



# SEINE RIVER TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

May  
2016  
Volume 11.5



## President's Message

### Dear valued members of the Association,

With only one more month on the 2016-2017 school calendar, I hope that you are all finding moments to rest, reflect and recharge as we embark on the sprint to the end of the school year. Things have been busy in the Association, as is so often the case at this time of year. I know that everyone in Seine River has a lot on their plate, so I hope all of you were able to find ways to get outside and enjoy the nice weather that we have experienced in the past weeks.

### SRSD Volleyball

The SRTA was happy to partner with the SRSD to bring back the annual SRSD Volleyball tournament, which took place on April 29, 2016 at CSNC and ESNI. The competition was friendly and entertaining for all! Big thanks to the Members from Richer, Ste. Anne Elementary, Ste. Anne Collegiate, Arborgate, Dawson Trail School, École St. Norbert Immersion, Collège St. Norbert Collegiate, La Salle, and Collège Lorette Collegiate who came out to participate and support the event.

### MTS AGM

The Manitoba Teachers' Society Annual General Meeting took place on May 26-28, 2016 at the Fairmont in Winnipeg. The SRTA delegation included Rebecca Brown, Leslie Buffie, Dan Lagace, Eric Lindquist, Cindy Mason and Sandy Turcotte, with Kaitlan Robertson and Ashley McKague attending part of the meeting as alternates. Our delegation showcased dedication and support throughout the three days of business, and my thanks go to each of them.

At first glance, this year's meeting agenda looked slightly different than in previous years, due in part to the

addition of breakout group discussions scheduled on Friday. This is the first time I can remember MTS including such an activity as part of AGM, and it was a wonderful experience to be sure. These sessions, where small groups discussed ways to build connections, engage community and encourage collaboration, were a follow-up to the keynote presentation by Rob Weil of the American Federation of Teachers, who encouraged attendees to "be prepared" for anything that may come.

The business of the Society was done in a respectful way, with many people stepping to a microphone to offer their support for/against motions, or to ask questions. Some of the notable resolutions debated were:

- Establishment of a *Women in Education Leadership Commission* **(Carried)**
- Recognition of Calls to Action 8, 14, 57, 62, 63 and 66 (specific to education) of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report* **(Carried unanimously)**
- Translation of MTS Handbook into French **(Carried – motion was seconded by Dan Lagace of SRTA)**
- Changing AGM to BGM (Biennial General Meeting) format **(Defeated after 2 hours of debate)**
- Recommendation for Locals to include a representative whose responsibilities would include Indigenous Education Issues **(Carried)**
- Expansion of Women's Caucus from 1.25 hours to 2 hours **(Carried)**
- Investigation and examination of issues of inequity related to Early Childhood Education **(Carried)**
- Recommendation to Manitoba Education that curricular outcomes related to healthy relationships and sexuality include discussion of consent as, "affirmative, ongoing, mutual, conscious and uncoerced" **(Carried unanimously)**
- Adoption of Society position that members not attend PD in US states that have legislation which legalizes discrimination **(Carried unanimously)**
- Support and facilitation of participation in Pride activities within Manitoba **(Carried)**

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# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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*(President's Message continued from page 1)*

As you can see, many of the resolutions this year were proposed to address issues related to equity and social justice. I am happy to be teaching in SRSD, where one of its priorities for all employees is to, "celebrate and support the individual uniqueness of all." The SRTA has been asked to participate in reviews of key Divisional policies related to safe schools, workplace safety and health, and respectful workplaces. We have accepted this invitation without hesitation and look forward to working with our divisional counterparts in 2016-2017 on these documents.

Our very own Sandy Turcotte was elected to the MTS Provincial Executive for the 2016-2017 school year. Our congratulations go to Sandy for her successful campaign. I look forward to working with her at the provincial level, and I hope all of our Members support her as she works on your behalf.

## **SRTA & MTS Golf**

I am looking forward to taking part in the **Annual Colleen Kachur-Reico Memorial Golf Tournament** on June 9<sup>th</sup>. Notices went out to schools and via email early in May, so hopefully you had a chance to register for the event if you were interested.

Later in the month, the SRTA plays host to the Annual MTS Golf Tournament at Oakwood Golf Course in Ste. Anne. There were 14 people who sent in their names prior to May 23<sup>rd</sup>, so the Association will be well represented at the event. I'm crossing my fingers for nice weather!

With that, I will end things off for this edition, but don't forget that the June newsletter will be sent out via email and on our website at the end of the month. Until then...

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

*Jonathan Waite, President*

## **Get your shirt on: Join other teachers at the Pride Parade, June 5**

***Get this cool MTS teacher tee free! Just show your pride by joining our MTS walking group at the 2016 Pride Parade on June 5.***

**There's plenty of colour and excitement as the day starts with a rally in front of Legislature. Be there at 11 a.m. to pick up your awesome shirt. The parade begins at noon. And don't forget to stop into the MTS tent in the Pride Festival Kids Zone at The Forks.**

**We have free face painting and decorating for kids 12 and under. You'll be surrounded by plenty of food carts and a great summer vibe!**





# YOUR EXECUTIVE

## Collective Bargaining

by Dan Lagacé, Collective Bargaining Chair

### Contract ratified through 2017-2018

Last April, we were fortunate to have our current collective agreement extended. It did not come easy! There were many reasons that members of this school division did not make it out to Lorette for the ratification vote. One main issue we encountered was the weather. It was definitely a factor well out of our control. Your executive of the SRTA heard every reason.... We are all busy!

The importance of this contract is truly unexplainable. Our division was 1 of 3 divisions who's contract ended in June of 2017. Having said this, it would be highly unlikely that we would have a contract in the 2017-2018. In addition, we were going to settle something unheard of for the last 4 years... we were going to have at 1.5% increase from July 2017 to December 2017 and another 1.5% increase from January 2018 to June 2018 which is in

reality a 3.02% INCREASE! No other public sector in Canada or Manitoba has had those kind of numbers for quite some time. This contract could have passed by knowing full well that a new government was going to elected.



We would have liked to have local or regional voting unfortunately we have a CONSTITUTION that prevents us from doing so. Could we have changed the date just because of weather.... Once again, our constitution dictates otherwise. Your president, Jonathan Waite, and myself are currently doing a complete "overhaul" of our constitution and our policies and procedures. This is no easy task and will take time before it is implemented. I would like to finish by thanking all those who took the time out of their busy schedules to vote on this so important extension to our current contract. I'm sure glad we had reached our quorum....barely!

