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The WTA NEWS

WTA Year End

By: Dave Najduch, President

The job of WTA President is never dull, but this year has been particularly interesting.

It began with a lot of my time being spent reviewing the WSD documents on pandemic Planning and talking about the potential impact of H1N1. It is nice to note that the pandemic never materialized in the manner in which it might have. It appears the old saying of “plan for the worse and hope for the best” truly did apply to the H1N1 case. Instead of slowing down at this point, the year seemed to pick up steam. We settled our contract in December, ratified the agreement in January, addressed the January 25, 2010 snow day issue through most of February and then spent the next four weeks responding to the incident at one of our high schools. A complicating factor to each of these events is that they were done with a significant amount of media attention. By any measure, this year took the WTA through a wide range of new, and at times, uncharted waters.

WSD and the Staffing Process:

We have been monitoring the staffing process through our office over the past five weeks. I have responded to questions regarding staffing and have brought a number of concerns to the attention of the WSD. If you have comments, questions or concerns about your experience through the staffing process please contact the WTA office before the end of June. It is much easier to address the issues now rather than waiting until the fall.

WTA Executive:

The current term of office for the 2009/2010 Executive will expire on June 15th. I would like to thank the two outgoing Executive members: Tina Garton (Chair, Reception Committee) and Christine Lachance (Chair, AGM Committee) for their efforts on behalf of the membership over the last year. Both committees are large and require a lot of effort. To the 2010/2011 Executive members I would like to say welcome and wish them the best in the year to come. We have already begun our work as a new Executive at our Training Workshop in May and will hit the ground running at our changeover meeting on June 16th. As always, there is lots to do.

The WTA Office Team:

To Glenda, Joan and Henry, I would like to say a special thank you. Your feedback and wise counsel over the year has helped to shape the work that I do on behalf of the membership.

Membership:

We are a few weeks away from another summer break. I would like to thank you for your support of the Association over this past year. Your input, feedback and comments are important to the work we do. Have a great summer, rest, relax and recharge your batteries for the school year to come.

Wearing Two Hats—Or is it?

By: Joan Fransen, WTA Vice-President

I recently attended the training sessions for the second Comprehensive Assessment Program (CAP) e-module. For those of you who are not elementary school teachers, the e-modules are professional development modules conducted online for those participating in CAP testing. Each person must complete two modules prior to administering the revised math CAP test next fall. It is not my intent, at this point, to discuss the merits or shortcomings of online training, but rather to discuss the content.

Once again, each school was instructed to send an administrator and a teacher to a half-day session; together, the team will lead the rest of its school staff in a half-day professional development session. The first e-module focused on understanding the math curriculum. The second one revolved around understanding, administering, and assessing the new CAP “tool”—now referred to as “N-6 Mathematics Assessment.”

There is reason to feel optimistic. Many times throughout the session, attendees were reminded that individual teachers and each school would need to use professional judgment when conducting the initial assessment. To my understanding, the process is much less rigid than previously. In the fall teachers will conduct the “initial assessment.” This is the portion that reflects the moment in time that will be reported to the School Division. Teachers will gather information about their students in ways that make sense to their situation. Observation through group-work or conducting individual inventories is at the discretion of the teacher. The intent is to determine next steps for programming for students. There seems to be no expectation of adherence to a “script.” In fact, information that has been observed informally throughout the course of learning will be honoured. As I made my way through the e-module, I viewed videos demonstrating many different teaching/assessment strategies.

It is clearly evident that a great deal of time and expertise has been exerted by your colleagues to develop the revised CAP tool, conduct the field tests, put together the e-module, and assist in training. Through the auspices of the Director of Assessment and Instructional Support Services, consultants, support teachers, school administrators, and teachers have spent many hours of time—much of their own time—getting to this point. Each school was instructed to set aside professional development time for working through the program. After I attended the first (of four) half-day sessions, I spent close to two hours viewing the e-module. Admittedly, I rushed through it. That is to say, I believe, in order to do it justice it will take more than two hours to complete. It is important for those participating to receive adequate time to work on it. If your school is not using professional development time—during the instructional day—to be trained, please let us know.

Next year a division-wide pilot will be conducted. The Division has indicated feedback will be welcomed. Teachers will continue to have access to the same amount of substitute time. Although some members may use the time for conducting the assessment, others may use it for planning the ongoing programming for individuals and/or entire classes. Time has also been offered for the school leadership team (those who attended the first two training sessions) and a few others to return for additional professional development intended to assist in the ongoing programming needs of the school. The intent is that the document will become part of ongoing planning for the year.

