



# SEINE RIVER TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

March  
2017  
Volume 12.3



## President's Message

In like a lion, out like a lamb... yes indeed, it's March! In the first three months of 2017, we've had our share of nice and not-so-nice weather, sometimes in the same week!

Regardless of the conditions outside, all of our members have been hard at work inside their buildings. Those in our high schools finished up one semester and moved into another, while our K-8 members have most recently put the finishing touches on their second set of report cards for the school year. Undoubtedly, most of us are looking forward to the opportunities Spring Break will bring us, and then the final sprint to the end of the year will be upon us.

My start to this new calendar year was not a pleasant one, as many of you know. Going through the passing of my father in January was difficult, even devastating at times. However, through reflection, I am able to take quite a number of positives out of the experience — I am, after all, a *glass-half-full* kind of person. First off, I am very thankful that we have compassionate leave built into our Collective Agreement, as I was able to take the time I needed to be with my family through the ordeal. I don't know exactly who was part of the team in 1966 that first achieved this article in our collective agreement, but looking at the modifications to the article over time, it's evident that the Division and our Association have long shared the view that when a member suffers a tragic loss, they need time to deal with the before and after effects.

Secondly, the outpouring of support from across the province was as overwhelming as it was uplifting. Within days of my father's death, I received emails and calls of

support from many of our friends at the Manitoba Teachers' Society, as well as from many presidents of other local associations. In fact, two such presidents reached out directly to see if there was any work that they could do for SRTA members while I took the time I needed away from the office. It goes to show that the support network we have here as part of MTS extends far beyond our local boundaries.

And finally, as the days and weeks elapsed, I received cards and condolences from individual schools, the SRPA school leadership group, and the trustees, senior administration, and office staff of the SRSD. It showed me that as often as I say that we are a family in this division, and that we really do have an amazing relationship across all segments of it, actions speak louder than words. The actions put forth by the exceptional people working here in Seine River demonstrated once again that we truly do come together and support one another when called upon, and for that I will always be grateful.

Speaking of which, if you've been paying attention to the news lately, there certainly have been a number of stories related to public sector workers and public education, and many members have been reaching out to me asking for more details. As news events happen, we want to make sure members are aware and supported. This is why once again I am encouraging all of you to make sure you are registered with MTS MyProfile. In all of my school visits so far, I've talked about having access to the most up-to-date information about our profession, and being able to be reached when important events occur. By being registered on MTS MyProfile, you ensure that MTS can get in touch with you if something significant to our profession is to occur. It's an intelligent and proactive way to stay involved with MTS, so I encourage you all to visit [www.mbteach.org](http://www.mbteach.org) and click on the "MyProfile/Members Area" link at the top (more information on page 7 of this newsletter).

Be well and take time for yourselves over Spring Break!

**In solidarity, for each of you and for each other,**

*Jonathan Waite*



# NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE



## Is The Sky Falling?

by Brian Trenchard,  
Employee Benefits Chair

Teachers often speculate about the status and sustainability of the Teachers' Retirement Allowance Fund (TRAF). Sometimes, there is worry or panic about where the fund is, or where it is going. So, is the sky falling?

Nope! Well, at least we are pretty sure they are not. As of now Account A (member contributions) is close to fully funded and fully sustainable, but there is very little margin.

Account B (government contributions), however, is a little less solid. Currently, Account B will not achieve a fully funded status unless the province commits significant funds — \$1.4 billion to be exact.

### What does that mean?

We have some choices to make. Members should understand that, depending on future investment results, and a desire for a higher margin, contribution rate increases may be necessary to avoid reductions in pension benefits.

Ideally, TRAF would like the Province and MTS to agree in advance to a maximum contribution level. If we don't meet our target investment returns, the province and MTS will probably consider how benefit levels could be reduced to keep TRAF plan sustainable.

### What happened at the Early and Mid Career Pension Sustainability Seminar?

In February the SRTA hosted the Eastern Region MTS/TRAF Early and Mid Career Pension Sustainability Seminar at École Ile des Chênes School. Basically we were given the information listed above. There was also more details about TRAF plan basics, how to increase your pension (with Additional Voluntary Contributions or AVCs), as well as services offered by TRAF.

