

Benefits and Services

**of the Canadian Teachers' Federation
to the Teachers of Manitoba**



Canadian Teachers' Federation
Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants



The
Manitoba
Teachers'
Society

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About the CTF

The Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) is a national federation of teacher organizations in Canada.

CTF's mandate is dedicated to the economic and professional well-being of teachers in Canada and the promotion of public education. CTF provides information and support to provincial and territorial teacher organizations and is the national voice of teachers to address key issues of concern to teachers and students.

The Canadian Teachers' Federation raises the profile of, and promotes, the teaching profession consistent with the objectives of The Manitoba Teachers' Society. This is done through its activities with coalition networks and membership in national organizations, its lobbying of Federal Government departments and agencies, and its provision of a national media presence on education and teacher-related issues.

CTF is governed by a Board of Directors which is comprised of the Presidents and General Secretaries (Executive Directors) of all of its member organizations. The Presidents are the voting members of the Board.

The Society's relationship with CTF started in 1919 when four teachers met to consider matters of common interest to the teachers of the four Western provinces of Canada. Harry Charlesworth, secretary of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation proposed to E.K. Marshall of Manitoba that a federation of teacher organizations in the four Western provinces be formed. That meeting marked the beginning of the Canadian Teachers' Federation. MTS has consistently played an active role in CTF affairs since that time. Our participation and representation has served the MTS well on the national education scene, in having its voice heard on critical education issues and in availing of the services and programs provided by CTF.

The current fee for membership in CTF is \$27.30 per teacher member per year. That is, for less than \$3 a month from each teacher, MTS has access to the staff, the expertise and the representation on national issues that CTF provides, and to be a participating voice in decisions affecting teachers throughout the country.

CTF carries out its work under five major areas

1. Advocacy at the national level on issues relevant to the cause of public education
2. National clearinghouse for education research and knowledge sharing
3. Collection, analysis and reporting on trends in education
4. Support, advocacy and tools that strengthen members' collective bargaining capacity
5. International exchange and volunteer opportunities through Project Overseas and other international programs

The CTF Vision is that every child in Canada will have access to a strong, quality, publicly-funded education system equal to or better than any other education system in the world.

CTF Mission is to be the unified voice of teacher organizations in Canada to advance the cause of public education, the state of the teaching profession, and freedom to learn.

Benefits to The Manitoba Teachers' Society

All of the programs, services and activities of the CTF provide direct benefits to member organizations and through them to their teacher members. There are many issues that affect education and teachers which transcend provincial jurisdictions. The following are just some of the benefits for the Society and for the teachers of this province:

- CTF is a national resource to MTS on teacher and educational matters and a statistical clearing house of national and provincial information. For example, access to teacher-specific national research and regular updates and notices from across the country including legal decisions, Education International rulings and comparison documents on teacher pension plans, teacher salaries, and collective agreement provisions. This is a wealth of information of critical importance to the Society's teacher welfare programs, including contract negotiations.
- CTF provides information and strategies on collective bargaining across Canada. Pan-Canadian comparative research is conducted on teacher salaries, benefits and working conditions. The CTF has developed current and historical comparative tools for in-depth analysis of economic indicators, government income and expenditures, government debt load, Consumer Price Index, and other indices.
- The CTF has cohosted, with other member organizations, special conferences on teacher collective bargaining.
- Contract information from other teacher organizations is available through the CTF. Access to all CTF member collective agreements across the country is available via an electronic database. This contract language is critical for MTS in developing proposals to bring to the bargaining table.
- CTF ensures that teachers and teacher organizations have a united voice on such topics and issues as French language education, aboriginal education, copyright, employment insurance, child poverty, youth criminal justice issues, and education as an international tradable commodity.
- CTF is a channel through which to lobby the federal government on issues affecting teachers. Specifically, through CTF we are able to jointly lobby the Federal government on such topics as the impact of federal pension legislation on teachers, including RRSP limits, pension splitting, CPP, and severance roll-over room. Other topics include Employment Insurance legislation,

tax deductibility for purchase of teacher items, copyright legislation, and changes to the Criminal Code related to Section 43. The CTF has intervened in the Supreme Court of Canada case where a coalition of groups unsuccessfully tried to strike down Section 43 which protects teachers from frivolous legal action. Without the collective voice of CTF, MTS would have little impact on these issues at the national level.

