I amend or cancel an application?

Please contact vp-pd@lrrta.mbteach.org to amend or cancel any application.

Can I save a draft of an application for submission at a later time?

Not really. While the new Online System does auto-save unsubmitted applications, application forms can only be accessed once the term opens (see above dates). It is advised to have information ready to copy into the application form when the term opens.

I keep getting emails from the new system. What's going on?

The new SMA PPDF system will send a reminder email when you need to do something to an application. This will most likely happen if you have an unsubmitted request in the Application Stage. To stop these reminders, delete any unwanted applications.

Mental Health Resources for Manitoba Teachers



For most of us, seeking professional help to maintain our physical health is routine—we don't give it a second thought. But when it comes to our mental health, we sometimes dismiss our feelings or fail to see that we need help until we're at the breaking point. This has to change.

We all internalize and process stress in different ways, but there's no doubt that the reality teachers have faced, particularly during the pandemic, has taken a toll. As an educator, it's important to make your health, both physical and mental, a priority—for yourself, your families, students, and colleagues.

It can be difficult to find the right mental health resources, so MTS compiled this resource guide to help you locate and connect with the help you need, when you need it.

Take time to review this document, and keep it handy. Help should always be at your fingertips.

Crisis Services in Manitoba

If you are in crisis and need help immediately, there are people available to help. A few of these resources are listed below. For a complete listing of crisis response services and helplines, click [here](#).

Manitoba Suicide Prevention & Support Line: 1-877-435-7170 (1-877-HELP170)

Klinik Crisis Line: 1-888-322-3019 or 204-786-8686 or TTY: 204-784-4097

Kids Help Phone (national line available to Manitoba youth): 1-800-668-6868

Winnipeg Crisis Response Centre, Mobile Crisis Service: 204-940-1781

Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority

24-Hour Crisis Line: 1-866-427-8628 or 204-482-5419

Northern Health Region

Thompson Youth (17 and under) Mobile Crisis Team: 1-866-242-1571

Prairie Mountain Health South District (formerly Brandon, Assiniboine)

Adult Crisis Line: 1-888-379-7699

Youth Under 18 Crisis Line: 1-866-403-5459

Crisis Stabilization Unit: 1-855-222-6011 or 204-727-2555

Mobile Crisis Services: 204-725-4411

Prairie Mountain Health North District (former Parkland)

Adult and Youth Crisis Line: 1-866-332-3030

Southern Health-Santé Sud/East of Red River – Crisis Response Services: 1-888-617-7715

Crisis Stabilization Unit: 1-855-320-1096

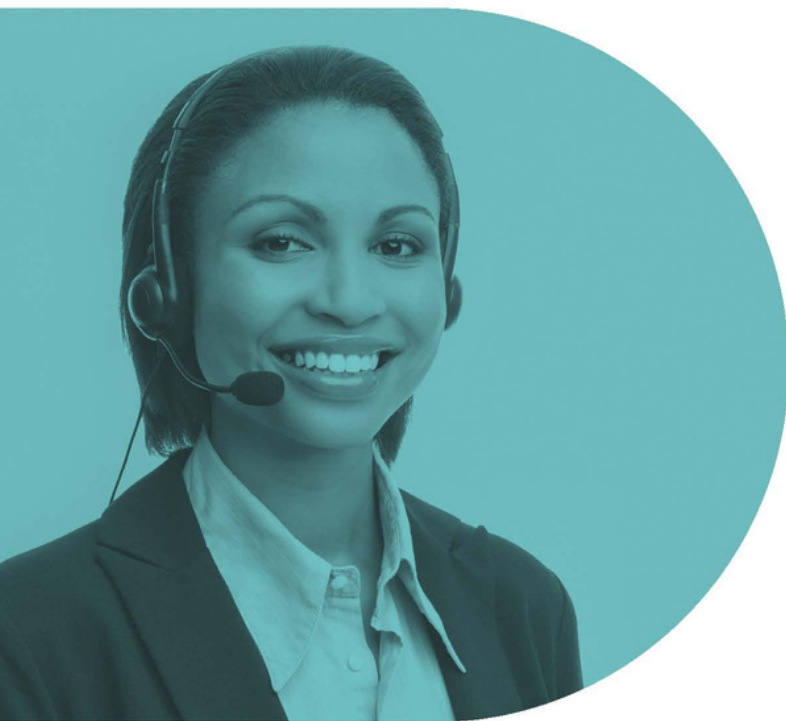
Manitoba Teachers' Society Resources

HumanaCare Services: Supporting MTS Members and Their Families

On January 1, 2022, MTS launched its Member and Family Assistance Program, featuring counselling services offered through HumanaCare. This program replaces MTS' long-standing Educator Assistance Program (EAP).