There was some 'doom and gloom' discussion, just because some of the other provinces are making changes to their pensions plans and many of them have teachers paying more or receiving less. We were also given a feedback sheet that asked us to rank in order of preference between four options:

- Increased contributions-both sides equally (teachers/province).
- Increased contributions-unequally-teachers pay more.
- Increased to unreduced access age-example 55 to 60
- Other

*\*please note that this was not a vote, but a collection of feedback data.*

### Can I access the information I missed at the seminar?

Yes. Visit [TRAF.mb.ca](http://TRAF.mb.ca) or email [info@traf.mb.ca](mailto:info@traf.mb.ca) to obtain information or materials. Alternatively, you can contact Glen Anderson (MTS Staff Officer for Benefits) at 204-831-3052 or by email at [ganderson@mbteach.org](mailto:ganderson@mbteach.org).

If you have other questions about TRAF or other employee benefits programs at SRTA, you can also access your friendly neighbourhood SRTA Benefits Rep. Brian Trenchard at [benefits@srteach.org](mailto:benefits@srteach.org).

## SRTA PD Fund Status

Category	Amount Budgeted	Amount Allocated	Amount Remaining
In-Area & Out-of-Area	\$45,000	\$27,588	\$17,412
University Coursework	\$15,000	\$17,006	-\$2,006
Group Projects	\$5,000	\$2,365	\$2,635
Classroom Visits	Maximum of 40	8	32
Substitute Costs	\$30,000	\$2,970	\$27,030
Surplus	\$13,557	\$2,006	\$11,551



## Objects in the Mirror Are Closer Than They Appear

by Jonathan Waite

*(reprinted from SRTA website January 2017)*

As the holiday season has passed and the start of a new calendar year has just occurred, it is commonplace for people to reflect upon the achievements of the past year as they prepare to embark upon the challenges of new one. This is a very important practice for teachers. Given the nature of the invaluable work teachers do, I believe that, upon reflection of the closing year, all members are amazed by the vast number of successes they achieved, the volume of events and activities they were connected to and the incalculable number of occasions where they have positively influenced the lives of young people. On a larger scale, this reflective practice is very important for your Society and the SRTA as well.

For the Manitoba Teachers' Society, the year 2016 witnessed achievements by the Society that reverberated both provincially and for individual members.

In January, 2016, the Manitoba government announced a change that now permits members to get full credit for seniority and salary when they take maternity and parental leaves. The closing of the "Mommy Gap" was the result of strong advocacy by your Society for the last number of years. By closing the "Mommy Gap", the Society has ensured that teachers will no longer be penalized in pay and pension benefits to have children.

In April, 2016, the Manitoba Teachers' Society ensured that the concerns of teachers were front and centre in the provincial election campaign. "Teachers know our kids need more support" was a refrain that was shared with the public and with political parties through advertisements from the Society and local associations. A virtual town-hall for members was hosted by MTS prior to the election and proved to be informative and enlightening for teachers. More importantly, however, the actions of the Society, local associations and individual teachers during the campaign cemented the position of the Society as being the vanguard of public education in Manitoba with the electorate.

The 97th MTS Annual General Meeting witnessed resolutions being brought forward to guide the Society in future endeavours. Of particular note was a resolution that would discourage MTS members from travelling to Mississippi or North Carolina for PD opportunities because those states have legislation that legalize discrimination. This resolution was carried unanimously by the delegates at the MTS AGM. Further to this action for equality, was the participation of hundreds of teachers in Pride Parades and other activities throughout the province over the summer. These examples underscore the belief of teachers that members embrace differences and that all people have the right to the same protections, liberties and rights.

In the autumn, MTS and individual teachers provided visible and vocal support to our educational colleagues at the University of Manitoba. The UMFA strike was the culmination of a breakdown in negotiations with the university's administration. As UMFA members took to the picket lines, MTS members walked with them. As MTS is the vanguard of public education in Manitoba, supporting UMFA members in their struggle was both natural, necessary, and hopefully, helped UMFA in reaching a deal.

More recently MTS was active in interpreting and contextualizing the PISA results from Paris based OECD. By interpreting the results, both the Minister of Education and the President of the Society were able to accurately focus the results as a reflection of the level of poverty in our province. In addition, both the Minister, Ian Wishart, and President, Norm Gould,

*(continued on page 4)*



# NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE

*(Objects in the Mirror Are Closer Than They Appear continued from page 3)*

agree that poverty must be addressed to improve outcomes in Manitoba schools. For MTS members who work in environments impacted by poverty every day, the connection between poverty and educational success cannot be overstated.



For the Seine River Teachers' Association, 2016 was a very busy year that posed many challenges but was marked by our collective resiliency and ability to support one another.

In May, Sandy Turcotte became the second SRTA member to successfully run for a position on the MTS Provincial Executive, joining Jonathan Waite as a Member-at-Large. Both Jonathan and Sandy have been hard at work in their positions, not just for SRTA members, but for all of those who are part of MTS.

