

SEINE RIVER TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

October
2016
Volume 12.1



President's Message

To the valued members of the Seine River Teachers' Association,

In the seven weeks that have come and gone in the school year so far, I have spent a great deal of time reflecting on what it means to be part of our Association. In the three years I have spent as your President, and in the many years that preceded that appointment, I have made deep and meaningful connections to a great number of you, both professionally and personally. As your President, it's my honour to serve each and every one of our Membership, which now totals over 350. I take it as one of my responsibilities to make every attempt to reach out to as many of you as I can over the course of the school year, as I truly believe that the strength of any Local is the complexity and stability of the relationships we have with each other.

Most days, this means being available in the SRTA office, on the phone, or via email, to any Member who has a question, concern or suggestion. I make sure that when feedback is received from Members, I can find solutions or information in as expedient a manner as is possible. This usually involves making calls on behalf of Members to our various partners, whether they be the Seine River School Division, the Manitoba Teachers' Society, other Local presidents, or some

other entity. As such, building and maintaining relationships with our partners has been a focus of mine over the years, to ensure the highest level of service for our Members.

The truest test of the types of relationships one has built over time will surely come when a tragedy occurs, and with the unfortunate death of Michael Slobodian, this was certainly the case. I received the call early in the day from SRSD Superintendent Mike Borgfjord, and my first call was to MTS General Secretary Bobbi Taillefer, to ensure that whatever needed to happen would happen. I was kept informed throughout the terrible ordeal, and in turn, I made sure that each of our Members was informed as well. It is obviously my hope that we would not have to deal with events such as this. However, I know that if they do, we are ready to be supportive to all Members, just as Members are supportive of each other. At the same time, I feel confident that our partners in education will be just as ready to offer their support if need be.

Turning to other news... at the September 29 SRTA Council meeting, the annual budget was approved with no increase to Member dues for the 2016-2017 school year. We have transitioned successfully from one bank to another, as well as from an Excel spreadsheet to the QuickBooks accounting system. It was a difficult year for Eric Lindquist, our faithful Treasurer, but my hopes are that this year will be much easier in terms of tracking our finances on an ongoing basis.

On that same day in September, we hosted our very first Welcome Back Trivia Night. As the Trivia Host, I was glad to see five teams of participants come out to play our silly games, and by all indications, it was time well spent. You can see pictures of the event on page seven of this newsletter.

We are only two weeks away from a major initiative for K-8 teachers, and that is the half-day of report card writing time on November 4. We will be sending out a survey later in the month to gather data about the day, so please watch your email inboxes and school mail slots for more information on that.

Speaking of which, it would be great if all Members would be part of the SRTA Mailing list. If you are not yet receiving email from the Association, head over to the sign up page on our website (srteach.org/srta-email-list/) and subscribe with a personal email address. We use the email list sparingly, but when news needs to be sent out, it's our best and most efficient way to do so.

If you ever have any feedback, feel free to email me (president@srteach.org), or call/text me at 204-270-0215. I look forward to seeing you all at the Divisional PD in November, if I have not already been in touch.

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

Jonathan Waite, President



Michael Slobodian October 8, 1970 - September 7, 2016

This issue of the Seine River Teachers' Association Newsletter is dedicated to the memory of our friend Michael, who passed away suddenly in September. Michael was a dedicated leader at College St. Norbert Collegiate, where he had taught for more than twenty years. He was supportive of his students in so many ways. At his funeral, many spoke of his kindness, humour and positivity. He will be missed by colleagues, students, community members, friends and family.

A trust fund has been set up in his wife Bonnie's name at any TD Canada Trust in Michael's memory for his three girls Alexi, Payton, and Brooke, Account number 6411535.



SRTA EXECUTIVE 2016-2017



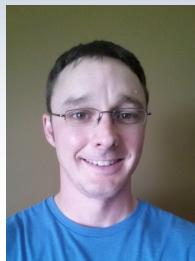
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Professional
Development



Sandy Turcotte
Public Relations



Paul Grosskopf
Wellness



Tannis Ward
Workplace Safety
& Health

Get Involved on SRTA Committees

We have many committees which can use your help and efforts. If you are someone who wants to help your colleagues by discussing and shaping the work of the association, contact the chair of the committee to see how you can get involved. They are:

Rebecca Brown, Aboriginal Voice and Action Liaison: vp@srtech.org

Dan Lagace, Collective Bargaining Chair: bargaining@srteach.org

Jenn Lapkin, Education Finance Chair: edfinance@srteach.org

Brian Trenchard, Employee Benefits Chair: benefits@srteach.org

Lisa Harder, Equity & Social Justice Chair: esj@srteach.org

Kaitlan Robertson, Professional Development Chair: pdchair@srteach.org

Sandy Turcotte, Public Relations Chair: pr@srteach.org

Paul Grosskopf, Wellness Chair: wellness@srteach.org

Tannis Ward, Workplace Safety & Health Chair: wsh@srteach.org

Financial education in the workplace: it's a win-win situation

Source: *Financial Literacy Newsletter – August 2016*

http://www.fcac-acfc.gc.ca/Eng/resources/newsletters/Pages/newsletter-august-2016.aspx?Wt.mc_id=FinLitNewsletterAug2016

Back to school time is not just for young people. Since 2014, adult Quebecers have been able to receive financial education training in their workplace. The **Treasure Academy**, established by Dominique Asselin, FCSI, B.A.A., investment advisor, has been in existence since 2011. The Academy had great success with its youth segment and subsequently created a segment for adults in order to meet the needs of people already in the job market. The training sessions, which are offered to companies, help employees increase their financial literacy.