On June 18, 2016, the Seine River Teachers' Association is going to *be* hosting the 2016 Manitoba Teachers' Society Golf Tournament at Oakwood Golf Course in Ste. Anne. It is a Greenball 3+1 challenge, which means that on every hole, one of the foursome will be golfing as an individual while his/her teammates play the hole as a best ball hole. Then, the scores are combined. It's going to be a fun afternoon of golf and dinner.



## Equity and Social Justice (ESJ)

by Rebecca Brown, ESJ Chair

As I step down as Equity and Social Justice Chair I think back to all of the connections with teachers across Manitoba who are working hard to make our schools and workplaces safe places for teachers and our students. This position is very diverse and at every meeting I have always learned something new. I will miss my weekend meetings but know that I leave this position in good hands with the passionate Lisa Harder.

### Orange Shirt Day Celebrations

Orange Shirt Day will be celebrated on Sept. 30th, 2016. You can expect to start hearing more about promotional and educational activities from The Manitoba Teacher's Society throughout May and June. Save the Date cards were given out at AGM, and articles will be in The Manitoba Teacher in June and September. Stay informed through visiting [mbteach.org](http://mbteach.org).



For more information or if you want to start discussions in your own local area, this link provides some basic details about the genesis of Orange Shirt Day - <http://www.ictinc.ca/blog/what-is-orange-shirtday>. There are other links that provide further information, including this one to a YouTube video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-sZ4cqO5kZo>

### Federal budget includes tax credit for teacher-bought school supplies

Canadian teachers will get some help from the federal budget when buying school supplies with their own money.

The federal budget includes a teacher and early educational supply tax credit. It will allow an eligible educator to claim a 15 per cent refundable tax credit based on up to \$1,000 in expenditures made by an employee for eligible supplies. That credit is worth \$150 if the full amount is claimed.

Eligible educators must have a teacher's certificate or a diploma or certificate in early childhood development recognized in the province or territory they work.

The Teacher and Early Childhood Educator School Supply Tax Benefit will apply to expenses incurred after Jan. 1, 2016, and will generate \$60 million annually in tax savings for

teachers and early childhood educators across the country, the government says.

A variety of expenditures are eligible, from art supplies to board games and educational software.

Science experiments count and the government has a list of ingredients it suggests, including seeds, potting soil, vinegar, baking soda and stir sticks.

According to the budget, the list of allowable school supplies also includes items like:

- Bulletin board decorative items, such as borders and illustrations;
- Construction paper and Bristol board for activities, flashcards, or activity centres;
- Posters with instructions, such as punctuation rules or chemistry formulas;
- Items for science experiments, such as seeds, vegetables, fruits, potting soil, milk, vinegar, coffee stir sticks, straws, spaghetti for building structures, etc.;
- Specialized art supplies;
- Games and puzzles;
- Supplementary books (novels, non-fiction, and reference) for classrooms;
- Supplementary technology for classrooms, such as tablets, laptops, graphing calculators, and projectors;
- Stickers and motivational items;
- Support software for teaching and learning purposes; and
- Containers, such as plastic boxes or banker boxes for themes and kits





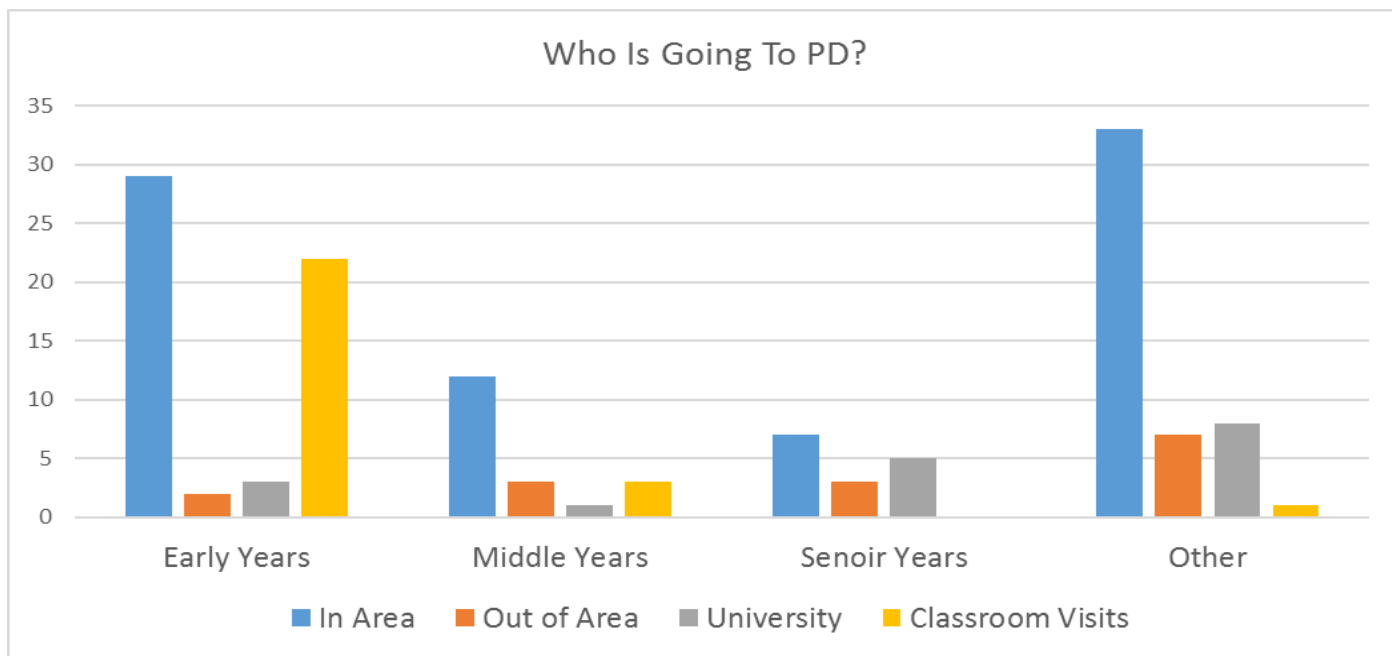
# YOUR EXECUTIVE

## Who Is Applying For PD?

By Kaitlan Robertson, Professional Development Chair

Did you know we have 330 active teachers within Seine River School Division and around \$90 000 available for Professional Development for these teachers? That's \$272.72 per teacher if we just split it equally! Did you know that we are one of the few, if not only unions that has complete control over its Professional Development fund? Many divisions' funds are allocated through a division and union team, while others are completely controlled by their divisions with an iron fist.

So have you applied for PD yet? Sadly, the answer for most of you is no. To date, about 42% of the teachers in our division have applied for PD. Of that 42%, only 11% are Senior Years. BUT THERE IS STILL TIME! So visit our SRTA website and get those applications in. Get your piece of the fund and enjoy some autonomous Professional Development!



