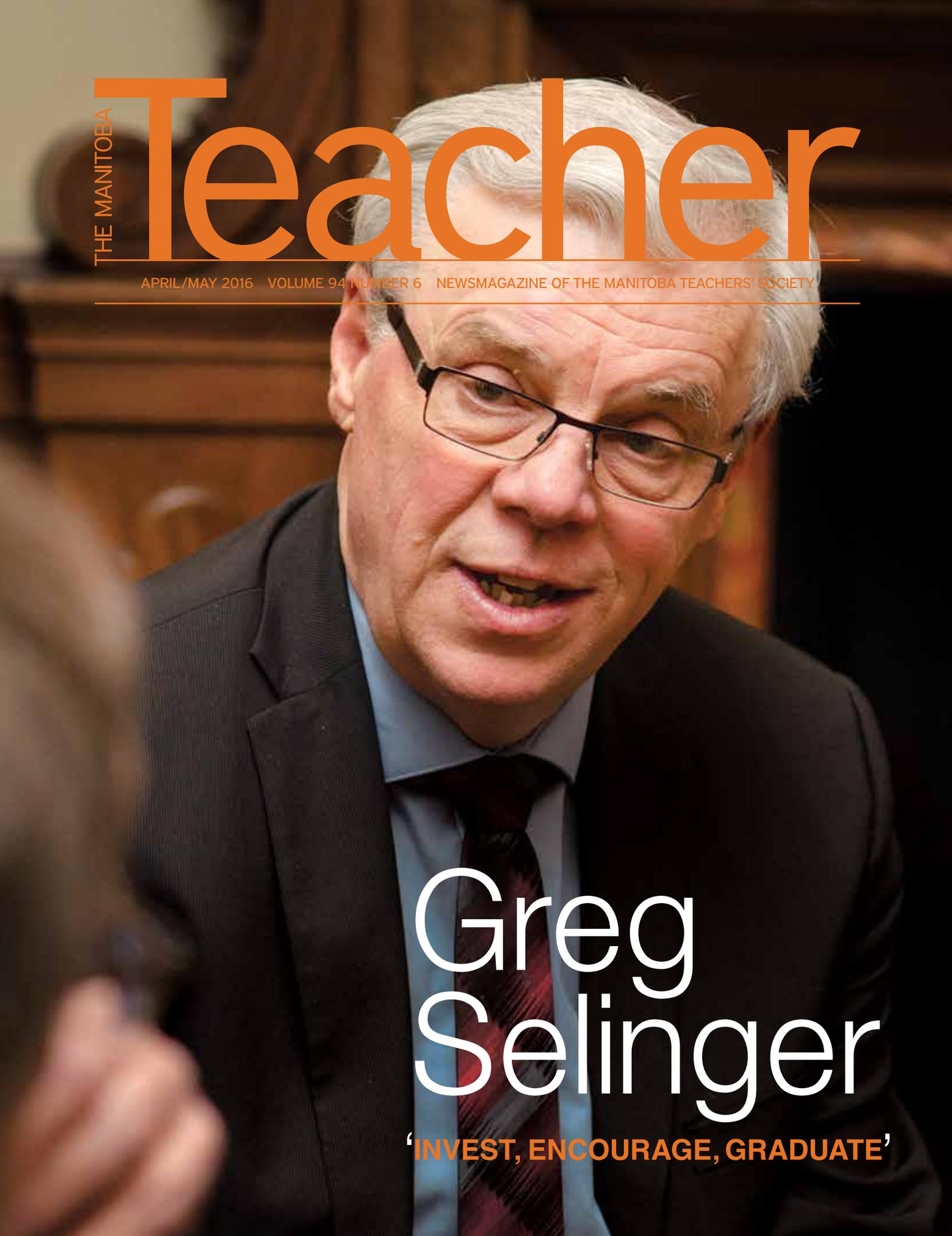


THE MANITOBA

Teacher

APRIL/MAY 2016 VOLUME 94 NUMBER 6 NEWSMAGAZINE OF THE MANITOBA TEACHERS' SOCIETY

A close-up portrait of Greg Selinger, an older man with white hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit, light blue shirt, and a dark tie with a red and black pattern. He is looking slightly to the right and appears to be speaking. The background is blurred, showing what looks like a wooden cabinet or bookshelf.

Greg
Selinger

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Greg Selinger



Brian Pallister



Rana Bokhari



FROM THE PRESIDENT

NORM GOULD

The first few months of every New Year are always a time of anxiety for many teachers and definitely for those of us involved in MTS.

It is during those months that the provincial government announces how much money it will devote to public education and, in turn, budget decisions are made by local school boards.

It is during those latter discussions that we are always reminded – and this year is no exception – that 80-some per cent of division budgets go toward paying employees. Of course, it's not ever put that way in media coverage. It is often described that 80-some per cent of the budgets are "eaten up" by staff, as if there is a pack of jackals unfairly making off with most of the money earmarked for education.

Sure it's just a lazy cliché, but isn't often enough put in the context of what education entails. Education is almost totally made up of people. Sure there are computers and books and whiteboards and other costs. But at its core you are paying for people; people to maintain the buildings, people to handle administrative chores and, mostly, people – teachers -- whose knowledge and ability are the No. 1 requirement to running an education system.

The majority of education funding does not go to what's on a teacher's desk or in their hands, it goes to what is in their heads, what they've learned through years of university and experience.

It seems all so obvious, but that becomes less clear when school divisions start the budget process and the media and others weigh in with their opinions on how schools should operate. During a discussion on the radio it was suggested the Winnipeg School Division could solve its fiscal problems by firing 60 or more teachers. The Brandon Sun turned out an almost fact-free editorial suggesting too much money was going to teachers.

It's all true. You could run a school system much more cheaply without teachers or only a handful per school. You could also save money on a new car if you bought one without an engine. And, well, there's always the old thought that schools would run much more efficiently if there were no students.

The good news is it seems more and more trustees are getting the message that a quality education system needs teachers. Research by MTS – through focus groups and polls of the general public – has also found that a majority of taxpayers would rather see more resources put into education.

We have found that is especially true of parents who are more keenly aware of what goes on in today's classrooms. They are strong supporters of teachers they come in contact with.

So, maybe as the years go by, and we continue to point out the obvious, that the anxiety at the beginning of each year will lessen and everyone can relax knowing our schools and students are in good hands.



The Manitoba Teachers' Society

Editor

George Stephenson,
gstephenson@mbteach.org
Phone: (204) 831-3058

Design

Krista Rutledge

Photography

Matea Tuhtar

Circulation

Jennifer Nasse, jnasse@mbteach.org

Advertising

Mireille Theriault, mtheriault@mbteach.org

The Manitoba Teacher

191 Harcourt Street
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Fax: (204) 831-0877

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INSIDE MTS

MTS READY TO WORK WITH WHOMEVER WINS ELECTION

BOBBI TAILLEFER, GENERAL SECRETARY

Spring has sprung!!!! Thank goodness that the days are longer and the sun is shining warmly upon us. I am always so excited for the coming of spring and the arrival of summer. It is a time that makes me feel more creative and I have renewed energy to tackle all of the activities that MTS has planned.

