



**INTERLAKE
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION**

ITA Today

Our monthly roundup of news and reminders, upcoming events, deadlines, MTS info, talking points and more. Any questions should be directed to itapres@mbteach.org

Issue No. 6 | June 2023

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: One more thing...

No matter where you are in your career, June still seems to go way too fast and way too slow at the same time. Lots to fit in, projects and assessments to finish up, one more field trip maybe, or that one fire-drill that didn't get done in January. Congratulations, colleagues! You have navigated another year of changing workloads and shifting policies. A year of new challenges, tasks and evolving students' needs. One more Monday get up... one more classroom clean up, and then a break.

To those returning next year - Rest and recharge. Do what you need to return as your whole and best self... not for your students, but for you and your family. Follow a passion; find a new one; naps are good too.

To those onto the next thing - Thank you! For your years of service to the students and families of the Interlake. I hope to run into you down the road with a bright look in your eye and smile on your face, and I wish you the best that your next chapter has in store.

I hope that summer is whatever you need it to be, and as always, stay safe and be well.

Yours in solidarity,
Cathy Pieskach, ITA President

MTS AGM RECAP

- 2023-24 MTS Fee: \$1132 per FTE
- ITA Fee \$130 per FTE, subs \$0.60/day
- Equity Audit was completed. To read the full scan, please go to My Profile and you will find it under Quick Links.
- Elected: President - Nathan Martindale; Vice-President - Cynthia Taylor.
- Click [here](#) to read more about the 38 resolutions debated and to see the complete MTS Provincial Executive.

*****UPDATED ITA 2023-24 Executive:**

To work around retirements and resignations, the ITA executive moved the following:

President: Cathy Pieskach

Vice-President/Equity & Social Justice:

Susan Hannah

Treasurer: Rebecca Good

Secretary: Ashleigh Norberg

Bargaining/Benefits: Ross Ledochowski

Education Finance: John Bock

Indigenous Voice: Kathy Simcoe

Professional Development: Lindsey Weber

Public Relations: Sheila Anderson

Workplace Safety & Health: Christie Crow

Member-At-Large: Rachel McWilliam

Member-At-Large: Becky Pritchard



INTERLAKE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

www.interlaketeachers.ca | itapres@mbteach.org

KIM ANDERSON – WARREN ELEMENTARY - RETIREMENT

Kim's teaching career began in Barrens River, where she embarked on a fulfilling path as a Kindergarten teacher from 1992 to 1995. In 1995, she began as kindergarten teacher at Warren Elementary School. Little did she know this was just the beginning of a remarkable tenure that would span over two decades.

Throughout her time at Warren Elementary School, Kim ventured into different grade levels, displaying her versatility and passion for education. From 1998 to 2000, she embraced the challenges of a combined grade 3/4 classroom, demonstrating her ability to adapt and thrive. In 1999-2000, she further honed her skills by teaching a grade 2/3 class, proving her commitment to continuous growth and development. Finally, Kim found her true calling in a grade 3 classroom, where she has remained for the past 23 years.



Kim has left an indelible mark not only as an educator but also as a mentor and guide to her colleagues. Many regard her as an expert and a Master teacher, always ready to lend a helping hand to new teachers finding their place within our school community. Her wealth of experience and expertise in the classroom is surpassed only by her unwavering dedication to fostering the success of her students.

In addition to her exemplary teaching, Kim's contributions to our school community extend far beyond the classroom walls, and she leaves a lasting legacy in the hearts of our students. From organizing the Terry Fox run and Jump Rope for Heart, to hosting Hannah Taylor's Ladybug fundraiser and the unforgettable grade 3 garage sales, Kim has enriched the lives of our students through meaningful experiences. Tabloid days, student leadership, social committee, and the snack shop have created a vibrant and inclusive atmosphere within our school.

Beyond her professional achievements, Kim's presence at Warren Elementary School has been nothing short of extraordinary. For 28 years, she has been a steadfast fixture, a guardian of our school's history. Countless teachers have benefited from her mentorship, while her compassionate approach has nurtured students with exceptional needs. Her kind and steady demeanor has not only led to her personal success but has also inspired and empowered her students to reach their full potential. Kim's unwavering commitment to growth and her willingness to embrace change have kept her teaching practices fresh and innovative.

As we bid farewell to Kim, we acknowledge that her departure signifies more than just the end of a career. It marks the departure of a dear friend, a cherished member of our community, and a source of inspiration for all. Kim's legacy will forever remain etched in our hearts, reminding us of the impact a dedicated teacher can have on countless lives.