**The Manitoba Teachers' Society**

## Fee increase of 2.09% Approved

By Eric Lindquist, Treasurer

MTS members will see an increase of \$20 in their annual fee next year.

Delegates to the 2016 Annual General Meeting adopted a budget that increased the fee to \$976 from \$956, or 2.09 per cent.

Total spending on MTS operations, excluding the Disability Benefits Plan, is slightly more than \$15 million.



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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### **Bridges 2016, National Orff Conference, Saskatoon, April 28-May 1 by Carol Martens, ARB**

I was very excited to be able to attend the National Orff Conference in Saskatoon. Through SRTA PD funding, I have also attended the 2014 conference in Halifax and the 2010 conference in Winnipeg.

This year's theme, "Bridges", was significant for me as it referenced connections, communication, and transportation.

Taking place in Saskatoon, the City of Bridges, made it a natural theme choice. For me, traveling to Saskatoon, where I had lived before moving to Manitoba, felt like a **bridge to the past**, as I reconnected with former music teacher or university peers.

**Connecting with music teachers from all over Canada** was also important. Music teachers often work in isolation from other teachers in the school. Having the opportunity to share successes, challenges, resources, and advocate for music education with others who understand is necessary and encouraging.

The keynote speaker, Robyn Stavely, spoke about the importance of **building connections for students, from the known to the unknown**, encouraging the Orff approach of using movement and patterns in teaching music. Connections were also emphasised in the workshop on "Engaging Older Students" by Chris Judah-Lauder, including tips to be totally prepared, set expectations high, provide a safe learning environment, and recognize their need for positive reinforcement from peers. Helping students make connections between literature and music was explored in the "Bridges to Brilliant Books" session by

Heather Nail, where simple songs were added to books to make the story come alive for the students. Judy Sills' session on "Artsounds" was about bridging composition and art, as we practiced creating sounds and movements from colours, shapes, lines, or moods of artpieces.



**I was reminded to connect more with original Orff sources.** Carl Orff (1895-1982) began the Orff approach, with the philosophy that children learn through doing, exploring and improvising (a Play-based approach!), and are active participants in an integrated, guided process that allows for differing abilities (music for all). The elements of speech, rhythm, movement, dance, and song are all part of that approach. Through Debra Giebelhaus-Maloney's session "Coloring the Schulwerk with Rhythm and Rhyme", I was reminded to use Orff's volumes of scores in a way that would be accessible to children – through rhymes and rhythms, as well as movement, improvisation, and singing..

**Bridging with the future** thoughts were inspired at a "Stomp Rondo" session with Lisa Armstrong. I was wondering if I needed to upgrade from basic Orff instruments to using collapsible chairs, basketballs, and buckets in musical arrangements, in order to become a more "with-it" music teacher? I also met two great music educators and resource creators – Dupont and Hiller – whose fresh arrangements look like they have a real future. Also, if the children are the future, the children's groups that presented really took the stage as they showcased their amazing musical skills, flexibility, and complete enjoyment of music! Kudos to their inspiring music teachers!

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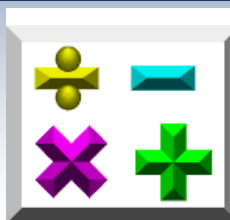
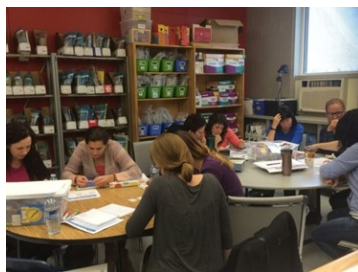
## PRIME Number and Operations by Lynn Gobeil, ESAS

### Topics covered :

- Different ways to represent a number.
- In depth look at 2 developmental charts “Échelle de développement des concepts et des habiletés: le sens des nombres - Vue d’ensemble” and “ Échelle de développement des concepts et des habiletés: le sens des nombres – Niveaux et indicateurs”.
- Big ideas by grade levels.
- Examined assignments to determine where students are in their development using Developmental Maps.
- Explored the principal of fractions.
- Administered diagnostic tools to our students.
- Planned for next steps.
- Differentiated instruction .
- Teaching concepts through problem solving.

### Application to your professional development

Using the developmental maps, we will be able to better determine where students are in their learning, what concepts they are missing and plan for their next steps. This first session has improved



our understanding of operation and number concepts. The second session focused on the principals of fractions and how to use a variety of manipulatives to represent them. The third sessions focused on the diagnostics tools and how to implement them in the classroom. We also had the opportunity to rotate through centers to learn first-hand why it is important to teach concepts through problem solving. The examples used in both guides are linked to our curriculum. They are detailed (supported by pictures) and easy to use in the classroom. They help consolidate the learning and prepare students for the next level. This program gives us researched based strategies to use in our classroom. We feel much more confident with our daily instructions when using PRIME.



### Critique of events for future reference

We had the opportunity to use manipulatives throughout the day. I believe this is the best way to learn (when you can do it yourself).

All three presenters were personable, knowledgeable and answered our questions.

They used concrete examples and gave us the opportunity to discuss with our colleagues.

### Members

Anita Lessard-Krizak,  
Lindsay Rakowski and  
Lynn Gobeil



*(Bridges 2016, National Orff Conference continued from page 6)*

**Connecting with my passion, music,** was also made possible with musical concerts in the evenings, featuring folk singer/songwriter Eileen Laverty, Tommy Banks and the U of S Jazz Band, as well as two local bands at the banquet and dance (composed of peers I attended University with!).

Thank you very much for the opportunity to connect at the Bridges 2016 conference. Hopefully, more SRSD music teachers will attend the next Orff conference – Cascade 2018 in Niagara Falls.



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### **FarSide Workshop – Friday April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016 by Christian Leclerc, ESNI “Living Mino-Pimatisiwin through Health and Physical Education”**

I was very pleased to attend this one day workshop at the University of Manitoba. The day began with an authentic tobacco smudge and opening greeting from an aboriginal elder. The whole day was based around aboriginal culture, teachings and sport. My morning session discussed a variety of outdoor, land-based activities designed for children that convey Indigenous approaches to learning using the natural world as the classroom.

After that I took an authentic Jigging class from professional jigger Dean Davis. It was about learning to jig Métis style, dancing in harmony with the music. We learned the basic step which can be used to dance at any event with the fiddle present. We also learned to jig to the Red River Jig which requires the basic steps and many fancy steps.

The afternoon consisted of an introduction to traditional and contemporary Indigenous games and activities that were taught to us by Blair Robillard. He also provided some key insights from the Rec and Read/Aboriginal Youth Mentorship Programs for All Nations.