Once again, I appreciated the opportunity to participate in the sessions in order to see, first hand, what will become a big part of next year’s learning. I welcome your feedback as you transition to the revised CAP.

The following are the dates for the 2010/2011 WTA Executive and Council Meetings:

Executive (All Wednesdays, 4:30 PM - WTA Office, 202-2639 Portage Avenue

September 15
October 6
November 3
December 1
January 12
February 2
March 2
April 6
May 11
June 1
June 15

- *Note: 2011/2012 Budget Debate*

- *Note: Changeover Meeting - Location and time TBA*

Council (5:45 PM - Arnett Auditorium, McMaster House, unless otherwise stated
Snack will be provided in the Lobby outside the Auditorium at 5:00 PM.)

September 20
October 4
October 19
November 17
December 13
January 20
February 15
March 16
April 18
May 17
June 6

Note: Council Workshop—5:00 PM

- *Note: Election Forum*

- *Note: WTA AGM*

- *Note: WTA DSA Reception*

WTA Retirement Reception - June 8th, 2011





REMINDER...

The Winnipeg Teachers' Association
Retirement Reception is being held on
Wednesday, June 9th, 2010
at the Shaarey Zedek Synagogue

The WTA newsletter is available on the WTA's website at: www.mb.ca

Quote of the Month

Children need love, especially when
they do not deserve it.

- Harold S. Hulbert (In bringing up
children, spend on them half as much
money and twice as much time.)

Electoral Units not represented at the May Council meeting:

Andrew Mynarski, Brock Corydon, Carpathia, Champlain, Children of the Earth, DLC, Dufferin, Elmwood, Garden Grove, Grosvenor, Isaac Brock, J.B. Mitchell, Lab Assistants, Lansdowne, LaVerendrye, Luxton, Lord Selkirk, Mulvey, Norquay, Ralph Brown, River Elm, Robert H. Smith, Rockwood, Sacre Coeur, Shaughnessy Park, Strathcona, Substitutes, Support Services, William Whyte, WAEC—700 Elgin Avenue.

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

Active Members...Going On A Trip This Summer Vacation?

It's almost summer vacation and you have been looking forward to travelling. Make sure that you take your ManuAssist card with you. That card is the only document that identifies you as a member of the plan.

The card should be filled in to include the number of our WTA Extended Health Benefits Plan—98240. The card should also have your membership number in the plan on it. *For most, but not all* teachers, your number is your WSD employee number. (That is the plan member certificate number that you use when making a claim for prescription medications, physiotherapy and other treatments.)

On the back of the card are toll free number you should contact if you need medical attention while in other parts of Canada, the US or other countries. If you have further questions BEFORE you leave on your vacation, you can contact Manulife at their toll free number:

1-800-268-6195

Having a first aid travel kit would enable you to deal with minor scrapes, cuts and burns yourself. Be sure you have sufficient supplies of any prescription medications you take. It is advisable to keep these in their original labeled containers, and to carry them with you in your 'carry-on' bags/backpacks.

Before leaving your working location at the end of June, make sure you have sufficient Manulife claim forms for the summer period. You can download our EHB claim forms from the Manulife website by the following process:

- Type www.manulife.ca/group/benefits
- Group Benefits Customers, in Step 1 select "Plan Member"; in Step 2, enter 98240 as your plan contract number; Click on "Go"
- "Quick access to the forms you need", Click on "forms"
- Click on (Health Claim Forms) "Extended Health Care Claim"

You are now able to print an Extended Health Care Claim Form for your completion.

(Please note, your dental coverage is provided by Great-West Life Assurance (GWL) therefore a GWL dental claim form would be needed for your dental claim to be reimbursed.)

Have a safe and happy vacation!



How about serving on a WTA Committee?

The WTA Committee Chairs are always looking for members to serve on various committees. Your Council Rep. has all the committee reports for 2009/2010. They may also be viewed online at wta.mb.ca. In your review of this year's committee reports you may find something of interest to which you could devote some time and energy. New ideas and creative thinking are required in all aspects of the work of the Association. This is a rewarding way to "give back" to your profession. If you would like to serve on a committee please fill in the form below and FAX it to the WTA office - 837-9698.

