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You and the MTS Code of Professional Practice!

by: Dave Najdich, President

Over the last few months it has become evident that there is some confusion around how The Manitoba Teachers' Society Code of Professional Practice is to be applied in buildings. I hope the following will help clarify the responsibilities of individuals when dealing with colleagues.

Member-to-Member:

e.g. I have been working beside an individual and have concerns over how they teach and interact with children/students. I wish to bring these concerns to the attention of the administration in the building. Prior to doing so I need to first share the concerns with that colleague. The Code states:

7. A teacher first directs any criticism of the professional activity of a Colleague to that colleague in private. Only after informing the colleague of the intent to do so, the complainant may direct in confidence the criticism to appropriate officials through the proper channels of communication.

If my colleague finds out that I have been critical of their professional practices without first sharing those concerns with them in the format outlined above, I have left myself exposed to a potential charge of unprofessional conduct. It is very clear that there is no immunity from the Code when talking to school administration about the professional actions of colleagues.

The only exception to the provisions of the Code of Professional Practice as they are outlined above is if the information to be shared is covered by existing legislation such as The Child Welfare Act which requires teachers to report incidents of potential abuse.

Administrators as Agents of the Employer:

Many of the calls we get in the office are linked to the actions of WTA members who are also school administrators. As a school administrator individuals wear two hats. The first is an MTS/WTA member and the second is as an agent of the employer. As an agent of the employer the person is doing the job of school administrator on behalf of the WSD. This job includes such functions as teacher evaluation, classroom assignments (space and students), directing the assigning of student grades, calling of meetings, etc. etc. These functions reflect the authority of the school administrator as it exists in both legislation and policy.

You and the MTS Code of Professional Practice! Cont'd.

The WTA Role:

When a member in a school has concerns over the actions of school administration when they are acting as an agent of the employer, the following portion of the Code applies:

8. A teacher shall not be considered in contravention of the Code in:
 - a. consulting with the Society or the president of the member's local Association;
 - b. reporting reasonable grounds for suspected child abuse according to legal requirements.

This means that individuals in a work location can call the WTA office to express concerns about actions in a building without informing the school administration.

Once a member or members have contacted the WTA with concerns the Association can take a number of actions depending upon the nature of the matter brought forward.

The Association can and does:

- * contact the administration in a building first (either in writing or by phone) to share the concern
- * take the concern directly to the WSD's Human Resources Department, the Area Superintendent or the Chief Superintendent
- * file grievances or take the matter to court.

It is important to remember that at no time does the WTA have to share the names of individuals who have contacted the Association with concerns or how many individuals called.

Calling the WTA:

Code issues and how they impact individuals in the system can cause confusion and some stress. I would encourage all members to contact the WTA when you have concerns, questions or require clarification on any issue.

ALL calls on any issue are considered CONFIDENTIAL and if information is shared with the WSD it will be done in a manner that protects the caller or with the permission of the person bringing forward the concern.



Accessing Personal Leave

By: Joan Fransen, WTA Vice-President

When visiting schools I often get asked why WTA members don't have personal leave days as some other associations do. My response is that actually we do. The last section of our Collective Agreement is the Code of Rules and Regulations. Chapter 5 describes both the procedure for securing permission and the salary provisions for leaves of absence. Much of what is stated in Chapter 5 is mirrored in The Winnipeg School Division's Policy GCBD 7. Personal Business Leave 7.1 Teaching/Clinical Staff. I'd like to highlight two of these provisions.

Section 5.1 Absence for Personal Business

1. 8. "For up to one (1) day in case of emergency illness in the family or household." (WTA Collective Agreement (2008-2009) Code of Rules, page 11.)

Many of us feel the effects of the sandwich generation is that we are called upon to look after not only our children but also our parents. The WSD has instructed us that family emergency is a mechanism for accessing leave for both emergent and non-emergent reasons.

Examples of emergent issues may include (but are not limited to) taking a family member to the hospital after an injury or picking up a sick child from daycare/school. In each instance, it is best to have back-up plans. When these fail, a family emergency occurs. Members need to make arrangements for substitute teachers, notify their administrators and report the absence on SFE at the earliest convenience.

Examples of non-emergent issues may include (but are not limited to) a planned surgery or paneling for nursing care. In these cases applications are made in advance.

For both emergent and non-emergent cases it is helpful to attach a letter to the short leave of absence form explaining any extenuating circumstances. Salary provisions for family emergency are one day with no deduction, per emergency.

2. 10. "For up to one (1) day in any case which the Superintendent may determine as sufficient to warrant such leave." (WTA Collective Agreement (2008-2009), Code of Rules, page 11).

I would refer to this type of leave as a "one timer." Circumstances would be unique and not covered under any other leave provisions. Again it is helpful to attach a letter explaining rationale. It should be noted that this is a discretionary leave. Members may be turned down.

In both cases—family emergency and personal leave—it would be helpful to let the WTA know whether you've been successful in accessing the provision or not. Before we negotiate changes to the Collective Agreement we need to know whether our current wording is meeting the needs of our members. We encourage members to make every attempt to schedule events outside the work day but when circumstances arise, the Collective Agreement is there to assist you.