This spring is going to be very busy at The Manitoba Teachers' Society. With the provincial election looming, we are committed to making sure that the membership has sufficient and reliable information so that they can make an informed decision in the voting booth on April 19th (or earlier at advance polls). This election is important for many reasons but, for MTS members, it is an opportunity to support a government with an education friendly agenda. In this way we can influence the legislative agenda and ensure progressive policy that shapes a bright future for public education in our province.

Teachers do not only influence public policy with their vote, they are on the front line of provincial politics. We have current and former members who have thrown their hats into the ring and stand as candidates for all major political parties. I wish them all success because I believe it is good for Manitoba to have teachers among the policy and decision makers at the Legislature in order to be a voice and advocate for education. Many people think that they know about teaching, education and schools because they once went to school, but teachers know that education is an ever evolving and truly complex profession. We, at the The Manitoba Teachers' Society look forward to working collaboratively with all who will be elected in order to address issues that affect Manitoba's teachers and classrooms.

Also on our spring agenda are a multitude of upcoming workshops on subject matters such as UDL numeracy and literacy, leadership and teaching with equity. As well, many of our committees will

be meeting in order to do work on your behalf. All of the information on these MTS events can be found on our website – www.mbteach.org under the Professional Development tab.

While you are on the website you will notice the Call for AGM. The Annual General Meeting is being held at the Winnipeg Fairmont Hotel on May 26th to the 28th. This meeting of approximately 330 delegates and staff of the Society is a very important event in your professional life because much like the provincial election, this meeting of members is when we set policy and ensure that we chart a progressive course for our organization.

I would like to thank all of the members who volunteer to be delegates and engage in this very important work on behalf of all their colleagues. I look forward to seeing you there as we work together to support our profession.

CANDIDATES FOR PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE

There are three provincial executive members-at-large positions to be filled during the 2016 Annual General Meeting May 26-28. See *related pre-AGM story, page 18*.

Nominated so far:



Ray Desautels
St. James Assiniboia



Frank Reeves
River East Transcona



Suzanne Jolicoeur
AÉFM

BY GEORGE STEPHENSON

Diversity KEY to FUTURE



As Premier Greg Selinger looks into the future, he says education in Manitoba is at a turning point.

Students, teachers, schools and even the materials that have to be taught and learned are not what they once were.

“We are seeing greater and greater diversity in our population,” he said in an interview with *The Teacher*. “The challenge of diversity and having an education tailored to the needs of each child and family is going to be a requirement in the future.”

Selinger’s interview with *The Teacher* was the last of three done with the main party leaders in advance of the April 19 provincial election. Interviews with Conservative Leader Brian Pallister and Liberal Leader Rana Bokhari were featured in the January/February and March issues.

Selinger said the growing Indigenous school population along with the influx of refugees and other newcomers to Manitoba create the need for new practices in public school education.

“The pressure to go back to standardized, one-size-fits-all approach will leave more kids in a position of failing, which is not the way we need to go.”

Selinger says that is one of the frustrations he has with the emphasis on standardized, international testing in basics such as literacy and math that have shown Manitoba students scoring below others in the world and Canada.

“They leave out all the other things teachers are doing now with kids in school.”

While the basics remain important, schools now must accommodate needs they didn't face in past years such as the importance of English as an additional language, preparing students for the digital world, environmental and sustainable education.

"Those things aren't tested for," he said. "Of course, we want kids to be literate in terms of numeracy and reading and the ability to express themselves and communicate, whether it's in writing or orally. Those are fundamental skills, but they don't have to be hived off from the other things."

"These can go together. You can teach skills of citizenship and all these other things in the core subjects. They don't have to be separate. It's not either, or; it's how you do both."

Teachers shouldn't have to be faced with educating students as individuals while at the same time having to be concerned about fitting them into standard slots.

"It puts a lot of pressure on teachers to deal with a diverse range of needs in the school and speaks to this testing issue," he said. "This notion that we can have standardized test for all kids really misses the point."

"I fundamentally believe that you have to assess where a kid's at and the measure of success is how far that kid moves from where he or she starts. It's that individualized progress that ... is the best measure of our success, not how they measure up on some bell curve relative to every other kid."

Selinger says the approach of his government has been to provide more programs to deal with the contemporary issues facing schools, to keep students in school and, in the end, to increase the number of students who graduate.

"I think the thing that is the biggest achievement for us is to get that graduation rate from about 71 per cent to 87 per cent. We've seen in some school divisions where they had about a 50 per cent graduation rate. They're up into the 80s now. That's a huge, huge advantage."

To continue to take that higher will also mean fewer and fewer standardized approaches for different students with different needs. For example, the graduation rate for Indigenous students is still only around 50 per cent, he said.

"We need to close that gap. It doesn't matter if you are a newcomer or a refugee or an Indigenous child or a kid in a middle class family, every kid should be able to get enough that they can get that start in life with the tools they need to navigate the world."

"Kids need to know how to navigate the digital world; they need to be able to understand the world in terms of issues like climate change and the environment -- which we do better in Manitoba than anywhere in the world -- they need to be able to address issues like violence; they need the skills to deal with mental health issues in our society. This is a big issue, more and more. Kids are under a lot of pressure, citizens are under a lot of pressure and stress."

One of this government's most enduring stamps on education has been its commitment to sustained funding for public schools.

"We have funded education every year at the level of growth in the economy, actually above that in various years, including this year. If you stop putting money into education you're compromising your ability to have the citizens of the future and the economy of the future."

Along with educating students now is the need to provide opportunities that weren't as critical in the past.

individualized attention to students who need it. The initiative, introduced after the last provincial election, has resulted in the hiring of more than 300 new teachers.

"Just about every other province is seeing teachers either laid off or fired. We are actually increasing the number of teachers at a time demands are growing."

Along with investments in programs and people, Selinger says there is more pressure now to also increase investments in schools themselves.

"When you drive around Manitoba and look at many of the communities a lot of the schools were built in the '50s and '60s and they need improvements. Some of the really old schools in the old neighbourhoods are a hundred years old now and they're beautiful buildings, they need upgrades."

He says a future focus has to be on ensuring those schools are equipped with modern science labs, gyms, arts rooms and child development centres.

As well, the continued growth of the community schools program will help meet

"We have funded education every year at the level of growth in the economy, actually above that in various years, including this year. If you stop putting money into education you're compromising your ability to have the citizens of the future and the economy of the future."

- Greg Selinger

"One thing we are learning now is people are going to change careers two, three, four times. If they don't have that ability to re-skill themselves, re-educate themselves as they go along, they are going to get lost. Education still remains the universal program that allows us to lift everybody up in our society."

Selinger says it is equally important to put an emphasis on the other end of the educational timeline, pre-school.

"It is fundamentally important to prepare kids for school," he said. "We are very committed to early childhood development. We are very committed to expanding our day care system -- now called early childhood learning centres -- so kids are better prepared."

"All those early investments allow kids to do well when they hit the schools."

Added to that is the government's class size initiative, keeping K to 3 classes at around 20 students, to allow teachers to give more

many of the modern needs of both students and parents. The province now has 47 community schools, which Selinger admits the public isn't particularly aware of.