As she embarks on a new era of adventures and travels alongside her beloved family, Mike and Mason, we offer our heartfelt wishes for her happiness and success. May this new chapter in her life be filled with joy, fulfillment, and the discovery of new horizons.

Kim, we extend our deepest gratitude for all that you have done for our students, our school, and our community. Your unwavering commitment, your nurturing spirit, and your boundless passion for education will continue to inspire us for years to come.

Thank you, Kim, for the incredible legacy you leave behind.

MYLES BLAHUT – TEULON COLLEGIATE - RETIREMENT



Myles Blahut is retiring from ISD after 19 years with the division. He can be considered a journeyman of ISD, as he has spent time working at Warren Elementary, Argyle, Stony Mountain, and Teulon Collegiate. Prior to joining ISD, Myles worked in Lakeshore School Division at both Lundar and Ashern schools. He was also President of COSL for 2 years prior to joining the Teulon team. Myles' career has gone from being on the front page of the Free Press (good story) to receiving calls from The Duty Minister of Education!!! Myles is going to miss first and foremost for his incessant dad jokes and thousands of stories. He has led every building with his heart. Staff and students know he may not be the most organized administrator, but he is most definitely the first person to give you the shirt off his back. He is incredibly kind, caring, and empathetic.

We have gone through many challenges together, Myles, but you have finally made it to a life of leisure, days at the cabin, and your new role as full time Pops!





Retirement Report Card for Terry Comeau

MET# 1988-2023 Grades 1,2 and 4

Terry Comeau has been a faithful and dedicated teacher since 1988; making ERWBB School her only stop in the Interlake School Division. Terry began her teaching journey in Grade One as Miss Coleman.

Strengths

Terry is a devoted, engaging, and organized teacher, who is well-known for her use of page protectors. She comes to school each day with a positive demeanor and she is a kind mentor to all of her colleagues. Terry is skilled in many areas, including: managing school patrols, running Chess Club and showing students how to effectively use Modge Podge while making paper mâché Christmas Critters.



Challenges

When arriving at school in her lime green Qashqai, Terry frequently has needed support with parking **between** the yellow lines. Another challenge for Terry is keeping her coffee mug **clean**. Terry is working toward using Power School independently. She should also be mindful of her colleagues' feelings when she consistently hands in Report Card comments **early**!

Next Steps

As Terry begins her next journey, we are excited to know that she will have many opportunities to expand and build upon her golf skills and will continue to hone her furniture refinishing and refurbishing abilities. In the winter, Terry will most certainly improve her cross-country skiing stamina. Terry is also excited to becoming an active member of ***The Hell with the Bell Club***.

We will miss Terry very much and we are honoured to call her our friend!

RENE COMEAULT – COLLÈGE STONEWALL COLLEGIATE – RETIREMENT



Rene has dedicated his life to education in the Interlake. He has taught both math and physical education, as well as science and chemistry. For the first six years of his career, he worked at Warren Elementary School before moving across town to become a Wildcat at Warren Collegiate for the next 25 years. His final four years were spent closer to home, as a member of the Rams staff at Stonewall Collegiate.

Throughout his career, Rene impacted countless students' lives through teaching and coaching many sports teams. He was instrumental in building the Warren track dynasty, that won the multiple rows of Zone and Provincial Track banners that line the walls of the WCI gym. It brings him great joy when former students see him several years after graduation and they tell him they are still physically active because of their experience with high school. Over time, he built strong relationships with colleagues whom he will miss dearly in retirement and, through it all, he is grateful for the opportunity to help shape young minds throughout his long-standing career in education. Congrats on your retirement Mr. Cosmo, and all the staffs you were a huge part of wish you nothing but the best. And Vive Les Habs!

MICHAEL SCHOOFs – COLLÈGE STONEWALL COLLEGIATE - RETIREMENT

Michael has worked in the education system for the last 33 years, having graduated with a Bachelor of Education in 1990. He has had the good fortune of teaching industrial arts-technology education, with many experiences in woodworking, electronics, power mechanics and metalwork for Grades 9 through 12. He started his career in Minnedosa at Tanner's Crossing School.

From there, he was employed in the St. Boniface School Division for 10 years where, in addition to Industrial Arts, he was afforded the opportunity to also teach Grade 9 Social Studies. Along the way, Michael made stops at Portage Collegiate and Grant Park High School. He has anchored the metal shop at Stonewall Collegiate for the last 21.5 years.