Lastly, a panel of Indigenous athletes and the coaches who support them discussed the issues impacting the athletic and academic development of Indigenous youth.

All in all it was a great day. I was able to pull activities and lessons that touch on Indigenous teachings. Activities that I can share with my colleagues and use right away in my curriculum.

### **Sustainability, Creativity and Innovation by Randy Engel, ARB**

I have had the opportunity start my Masters of Education course through the online option at Cape Breton University. The course is called Masters of Education (SCI) and that stands for Sustainability, Creativity and Innovation.

The first course that I was able to start was called Fundamentals of Sustainability which introduced me to an interdisciplinary

inquiry into the complexities of sustainable development and sustainability.

Basically, what is sustainability? The course outlined

sustainability and sustainable development using a balanced perspective as it is understood through the social sciences (people, cultures, empowerment, education and health), nature and the environment, and prosperity and the economy. These three pillars of sustainability (people, planet, prosperity) form a core organizational strategy and through these three pillars I was able to understand the fundamental reasons for unsustainable practices.

I was able to inquire into positive local, national and international efforts in economic development, as it is related to social entrepreneurship, in education, in health and in social justice. The bottom line is that sustainability is not just about the environment, but a balanced approach to making the world a better place to be for people, the environment, and the economy. For something to be truly sustainable it needs to benefit all three of these interests.







# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## **Literacy Across the Content Areas by Amanda Schnell, SAE**

This winter I enrolled in a university class called Literacy Across the Content Areas. In full disclosure I didn't really know what the course was about when I signed up for it but it was an evening course that worked with my schedule so I went for it. After the first class I was so happy that I signed up for it. The course had an excellent Prof, Jennifer Watt, who was very personable and energetic. She was very practicable in her teaching and her assignments were meaningful and based on our reflections with literacy in different parts of our lives.

The course had a lot of EAL teachers in it so the focus was on looking at the language and vocabulary in all subject areas as well as in different activities we do outside of school (example: Sports or dance). We had wonderful guest speakers who were current teachers working with EAL students and they shared some of their most successful teaching projects and who they

incorporate teaching vocabulary into everything they do.

If you are looking for a great post bach course I would definitely recommend this course. The work load was very reasonable and easy to handle while I was still teaching. I enjoyed the class discussions and it opened my eyes to the different languages of all the things we do. We did different activities helping us to see all of the vocabulary attached to each subject area. In general I learnt how important language and vocabulary is for helping students succeed. The more our students understand the language of a subject the more successful they will be in area.

If you have a lot of EAL students in your school or classroom this would be a very helpful course to sign up for. I wasn't exactly sure what this course was all about when I signed up for it but it turned out to be one of my favourite courses I've taken. To those looking for great courses to finish up their post bach this is a great course with an even better prof.

## **The Psychology of Human Relationships/ Counselling Skills – Prof. Linda Burnside (University of Manitoba)**

**by Katelyn C. Blais – Resource Teacher, CLC**

The Psychology of Human Relationships is a course that focuses on the study of interpersonal relationships using a laboratory approach that is used to increase the personal sensitivity of the participants to people. The main topic covered in the course is interpersonal communication. The course examines the development of communication skills, and some things that affect how people communicate. Some of the barriers or impediments to effective communication discussed in the course are the relationships between communication and identity, and the effect of perception, emotions, language, and nonverbal communication/cues on interpersonal communications. The course also discussed and practiced effective listening skills, and communication and relational

dynamics. Through the development of these skills the participants were supposed to have the abilities to help improve communication climates and manage interpersonal conflicts. The course was presented in a lecture style format, with daily small group practice and activities.

One of the most valuable aspects of this course was its practicality. When dealing with students with multiple and differentiated needs on a daily basis, one of the things that becomes evident is the importance of interpersonal communication. There are a lot of students who have difficulty interacting with peers because they struggle to read and understand nonverbal cues (facial features, body language, etc). This course provided information into the development of these specific skills, as well as strategies to help students struggling in these areas. The course also provides explanations as to why some students may struggle with different aspects of communication

*(cont'd on page 12)*



## Learning and the Brain Conference by Shawn Sadler, SAC

Over the past couple of years teaching at Ste. Anne Collegiate, I've been coming to the realization that I don't know enough about how our brains work. In particular, I need to know more about how our students' brains actually develop and function. Throughout the growing up and school years, brains are constantly changing and developing. We have the responsibility of shaping and guiding that development to help our students become well-adjusted, curious and creative adults. So, on that admittedly intimidating note, I decided to go find out more about how the brain actually works.

The focus of the Learning and the Brain conference in Orlando this past April was on Creativity. Creativity, simply defined, is the generation of ideas that are both novel and useful. Historically valuable, creativity is now becoming a crucial skill for our students - the jobs that require rote learning and memorization are disappearing, but creative people will be more and more in demand. Creativity, however, is a taught and learned skill. It is a skill that is as fundamental and important as teaching literacy or numeracy in the classroom, and it must be taught! Creativity is not just the "flash of insight", but the whole process which ultimately results in that novel, useful idea. In a study at the San Francisco State University, they found that creativity had only about 20% heritability - we as educators must guide and develop creative skills in our students.

In the brain, there are two major networks that are associated with creativity. The executive function network is mainly driven by the frontal and pre-frontal cortex in the brain. It functions as the "managerial network" for the brain, instructing the brain when to do the more basic tasks such as recall, motor coordination or speech. The default mode network, associated with the medial surface of the brain, is the "imagination network". It is responsible for planning, imagining, meaning-making and perspective-taking. Both of these networks must be engaged for the creative process to be successful.



Unfortunately, we don't require our students to use either network enough. For example, the executive function network is completely unengaged during conventional "test" and "exam" assessments in our classrooms.

So where do we need to go? How can we use our time in the classroom to drive creativity skill development for our students?

Here are a couple ideas. Creativity is often driven by curiosity. Curiosity can be "sleuthing out a mystery" (D-Type Epistemic Curiosity) or it can be the "exploration of novelty" (I-Type Epistemic Curiosity). We can certainly drive curiosity in our classrooms. Creativity also often requires a "push" for students, as they need a spark to engage their executive function networks.

One of the most effective ways to drive creativity (and this is supported by research!) is to give students an open-ended problem and then merely tell them to be creative! They will surprise you!

## Groups in Guidance by Amy Scherbain, CSNC

During this past winter term I had the opportunity to take the Groups in Guidance course at the University of Manitoba. Originally the reason I enrolled in the course was because it is a prerequisite for the program I am beginning this September and future career aspirations but it became clear that topics covered could be applied immediately in the classroom.