More than 10 years old, the program is designed to bring together parents, community leaders, and community agencies as "partners" -- providing a range of services and supports that any given community needs, from education programs for parents to breakfast programs.

"I believe schools, because they are universal, are hubs in neighbourhoods and one of the few places you can go where you are not labelled as having a problem. You're a parent, you're not a social assistance recipient or a person in the child welfare system."

"You're going there because you are a parent with a positive role to play. I think that is the great thing about education. It puts everybody in a positive light: a learner or a supporter of learning."

Quiz

BY NORM GOULD
PRESIDENT, MTS



your candidates

By now most MTS members, and likely the general public, have seen the TV commercial, billboards and ads encouraging support for public schools.

Reaction has been generally favourable, although some people have said they can't escape the commercial either on TV or online. They can pretty much recite the words by now. Sorry, but that's actually a plus in that it means our message is getting around.

Some people, however, have suggested the message is a subtle or subliminal message for Manitobans to vote for a specific party in the April 19 provincial election.

Not true. The message is neither subtle nor subliminal, but very clear: our kids need more support, not less.

We think any party that agrees and commits to that sentiment is deserving of support. We believe in policies that support public education, no matter which party is proposing them.

The commercial, which we've put on hold during the election campaign period, also mentions that some politicians have talked of cuts to education. The ad mentions this because it has been a theme in many provinces and U.S. states and, bluntly, we don't want it happening here.

Again if any party pledges to support,

not cut, education, it deserves support.

This campaign was designed after months of talking to parents and teachers across Manitoba about the state of public education and what concerns them most about their children's and their students' future.

We don't expect all teachers to vote the same way. Indeed, our polling shows our members are not of one mind, we know that the votes of 15,000 members can make a difference. More than 90 per cent of our members vote in elections, so what you say or ask of your local candidates or the leaders does matter.

What we heard was many, many of those involved in our focus groups and polling were concerned about continued – and increased – support for public schools. That concern becomes more acute with

the uncertainty that precedes any election. Parents and teachers especially spoke about the increased needs in today's classrooms. They saw that it's not the same as when they went to school.

They crafted the message.

The campaign features a real Manitoba teacher. You can meet her on page 10 of this issue.

As a teacher, Lauren Marshall lives the reality of the commercial in every classroom.

She sees the changes in Manitoba classrooms. We are richer as a society thanks to the arrival of so many new Canadians over the last number of decades, and most recently the Syrian refugees. This does, however, have an impact on classrooms.

Newcomers to Canada have different needs, as do First Nations students who arrive from remote communities, as do kids with special needs and those who live in poverty and those who face the challenges of poor nutrition and disruptive home lives. And teachers are the ones with the responsibility of meeting and fulfilling those varying needs.

All these factors affect our ability to provide Manitoba's students the quality public education they deserve. Sustained



The Manitoba Teachers' Society is dedicated to safeguarding the welfare of teachers, the status of the teaching profession and the cause of



Greg Selinger



Rana Bokhari



Brian Pallister

funding by school boards, and ultimately the provincial government, is necessary to ensure that our teachers have the support to meet the needs of their students and that students have the support to achieve their goals.

To be fair, Manitoba has been relatively calm compared with the fights over education funding and direction in other provinces. Discordant relationships in British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec have resulted in court fights, strikes, and cancelled extracurricular activities that have disrupted school years and class time for students and teachers. We don't want that happening here.

And our goal at the moment is to give our members and the general public as much information as possible to ask the questions of candidates and initiate discussions to help ensure there is support for the goals of students.

We have, in *The Teacher*, published articles from interviews with all the three main party leaders to get their views on the importance of education and teachers. And to get them on the record. Some of what was said was enlightening, but the leaders weren't ready to get into specifics until closer to the election.

We will use our website to keep a running

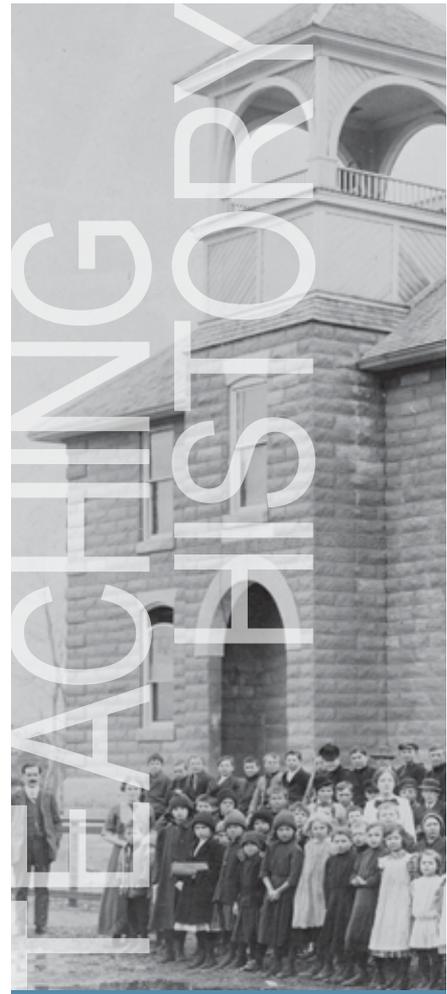
lists of the promises on public education being made by the parties as well as any other election-related material that is relevant or, on occasion, what is simply interesting.

Our website material will expand on what we have done in *The Teacher*.

We started back in December with the first of the three leaders' interviews and with this issue of *The Teacher* we are providing as much material as was available a month before the election.

As in other elections, we organized a leaders' event to elicit as much information as possible from the candidates about their views on public education and what policies they might be planning to implement. During the last election it was a leaders' debate. This time we planned a virtual town hall.

We don't expect all teachers to vote the same way. Indeed, our polling shows our members are not of one mind, we know that the votes of 15,000 members can make a difference. The overall result in a Manitoba election can rely on a few thousand votes in a few select ridings. And, we know, more than 90 per cent of our members vote in elections, so what you say or ask of your local candidates or the leaders does matter.



The Manitoba Teachers' Society is looking for **photos, artifacts and other records of teaching and Society activities** from 1919 to the present.

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She's not just a teacher on TV

BY MATEA TUHTAR

Lauren Marshall says she couldn't believe it when she got a call back for her audition in the new MTS TV ad "Our kids need more support, not less". The 26-year-old teacher and newfound actress says that when she saw the script she didn't think she had a shot because "I thought nobody would cast me as a mom, so I went in there and was super comfortable because I thought there's no way I'm ever getting this part so I might as well have fun doing it."

Turns out that attitude worked in her favour, landing her her first screen gig - a big breakthrough for Marshall who only got interested in acting very recently.

"I've been looking for every opportunity I could get, so when I saw the MTS call for auditions, and the only requirement was that you were a member, I thought 'I could do this!' It was just a no-brainer."

Marshall taught for three years at Lundar School as a music specialist and says it was that job that spurred her interest in acting.

"Honestly, it was seeing my students up on the stage that made me miss being on stage myself," she says. "So it was in my third year in Lundar that I started all of a sudden taking all these classes in the city, and joined as many plays as I could."

Marshall would teach all day, then drive the 1.5 hours to the city in the evening to pursue her acting which was "a big commitment, and I knew I couldn't do it long term because it was too draining. So that's what prompted me to leave Lundar because I realized: 'Okay if I wanted to do this, I have to be in the city'."

