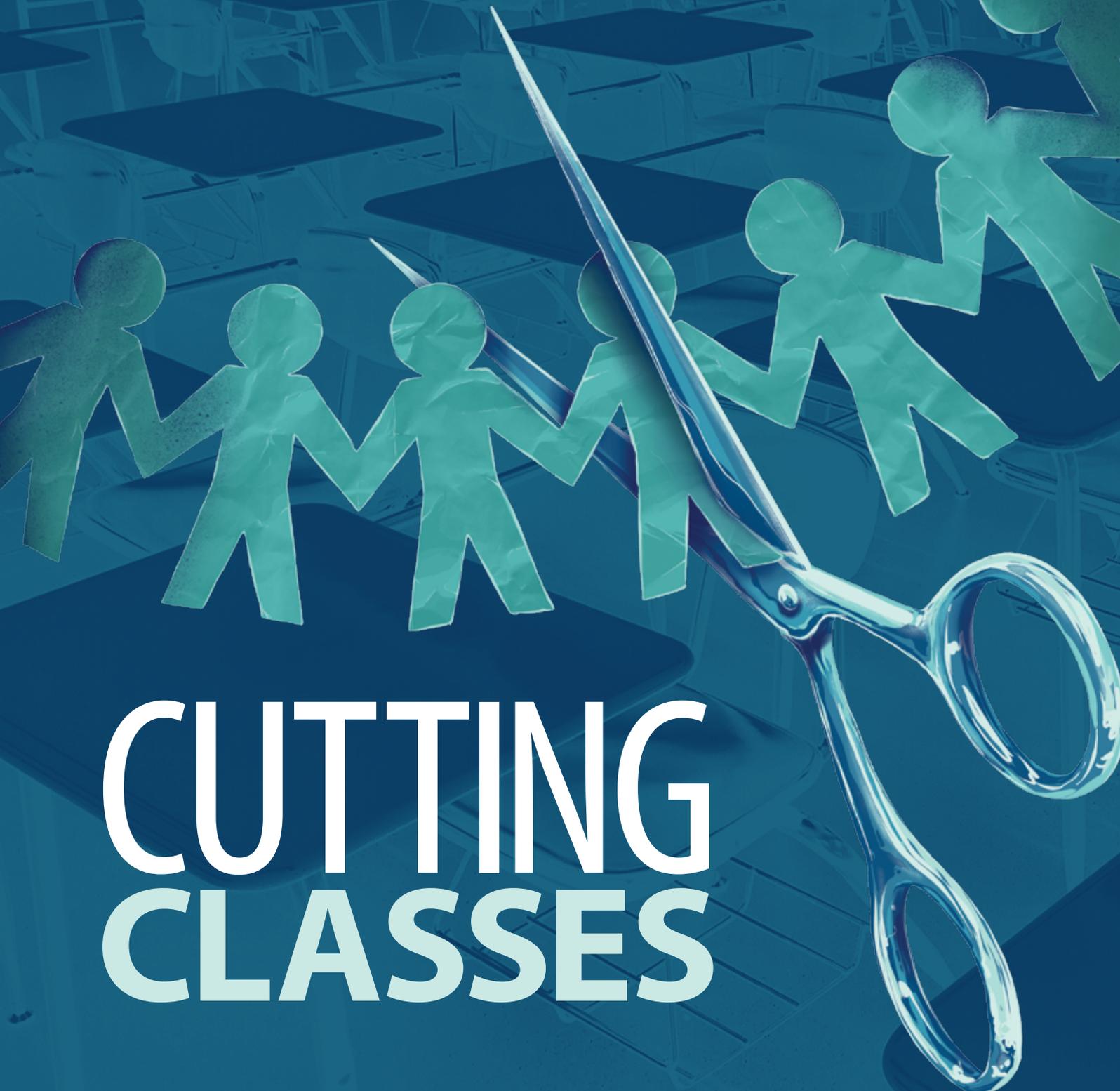


THE MANITOBA

Teacher

MARCH 2018 VOLUME 96 NUMBER 5 NEWSMAGAZINE OF THE MANITOBA TEACHERS' SOCIETY



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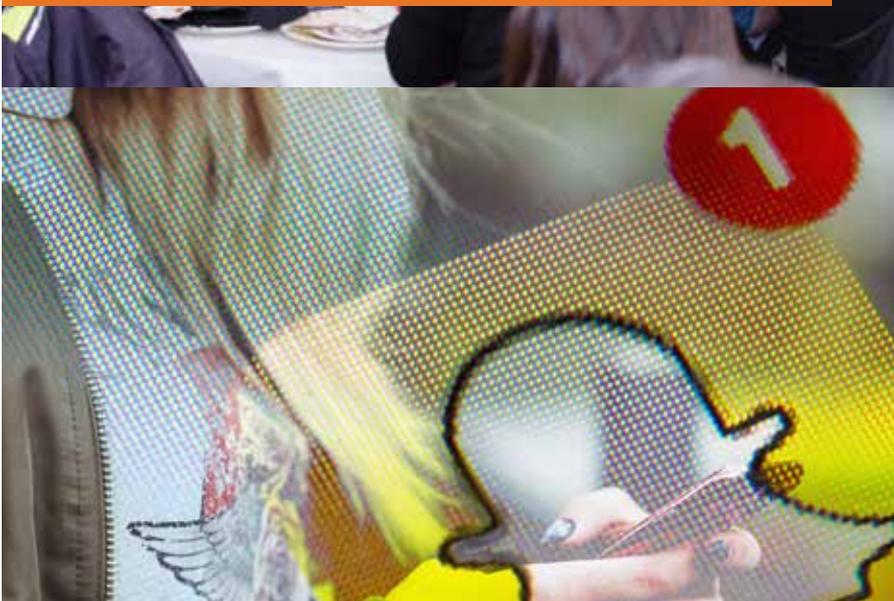


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FROM THE PRESIDENT

NORM GOULD

Throughout my career I've had the good fortune to work alongside a lot of great people. Some I've worked with for a decade or more, and I recognize the unique value of those long-term relationships. A rapport develops, communicating and collaborating become second nature. Then, as they do, circumstances change, people move around, and we find ourselves at square one again, working to establish new connections and that rhythm, that groove, where shared purpose meets a plan.

It's like that right now for MTS. After 17 years working with one government, we now have another – one with its own priorities and vision. Change itself isn't necessarily a bad thing, but it is challenging. It takes time, energy and effort on both parts to come to a mutual understanding of the landscape, to get to know one another, to determine a productive way forward.

Our provincial government is halfway through its mandate, yet has only recently signaled its intentions related to public education policy. And it isn't reassuring.

MTS has engaged early and often over the past two years as the government's economic priorities became clear. I've met on numerous occasions with Education Minister Ian Wishart, and took him at his word when he stated his commitment to working with the province's teachers. MTS has repeatedly asked for details related to savings targets and other objectives, in the hope of collaborating on the government's goals.

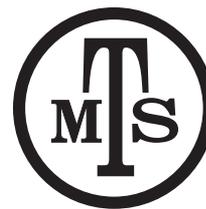
But we haven't had much luck. Instead, we've been shut out, with negotiations relative to the Bureau de l'éducation française (BEF), with Bill 28: The Public Services Sustainability Act that freezes public sector wages, with a funding announcement billed as an increase while pegging investment in schools below the rate of inflation, and with public consultation on literacy and numeracy initiatives that excludes teachers. This, as we await the province's promised educational reforms and overhaul of school boards after the municipal elections this fall. It's a challenging environment in which to collaborate, to say the least.

Still, both the government and MTS are here to create the conditions in which our young people can learn, grow, be inspired, change the world. Teachers have incredible energy – we see it every day. Governments and their ministers, too, want to make a difference, want to strengthen Manitoba. What better way to do it than by investing in our children.

We need look no further than Nova Scotia and the proposed dismantling of school boards, strike action by teachers, and government by consultants, to see the lasting impact of rancor. That cannot be Manitoba's path forward, and it doesn't need to be.

