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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE: #SLAMTHEDOORON64

Since the release of Bill 64 and its supporting documents (see p. 2 for a walkthrough), member questions have focused on two main areas:

What does it mean for teachers?

Nothing in your classrooms next year, and as a union, Bill 64 does not control the structure of MTS and its Locals. In the next few months, MTS will use a democratic process to assess whether changes to its governance model, internal or external structure need changing. The plan to implement the proposed bill and the resulting changes to education governance is only slowly beginning to come into focus. Plus let’s keep that word as the main focus; “proposed”. The province is forming task forces to help plan out this process. See them [HERE](#).

As recently as May 20, the province released the Parent Engagement Task force members, with town halls and 15 regional meetings planned for May and June. See the press release [HERE](#).

In response, MTS is focused on creating “a strategic and measured approach for identifying where we can take immediate action to establish credibility, drive member and public narrative, and weaken the government agenda while also planning to achieve long-term outcomes.” (April/May MB Teacher) Further, they will ensure timely and crucial communication with members, i.e. The SUB emails you have been receiving. There is a plan; it will roll out in 3 phases:

Phase 1 – now to end of June. Short-term gains and successes here will be imperative; quick hitters if you will. You will have noticed the influx in social and print media. Slam the door on 64 full page ads in the Winnipeg Free Press, and radio and TV spots are planned.

Phase 2 – the summer months. This will be a critical time to keep the momentum. Please ensure you have changed [MYPROFILE](#) TO A NON-ISD EMAIL to receive updates and summer communication.

Phase 3 – by November, when the bill is to be reintroduced at the leg. Not a time to tire out. Time to re-focus and re-fire. All-member/large group efforts will shine, as will solidarity and strength in numbers.

What can we do about it?

- Stay informed – read the documents if you wish. MTS also has highlighted [BILL 64 FAQs](#) and [TOP ISSUES FOR MTS MEMBERS](#).
- Use the tools provided – Go to the [MTS BILL 64 TOOLKIT](#) to see ways to contribute. Register to speak at the leg. Know the key issues and how you can help on social media.

The aim of the #slamthedooron64 MTS campaign is to have the bill thrown out; forget trying to work with it. By using public opinion, media pressure, member awareness, allies in public, private and political sectors, the plan is to win both the sprint and the marathon.

The 3 Documents

Here are some highlights and a road map to walk you through them (click on the title to go to the document):

1. [Our Children's Success: Manitoba's Future – Report of the Commission on K-12 Education:](#)

This document is the final report by the commissioners. It includes 75 recommendations and 10 imperatives to improve Manitoba's Education System. My take: The imperatives do hit the nail on the head. The problem is that their intent is skewed and misrepresented by MB gov in the next two documents. In the commissioners' words; *"In the report, we have subsumed, under each imperative, **a number of recommendations which, taken as a whole, constitute our vision for the future and what must be done to improve education in Manitoba.**"* It is unfortunate that the creators of the two other documents, did not take this advice, but created their own narrative.

2. [Better Education Starts Today \(B.E.S.T.\) – Putting Students First:](#)

This title irks me in so many ways. When I say it, I need to "Wullerton Spit" for Corner Gas fans – [LINK](#). Released by MB Gov, it is a summary of the changes Bill 64 will bring. It does refer to the 10 imperatives and recommendations, every so often, but does not explain how these led to the 4 Pillars of Student Success. Here are just some of the items:

Pillar 1: Governance & Accountability for Results:

- *Newly created **Provincial Education Authority of appointed members.*** (Our new employer.)
- ***Provincial Advisory Council on Education comprised of 16 elected representatives*** (1 elected parent from each of the 15 regions + DSFM), reporting to the Minister.
- *School Community Councils in every school.* (Any parents with children in the school may participate.)
- *Annual school improvement plans, developed by the principal with the school community. **(No clarity on what school community means. WE ARE ALREADY DOING THIS!!!)***
- *Simplify funding to schools.* (Their rationale for removing school taxes is to provide equitable funding to all regions. One can't help but predict they will make it equitable alright; equally low and inadequate for all.)
- *Launch provincial survey for students, parents and staff regarding their school experience to inform school plans and broader decision making.* (Already doing it; sounds great; how will the data be used?)

Pillar 2: High-Quality Learning & Outcomes: (Because we've been serving up low-quality learning since ...?)

- ***Appoint a Provincial Curriculum Advisory Panel*** to provide input into the provincial curriculum.
- ***New provincial summative assessments at Grades 3 or 4, 6 or 7, and 10, with school-level data made available to local school communities.*** (All assessment results released province wide.)

Pillar 3: Future-Ready Students:

- *Students are more engaged and attendance improves,* (with no mechanism how this will be done).
- *More students have access to provincial online, distance and remote learning platforms.* (Why, will their teachers become unfunded?)

Pillar 4: Excellence in Teaching & Leadership:

- *Establish professional standards and a regulatory framework to guide teacher training and professional practice.* (Known as a college of teachers; can involve colleague-colleague evaluation. One worry is this may lead to merit pay/teachers paid based on student achievement).
- *Develop teaching and leadership standards for professional practice and conduct.* (We have this already!)
- *Create an innovative and results-based professional learning framework.* (Does this mean you can't get PD unless you are already really good at what you do?)

3. [Bill 64 – The Education Modernization Act](#):

The name is not appropriate, as the bill does NOTHING to modernize education. In fact, it will cause much of education to go decades in reverse. **WE PLAN TO ENGAGE MEMBERS TO JOIN A COMMITTEE TO DELVE FURTHER into BILL 64**, and how we can form a measured PR plan going forward in the fall. **Look for a designated BILL 64 issue in early June.** Go to [BILL 64 TOOLKIT](#), [FAQs](#) or [TOP ISSUES FOR MTS MEMBERS](#). ITA lawn sign plan coming soon, stay tuned.



