

The Apple Core

Oct 2025

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President's Address:

Teachers in Alberta are on strike.

After years of wage freezes and increasing class sizes, Alberta teachers are choosing to withhold their labour until a better agreement can be secured.

Common publicized issues are class size and complexity. In Alberta, teachers will commonly have classes of over 30 and many have well over 40 students. One example that sticks out in my mind is a teacher teaching the Alberta equivalent of an essentials math class of 43

students. How are students that need additional support and attention in math supposed to get what they need in these conditions? How are teachers able to sustain themselves in a system that does not allow them or their students to succeed?

Manitoba teachers can look at this situation and know that something needs to change.

Teachers have been fighting for language in a collective agreement about class size and complexity since at least the 1980's. BC ensured the right for teachers to negotiate class size and complexity by taking a legal battle to the Supreme Court of Canada and winning in a 7-2 decision. New Brunswick and Quebec have clauses that ensure classrooms are places that students can succeed by keeping size and complexity manageable. Saskatchewan teachers achieved advances in this area in their most recent bargaining round, too.

Both Alberta and Manitoba do not have collective agreement clauses that set parameters around class sizes nor the complexity of those classes. But our drive toward such an achievement is not isolated. Together, teachers have been able to build off the gains of one another to work toward a better education system. Maybe this next agreement will be where we see such gains.

As Alberta approaches the end of their bargaining cycle and a new agreement, we stand with them and support their cause. As we begin negotiations, we look forward to carrying the torch as we work to better the working conditions of teachers and the learning conditions of our students.

If you know an Albertan teacher, reach out and let them know that you're supporting their fight.

In Solidarity,

Mike Urichuk

GVTA President

president@gvta.mbteach.org

Apple Core Readership Contest:

Congratulations to Ana Lapeare who was the winner of our September readership contest! As the winner of our monthly draw, Ana will receive a \$25 gift card to the local business of her choice!

For October's contest, email a sentence or two to president@gvta.mbteach.org about your MTS PD Day on Oct. 24. Send your emails by October 30, 2025 to qualify.

GVSD Accessibility Committee: GVTA Representative

Garden Valley School Division is looking to establish a committee to focus on accessibility in our schools. This committee will:

- Review the Division's current accessibility plan;
- Review proposed capital expenditures related to accessibility;
- Review operating expenditures related to accessibility;
- Review funding alternatives that are available from the Provincial and Federal government;
- Propose additional projects that need addressing; and
- Other items as determined by the committee.

GVSD has asked GVTA to send a representative to this committee. The GVTA Executive wants to open this invitation up to the full membership of GVTA. If you would be interested in improving accessibility in GVSD by working on the above items, please email president@gvta.mbteach.org as soon as possible with an expression of your interest. Any names received will be put forward for approval to the GVTA Executive on Nov. 4, 2025.

CTF Calls Out:



Canadian Teacher's Federation Calls Out a Failed Promise to Support Teacher Recruitment and Retention in Rural/Remote Areas. The Federal government is failing to uphold promised student loan forgiveness for educators.

The 2024 Federal Budget committed to expanding the National Student Loan Forgiveness Program to educators working in rural and remote communities. Regrettably, and despite the CTF/FCE's efforts, the Government of Canada has not made any real progress on

implementation.

Join us in calling on the federal government to fulfill its promise to the hundreds of teachers impacted by this decision.

Use the link below to send a letter to the relevant government officials:

<https://www.ctf-fce.ca/take-action/loan-forgiveness/#call-on-goc>

Find out more about this situation [here](#).

Summer Seminar Session – Confronting Hate

This summer, both ESJ chairs were able to attend the MTS Summer Seminar. One of the keynote speakers was Dr. Izzeddin Hawamda, speaking on the topic of Confronting Hate. Dr. Hawamda was born and raised in a rural village just outside of Nablus in the

West Bank, Palestine. He currently serves as the Anti-Racist Education Professional Learning Initiative Coordinator with three Winnipeg School Divisions. He has recently completed his PhD in Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Manitoba.