I believe that whatever differences exist between the Manitoba government and MTS, our considerable common ground remains. Politics can be polarizing, yes, but priorities can unite.

We have what it takes, right here at home, to improve education for our children. Let's unite behind that. For the sake of students, let's work together, not at odds, and allow shared purpose to dictate the plan forward.



The Manitoba Teachers' Society

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Published seven times a year (September–June) by The Manitoba Teachers' Society. Articles and views published herein do not necessarily represent the policies nor the views of the Society.

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Publications Mail Agreement

40063378 ISSN 002-228X

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

Information Management
The Manitoba Teachers' Society
191 Harcourt Street
Winnipeg, MB R3J 3H2
email: mts-im@mbteach.org



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INSIDE MTS

GOVERNMENT SEES EDUCATION AS BANK ACCOUNT

BOBBI TAILLEFER, GENERAL SECRETARY

It has been a while since I wrote my last column and much has changed on the Manitoba public education landscape. On February 8th, we were completely gob smacked to hear that in the annual education funding announcement, Minister Wishart announced what amounts to a cut of 1.5 per cent. The government also imposed a limitation on the ability of school boards to raise funds through local taxation and, in an unprecedented move, added the additional nugget of - oh yeah, we are also going to impose provincial bargaining on teachers. Why gob smacked? Maybe because the week before the announcement, we had a meeting with Minister Wishart and Deputy Minister Wilson where, at the end of the meeting, our President Norm Gould asked whether there was anything else of importance coming our way. This was the perfect opportunity for collaboration and consultation – which our government so often asks of us. Both answered with “No – I don’t think so”. Not exactly the way to build trust in a working relationship.

So let’s start deconstructing this announcement starting with the paltry .5 per cent “increase” announcement that the Minister was so pleased to deliver given the economic “reality” in the province. It is completely unacceptable that when the province has won the lottery with the arrival of the 2 billion dollars of Federal equalization transfers, with the unexpected increase of 11.9 per cent or \$290 million more, as well as the additional revenue from the carbon tax and cannabis sales that the government would still choose to underfund public schools. To add insult to injury, this occurs at a time when the Winnipeg Free Press (Dec 2, 2017) noted

that private school government funding had risen by 11 per cent over the past five years compared to 6.2 per cent for public education where there is an increasing enrollment of students with diverse needs.

What is most dismaying is the impact this will have on students who, by no fault of their own, will be punished by the fact that they and their parents chose public education and had thought they could count on government to adequately fund it. Early years students will no longer be taught in smaller classrooms where they could have had more individualized attention from their teacher. Middle school and high school students will end up with fewer options and larger classes as well.

And it continues. In addition to the underfunding of the public schools, there is also the “special tax” on Manitoba’s public servants’ wages. For 2 years wages will remain frozen at 0 per cent, 0 per cent, then they will increase by up to 0.75 per cent in year three and by up to 1.00 per cent in year four. With these freezes (or savings as Minister Wishart called them) it is estimated that every teacher will suffer a potential earning loss of \$15,400. Is it just me or does anybody else remember that Mr. Pallister and his cabinet awarded themselves a 20 per cent wage increase in 2016 (CBC – June 2, 2016) and then the following year made a big announcement where they magnanimously agreed to freeze their wages (CBC – March 1, 2017)? How noble. This certainly gives them the moral high ground to ask public sector workers to freeze their wages for 2 years and then have imposed limitations.

So if we agree that actions speak louder than words, we can easily see certain beliefs emerge.

Belief one – This Premier and his cabinet do not lead by example.

Belief two – Government has chosen to turn a blind eye to the value and benefit provided to our greater society by public services and public servants.

Belief three – This government does not see education as a public good that benefits Manitoba’s children and society as a whole but rather as a bank account where government can go to fund other pet projects.

And my personal belief is that all of these wage savings, cuts, underfunding etc. are being made so that Mr. Pallister can make good on his promise and announce a 1 - 2 per cent reduction in the PST (paid by you) just before the next election. This may be cynical, so I’ll reserve my judgement until then. But it may just turn out that I do have a crystal ball after all.

Our member and public polling results (described in more detail further in this edition) clearly show that a majority of Manitobans are not behind this government’s policies and I suspect those numbers would rise after this draconian announcement.

The MTS will continue to keep you apprised on its efforts to advocate for public education, teachers and students. Make no mistake, this government’s policies do not favour public education and we must all remain vigilant if we want to protect this key foundational element of a just and progressive society. It is therefore more important than ever to ensure that your information is up-to-date in MyProfile so that MTS can stay in touch with all its members and advise them of important developments in this file.

NOTICE OF CALL

This notice is given in compliance with Bylaw II of The Manitoba Teachers’ Society.

The 99th Annual General Meeting of the Provincial Council of The Manitoba Teachers’ Society will be held at 9:00 a.m., May 24, 25 and 26, 2018 at the Fairmont Hotel, Winnipeg.

The Provincial Council consists of representatives named by teacher associations and Les éducatrices et éducateurs francophones du Manitoba plus the members of the current Provincial Executive. The number of delegates representing each association depends on the number of members in that association.

Bobbi Taillefer, General Secretary

THE CIRCLE GAME: THE USE AND ABUSE OF TERM CONTRACTS



BY DIANE BERESFORD

Kim teaches in a large urban division, hired right out of university eleven years ago. She doesn't have job security, a right to due process, or the courage to question anything. She could be out on the street the next time her current term contract times out.

How could this happen? How could a teacher praised by every principal she's ever worked with, willing to take on any extra-curricular activity needing a coach or mentor, respected by colleagues, parents and students be in this position? Isn't the first job of a union to provide job security and fairness in hiring and promotion?

This situation can occur because of the unreasonable wording in the Limited Term General Contract. Originally created to enable school divisions to hire teachers temporarily to replace a particular teacher on a defined leave, term contracts have come to be used by Divisions to exploit beginning, usually young, teachers for years.

The wording in the contract is as follows: *"If a teacher has taught for two full years for the school board under this*

form of contract (Limited Term Teacher – General), and accepts employment as a teacher for the school board for a third full consecutive year, a) in that third year will be employed under a Teacher – General (permanent) contract..."

The wording creates loopholes that allow school divisions to exploit newly-hired teachers endlessly. The narrow wording in the contract means that a School Division can artificially create breaks in service that postpone the requirement for a permanent contract.

They have started teachers a few days late in the year. They have created breaks in service by offering a term contract for the first term, waiting a few days and offering another term contract. They have insisted teachers begin the fall as a sub and then offered a term later.

Another problem is that where we have challenged these practices through grievances, some divisions have simply refused to hire teachers back in the third year to avoid the necessity for a permanent contract.

Finally divisions often, in that third year, give teachers a part-time permanent contract, topped up with a

letter indicating an additional teaching assignment is a term.

The Society has been laying grievances and challenging these practices where we have good facts and willing teachers, but it is difficult because term teachers are vulnerable precisely because they have no job security. They fear being "black-listed". Where we have laid grievances, school boards have opted to settle, but on a "without precedent and without prejudice basis" with a confidentiality agreement. While these settlements benefit the individual teacher, they don't fix the underlying problem.

Kim is a success story. The Society intervened and she now has her full-time, permanent contract. Others are not so lucky. They are postponing getting married, buying a house, having children, waiting for that golden ring of a full-time permanent contract. They keep their heads down and their mouths shut. They keep going round and round in the circle game of term contracts. It's time for the Government of Manitoba to fix this. The Society is willing to help.



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The University of Winnipeg invites applications for the position of Dean of the Collegiate. Reporting to the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, the Dean will provide strategic leadership aimed towards the growth and development of the Collegiate at The University of Winnipeg.

