

B.L.T.A Newsletter

Border Land Teachers'
Association

11/30/2016

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President's Message

Respectfully: Mary Chalmers
Somethings for 2016-2017:

Hello Everyone!

As always it has been a great start to the year. Every year it seems that the time speeds and before you know it the first set of report cards need to go out and Parent Teacher Conferences are upon us.

A few things:

- We are all subject to the Code of Professional Practice. You may have noticed that I included a portion of the Code of Professional Practice. (as well as a link to the Code) I did this as a reminder that each of us, myself included, are subject to the Code of Professional Practice. Within the Code of Professional Practice there are protections for all members to speak with their President, a Staff Officer from the Manitoba Teachers' Society. (Section 6 a,b, & c)
- If you have question regarding the BLTA or something that it is doing, please contact myself or

one of the members of the Executive and feel free to ask the question. We may not have the answer immediately but we will try to find it and help you in anyway

- Every year as President I try to get to every school whenever possible. If you would like me to come, I would be happy to come. During February I am available to come and share a book with a class with your school. Send me some dates that work for you!
- This year we have filled most of the roles on the Executive, however Professional Development is still looking for a Chairperson. The President has been filling this role, if you are interested and perhaps would like to co-chair with the President please contact me (Mary Chalmers).

*Border Land Teachers'
Association
Executive 2016 -2017*

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President: Mary Chalmers

Vice President: Kerry Enns

Treasurer: Carol Peters

Secretary: Melissa Nogier
Professional

Development: Mary Chalmers (ex-officio)

Workplace Safety &

Health: Kerry Enns

Collective Bargaining:

Rob Stradeski

Education Finance: Joel Wiebe

Public Relation:

Donna Osadchuk

Employee Benefits: Randi Cote

Contact us:

You can contact the Executive directly through their divisional emails if you have questions about the work they do on behalf of the Teachers' Association

You can contact the President Mary Chalmers at chalmersm@blsd.ca or borderlandteacherspresident@gmail.com or by cellphone at (204)371 0721.

Manitoba Teachers' Society Code of Professional Practice

The Code of Professional Practice establishes the required standards of conduct for all members of The Manitoba Teachers' Society, whether acting in an employed position under a Collective Agreement, or acting in an appointed or elected position. A member's professional behaviour must reflect the spirit as well as the letter of the Code. (1)
<http://www.mbteach.org/mtscms/2016/05/06/code-of-professional-practice->

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Workplace Safety & Health

Respectfully submitted by:

Kerry Enns

Violence at Work

It is a sad reality that teachers experience violence in their classrooms and schools. Thankfully, in our school division violent incidents are uncommon and typically aren't severe. Yet the reality is that they do occur despite our best efforts to create safe classrooms and develop plans for students who need extra behavior support. As teachers, we've traditionally seen violence as a teaching or student behavior issue. While violence does fit these categories, we also need to view it as a workplace safety and health issue.

Harassment at Work

No one deserves to be harassed at work. Harassment has been considered a Workplace Safety and Health issue for several years. The Act defines harassment as "as any inappropriate conduct, comment, display, action or gesture by a person on the basis of... race, creed, religion, colour; sex, sexual orientation, gender-determined characteristics; marital status, family status, source of income; political belief, political association, political activity; disability, physical size or weight, age, nationality, ancestry or place of origin". Bullying is a common form of harassment. The Act describes bullying as debilitating comments or treatment that occurs over a

long term. It also includes bullying that consists of a single, severe incident.

These definitions can be abstract, so here is a list of the kinds of behavior that falls under the harassment umbrella:

- verbal or written abuse or threats
- insulting, derogatory (mean, critical, embarrassing) comments, jokes or gestures
- personal ridicule (put-downs, teasing) or malicious gossip
- malicious or uncalled-for interference with another's work
- refusal to work or co-operate with others
- interfering with or vandalizing (damaging) personal property

Remember that harassment can come from many different sources. Harassment from colleagues, administration, parents, students, or members of the public are covered by the act.

If you experience harassment you can report it to your supervisor, the superintendent, or a provincial WSH officer. Remember that in cases of harassment the Code of Professional Conduct releases you from having to inform a colleague of your intention to take matters to higher authority.

For more information you can visit

<http://www.safemanitoba.com>.

You can also call MTS Staff Officer Darren Hardy (1-800-262-8803) or check with BLTA.

Employee Benefits

Respectfully Submitted by:

Randi Cote

Pension Sustainability Seminars

Please attend your regional and local seminars if you want to have a say in some of the changes that are being discussed in regards to our pension program. Please attend if you would like a better understanding of our pension program. Do you know what the difference is between a defined benefit plans vs. a defined contribution plan? Come and find out. Look up a seminar near you. (See table below for Seminar locations, date and times) **All teachers are Welcome!**

Maternity/Parental Leave Seminar

A seminar discussing information on this topic is in the works for January 16th 2017. Nancy Kerr, Teacher Welfare, Manitoba Teachers' Society. **All Teachers Welcome!**

Location: Roseau Valley School, Dominion City

Time: 5:30 – 7:00pm

RSVP: to President

Please check emails for further information regarding this topic.