- The Francophone Services Division of CTF is an invaluable support to MTS as we draw upon research, resources and the network of CTF francophone liaison officers to provide information and services to the teachers in our francophone schools. The francophone teachers can be a part of national research, use free resources for students, teachers and parents, and connect to colleagues across the country.
- In the area of teacher supply and demand CTF maintains up-to-date demographic information on the Canadian public education system including numbers and characteristics of students and teachers, carries out ongoing research on supply and demand/recruitment and retention of teachers, and analysis and reports on graduates from teacher training institutes.
- In the area of accountability the CTF has developed and is promoting alternatives to standardized testing. CTF has developed two brochures on learning and assessment, “Ask the Teacher About Learning and Assessment”, and “Teachers Know About Learning and Assessment” that provide information for both teachers and parents on how learning is best assessed.
- CTF has been working with the National Alliance for Children and Youth to actively promote government action to improve the health and well-being of Canadian children and youth.
- Membership in CTF provides opportunities for the President, Executive Director and other MTS staff to meet and liaise with their counterparts, to discuss teacher issues of common concern and participate in decisions for action on the national level. As well, equal representation is provided on the CTF Board of Directors which is recognized as the voice of teachers in Canada.
- Representation and voice on teacher issues at the national and international level is provided through CTF and Education International. The CTF is a member of Education International and is committed to the millennium development goals of Education for All.

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- The Society has regularly been represented on CTF committees and work groups such as those on Employment Insurance, Pensions, Diversity and Human Rights, Accountability, and Cyberbullying. This experience is invaluable for the staff and executive members involved and provides direct MTS input into the development of the national position on behalf of teachers.
 - Through CTF the Society receives support from other organizations when matters of local concern arise. This would include press releases from CTF and its member organizations supporting the Society's position on matters of wrongful discipline, unfair negotiating tactics and similar topics.
 - National issues are brought to our attention via news releases, a communications email group and direct contact with CTF staff. This is helpful when issues across the country may affect us or we may be contacted on the issue by local or national media. National media and reporters are put in touch with us for local stories or for local input on a national story.
 - CTF provides regular access to numerous publications including:
 - An Invitation to Success for French First Language Parents
 - E-Links
 - Economic & Member Services Bulletins
 - Economic & Member Services Notes
 - Seeing the Rainbow – the Gay-Straight Alliance Handbook
 - PD Perspectives
 - Health and Learning Magazine
 - Challenging the Silence
 - Many Voices Many Journeys: Stories by Aboriginal Teachers
 - Together Report outlining CTF's international programs and activities
 - CTF Annual Report highlighting CTF's programs and activities for the past year
 - In addition, CTF produces a number of pamphlets for teachers and for the public that we can distribute or from which we can develop our own MTS version.
 - The education polls carried out by CTF are very useful for within-province analysis and serve to supplement local polls and surveys. For example, the CTF National Issues in Education Poll is the largest public opinion poll on education in the country. Conducted every second year, it provides informa-

tion on trends in the public's views on key, ongoing issues and informs the policy and advocacy direction for CTF and member organizations on current and emerging issues.

- MTS has access to the CTF Teachers' Defense Fund if needed. This includes the funding of such things as legal costs incurred in addressing issues concerned with Section 43 of the Criminal Code and issues related to copyright legislation.
- Through CTF's International Programs Division, MTS can make a contribution to education and social development beyond our borders. Project Overseas, the John Thompson Leadership Program partnership with the Caribbean Union of Teachers, the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation Women's Network in India; the Africa Women in Education Network and the Sierra Leone Teachers' Union are just some of the examples where MTS has played a role.
- Through CTF, teachers in Manitoba can be a part of national or international campaigns such as World Teachers' Day, Media Awareness, Green Street and National Media Education Week. CTF provides resources, web links and promotion at little or no cost to teachers and schools.
- CTF's analysis of the Federal Budget is helpful, particularly in those areas of the budget which impact education.
- CTF provides articles and other pertinent information for The Bulletin on education issues, projects, and general interest stories.
- Other initiatives by the CTF include working to increase teacher access to information on young offenders; advocating for reversals of cuts in funding to women's groups and Status of Women Canada, Skills and Literacy Programs, and the Court Challenges Program; promoting a greater awareness of the effects of domestic violence and sexual abuse on children and females; and developing partnerships in the promotion of bargaining rights as human rights.

Conclusion

If CTF did not exist, we would have to create it. The Federation provides representatives of provincial and territorial teacher organizations with regular opportunities to exchange views and strategies, share information, cultivate alliances in the interests of improving teachers' professional lives and working conditions, and represent the interests of education and teachers on the national scene and at home. In addition, through CTF's own programs and services, it provides important research and information that is critical for the Society's services to, and representation for, its own members. CTF also serves as the representative voice of teachers at the national level on issues that directly affect teachers and public education.

Further information on specific CTF programs is available from MTS.