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UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

UNkindest CUTS

BY GEORGE STEPHENSON

"This is a huge disappointment, a 1.5% cut. Teachers are facing large increases in student enrollment, a growing influx of refugee and newcomer students, chronic – and I mean chronic – child poverty and more special needs kids than ever, and this is what government thinks our students are worth?"

- MTS President Norm Gould

Last month the provincial government announced sweeping changes to education funding that will have a huge impact on every public school teacher in the province.

And the education minister promised there is more to come.

So far, the government has said it will:

- Essentially cut K-12 funding by keeping direct financing of education to less than the rate of inflation and limit the amounts school boards can raise through taxation.
- Freeze salaries of school staff, including teachers, for two years and limit increases for another two years after that.
- Institute a system of provincial bargaining whereby most, if not all, collective bargaining is done at a central table.
- Implement a full review of the education system that the province says will lead to the most profound changes in a generation.

While details of some of the changes are still unclear, it is apparent that the immediate changes will come at a cost to teachers and students.

EDUCATION FUNDING

The province announced it would increase funding in the coming year by one half of one per cent, much less than the expected rate of inflation. At the same time, it has ordered school boards to limit any increases to local education property taxes to two per cent.

MTS President Norm Gould says the announced "increase" is actually a 1.5 per cent cut, given that inflation is expected to be about two per cent. As well, enrolments are increasing.

"Teachers are facing large increases in student enrollment, a growing influx of refugee and newcomer students, chronic – and I mean chronic – child poverty and more special needs kids than ever, and this is what government thinks our students are worth?"

Gould points out that Manitoba is receiving \$290 million in new cash in Federal transfers this year, yet still doesn't see education as a priority.

"This makes clear that our students are an afterthought in this announcement.

Gould's concerns have been echoed by others since the announcement. The chair of the Winnipeg School Division was quoted in the Winnipeg Free Press saying it appears the government is trying to balance the books "on the backs of children."

And, Gould pointed out, on the backs of their employees.

SALARIES TO BE FROZEN

Along with the funding announcement, Education Minister Ian Wishart announced that Bill 28 -- the law that the government passed but not enacted into law -- will freeze and limit public sector workers' salaries for the next four years, beginning July 1. Under the Act, being challenged in court, salaries and monetary benefits, would be frozen for two years. They would be held to an increase of up to .75 per cent in the third year and up to one per cent in the fourth year.

Assuming a projected cost of living increase of two per cent per year, it would mean the average public school teacher would see a salary decrease of 6.3 per cent or a loss of income of \$15,400 over four years.

Wishart all but agreed with Gould that funding of education is being done on the backs of school employees. A news release from the province said: "Wishart pointed out The Public Services Sustainability Act (Bill 28) wage freeze would alleviate some expenditure pressure on divisions." When

announcing the funding, Wishart made it even clearer: "We believe this limit on education property tax is achievable in light of Bill 28 wage freeze."

While the legislation will freeze salaries, bargaining on other issues (reportedly including step increases teachers earn in their first 10 years) is to proceed, but not at the local level.

PROVINCIAL BARGAINING

The biggest shock in the recent announcements was the decision to implement provincial bargaining. As MTS President Gould said in a later letter to the minister: "Bargaining is a highly complex process, for which our locals have been preparing for the past year and a half. To make a decision like this with no consultation from key stakeholders is blatantly disrespectful and signals a retreat from established democratic systems and processes."

While MTS in the past has supported the general idea of provincial bargaining, no government has discussed what that might involve or how it might be implemented.

There are many different models and it is unknown what the province hopes to implement in the next few months.

And the province's decision leaves many other open questions, such as what happens after July 1 if local associations choose to go to binding arbitration to resolve issues, as is the case now. Will teachers still have that right? In 1956 teachers agreed to give up the right to strike and have disputes settled by binding arbitration. If binding arbitration is not available July 1, some feel it begs the question whether teachers then will have the right to strike.

Gould has asked Wishart for regular consultations.

"Make no mistake, this is a watershed moment in our 99 years of history as a teachers' union," Gould said in a letter to members. "I am sharing my deep concern with you today to underscore the detriment of this government's actions and practices against us."

"The challenges ahead of us are daunting. However, we need to stand together to work towards a resolution that will be fair and just."

Is N.S. report new template?

The Manitoba government has been following in the footsteps of Nova Scotia when it comes to introducing legislation and developing policies around education.

The most well-known piece of copycat legislation is Bill 28 -- the Public Services Sustainability Act, which imposes two years of wage freeze on all new public sector collective agreements. Manitoba has executed Bill 28 in the same manner as the Nova Scotia government, without so much as a name change.

With this precedence, there is legitimate concern that a recent controversial report on education reform in Nova Scotia, The Avis Glaze Report, may be a template for Manitoba.

The report, which studied the way the K-12 public education system is administered in Nova Scotia, suggested 22 ways to change the system. All 22 recommendations are being implemented by the Nova Scotia government.

While the Manitoba government has not yet commissioned a similar report, based on

past practice and the similar direction of the government, there is concern these changes will eventually trickle down to Manitoba's education system.

Two of the recommendations are especially concerning because they would directly impact the structure of The Manitoba Teachers' Society (MTS) and its ability to serve its members.

The report called for the removal of principals and vice-principals from the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union (NSTU) in an effort to eliminate conflict of interest when both management and employees are represented by the same union. Principals and vice-principals will now be moved into a new professional association and will no longer be members of NSTU.

MTS believes inclusion of principals and vice-principals in a union that represents teachers is vital, since these individuals are in fact the "first teachers". It creates an environment based on collaboration and trust where teachers and school leaders work together to ensure the success of students. The

removal of principals and vice-principals will have the opposite effect, creating adversarial cultures in our schools, breaking the trust between colleagues, pushing different agendas (principals might not be required to have a teaching background) and eventually leading to a weakened school system.

Nova Scotia is also moving forward with the creation of a new licensing and governing body for the teaching profession - a provincial College of Educators, similar to the College of Physicians and Surgeons which regulates the practice of medicine by doctors.

The aim is to take supposedly "weak" teachers out of the classroom and provide them a chance to improve their skills or in extreme cases, provide a mechanism to get rid of teachers who fail to improve.

The establishment of a College of Educators in Manitoba is simply unnecessary, since its duties are already covered by The Manitoba Teachers' Society.

Poll shows public oppose cuts

BY SAMANTHA TURENNE

The province's effective cut to education funding would have come as a surprise to more than half of Manitobans and is further evidence the provincial government's actions are opposed by a majority of voters.

In a recent poll of the public, commissioned by The Manitoba Teachers' Society, 55 per cent of respondents predicted the government would increase education funding (13.3 per cent) or keep it at the same level (42.2 per cent).

Instead, the government announced what amounted to a 1.5 per cent cut when taking inflation into account.

That wasn't what those polled thought was needed. More than 82 per cent agreed that in order to effectively meet the growing demands of today's students, the government must provide more support, not less. Ninety-one and a half per cent said that the provincial government should increase education spending (61.3 per cent) or maintain the same level (30.2 per cent).

Only 4.1 per cent of respondents were in favour of cutting funding for education.

The subpar education funding announcement appears to be another strike against the Conservative government of Brian Pallister because Manitobans were already unhappy with the direction the government has taken.

Of the 805 Manitobans who participated in the poll, close to half (47.4 per cent) said that the government was moving in the wrong direction. The consensus has almost completely flipped from last year, when 44 per cent of Manitobans were in favour of this government's course of action.

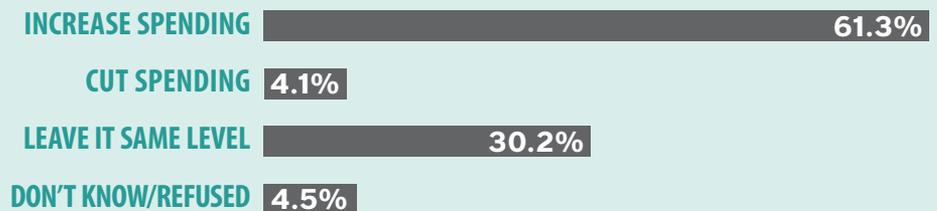
As it stands, more than half of Manitobans (50.2 per cent) agree that their impression of the Pallister government has worsened somewhat (32.3 per cent) or worsened a lot (17.9 per cent) in the last year.

