

President's Message

This week, we as ITA members find ourselves in an interesting limbo between what was and what will be. On our October 5th PD day, (World Teachers' Day incidentally), teachers of the Interlake School Division experienced the official roll out of the ISD's new Continuous Improvement Plan, (CIP). Having talked with members and listened to their recent comments, the first reactions I've heard are those of excitement and positivity, matched with trepidation. Here is the [LINK](#) to the document on the ISD website. The "We believe..." statements on page 2 of 8, I can honestly say, are many of the reasons why I went into education. But so many times everything else in our jobs or lives gets in the way, and we forget that we are in the business of giving our students the critical life skills with which they will go about the rest of their lives. No pressure, but really, I love that idea! What other job allows their employees to have such a powerful influence over the global future?

The 9 – 12 goal is wellness, which naturally fits into the tool bag of skills we hope to give our students for a good and productive future. The K – 8 numeracy goal is being approached in a whole-village oriented manner. The plan is that all of our staff, regardless of the role or curriculum in which each member contributes their expertise, will be involved in the forming of how our students learn to approach numeracy and wellness. Those of us who have been here a while, will no doubt reflect back to previous times when new plans have been in their initiation stage. The next question many of us ask is often, will the resources, money and supports continue to be there as we take this four year plan into action? Don't get us excited about it, if it can't be sustained!

This plan, I do believe, has a build-in sustainability factor. Senior admin have presented the importance of it being a year-by-year plan. This will allow for budget lines to react to results of the first year. If it is discovered that more or varied resources are needed in a certain area, the flexibility of the CIP will allow our program support and wellness team to react to the changing needs, and share that information with the board when it comes to budget time.

Over the next year, ISD plans to ask staff for their reactions and experiences so they can use this data for moving forward into subsequent years of the plan. As teachers we are the frontline workers of this industry, so I am hopeful that you will take the opportunity to share both your successes and concerns. Trustee elections take place on October 24th, which means a new board may be the group setting the budget for future years of the CIP. Please go and vote, so that you may have your opinion heard, loud and clear.

I encourage you to read the CIP. What resources will you require from ISD to work within the plan? This work will require the continuous collaboration of ITA teachers, division officials and staff for the benefit of our true common interest; the students of the Interlake School Division.

News Items:

Last week there were two news item on the radio that caught my ear, and unfortunately I couldn't find the exact articles, as I heard them during my drive to work.

- One was the fact that schools in Manitoba are now thought to be doing better than most other provinces when it comes to math instruction.
- The second was that Manitoba students are also starting to improve in the areas of critical or soft skills that are required for success in the work place and new industries. This report also suggested that students who learn at colleges or institutions where the instructors have expertise and experience in the field they are teaching, are more prepared for the job than those with simply book smarts. Teaching what you know, opposed to knowing what to teach.
- The link between both of these reports is that the data did not come from standardized testing scores. Rather it was according to employers and post-secondary educators. Isn't this the exact audience we want our students to be impressing?
- Incidentally, both numeracy and life skills fall in the realm of our new CIP. So we are headed in a sustainable direction by aligning with what the work world expects from our students.
- **Update on Membership Cards:** Thank you to all of you who replied to my call out for members requiring MTS membership cards. In case you thought you were the only one, 30 plus people initially replied, and more have come in since. I sent your information in to MTS last week, and you should receive your card in the mail in the next few weeks. If you still wish to get a card, you can still email me at president@interlaketeachers.ca . Discounts are listed on the MTS website.
- On that note... go to the MTS website, www.mbteach.org and sign up or confirm your information is correct on MyProfile. When I informed MTS about members needing cards, the suggestion was name, home email and address changes are very important to update.

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.
- Regional Meetings continue. Register at <https://memberlink.mbteach.org/Event.axd?e=897>. We are in the Lakewood Region. Our dates are Tues. Oct 23 in Beausejour and Thurs. Oct 25 in Gimli.
- October 24 – Trustee and Civic Election Day
- November 5 – 9, 2018: Media Literacy Week – incorporate social-media do's and don'ts into your teaching. Bring in a newspaper and see if your students even know what the ancient relic is.
- 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.