It was soon after starting at SCI that he realized his days of wandering were over as this was where he needed to be. Michael said that memorable events are too numerous to list. However, the year he coached the powerhouse football team that won the 2008 Rural Manitoba Football Championship would certainly be top of the list. In addition, anytime he could involve his students in community projects was also a highlight.

Of course, Michael will miss the friends and colleagues he has worked with over the years, and the excitement students have always provided working in the shops. He is looking forward to the adventures that lay ahead. Good luck and enjoy your retirement, Michael.



CHERYL KOONING – ÉCOLE STONEWALL CENTENNIAL SCHOOL - RETIREMENT

Cheryl Kooning began her teaching career in 1986 after graduating from Brandon University. She taught at Gypsumville School, beginning in a Kindergarten class, until 1988 when she made the move to Stonewall, where she would work the rest of her career. She taught grade 5 and 6 at École Stonewall Centennial School from 1988 until 2023, with a one-year hiatus at École R. W. Bobby Bend in a grade 4 classroom that became known as Kooning's Cottage. In 2020, during what she describes as her "most fun year", she taught grade 5-8 Phys. Ed. at Centennial.



In addition to her tireless work in the classroom, Cheryl dedicated hours to MTS and ITA committees, coaching various sports and working on school-based initiatives and organizations. She has mentored many student teachers who have become successful professionals in ISD and beyond.

She marks as highlights her many 3-day trips with students to Camp Arnes and enjoyed experience of teaching the children of former students – when students become parents of students. In 2000, Cheryl was honoured with the Lieutenant Governor's Elementary School Classroom Teacher Award, a worthy recognition of her commitment to excellence in the classroom.

Cheryl's colleagues will miss her infectious energy and "life of the party" attitude that she brings with her everywhere she goes. We wish her nothing but happiness in her next adventures.



KELLY FARMER – STONY MOUNTAIN SCHOOL – LONG SERVICE



After 23 years, Kelly is leaving the ISD to pursue other passions! Kelly began teaching in 1999 and has basically taught every subject and grade from K-8. Kelly began her career at Woodlands School, then a short stint in Warren, a few colonies, multiage in Argyle and then ending her career teaching sewing in Stony Mountain and Balmoral. For most of her career, Kelly organized divisional curling. Kelly has made many friends along the way and has had a lasting positive impact on her students. Kelly will continue to run her refrigeration business and build her elk ranch. Kelly dreams of spending more time at the lake.

We all congratulate and wish Kelly the very best!

ARLENE MACDUFF – STONY MOUNTAIN SCHOOL - RETIREMENT

After 34 years of teaching, Arlene is retiring! Arlene began her career in 1989 and has taught all subjects K-6 including specialties such as Music, Choral and French. Arlene has taught at Ecole Stonewall Centennial School, Woodlands Elementary, Grosse Isle and Stony Mountain School. Arlene has been involved in many extracurriculars including leadership committees, award celebrations, school productions and many choirs. Throughout her career, Arlene excelled and led many education committees. Arlene's passion for education went beyond the classroom and included teaching and mentoring others. Arlene designed, facilitated and co-facilitated professional development workshops for K-12 teachers, principals, para-professionals and other professionals working in the field of education in Manitoba.



A highlight for Arlene was travelling for her thesis research in Canada and the US.

Arlene's retirement plans include travelling, painting, writing and celebrating with her family and friends. Arlene's advice to other teachers is 'If you can dream it, do it! Be true to yourself, trust instincts and follow your own goals.'

We all congratulate and wish Arlene the very best in her retirement!

CORA-LEIGH MAZURAT – NEW HAVEN COLONY SCHOOL – LONG SERVICE

Cora-Leigh spent most of her formative years in the Interlake School Division. In 2006, she commenced her teaching career here and began her journey by imparting knowledge and skills to second-graders at Stony Mountain School. Subsequently, she taught at various colony schools, including New Haven, Sturgeon Creek, and Meadow Lane, and eventually returned to New Haven.

Throughout her career, Cora-Leigh has demonstrated her versatility and proficiency in teaching a diverse range of subjects, from early to senior grades. Furthermore, she has served as a teaching principal in multi-age classrooms, inspiring and nurturing young minds to achieve their full potential.

Over the years, she has established many meaningful connections and forged enduring friendships with colleagues and families in the division. As a member of the ITA, she has also contributed to the professional development of her fellow educators, and was the ITA's first Indigenous Voice and Action Chair.

As she embarks on a new career chapter with the River East Transcona School Division, we extend our heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for her continued success and fulfillment.