Furthermore, 34.3 per cent believe that they are worse off (25.4 per cent) or much worse off (8.9 per cent) than they were four years ago, an increase of 10 per cent from last year's polling results.

When asked specifically about providing quality public education from K-12, only four out of 10 Manitobans (43.6 per cent) think the government is on the right track. And this was before the latest education announcements.



What do you personally think the Manitoba government should do – increase spending on education, cut educating spending, or leave it at the same level it is now?



The public attributes the bulk of the problems facing Manitoba's public schools to the provincial government (34 per cent) or school trustees and boards (32.7 per cent). Only 7.1 per cent of Manitobans feel that teachers are the most responsible for problems facing public schools.

While the government has fallen out of favour with Manitobans, teachers are still the most reliable and credible source when it comes to education matters. Almost nine out of 10 Manitobans (87.4 per cent) believe teachers are very reliable (50.1 per cent) or somewhat reliable (37.3 per cent) as a source of accurate information about education issues.

Interestingly enough, 87.4 per cent of Manitobans also have a favourable view towards public school teachers, further reinforcing the important role of teachers

as advocates for the sustainability of quality public education. The Manitoba Teachers' Society also fares well, with 74 per cent of respondents agreeing that the organization is a trusted source.

On the other hand, 41.6 per cent consider the Premier of Manitoba to be unreliable on education issues, a significant drop in confidence from last year's 26 per cent reliability rating. According to the poll, Manitobans find Education Minister Ian Wishart to be far more palatable than the Premier with a 54.2 per cent on the credibility rating scale (9.4 per cent very reliable, 44.8 per cent somewhat reliable), however this is also a decrease from last year's rating of 59 per cent.

This poll was conducted by Viewpoints Research in January 2018.



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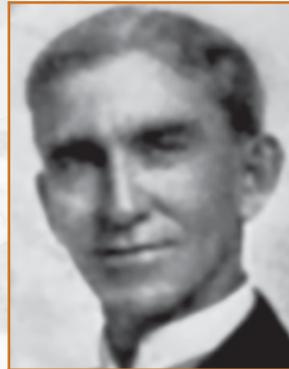
Heading into the 100th year of The Manitoba Teachers' Society, The Teacher will be running articles about the revolution and evolution of the organization, its challenges and successes.



H. W. Huntly, President



B. Stewart, Vice-President



J.M. Nason, Secretary



W. E. Marsh, Treasurer

Where it all Began

BY GEORGE STEPHENSON

In April and May, 1919, a group of Manitoba teachers embarked on a mission that would forever revolutionize education in the province.

The formation of The Manitoba Teachers' Federation came at a time when barbers earned more than teachers and teachers weren't expected to reach a minimum level of training.

One of the first things the federation did was to create a newsmagazine, The Bulletin, the first of which was dated May 24, 1919. That issue and the second in September, 1919, clearly illustrated the problems ahead and what the federation hoped to achieve.

"The Federation is the result of a movement which originated with the teachers who were examining at the Departmental Examinations last July," said the opening article in the first Bulletin.

"For some time it had been felt that a more definite, energetic and united effort among teachers was needed in order to improve the status of the profession."

The first officers of the organization included men and women from across the province from Winnipeg to Teulon to Brandon and Souris.



In 1919, a group of Manitoba teachers embarked on a mission that would forever revolutionize education in the province. The formation of The Manitoba Teachers' Federation came at a time when barbers earned more than teachers and teachers weren't expected to reach a minimum level of training.

The Bulletin reported that a constitution had been drafted and accepted on April 22 at a meeting of some 400 teachers in Winnipeg.

"Before the meeting on April 22, there were about 200 members. At the close of the convention on April 24, there were 600. There are now over 700 members, 10 local associations already formed and affiliated and many in the process of formation."

One of the first pushes was to get teachers to form local associations. A one-time registration fee of \$1 was set along with a yearly fee of \$2 for members. Locals were allowed to add "a small fee for its own expenses, such as postage, stationary, etc."

"We have our Federation, but all have not yet joined up ... and as our success depends largely on our numbers, we appeal to you to 'sign up'. In this spirit of mutual trust, fired with the idea of exercising the most potent influence for good in the community, let us accept the challenge."

The following issue of the Bulletin in September emphasized the need for teachers to organize locals, setting out a goal of having the complete province

organized in that school year.

"We are confident that the claims and objects of the Federation have only to be placed before the teachers in order to enlist their hearty co-operation and support," the MTF executive wrote.

"The most desirable size for the local is still a matter of debate. Probably only experience will show whether a local of seven, 70 or 700 teachers is most desirable. The present constitution calls for at least 10."

The formation of what would become The Manitoba Teachers' Society, while attracting widespread praise, also had its critics.

Federation secretary, J. M. Nason, acknowledged criticism in a Bulletin article.

"To the charge that we are Bolsheviks we wish to be perfectly understood that members of the executive are deeply in earnest and in the profession for its own sake," he wrote. "If they can prepare the boys and girls of the present generation to go out into the world and fill their places as good citizens in the truest sense of the word they ask no higher reward, if only they can be assured of a proper living wage and working conditions which will not leave them physical wrecks after a few years of service."

In the first edition of the MTF Bulletin, President H. W. Huntly set out the vision for an organization that will turn 100 years old next year:

Less than a year ago a few teachers, while reading examination papers in Winnipeg, talked over the advisability of forming a teachers' federation. Little did they think that the time was so opportune as the increasing number of local organizations seem to show. Today in Winnipeg about 85 per cent of the 660 teachers are in one large organization, while in some rural centres this percentage is exceeded.

Some are inclined to look at this movement with a certain amount of apprehension, realizing that, what is capable of the highest good is also capable of the greatest evil. To such I would like to say that an organized body of workers well education should occasion no anxiety. The motive of those entering are of the very highest. They feel that in the past teachers have gone on with their work quietly, sacrificing without complaint with a high sense of duty. Now, the war

is over and the period of reconstruction is here and as they examine the condition of their profession teachers find it to be in a chaotic state.

This organization, then, has risen phoenix-like overnight to enable teachers to take a more active part in the profession to which they belong, to grade themselves according to their qualifications and experience; to prevent the profession from being a mere stepping stone to other 'more remunerative' professions; to make it more attractive for the proper kind of candidates to enter; to see that those entering get an adequate training before being admitted; and that a salary adequate for the responsibility and the time spent in preparation is paid, as well as to insure to the rising generation a proper foundation for their future work.

But some may say that all this has been attempted in the past. My reply to these is, have they succeeded? If not, let us try it from another angle. The people of Manitoba seem to realize the importance of education. They frankly confess that if we are to escape the extremes of Russia, Austria and other illiterate countries, it is only through a thorough system of education. They are willing to meet us, hence the fault must lie with ourselves. Let us then move cautiously and carefully, but with a firm determination to improve conditions and success will attend our efforts. In conclusion I may say that this is not the work for a few. Every teacher should be in this organization and should try to do his or her part. Little petty grievances should be cast to one side, for in unity there is strength.

*- H. W. Huntly
May, 1919*

From the first treasurer's report for the Manitoba Teachers' Federation, May 12, 1919:

RECEIPTS:

Fees: \$405.41

DISBURSEMENTS:

Postage	\$3.30
Telephones	\$3.75
Books	\$22.65
Treasurer's Bond	\$5
Discount	.25
Miscellaneous	.50
Cash on Hand	\$1.10
Balance in Bank	\$386.86

The formation of the Manitoba Teachers' Federation drew wide comments from the media of the day after the first issue of the Bulletin was sent to newspapers.