The course covered everything from the proposal writing, selection of members and the initial, transitional, working, and terminating stages of running groups. The course involved a weekly reflection which allowed me to look back at my thoughts at the beginning of the course and observe my growth throughout the course. There was also a group project and presentation that involved writing a proposal for a potential counselling group. The purpose of the group project was not only to write a group proposal but to also observe the various groups stages for ourselves within the group context.

Going into the course I would say I was unsure of the group process and how it could be applied in the high school environment. The reading material, class discussions and videos provided evidence of the process in action.

*(cont'd on p. 12)*



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## **Understanding the Language Classroom: Procedures for Effective Teaching** by Jacquie Dion, LBC

Taught by Olesea Lazo at University of Winnipeg

Tuesday evenings from 6-9:00 p.m. January 12- March 15, 2016

This course is one of the two pre-requisites for the ESL Teachers' Certificate at the University of Winnipeg. The other pre-requisite is a theory course while this one was completely practical.

The prof began by doing a needs assessment of her class which in essence is exactly what we were being taught to do with new EAL students. She covered the various ways that someone could enter Canada - International students, immigrants and/or refugees. She

introduced the class to the various services available and some of the requirements that newcomers had to meet. Olesea was/is also a newcomer to Canada and was able to relate first hand to some of the experiences to which newcomers are subjected. She had us complete 3 major assignments. The first assignment was a needs assessment for a student who would be at the intermediate level. While attempting to design a needs assessment, Olesea introduced the class to the CLB - (Canadian Learners Benchmarks) the bible to EAL teachers. She ensured that everyone understood that we had to use the CLB to determine the level of English skills (Reading, writing, listening, speaking) being used by the student. The CLB also helped us to determine which direction we would need to follow to create assignment #2 - a syllabus for a hypothetical course. The Syllabus needed to include a minimum of 4 modules of

courses with classes running two nights per week - total 6 hours. The third assignment was the actual planning of the lessons within the modules.

The prof modelled several strategies for learning throughout the 10 week period. We brainstormed, we shared as a group, presented individually, did think pair share, etc. and she pointed out how each of these strategies would be helpful in an EAL class and what the possible challenges might be in pairing students for activities. We were reminded over and over again about how we needed to be very mindful of the various cultures in the classroom and what some of the roadblocks might be.

This course was extremely practical and as I learned new concepts and strategies, I related them back to my school and how I could use them with the students at LBC.

## **Seminar in Education: Guidance and Counselling Interventions** September 2015 – April 2016 by Melinda Roy, CSNC

In the course, Seminar in Education, we discussed several issues affecting rural, northern, and First Nations schools. Some of the topics included resiliency, student mobility, social-emotional learning, school readiness, and socio-economic status. We also studied the Truth and Reconciliation document where several "calls to action" were presented to address issues facing First Nation and Metis communities. We took an issue in this document and wrote a position paper to further look into the issue and also to provide recommendations. I chose to research and present a position on parole services for First Nation youth following incarceration. Because I work with at-risk youth, I wanted to research why crime is such huge problem for many youth, and why rehabilitation services are not meeting the needs of youth offenders. I learned a great deal and find I am connecting more with probation officers for students who have them connected to their parole.

In the course, Guidance and Counselling Interventions, we discussed and researched topics such as management of anxiety disorders, abuse, clinical depression, gangs, LGBTQ, school phobia and attachment disorders. Each in our class had to prepare a module on a related topic. We had to choose 10 modules to do.

The module I prepared was on war affected and refugee children. Our school has a number of these students attending so I was able to relate to this topic. Doing the research on this topic I found a number of very good resources and programs that will assist students who are transitioning from war affected countries into our school and community.

Completing the modules from my classmates was also very helpful. Many of the modules had "takeaway" resources that I could use. Studying a variety of mental health issues is very beneficial as I work with students who suffer from many of these conditions. All in all, this course was extremely helpful and resourceful.



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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*(The Psychology of Human Relationships/Counselling Skills continued from page 9)*

The Counselling Skills course emphasizes the development of counselling skills such as attending and listening, reflection of content and feelings, feedback and self-disclosure, focusing and summarization. The first topic discussed in the course is the development of the counselling relationship, and the importance that this relationship has on the effectiveness of the counselling sessions. It relates the importance of the relationship between the counsellor and the client to that of the teacher and their student. The course also spent time discussing the ethics surrounding counselling practices, and the responsibility of the counsellor to provide confidentiality but also safety for their client. The course also examined the affect that personal values and self-awareness can have on the way that the counsellor interacts with their client. The course discussed and gave time for specific skill development in the areas of listening, asking questions, empathy, and empowerment. In conclusion, the course also discussed difficult situations that may arise as part of a counselling session. This was a practical course where skills were taught and modelled, and then practiced daily in small groups. Throughout the course daily feedback on practice counselling sessions was provided by peers and the instructor, and each session/skill was reflected on by each participant. The reflections were meant as a way of looking at individual skill development, as well as the connection between what was being done in class and our current roles.

This course was very effective in the way that it introduced, modelled, and practiced different counselling skills. It provided skills that are important for counsellors to know and use when working with a client, but these skills are also transferable to working with students in a classroom setting as well. The skills presented allow the client/student to feel safe, valued, respected and heard, as well as providing the counsellor/teacher with a toolbox of skills and strategies to pull from when working with students with social/emotional concerns and difficulties.

The course also provided example phrases and wording that are very useful on a daily basis.

### **Conclusion:**

Overall I feel that both courses provide information, skills and strategies that are useful when working with students in a variety of educational settings, not just in resource or guidance. Both courses focus on the importance of effective interpersonal communication skills, and the importance that these skills play on creating and maintaining relationships. While the information presented in both courses was very interesting, what was most relevant was the practical skills that were practiced and can be easily applied into everyday work with students. While the focus of the courses is students or patients with behavioural or social/emotional difficulties, these strategies can be easily applied to students who struggle academically or with peer interactions.

*(Groups in Guidance continued from page 10)*

I can now say that I understand the process and believe that it can be an effective delivery method of counselling at the high school level. I originally thought based on previous experience that counselling groups were essentially individual counselling in a group setting. I now understand that it is the members that allow the counselling to happen and it is the counsellor's job to facilitate discussion within the group.

There are also many parallels to the role of a teacher in a classroom which allows me to apply the course material immediately in my own classroom. It is not necessary that I wait until I am in the role of counsellor to apply what I have learned. I would recommend this course to anyone who is interested in how groups function and what can be done to facilitate effective groups, specifically in counselling.