Committee:

AGM	Kristin Insull, Kelvin High School
Finance	Jennie Matteis, Grant Park High School
Reception	Kyle Leblanc, Robertosn School
Teacher Welfare	David Harack, Tec Voc High School
Group Benefits	Shahram Hakimelahi, Wolsley/Montrose
Distinguished Service Award	WTA Office
Executive Nominating & Elections	TBD
Monitoring (School Board Meetings)	Tracy Stutzke, Tec Voc High School
Workplace Safety & Health	Joan Fransen, WTA Office
Substitutes	Melinda Guenther-Balodis, Lord Selkirk School



SERVING ON WTA COMMITTEE(S)

FAX: To the WTA Office - 837-9698

Name: _____ Home Phone: _____

Address: _____ School Phone: _____

School: _____

I would like to serve on the following committees: _____

Signature

Learning and the Brain's Annual Conference

Focused Minds: Enhancing Student Attention, Memory and Motivation

By: Nathan Martindale, WTA Executive Member

In May 2010, I had the opportunity to attend an excellent conference in Washington, D.C. entitled *Focused Minds: Enhancing Student Attention, Memory and Motivation*. Over the course of 2.5 days, over 1,000 teachers, psychologists and occupational therapists from across North America heard accomplished speakers and presenters. There were nine keynote addresses with informative and interesting topics ranging from “*Why don't students like school?*” to “*How can we use Neuroscience to enhance Student Learning, Attention and Memory?*”

In addition to the keynote addresses, there were twenty-five different sessions offered on a wide range of topics related to the conference theme. These sessions were divided into six sub-themes: Focusing the Student Mind, Treating ADHD and Executive Function/Motivation, Engaging Motivation, Intervening on Math/Reading Disorders, Directing Emotions/Behaviour and Movement.

The sessions I attended were:

- **Using Attention Networks and Neuroplasticity to Increase Attention and Motivation*
- **Raising a Self-Disciplined Child: Helping Children Become more Focused, Resilient and Motivated*
- **Focusing the Student Mind*
- **Brain Processing in Behaviour Disorders*

Reflecting on all the keynote addresses and sessions, I found Dr. Edward L. Deci's keynote address *Facilitating Optimal Motivation in Schools: The Self-Determination Theory Perspective* to be the most captivating.

Dr. Deci is a Professor of Psychology and the Gowen Professor in the Social Sciences at the University of Rochester (Rochester, New York), and Director of its human motivation program. He is the co-founder of self-determination theory (SDT), which is an influential contemporary motivational theory that is concerned with supporting our natural or intrinsic tendencies to behave in healthy and effective ways. SDT has been researched and practiced by a network of researchers around the world.

The focus of his address was the shift from the traditional theories of motivation which view it as a unitary phenomenon (one that takes into consideration solely the level of motivation) to a theory that identifies both the level of motivation and the orientation of motivation (intrinsic or extrinsic), as well as how the motivation is initiated, focused and rewarded.

Dr. Deci studied 128 published experiments on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. He concluded that:

- *students who were already intrinsically motivated to perform a task actually showed decreased levels of intrinsic motivation when an element of external motivation (reward) was added (they saw completing the task a means to an end, rather than something they actually wanted to do);
- *other extrinsic events (including threats of punishment, deadlines, and competition) can have negative effects on intrinsic motivation;
- *all reward systems are inherently flawed because they possess one great risk – the loss of intrinsic motivation;
- *if a student is being controlled by a reward system then they are not truly acting autonomously;
- *a certain amount of self-autonomy is essential for optimal psychological health therefore extrinsic motivation is not psychologically healthy.

Learning and the Brain's Annual Conference cont'd.

Based on his findings, Dr. Deci suggested that teachers should encourage student self-autonomy and self-determination by providing students with some element of choice. Research shows that individuals who given choices are more interested in completing a task and therefore more intrinsically motivated.

Dr. Deci also compared and contrasted the two different options for motivating students: the traditional reward and consequence system versus a needs-supportive environment approach. He expressed his concerns that a reward and consequence system used to extrinsically motivate students is simply a method of control that creates an environment in which student success is limited to rote memorization, and students have a trouble maintaining and transferring skills.

For further information regarding Dr. Deci's research regarding motivation and/or Self-Determination Theory, please visit the following links:

www.psych.rochester.edu/SDT/

(University of Rochester Department of Psychology website on Self-Determination Theory)

www.unco.edu/cebs/psychology/kevinpugh/motivation_project/resources/ryan_deci00.pdf

(*Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations: Classic Definitions and New Directions*, Deci and Ryan, Contemporary Educational Psychology 25, 54-67 (2000))

I would like to thank the Winnipeg Teachers' Association for providing me with the opportunity to attend this conference.