REMINDER: CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2010/2011 WTA EXECUTIVE ELECTION

The Executive Nominating & Elections Committee is calling for nominations for the 2009/2010 WTA Executive. If you are interested in running for a position on the Executive please contact the Association office at 831-7104 or Lesley Wallis, Chair, Executive Nominating & Elections Committee at Meadows West School.

What is the WTA? The Winnipeg Teachers' Association represents all teachers, including substitutes, clinicians and lab assistants in The Winnipeg School Division. The Association negotiates for its members with the Winnipeg School Board. The WTA actively supports the well-being of all members through various committees such as Teacher Welfare, Professional Development and Public Relations.

Who can be an Executive member? Any member who indicates their willingness to run for election to the Executive when the call for nominations goes out. Candidates may be asked to speak at the Election Forum during the March WTA Council meeting. The new Executive year begins on June 15th.

What will I do if elected? All Executive members attend a retreat/workshop to become familiar with current issues and to determine (based on interest and experience) which committee they will Chair and/or sit on. There are committees which require less time and are ideal starting points for new members.

What is the time commitment for an Executive member? There are two Executive meetings per month. The meetings start at 4:30 PM and run between two to four hours (supper is served.) There is one Council meeting per month commencing at 6:30 PM. Committees meet at times determined by their mandate, or need, and can vary from two to three times per year to once a month.

What do I get out of it? Some rewards are extrinsic. Members are reimbursed for travel to Executive meetings and for dependent care. The opportunities for Professional Development are many and all are encouraged to take advantage of them. Substitutes are paid for by the Association when individuals attend PD opportunities.

Some rewards are intrinsic. Members of the Executive play an important role in achieving improvements in the working lives of teachers. They gain an insider's view of the politics; negotiations and goals of those involved in education throughout the Province. Executive members know that they have helped all their colleagues by serving their Professional Association.

Is that all? No. You will get to work with a group of fun-loving, hard-working, supportive people who may soon become a group of trusted friends.

For further information please contact either the Association office or Lesley Wallis.

DENTAL PLAN BENEFITS & COVERAGE

- Plan Covers:
- spouses of eligible contracted teachers/lab assistants
 - dependent child under 18 years of age
 - dependent child under 25 years of age if fulltime student
 - dependent child who was incapacitated for a continuous period beginning before age 18 or while a fulltime student and before age 25

Annual Deductible: \$15.00 person/\$30.00 family. If both spouses are WTA members the maximum deductible is \$30.00 in a calendar year. *(Note: there is a deductible holiday for the 2009 calendar year.)*

Annual Benefit Maximum: Routine and major combined = \$2,500.00 per person
 Orthodontic = \$1250.00 per person
 Total = \$37500.00 per person

Any Routine or Major Treatment expected to cost over \$300.00 and all Orthodontic treatment must first be submitted to Great-West Life.

Great-West Life Office Mailing Address:

Winnipeg Benefit Payments
 P.O. Box 3050
 Winnipeg, MB
 R3C 4E5
 Phone: 942-3589
Plan No. 51001

The 2009 Dental Fee Guide is in effect.

Routine - 100% Coverage

- cleaning, bitewing x-ray, fluoride (limit twice in a calendar year)
- oral examinations
- full mouth x-rays (once every 24 months)
- extractions
- fillings
- dental surgery (excluding orthodontic or extensive procedures)
- diagnostic x-ray and lab work
- general anesthesia
- endodontic treatment (root canal)
- periodontal treatment (gum disease)
- treatment for relief of dental pain
- injected medication
- space maintainers (not used for orthodontic purposes)
- consultations - relines, rebases and repairs to existing dentures
- pit and fissure sealants (up to age 19)

Major - 60% Coverage

- crowns, bridges, implants, dentures, etc .
- replacement of prosthodontics (dentures, etc.) if appliance is at least 5 years old
- procedures involving gold if no reasonable substitute at lower cost could be rendered

Orthodontic - 50% Coverage

- correction of malocclusions of teeth
- appliances
- observation adjustments
- repairs
- bands
- consultations

Benefit payments for orthodontic treatment are spread over the treatment period.

WTA 2009/2010 Pre-Retirement Seminar
REGISTRATION FORM

Applicant Data

First Name	Initial	Last Name
Social Insurance Number: _____ <i>(required to obtain data for you from TRAF)</i>		
Home Address: _____		Postal Code: _____
Home Phone: _____	Work Phone: _____	
Spouse or Partner (Full Name) _____		
His/Her date of birth - Note: this information is required. _____		
		Month - Date - Year
Will your spouse/partner be attending? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
There is a charge of \$15.00 <i>per attendee</i> for materials, coffee, dinner, etc.		
<i>Please indicate below if you have any dietary restrictions or allergies:</i>		
Specify type of dietary restriction/allergy: _____		

Retirement Seminar Data

I would like to attend the Pre-Retirement Seminar on (please check ONE):

March 18th, 2010

at McMaster House Arnett Auditorium, 191 Harcourt Street commencing at 5:00 PM
T.R.A.F. will provide you with a maximum of TWO printouts of retirement information based on possible retirement dates that you designate. Retirement dates may be milestones (e.g. age 65), or specific dates (e.g. June 2014). *Please NOTE: estimates will not be provided to anyone but the pension plan member.*

Retirement date #1	Retirement date #2
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Confirmations will be sent to applicants. Please note that enrollment is limited (maximum of 80). Please apply early. Cheques are payable to **The Winnipeg Teachers' Association**, payment (\$15.00 per attendee) is due with the application. Mail the application and cheques to the WTA office, 202-2639 Portage Avenue R3J 0P7. **Deadline for applications is one month prior to the seminar.** If you have any questions please contact Glenda Shepherd, 831-7104.

Distinguished Service Award Recipients

1979 - Dr. Alice Cheatley
 1980 - Dorothy M. Slaughter
 1980 - Anthony Romanow
 1981 - Shirley Chappell
 1981 - Kiva Berger
 1981 - Rae Kulba
 1981 - George H. Enns
 1982 - John H. Lockett
 1983 - Alfred Laser
 1983 - Nina Phillips
 1983 - Marilyn Thompson
 1984 - Aubrey Asper
 1984 - Ethel Arnott
 1984 - Terry Clifford
 1985 - John W. Carroll
 1986 - Dawn McBain
 1986 - Phyllis Moore
 1987 - Doreen Pruden
 1988 - Kai Arnot
 1988 - Chris Pammenter
 1989 - Walter Watts
 1989 - Ron Banister
 1990 - Carole Wylie
 1991 - Dr. David Turner
 1992 - Jack King
 1992 - Ardythe McMaster
 1993 - Sandy Millen
 1993 - Dick Marshall
 1994 - Anne Monk
 1995 - Bob Davies
 1995 - Joe Scott
 1996 - Erna Braun
 1996 - Gordon Crook
 1996 - Linda Guse
 1996 - Louise Kernatz
 1997 - Claretta Shefrin
 1997 - Mavis Riley
 1998 - David Najdich
 1998 - Neville Trevenen
 1999 - Barb Lercher
 2000 - Suzanne Adkins
 2000 - Patt Keating
 2001 - Joan MacDonald
 2001 - Susan Yee Wickler
 2002 - Donald Teel
 2003 - Brenda Craig
 2003 - Pat Lewicki
 2003 - Ray Stoyko
 2004 - Wendy Land
 2004 - Henry Pauls
 2006—Margo Foxford
 2007— Ruth Livingston
 2007— Henry Shyka (Honourary DSA)
 2008—Glenda Shepherd (Honourary DSA)
 2009—Melanie Hall

WTA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD NOMINATION FORM

All parts of the application form must be completed fully and submitted on time for consideration of the application

Name of Nominee: _____

Current Location: _____

of years Association involvement: _____

Please complete the following precisely and accurately, and if necessary, append additional pages.

1. Major Association/Society Professional...

Area of involvement	Dates
a) Council Rep.	_____
b) Executive (specify roles)	
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
c) WTA Committees (specify)	
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
d) Other committee involvement (specify)	
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Major contribution to the Association (e.g. Service to the Association/membership through advocacy/support.)

Specific areas:

Dates

Please provide any further information on the nominee's contribution to the Association that you may feel the committee should consider.

In addition please provide the names of two members who would provide additional information. The Committee may contact these people should they require further information. You may only support ONE application per year.

Name

Location

Phone #

1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____

Name of Nominator: _____
 Location: _____
 School Phone Number: _____

**Return this form to the WTA office via FAX - 837-9698 by:
February 15th, 2010.**

The Winnipeg Teachers' Association Event

At

Rumours' Comedy Club

190-2025 Corydon Avenue

Tuesday, January 19th, 2010

Showtime—8:00 PM

Doors Open—6:00 PM

Duration: 80 minutes

Comedian: Jay Malone

Only 250 Tickets Available!

Cost: Free for WTA Members

\$10.00 tickets available for non-members

Please e-mail Tina Garton at tgarton1@shaw.ca to reserve your ticket(s). Tickets available on a first-come first-serve basis.

A limited assortment of appetizers will be served. Menu & drink list available upon request.

The following electoral units were absent from the November 2009 WTA Council meeting:

Andrew Mynarski, Brock Corydon, Champlain, Garden Grove, Greenway, Grosvenor, Harrow, Interdivisional Student Services, Isaac Brock, J. B. Mitchell, Lab Assistants, LaVerendrye, Mulvey, Niji Mahkwa, Support Services, Weston, William Whyte, WAEC – 700 Elgin Ave. , Wolseley

Substitute Teachers Concerns/Issues

Substitute teachers please contact Iyvan Michalchshyn at Andrew Mynarski School if you have any concerns or issues.

The views expressed in all articles in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Association.

Deadline for articles for the January Newsletter:

Wednesday, January 13th, 2010