As September saw the start of another school year, the SRTA Council and Executive was full of members representing and working on behalf of colleagues in all worksites. Twelve of thirteen chairperson positions were filled by individual members for 2016-2017, with one Executive member serving double duty. As well, a new position was created, first as a liaison and then as an Ad hoc chair, dedicated to issues related to Indigenous Education. And to top it off, SRTA members have volunteered their time to serve on our many committees. The strength of the SRTA has always been the active involvement of these types of members.

The SRTA was also pleased last year to continue its collaborative work with the Division in relation to a variety of issues and concerns. The Division extended an opportunity to the SRTA to take part in the Lyn Sharratt professional development session with school teams, and two spots at the upcoming Our Human Rights Journey workshop were given to SRTA Executive members. SRTA members should value the fact that the lines of communication with the Division are always open, and the SRTA appreciates the opportunity to exchange ideas, information and to advocate on behalf of members.

2016 was a very busy year marked with many challenges, achievements and successes. Looking to the future, 2017 will bring a new share of challenges; some expected and others not. As the New Year dawns, members need not make a resolution but rather, a commitment. Become more active in the SRTA and your provincial Society. Ensure that you are informed of issues that may impact your teaching, your class or your health. Your Society and Association need you to be participant and a supporter. No longer can Society/Association business be left to others to deal with. Every member has a responsibility to be actively engaged in your Society's/Association's business.

How can you become actively engaged in this important work? Your level of engagement will vary dependent upon circumstances. However, all members can be engaged by simply bookmarking the MTS and SRTA websites and visiting them frequently. All members should read the SRTA newsletters and the Manitoba Teacher. All members should be followers on twitter/Facebook of MTS and SRTA. All members must be registered with MTS on "MyProfile". All members must complete the MTS Workload Survey next month. In addition, where applicable, all members must attend the general meeting of your association. Spread out over the year, these actions would amount to a few minutes per week per member. However, these few minutes per member would provide the collective with a well informed and well connected membership. The whole would indeed be "greater than the sum of its parts".

The power of collective action brings about positive change and the 15 000 members need to be involved in order that our voice is strong, that our voice resonates and that our voice is heard. We have a great responsibility as the vanguard of public education and each of us must fulfill that responsibility.

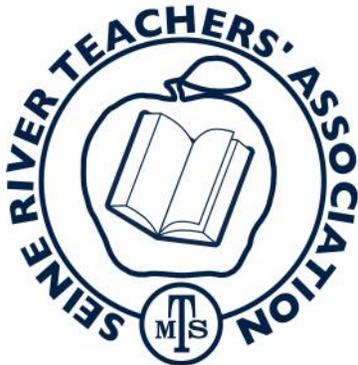
You have read just a bit of what your Society/Association has done for you last year. For 2017, what are you going to do for your Society and Association?

Take care of yourself and take care of each other.



# SRTA ELECTIONS

# SRTA EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS



*coming*  
**MAY 2017**

★ ★ NOMINATIONS OPEN UNTIL APRIL 24, 2017 ★ ★

NOMINATIONS ALSO ACCEPTED AT APRIL 25 COUNCIL MEETING

Send nominations to  
**CATHY GAMBLE**  
at ECOLE STE  
ADOLPHE SCHOOL  
or email  
[elections@srteach.org](mailto:elections@srteach.org)

### POSITIONS UP FOR ELECTION

- President
- Secretary
- Employee Benefits Chair
- Education Finance Chair
- Professional Development Chair
- Public Relations Chair
- Workplace Safety and Health Chair



# SRTA/MTS EVENTS

## SRTA Bowling

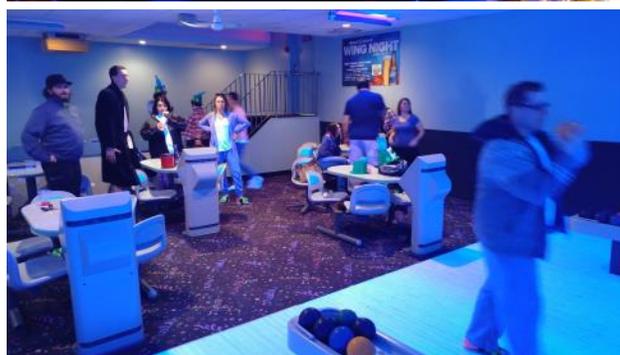
The 2017 SRTA Bowling event was another successful social gathering enjoyed by all that could make it!