LAURA PERRELLA – WARREN COLLEGIATE - RETIREMENT



As Laura approaches her well-deserved retirement, her departure leaves a profound impact on the school community. Mrs. Perrella, is a remarkable principal, that has made a significant impact on her school community through her unwavering commitment to inclusion and community building. With a clear and strong focus on fostering a welcoming and supportive environment for all students, she has become a beacon of hope and unity. Mrs. Perrella's leadership has transformed her school into a place where diversity is celebrated and all individuals feel valued.

One of Laura's most notable contributions has been her unwavering focus on student mental health and well-being. Recognizing the growing challenges faced by students in today's fast-paced and demanding world, she made it a priority to prioritize mental health initiatives within the school. She implemented programs that supported students' emotional well-being, providing resources, counseling services, and a nurturing environment where students could openly discuss their feelings and seek support when needed. She goes above and beyond to ensure that every child receives the support they require to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Laura's commitment to student mental health has undoubtedly had a profound impact on the overall well-being and success of the students at Warren Collegiate.

Laura's emphasis on community building has been instrumental in fostering a positive and inclusive school environment. She encourages open communication and collaboration among students, teachers, and community members, creating opportunities for dialogue and partnership. Mrs. Perrella actively involves families in school activities, recognizing the crucial role they play in a child's education. Through PAC involvement, school open houses, she ensures that the school remains deeply connected to our surrounding communities.

Laura's leadership exemplifies the power of a principal's vision and dedication. Her focus on well-being and community has transformed her school into a safe and nurturing space where every student can thrive. By fostering a sense of belonging and celebrating diversity, she has not only shaped the lives of her students but has also created a lasting legacy of inclusivity that will continue to impact future generations.

We wish Laura the absolute best that retirement has to offer! Cheers Laura!

LEE STEWART – WARREN COLLEGIATE - RETIREMENT

Lee's departure leaves a void that will be deeply felt by both her colleagues and students. Throughout her career, she has been an extraordinary teacher, making significant contributions to the school community. Mrs. Stewart's commitment to volunteer work in sports has been exemplary, but her impact extends beyond athletics. She has also been a valued instructor in Language Arts and the Bike Repair program, leaving a lasting impression on countless young minds.

Lee's dedication to volunteering and helping students in sports is truly inspiring. Over the years, she has gone above and beyond to support young athletes, devoting her free time to coaching, organizing sporting events, and providing mentorship. Her passion for sports has not only helped students develop their athletic skills but has also instilled valuable life lessons such as teamwork, resilience, and discipline. Her tireless efforts in this domain have left an indelible mark on the school and have positively shaped the lives of countless children.

In addition to her remarkable work in sports, Lee has been an invaluable teacher in ELA, History Bike Repair and Outdoor Education. Her expertise and dedication in these subjects have cultivated a love for literature and language among her students. Through engaging lessons, insightful discussions, and creative writing assignments, she has nurtured the intellectual growth of her students, sparking their curiosity and fostering a deep appreciation for the written word. Lee's ability to connect with her students personally, and create a nurturing learning environment has made her a beloved figure at WCI.

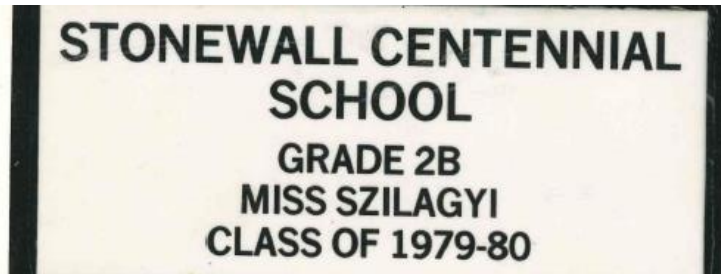


Lee's dedication to the Bike Repair program has been instrumental in teaching students' practical skills while instilling a sense of responsibility towards the environment and sustainable transportation. Through hands-on workshops and repair sessions, she has empowered students to become self-reliant in maintaining and repairing bicycles, promoting a healthier and more eco-friendly mode of transportation. to not only empower students with valuable skills but also contribute to a more sustainable community. As Lee embarks on a well-deserved retirement, her contributions to Warren Collegiate and her students' lives will always be cherished. Her tireless dedication to volunteering and helping students in sports, combined with her exceptional teaching in ELA, History, Bike Repair and Outdoor Education, will leave an enduring legacy. Lee's impact on the school community is

immeasurable, and her commitment to empowering young minds and nurturing their physical and intellectual growth will continue to inspire generations to come.