Dr. Hawamda began by defining hate, hate speech, and hate crimes. He discussed the reasons for hate, including fear, anger, frustration, mistrust, isolation, lack of accountability and the need to externalize blame. In

relation to school environments, he first highlighted the difference between safety versus comfort. Safety means you can ask questions without fear or judgement. You can voice your perspective and know that this will be validated as exactly that – your perspective. Others may challenge your ideas respectfully, but that challenge is in the spirit of greater understanding and growth. Comfort means that your perspective will be agreed with, validated, and unchallenged. You don't have to explain yourself to be understood, and you don't have to justify your perspective because it is shared by everyone. Meaningful dialogue happens in an environment where everyone is safe, but not always comfortable so that we can learn and grow together.

You can find more information on Dr. Hawamda and his work at www.izzeddinhawamda.com

New Safe Space:

New Safe Space Posters and Safe Space Cards

MTS has created new Safe Space Posters and Safe Space Cards. GVTA is organizing a bulk order for anyone interested in posting an English 9"x6" Safe Space Card in their class. Use the link to fill out the order form by Oct. 24:

<https://forms.office.com/r/zWdbcPdKUL>



To find other printing options, please take a look online at [New Safe Space Posters and Cards Available Now – The Manitoba Teachers' Society.](#)

GVTA CLOTHING 2025-26



Two Tone Polo Shirt
Mens and Womens Fit
\$32.00



1/4 Zip
\$60.95



Long Sleeve Hooded Tee
\$32.00



Performance Polo Shirt
Mens and Womens Fit
\$26.75



Retro Trucker Cap
\$22.00



Crewneck Sweater
\$26.75



Knit Cuff Toque
\$15.00



Pocket Scarf
\$23.60



Full Zip Hooded Sweatshirt
\$52.00



Three Layer Knit- Tech Jacket
Mens and Womens Fit
\$52.00



Shop here!

Get your GVTA gear at:
<https://stores.inksoft.com/GVTA/shop/home>

All orders placed before the 30th of the month will
be ready on the 30th of the following month, and
delivered to your school!

○ Every year, teachers and principals are disciplined or have their contracts terminated because of poor online behaviour. Your professional reputation is your most valuable asset.

Educators are held to a higher standard than most professionals, so be a professional in public at all times. You may be disciplined for off-duty conduct.

If you are a teacher candidate, do not wait until you're employed to clean up your social media accounts. Potential employers are watching your online behaviour now.

Since passage of Bill 35, members of the public can file complaints alleging misconduct and incompetence against you.

If you have any questions or need help, contact our Teacher Welfare Department at 204-831-3055.

McMaster House

191 Harcourt Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
R3J 3H2

Phone: (204) 888-7961
Toll Free: 1-800-262-8803
Fax: (204) 831-0877
Toll Free: 1-800-665-0584



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mbteach.org



Online Safety for MTS members

Protect your teaching career
and reputation

Your professional reputation is your most valuable asset. **Protect it always.**





Model professional and ethical online behavior

- You are a professional, not a friend to students. Crossing boundaries can be perceived as inappropriate or even grooming behaviour. Good intentions can ruin a career.
- Do not use email, texting or messaging apps to develop a rapport with students. Don't text students without parental permission and then only during regular school hours or approved working hours—and only in relation to school activities.
- Get permission, including signed releases from parents or guardians before posting pictures of students, school or classroom activities, or information about students, families or colleagues.

- Ensure your students are not exposed to inappropriate material or communications. This can lead to criminal charges. Do not destroy the material in question: you risk exaggeration by students.
- Do not post inappropriate pictures; revealing selfies; racist, homophobic or transphobic memes; embarrassing candids, effusive references to alcohol or cannabis, or any posts with profane language or gestures.
- Teachers are known by the online company they keep. Do not follow or interact with questionable accounts. If your students can see you're following a highly inappropriate account, it could result in discipline including firing or non-renewal of contract.
- Never vent about colleagues, students or parents online. Remember, screenshots are easy to take. Unprofessional comments can lead to official complaints against you.
- Create separate personal and professional profiles on social media. Use different names for each account. Resist friending or interacting with students on your personal accounts.
- Know and follow your board's policies when it comes to using social media, divisional computers and equipment. If the equipment you're using belongs to the employer, nothing remains private. Misperceptions of your activity may lead to allegations, investigations and a forensic audit.
- Keep printed and electronic copies of all significant emails.

Commenting

- When leaving comments on social media posts or news media sites, do not engage in personal attacks, hate speech or negative comments based on race, ethnicity, creed, national origin, citizenship, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, homophobia, transphobia, disability, marital status, age. Dog-whistles are out, so is profanity, spam, trolling and using asterisks to camouflage bad language.