“The workplace is an excellent place to learn financial knowledge,” said Jean-Marc Donahue, Executive Director of the Academy. “When money issues cause stress, employees’ productivity drops and absenteeism increases.” According to a survey conducted by the Financial Planning Standards Council, money is the greatest source of stress for 42% of Canadians. Therefore, it is beneficial for employers to give their employees tools and direct them to resources that will improve their financial well-being.

The program for adults has been around for two years and has had a lot of success with companies that have enrolled, such as Clarins, Cascades, Standish Communications and De la Fontaine. Training sessions are led by volunteers with many years’ experience in the financial sector. “As active retirees, our volunteers are not affiliated with financial institutions and do not give financial advice,” Mr. Donahue added. Information presented at the sessions is impartial and covers a broad range of topics, such as budget management, retirement planning the youth segment.

The Academy would like to create a kind of sponsorship between the adult segment and the youth segment where profits made from training sessions given to adults will be used to establish the Treasure Academy program at schools in various regions.

This fall, turn your conference room into a classroom! Your company and your employees will be sure to benefit. For additional information, please consult the **Treasure Academy’s** website (www.academiedutresor.com/en/).

Teachers Believe

A strong publicly funded public education system, rooted in the principles of universality, equity, responsiveness and accountability, is essential to sustaining and promoting our democratic society working for the good of all.





Vice-President's Message

by Rebecca Brown, Vice-President

Welcome to the 2016-2017 school year! I am very excited to begin this year and represent the Seine River Teacher's Society as your Vice President. The Executive this year is very excited and ready to get involved and serve all members. On September 29 we had our first Executive meeting and our first council meeting. On the same day we also had our first ever Trivia Night. All events were very successful. I would like to thank Jonathan and Paul for organizing and planning the day.

This year along with Vice President duties I am chairing the **Indigenous Education** portfolio and also hold a position on the Manitoba Teacher's Society's Disability Benefits Plan committee. The first training session for the Indigenous Education Chairs is being held on October 14 and 15, please stay tuned to the next newsletter for a full report from the training session. On October 7, I attended the first Disability Benefits Plan committee meeting, the committee is working very hard to address the needs of members.

If you would like to be more involved in the SRTA we have many executive Chairs that are looking for members to form committees to better serve our members. The best part of being on a committee is meeting new people and finding others that have the same passion.

"The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in the service of others." —Ghandi

Knowing your Collective Agreement

by Dan Lagacé, Collective Bargaining Chair

Did you know?

Article 16 – Complaints Against Teachers

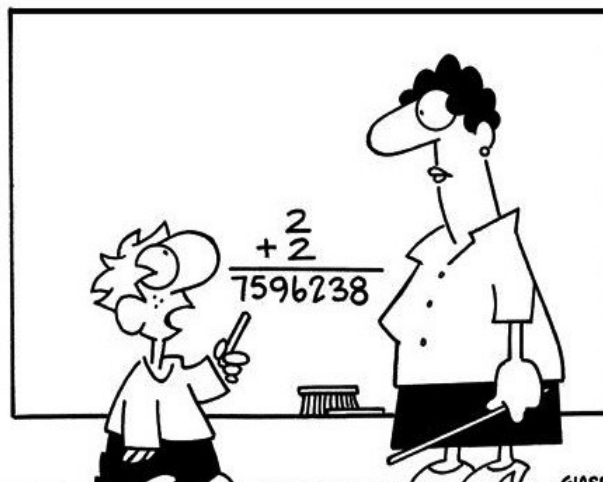
This article could be more important than any article to protect you, the teacher. The procedures that are in place are to protect you in the event of a complaint. First and for most, the division administration, board of trustees or committee of the Board will not consider or act upon complaints until the complaint has been explored at the appropriate level as outlined in the Article!

The article clearly outlines the process and if at any point, the teacher feels that there has been a violation of these procedures, he/she should be in contact with the Collective Bargaining chair or the President of the Seine River Teachers' Association.

More Collective Agreement highlights to follow in upcoming Newsletters.

Thank you!

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"In an increasingly complex world, sometimes old questions require new answers."



NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE

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SRTA PD Fund 2016-2017

By Kaitlan Robertson, Professional Development Chair

You know what's better than professional development, professional development sponsored by your friendly Seine River Teacher Association! As a member of the SRTA, you are eligible to funding towards a number of different PD opportunities. We sort PD into 4 separate categories: In-Area, Out-of-Area, University Courses, Group Projects, and Classroom Visits.

Everyone in the division who pays full association fees is eligible for In-Area, Group Projects, and Classroom Visits.

- **In-Area:** is any form of personal development that an individual seeks out to better their individual practice within 100km of our school division, excluding SAGE, also known as MTS Professional Development Day.
- **Group Project:** is an opportunity for a group of Association members who wish to work together on a common point of interest.
- **Classroom Visit:** is an opportunity for Association member to observe other professionals to enhance their classroom practice. This does not have to be within the division, you are encouraged to observe colleagues in other divisions as well.

Professionals who pay association fees and are employed with a permanent contract may also apply for Out-of-Area and University Courses.

- **Out-of-Area:** is an exciting opportunity to seek out development over 100km from our division perimeter.
- **University:** Just as it sounds, this funding allows you to apply for some funds towards your university coursework.

For more information on how you can apply for some financial assistance towards your professional development, please refer to the SRTA website (www.srteach.org) and refer to the PD Guidelines.

Lastly, on **October 21** we all attended the MTS Professional Development Day. I hope to hear about your MTS PD Day experiences, so if you have a story about a great session, reach out to me (pdchair@srteach.org)!!



Contact
us!



www.srteach.org



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



Facebook: fb.me/seineriverteach



Orange Shirt Day

With Marlene Gallagher

MARLENE GALLAGHER WITH STUDENTS FROM DAWSON TRAIL SCHOOL

September 30, 2016

Bringing History to the Classroom: Marlene Gallagher

by Lisa Harder, Equity and Social Justice Chair

What is Orange Shirt Day?

This year hundreds of people across Canada participated in Orange Shirt Day on **September 30th, 2016**. This national event was created to honour the children who survived the Residential School System and to remember those who didn't.

Originating in British Columbia, the campaign came from *Phyllis'* account of having her orange shirt taken away from her on the first day at St. Joseph Mission in Williams Lake, BC.

This annual initiative not only provides a national platform for people to discuss the experiences of former students and the impact it had on an entire culture, but also solidifies Canada's commitment to reconciliation.

Marlene Gallagher: School Visit

On September 30, 2016, Marlene Gallagher came to DTS to share her personal account from when she was a student at an Indian Residential School in Manitoba. Gallagher showed students a PowerPoint presentation and discussed topics that included the day she was taken, the food she was given, daily activities at the school, the time she ran away,

and the last day when she was "stolen" back.

Her presentation is extremely informative and honest, yet skillfully crafted in a manner that makes the information suitable for all ages. Students were completely engaged during her presentation and asked very meaningful and thoughtful questions throughout.

Background Information

Marlene Gallagher is an Anishinaabe Ikwe from Sagkeeng First Nation. She is able to speak fluent Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) and takes part in various cultural practices and ceremonies. She attended an Indian Residential School and works with the educational system to teach people about the history and culture of First Nations, and the legacy of Indian residential schools.

Education and Training

Marlene possesses a Bachelor of Arts/ Bachelor of Education degree with double majors in History/English, a Bachelor of Arts

Honours degree in History from the University of Winnipeg and a Masters of Education degree.

Marlene is currently an Independent Consultant, Sessional Lecturer at the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg, and a writer/editor with Portage and Main Press.

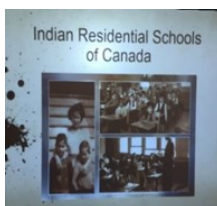
Contact Information

Having the opportunity to have an actual Indian Residential School survivor share their personal stories in your classroom provides students with an authentic learning experience.

If you would like more information about getting Marlene Gallagher to talk to your classroom or school, please contact her at marlenegallagher1@gmail.com.

Ordering an Orange Shirt

Many people have been inquiring about the "Every Child Matters" shirts and asking where they can be ordered. If you or your school would like to order shirts for next year, please visit www.mtsunionproud.com.





WELLNESS ACTIVITIES



WELCOME BACK!

T R I V I A N I G H T



On September 29, 2016 the SRTA hosted its first-ever **Welcome Back Trivia Night**. SRTA Members from Ecole Lorette Immersion, Richer School, Ecole St. Anne Immersion, Arborgate School, Dawson Trail School, Ste. Anne Elementary and Ste. Anne Collegiate took part.

Big thanks to all that attended, and especially to the new teachers to SRTA who came together with their colleagues to have some fun!

2016 Champions (after tie-breaker question): Steve's B's (Richer School)

Improving Math Instruction: It's Critical!