JUDY SZILAGYI – ÉCOLE STONEWALL CENTENNIAL SCHOOL - RETIREMENT

Judy started her career at École R. W. Bobby Bend at the time when RWBB and École Stonewall Centennial were under the same administration. She recalls how the visits from the administrators were infrequent given their focus on the “Big School” (Centennial). The teachers would stand guard by the windows to see if they were heading down the road to check up on things.



After 6 years of teaching, Judy resigned to take up the equally challenging and rewarding job of raising her two children. After being a full-time mom for a few years, she returned to the classroom and quickly became the primary substitute for Balmoral School, before she came back to teaching full-time at Balmoral. She taught junior high Math and Science and also volunteered coaching various sports teams. She remembers the extended days at Balmoral, starting early and ending late, because of the bus schedule. After 6 years at Balmoral, Judy made the move back to Stonewall to teach at Centennial.

She describes her early years at Centennial, “teaching grade 5 with the legendary Cheryl Kooning and Christine Peters” for 12 years. Finally, Judy was able to finish her career in her “dream job”, teaching Human Ecology for the last 6 years to students at Centennial and Stony Mountain. She marks as highlights her time teaching Home Ec. and the joys of seeing former students become colleagues. She is looking forward to spending time with her two small grandchildren and “slowing down”.

Her colleagues will miss her calm demeanor, her hospitality and her generosity both at school and as a host of many staff parties at her beautiful home. We wish her happiness and joy in her retirement.





Retirement Report Card for Susan Young

MET# 1995-2023 Grades K,2,3 and 4



Susan Young has been a loyal and fervent teacher since 1995; making ÉRWBB School her only stop in the Interlake School Division. Susan began her teaching journey covering a Grade 2 Maternity Leave for Terry Comeau.

Strengths

Susan's organizational skills are second to none. She is a knowledgeable, passionate, and well-planned teacher. Susan interacts well with school mates and demonstrates a collaborative work ethic by sharing resources with others. Susan frequently enhances her lessons with hands-on experiences such as helping kids with sampling Egyptian and Indian food or creating newspaper structures.

Susan has shaped the mind of many young learners over the years with her meat and potatoes, no-nonsense approach.

Challenges

Susan is currently receiving one-on-one support to **accurately** take attendance **before** leaving the school for Field Trips; so as to not leave Staff members behind. This will help to reduce stress at the school. During various Staff Room tête-à-têtes, Susan is encouraged to tactfully share her opinions with others so no feelings are hurt. A goal for Susan in the future would be to carefully use paper cutters to avoid **injury**.

Next Steps

As Susan begins her next journey, we are excited to know that she will have many opportunities to support the tourism industry by exploring destinations unknown. Retirement will allow this avid reader to spend boundless days delving into award winning literature whilst sipping coffee or sampling wine. Susan is looking forward to becoming an active member of ***The Hell with the Bell Club***.

We will miss Susan very much and we are honoured to call her our friend!

CHRIS GAMBLE – WARREN ELEMENTARY – LONG SERVICE



Mr. Gamble, during your tenure at Warren Elementary School, you have not only demonstrated a deep love for science and technology but also a remarkable ability to create fun, family-friendly activities that fostered a sense of togetherness and camaraderie. Your commitment to nurturing these endeavours extended beyond the classroom and encompassed engaging events organized by the WEPAC, such as Nerf Battle and Movie Nights. Your active participation and support for extracurricular activities demonstrated your genuine desire to connect with our students and their families.

Your dedication to organizing such activities has provided our students and their families with unforgettable experiences and moments of joy. The Nerf Battle events brought out the spirit of friendly competition, encouraging teamwork and bonding among our students. The Movie Nights provided an opportunity for families to come together, enjoy quality time, and create lasting memories. These initiatives not only strengthened the bonds within our school community but also created a safe and inclusive space for everyone to feel a sense of belonging.

Your encouragement of outdoor learning opportunities and the support of these activities, such as WES Fest, The Teepee, and Tabloid Day emphasized the importance of inclusive and hands-on education, where academic growth is complemented by social and emotional development.

Beyond your contributions to the community, you have been a mentor, friend, and a voice of reason to all of us. Your inclusive leadership style, your commitment to fostering a supportive environment, and your unwavering dedication to our students' success have left a mark on our staff and students that won't soon be forgotten.

As we bid farewell to you, we cannot help but feel grateful for the impact you have made on our school. On behalf of the entire Warren Elementary School community, we would like to express our appreciation for your leadership, your dedication, and your support.

As you embark on your new journey in Prairie Rose School Division, we wish you continued success and joy. May your passion for science, technology, and inclusivity-building continue to inspire and impact the lives of others.