Today Marshall is substitute teaching in Winnipeg which accommodates her teacher/actor lifestyle perfectly.

"Subbing still allows me to interact with kids, and I love that, but I can make my own hours and I don't have to go home at the end of the day and think immediately about planning, which is a huge part of teaching. I've found the experience very positive."

Teaching and acting have many similarities - both roles are high-energy and require a performance to command the attention of their audience, and



"I think acting has definitely taught me to be a more expressive communicator, which helps build relationships with students. And teaching has helped me feel comfortable in front of a room - students can be a tough crowd."

- Lauren Marshall

for Marshall the two complement each other well.

"I think acting has definitely taught me to be a more expressive communicator, which helps build relationships with students. And teaching has helped me feel comfortable in front of a room - students can be a tough crowd."

Marshall says she's learned a lot from her first ad shoot and that the production was more intense than she expected.

"The first thing that struck me when I walked in was the sheer amount of people involved to do a 30-second commercial. I never realized the scope of a production - there's so much manpower to make it happen. A good successful take hinges on

so many people doing their jobs, and you never want to be the one who messes up a take."

Marshall says she's happy with the final product and has gotten a lot of positive feedback from people who have seen the commercial, including being recognized by students when she goes to a school. The message of the ad is something close to her heart.

"As an arts advocate I think it's super important to have more support for our schools. I'm a direct recipient of that - in my first year teaching in Lundar we had no instruments, so I applied for the CARAS (Creative Arts Research and Scholarship) grant and received \$10,000 to purchase instruments. So I'm a direct beneficiary of the funding that is available for schools. I strongly believe in the benefits that more support to schools bring - you can see it in the classroom."

Marshall's plan for the next few years is to be a sponge and take as many acting classes as she can, and take on as much acting work as she can... "Until one day I get paid for it! But in the meantime subbing will always be there and that's what I'm really thankful for. Not a lot of professions would have that option."

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Jim Martland is the co-author of several books on early numeracy and the director of the Mathematics Recovery Program in England, Scotland and Wales. He is Senior Fellow in the Department of Education at the University of Liverpool.



Gay Sul is a math consultant in Red River Valley School Division and the only accredited Math Recovery trainer in Canada. In 2009 she was voted Math Teacher of the Year by the Manitoba Association of Math Teachers.

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Crucial

Questions

We asked the three main leaders some not-so-probing questions about their own school days.



**Brian
Pallister**

What was your favourite subject in school?
Phys-ed.

What was your least favourite subject?
When I taught high school, I was given last-minute instructions that I was teaching Grade 9 students. I asked for the curriculum and textbooks, and was told, "You design it". That pressure made it my least favourite subject for a few weeks, but it forced me to educate myself so I could educate my students. The lessons I learned and taught to my students in "environmental studies" have provided me with an enduring respect for protection of our environment.

Was there one teacher who had a profound influence on you? Who? Why?
Mick Cochrane, my phys-ed teacher. He was demanding. He gave me a chance to play team sports, when I couldn't walk and chew gum at the same time.

If you could say one thing to that teacher today, what would it be?
Thanks for pointing me in the right direction.

If you were a teacher now, what subject would you want to teach?
Social studies.

Were you ever suspended from school, and in what grade?
No, but in Grade 7 I probably deserved to be.

What's the best experience you ever had in school?
My first year of teaching when I set up remedial reading classes for several young people, and we worked together at noon hours. It was one

of the hardest and most rewarding experiences of my time in any school.

What's the worst experience you ever had in school?

I was late one morning at Portage Collegiate. The principal – an ex-military guy, Bill Taylor – gave me a strong lesson about the importance of being at the school punctually. "I don't mind that you don't like me right now, son. I want you to respect me in 25 years." And I do.

What school do you remember most?

The two-roomer that I went to for Grade 1 to Grade 7. It was hard for me to be bigger than boys three grades ahead of me. But I read every book in the library, not that it was that big a library.

Can you remember anything said about you in a yearbook?

I don't know. My favourite part of the yearbooks was the team pictures and being on those teams.

How did you travel to school each morning?

When I taught, I walked - also in high school. In the early days, I carpooled. It was 3 1/2 miles so our neighbours and us took turns.

Did you play a musical instrument?

My Grade 2 teacher got me interested in my voice as a musical instrument and in piano, and that is a big part of my life.



Greg Selinger

What was your favorite subject in school?

My favorite subjects were History and Social Studies and English.

What was your least favorite subject?

My least favorite subject had to be Physics.

Was there one teacher who had a profound influence on you? Who? Why?

Yes, Mr. Gordon at Deer Lodge Junior High School. Mr. Gordon has a unique ability to connect with his students and that makes all the difference in the classroom. He listened to us and was genuinely able to interact with us. His passion for teaching gave us a passion for learning.

If you could say one thing to that teacher today, what would it be?

Thank you for taking the time to show the students you care and appreciate them.

If you were a teacher now, what subject would you want to teach?

I would love to teach Social Studies and History, not only because they were my favorite subjects, but because I believe it's so important that we learn from our past and social studies allowed us to learn about the world around us, people, places and cultures.

Were you ever suspended from school and what grade?

No, I was never suspended.

What's the best experience you ever had in school?

I loved playing team sports. There's no greater

feeling than being part of a team!

What's the worst experience you ever had in school?

It really made me indignant when I saw other students being picked on at school because they were different.

What school do you remember most?

I remember my years at St. James Collegiate the most fondly because there were a wide-range of programs and extra-curricular activities for students. I played on many of the sports teams they fielded and also had a great time in their theatre programs. It was a school that really seemed to have something for everyone.

Can you remember anything said about you in a yearbook?

I do remember a comment a friend wrote about my time in high school. He said something along the lines of "I didn't have a lot going on" which was ironic cause I was involved with sports, theatre and other extra-curricular activities in school and not to mention hanging out with friends, and working a part-time job.

How did you travel to school each morning?

Actually I walked to school every day.

Did you play a musical instrument?

I did not play any musical instruments, nor sing very well. If I did I might not be in politics...

What was your favorite subject in school?

My favorite subject was biology.

What was your least favorite subject?

Wood working.

Was there one teacher who had a profound influence on you? Who? Why?

There were a few, Mr. Carrington and Mr. Zuk for biology, Mrs. Malik--they were kind and engaging and made it fun to be in their classes, but they also never busted me for things I probably should have gotten in trouble for.

If you could say one thing to that teacher today, what would it be?

I would say thank you to all three, I learned a lot and made some great friendships and memories in those classes.

If you were a teacher now, what subject would you want to teach?

I think teaching is one of the toughest jobs so I probably would never do it, but probably history or social studies.

Were you ever suspended from school and what grade?

I'm pretty sure I was suspended, probably grade 9. I was a little scrappy back then.

What's the best experience you ever had in school?

Parking lot parties during lunch at SCI is my

greatest social memory of school fashion shows put on by the school every year again were really good memories. Most of my great experiences were because I was surrounded by some wonderful friends and classmates.

What's the worst experience you ever had in school?

The death of a classmate Sandy Sontag was probably the worst experience that we all had at SCI.