Belmont News:

"The lawyer, the doctor and the dentist set their price, while the teacher, like the preacher, feels like saying: 'How long, oh, Lord?' How long – when he is forced to or invited to bid against his fellow for the lowest salary."

Neepawa Press:

"Let the teachers think some for themselves. They are educated too much along the lines of capitalism, which has no sympathy."

Winnipeg Tribune:

"It may sound paradoxical, but the pay of teachers is one service in which we can afford extravagance. The more the pay the more brains will be retained and recruited into the profession. The more the pay, the more the teacher can afford upon his or her training as a teacher. Let us make education our national extravagance. It is the one place where extravagance will be an investment."

Winnipeg Telegram:

"Praise cannot, however, be extended to the remuneration given to those who in no small degree, form the national mind, or at least, deal with it when it is at its most plastic stage, and it is to be hoped that this stigma will soon be removed and salaries given to teachers in more accord with the national importance of their work."

Canadian Finance:

"Good service deserves good pay. We need our teachers to possess the ability to enable them to instil our children with true Canadianism. The fate of the future generation depends materially upon the calibre of teachers today. It is a good investment to provide proper remuneration for the teaching profession."

Jim Bell

#myteachermystory

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BY JUDY OWEN

You could say one of Jim Bell's former teachers hit all the right notes with him.

The chief executive officer of Siloam Mission expected he'd be a sporty kind of guy at Daniel McIntyre Collegiate Institute until he met music teacher Barry Anderson.

"I was not musically inclined at all," Bell says. "I was like a lot of kids growing up in the neighbourhood – you could find me on a schoolyard or a hockey rink with a football or a hockey stick.

"So when I entered Grade 10, I knew nothing about music. Couldn't read a note or anything like that."

Then one day in French class a knock came on the door. A puzzled Bell watched as each of his male classmates separately left the room.

What he discovered was Anderson was taking the guys down to the music room to have them sing the scale.

"I remember it like yesterday, just the do re mi," he says. "My turn came and I felt intimidated, but he said, 'Just sing the scale for me.'

"I am sure I butchered it, but I wasn't shy and I think that's what he was looking for."

Anderson then convinced Bell and some of his classmates to join the male choir with the grade 11 and 12 students. It ignited a new love of music for Bell, who had briefly taken piano lessons at a young age on the insistence of his mom.

Now he was practising singing every noon hour and learning songs Anderson carefully chose.

"The songs were contemporary," Bell says. "I think he knew that if he was going to get us that he had to make the music interesting, stuff that we knew like the Beatles."

That led to him joining the mixed choir, and then he was one of the students Anderson



selected to sing in the Madrigal choir that performed at events such as festivals.

Those practices were every day at 8 a.m., plus he was on the ice playing goalie after school.

"I was getting a full dose of music and I was enjoying it," the former first tenor says with a laugh. "I had no idea that I was going to be going down this path.

"But when I look back on my high school experience, it doesn't take me long to think that that was the highlight in so many ways."

A lot of that had to do with Anderson's style of teaching. He was disciplined, "worked us to the bone" but was also patient and had fun with the students.

After graduation, Bell occasionally sang in a church choir, but he never bumped into Anderson.

One time, though, was close.

Bell was at the Centennial Concert Hall a few years ago and saw Anderson and his wife, but when he walked over at intermission his

former teacher had gone somewhere.

"I went over to Mrs. Anderson and said to her that I recalled my high school time. And I said to her, 'Please pass on to Mr. Anderson for me that that was a tremendous time in my life and that I had the deepest and highest regard for him.'"

Bell, who joined the non-profit charity for the homeless last year, is grateful he got to pass the message along because Anderson unexpectedly died last October.

"He pulled something out of me. I don't know how well I did at it, but he pulled it out of me and it taught me some valuable lessons," Bell says.

"One in particular is never say you can't until you try. And then always be on time. Mr. Anderson hated when you arrived late for practice because you were letting the rest of the team down.

"I don't know whether he planted that in me, but one of my pet peeves is being late."

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my story

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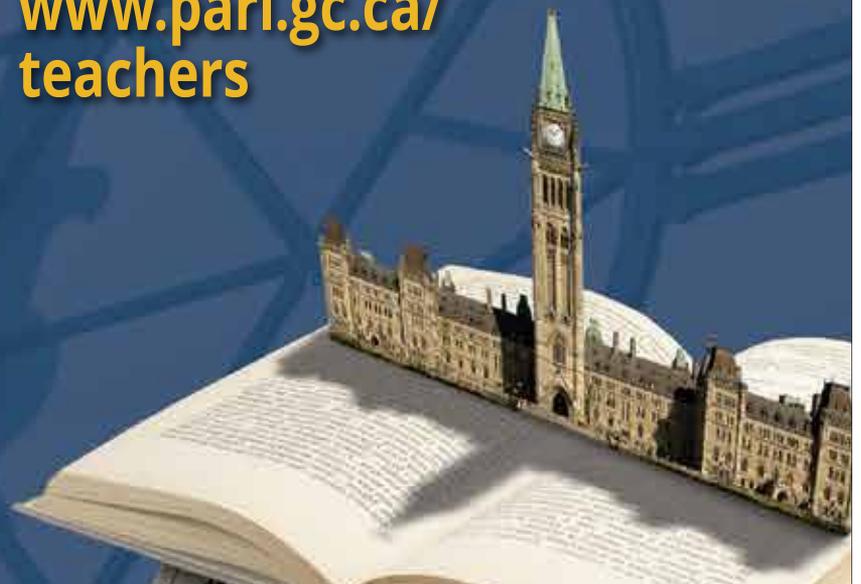


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Michelle Lawrence



Charles Tinman



Troy Scott

MB PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP AWARDED

BY JUDY OWEN

They've given countless students the opportunities to succeed, welcomed the broader community into their schools and been role models for other educators. And now, **Winnipeg principals Michelle Lawrence, Troy Scott and Charles Tinman** have been recognized for their leadership by each being named one of Canada's Top 40 principals for 2018.

The trio received the honour through The Learning Partnership, a national charity that offers support and programs for publicly funded education.

Created in partnership with the Rotman School of Management, the award acknowledges principals who've demonstrated innovation, entrepreneurial spirit and remarkable achievements.

The award held extra meaning for Lawrence and Scott, as Lawrence used to be Scott's Grade 8 math and science teacher.

The winners attended a gala dinner and five-day executive leadership training program at the Rotman school in Toronto in February.

Here are the trio's accomplishments and approach to education.

Michelle Lawrence Oak Park High School

When Michelle Lawrence got the phone call notifying her she'd been named one of the country's Top 40 principals, she had to keep it a secret for three weeks until it was officially announced.

Luckily, there was one person with whom she could share the news – fellow winner and former student Troy Scott.

Lawrence had taught Scott Grade 8 math and science at Acadia Junior High and was proud, but not surprised, her former student had received the award at such a young age.

"He was a bright kid, totally engaged and always had lots of ideas," she said. "He was a good student."

Her vice-principals at Oak Park nominated her, with letters of support from parents, students and colleagues in the Pembina Trails School Division.

"It's a little surreal," Lawrence says of receiving the award. "I am so not a limelight

person at all. It's very humbling and I'm extremely grateful."

Lawrence, 53, spent the first 15 years of her career as a teacher. This is her 16th year as a school administrator and fourth as principal at Oak Park.

One of the initiatives she's proud of is collaborating with other educators in the division on the Making the Move program. It added English-track Grade 9 students into local high schools that had been grades 10 to 12 and restructured grades in feeder schools.

The program was sparked three years ago by declining enrolment in the division's Tuxedo and Charleswood area, she says. She and then-Shaftsbury High School principal Stan Wiebe undertook research on the benefits and domino effect of the shift and made a presentation to the board of trustees.

This is the first school year under the realignment.

"They have far more choices in terms of their courses and optional courses more suited to their interests," Lawrence says of the Grade 9 students.