Winning teams were:

- “The Dudes”(Richer) — highest team average score and team spirit
- “Ball Gobblers” (various schools) — best team name
- “&%#\*\$@!” (Dawson Trail) — team with the most improved player (Corissa) from game 1 to 2

Alana Klopick won the \$100 door prize just for showing up!

Big thanks to all that attended and to SRTA Wellness Chair Paul Grosskopf for organizing another fun event.



## MTS Curling 2017

**Brandon, MB—March 3-5**

The 49th MTS Curling bonspiel was held earlier this month at the Riverview Curling Club in Brandon. The SRTA was well represented with a team (pictured here) that made it fairly far into the B-side draw. SRTA President Jonathan Waite also participated, joining a team of fellow Provincial Executive members.

Next year’s event will be the 50th anniversary of the bonspiel, and rumours are that Brandon will once again be the host.



(L-R) third Joel Sweetland (ARB), second Kaitlan Fisher (DTS), skip Dan Lagacé (ALC), and lead Rebecca Brown (SAE)

## How to Sign up for your **MyProfile** Account

Go to the MyProfile members' area of the MTS Website at <https://memberlink.mbteach.org>



If this is your first visit to the MyProfile site, you will need to follow these four steps:

- 1 Click on the red button named “Sign Up Now”;
- 2 Fill out the four required fields;

- 3 If you are a MTS member or a new MTS member and have never entered the site previously, fill out all the fields under Option 2;
 

*\*If you are a member and do not know your MTS number, please use the “Forgot your MTS Number?” link on the right side of the page. Or, you can contact the Information Management department at 204-837-4666, ext. 331 or toll free at 1-866-494-5747, ext. 331.*
- 4 Click the red button labeled “Register”. You will receive an email, to the address you provided, indicating that you now have access to the site.



## Teacher Tech Summit- San Diego

by Ria Pirie, La Barriere Crossings

From February 6-8th, I attended the Teacher Tech Conference in San Diego California. The pre-conference included three Keynote speakers Dan Meyer, Carl Hooker and Grant Lichtman, discussing topics such as “Full Stack Teaching”, learning with devices, and “Future Education”.

One session we attended was "Tonka Teacher Talks". The presenters were from Minnetonka Public Schools in Minneapolis. Here, their schools have 1-1 iPads for grades 5-12. The presenters went through several apps they use for various grades as well as discussed the "Learning Instructional Framework" they designed based on the technology the division uses. The framework guides teachers in using iPads in their classrooms as a learning tool rather than just for research or games.



One app they showed us was called Blendspace. Using this app, teachers can input a variety of resources that the kids can use to complete research or a project. Resources can include videos, images, PDFs and are put into a frame so that students can access them all from one screen and all the resources they need to complete a learning task is at their fingertips.

The afternoon was spent "AppSmashing". This was a hands-on-session where we worked at using more than one app to create a final product. Some of the apps we "smashed" were Tellagami, MoMA, Book Creator, iMovie, Shadow Puppet, Pic Collage, Explain Everything and Draw and Tell. By the end of the session, we were familiar with using all of these apps.

I also became familiar with Drawp, which is an app similar to SeeSaw. Teachers and students can share with each other, allowing for immediate feedback as well, parents can see what students are doing in the classroom and they can comment on it as well.

The app I am most excited about is called "Classkick". Teachers can ask students questions through the iPad and view student responses



and work in real time. If students need assistance, they can virtually raise their hand and the teacher can respond and give them guidance right through their iPad.

In conclusion, the conference provided some interesting ways to use the iPad with students to have them show case their knowledge. Although the conference was smaller than expected, it was worth the trip.

## Making Sense of Neuroscience in the Early Years Classroom

by Kathryn Reuter, École St. Norbert Immersion

In recent years there has been an increased interest in teaching the “whole child” in the classroom. Teachers are seeing an increase in anxiety and related disorders in their students and are having to become more adept at not only teaching the curriculum but also addressing the socio-emotional needs of the students. This has gone beyond the basic classroom management most teachers are used to providing in their classrooms. With this increased attention to the emotional needs of our students, many teachers have turned to trying to understand what is happening neurologically with their students. Will play-based learning be able to address and alleviate these behavioral and mental health problems from arising in the early year’s classroom?