## National Council Teachers of Mathematics Annual General Meeting by Jessica Laluk, Resource SAE

From Thursday April 14th through Saturday April 16th, the Moscone Center in San Francisco was home to the National Council of the Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) General Conference. The NCTM Annual General Meeting is the world's largest meeting for mathematics education, bringing together classroom teachers and school, district and state mathematics education leaders, administrators, mathematics teacher educations, mathematicians and researchers. There was a new session to attend each hour of the day and each choice was fabulous which made it very difficult to pick just one! Each session allowed me to hear new ideas and ways of teaching that I could take away and use in a classroom immediately. Each session was filled with hands on experiences using manipulatives and different tools to encourage hands on experiences for our students and information that was researched based and was from the presenters experience in the classroom.

This conference was very helpful to me because it cemented a lot of the learning that I have been doing with "Prime" in our division. It made me make connections to current PD that I have done and really make me see the importance of how math discourse and engagement is in the

process of our students really showing an understanding of math. I went to sessions that targeted K-8 which allowed me to see how many of these methods can be used across the grades. Marian Small was amazing and again made you really think about your teaching and what you can do to do the best job you can for your students. Marian Small's session focused on this by explaining that teachers have to be comfortable with going beyond the details of curriculum standards to reveal the big ideas in mathematics. Focusing on the bigger picture will help student make critical connections and we can help this along by posing more open ended questions

Many of the sessions had the same message across the board. The emphasized the importance of math discourse, composing and decomposing numbers, open ended questioning, and setting kids up so they can access mathematics at their own level and setting them so they can quickly make connections to other skills and grow and develop further skills. Encouraging students to explain their thinking and how they found their answers was highlighted in each session.

I attended a Guided Math session that was really exciting. The presenter was a classroom teacher and she shared her experience with Guided Math and really explained the process of how it works. She shared explicit examples from her classroom and explained the important aspects that need to be included when using "Guided Math" in your classroom. She gave suggestions on warm up activities, informal assessments to give grouping by skill that changed weekly and how to run math workshop while you meet with groups. It was probably my favorite session.

One session, really left me thinking and wanting to dig deeper and it was on having students struggle while solving math or working on a problem. Giving students time to struggle and really have to work hard and try different things before we help them and guide them through the question.

I highly recommend an NCTM conference for any SRTA member that teaches Math from grade K-12. This conference is filled with fabulous sessions and there are sessions for everyone at any grade level you teach.





## Group PD—iPads by LBC Group Project Participants

On Monday, November 23rd and Tuesday, January 19th a group of teachers at LBC, who are participating in the iPad project with their classes, got together for the day to share their knowledge and experiences with a variety of different apps, as well as figuring out an effective way to incorporate apps into the classroom in subject-specific areas.

The three teachers are all teaching Grade 5 and 6 at LBC this year, focusing on co-operative teaching within the Math and ELA areas. One of the teachers had experience from participating in this project last year, and brought invaluable experience and knowledge of the 'ins and outs' of iPad use to this PD.

They started off by communicating with each other different apps that they have tried out this year and which ones have worked effectively in a way to engage students, while still focusing on the overall learning aspect of the curriculum. The teacher from last year spent the morning sharing with the two new teachers some of the successes she had last year. They focused on how to properly use *Explain Everything*, an app which allows each student to complete an assignment and explain their thinking behind what they did. They moved on to

how to successfully use OR codes in your classroom, ranging from setting up math assignments with the codes, to having whole unit tests based on a different question around the room for each code. This is a great way to encourage movement in the classroom and allows the students to have some fun with their assignments and tests. They also looked at how they could use *iMovie* and *Lego Movie* apps and connect them to the Social Studies or Science curriculum.

In the afternoon, they spent a lot of time looking at different Math and ELA apps that could be used for morning starters, extra practice, in a Guided Math setting or simply in an everyday math class. They were able to find apps that focused on sight words, reading comprehension, specific ELA strategies and a couple of neat story starter apps, which generates pictures and words to give the students a place to start a story. There was also another great app called *Toontastic* that focuses on every aspect of a story arc and allows the students to create cartoons to explain each part. Another really cool app was *News-o-Matic*, which is a daily newspaper that has student engaging articles and activities that can be completed independently, or as a group.

For Math, there were multiple basic apps that provided flash cards for practice, different kinds of manipulatives

to show students, as well as ones that focused on how to correctly solve math word problems. There are an abundance of math apps that come in a game style format, but still have the students answering math questions to compete. A really good app they found was *Primary5-Math*, which allows students to work their way through different areas of the math curriculum. *Division for Kids* is another great app that walks students through the steps of long division.

The day was very productive for all three of the teachers and provided many ideas and opportunities on how to further implement the effective use of iPad in the classroom, in a way that will not only engage the students but also continue to allow them different ways of learning subject based materials.



## Theoretical Perspectives of Education Administration by Jennifer McGonigle, CSNC

This course provided an opportunity to study the main currents of organization theory and administrative thought and their implications for the study and administration of educational organizations. Both past and present theories were studied and discussed, with an opportunity to study some of the more recent theories in greater depth.

A large focus was also put on the theories that applied to leadership in education and how leaders can use the theories to develop the

climate, culture and cohesiveness of their school. Another major portion was put on theories that deal with issues that are presently happening in schools now, including: GSA's, EAL and immigration, feminism and patriarchy in school leadership.

Theories were studied through multiple articles, and weekly class presentations. Participants in the course were able to share their ideas on chosen theories through bi-weekly journal entries.

This is a required course and so had to be taken. I am not a theory person and did not find this course to be interesting or beneficial. This was the second part of the introductory courses for Educational Administration and is a supplementary course to Educational Administration as a field of study and practice.



## Group Project Professional Development Article Explorations in Nonfiction Writing by Rebecca Brown, Tracey Kirby, and Michelle Savard, EIDCS

At Ile des Chenes School one of our on-going goals this year is to work on developing stronger writing skills in our students. To help support our growth and understanding of how to teach students to become better writers a group of Early Years teachers applied for Group Professional Development to work with the writing program Explorations in Nonfiction Writing created by Tony Stead and Lina Hoyt.

Explorations in Nonfiction Writing can be accessed through your instructional coaches and was first introduced during a school professional development day. As I was keen on using the resource I also realized that to change and enhance my current writer's workshop and literacy program I needed time to make the program work within my class and I also need to consult and collaborate with colleagues in my school. The most valuable part of this experience and having the support of the Seine River Teacher Society Group Professional Development funds is to have opportunity for the time to plan and to work with each other. The release time was utilized to develop the program within our own classrooms and collaborate with each other.

Explorations in Nonfiction writing program was created and planned with Stead and Hoyt's (2011) belief that "children should be surrounded by non-fiction reading and writing from the very beginning." p.5.