"Their maturity level is at the stage where they can be in a high school setting and benefit from a little more freedom and participate in more sports and extra curricular activities. They've just become part of our family and it's been amazing."

Charles Tinman Niawka Place School

It's no surprise Charles Tinman wants to open doors for his students to have well-rounded educations.

His decades of teaching and administrative experience began overseas teaching in France and Scotland and continued in Brandon, Saskatchewan and Winnipeg.

During his three years as principal at Niakwa Place School in the Louis Riel School Division, Tinman has expanded the kindergarten to Grade 8 students' learning experiences.

The former president of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People encourages students to express themselves through theatre and stretch their minds in a robotics program. He's also promoted a community garden with heirloom plants and supported programs for parents of newcomers.

"I'm a pretty creative and imaginative person," says Tinman, 64, who's spent 29 years in the St. Boniface/Louis Riel divisions.

A partnership with the Families and Schools Together (FAST) program brings newcomer families into the school to take turns making dinners featuring their cultural dishes.

"They get to know each other," Tinman says, noting 30 per cent of the students are newcomers.

"It helps them to create connections and find their way. They discover that very approachable side of the school and get to know the people who run the school, who are the teachers in the school and get to know each other's children."

He's also arranged settlement services to

come into the school once a week to do a clinic for families from a number of schools in the Southdale area. The clinic covers topics such as banking, shopping, recreation and understanding the school system.

"The school used to be the focus of our job, but it's a broader job because kids come here and they come with part of where they're from. And if you ignore that, you ignore that at your peril," Tinman says.

"Part of the richness is what people bring to the building, so our school community is incredibly rich because of the diversity."

Troy Scott *Acadia Junior High*

Troy Scott didn't set out to become one of Winnipeg's youngest principals, it just happened – but not by luck.

Scott's dedication to education began in 2002 as a teacher at Fort Richmond Collegiate. He moved to Calgary to teach for a year and then travelled for a year in Asia. Even on vacation, he visited schools in different countries and that made him appreciate Canada's education system more.

Returning to Winnipeg, he taught again at Fort Richmond, was vice-principal for five years and acting principal for eight months.

Four years ago, he became principal at

Acadia. Now the 40-year-old is making an impact on the grade 7 to 9 students and their families.

About 56 per cent of Acadia's 650 students are newcomers. Last year, many were Syrian refugees, this year there are a lot of Kurdish refugees, he says. Some have never had the opportunity to go to school.

Scott is embracing the diversity and ensuring the newcomers are welcomed and supported.

Acadia and Fort Richmond combine to make one of the city's four sites for The Peaceful Village, a three-hour afterschool program running four days a week. About 200 newcomer students do homework for the first portion, helped by volunteer multicultural mentors, teacher candidates and social work students, Scott says.

The last 75 minutes focus on passion projects chosen by students, including dance, art or drumming.

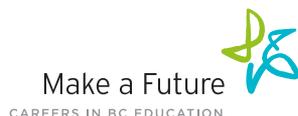
Every three to four months, participants bring their families to a "village kitchen" in one of the schools' gyms. Funding is provided to families to make the meal and students present their passion projects.

"It's been amazing just seeing all the performances that first year and all the families feeling really part of the community," Scott says.

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Snapping to attention

BY WILLIAM BURTON

Did you hear the one about the Silicon Valley tech designers, engineers and product managers who have cut themselves off from the internet?

It turns out that many of the brightest young technology innovators from Google and Facebook in the last decade are putting timers on their modems that cut out at 7 pm, blocking apps on their phones, and increasingly leaving the industry that is shaping everyday life for many, particularly teenagers.

Walk into any Manitoba High School classroom today and ask teens what apps they spend the most time on, and you will likely get the responses of Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat.

Snapchat is presently the top app used by teens in North America, logging 150 million daily users, who spend an average 25-30mins a day interacting with it, according to Bloomberg News.

One of the features is “streaks” - a function whereby the app tracks and rewards the ongoing daily interaction of sending an image between users, ensuring that teens continue to log on to continue the streak. This addictive feature is replicated in other apps, such as Instagram which will send a burst of “like” and “comment” notifications that gratify the user, and Facebook which uses the “pull down” function for updates, the red circle for new alerts, automatic playing of videos.

All these functions according to Behavioral Psychologist and former Google employee

Tristan Harris, are designed to access and hold a greater portion of our day.

As educators, it raises the question: Are we winning the race for student attention?

The most recent research on smartphone users outlines that they interact an average 85 times per day, which includes an average of 2,617 touches per day, with the top 10 per cent hitting 5,427 touches. In that same study, 87 per cent of users checked their phone at least once between midnight and 5 am.

Researchers looking at teen smartphone use have discovered that even if a device is not being interacted with and merely in the presence of a user, teens are more distracted and score lower on tests.

Earlier this year San Diego State University professor of Psychology Jean Twenge caused a stir with the release of her latest book *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy--and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood--and What That Means for the Rest of Us*.

Combing through data from a collection of studies on behaviors grouped by generations, she found that in 2012 a shift took place: 50 per cent more teens suffer from major depression now versus just six years ago and three times as many girls aged 12 to 14 take their own lives.

What coincided with this spike, she argues, was a huge uptake in youth aged between 12 and 17 owning a smartphone. While teens that spend less than an hour on their

smartphones each day show no statistical difference in likelihood of depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts, these numbers jump once screen time passes two hours a day. It is no coincidence that an increase in the time spent interacting with a smartphone also leads to both less time outside of the home on evenings and weekends, and face-to-face socialization with peers.

On the other hand, technology can be a useful tool and can play an important role in the classroom. It supports and enhances teaching, provides useful and engaging resources for students, and can offer the ability to interact and develop community.

At the project-based learning school that I work, technology permeates everything we do. Assignments are posted through Google Classroom, completed on Google Docs, and uploaded onto Project Foundry, an online project-based learning platform in which teachers can log learning outcomes achieved by students.

Learners often complete more than half of their research online, and have avoided the cost of a calculator for each student as they have one on their phone. I usually communicate to parents via text message or email, and encourage students to do the same (even on weekends). Students appreciate this because they can get homework support while they are working at home; parents appreciate the accessible format of a text message and email at work.

It could be argued that the conversations we need to be having with our students and

Snapchat is presently the top app used by teens in North America, logging 150 million daily users, who spend an average 25-30 minutes a day interacting with it.

ourselves is about capitalism. While social media corporations may proclaim that they are working hard to connect the world, what often gets ignored is the behavioral data and financial rewards that they reap from users.

The apps are free to access, but the corporations are mining user data and advertising to users in return. Google (trading as Alphabet, and also owns YouTube) earned over \$26 billion in the second quarter of 2017. In that same period, Facebook, which logs over two billion users a month, collected \$9.32 billion in advertising revenue, of which \$8 billion came from mobile use. A leaked memo from earlier this year found that Facebook (who owns Snapchat and Instagram) can monitor posts and photos in real time to determine when young people feel “stressed”, “defeated”, “overwhelmed”, “anxious”, “nervous”, “stupid”, “silly”, “useless” and a “failure”. Facebook declined to expand on what they plan on doing with this data.

Clearly, there are advantages as well as drawbacks to the use of technology in the classroom. Questions and conversations need to be taking place in staff rooms and classrooms in an effort to cultivate aware, healthy and happy citizens.

As educators, it is our responsibility to think critically about the role of technology in an educational setting. How do you deploy technology in your classroom? Do you have rules over smartphone use? If you'd like, feel free to share your thoughts, *william.burton@7oaks.org*.