*(continued on page 14)*



## **“Inclusive Education Conference, Achieving Education For All: Resolving challenges of learning difference, learner diversity, & at-risk youth” UWI St. Augustine Campus, Trinidad and Tobago by Melinda Roy, Collège St. Norbert Collegiate**

This conference was a once in a lifetime opportunity! It checked all the boxes. Whenever a conference whose main theme is diversity begins with a student symphony playing Bob Marley’s “One Love”, with violins and cellos, you know it is going to be a real treat! The presenters and participants spanned from all corners of the world that included, Canada, US, Africa, Caribbean, Saudi Arabia, England, and India. Having all of these educators in one room, discussing how to make our systems better for the diverse students we serve, was truly an enriching experience I will not soon forget.

The conference started with a representative from UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) addressing the participants. Their message was that still today, children/youth from around the world are being marginalized because of their social origin, economic conditions, sex, ethnic background, and religion. I found this discussion very interesting, especially when discussing school challenges among other countries. When talking about human rights and the education system in terms of socio economic status, I found myself thinking about some of my at-risk students who fall under this category. The presenter talked about how our educational goals are often unrealistic and even problematic for students who are struggling for survival. This also brought caused me to reflect on our student refugees, who are experiencing trauma. Our goals for these students should look different.

On day two, there was a presenter that seemed to be talking directly to me, as I resonated with many of the talking points he was speaking about. He was discussing intelligence, and how it is a “feedback loop”. Teaching and learning is not linear, it operates on a loop that is guided by relationship and information that exists between the teacher and the student. I found this very interesting and enlightening. If we have this mentality when working with students at-risk, we will be better able to meet their individual needs. We as educators cannot assume that meta cognition is just a concept that a students has or lacks, we have to teach and guide them towards thinking in meta cognitive terms.



Another major concept that I took away from this conference is how any kind of transformation takes time, it is not a sprint to the finish line. When working with students at-risk who experience challenges in several areas of their lives, we have to allow for time when introducing new concepts and expectations. Often we as educators give up to easily if something doesn’t produce results quickly. This can also be reflected in our educational goals for students. Graduation is not always the most important goal, becoming a worthwhile citizen may serve as a much more beneficial goal for some students who deal with social difficulties.

What I took away from this conference is how we are more the same than different in our education systems across the globe. Some of our students struggles may be on a larger scale than others, but I could relate my teaching experiences to that of my colleagues around the globe. Focusing on appropriate goals that are not generic in nature are more effective ways for programming for at-risk students.



## 2017 National Reading Recovery & K-6 Literacy conference

by Natalie Moore, Dawson Trail School

This past January I was given the opportunity by the SRTA to attend the National Reading Recovery and Early Years Literacy Conference in Ohio. Upon my registration I was able to select from 7 mini sessions and one leadership conference to attend. Being new to reading recovery I selected many sessions surrounding the instruction of reading recovery including how to support EAL learners in reading recovery, fast visual processing, and supporting students with hearing and recording sounds. I also attended a workshop that focused on how to ensure that students are the one doing the work. She stressed the value in using the gradual release model as well as the importance of echoing your main teaching point throughout that release not only that day, but for the week.

I also had the opportunity to hear keynote speakers such as Jan Richardson. She presented videos that helped me fill in the gaps as well as helped me refine my current practices. Although I know I would have had a great experience had I gone alone, what made this experience more valuable was that I had 6 other colleagues to share it with. The opportunity to discuss and share not only during the sessions, but over a meal really demonstrates the care and desire the people in this division have for making the learning experience for our students the best it can be. I would really recommend you attend this conference should you be given the opportunity.

## Nutrition for Health and Changing Lifestyles

University of Manitoba 1210-DO1

by Joanne Vielfaure-Romaniuk, SRSD Social Worker

This fall, I decided to take a class that would help me support my role as a Social Worker and also holds a personal interest: healthy eating and active lifestyle – therefore I took Healthy Nutrition and Changing Lifestyles – an online course offered at the University of Manitoba by Kirsten Hildahl. I wanted to gain more knowledge and ideas on how to support best practise. In my role as a School Social Worker, this conversation around healthy nutrition gets brought regularly! This topic gets a lot of air time when working with families and children as healthy nutrition and physical activity plays a huge role in mental well being.

This course was exceptional! It had weekly chapters starting with the biology of the body and then dove into the facts/myths/truths on food and nutrition – we had a

big project to do on our own eating habits! Part of our project was using EATracker – which I encourage you all to check out (it can be downloaded on your device). It is user friendly and easy to use and the goal of this app is to track what you eat and it will help you better understand your diet and help you foster change.

The second half of the course talked about all the different minerals and vitamins. These chapters were very intense as it went into details on their roles, how they interact with each other, the signs and symptoms of overdosing and/or under-nourishment from these critical nutrients, the short and long term consequences of under/mal nourished.