What school do you remember most?

I remember Springfield Collegiate the most--we were just country kids having fun and being competitive and learning about ourselves. I'm proud to still have very close relationships with people I spent those years with.

Can you remember anything said about you in a yearbook?

I really can't remember at all...i'm sure it was something to do with me being energetic.

How did you travel to school each morning?

I travelled by school bus. Mr. Ed was my bus driver and our bus number was 46.

Did you play a musical instrument?

No, I didn't take band--other than recorder (which i was not very good at). I never played an instrument.



Rana Bokhari



BY RICHARD CLOUTIER
CHIEF CORRESPONDENT,
680 CJOB NEWS

PARTYING LIKE IT'S 1988

Ah spring. The geese are back. Neighbours you haven't seen since the fall are in their yards. Spring cleaning is in full swing everywhere. Expect the same on April 19.

Manitobans will vote in the 41st Provincial General election on that day. There are 57 constituencies across the province represented in the Manitoba Legislature with the New Democratic Party holding a majority.

All signs indicate Premier Greg Selinger and the NDP will be replaced by Opposition leader Brian Pallister and the Manitoba Progressive Conservatives. The Manitoba Liberals led by Rana Bokhari are hoping to grow from their current single seat.

Politics is sometimes like the weather, unpredictable. In Manitoba, you should never put away your winter boots early.

The federal election last fall is a good example. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau started the campaign in third place. But he overtook the federal NDP to defeat Stephen Harper's Conservatives. Is Selinger the Harper-like figure in this campaign? He's certainly unpopular with Manitobans. Many associate his decision to raise the provincial sales tax to eight per cent with an arrogant, out-of-touch administration. Is Pallister the answer? The lanky leader has hammered away at Selinger, but he has trust issues, too. His detractors believe civil-service jobs and services will be cut to rein in government spending. And the Bokhari option? She's banking on Manitobans not connecting with the two older men in this fight.

And while personalities are important, history is also our guide. It could be 1988 all over again. That year the NDP were reduced to 12 from 28 seats.

It was a bizarre set of circumstances that led to the downfall. In March of 1988, the Legislature came to a sudden halt. Jim Walding, a former NDP Speaker of the House helped defeat his own government. Walding had been passed over for a cabinet post and ultimately decided to vote with the Opposition Progressive Conservatives on a budget vote. The government of Premier Howard Pawley fell. Walding had warned Pawley was becoming out of touch, but the move shocked all.

There were scandals and protests and a certain appetite for change. Auto insurance rates had increased. There

were protests outside the Legislature.

With his vote, Walding set into motion change the NDP could not manage. Pawley, who died last December, resigned and called an election. He was replaced by Gary Doer. The NDP were reduced to the third party in the legislature.

I have had several conversations with current NDP cabinet ministers who fear they will be reduced to third party status again. The anger is comparable.

Brian Pallister is also trying to avoid 1988. Sure the Progressive Conservatives won the election, but then Premier Gary Filmon expected to form a majority government. They gained only 25 seats, a minority. Gary Doer and the NDP were able to hammer away at Filmon, charging the Progressive Conservatives would return Manitoba to the politics of health and education job cuts from the previous regime of Sterling Lyon.

Is this starting to sound familiar?

The Manitoba Liberals, led by Sharon Carstairs, became the Official Opposition in 1988. She performed well in the leaders' debate and the Liberals won 19 seats, all in Winnipeg. Among the victors: Jim Carr and Kevin Lamoureux. Both are now Liberal Members of Parliament.

Rana Bokhari would love history to repeat itself. She is hoping the popularity of Trudeau spills over into provincial support. Last fall, the Liberals swept all but one of the ridings in Winnipeg. Liberals reckon voters who can't stand Selinger or Pallister will vote for the new leader on the block.

The pressure is on Bokhari to show depth on the key issues of the day. So far, her scripted answers are barely adequate. Carstairs had far more knowledge and competence. The comparison to 1988 has its limits.

So what should we expect in the weeks ahead? Air wars and ground wars.

The air wars spread key messages through media briefings and advertising in traditional and social media. You will hear and see positive and negative messages from all three. There are strict limits on advertising by the political parties and third-parties who want to advocate for a specific party.

The Conservatives' message: Selinger broke a 2011 promise not to raise taxes. The PST tax hike is the gift that keeps on giving. The positive messages portray Pallister as a Premier in waiting. He is

especially sensitive to accusations they would cut teachers and nurses if elected. It's all about the warm and fuzzy. There will be promises on key components of the economy, education and health care. Mindful of history, Pallister will attempt to soften the party image in the weeks ahead to answer the cut and slash accusations.

The NDP has targeted both their competitors. Strategists know voters who can't stand the PC's will look

in this area. Bokhari expects many volunteers who helped defeat the Conservatives federally will help in key Winnipeg ridings. And while the Liberal brand resonates after the federal campaign, Bokhari has not proven to her own party she is capable of being Premier.

The Pallister team has been ready for months. They want the Liberals to do just well enough to siphon votes away from the NDP. A popular Liberal



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long and hard at the Liberals. After defending and apologizing for hiking taxes, Selinger will put forward a long list of promises to fend off those who could abandon the NDP to the Liberals. He will also attempt to put Pallister on the defensive in the few times they will be together in leadership debates. An angry Tory leader, they believe, will turn off voters.

The Liberals have some money to spend on advertising but lack resources where they are needed most, on the ground. The ground wars consist of the hundreds of volunteers who knock on doors and help identify potential voters.

They are assisted by pollsters who assess voter likes and dislikes in key constituencies. The Liberals suffer

leader will benefit the PC's in several Winnipeg ridings. They have identified key constituencies on the west, south and northeast Winnipeg that could switch.

The NDP has a core of volunteers but most of the Doer gang is gone. They have retired or left government altogether. Yes, Selinger survived a leadership challenge last spring but the split in the party has not really healed.

Selinger may have defeated Theresa Oswald for the leadership but her supporters are not motivated to get out the vote. Many believe they need time outside of government to renew. Long-time NDP members have decided not to run for a reason. They know the brooms are out for a spring cleaning.

SCREEN

TE



PC Party of Manitoba TV Ad



NDP Party of Manitoba TV Ad

Which style is most likely to inform your choice on election day:

- Apologetic and alarmist?
- Confident and confrontational?
- Inactive and invisible?

The advertising strategy in the run-up to Manitoba's provincial election has been a decided study in contrasts, and while it was certain that the volume and intensity of the three main parties (NDP, Progressive Conservative and Liberal) TV ads would ramp up significantly after the writ was officially dropped in mid-March, the style and substance (or, perhaps, lack thereof) in each party's early ad campaign have offered a fairly good indication of what would follow when the provincial election race got fully up to speed.

For the incumbent New Democrats, crippled by internal strife and weighed down by dismal polling numbers and a leader who has consistently ranked as the country's least popular premier, the early ad strategy was a no-frills combination of contrition and plaintive caution about the dangers of a change in government.