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PORTFOLIO

EATING TIDE WASN'T ENOUGH



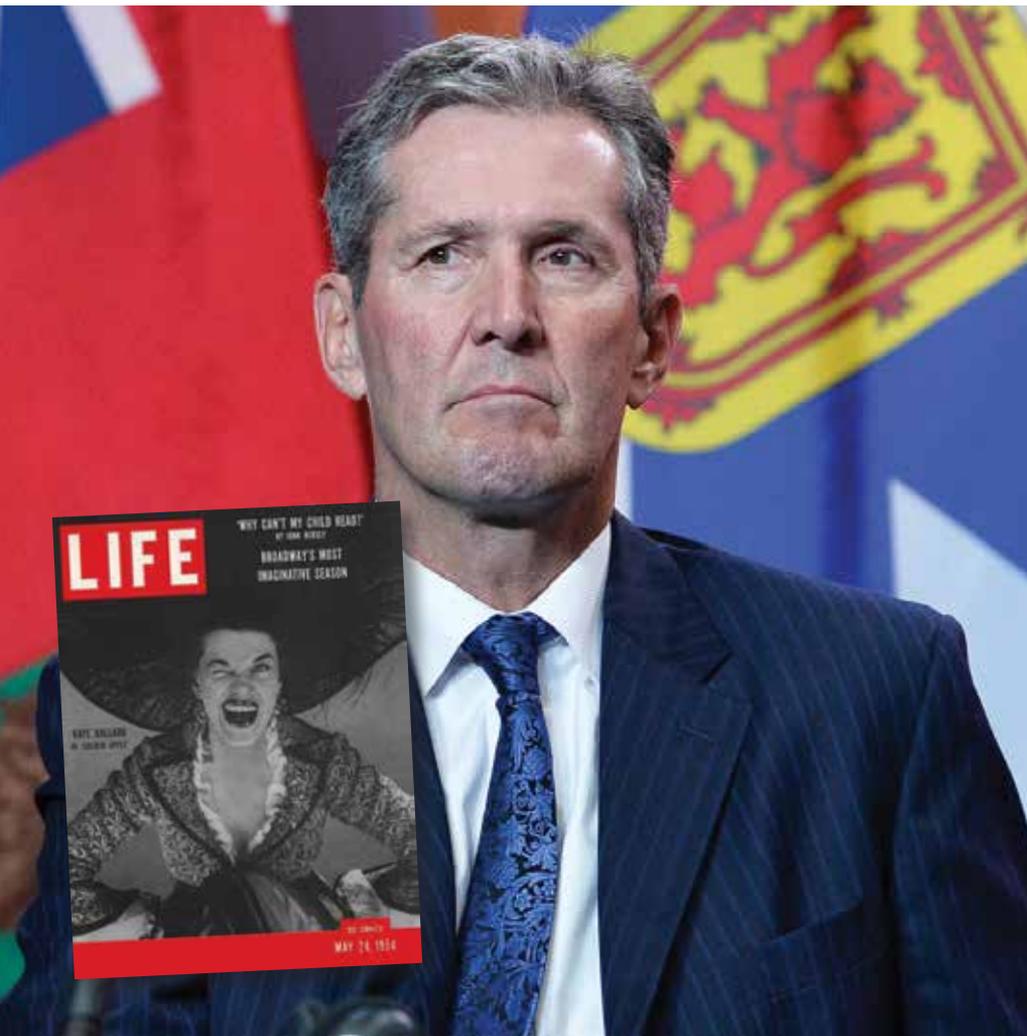
A 17-year-old boy remains in critical condition after he was shot in the head by a friend as they played an internet game called the “No Lackin Challenge” inside a Midtown restaurant Thursday.

According to the Memphis Commercial Appeal, videos on YouTube and the internet show the “No Lackin” game involving people pulling guns on their friends and their friends pulling guns on them, but no shots are fired.

That wasn't the case last month when a 17-year-old boy was accidentally shot in the head by his 21-year-old friend.

Literacy: Maybe just save libraries

BY GEORGE STEPHENSON



It's no secret Premier Brian Pallister has had a thing about making sure schools turn out kids who can read.

Before he was elected, he talked of putting an emphasis on improving literacy in Manitoba. During the election campaign in March, 2016, he pledged to spend \$7 million on a “read to succeed” initiative.

He said standardized tests showed that Manitoba students were last in Canada in math, reading and science.

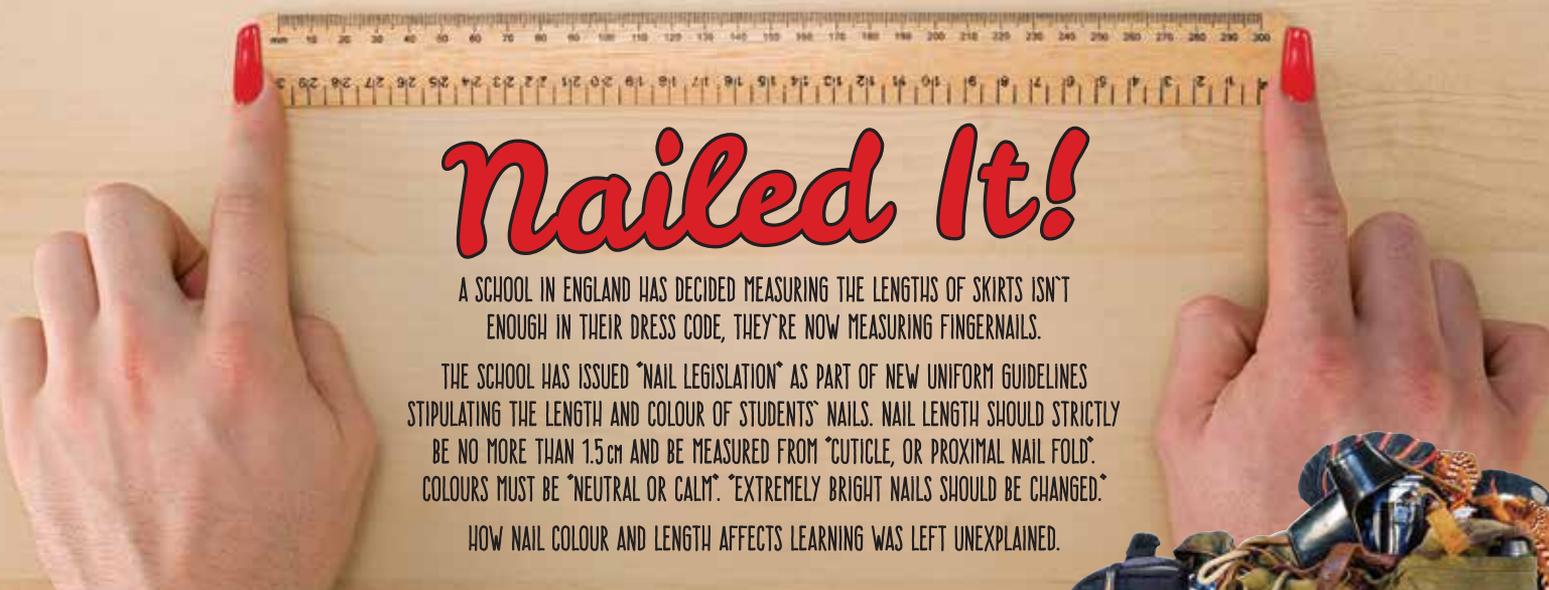
Pallister, of course, isn't alone.

Indeed, an article in a national magazine devoted thousands of words to the same topic.

“A question that both educators and parents will want to see answered by those (standardized) tests is: Are our young citizens learning to use our language well enough?”

“This question has been more and more frequently asked in recent years. Parents have cried in dismay that their children could not read out loud, could not spell ... Businessmen have complained that they could not find (employees) to write grammatical letters. Employers have said that mechanics could not read simple directions,” the article said.

“Many a college has blamed high schools for passing on students with average or better IQs who could not read adequately to study college subjects; the sixth-grade



Nailed It!

A SCHOOL IN ENGLAND HAS DECIDED MEASURING THE LENGTHS OF SKIRTS ISN'T ENOUGH IN THEIR DRESS CODE, THEY'RE NOW MEASURING FINGERNAILS.