Reminder...

As of September 2010 there will be no paper copies of the WTA newsletter. The newsletter will ONLY be available on -line at wta.mb.ca

The Manitoba Teachers' Society Annual General Meeting Update

By: Dave Najduch, WTA President

The end of May each year sees just under 300 teachers from across the province come together at The Fairmont Hotel for the three-day Annual General Meeting (AGM) of The Manitoba Teachers' Society. This is where the Society passes policy, elects the Provincial Executive, approves a budget and sets your MTS fee for the coming year. The meeting can be very political and in years past some items have been very controversial. For the official record of events check the next edition of *The Manitoba Teacher*. Beyond that, this year was most interesting for a number of reasons.

The most contentious of issues discussed at this year's AGM related to a motion brought forward by the Louis Riel Teachers' Association (LRTA) and seconded by the Flin Flon Teachers' Association. The motion would see the contract of the current General Secretary of MTS, Ken Pearce, extended for two years beyond the June 2011 expiration of the contract. The General Secretary (GS) is the senior staff person working for MTS. Initially the Chair of the meeting ruled the motion Out of Order. This ruling was challenged and there was a spirited debate about whether the issue could even be talked about on the floor of the meeting. Ultimately 108 members supported the ruling of the chair and 167 members supported the challenge to the Chair. The outcome of this vote allowed there to be a debate on extending the GS' contract.

LRTA presented a good argument for the extension. The general sense among many at the meeting is that Mr. Pearce brings to the Society the right balance of skills, experience and determination that will help to reshape the organization. When the vote was finally taken on the motion, the AGM delegates approved the extension of the GS' contract. As a sidebar to the discussion on extending the GS' contract, another motion was passed changing how future General Secretary's will be hired. Instead of the power to make a recommendation resting solely with the Provincial Executive, the selection process will now involve one senior staff member of the Society, the President or Vice-President, three Provincial Executive members and three Presidents selected by a random draw at an open Provincial Executive meeting.

The election for Provincial Executive saw a total of 11 members running for five seats on the Provincial Executive. Five of the eleven candidates were incumbents running for re-election. After the speeches Friday evening, the question/answer session and the vote Saturday morning; two incumbents were re-elected and three new members were added to the Provincial Executive. For many long-time participants at the AGM there appeared there was some dissatisfaction with the current Executive and the assembly felt a shift in composition of the Provincial Executive was required.

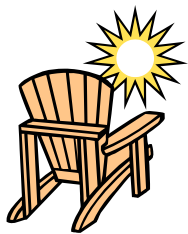
This desire for change in the Provincial Executive can also be seen in a motion passed on the floor of AGM creating term limits for the Provincial Executive members. Starting at next year's AGM, Executive members can serve a total of three two-year terms and then they will not be allowed to run for re-election. The passing of this motion will have a major impact on the six individuals who would have been up for re-election next year.

The WTA brought forward a number of motions to this year's AGM. The first was to have MTS grant a Life Membership to Erna Braun for her work on behalf of teachers during her career. This motion was passed and Erna was honoured during a special presentation Thursday morning at the AGM. The second WTA motion was to have the election of the Provincial Executive done on a regional basis prior to AGM. Each region would have approximately the same number of members and would have ensured equity in how Provincial Executive seats were distributed across the Province. This motion was defeated. The AGM did pass a motion changing the election process for the Provincial Executive. At next year's AGM, all delegates will be free to vote for the number of candidates they would like instead of having to vote for a set number of candidates.

MTS Annual General Meeting Update cont'd.

The issue of Provincial Bargaining was addressed through a number of motions at this year's AGM. The WTA motion to remove MTS support for Provincial Bargaining was defeated but sparked a lot of discussion. By the end of the AGM the Provincial Executive motion to create a new Provincial Bargaining model based on an Ad Hoc Committee report was defeated. The assembly passed a Business Arising motion creating a new Ad Hoc Committee to investigate other models of Provincial Bargaining and referred a motion on bi-level bargaining to the new committee and asked for a report back to next year's AGM.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the WTA AGM Committee Chair, Christine Lachance, the Whips, Iyvan Michalchyshyn and Richelle Desrosiers, hospitality chairs, Terry Willerton and Bob Morgan and the entire WTA AGM Committee for their efforts this year, there is a lot of time and effort into preparing for AGM. The WTA takes 48 delegates and two permanent alternates to the AGM. The feedback I have received about our delegation's participation and preparation has been very positive.



Have a GREAT Summer!