The New Democrats preferred TV-ad format involves single speakers positioned in front of a plain white background; the lead-off spot in the collection archived on the NDP's website features embattled Premier Greg Selinger explaining that "it's been a tough year, and we haven't always gotten it right." The 60-second ad — double the length of most election spots — outlined the challenges the NDP has overcome (major floods, global recession) and then mixed a few modestly stated accomplishments with a couple of equally low-key promises. The ad's tag line, "We're moving Manitoba forward because everyone matters," took an obvious shot at the elitism and divisiveness that the NDP believes would accompany a win by the

EST

BY BRAD OSWALD
TV CRITIC,
WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

poll-leading Progressive Conservatives.

After Selinger's minute-long mea culpa, the NDP rolled out a couple of other white-background ads — one featuring the premier's son, Pascal Toupin-Selinger, admitting that his dad "isn't the coolest guy right now" but insisting that he's still the right man for the job, and another with a woman looking perplexed by the election promises of Liberal leader Rana Bokhari. "I just don't get it," she offers, but the subtext of this baffling ad seems to be, "We understand that we're going to lose, but please don't relegate us to third-party status behind these people."

Other ads featured Indigenous candidates Wab Kinew and Amanda Lathlin extolling the virtues of the NDP's connection with First Nations, and erstwhile health minister Sharon Blady revisiting the New Democrats cobweb-covered (but still memorably effective) "running with scissors" warning about Pallister.

Not surprisingly, the PCs' early ads were confident to the point of bordering on cocky. Just imagine the unbridled glee that must have swept the Conservatives' ad agency back when the rebel NDP cabinet ministers resigned their seats and stated that Selinger no longer had the best interests of Manitobans at heart. Yes, it turns out that those attack ads really can write themselves, after all.

The PCs' early ads, also stored on the party's website, were a predictable combination of positive Brian Pallister portrayals and negative NDP-focused attacks. The upbeat spots feature Pallister looking all folksy and statesmanlike, wearing an open-collared shirt and talking about his party's priorities, his humble rural upbringing, the inspiration he drew from his mom, a teacher, and how that informs his commitment to protect

front-line services when the inevitable budgetary bloodletting begins under a PC regime.

The negative ads ... well, as stated earlier, they pretty much wrote themselves. When you have footage of a headed-for-the-exit NDP cabinet minister describing Selinger as "increasingly being driven by his desire to hold onto his leadership rather than by the best interests of Manitobans," there really isn't much need for the PCs to ask their supposed premier-in-waiting to engage in the slinging of mud.

With each successive drop in the NDP's popularity, the PCs' election-ad campaign became a little bit easier to produce.

And then there's the Liberals....

Given the opportunity presented by the NDP's plummeting popularity, one might have assumed that the Liberals would jump aggressively into the election-ad game in order to establish theirs as a party worthy of a vote.

One would have been wrong. As of this writing (during the final week of the winter/spring legislative session), the Liberals had yet to roll out a single TV ad. In fact, the only video available on the Liberals' website was a poorly produced 12-second welcome from Bokhari, which looked and sounded like it was recorded inside a toaster oven.

Of course, there had to be more to come, from the Liberals and from their more ad-aggressive opponents. But the stylistic choices certainly made a strong first impression.

- Apologetic and alarmist.
- Confident and confrontational.
- Inactive and invisible.

Which approach is most likely to earn your vote?



BALANCE

mind body spirit

THE MANITOBA TEACHERS' SOCIETY

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MTS Balance, Mind Body Spirit, encompasses many different dimensions of wellness with diverse programming ranging from fitness to massage therapy. The path to healthy living has never been easier!

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For more information:

Robyn Braha

Wellness Coordinator

P: 204-837-2564

TF: 1-800-262-8803

MTS budget proposes **fee hike of 1.7%**

The MTS budget proposed for 2016-2017 recommends a fee increase of 1.7 per cent.

The budget, to be debated at the Society's Annual General Meeting in May, would see the membership fee increase to \$972 from \$956 or \$16 a year.

The recommended increase is lower than adopted last year when the final budget included an increase of 2.5 per cent.

The increase last year would have been higher, but delegates transferred \$400,000 from reserves to ease the impact.

This year, the provincial executive is recommending \$300,000 be transferred from reserves to be used against any proposed fee increase.

If the budget recommendations are approved, the total Society operating budget, excluding the Disability Benefits Plan, would be \$15.1 million next year.

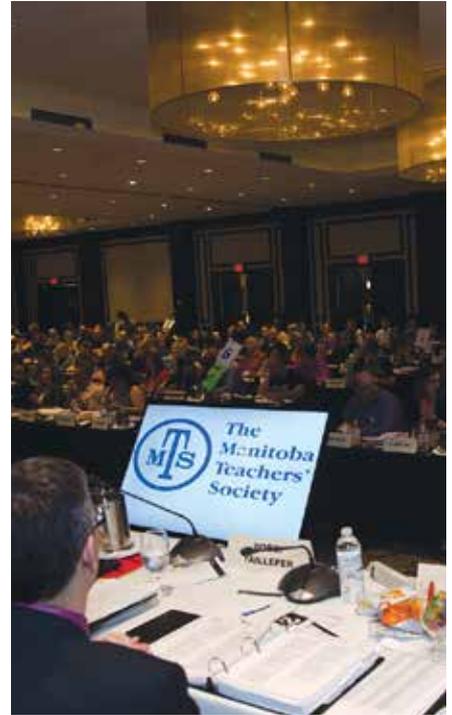
Expenditures and revenues in the final budget could change depending on decisions made at the AGM.

Along with the budget, delegates will deal with a number of resolutions including one calling on various governments to implement recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The resolution calls on the federal government to "eliminate the discrepancy in federal education funding for First Nations' children being educated on reserves and those First Nations' children being educated off reserves."

It also asks MTS to ask the federal government to enact an Aboriginal Languages Act and to "establish multi-year funding for community-based organizations to deliver programs on reconciliation."

The AGM will also again deal with a proposal to hold the meeting every two years and in the intervening year to hold a membership engagement forum. A similar resolution was defeated at the AGM last year.



Follow the election on mbteach.org

As the provincial election campaign rolls on to voting day, April 19, MTS will keep members abreast of timely information – the promises and policies – involving public school education.

~~Election~~ 2016



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UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

THOSE OTHER ELECTIONS

PORTFOLIO



OR, WE'LL JUST CALL BATMAN

The city council in Williams Lake B.C. wants GPS trackers installed on repeat offenders. And, preferably, by injection. Though it wasn't specified in the motion, Coun. Scott Nelson said council's preferred method would be to inject the trackers into offenders. "There is many different ways to do it. We'd like the one where you are absolutely forced to be injected, so it can't be torn off,"
The only problem with the idea is that outside of movies, there is no such thing as an injectable tracker.

Just another brick with a wall

BY GEORGE STEPHENSON



Well, that's disappointing. Donald Trump says if he becomes president of the United States he won't build a wall between Canada and the U.S.

Trump has made clear he is the King of Walls and that he will build "a big, beautiful wall" along the Mexican-U.S. border. Oh, it will also have "a big, beautiful door." That wall, he has said, is to keep out the Mexican "rapists" and "killers" that are apparently flooding into America every day.

And not only will he build the wall – some 17 metres tall and 3,000 km long – he'll get Mexico to foot the \$12 billion bill. Mexico would do this because, well, who knows? To keep out drunken spring-breakers staggering down from San Diego and Tucson?