In the NEWS: Click [HERE](#) to view a list of recent education articles on our website www.interlaketeachers.ca.

Ratification Results: Thank you for voting. Our new collective agreement passed 98.5% in favour, 199-3. Review our agreement [HERE](#). You can see where we stack up in the province [HERE](#). For the first time in history, all MTS teachers have an agreement for the same time period, to June 2022. Bill 45 has received 3rd reading, been passed, but not yet proclaimed. Our next agreement will be bargained provincially by MTS. Please do the survey!

Collective Agreement FAQs:

- Why did we waive interest on the retro pay? Several reasons: 1. We always have on previous agreements; 2. All other locals have this round; 3. Members would have to go back and redo their taxes from 2018 to 2020, as interest is income, and would have to be claimed.
- What does the yellow premium box mean on the salary grids on pages 4 & 5? These are the max deduction amounts if you are in medical, dental and group life insurance. Pages 29 & 30 have the actual salary grids. Members receive different salaries based on differences in deductions, when in a year they moved up classifications, and a variety of other reasons.
- Why is there no grid for September 2021? The final year COLA increases which will not be calculated for 2021 until January or February 2022. At that time, we will receive retro pay back to September 2021.
- BILL 28 update – June 3, 2021 MB gov appeal hearing on the decision that Bill 28 ruled unconstitutional.

MTS Provincial Bargaining Survey is LIVE - [LINK](#) (closes June 7, 2021)

- The survey is short. Your responses bring the needs of our local to our next, province-wide agreement.

102nd Annual General Meeting of the MTS Provincial Council:

- Thank you delegates for this important work. [LINK](#) to details. 2021-22 MTS fee = \$1047 FTE pro-rated

Some highlights:

- MTS to conduct a wellness workshop with a focus on teacher mental health – details TBD.
- MTS to investigate substitute interest in extended health & dental.
- MTS to explore/present options re: access to sick days for members returning from a disability leave.
- MTS to investigate/report barriers faced by 2STLGBQIA+ members. Aligns with other equity groups.
- MTS to advocate for all Divisions and Locals to use language that is gender neutral & diversity inclusive.
- MTS to officially join MFL (Manitoba Federation of Labour), cost already in membership fee.
- MTS to lobby the government to make MTS PD Day mandatory for all divisions to release members.
- MTS to conduct an organizational equity audit.
- Number of MB teacher issues to go down to 3 per year, other electronic communication to increase.

ISD BILL 64 Town Hall is Thursday, May 27, 2021 – Many divisions have been using these settings to share Bill 64 information with communities. Go to www.isd21.mb.ca for the link, and they have assured us the capacity will be over 100. Some divisions have had 800 – 1000 people on the call. Please join if you are able.

What is the Manitoba Federation of Labour (MFL)?

The MFL (founded in 1956), is an organization that brings public and private sector unions together (representing 120,000 workers) on issues of common concern to have a stronger voice on behalf of their members. The MFL coalition includes close to 30 unions (known as affiliates). The purpose of the MFL is to advance the interests of its affiliated unions and to act as a strong voice for better working and living conditions for all working families.

The MFL accomplishes this by:

- lobbying government for legislation, policy and funding decisions that benefit working people,
- providing educational opportunities that engage members of affiliate unions and enhance their understanding of their rights in the workplace, and
- coordinating public awareness campaigns on issues that are of common interest and benefit to multiple unions.

Benefits of the MFL's Work

For decades the MFL has been a leading voice on workplace health and safety, secure pensions, strong public services, collective bargaining rights and better employment standards for all workers. The MFL has championed issues like opposing cuts and privatization of public services, establishing paid sick leave, enhancing the Canada Pension Plan, raising the minimum wage, and winning the first-in-Canada paid leave for workers experiencing domestic violence. The MFL also plays a formal role on behalf of the labour movement in board appointments to many government and community agencies, such as the Manitoba Labour Board, the Labour Management Review Committee, the Workers' Compensation Board and the United Way.

A Seat at the Table

By affiliating with the MFL, MTS will have an official seat at the table as part of the MFL's leadership group, helping to set priorities and direct resources. Becoming an affiliate to the MFL provides an opportunity to inform and gain support from other unions on issues of importance, and a process for sharing with other unions facing similar challenges.

Solidarity

The political landscape in Manitoba has changed dramatically in recent years, and a strong, united labour movement is needed now more than ever before. There is strength in numbers – it's the basic principle that drives all unions to protect the interests of working people.

How much does it cost to affiliate with the MFL?

The per capita cost to affiliate to the MFL is \$1.10 per member per month (\$13.20 per member per year). This rate is reviewed periodically and can only be changed by way of a majority vote of delegates to a triennial MFL convention. Affiliation to the MFL also requires affiliation to the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) within a period of three years, at a cost of \$0.75 per member per month (\$9.00 per member per year). **INCLUDED IN 2021-22 MTS FEE.**

Does affiliation with the MFL change MTS' status as a non-partisan organization?

Becoming an affiliate has no effect on non-partisanship. Those decisions are made by individual unions, based on the will of their membership and the MFL does not interfere in those decisions.

Would affiliating to the MFL bind an affiliate's actions to the MFL?

No, being an MFL affiliate means that the affiliate has a direct voice and vote on the MFL's Executive Council and at MFL Conventions, which set policy and priorities. As a coordinating organization for labour advocacy in Manitoba, the MFL Executive Council provides union leaders an opportunity to work together on setting the direction of the MFL in between Conventions. Individual unions maintain their autonomy and accountability to their membership.

How can I learn more about the MFL?

Visit www.mfl.ca for more information about the MFL's advocacy, or follow them on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.