PENSION SUSTAINABILITY SEMINARS

<u>Division/Region</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Contact Number</u>
Pembina Trails Teachers' Association	December 7, 2016 (Wednesday)	4:30 - 7:00 PM	Shriner's	Michelle/ PTTA	204-896-4857
St. James Teachers'	January 10, 2016 (Tuesday)	4:30 - 7:00 PM	McMaster Auditorium	Ray Desautels	204-955-3950
Northern - Thompson	January 14, 2016 (Saturday)	1:00 - 3:30 PM	RD Parker	Shaun Kennedy	204-307-1645
Central - Carmen	January 17, 2016 (Tuesday)	4:30 - 7:00 PM	Carman Collegiate	Melissa Benner	204-343-2023
Eastern - Ile des Chenes	February 7, 2017 (Tuesday)	4:30 - 7:00 PM	Ecole Ile des Chenes	Jonathan Waite	204-270-0215
River East Transcona	February 15, 2017 (Wednesday)	4:30 - 7:00 PM	K E Collegiate	Janice/RETTA	204-661-1823
Southern (Morris)	February 21, 2017 (Tuesday)	4:30 - 7:00 PM	Morris	Tammy Hodgins-Rector	204-736-2366
MTS Open	February 27, 2017 (Monday)	4:30 - 7:00 PM	McMaster Auditorium	GA/ Billie Couture	1 (800) 262 8803
Interlake (Selkirk)	March 13, 2017 (Monday)	4:30 - 7:00 PM	Lord Selkirk RSS	Mark Walterson	204-444-4632
French Open	March 20, 2017 (Monday)	4:30 - 7:00 PM	McMaster Auditorium	GA/ Billie Couture	
Attend your regional and local seminars if you want to have a say in some of the changes that are being discussed					

Ed Finance Report - November, 2016 Respectfully Submitted: Joel Wiebe

Based on the information provided by Joseph Warbinski, MTS, Policy Analyst, at the Ed Finance meeting in Winnipeg on November 5, 2016.

Things to consider:

- ✓ The year 2015 saw 18,000 immigrants added to Manitoba's population
- ✓ The year 2016 will probably see closer to 20,000 immigrants to Manitoba's population

✓ This is our future school enrollment, but it requires funding

✓ 2016-2017 FRAME budget is up 3.6% from the 2015-2016 FRAME budget (This was the election budget of the former Selinger government)

✓ What are the Pallister government's budget intentions?

Budget Cycle

- ✓ Throne Speech was presented on Monday November 21st, 2016
- ✓ Local school boards need to prepare preliminary

budgets for the upcoming school year (2017-2018) by the end of December. To do this, they are required to present its proposals and receive feedback and recommendations from the public. These public meetings are announced and are available for all to attend (including teachers)

✓ Late

January/February 2017 the provincial government will provide the Public School system funding announcement for the 2017-2018 school year. This is not how much each school division will get; rather, the allocation of funds to the various elements of the overall funding model. Each school board is eligible to obtain operating dollars from these allocations. The funding announcements

enable the local school boards to start finalizing their budgets.

Questions and Issues

✓ There has been a 30% drop in level 2 funding approvals for special needs students over the past few years.

✓ The Pallister government has made an election promise to cut the PST by 1%. How will this affect education spending? Is there a possibility that the province will look into a harmonized sales tax (HST) like other provinces? The HST is a combination of GST and PST, but includes taxes on items that were formerly untaxed. What about the possible source of revenue from the proposed carbon taxes? Would their potential revenue offset the 1% PST cut?

✓ The Pallister government has said that it intends to cut the provincial deficit of \$850 to \$900 million. How will it do this? Freezing the increases at 0% is a possibility. But costs are always rising and the 0% increase becomes a loss when inflation is factored in. What about a second year of 0%? A third or a fourth? Over time, this becomes a financial problem for local school boards because accumulated inflation quickly adds up.

✓ Is the recent labour strife at the University of Manitoba a sign of things to come for Public Education funding/underfunding?

I have access to various statistics such as these. Let me know what kinds of data you would like me to research for BLTA.

Manitoba Economic Summary:	2015	2016F	2017F
Real GDP	1.6%	2.1%	2.1%
Nominal GDP	2.6%	3.2%	4.0%
Employment	1.5%	0.0%	0.9%
Unemployment	5.6%	6.0%	5.8%
Inflation (CPI)	1.2%	1.7%	2.2%



B.L.T.A Special PD Fund

The B.L.T.A Special PD is going to reopen on December 1st, 2016. Applications will be accepted until January 31st, 2017 at 4:30pm. Watch for the information and application in your inbox.

Did you know?

- ❖ You can apply for mileage for PD that you have not already been reimbursed for.
- ❖ You can apply for hotel rooms to pay the other half of that you have not already been reimbursed for.
- ❖ You can just apply, we would love to support your professional growth.

Attention Fellow B.L.T.A. Members:



The Collective Bargaining Committee is looking to form a committee to represent our bargaining unit when negotiating our next collective agreement. I am hoping to have a member from every site. This is not a commitment to sit on the table team that will actually negotiate with the School Boards negotiations Committee. It will simply be a chance to influence what issues are discussed when we start collective bargaining. Our agreement still runs until June of 2018 so in the near future, this will not be a very intense commitment but it may involve more meetings as negotiating nears. If you are interested, please tell your BLTA council representative or contact me directly by email at robstradeski@hotmail.com. Thank you for taking the time to consider this.

Respectfully,
Rob Stradeski
Collective Bargaining Chair
Ross L. Gray School