By Holly Sorenson & Chantale Lecocq, EIDCS

From October 5th to October 7th we had the opportunity to attend a math conference, in French, in Ottawa. The conference was presented by l'Association francophone pour l'enseignement des mathématiques en Ontario (AFEMO). The motto of the conference was "Penser mathématiques, c'est critique!" (Mathematical thinking, it's critical). There were 616 participants from 5 different provinces and one state, 70 choices of workshops, and 64 presenters.

The goals of this conference were:

- to be informed of current trends in mathematic teaching and learning, which include mathematical discourse, problem solving, and verbalizing thought processes;
- integrating the use of technology in mathematical teaching and learning;
- to develop critical thinking skills in our students;
- to use manipulatives in the mathematics classroom.

We were looking forward to attending this conference because we are both interested in making learning math more engaging and challenging for students. The workshops we attended included: ideas for mini math lessons, strategies for critical thinking in the math classroom, what critical thinking looks like in grade 7 and 8, oral communication in math, building a positive culture in the school, collaborating for success, upside-down teaching, and using manipulatives and critical thinking in algebra. There was a large variety of presenters from all over North America, with different professional backgrounds from university to the classroom. The keynote speakers included

Kim Thuy, a Quebec author originally from Vietnam, Dr. Thierry Karsenti, a professor from the university of Montreal, and Dr. Cathy Seeley, an educator and author of mathematical resources.

Many of the workshops provided authentic and practical ideas for implementation in the classroom, and supported our divisional and school goals in numeracy. While some content was specific to the Ontario curriculum and assessment guidelines, most of the workshop content could be adapted and/or implemented as it was in a mathematics classroom in Manitoba.

Attending an out of province conference allowed us the opportunity to network with other teachers and administrators, and to see how our experience teaching in Manitoba compares to those of other provinces.

In the end, we learned a lot and feel that Seine River School Division is on the right track!





ASCD- Teaching Excellence, New Orleans, LA - July 8 to 10, 2016

by Yvan St. Vincent, SAE/SAC

As an administrator, I feel it is critical that I remain on top and relevant (as much as possible) to the various challenges that teachers face on a day to day basis. I really value working along with teachers and I want them to feel that I am supporting them as much as possible and for that to happen, I need to know what challenges they face in their daily encounters. Teachers are asked to juggle and consider many things and this conference covered many of these themes such as student (family) poverty, incorporating technology, various assessment tools, inquiry learning, design process, and the list goes on!! I attended several sessions but by far the most valued session was the following:

Collaboration and Leadership Skills for Teacher Leaders, Instructional coaches and administrators by Jennifer Abrams:

We have credentials in how to teach students, but we don't have credentials in how to talk effectively with adults. Acting as a teacher leader, committee member, coach, administrator or team lead requires a different set of skills than teaching. In this interactive session, we discussed the two teacher leader roles of group facilitator and coach, and learn about the skill sets required by these new roles as well as resources and key ways to increase their capacity to be effective in these positions. Schools with a high degree of trust are more likely to make changes that help students achieve. According to the research, there are four vital signs for identifying and assessing trust in schools.

Respect: Do we acknowledge one another's dignity and ideas? Do we interact in a courteous ways?

Competence: Do we believe in each other's ability and willingness to fulfill our responsibilities effectively?

Personal regard: Do we care about each other personally and professionally? Are we willing to go beyond our formal roles and responsibilities to go the extra mile?

Integrity: Can we trust each other to put the interests of students first, especially when tough decisions have to be made? Do we keep our word?

These 4 vital signs is something I will certainly look for and encourage with my colleagues and leaders to help build trust amongst us all. Trust will be an important part of all our conversations at the school so we can ensure that students are achieving to their maximum potential.

The ASCD conference was fantastic and very easy to identify topics and sessions that would be relevant and applicable to my current role. The descriptions of the sessions were accurate and helpful to choosing sessions!





ASCD Teaching Excellence Conference – New Orleans July 8 to 10, 2016

by DJ Huver, Richer School

As a teaching professional, I feel that it is very important to continue to improve your skill set by being reflective, to be open to change, and to adapt your teaching practices to meet students' needs. I believe that this will create a rich learning environment, not only for the teacher, but more importantly, the students. Teachers face many challenges in the classroom today with the influx of technology, what to assess, lesson planning, inquiry/design process, how to be a teacher leader etc... The ASCD Teaching Excellence Conference covered all this, and much more!!! I attended several sessions, but the two that stuck out for me were:

Designing Project-Based Learning Activities for Rigorous Learning by Andrew Miller

The focus of the session was to explore that projects can offer engaging learning experiences, but run the risk of being "fun" activities with little rigor. Andrew showed the components of designing a project-based learning activity, and the steps for designing rigorous performance tasks that hit multiple standards and learning outcomes. He discussed the importance of all projects being authentic and challenging, aligned to learning goals, promoting inquiry and

exploration, providing a chance for student agency and allowing for tinkering, reflection, formative assessment/feedback and public engagement. He also spent a great deal of time discussing the process of backwards design to unpack performance tasks into specific formative assessments and instructional scaffolding to ensure high-quality products that show high-quality learning.

This was extremely meaningful to me, as I was part of the SRSD ELA pilot program this past year – and although the vocabulary was slightly different, the overall philosophies matched almost exactly to the practices and elements being created by Manitoba Education for the new ELA curriculum. I spent a great deal of time this past year designing rich learning experiences both independently and in collaborating with my colleagues, and I'm very proud of what we've accomplished – and this session only reiterated the fact that we are on the right track to becoming a very progressive school division.

iTunes U: Creating Purposeful Content and Collaboration by Amy Harp

The focus of the session was to explore the advantages of using iTunes U at the district, campus, and classroom levels. Amy demonstrated how to explore the content and collaborative tools within iTunes U, and create a course framework. She

also included ideas for professional learning using the iTunes U platform.

This was also very useful to me, as I have been a part of the SRSD i-Pad project for the past two years. I have learned so much in effectively incorporating technology into my classroom, while still remaining focused on curricular outcomes, student exploration, and authentic learning. Overall, this session was somewhat of a refresher as to the resources available through iTunes U; however, I enjoyed collaborating with other teachers at my table in the use of i-Pads within the classroom. Amy spent a great deal of time discussing the effectiveness of creating a "flipped classroom" culture in order to get the best use out of iTunes U – and although I also spent time in another session learning about the "flipped classroom" approach and recognize the value in this practice, I feel that the lack of technology/internet availability for some students in our community would make this endeavor somewhat difficult. However, I will continue to use iTunes U within my classroom, and promote this app with my students.

Overall, a wonderful three days, and a great first experience for me in networking outside of SRSD and Manitoba!!!





Graduate Summative Seminar

April 2016 – July 2016

by Melinda Roy, CSNC

Graduate Summative Seminar is an exit requirement for all Master of Education students in the course-based routes. This course is designed to engage graduate students in a scholarly analysis and synthesis of knowledge in their field of study and, therefore, must be completed at the end of the program. The course requires students to create a professional portfolio which summarizes all the courses taken in the program. You had to choose three “artifacts” to submit from each course and write a reflection on their significance. Students also had to write a summative paper on a topic or theme that they were pursuing in their professional career. Students also attended a week long session at Brandon University from July 11 – July 15th to present their topic to the rest of their colleagues in the course.

This course spanned over both spring and summer sessions. It was exactly as described, a summation of all the work completed throughout my program. Doing the portfolio I came to some realizations. I have really grown

in both my personal ideology and my professional thought. Each one of the courses in my portfolio has changed the way I see myself as an educator. I have also realized that having this educational experience has increased my thirst for knowledge. I will never really “arrive”, meaning, even though I will have a certificate stating I have a Master in Education, my search for knowledge is ongoing and I will always need to look for answers to questions that arise.

Going through this process has taught me how to look, research, and call upon resources when I am learning a new challenge, program or job task. By utilizing my electives in the counselling area, I was able to broaden my educational base. I feel more confident when advocating for students both in the special needs and counselling areas as I have a background knowledge rooted in research and higher learning.



Diversity and Equality in Education

Attended July 4-8, 2016 at USB
Course taught by Brahim Ould Baba

by Jennifer Catellier, ESNI

This summer I finally started my post bac. I have been wanting to do this for a few years now and it feels great to have finally taken the first step!! Let’s be honest though, who actually wants spend their summer vacation in

school? I lucked out though since the course I enrolled in was only a week long, (plus 2 weeks to complete and hand in the final assignments). As an added bonus, the prof and the course we’re so awesome that I was a bit sad when it ended! The course was loaded with discussion and reflection that really allowed me to learn things about myself and about my teaching style that I was blind to before. We touched on a number of different topics, including diversity (including but not limited to: race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, age, and language), prejudices and discrimination (and the differences

between the 2), inclusion, and cultural competency. I’m looking forward to sharing some of what I learned with my colleagues and incorporating some new ideas into my teaching. I feel inspired and am confident that by sharing what I learned with others, we can all be more conscious of how the words we use can affect the people around us. I am motivated and excited to begin a new school year with these new thoughts and ideas in mind. I am always looking for ways to help my students become global citizens and I know that this will only add to my ability to do so.



Assessment and Instruction in Inclusive Education

University of Manitoba- Summer session from August 2-24, 2016 with Dr. Rick Freeze

By Shannon Philippe, ELI/ESAI

This university course examined curriculum and classroom based assessments that help guide the instruction of students experiencing learning or behavioural difficulties in inclusive classrooms.

In this course, we discussed the importance of using a variety of checklists, surveys and observations early on to address the physiological and social-emotional needs of our students. In addition, we discussed positive social-emotional learning and the impact it has on our learners. We also examined the importance of building trusting, collaborative relationships between teachers -colleagues, student-teacher and teacher-parents.

