

President's Message: 15429 Reasons to Take an Interest in Politics

“Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you.” – Pericles. Or, in the words of a more recent, but fictional character, just the facts. Next year you will receive a 1.5% wage increase in September and then another 1.5% in January. After that Bill 28, the Public Services Sustainability Act, takes effect. Bill 28 legislates increases of 0%, 0%, 0.75% and 1% in the first four years of a new collective agreement. Recently, teacher wages have been keeping pace with inflation. If we assume that inflation will plod along at 2%, then teachers will slowly lose buying power over the course of those four years. The average teacher salary in Manitoba will be \$83,700 by June 2018. Doing the math, the average teacher in Manitoba will lose \$15,429 of buying power over the course of those four years. A class 4 (max) teacher in the ISD will lose \$15,520, a class 5 (max) ISD teacher will lose \$16,460 and a class 6 (max) teacher will lose \$17,277. This law essentially requires each of you to write a cheque for well over \$15,000 to support the government in its deficit reduction. The government says these measures are necessary to slay the \$873 million summary deficit. Cumulatively, this bill will cost Manitoba teachers \$217 million in lost wages over the course of these four years. Dropping the PST by 1% will cost the government around \$277 million. These are the facts. By the time Bill 28 kicks in for teachers, this government will have two years left in its mandate and then there will be an election – which brings me back to Pericles.

New ITA Web Page: www.interlaketeachers.ca

As was announced at the recent AGM, the Interlake Teachers' Association website has been relaunched. The website has a modern look and feel and works on mobile devices as well as desktops. All of the information from the old website has been transferred to the new, and we have endeavoured to put the most important information just one click away. One important addition to the website is ISD forms. We have placed some of the more common ISD forms on

the website for easy access. You will find the notice of injury form, the violent incident report form, workplace safety concern form, and the photo release form. All of you will have signed a photo release form at some point; you can use the form from our website to revoke your photo release should you wish to do so. The ITA website is hosted by a Canadian company which runs a carbon neutral operation and donates 10% of profits to charity.



AGM a Success

On Tuesday of last week, over 70 ITA members attended the ITA AGM. Numerous others emailed me to send their regrets – personal and family matters preventing them from attending. That level of support is very gratifying to me and to your new executive as we move forward into a new political and financial reality. I and the executive take seriously our duty to represent you to the best of our ability. Having you, the members, back us is empowering in the true sense of that word. In the coming year, we will continue to work to keep you informed as we move through some important decisions. Your feedback is welcome and necessary. Your ideas are important; your support is vital. Thank you.

The 2017/2018 ITA Executive

President	John Bock	Indigenous Education	Cora-Leigh Mazurat
Vice-President	Cathy Pleskach	Employee Benefits	John Kooning
Treasurer	Larissa Friesen	Field Services	Leslie Fuerst
Secretary	Rebecca Good	Professional Development ...	Ashley Kutcher
Collective Bargaining	Maria Nickel	Public Relations	Tracy Procter
Education Finance	Dan Gregovski	Workplace Safety	Christie Crow
Equity and Social Justice.....	Kim Deline	Member at Large	Cheryl Kooning
		Member at Large.....	Ross Ledochowski

Plebiscite Plurality

In the previous newsletter and at our AGM the question of the 2/3 plebiscite plurality was raised: should the ITA drop this to 50% + 1? It is not my purpose to repost the contrasting arguments here (they are on the [website](#)), but I do wish to remind all of you that we request welcome your feedback. Please make use of the [contact button](#) on the new website to send any thoughts, ideas or concerns you have about this issue. The ITA Executive will be deciding on this at an upcoming meeting.

Collective Bargaining

As announced at our AGM, we will be conducting a collective bargaining survey in May. While the window to respond will be open from May 8 to May 15, we encourage all members to take part on the May 8 PD day. This survey is the first step in preparation for bargaining in 2018.

