

The Apple Core

Mar 2026

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President's Address:

Hello GVTA Members,

This past month I have been able to come into various schools and hear what would help improve your working conditions as Teachers (capitalized to indicate inclusion of principals, vice-principals, teachers, clinicians, substitute teachers, and coordinators). Then, in March, I was able to attend a meeting where our opening package was finalized.

At this point, the team of Teachers has been assembled to bargain and we have our list of opening proposals to help advance our welfare, our professions in education, and to ensure meaningful protections for those working in Manitoba's public education system. Now begins a time of significant effort, diligence, and patience by the select Teachers that represent us and the staff of MTS as they work to secure a deal that works for us all.

My biggest takeaway from the past month is how resolving concerns and issues that face teaching are rarely resolved immediately and solely with the wording that was agreed upon far away from the classroom. While collective agreement language provides legitimate power, these words are toothless without Teachers willing to assert their rights that they are entitled to.

So, I wanted to take a moment to say thank you to those Teachers who have spoken up over the last month. By asking a question or expressing a feeling of, "This doesn't seem right" we have had Teachers ensure the protection of our collective rights. These are Teachers who added the pursuit of small daily justice on their already full plates so that they, as well as the next Teacher, can face a better circumstance. It is these acts that uphold our bargained for rights and convert our written words to better lived realities.

Thanks folks and please do not hesitate to reach out with even a seemingly small question.

In Solidarity,
Mike Urichuk
GVTA President

President@gvta.mbteach.org

Apple Core Readership Contest:

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

For March's contest, send an email with the subject line "March Apple Core Contest" to president@gvta.mbteach.org. Include in the email the word that fills-in-the-blank below:

9. Teachers authorized to engage in approved extra-curricular activities shall be reimbursed for reasonable out of pocket expenses including documented _____ and meal expenses related to such activities as per School Division policy/procedures and/or School Division authorization.

Consider article 6.04 EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES clause 9 on page 33 of the PDF version of the [Collective Agreement](#). Entries received on or before April 3, 2026 will be entered to win a \$25 gift card to the local business of your choice!

GVSD Budget for 2026-27

On March 13, 2026, GVSD passed what board chair Leah Klassen described as a “status-quo” budget. With the information that GVTA has access to, I agree with this assessment.

In last month’s Apple Core, GVSD’s budget shortfall was described as a decision between making cuts or raising local taxes. GVSD Trustees unanimously chose to raise local taxes instead of cutting staffing. This was because Teachers, parents, and community members all expressed the need to at least maintain current staffing levels. In addition to budgeting to maintain staffing levels, GVSD will be looking to hire a behavioural specialist to help support teachers in addressing part of classroom complexity.

This budget by GVSD responds directly and appropriately to the Manitoba government’s decision to reduce its share in the cost of sustaining educational programming in Garden Valley Schools.

While healthcare will likely always remain as the top priority in provincial funding, investing in public services that make our communities healthier, like the services that are offered through our school system, can help reduce the need for acute care interventions.

GVTA Nominations 2026-2027

Nominations for GVTA Executive positions are still open. Please note that nominations for President will close by 4:00pm – Thursday March 12, 2026. If an election is required, it will be held Thursday, March 26, 2026 by secret ballot. The winner of the election will be announced on March 27th.

Please contact Karla Rootsart if you are:

- Planning to continue in your current GVTA role. (Note: GVTA does not have term limits) OR
- Considering an executive position – self-nominations are welcomed OR
- Aware of a person/s that you wish to nominate – just be sure that you have their prior approval with an indication of their willingness to let their name stand.

Nominations should be received by Noon – Monday, May 25, 2026. Elections will be held at the GVTA Annual General Meeting on Tuesday May 26, 2026 with nominations “from the floor” also being accepted at that time.