Through **HumanaCare**, MTS members and eligible family can receive one-on-one counselling, as well as an array of other wholistic support services. These include family, relationship, grief and bereavement counselling, as well as support for substance use, depression, work related stress, diet and nutrition, even legal and financial counselling.

To request services 24/7 on any day of the year, call 1-800-661-8193, or go online at www.humanacare.com/mts.



Extended Health Coverage

As a public school teacher in Manitoba, you have benefits that may include access to a counsellor or clinician in private practice—unless you've opted out of that coverage. Most MTS members are covered at 80 percent to maximum of \$850 per calendar year.

Benefits may differ, however, for members in the Winnipeg Teachers' Association (WTA), Seven Oaks Teachers' Association (SOTA), and Thompson Teachers' Association (TTA). If you're a member of one of those locals, check the benefits provided by your employer/local to find out more.

The Manitoba Psychological Society's **Find a Psychologist** webpage can help you find a clinician near you. Some may offer virtual sessions for clients who can't attend in person.

Manitoba Teachers' Society Workshops

"Wellness and the Resilient Educator: Managing Change" is a series of workshops tailored to the specific needs of public school educators, designed by the Professional and French Language Services team at MTS. The workshops can be booked individually or in a combination that suits your school's unique needs. Click [here](#) to learn more.

1 Resiliency

This workshop focusses on building resilience within the context of work and societal change.

Here you will:

- unpack the definition of resilience in today's world.
- explore the role of empathy, as well as energy and demand management and play in building resilience.
- develop a recovery training plan to build and maintain personal balance.

2 Indigenous Approaches to Holistic Wellness

The ability to balance our mental, physical, and emotional selves is central to our sense of wellness and wellbeing.

In this session, you will:

- learn about Indigenous approaches to wellness from a variety of Elders and Knowledge Keepers.
- use storytelling and experiential learning approaches.

3 Navigating the Waters of Change

A global pandemic has created opportunities to use reflection and strategy in your teaching practice.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- build collective efficacy and social capital.
- engage in learning and inquiry.
- implement change to move forward with a well-informed foundation.

Additional Resources

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) – Mental Health Resources in Winnipeg

The CMHA has put together a detailed list of **mental health resources** located in Winnipeg. Even if you live outside the city, it may be helpful to check the list and consult with experts who work with the various agencies.

Canadian Mental Health Association

Care for All in Education

Recognizing that those who work in public education can experience additional stress and anxiety due to their role throughout the pandemic, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) created a website of resources tailored to the unique needs of educators. **Care For All in Education** features support resources focused on anxiety, depression, maintaining social connection, navigating grief, and ways in which you can disrupt feelings of helplessness and distress that, over time, impact your physical and emotional health.

Care For All in Education lists crisis services available to educators in Manitoba, in languages that include English, French, Cree, Ojibway and Inuktitut.

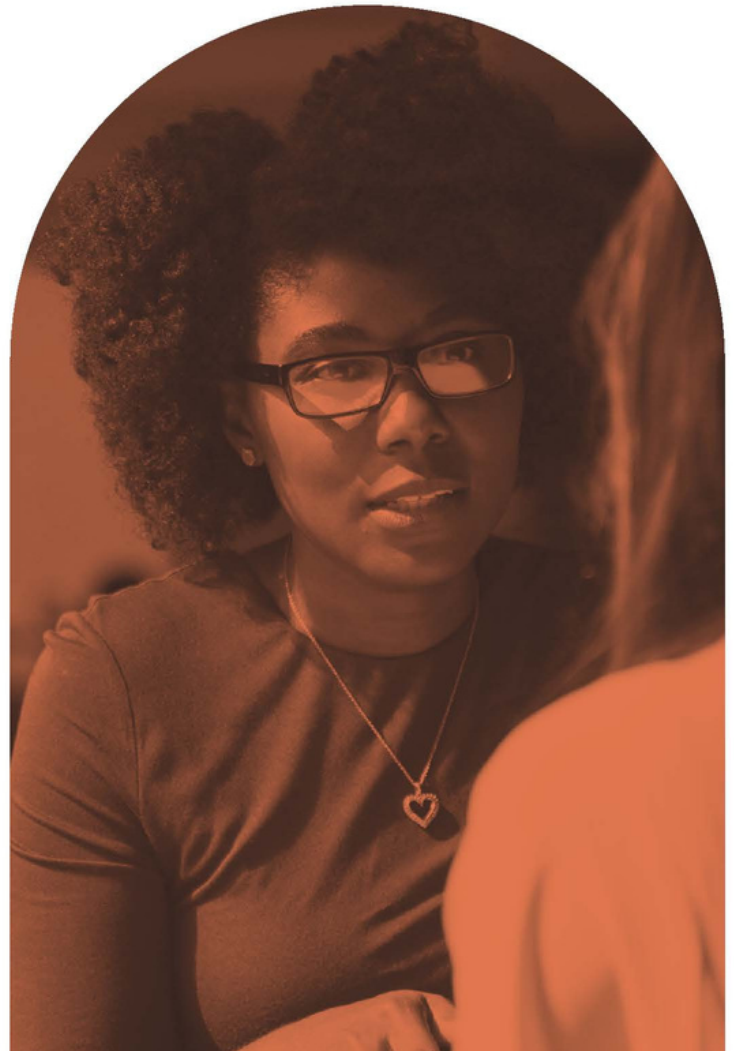
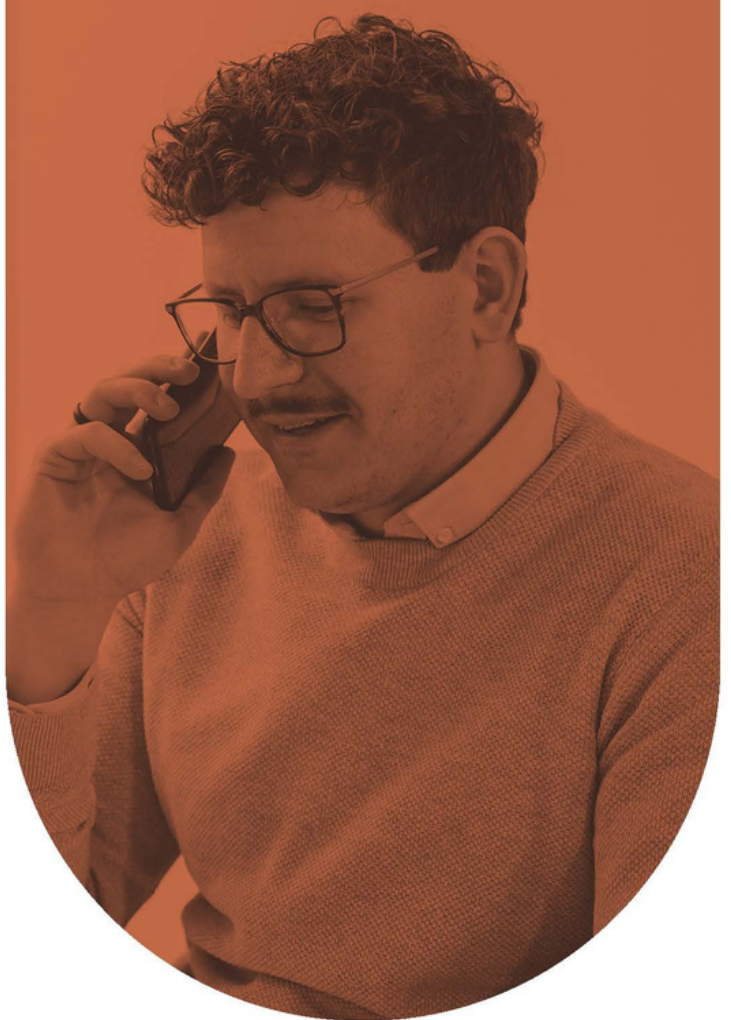
Your family and friends are facing significant challenges, too, and the weight of that reality can be crushing. This helpful **Supportive Conversation Library** gives you the tools to have difficult conversations about mental health, stress, addiction, anger and abuse with people you care about.

Bounceback: Reclaim Your Health

The Canadian Mental Health Association's **Bounceback: Reclaim Your Health** program is designed to help adults and youth aged 15+ manage low mood, mild to moderate depression, anxiety, stress or worry. This self-guided program uses workbooks and a trained coach to guide you and encourage reflection, building skills to help you improve your mental health. Bounceback is free of charge to users.

Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) "But at What Cost?" Teacher Mental Health Report

The Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF/FCE) pandemic research report, **"But at what cost?" Teacher mental health during COVID-19**, captures first-hand accounts and an in-depth understanding of living through a pandemic as a teacher during the 2020-2021 school year. The collected narratives from the interviews reveal how and why various aspects of teachers' professional lives contributed to a decline in mental health.



A man and a woman are standing and looking at a smartphone together. The man is on the left, wearing glasses and a light-colored jacket over a white shirt. The woman is on the right, also wearing glasses and a dark jacket over a white shirt. They are both holding the phone, and the man is pointing at the screen. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

The EdCan Network – Well at Work

Teachers experience stress and burnout at a greater rate than those in many other professions. This not only impacts their own mental health, but also their students' wellbeing and academic success – leading to significant costs for school districts, recruitment challenges, and reduced workplace morale. **Well at Work** aims to:

- Reduce stress, burnout and disability due to mental health problems among educators across Canada.
- Build capacity in education leaders to develop their own unique approaches that will improve workplace wellbeing, reduce financial costs, and create more positive working and learning environments.

Being Well at Work: Personalized Coaching for School Leaders

Being Well at Work is an EdCan Network program designed and delivered together with BTS Spark, a leading not-for-profit initiative that has coached over 13,000 K-12 leaders across Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States. The program enables K-12 education leaders and teachers to develop their personal wellbeing, resilience, and leadership skills. The program tackles the daily challenges of educational leadership with a certified coach.

Ontario Teachers' Federation – Survive and Thrive

Survive and Thrive is an online tool from the Ontario Teachers' Federation for beginning teachers, occasional teachers, mentors and teacher candidates. The site focuses on strategies to positively manage stress, address mental health issues and maintain a healthy work-life balance.



September

Wednesday, 13th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 20th LRTA Council Meeting
Monday, 25th LRTA New Rep Orientation (virtual)

October

Wednesday, 4th LRTA Executive Meeting
Friday, 6th LRTA Executive Retreat/Training
Wednesday, 11th LRTA New Member Celebration
Thursday, 12th Maternity/Parental Leave Seminar
Wednesday, 18th LRTA Council Meeting
Friday, 20th MTS PD Day

November

Wednesday, 1st LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 15th LRTA Council Meeting

December

Wednesday, 6th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 20th LRTA Council Meeting
Monday, 25th through Friday, Jan. 5th Winter Break

January

Wednesday, 10th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 17th LRTA Council Meeting

February

Wednesday, 7th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 21st LRTA Council Meeting

March

Wednesday, 6th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 13th LRTA Council Meeting
Monday, 25th through Friday, 29th Spring Break

April

Wednesday, 3rd LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 10th LRTA Council Meeting
Wednesday, 17th LRTA Annual General Assembly
Thursday, 18th Maternity/Parental Leave Seminar

May

Wednesday, 1st LRTA Executive Meeting
Thursday, 2nd LRTA Appreciation Dinner
Thursday, 9th through Friday, 11th Manitoba Federation of Labour Conference
Wednesday, 15th LRTA Council Meeting
Wednesday, 15th MTS AGM Binder Meeting
Thursday, 23rd through Saturday, 25th MTS AGM

June

Wednesday, 5th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 12th LRTA Retirement Reception
Wednesday, 19th LRTA Council Meeting

Reminder: If you have recently changed your name, please contact the LRTA office at 204-929-5782 or office@lrrta.mbteach.org and have your file updated.

CONTACT US

The LRTA office is closed from July 1st to Sept. 6th.

Should you require assistance, please contact the Manitoba Teachers' Society at 204-888-7961.

@preslrrta 