The program is very user-friendly and focuses on Writing Purposes; Inform, Instruct, Narrate, Persuade and Respond. Within each writing purpose there are step by step lessons that support modelling and the gradual release to student's writing independently. Each lesson gives examples of non-fiction books and mentor texts that can be used to help support the lessons. The lessons are broken up into three parts

1. Focused Mini lesson: that sets the stage for students, focuses the attention on the specific learning task.
2. Writing and Coaching is where children research, draw, write, meet with partners, confer, and join guided-writing or shared-writing sessions.
3. Sharing and Reflecting is where learning goals are considered, students writing, drawing, research is shared.

Working and planning and using the lessons in our classrooms have made my colleagues and I really think about the writing process. As teachers who use writing daily we sometimes forget the steps we take for processing, analysing, and extending information. As my colleagues and I are in the middle of navigating through one portion of the writing program we have already seen growth in our students and in the way we approach, and teach nonfiction writing within our classrooms. Together we have developed and adapted resources and are excited to continue to use what we have learned with other colleagues and in our classes in the next school year.

Thank you Seine River Teacher's Society Professional Development Committee for supporting this experience.





# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## **National Council Teachers of Mathematics Annual General Meeting By Laird Laluk—Principal, ESAS**

From Thursday April 14th through Saturday April 16th, the Moscone Center in San Francisco was home to the National Council of the Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) General Conference. The NCTM Annual General Meeting is the world's largest meeting for mathematics education, bringing together classroom teachers and school, district and state mathematics education leaders, administrators, mathematics teacher educations, mathematicians and researchers. Each session provided many opportunities to hear new ideas and approaches that conference participants can take away from the session to do their part in providing better mathematics for all students.

This conference was extremely valuable to me as it highlighted some of the areas that we have pursued as a school including increasing quality Math discourse in our Kindergarten to grade 8 classrooms. It was very interesting to see that this was a topic of discussion in every session regardless of the presentation. Clearly the session "Facilitating Rich and Rigorous Discussion in the Mathematics Classroom" was about making sure we are teaching correct Math vocabulary and facilitating students' dialogue, but so was Marian Small's session, "Becoming the Math teacher they need!"

The conference also had a focus of open ended questions and allowing for multiple entry points for students to engage in their mathematical learning. Marian Small's session focused on this by explaining that teachers have to be comfortable with going beyond the details of curriculum standards to reveal the big ideas in mathematics. Focusing on the bigger picture will help student make critical connections and we can help this along by posing more open ended questions.

I highly recommend an NCTM conference for any SRTA member that teaches Math from grade K-12. This conference is filled with professional dialogue and collaboration between educators from around the world. Each session provides some thought provoking moments and causes teacher reflection- which can be the beginning steps to some pretty sound professional development.

## **Student Specific Reading Interventions – Targeting Specific Needs by Jaymi Thiessen, CLC**

Recently, I have completed a course at the University of Manitoba titled Seminar and Practicum in Clinical Diagnostic and Remedial Techniques. This course is primarily focused on how specific reading assessments can be used to identify the strengths and needs of particular students. Furthermore, the content in this course supports the connection between a student profile and creating a reading intervention to meet the needs of that specific student. Making the link between assessment and intervention is important for the growth of a student who needs extra support in reading. However, it is also important to make a connection to all classroom instruction so that literacy instruction is seen throughout the school day.

An incredibly important aspect of this course is how to correctly follow appropriate testing procedures and guidelines. These procedures and guidelines are specific to each assessment and should be attended to accordingly. However, there are a few protocols that should be used in a general sense. For example, it is incredibly important for someone who is completing an assessment to establish rapport with the student who is completing the assessment. Additionally, the testing environment should be quiet and relatively comfortable. These external factors can influence an assessment in some way. It is important to plan for and notice these factors so that all assessments are reliable and student results accurately reflect their abilities.

Some of the assessments that I worked with during this course include, but are not limited to, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT), Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP), and the Woodcock-Johnson IV (WJ IV). Each of these tests gives the examiner different pieces of information that complete the puzzle of a student profile. An examiner may have many questions when assessing a certain student about what specifically is causing the student to have difficulty with reading. These assessments support an examiner in answering these questions and getting more information about the student they are working with. This information can then be used to support individual student needs.

Of course, balanced literacy instruction is a staple for all classrooms at all grade levels and subject areas. However, 20% of all students may struggle with reading to some extent, and 5% of those will have considerable difficulty in learning to read and write. For these students, additional, strength-based, reading interventions may be necessary to acquire proficiency in literacy. Specific diagnostic assessments can serve to provide valuable information and guide these interventions.





## Understanding the Historical and Curricular Contexts of Reading and Writing

By Chasity Findlay, CSNC

This fall I had the opportunity to participate in a course at the University of Manitoba toward my Masters of Education degree in Language and Literacy. The course, *Seminar in Reading and Response to Literature*, was an elective course within my program, which I took based on my interest in the field of reading response. I was looking to learn about new reading response strategies and to gather new book titles to add to my classroom library. This course proved to be an interesting and informative one as I learned from my colleagues in the class, the course readings, and the instructor.

For this course we had two required textbooks that we read one or two chapters of for each week, as well as various articles to enhance our learning. The textbooks were *Teaching Children's Literature: It's Critical!* by Christine Leland, Mitzi Lewison, and Jerome Harste, and *Reading Canada: Teaching Canadian Literature in Secondary Schools* by Wendy Donawa and Leah Fowler. These textbooks were well paired as they each provided different perspectives and contexts that contributed to the overall understanding of the big ideas of the course. *Teaching Children's Literature* looks at different aspects of the reading process and provides a variety of specific and well-detailed reading and response strategies complete with examples of how they have been and could be used. This text looks specifically at books through a critical literacy lens, and the authors discuss how books can be interrogated to support students in revealing bias and stereotypes. The goal is that students will connect the ideas in these texts to real world examples and encourage them to become positive, active citizens in our society. *Reading Canada* explores a variety of genres of novels, graphic novels, and picture books and provides examples of the high quality Canadian Literature in each of these genres. They also provide case studies on particular books and text sets and discuss how units and inquiry projects could be created around these texts. Although the titles of each of these textbooks suggest that one is geared more toward early years students and the other toward high school students, I found that both texts had a variety of reading strategies and suggested books that could be used with almost any grade level. Both texts were written at a practical level for teachers; the authors share the theories behind their ideas, but the main focus is the description of the activities and books that teachers can use in the classroom. I would recommend both of these books to any teachers looking for new book suggestions for the classroom or reading and response strategies.