This course concluded on the importance of physical activity – and its critical role in children, adults and elderly.





## Groups in Guidance

by Amy Scherbain, Collège St. Norbert Collegiate

Group counselling can be an effective tool to use in the high school setting to reach multiple students with various issues at the same time. This is important in the school setting where an increase in mental health issues among adolescents is increasing and the number of hours available to help those students is remaining the same or decreasing. This course is different from the PBDE course Groups in Guidance where the focus is on psychoeducational groups, teaching group members the skills to help with their issues.

This full year course is separated into two terms with the first term focused on group therapy theory and what to be aware of while leading a psychotherapy group. The focus of psychotherapy groups is on person-to-person relationships within the group in the here and now. Group leaders facilitate sessions while keeping in mind characteristics of effective groups such as: universality, altruism, hope, imitative behaviour, group cohesiveness and imparting information. Research suggests that a group will follow the same patterns as a family unit and behaviours will emerge as in a family. Group therapy allows members to reframe or correct those behaviours in the group setting and apply new behaviours in their life outside the group. Group also shows members that they are not in isolation and that others feel the same feelings and have similar thoughts. This concept of universality gives members hope and the understanding that they are not alone. This new community can support and help them work through their problems. The second term of the course focuses on running a therapy group in the community using the skills and techniques learned in the first term. I am looking forward to the challenge of running a group and seeing the changes that happen for group members.

## EdTech Innovation Summit – San Diego

by Jeff Gusdal, La Barriere Crossings

This PD was set up with a focus on how to use iPads and other forms of technology successfully in classroom and how to integrate this usage into a whole school or class plan and philosophy.

On Monday, there was a presenter who talked about a couple of pretty interesting apps to use in the classroom. One of the apps, called Classkick, looks like it can be really useful in a mathematics classroom. This app allows you to assign math questions for any topic and students can complete them, individually, on their iPads. The app allows the teacher real-time monitoring of what each student is doing as they answer the questions, allowing multiple assessment opportunities. It also allows students, who may be shy, the opportunity to ask for and receive

help remotely, directly to their iPads without the teacher having to come to their desks in front of everyone.

On Tuesday, we started off with a session for 1-to-1 iPad classroom use. This was presented by a school team in Minnetonka who use iPads from grades 5 to 12 in every subject area in their school. They discussed how they set up learning goals and monitoring processes through many different areas, incorporating technology and iPad uses into the structure.

They went over a multitude of different apps that can be used through all grade and subject areas. They discussed



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# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

*(EdTech Innovation Summit – San Diego cont'd from page 10)*

how iPad use is very beneficial for students, allowing them access to information quicker, plus giving them the ability to be engaged and learn in many different ways. They listed many positives of 1-to-1 iPad classrooms, improving communication, building oral speaking skills, enhancing creativity and innovation, promoting collaboration with fellow peers and also giving each type of student learner the opportunity to participate in classroom discussions in a variety of ways. A couple of interesting apps they discussed were Thinglink and Schoology. Schoology is an app that you can 'smash' with many other apps. It provides classroom discussion boards, collaborative opportunities, chances for students to record assignments on their iPads for teacher and peers to check out, as well as opportunities to ask questions of the teacher and share thoughts with their classmates. Thinglink provides the students with an opportunity to use pictures and a recording option



to create assignments for many different subject areas. They can put pictures of different historical persons or events and do a voiceover, discussing the person's or event's importance in history, or recreating a story or historical adventure.

Our next session was a tech infused workshop, exploring a variety of different options to use technology to help enhance writing and providing engaging platforms to entice reluctant writers. One of the main things we looked at during this session was Bookcreator, which we were already very familiar with. There were some other apps as well, but unfortunately a lot of them seemed to be focused on earlier grade levels. We were able to play around with Bookcreator some more, and figure out ways to

'smash' different apps with it to further enhance student's writing pieces.

Another session we went to was specifically on 'App Smashing'. This session was longer than the previous ones, as there were many different hands-on activities to accomplish and learn about. The basic idea of this session was to show us a bunch of iPad apps that can be 'smashed' (combined with each other) to help make projects more thorough. These types of apps allow us to focus on all the different multiple intelligences and integrate different ones into one assignment. The primary app the presenter focused on was Bookcreator. He showed us how to start a book and become familiar with using other apps to add to it. We went over how to use Puppet Edu, Pic Kids, Tellagami and ThingLink. We spent time with each app, creating something and saving it, and then adding it to our project in BookCreator. It was a great opportunity to learn about a bunch of different apps that can be smashed together.