There are many different ways that the physical space of a classroom can become inhospitable environments for the teacher and the student. We need to be mindful when we set up the physical space so that we invite all students into their class creating a cohesive learning environment. This important step is not about making the space "pretty" but creating an environment where students are curious to learn and teachers are inspired to teach. Through a variety of simple assessments and conversations with our peers, we can gain important knowledge about our students.

Authentic assessments help guide us in our planning and our instruction. Throughout this course, we studied some of the characteristics of authentic and collaborative assessments: direct, continuous, transparent, motivational, interdisciplinary, hands-on, project based and interwoven with instruction to name a few.

As an instructional coach and reading recovery teacher, I found that this course was relevant to my role. I will be able to share different types of assessments with my colleagues and remind them of the importance of social-emotional learning. In my opinion, some of the content was information that I had previously learned, but if you follow the rule of six: we need to repeat input six times before we can say that we have actually learned it.

Introduction to Inclusive Special Education and Assessment and Instruction of Inclusive Special Education (University of Manitoba) by Graham Bodnar, Richer School

This spring I was given the opportunity to continue my Post-Baccalaureate Diploma in Education through the University of Manitoba. With the help of funding from our Seine River Teacher's Association, I completed two University courses, "Introduction to Inclusive Special Education" and "Assessment and Instruction of Inclusive Special Education". Some courses in the Post-Bac program can be chosen based on interest, while these particular courses were selected based on fulfilling the Faculty of Education course requirement.

They were both extremely applicable in regards to my professional development. The course, Introduction to Inclusive Special Education, introduced students to the notion that inclusion does simply mean focusing on students that may have special needs, but rather finding ways to assure that everyone is included at all times. By realizing that all students have

strengths and weaknesses, it is the teacher's responsibility to build an environment that can use and appreciate the strengths, while also giving opportunities to improve on weaknesses. The course, Assessment and Instruction of Inclusive Special Education, provides that practical application of the theory learned in the introductory course. Students are taught to use assessments as a major component of their planning for not only individual students, but the class as a whole. The assignments in this course gave students the opportunity to use real teaching situations and real student data, with respect to privacy guidelines, to plan for and improve their teaching approach.

Without question, I would recommend both of these courses to anyone who is looking to increase their understanding of inclusion and anyone hoping to learn more about the role of a resource team in any school. The coursework itself was quite challenging at times, but offered many valuable experiences to help actually improve teaching practices. Thank you to the SRTA for this wonderful and beneficial opportunity.



ASCD Teaching Excellence Conference New Orleans, LA July 8 to 10, 2016 by Keri Huver, SAE

Whenever my students are leaving for vacation and their parents ask for homework to take along, I always give them the same answer – “keep a journal and take pictures to share with the class when you get back”. After attending Erick Powell’s session “NOLA as a Classroom: Travel as a Resource for Excellent Education”, I realized that traveling can provide teachers with valuable and interesting tools to engage students, promote discussion, and encourage inquiry. Meeting in one of the most unique and historic cities in the United States provided me with a wealth of experiences – and Powell discussed the most effective ways of drawing on these travel experiences to inform overall teaching practices, and enhance student learning. Going on a swamp tour on a Louisiana Bayou (and seeing gators!!!), visiting Oak Alley Plantation, exploring the French Quarter, taking a Hurricane Katrina bus tour, and sampling various Creole and Cajun dishes native to New Orleans provided me with wonderful opportunities and memories that I hope to share with my students for many years to come. The ASCD Teaching Excellence Conference not only enlightened me with this insight; but also provided a plethora of professional development sessions that I found valuable and relevant to my own teaching practices and objectives/goals.

Active Learning: This is Your Brain on Games – John Felling

This session defended that when students are actively engaged while learning, more of their brains are involved – which helps them learn a concept or skill faster and more thoroughly, retain it longer, and recall it more quickly. I was exposed to a variety of games and activities for Mathematics and English Language

Arts that I could use (or adapt) immediately, and I was also provided with a handout including strategies, games, activities, and links to resources. Although inquiry and design are being heavily encouraged in today’s classrooms, there still needs to be some “direct” teaching of concepts, information and vocabulary – and keeping students engaged in this type of learning is most difficult. However, by giving them a challenge, making it meaningful for them, and making learning “fun”, we can still teach students what they need to know in order to become more active in their learning afterwards.



Is This the Right Time? Evolving from Teacher to Administrator – Susan Kessler and April Snodgrass

This session provided me with the skill set required for each administrative job, strategies for picking the right job, and survival tips for navigating the first years. Moving into administration has been a long-term goal of mine since I began teaching – and much of what the ladies spoke of in becoming an effective leader can lend to being an effective teacher – such as being able to multitask, make quick decisions, admit when you don’t know the answer, and look out for the best interest of those who look up to you. I hope that one day I can use what I’ve learned throughout my career to take this next step, and motivate others around me to do the same.

