



President's Message:

Which is a bigger dose of February's cold reality; the weather or budget season?

People say that Manitoba has two seasons: winter and construction. February also has two seasons of conversation over the course of its 28 days. The first is usually the weather. I don't need to reiterate, as we all know how that has been going of late. The second season of this shortest month is building momentum. It is the budget conversation storm that lay on the horizon.

It has begun to drizzle, the funding numbers and plus/minus percentages with which Manitoba's School Boards will work in the 2019-2020 year. School boards in Manitoba can receive no less than 98% funding from the previous year, in accordance with the Formula Guarantee, (or a 2.0% cut in reality). According to the **estimated** numbers released by the Province on January 24th, (**Education Funding Announcement** - [LINK](#)), 16 out of the 37 divisions would have experienced greater cuts than they actually will, without the Guarantee. In the Interlake, we were to receive -0.1%, however, changes to next year's enrollment will result in a **-1.8% impact on funding for ISD**. One division saw no change, and 15 were given a budget increase, mostly due to increased enrolment. (The two highest were DSFM at +4.8%, and Western at +4.4%) This means **22 of 37 divisions are forced to work within a budget that is at, or below last year's financial commitment** from the Province.

In addition to an expected reduction by -1.8% in funding, we all know that expenses will not remain stagnant. Rather they will increase, and likely many of them by a rate at which status quo financing will not compete. Our trustees have very difficult decisions to make. The cost of keeping buildings and buses running, hiring and retaining qualified staff, while supplying ISD students with materials and resources to keep them competitive with their peers across the province, is a daunting task.

This reduction in funding also negates any possibility of improvement in any of these areas. We are merely maintaining what we can to keep up, or even falling behind in some areas. ITA members have expressed concern over retaining young teachers and qualified subs, as they can get paid more a few miles down the highway. Both Teulon and Warren Collegiate received ISD funds for new science labs, and Teulon Elementary needed a new heating system and roof, items that are necessities, not luxuries. We should be asking why the Province did not find these to be sound financial investments, in order to maintain safe and viable learning spaces in public schools.

In an ideal world, budget planning would look like this: All stakeholders would share their needs and goals for an effective educational policy or vision. Then fiscal policy would be matched to support it. Schools that have developed a path in this same way, know that it is difficult to stay on it, even when the necessary resources are in place. For its part, the ISD has invited input from its employee groups, and has shared the budget with the community. This equation does not however equate to found money, and once more teachers and students in the Interlake and province-wide, will be forced to work harder with less.

Message from your ITA Indigenous Chair:

Hello! Tansi!

My name is Cora-Leigh Mazurat, and I am proud to be your Indigenous Voices Chair. This is my second year in this position, and I am looking forward to working for the members of the Interlake Division. I am available to discuss any challenges you are experiencing when it comes to Indigenous Education and working towards reconciliation, as point person for gathering resources, and to celebrate any successes you have had. I am open to facilitating group discussions and information sessions, and can act as a liaison between you and the ITA executive. Please email me with any questions, comments or concerns. You can reach me at cmazurat@isd21.mb.ca. I look forward to hearing from you!

Reminder: Beyond 94, was created by CBC in response to the 94 Calls to Action put forth by the TRC for the media. It is [free](#) for teachers, is user friendly and a great tool for a classroom. If you'd like a copy for your classroom please email me and I will make sure you receive one.

News Items:

QUIZ NIGHT RECAP - Our 9th Annual Quiz Night was another success. Thank-you to Brooke Darragh and John Bock for your quizzical awesomeness, and to all of you who braved the cold. We had 8 teams participate with Ecole Stonewall Centennial School Team #1 finishing as #1. A huge thank you to all executive members who helped out.

ISD PUBLIC BUDGET MEETING – was held on Thursday, February 21 from 5:30 – 7:30 pm at Ecole Stonewall Centennial School. This was a walk-through evening where attendees could have conversations with Trustees and Senior Administration, as well as leave comment sheets that the Board will be going through before releasing the final budget in March. If you missed it, you can see the budget on the ISD website at [LINK](#). Please submit any further comments to the Board before March.

Highlights include:

- Totalling provincial and local sources of revenue, the effect to ISD funding is 1.8% reduction.
- ISD enrollment will be down 50 students for 2019-2020 to 2902.
- Staffing in the Division overall will be down. The budget calls for a cut of 2.25 classroom teaching positions, with increases in resource, guidance, and reading recovery. The result is a **total reduction of 1.5 FTE to professional staff in 2019/2020.**
- Staffing details by school were not released. Explanation given was that different schools require different levels of need, which is not easily explained to all stake-holders. In speaking with Trustees and Senior Administration, I suggested that releasing these numbers and fielding the questions that came as a result, would greatly promote conversation between all of said stake-holders. After all, that is the kind of opportunity events such as this can provide.

AGM & EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS – The Interlake Teachers' Association Annual General Meeting will take place Tuesday, April 23, 4:30 pm at SCI. If you are thinking of working for your peers or learning more about your union, consider running for our local ITA executive. There is a list of the executive positions on our website, www.interlaketeachers.ca. **If you are interested in helping with elections, we are currently looking to appoint an Electoral Officer.** Please feel free to inquire further either to run in the election or help run it, by contacting Cathy at president@interlaketeachers.ca. More AGM and election information to come.

Upcoming Dates:

- Friday & Saturday, March 1 & 2 – **MTS Authentic Equity Workshop: Moving Beyond Celebrating Diversity. Featuring Speaker Paul Gorski** - Supporting teachers and leaders to create equitable classrooms and schools and to avoid common pitfalls that create the illusion of equity while maintaining inequity. For more information or to register click [here](#).
- Friday, March 1, 4pm - **Nominations are now being accepted for positions on the MTS Provincial Executive.** Nominations must be forwarded to the attention of Roland Stankevicius, (who was recently appointed as the New General Secretary of MTS), by email at governance@mbteach.org, **no later than 4:00 p.m. on March 1, 2019**. Positions to be filled for 2019 – 2021 are: President, Vice President, as well as five positions for Members-at-Large
- Tuesday, March 12 – **Lakewood Pension Sustainability Seminar**, will be held at Stonewall Collegiate Library from 5:00 – 7:30 pm. Snacks and beverages provided. It is meant to help members better understand how our pension may be affected as we navigate through changes that may be coming. You **must register for this event by Friday, March 8** by going to www.mbteach.org, then to *Myprofile*. Click on *Events*, from the top menu choose *List of Events*. Scroll down and click on *Lakewood (Stonewall) Pension Sustainability Seminar*.

NOTES ON LEAVES OF ABSENCE:

- Please fill out an intent form if you wish a reduction in time or a transfer for next year.
- If you are considering retiring or resigning, members have until April 30 (if hired on or after Dec 7, 2004) or May 31 (if hired before Dec 7, 2004), to give notice effective June 30.
- If you are planning to take Maternity or Parental Leave, or any other leave, please feel free to contact me for a form letter to help you apply.
- **IN ALL CASES OF LEAVE**, or if you need to alter the dates of a current leave, please give notice to the Board **as early as possible**. They will follow the dates of your request letter unless you tell them otherwise.

Get yourself into the hottest ITA fashion trend!

Order your ITA “Wake up, teach kids, be awesome!” T-shirt today! Cost is \$10, paid to your School ITA Rep. Orders are due Monday, March 4, and will be ready by spring break.

