

President's Message

As the calendar flipped to October 1st, (and of course it had to be a Monday), most of us finally came up for air, and asked, "Where did September go?" Just like our students, we have re-worked old routines or began new ones. After one month, we've attempted to gain a sense of our students' identities and needs. We have begun formulating a plan as how best to use our experience and resources, to ensure each student can find their own path to success. Ideally, we have also tried to gauge the amount of time we dedicate to them, first in direct teaching contact, as well as planning, creating lessons and assessments, marking, extra help and extra curricular clubs.



For the ITA executive, an on-going routine is advocating for appropriate workload and member well-being; two entities which are undeniably linked. There is an indirect relationship between the two, for as one goes up, the other almost always goes down. It is important to keep in mind that a diverse class of individuals with an array of needs is not something that should feel arduous. Rather as you develop a plan for you and your students to succeed, keep it simple if you can.

I am not about to rehash the years of universal design PD many of us have attended. Teachers new to the profession, you probably recently finished university classes dedicated to the idea. But as we grow in this profession, it is import to become efficient, not feel we have to be everything for everyone. Don't feel you have to have a different assignment for every student. Don't make 11 different versions of a test for a class of 15. I have tried assessments with sections that allow student choice of questions, and found this was beneficial for both of us. There is almost as much knowledge gained for students in learning how to choose the questions that suit them best, as there is in learning the outcomes. Assign jobs to students in the class to help the day become more efficient for all. Teachers by nature are perfectionists, but perhaps we should use that as a form of mentorship, as opposed to doing everything for our students. Allowing students "productive struggle" is a phrase gaining momentum. If we lay the ground work allowing them to succeed and fail in the learning process, they will begin to pick up and use a number of the tools.



There is no denying our classrooms are made of students at various levels with unique sets of abilities. You know your curriculum and your style, and most importantly your students. Take a few small steps to increase efficiency while ultimately decreasing your workload as best you can. Take time to stretch, go for a walk or collaborate with a colleague. Teachers tend to isolate themselves under the weight of having much work to do. There is no denying there is much work to do, but a wise mentor once told me, "The inbox will always be full." Be you, not everybody, for your students. Enjoy the upcoming Thanksgiving Day's, turkey-related festivities with your family.

News Items:

- Reminder, there are two open executive positions; Secretary and Public Relations. Contact me at president@interlaketeachers.ca if you have any questions or want to joining our executive team.
- Please go to the MTS website, www.mbteach.org and sign up or confirm your information is correct on MyProfile.
- Also be mindful that your MTS membership gives you access to a variety of discounts. If you don't have a membership card, contact me and I can get one ordered for you.

Upcoming Important Dates:

- MTS PD Day – October 19: Visit the MTS website (www.mbteach.org) for a list of all the SAGES and their offerings this year. Chase an interest and remember to STAY the DAY. (Might as well sign up on MyProfile while you're there!)
- Here are some interesting SAGE groups you might not know existed:
 - CIEM: Council for Indigenous Education in Manitoba
 - GAME: Gaming Association of Manitoba Educators
 - MAME: Manitoba Association of Multi-age Educators
 - MASTARS: Manitoba Association of Secondary Teachers of At-Risk Students
 - MELIT: Manitoba Early Literacy Intervention Teachers
- Regional Meetings will wrap-up in early November. (President Norm Gould is speaking to provincial bargaining, the court challenge and other current topics). You can go to any of the meetings but please register at <https://memberlink.mbteach.org/Event.axd?e=897>. We are in the Lakewood Region. Our dates are on Tues. Oct 23 in Beausejour and Thurs. Oct 25 in Gimli.
- October 24 – Trustee and Civic Election Day – Please put time into your day to vote. Your electoral voice is important and should be heard. It is a freedom not all people have.
 - According to Quora.com, only 86 countries around the world (about 44%) hold liberal (free) democratic elections.
 - Another 47 claim to be partly free choice (low level officials are elected, but the governing bodies who actually run the country are appointed by the ruler in power).
 - The remaining 70 either do not hold elections, or do not hold meaningful free elections, as they are ruled by authoritarian movements crafted often, out of revolution or religion.
- November 7 – Maternity & Parental leave Seminar for Lakewood Region at Lord Selkirk Comp, 4:45 pm. Please RSVP to me at president@interlaketeachers.ca before Oct 30, 2018.