(Cont’d on page 13)



The Psychology of Sex Differences and Inventing Canada (University of Manitoba)

by Graham Bodnar, Richer School

This summer, with the help of funding from the Seine River Teacher's Association, I was able to complete my Post-Baccalaureate Diploma in Education through the University of Manitoba. With the PD funding I received, I completed the final two University courses I required, "The Psychology of Sex Differences" and "Inventing Canada". Some courses in the Post-Bac program can be chosen based on interest and preference, which I was able to choose these Psychology and History courses to fulfill my requirements.

I found both courses to be beneficial in regards to my professional development. The course, The Psychology of Sex Differences, spent a great deal of time discussing the differences between males and females during all stages of the life cycle. There was a particular section in particular that focused on childhood and adolescent development, which I found extremely relevant to understanding the development of our very own students. The second course, Inventing Canada, focuses on how Canadian history is not simply a collection of dates and facts from the past, but rather a narrative that never stops being created. It teaches students to challenge what they already know, to ask questions about what they do not, and to seek those answers with sound research.

I found both of these courses to be quite interesting and would recommend them to anyone who enjoys learning about Psychology and History. The coursework itself was not extremely difficult, but as is the case with most distance education courses, it is important to stay caught up with course material and assignments throughout the term. I enjoyed the challenge of completing courses that were not based on my current teaching assignment, Physical Education. Thank you once again to the SRTA for providing this opportunity.

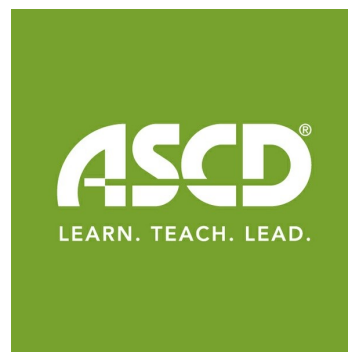


(ASCD Teaching Excellence Conference continued from page 13)

Designing Project-Based Learning Activities for Rigorous Learning – Andrew Miller

This session cautioned teachers on using projects – stating that they can offer engaging learning experiences, but run the risk of being fun activities with little rigor. I learned the components of designing a project-based learning activity and the steps for designing rigorous performance tasks that hit multiple standards and learning outcomes. We were able to use the process of backwards design to unpack these performance tasks into specific formative assessments and instructional scaffolding to ensure high-quality products that show high-quality learning. After doing a similar workshop with Bev Freedman, this method of planning was nothing new; however, was a nice refresher in remembering to reflect on our practices, and be purposeful in planning activities for our students.

The ASCD Teaching Excellence Conference was a wonderful learning opportunity, and a great way to take in a little bit about everything in the world of education!!!





Nature and Outdoor Learning

by Randy Engel, Arborgate School

I have continued to work through my Masters of Education course through the online option at Cape Breton University. This discipline of study is called Masters of Education (SCI) and that stands for *Sustainability, Creativity and Innovation*.

The current course that I just completed was called *Nature and Outdoor Learning* which introduced me to the importance of allowing students to make deep connections to the natural world and how these connections can help students grow academically, emotionally and physically. These learning opportunities must emphasize the need to make sure that historical knowledge about places across Canada that we use to teach students, incorporate an Aboriginal perspective that allows traditional

knowledge of places to be part of the learning process for students. Fostering a deep understanding and respect for the land and how we are dependent upon it to sustain our life here on earth is a key message that needs to be shared with students.

This course allowed me to explore the areas of peer assessed research and gave me the opportunity to research various articles and educational journals. This research gave me a sense of what others in the educational field are leaning towards in terms of pedagogy and practice to best meet the needs of our ever changing student population. As educators we are forever learning and growing to help educate our young people for the diverse ever changing world outside of our schools.

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for MTS Professional Development Sessions.

Questions and Answers: Extra-curricular Recognition

Q: *What is extra-curricular recognition?*

A: Extra-curricular recognition was introduced to SRTA Members in 2014 with the ratification of the Collective Agreement, and full implementation went into effect in February 2015. What it means is that Members are entitled to a paid leave of absence of one day maximum, per school year, if they perform at least 50 hours of eligible extra-curricular activities during a school year.

Q: *When can I take my day in recognition of extra-curricular activities?*

A: First, it must be taken in the school year it was earned — there's no carry-over to the next school year. That being said, most dates will work, provided that the day is mutually agreed upon between the principal and the teacher, and that the day doesn't extend the winter, spring or summer holidays.

Q: *What is considered to be an extra-curricular activity?*

A: Examples of possible eligible activities include:

- Coaching and directly supervising/ managing students at lunch intramurals or after school extra-curricular activities;
- After hours school clubs, student groups or activities that are open to a wide range of students and are not a direct extension of classroom instruction or part of assigned supervision (e.g. chess club, Student Council, breakfast program);
- Drama, music, leadership, or other activities for students that do not form part of a teacher's teaching assignment and that are not an extension of that teacher's course/learning in the classroom;
- After hours or overnight trips with students, that are not a direct extension of learning in the classroom (e.g. athletic trips and tournaments, music camps, etc.);

Q: *I'm a part time teacher. What am I entitled to?*

A: A part time teacher is entitled to the equivalent time off as

a full time teacher.