The list of the Executive positions is as follows:

- Vice-President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Collective Bargaining Chair & Collective Bargaining Co-Chair
- Education Finance Chair & Education Finance Co-Chair
- Employee Benefits Chair & Employee Benefits Co-Chair
- Equity and Social Justice Chair & Equity and Social Justice Co-Chair
- Indigenous Education Chair & Indigenous Education Co-Chair
- Professional Development Chair & Professional Development Co-Chair
- Public Relations Chair & Public Relations Co-Chair
- Social and Teacher Wellness Chair & Social and Teacher Wellness Co-Chair
- Workplace Safety & Health Liaison

A description of all positions, as well as an updated nominee chart, are included on separate pages in this edition of the Apple Core.

Thank you for considering serving our members.

Karla Rootsart
Chair, Nominating Committee

Turn the Page – Step into Leadership Conference

April 30 (Evening) & May 1, 2026 A Conference for Aspiring, Emerging, and Experienced School Leaders

Step into a transformational learning experience designed for those ready to embrace the next chapter of their leadership journey. Turn the Page – Step into Leadership brings together aspiring leaders, new principals and vice principals in their first five years, and experienced administrators looking to deepen and refine their practice.

<https://memberlink.mbteach.org/Event.axd?e=4033>

Notice of GVTA Policy and Bylaw Changes

Teacher Wellness Changes:

That the GVTA Bylaws be amended as follows:

9.1 The following are the Standing Committees of the Local:

- a) Collective Bargaining Committee;
- b) Education Finance Committee;
- c) Employee Benefits Committee;
- d) Equity and Social Justice Committee;
- e) Indigenous Education Committee;
- f) Liaison Committee;
- g) Professional Development Committee;
- h) Public Relations Committee; and
- i) Social and Teacher Wellness Committee;

That the GVTA Policies & Procedures be amended as proposed by the Social and Teacher Wellness Bylaw Review Committee.

12. Teacher Wellness

To promote physical, emotional, and mental wellness.

To plan, budget for and execute relevant support(s) that could serve our diverse community of needs throughout the year;

Include on the executive agenda in fall, winter, and spring, a wellness check-in where each school representative will report on teacher wellness in their building and together, executive members will discuss possible event(s) for the school year;

To develop awareness of wellness issues in member attitudes, school policies and programs;

To share information and resources regarding wellness. This shall be done primarily through the monthly publication of the Apple Core;

To identify local needs for which the committee may provide assistance;

To act as a liaison between the local Association and the Society;

Give monthly reports at GVTA Executive meetings and annual report at the general membership meeting.

Changes to GVTA President Elections:

That the GVTA Bylaws and Policies be revised to make:

GVTA President elections take place in January of each school year

GVTA President term to be 2 years instead of 1 year

Both of these changes are to help provide a clearer picture for staffing decisions in GVSD and to give the GVTA President some stability in a mandate. If these changes take place, the first election for a 2-year term would take place in January 2027.

These changes will be considered by the GVTA Executive at their next regular meeting. If you have any feedback for the changes or would like to attend the meeting, please contact president@gvta.mbteach.org

Uncertified Teachers in GVSD

The use of uncertified teachers in GVSD and across the province has been an often revisited conversation throughout this school year. MTS and GVTA both agree that where a qualified and certified teacher is available, they should be given priority for positions over uncertified teachers. This includes permanent, term, and casual (subbing) positions.

GVSD has agreed with MTS and GVTA in prioritizing the hiring of qualified and certified teachers. The one sticking point is around facilitating the hiring of substitute teachers. Specifically, setting priority subs. With our SmartFind software, schools and teachers can indicate preferred substitute teachers to receive priority notifications for available jobs. It is possible in this software to list uncertified substitute teachers to receive priority notifications over qualified and certified teachers. We do not believe that this practice should not be permitted.

Over the year, we have arrived at a point of agreement with the division. We agree that uncertified substitute teachers should not be given priority over certified teachers. There is one exception to this standard: when certified substitute teachers exist, but they are not qualified to teach a particular subject (ex. specialty areas like diesel mechanics and Industrial Arts) when an uncertified substitute is.