**Contact us!**



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Twitter: [@seineriverteach](https://twitter.com/seineriverteach)



Facebook: [fb.me/seineriverteach](https://fb.me/seineriverteach)



## Counselor before educator

by Nadine Lesage, École Lorette Immersion

This year I have decided to continue my studies in the education world through university coursework. I have decided to specialize myself in counseling. Ever since I have started my studies towards becoming an educator, I have always been interested in become a guidance counselor. This fall, I began my studies towards my postbaccalaureat in counseling. I was able to take two courses through the University of Saint-Boniface. The first one, entitled *Counselling à l'élémentaire* (Elementary School Counseling), took place on Monday nights in the classroom from September 12th to December 5th and it was facilitated by Robert Buck. The other one, entitled *Counseling et éthique* (Ethics in Counseling), took place online from September 6th to December 22nd and it was facilitated by Hélène Archambault. There were other teachers, counselors, resource teachers and principals who also attended these courses.

The two courses complimented each other well, as the one talked about the meaning of counseling, its code of ethics and the counselor's role. While learning this, there were many case studies given to work on. These allowed me to familiarize myself with the code of ethics and to put myself in real-life situations. The other course, *Elementary School Counseling*, also allowed me to put into practice what I was learning in the other course. The teacher made the contents of the coursework very practical and explicit. In this course, we were also introduced to documents that are very useful when unsure about the course of action needed to take as a counselor.

As the fall term preceded, I was able to take back what I was learning into the classroom. In the *Elementary School Counseling* course, the facilitator asked that we present an intervention that was done with a group or an individual in our current school. This was practical, as we were able to see the different interventions that were being done in the various schools. Also, we were able to present something that could benefit the students at the same time. Another assignment that was given to us was to prepare our very own annual counseling plan. While elaborating our plan, we were to include the various components we had learnt throughout the term and to ensure that it was beneficial to our students.

What is it that our students need to reach their full potential? I believe that a lot of what I have learnt in these two courses during the fall term could be useful to other teachers, as these courses have made me realize what is most important to our students. Ensuring that our students feel that they belong, that they are listened and that they are understood - that is what is most essential to give our students. Also ensuring that they feel a connection with their teacher and/or peers, is ensuring that our students are getting the best academic experience. What will our students truly retain from their school experience?

*"Education is what remains after one has forgotten everything he learned in school." - Einstein*

These two courses have helped me better understand our students and what they need. In order to enable yourself to be a good educator, I believe it is important to understand the student. Our students are our number one priority so I believe that before excelling as a teacher, it is important to in some way be a good counselor, to be able to understand the needs of our students and help them in their obstacles.

*"Educating is not only a transmission of knowledge." – Robert Buck*



## Overview of Educational Issues

Brandon University - Instructor: Dr. Burcu Yaman Ntelioglou  
by Mireille Bazin-Berryman

I have begun my Master's journey through Brandon University. For both personal and professional reasons, I will be concentrating on Special Education. Brandon University offers Masters programs in a primarily online format which works very well for many educators and their busy lives. I completed a post baccalaureate several years ago and once again got the itch for university level learning.

My first course was entitled Overview of Educational Issues. The goal of the instructor and the university for this course was to "engage students in critical discussion of the main issues facing the educational system." The course was presented through document shares, online interactive sessions, and email. This was my first experience with a course being taught in this manner but it was flexible and convenient.

At the beginning of the course we were presented with the main issues facing the educational system. The course was very personalized from that point forward, as we focused our research and assignments on areas that were of interest and concern to our own situations.

My focus was on bilingualism and special education. Through my research I realized that there is very little research on bilingualism and special education but I was able to determine some logical next steps for myself. I wrote these next steps into four essential questions:

- 1) What do I need to know and understand about second language acquisition in order to support my staff's professional development needs?
- 2) What does research show are the most effective methods and strategies of teaching a second language to majority language speakers?
- 3) What can be done around process and policy to promote consistency?
- 4) How do the above three questions apply to creating an inclusive school?

I am hoping to be able to delve into these essential questions as part of my PGM in order to become a stronger immersion principal.

I would highly recommend the Brandon University Masters programs to those educators who want to continue their education but need the flexibility of online courses. I realize that this is just my first course but the program is very well laid out and there is no guessing on how it will play out as although it is flexible it is also a prescriptive program. The next three years of my education are planned out and I know where I will be at each step along the way.

I look forward in sharing more steps along the way with you in future articles.

*(Making Sense of Neuroscience in the Early Years Classroom continued from page 8)*

There has been an increasing number of researchers involved in the topic of brain development in early learners. This bodes well for educators in this field as they are able to make decisions based on research and empirical findings. With this increased abundance of research, educators and scientists will need to become more equitable partners in continuing our efforts to improve our evidence-based practices within the education community. The brain has a logical way that it develops. When we, as educators, use research to inform our teaching we are able to support good brain development and learning in our students.

Some students arrive in our classrooms with brains that have had a limited amount of exposure to novelty and discovery. We have to work with these students so that they can develop these areas of the brain in order to perform the complex processes that reading and learning require. I support the theory that optimal brain development arises from a rich environment of play and choice. This is challenging for teachers in classrooms; we must stay current with the research and literature so our students are able to reach their maximum potential.





## NOTICE OF CALL

This notice is given in compliance with Bylaw II of The Manitoba Teachers' Society.

The 98th Annual General Meeting of the Provincial Council of The Manitoba Teachers' Society will be held at 9:00 a.m., May 25, 26 and 27, 2017 at the Fairmont Hotel, Winnipeg.

The Provincial Council consists of representatives named by teacher associations and Les éducatrices et éducateurs francophones du Manitoba plus the members of the current Provincial Executive. The number of delegates representing each association depends on the number of members in that association.

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## AVIS DE CONVOCATION

L'avis de convocation a été envoyé en conformité avec le principe directeur II de la Manitoba Teachers' Society.

La 98e Assemblée générale annuelle du Conseil provincial de la Manitoba Teachers' Society aura lieu à 9 h les 25, 26 and 27 mai 2017 à l'hôtel Fairmont, Winnipeg.

Le Conseil provincial est formé des personnes représentantes nommées par les associations locales d'enseignantes et d'enseignants et par les Éducatrices et éducateurs francophones du Manitoba ainsi que des membres de l'Exécutif provincial. Le nombre de personnes déléguées nommées pour représenter une association locale est basé sur le nombre de membres actifs de cette association.

## MTS Provincial Council Delegates & Alternates

The official delegates from SRTA to the 2017 MTS Provincial Council (AGM) are Rebecca Brown (Vice-President), Kaitlan Fisher (Professional Development Chair), Lisa Harder (Equity & Social Justice Chair), Dan Lagacé (Collective Bargaining/Resolutions Chair), Jenn Lapkin (Education Finance Chair), Eric Lindquist (Treasurer), and Cindy Mason (Secretary).

The SRTA will be seeking 2-3 alternate delegates to attend the meeting as well. Information will be distributed via Council Representative in April.

## Questions and Answers



**Q: If we are starting our staff meeting at 3:30pm, what is a reasonable duration for the meeting and at what point are we no longer required to stay?**

A: The position of the SRTA is that anything more than 90 minutes would be unreasonable, and that is written into our Policies and Procedures document. So, based on a 3:30 pm start, the meeting would hopefully be done no later than 5:00 pm. If there were a particular circumstance which required a bit more time on a one-time basis, hopefully this is communicated with staff in advance of the meeting. No member should leave a staff meeting early unless it was agreed to with the principal before hand. Time conflicts happen, and it usually should only take a conversation with the principal to resolve such conflicts.

**Q: If I book a medical appointment and no sub is available, can I be mandated to work?**

A: It depends. The answer is no if the teacher has given enough notice and that plans were made to have a sub come in. It is extremely difficult to reschedule appointments with specialists and some doctors that are in high demand. The answer may be yes if the request is made last minute without giving notice to the school principal/VP and that the situation is non-urgent. Again, if there is an emergency, it would not be reasonable to ask the employee to work when they need immediate medical attention.

**Q: How early do I have to be in my classroom at the beginning of the school day?**

A: As stated in the Miscellaneous Provisions Regulation of the Education Administration Act, "A teacher must be on duty in the school at least 10 minutes before the morning session begins and at least five minutes before the afternoon session begins, unless prevented from doing so by exceptional circumstances."

## Upcoming Dates

SRTA Council meeting: April 25, 2017  
SNAC, 4:30 pm

SRTA Executive meeting: April 11, 2017  
Chicken Chef Lorette, 4:30 pm

MTS Provincial Executive:  
April 27-28, 2017  
McMaster House

SRSD Board Meetings:  
April 11, 25, May 9, 23, 2017  
Division Office

Presidents' Council/South Central Presidents' Council:  
April 29, 2017  
McMaster House

MTS Annual General Meeting of Provincial Council:  
May 25-27, 2017  
Fairmont Hotel, Winnipeg

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"You know, I'm really going to miss our little chats over spring break."