When former Mexican President Vicente Fox placidly pointed out: "I'm not going to pay for that f***ing wall," Trump responded by saying he would add 10 feet to the height. By the time builders move in the wall will probably be nudging the stratosphere. That is Trump's Art of the Deal.

Still, nothing for Canada, though.

TRUMP
MAKE AMERICA HA...

KING OF WALLS



Uh, those are nouns, Bernie
The Bernie Sanders' campaign sent out a Tweet that said "Greed, fraud, dishonesty, arrogance. These are just some of the adjectives we use to describe Wall Street."

Absolute facts, not theory

A former teacher and a Republican candidate for the Texas State Board of Education discovered before anyone else the cause of school shootings—they began after government removed the 10 Commandments and the Bible from schools.

Also, said Mary Lou Bruner: "the school shootings started after schools began teaching evolution as an absolute fact. She also pointed out during the campaign that dinosaurs became extinct because there was nothing for them to eat after they got off Noah's Ark.

And to top it off, she said Barack Obama supported a drug habit in his '20s as a prostitute. Bruner won almost 50 per cent of the vote in the Republican primary.

Slate.com's education reporter explains why it matters: "Members of the Texas State Board of Education wield a huge influence not just in Texas but all over the country. Learning materials developed for Texas' 5 million students are often used in other states as well, which is why the ongoing kerfuffle over historical, um, flourishes in the books—describing slaves as 'workers from Africa,' say, or referring to the slave trade as the 'Atlantic triangular trade'.

Happy learning, kids.

Trump must feel our criminals, bums and job-takers are the stay-at-home types, more interested in universal health care and other Canadian evils than mowing the lawns of Beverly Hills burghers or working high steel on another Trump monument.

Then again, it might be just that this is one project even Donald Trump can't promise. He says it would just be too hard. It would be 8,800 km, which in Trump math is quadruple that of the 3,000 km Mexican border.

"You're talking about a border that would be about four times longer. It would be very, very hard to do."

Pretty defeatist attitude for The Donald. Certainly transforming a Manhattan huckster with a weird comb-over and orange tan into the President of the United States would rival creation of the pyramids of Egypt or the Colossus of Rhodes. In fact, while defending his big, beautiful barricade, he has cited the precedent of the Great Wall of China – and it was some 9,000 km long. Even what remains is so immense that, like Trump's hair, it can be seen from outer space.

But Trump says Canada is not a big enough problem to warrant a big, beautiful barrier.

"I don't care what anyone says. It is not our big problem. Our big problem [with Mexico] is not only people coming in, and in many cases the wrong people, it's the tremendous amount of drugs that are coming in."

Well, perhaps we'll get special recognition once we legalize marijuana and the U.S. is

faced with spring-breakers floating down to the U.S. from Estevan and Timmins with bags of BC Bud stuffed in their mukluks. Then we'll see who's a big enough problem.

In the meantime, Trump says he's got lots of affection for Canada.

"I love Canada," he says, although he's never made clear what he loves about a country that offers so many things he is opposed to.

But we shouldn't get too smitten with all the love we're feeling from the Trumpster. Like the post-Christmas Grinch, he apparently has a heart three times bigger (or in Trump math, 10 times bigger) than he did at the beginning of his campaign.

Since it all started, and despite evidence to the contrary, he has said at various times: I love the poorly educated. I love Muslims. I love beautiful women. I love the Latinos. I love war. I love free trade. I love Neil Young. I love the Mexican people. I love Kanye. I love God. I love my business. I love my church. I love African Americans. I love China. I love people. I love Scotland. I love stupid people. I love Billy Graham. I love Michigan.

So, Canada, feeling the love? At this point, maybe as much as his first two wives.

It does make one pause and ponder whether he's being totally candid about his love life when he claims to love Mexicans or Latinos or Iowa. But, some make sense. When he said he loves stupid people he added it was "because stupid people love me."

And there's one you can tape on The Wall.

Was that campaign in 1940?

Ohio governor and Republican presidential candidate John Kasich told a town hall meeting that he won election as a state senator because "women came out of their kitchens to support me." He paid all those women back by defunding Planned Parenthood.



QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?
I'D LOVE TO HELP.
REACH ME AT [RJOB@MBTEACH.ORG](mailto:rjob@mbteach.org)

REFRESH

BY RAMAN JOB, PUBLIC RELATIONS FACILITATOR

Bust out of photo purgatory

We've all been to smartphone purgatory. Sooner or later we accumulate so many photos on our smartphones that we have to kill a hefty batch to make some room for new apps—or more photos. Well, Google Photos has your back. It will back up every picture and video you can throw at it, free of charge.

And here's the magic, it will take these unlimited pics and vids and organize them for you. Every single person in your camera rolls shows up in a little individual folder. Just tap the icon and you'll get every photo of Uncle Jim, your niece Brittney—or your favourite feline or canine friends. The facial recognition is dead on and you'll be impressed with how helpful this is.

No more scrolling through thousands of pics to pull up that picture of your cousin falling into the lake the day you

went tubing. It's there. And so are pictures of graduations, concerts, sunsets, lakes, flowers, St. Patrick's Day, screenshots, Christmas, skies, Halloween, New Year's, etc. Yes, it's that good. They're all in separate folders. And you don't have to tag anything.

While you're uploading your pics—it can be a lengthy process—make sure to turn off “photo and video backup using cellular data” unless you have an unlimited plan or cash. And as wonderful as the cloud is, it's always smart to back up to a physical drive.

Take Google Photos for a spin. You'll believe the magic.

Your new ed-tech darling

Chromebooks are one of the darlings of ed-tech south of the border. Not so much in Canada. What's to love about a laptop with no more memory than a standard smartphone? Well, I did a bit of research a few months ago and finally took the plunge.

Here's what I've experienced.

Chromebooks aren't meant to tackle all the tasks you give your laptop. But for anything to do with writing, social media, personal banking, reading ebooks, Internet surfing, research, YouTube, Netflix and casting to your widescreen TV, they are more than adequate.

Plus, they have features even a full-fledged laptop would envy.

Those six to seven minutes it takes for a laptop to boot—who has the time? My Chromebook is up and ready to go in about seven seconds.

Battery life?

Well, you know manufacturers always embellish screen time stats on a single

charge. My Acer Chromebook CB3-11 is rated for an absurd 8.5 hours. But it's legit. I get 8 hours consistently. What a thrill to not shackle myself to an electrical outlet: To write for three hours and still have 5 hours of battery life left.

And since all the battery really powers is the screen—there's no hard drive—Chromebooks never get hot. They don't even come with fans.

While many people doubt a laptop with 16 or 32 GBs of memory can be truly useful, mine comes with a slot for an SD card, two USB drives (regular and high-speed), plus 100 GB of free Google Drive space for two years.