In this course the classroom practices and assignments were well paired with the information we were learning and the activities we were encouraged to try out with students. The instructor guided us in pushing ourselves, trying out new response strategies in our own assignments, and challenging our previous beliefs. One of the main focuses of the course was on multimodal responses—responses that extend beyond the traditional written text. We were encouraged to respond in different sign systems, including art, dance, music, drama, or a combination of these modes. Our course assignments did not have to be in the traditional research paper format. Having the freedom and opportunity to try out some of the multimodal response strategies myself before bringing them to the classroom was a beneficial experience for me. I was able to put myself in the shoes of my students, see how much time they would need, and to troubleshoot any roadblocks I could see them facing. I also now have some exemplars that I can show to students to support them in creating their own multimodal responses.

In the course we also focused on learning from each other through group discussions on our experiences with trying out the new reading strategies in the classroom, as well as trying them out together in class. We also took field trips to the Winnipeg Public Library, the Archives and Special Collections at the U of M to view the *Books Without Ink* display, and listened to several guest speakers to enhance our learning. In addition, we each prepared a 30 minute presentation in which we engaged our peers in a reading response experience that was part of our personal inquiry project.

My course studies this fall contributed to my growth as a learner and educator. In addition to gaining new insights from course readings and instructors, I found it valuable to network with other teachers and to connect and share strategies with those who have similar interests and teaching orientations. This course opened my eyes to new texts for my classroom library and to the wide variety of response strategies that I can use in the classroom. I enjoyed having the opportunity to test out new creative response strategies in preparation of using them in the classroom. I would highly recommend this course to anyone enrolled in the Language and Literacy specialization in the Masters of Education program at the University.



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## Group Project - Departmental Exam Planning

by Lisa Ramsden, SAC

As teachers, we understand that the learning process is best supported by mentorship and collaboration. If this is the learning experience that we want to create for our students, it seemed like a good way for our department to learn and grow. Erin Rafferty and I decided that it would be beneficial for our students for us to co-create process exams for her grade 10 and 11 English classes that would scaffold students for the expectations of the provincial exam they will face once they reach my grade 12 English classes. We used the SRTA group funding to cover the expenses of subs in our classrooms for three afternoon meetings. Without the support of the SRTA PD fund, we would have either have to meet to collaborate during out of school hours, or Erin would have been left to sort out the complicated task of creating a process exam on her own.

As a new teacher, Erin was unfamiliar with the process of creating an English exam. More specifically, she was unfamiliar with creating a process exam. This opportunity to meet with a more experienced teacher provided her with greater understanding and an opportunity to ask questions about the task of process exam creation. The meetings helped her to clarify ways to address the outcomes, both during the exam and in classroom setting. We explored a multitude of tasks in the process of creating a comprehensive exam: from searching for and selecting a variety of texts, considering levels of texts, exploring different aspects of the same theme, effectively creating questions in order to assess multiple outcomes, and the difficult task of creating questions that are approachable for students who may have had very different background experiences. Hearing from several voices at the table, including Myra Tillet (our instructional coach) and Megan Penner (teacher candidate), was a valuable part of the process as it allowed us to explore a variety of perspectives.

Overall, the experience was valuable for both of us - new and experienced. Planning in isolation can be frustrating and inefficient, and we welcomed the opportunity to collaborate in order to create more meaningful assessment vehicles.

### There are still SRTA PD Funds available for 2015-2016!!!

Surplus is available for remainder of year to be used in In-Area and University funding.

To apply, visit [www.seineriverteachers.com/PD](http://www.seineriverteachers.com/PD)—apply before June 20, 2016

	Total Used	Remaining	Percent	Remaining Funds with Surplus	
In Area	\$25,276.03	\$47,638.35	-\$7,638.35	119%	<b>\$15937.66</b>
Out of Area	\$22,362.32				
University	\$18,409.77	-\$3,409.77	123%		
Group	\$2,691.45	\$2,308.55	54%		
Classroom Visits	27.0	13.0	68%		
Sub Costs	\$21,546.16	\$8,453.84	72%		

## Trudeau speaks to CTF meeting, first time for a PM

OTTAWA – For the first time in its history, a sitting Prime Minister has addressed the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) Board of Directors in Ottawa. The CTF teacher leaders of 16 teacher organizations from across Canada welcomed Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to their meeting at their national office today, on his six-month anniversary of being elected to power.

"We appreciated his openness and insightful perspective on the challenges faced by teacher colleagues and in public education today," says CTF President Heather Smith. "The Prime Minister acknowledged his first career as a teacher and his passion for social justice especially in the context of public education.

"We were also heartened when he expressed concern about the previous government's cuts that ended support for CTF's international cooperation program which involves Canadian teachers in professional development and capacity building partnerships with teacher organizations in developing countries.

"CTF Board members asked him very specific questions about student mental health and wellbeing; ending child poverty; seeking an education exemption in the TPP; and ensuring quality education for all indigenous children and youth," says Smith.

As a token of appreciation Smith presented him with a special T-shirt that recognizes his leadership skills both in the classroom and in Canada. It reads "I Teach. I Lead. Une classe. Un pays."



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and CTF executive



# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

## Upcoming Dates



### SRTA Council Meeting

June 14, 2106

### SRTA Executive Training

Thursday, June 9, 2016

Southside Golf Course, Grande Pointe

### SRSD Board Meetings

June 14 & 28, 2016

Division Office

### Provincial Executive Meeting

June 2-3, 2016

McMaster House

### 2nd Annual Colleen Kachur Reico

Memorial Golf Tournament

Thursday, June 9, 2016

Southside Golf Course, Grande Pointe

### MTS Golf Tournament

Saturday, June 18, 2016

Oakwood Golf Course, Ste. Anne

HOSTED BY SRTA

## Only one new executive member elected to MTS PX

The MTS Provincial Executive will add only one new member, following voting at the MTS Annual General Meeting.

Sandy Turcotte was the only new person elected, replacing Bob Kriski who is retiring.

Three incumbents were re-elected.

The executive for 2016-2017 is:

**President,** Norm Gould (STJATA)

**Vice-president,** James Bedford (LRTA)

### Members at large:

Richard Alarie (AEFM)

Suzanne Jolicoeur (AEFM)

Mary Chalmers (BLTA)

Frank Reeves (RETTA)

Jeff Cieszcecki (SOTA)

Sandy Turcotte (SRTA)

Ashley Deeley-Michaluk (PTTA)

Jonathan Waite (SRTA)

Ray Desautels (STJATA)

Beatrice Walker (FFTA)

Kristin Insull (WTA)

## Congratulations to the recipients of the \$500 SRTA Student Scholarship for 2015-2016.



- **Madison Will, CLC**
- **Cierra Limburg, SAC**
- **Gabriella Borelli, CSNC**

*We wish all SRSD grads well in their future endeavors.*



**Contact us!**



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