To be clear, this achieved understanding with the division would require that priority substitutes are certified teachers unless:

- the exception noted above applies, or
- if no certified substitute teachers exist, or
- if all certified substitute teachers are already listed as priority notification recipients.

GVTA EXECUTIVE POSITIONS	DESCRIPTIONS IN BRIEF
President	Call, preside, provide notice, and create agendas for all Executive meetings and general meetings; attends Association Standing Committee, GVSD Board, Society, Presidents' Council, and South Central Region President meetings as necessary; make reports at all Executive and General meetings; act as a liaison between the Association and the Society; execute a recognition for retiring teachers as needed; deal with personnel issues; attend negotiation sessions between the Association and Garden Valley School Division; work with Treasurer to create the Association budget
Vice-President	Assist the president as needed; take full charge of the affairs of the Association during the absence of the President.
Treasurer	Keep an accurate record and take charge of all funds collected; prepare a financial report for each Executive and general meeting; meet with the President in budget preparation; prepare all necessary reports for the yearly financial review; present the completed review at a general meeting; be one of the co-signers to access Association accounts.
Secretary	Keep an accurate record of all proceedings of the Association; distribute agendas and minutes of Executive meetings, special meetings, and general meetings.
Collective Bargaining	Represent GVTA at all regional and provincial bargaining meetings with The Society; survey the local members when appropriate before regional bargaining seminars; promote knowledge of the collective agreement and provincial bargaining procedures, including ratification voting procedures, amongst the Association.
Education Finance	Track trends in Education Finance; gather information to present to local Executive and General Meetings; present to the Board as a part of the GVSD budget process.
Employee Benefits	Develop and promote awareness of all employee benefits; identify and investigate local needs for which the Employee Benefits committee can provide assistance; organize and host Employee Benefits Seminars relevant to GVTA members
Equity & Social Justice	Develop awareness of social justice and equity issues in classroom materials, attitudes, school policies, and programs; share information and resources; identify local needs for which the committee may provide assistance.
Indigenous Education	Develop awareness of indigenous education and equity issues in classroom materials, attitudes, school policies, and programs; share information and resources; identify local needs for which the committee may provide assistance.
Professional Development	Initiate, organize, and implement a program of in-service training to provide opportunities for the continued improvement of GVTA membership's educational practices; inform GVTA teachers of PD opportunities; engage such resource persons as are deemed necessary for the in-service program; prepare, administer, and evaluate the GVTA PD budget; work in cooperation with senior administration in the planning and implementation of PD programs for the division.
Public Relations	Purchase prizes and food for General Meetings; publish a membership newsletter; promote GVTA events for all committees; purchase and distribute a biennial GVTA 'gift' for members. Enhance and increase GVTA's online media presence.
Social and Teacher Wellness	This portfolio is currently under review. Nominations are still welcome.
Workplace Safety & Health Liaison	Promote the aims and objectives of the Association within the GVSD Workplace Safety and Health Committee; inform the Association of the activities of the GVSD WS&H committees; WS&H Liaison shall be an Association member who serves on the GVSD WS&H Committee

2026-2027 GVTA EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

GVTA positions do not have term limits so, while some persons will be letting their names stand, the following positions are annually open for nominees (including self-nominations) and subject to any subsequent election:

Position		Nominees & School/Administrative Unit		
Nomination Deadline: Thursday, March 12th at 4:00 pm	President	Mike Urichuk (PLS)		
	Vice-President	Kirsten Carman (GVC)		
Nomination deadline: Monday, May 25th at noon Nominations also accepted from the floor at AGM on May 26th, 2026	Treasurer	<i>Incumbent not returning</i>		
	Secretary	Mary Eberling-Penner (PC)		
	Collective Bargaining	Chair		
		Co-Chair	Sarah Coates (GVC)	
	Education Finance	Chair		
		Co-Chair		
	Employee Benefits	Chair		
		Co-Chair	Sarah Coates (GVC)	
	Equity & