

## President's Message

Welcome back. No doubt many of you have already spent a few days getting ready for the new school year as you anticipate the students who will soon be entering our classrooms. Association presidents also do some prep work at an annual three-day presidents' training seminar run by MTS. These meetings allow me to discuss and compare life in the Interlake with the challenges and opportunities that exist in the rest of the province – and the truth is, there are a lot of positive things going on in the Interlake. Our class sizes are below the average, we have a board and senior administration that is seriously and formally interested in discussing workload, personnel issues are heard and addressed, and there is an overall sense that we all are working to do the best for students. This does not mean we are without concern. Would we like the division to take a harder look at class size and composition, yes. Are there still workload issues to discuss, absolutely, and, no doubt, there will be individual and association-wide issues that will require attention in the coming year. So, no, not everything is rosy; however, we do work in a climate in which discussion is valued, input is sought, and progress is made. I, therefore, look forward to the new school year with optimism as I and your Executive work on your behalf to improve the working lives of teachers in the Interlake School Division. Please feel free to contact me with any issue or question, large or small, and I will work to resolve it. The Interlake Teachers' Association is the agency specifically tasked with looking out for the interests of teachers, please avail yourselves of our services.

## Contact the ITA First

The Interlake Teachers' Association Executive and the Manitoba Teachers' Society are primarily tasked with advocating for members. From simple inquiries to more complex employment-related or personal matters, it is in your interest to contact us first before contacting division personnel. It is our job to guide all members to the solutions that are best for that member. All matters are always and necessarily dealt with in confidence. If you are using email, please ensure that any inquiries of a sensitive nature are done through a personal email from a personal computer, not through division technology. Members always have the right to contact the Manitoba Teachers' Society directly and ask for a staff officer (204-888-7961).

All of the contacts below go directly to the ITA President, John Bock; confidentiality is assured.

**Email:** [interlaketeachers@live.ca](mailto:interlaketeachers@live.ca)

**Phone:** 204.467.5845

**Web Page:** Go to [interlaketeachers.ca](http://interlaketeachers.ca) and click on "[Contact Us](#)".

## Professional Development Opportunities

Here are some upcoming opportunities for professional development offered by MTS.

### **Help! I've Been Asked to Present: Now What?** – September 17, 2016

Topics: Adult learning; brain-friendly teaching; 4C's of workshop design; the learning stance; shifting paradigms; powerful PowerPoints; and skills and goals for facilitation.

Fee: Member \$75; Non-Member \$90

### **Supporting EAL Learners: Informing Practices and Programming** – October 6 & 7, 2016

Topics: responsive classroom practices; examples from the field; programming at the school level; and development of action plans.

Fee: Member \$150; Non-Member \$180

## Changes in Family Status: The 90 Day Rule

All of us are enrolled in various health, dental, and life insurance plans, whether it be through the school division, the ITA, or some other agency. The 90 day rule states that any changes in family status such as new additions, changes in marital status, or children who are no longer dependants must be reported within 90 days of the change, otherwise you or your dependents might experience a reduction or elimination of coverage. The 90 day rule specifically applies to ITA related benefit plans, but all plans likely have a similar rule. Make sure to report

all changes in family status to the ISD payroll department or any outside agent as appropriate. The 90 day rule also applies to changes in spousal health and dental plans. Some of you might have been using a spousal plan. However, because of changes to that spousal plan or a change in your spouse's employment you might now wish to switch to the ITA plan. If your spouse's plan is eliminated or changes significantly, you have 90 days from that change to sign up with the ITA plan(s). Again, ISD payroll will have the appropriate forms.



## New Members Event

The annual ITA New Members' Event will take place in the division conference room (room 107 at SCI) from 4:30PM to 6:00PM on September 28 and 29. The seminar on both dates is identical; pick the date that works best for you. This event is for teachers new to the profession and/or new to the division. If you joined the division part-way through the previous school year or are just starting now, you are welcome to attend. In fact, even if you have been with us for a few years, but missed the session in your first year, feel free to join us. To register simply send an email to [interlaketeachers@live.ca](mailto:interlaketeachers@live.ca) indicating your name and the date on which you wish to attend. There will be food and prizes, so plan to attend to better understand what your association can do for you.