THE SCHOOL HAS ISSUED "NAIL LEGISLATION" AS PART OF NEW UNIFORM GUIDELINES STIPULATING THE LENGTH AND COLOUR OF STUDENTS' NAILS. NAIL LENGTH SHOULD STRICTLY BE NO MORE THAN 1.5cm AND BE MEASURED FROM "CUTICLE, OR PROXIMAL NAIL FOLD". COLOURS MUST BE "NEUTRAL OR CALM". "EXTREMELY BRIGHT NAILS SHOULD BE CHANGED."

HOW NAIL COLOUR AND LENGTH AFFECTS LEARNING WAS LEFT UNEXPLAINED.



CHANGE OF NAME

In a radio interview, Winnipeg City Councillor Matt Allard repeatedly called the downtown Millennium Library, the Millennial Library. Well, at least those young folks are reading.

teacher has blamed the fourth-grade teacher; the fourth the first; and all the teachers have now and then blamed parents, and with justice."

Whew, it could have been the foundation of Pallister's thinking. Maybe he read it.

Then again, not likely, since it was written a month before Pallister was born.

It was May, 1954, when Life Magazine ran the article bemoaning the fact that U.S. students did not do well on standardized tests for reading, headlined: "WHY CAN'T MY CHILD READ".

So, hardly a new lament and perhaps as accurate today as it was back then. In other words, is there really a problem so profound nobody has come up with an answer in more than six decades? It just might be we're trying to create a hammer that doesn't exist to pound down a nail that doesn't exist.

The basis for bemoaning the lack of literacy always seems to be students' performance on standardized tests, where it seems the only acceptable result would be for every student to tie for first place.

The Manitoba government has pledged to improve literacy among young students because 15-year-olds here didn't do as well on international, standardized tests as students in other provinces.

So, the province has teamed up with a tech firm that has called for innovative ideas on how to improve literacy and

numeracy among kids before they enter Grade 1. The company, North Forge, has called for proposals that would cost less than \$50,000 and can "be implemented immediately and get results quickly."

Whoa, a call for quick results. Somebody should have thought of that back in the '50s. It seems to be an open question how any results can be quickly determined. After all, the whole exercise – involving pre-school kids – is based on testing 15-year-olds. Won't we have to wait some nine years before we can tell whether there is any difference?

Whatever. This whole effort is a head-shaker given that this government – and yes, previous ones – has shown little concern for one aspect of schools that is actually devoted to literacy: libraries. As the premier sheds crocodile tears over literacy, librarians are becoming an endangered species, libraries are not open as often and are less a critical part of every school. As education funding is cut, libraries suffer.

Maybe instead of looking for some techno-solution to a supposed problem, maybe the province could ensure the place with all the books is protected, that all students are able to access books without having to buy them.

Who knows, maybe books have something to do with literacy.



Because they're at their library

Sales of outdoor equipment are falling in the U.S. because of millennials. Matt Powell of NPD Group, a market research company that tracks trends in two dozen industries, says millennials are less likely to buy outdoor gear than previous generations.

He used boots as an example. "The hardest, the most extreme condition some of these boots are going to have is walking from the Prius to the craft brewery," he said.



Tomato Tomahto

It was incorrectly reported last Friday that today is T-shirt Appreciation Day. In fact, it is actually Teacher Appreciation Day.

- Daily Vidette, Illinois State University

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?
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REFRESH

BY RAMAN JOB, PUBLIC RELATIONS FACILITATOR



I learned Spanish through conversations with good Chilean friends, Condorito comics, Living Language records, shortwave broadcasts from Radio Havana, hundreds of my own makeshift flash cards, and Spanish newspapers from a Latin-American boutique. It took me eight months to become functionally bilingual and it changed my life.

But when I look at my twenty-something polyglot son, I realize the resources I used were small potatoes. These days, online and mobile apps are crazy effective and real time conversations with people on the other side of the globe are common place. Having “no one to talk to” is no longer an excuse.

So, whether you want to dive into a new tongue head first or just pick up a few quick travel phrases, here are some great language-learning tools.

Korean Unnie (Korean Big Sister)

Enjoyed the PyeongChang Winter Olympics? Big fan of Korean drama or K-pop? You can make that lovely language your own by visiting Talk to Me in Korean (TTMIK), the flagship hub for learning Korean on the net. They are content masters. Videos, books, podcasts, online

lessons are all there to teach and entertain. Follow TTMIK on social media and in a few weeks you'll become very familiar with hosts Hyun Woo, Seokjin, Kyung Hwa, Kyung Eun, Jooyeon, and Cassie. They really care about your progress.

Another excellent YouTuber to follow is Moon So Hyun, better known as Korean Unnie. Her fun and colourful vids will show you both the basics and nuances of writing and speaking Korean. Yes, those unusual Hangeul characters really will make sense to you if you stick with it. And there are plenty of vids on how to ask for directions, find the best street food, and what to expect at the local 7-11s in Seoul. Moon's two-to four-hour livestreams are massively popular with her fan base.

Other resources: Korlink, the unofficial TTMIK app, and Write it! Korean - great for guided practice writing Korean characters.

Easy German

Cari, Janusz and the gang at Easy German host one of the most refreshing language-learning channels on YouTube. It's built almost entirely on streeters. Every video sees them venturing out onto the sidewalks and into restaurants, markets and bars to bring you short and lively chats

with locals in Berlin, Frankfurt, Münster and more. Cari and her guest hosts regularly stop Germans to ask them things like what they think of Canada, what it's like in a Berlin home, what they eat for breakfast, what was the happiest moment in their lives – you get the drift. Both German text and English subtitles appear on screen. Easy German's companion channels are Easy French, Swedish, Portuguese, Spanish, etc.

More connections

Periscope: Scoping with people across the globe is instant fun. There are people livestreaming in the language you want to learn at every hour of the day. And if you're looking to connect with teachers, you'll find them.

Tandem: An excellent app to get help for learning any language under the sun and share your knowledge of English with others. Audio and video calls are wonderfully clear. Like pen pals on steroids.

Duolingo: Still a solid language learning app for the basic and lots of great selection.

Anki: One of the premiere flashcard building apps. You can build your own cards, add your own pictures or download decks from other Anki users. Also try Memrise.



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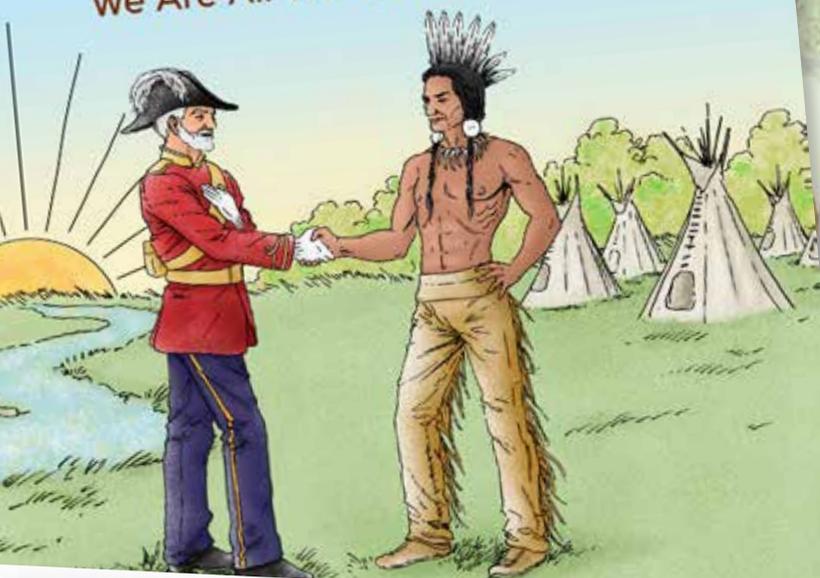
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FIRST NATIONS CEREMONIES

VALERIE ROULETTE

Treaty Tales
We Are All Treaty People



A Big Mistake?



Written by Richelle Lovegrove
Illustrated by Amber Green

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