Q: *What is not considered to be an extra-curricular activity?*

A: Examples of non-eligible activities include:

- School and divisional committees;
- Planning and preparation time for extra-curricular activities;
- Teacher-student learning tutorials or supporting/ working with students in your classes/homeroom room;
- Any activity that is part of a teacher's teaching or supervision assignment, including courses where students receive credit;
- Parent-teacher interviews and meetings, concerts or other after hours activities that require all staff to be involved in supervision and meeting with parents/ students;
 - Assigned supervision of students, including supervising students in cold weather or unusual situations, supervising students at recess or lunch when completing class work, supervising students who are ill, etc.;
 - Any activity that is an extension of learning from the classroom and where the learning will be used as part of the whole class learning (e.g. class field trips that extend beyond the regular work day);
 - Working with students outside of the timetable when compensated in some other way for this time (e.g. paid refereeing, time provided within teaching allocation);
- Activities that are spontaneous, or not planned and approved in advance;
- Any activity that has not been approved by the principal.



Q: *What if I have questions about extra-curricular recognition that are not addressed here?*

A: You can always contact SRTA President Jonathan Waite by email, text or phone. Both the Association and the Division understand that there might be activities that are in 'grey areas' as to whether or not it is deemed extra-curricular, and in those cases, you or your principal should contact the SRTA president or Assistant Superintendent Monica Biggar.



FOR YOUR INFORMATION



Making Additional Voluntary Contributions to TRAF

Did you know that you can make additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) to TRAF in addition to your regular TRAF contributions?

AVCs do not impact your TRAF pension formula, but are rather like a separate retirement savings account. Making an AVC this year will reduce your allowable RRSP contribution room next year by the same amount.

The Income Tax Act (Canada) permits AVCs up to the lesser of:

- 18% of your salary, less your pension adjustment, or
- The Money Purchase limit as prescribed by the Income Tax Act (Canada).

Under the TRAF program, this limit is reduced by an administrative "cushion" to ensure you do not inadvertently exceed your limit and incur penalties under tax laws.

AVCs are credited with TRAF's investment rate of return (positive or negative). While making AVCs enables you to take advantage of TRAF's comprehensive investment

program and low administrative costs. It is important to know that TRAF's investment strategy is focused on the long-term funding objectives of the pension plan and may not be consistent with your investment objectives and risk tolerance. However, AVC's will be charged the same Investment Management fees as TRAF which are significantly less than those charged by retail Investment managers.

The balance in the account can be converted to a monthly annuity at retirement (not eligible for cost of living adjustments), paid as a lump sum prior to retirement (as cash, less withholding tax, or transferred to your RRSP) or used to purchase eligible service with TRAF.

If you wish to make an AVC, it must be deducted from your salary as a payroll deduction. You may increase, decrease or discontinue this deduction at any time.

To make AVCs, use the Additional Voluntary Contribution Calculator to determine the amount you are allowed to contribute and then complete the Additional Voluntary Contribution Application. The calculator and application can be found on the TRAF website at www.traf.mb.ca.

It's always a good idea to consult a professional advisor before making a decision.

For further information you can contact TRAF, at 204 949 0048 or 800 782 0714 and ask for a member services representative, or Glen Anderson, MTS Staff officer benefits, at 204 831 3052 or 866 494 5747.

Upcoming Dates



SRTA Executive meeting: Nov. 29, 2016
Chicken Chef Lorette, 4:30 pm

SRTA Council meeting: Dec. 6, 2016
SNAC, 4:30 pm

MTS Maternity and Parental Benefits Seminar: October 25 2016
Room 10, Dawson Trail School, 4:30 pm

SRSD Board Meetings: Oct. 11 & 25, Nov. 8 & 22, Dec. 13, 2016, Division Office

MTS Provincial Executive:
Oct. 19-20, 2016 McMaster House

South Central Presidents' Council:
October 22, 2016, McMaster House

Presidents' Council: October 22, 2016
McMaster House

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REFUGEES, IMMIGRANTS
AND NEWCOMERS IN
MANITOBA SCHOOLS

MANITOBA
School
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ASSOCIATION

A forum for educational partners sponsored
by the Social Justice Coalition of Manitoba.

 **MASS**
MANITOBA ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

 **The
Manitoba
Teachers'
Society**

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 6:30 PM TO 8:30 PM
Hugh John Macdonald School, 567 Bannatyne Ave., Winnipeg

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28, 8:30 AM TO 4:00 PM
Peaceful Village, 357 Bannatyne Ave., Winnipeg

Registration: \$25.00

Register at www.mbteach.org/myprofile