

## President's Message

Early issues of the ITA News each came to you with a focused theme in mind. Sometimes it related to our workload with students, and other times to the well-being of members. We, as an executive, feel these are important topics to [teachers as educators](#). This is also a critical time to focus on [teachers as members of a union](#), and this issue aims to engage you in that premise.

Provincially, news related to Public Education has slowly begun to emerge since the appointment of the Right Honourable Kelvin Goertzen as Minister of Education. Just recently, released on Nov 3, teacher bargaining units were said to be on the agenda at the AGM of Manitoba's governing party ([LINK](#)). At a local level, some of you have started to ask, "Do we have a Collective Agreement?" "What is the state of bargaining?" "Are we next after Health Care?" Here are some answers to those questions:

### "Do we have a Collective Agreement?"

The Collective Agreement (CA) between our Local Association (ITA) and the Interlake School Division (ISD) expired on June 30, 2018. Our current CA, however, remains in effect until a new CA is signed; any new CA will be retroactive to July 1, 2018. For this reason, anyone who is still advancing on the salary grid will continue to do so. Those that have reached the top of the salary grid will receive the same salary until a new CA is signed; at that time retroactive pay, if any, will be paid. Quiz night practice: Have you ever wondered why your cheque can vary from month to month? Answer: TRAF (our pension) is only deducted for days worked in a month.

### "What is the state of bargaining?"

**Locally:** Your Collective Bargaining Committee, under the guidance of CB Chair, Maria Nickel, has worked hard preparing for this round. The Committee created and circulated a bargaining survey, compiled your input, and created our opening package. In April 2018, we submitted our letter to open bargaining with the ISD board. The Board has declined to enter bargaining. The Provincial Government has announced it would like to pursue provincial bargaining but has not introduced any legislation to make that happen. Also recall, Bill 28 has not yet been proclaimed. ([Link to Bill 28](#))

**Provincially:** Collective Agreements between school boards and teacher associations across the province expired June 30, 2018. Currently, one local has dates for bargaining; two have reached impasse and are in the process of forming arbitration boards; while most are in a position similar to ours. We continue to work with the Manitoba Teachers' Society as this round of bargaining unfolds. You can be assured that your union is prepared at both a local and provincial level.

## Regional Meeting: “Are we next after Health Care?”

October 23: President Norm Gould spoke to the Provincial announcement that a full review of the Manitoba education system would commence in January 2019. The review will take up to a year to complete, and we need only look at other provinces to come up with items **potentially** in its scope; provincial bargaining, amalgamations, removal of principals/vice-principals from the union, reclassifications, recertification, college of teachers, adjusted school year, unpaid days, and pension reform. I will expand on some of these in future editions. MTS recently received word from the Province that public sector **pensions would not be affected**. Mr. Gould briefs the minister at the Legislature on Nov. 7. This round of regional meetings is complete, but I encourage you to participate in the next round if you can. It is very informative, and mileage and a meal are provided.

## MTS Members Survey:

The Society stresses the importance of members giving input during the review when given the opportunity, and you will have your chance soon it seems. **MTS will be calling 1,200 teachers from Nov 12-21. This is a general survey, but will also ask questions about violence in the workplace, workload and resources.** Please answer the questions as honestly as possible.

## Presidents’ Council and other training updates:

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, I attended Presidents’ Council, and on October 27<sup>th</sup>, your Education Finance Chair, Dan Gregovski, and I attended that training. We had the privilege of hearing Dr. John Wiens speak to the up-coming Education Review and possible amalgamations. He is the former Dean of Education at the University of Manitoba, and he is a go-to expert when it comes to education reform in this province and country. We discussed these amalgamation articles. Review at your leisure.

➤ [Shannon Sampert article](#)

[Dr. John Wiens response](#)

We also discussed the reality that most public citizens can not name their MLA, local councillors or trustees. The fact is, Dr. Wiens noted, many people don’t become informed until it matters to them. Here is where I hope to stir the union member in you! Your MTS and ITA Executive members share a common concern as this review begins... “Until something bad happens, how do we engage our members in their union?”

The numbers show **80% of the 15,000 MTS teachers started working after 1999**, and have only known the profession in “good times”. Your executive is working on ways to connect with you and provide you with more information. Look for spotlights on specific portfolios in coming newsletters, keep asking questions, and visit the MTS and ITA websites. Contact me with your questions or concerns at [president@interlaketeacher.ca](mailto:president@interlaketeacher.ca). Stay informed and be well.

## Upcoming Events:

- November 5 – 9: Media Literacy Week – MTS uses social media platforms, so follow your preferred one. The Steinbach Carillon is often Minister Goertzen’s news medium.
- November 7 – Reminder if you registered for the Maternity & Parental leave Seminar, it is at Lord Selkirk Comprehensive School, 221 Mercy St. Rm 140, 4:45 pm, dinner provided.

November 2018

# BENEFITS NEWS

## Benefits Chair — John Kooning

### Benefits!

Wondering about your  
benefits?

Email me:

[jkooning@isd21.mb.ca](mailto:jkooning@isd21.mb.ca)

### Preferred Pharmacy Rates

- You can get Lower Costs for  
Drugs

Our plan will pay for 90% instead  
of 80% when you go to Costco  
and Express Scripts Canada  
(ESC)- At ESC You can get  
regular maintenance medications  
with free home delivery anywhere  
in Manitoba. Just sign up at:  
[www.express-scripts.ca/mpse](http://www.express-scripts.ca/mpse)  
(VIP code MPSE or call 1-855-  
550-6337—need plan ID card,  
label of maintenance meds)

This is a great service as it takes  
“forgetting” to get regular  
maintenance drugs out of the  
equation. They’re mailed right to  
your post box and they provide  
for temperature sensitive drugs  
as well!

### Did You Know?

The Lakewood (That’s Us in the Interlake S.D.)  
Pre-Retirement Seminar is Nov. 17.

- 9 a.m.—12 p.m. at Lord Selkirk RSS
- You must register in advance on MyProfile.

### Did You Know?

MTS provides an optional Life Insurance Plan:

#### **Q: Who can get it?**

A: Term teachers contracted for less than 60  
working days and substitutes are not covered by  
MSPE plan—so this is a good option for them

#### **Q: Can my spouse can it?**

A: Yes! It is good coverage for underinsured  
spouses.

#### **Q: Can I use the optional Life Insurance Plan as an alternative to mortgage insurance?**

A: Yes! This is a good alternative to mortgage  
insurance and in most cases the costs are lower  
than what banks and credit unions can offer!

#### **Q: Where do I get more information?**

A: Go to the MTS website  
<http://www.mbteach.org/mtscms/2015/08/10/options-life-insurance> or call Mercer 204-947-0055

### Plan Changes—September 1, 2018

- Increased maximum for CPAP  
machine/accessories and Insulin Pumps -  
combined maximum of \$1000 every 5 years (was  
\$500 per lifetime)
- Hearing aid maximum changed from \$2000 every  
6 years to \$2000 every 5 years.