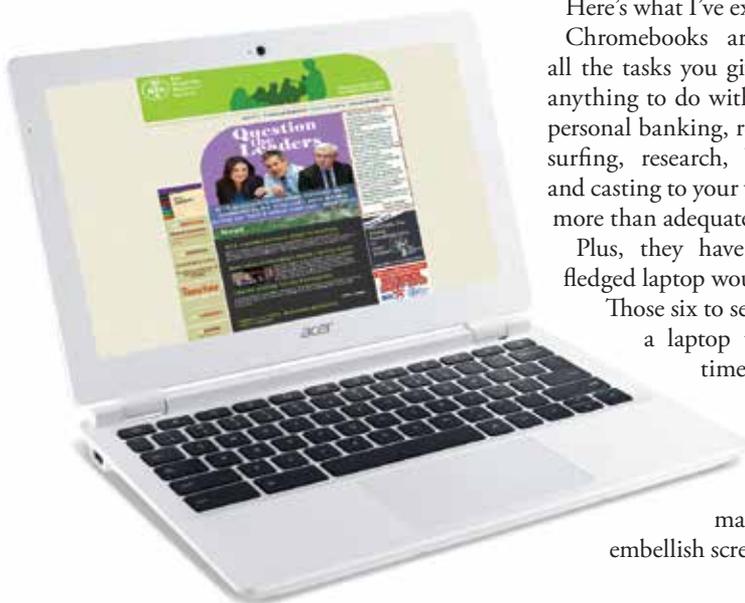
Since these machines are all based on Google's operating system and apps, you'll never have to update your OS or apps, or worry about viruses. That's all done for you. Granted, you may not get to use some of your favourite programs, but there's usually a Google product that's compatible or a Chrome extension for the app you really want.

Bottom line?

Don't buy a Chromebook if you're looking for a full-featured laptop. But if you want to write or journal in the cloud, work and engage on social media or surf for a long time without a lot of hassle, do your research—many of these machines are solid choices.

Did I mention my Chromebook is white, ultra-thin, weighs almost nothing and set me back only \$250?

Have an idea for a story or a social media question? Kick it to me at rjob@mbteach.org





CANADIAN MUSEUM FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS
MUSÉE CANADIEN POUR LES
DROITS DE LA PERSONNE

Spring 2016 school visits: spaces still available!

Visites scolaires du printemps 2016 : il reste des places!

Add a visit to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights to your plans before the end of June. There are still spaces available. All programs are curriculum-based, age-appropriate, engaging, inclusive and accessible.

Call 204 289 2253 or email education@humanrights.ca to book the program, time and day that works best.

Let the Museum help your students to be inspired.

humanrights.ca #AtCMHR

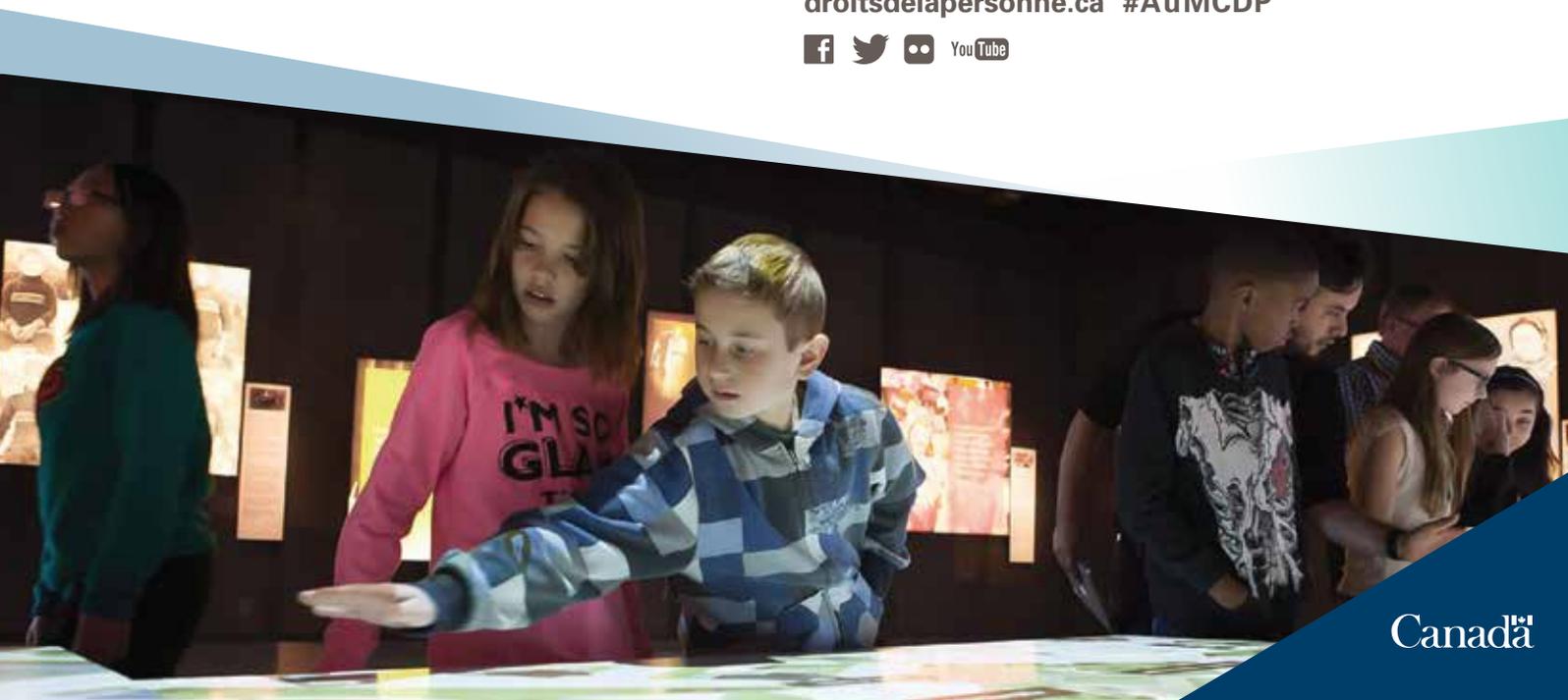


Planifiez une visite au Musée canadien pour les droits de la personne d'ici la fin juin. Il reste encore des places. Nos programmes scolaires s'appuient sur les programmes d'études enseignés dans les écoles. Ils sont adaptés à l'âge des élèves, intéressants, inclusifs et accessibles.

Appelez-nous au 204 289 2253 ou écrivez-nous à education@droitsdelapersonne.ca pour réserver le programme, le jour et l'heure qui vous conviennent le mieux.

Laissez le Musée vous aider à inspirer vos élèves.

droitsdelapersonne.ca #AuMCDP





The
Manitoba
Teachers'
Society

Sign up for your MyProfile account in 4 steps

Go to the MyProfile members' area of the MTS Website at <https://memberlink.mbteach.org>

If this is your first visit to the MyProfile site, you will need to follow these four steps:

- 1 Click on the red button named **“Sign Up Now”**;
- 2 Fill out the four required fields;

- 3 If you are a MTS member or a new MTS member and have never entered the site previously, fill out all the fields under Option 2;

If you are a member and do not know your MTS number, please use the **“Forgot your MTS Number?” link on the right side of the page. Or, you can contact the Information Management department at 204-837-4666, ext. 331 or toll free at 1-866-494-5747, ext. 331.*

- 4 Click the red button labeled **“Register”**. You will receive an email, to the address you provided, indicating that you now have access to the site.