



President's Message: Majority Rules

There is a question which needs answering at the end of this president's message. Posing that question requires a little background and that background involves constitutions, by-laws, and policies, which, I know, are not always top of mind for many of you. I ask, that you stick with me for the next 300 words or so, there is something germane to your future in all this.

Several years ago, the Manitoba Teachers' Society conducted a complete re-write of its constitution and by-laws. This was a necessary and beneficial exercise for the Society. MTS has now started the process of modernizing the constitutions, by-laws, and policies of local associations. MTS has asked a few local presidents, including yours truly, to consult in the process. That consultation focussed on best practices and brought to light many of the positive governance procedures that the ITA employs; it also identified several areas where changes could be made. These changes will be debated by your local executive and you will hear about them, with requests for feedback, as they do – which brings us to the first such issue.

Currently we require a 2/3 majority of votes cast, in an association-wide referendum, to make a change in our benefits. The Society recommends that locals use a majority of 50% + 1 for such plebiscites. This would align with labour law which requires a simple majority for the ratification of collective agreements. Those in favour of keeping a 2/3 majority argue that, because benefit plans have cost implications, they should have a higher threshold of approval than 50%. Those in favour of simply majority suggest that, if a majority of members wish to have particular benefit, why should a minority be able to keep them from accessing that benefit. MTS has advised that the latter is the preferred analysis.

The ITA 2/3 majority rule is written in our policy manual, not our constitution. As such, the ITA Executive is the body with the authority to change it. The Executive has decided that, if were to occur, a change of this significance, requires input from members.

Question: should the Interlake Teachers' Association amend the current requirement of 2/3 of votes cast to 50%+1 of votes cast, when approving changes in benefits? (In either case, the policy of requiring an association-wide vote on the matter would remain.) This issue will be up for discussion at our AGM, please be there, April 25, 4:30PM, Stonewall Collegiate Music Room, to discuss this and other important issues.

ITA AGM

Tuesday, April 25

**4:30PM, Stonewall Collegiate
Music Room**

Agenda

- Elections
- Budget
- Collective Bargaining: getting ready for 2018
- The 2/3 rule: discussion
- Violence in the Workplace
- Norm Gould: MTS President – The State of the Union

ITA Executive Elections: Update

The Interlake Teachers’ Association has received nominations for all positions on the executive. It is still possible for any member to put forward their name for election. If you wish to do so, please contact Maria Nickel.

The current candidates for election are:

President	John Bock	Stonewall Collegiate
Vice President	Cathy Pleskach	Warren Collegiate
Treasurer	Larissa Friesen	Warren Collegiate
Secretary	Rebecca Good	École Centennial School
Collective Bargaining	Maria Nickel	École Centennial School
Education Finance	Dan Gregovski	Warren Collegiate
Benefits	John Kooning	Teulon Collegiate
Professional Development	Ashley Kutcher	Omega School
Public Relations	Tracy Procter	Woodlands School
Workplace Safety	Christie Crow	Grosse Isle School
Field Services	Leslie Fuerst	École Centennial School
Equity & Social Justice	Kim Deline	Woodlands School
Indigenous Affairs	Cora-Leigh Mazurat	Meadow Lane School
Past President	Maria Nickel	École Centennial School
Member at Large	Ross Ledochowski	Teulon Collegiate
Member at Large	Cheryl Kooning	École Centennial School

ITA Budget

The Interlake Teachers’ Association Executive has created a budget that will be presented for approval at AGM. The budget proposes a fee increase of \$10 to \$120.00 per year (\$5.00 per pay cheque). Fees have been slowly rising in the ITA since MTS changed its funding formula for president’s release. Previously, MTS charged ITA \$40.00 per member for president’s release; in 2015/2016 that charge increased by \$35.00 to \$75.00 per member. If the proposed budget is approved, ITA fees will have risen only \$20.00 since that change instead of the full \$35.00. Careful budgeting and a judicious use of our reserves has allowed the ITA Executive to lessen the impact of this change. There are no significant operational changes implied by the proposed budget.

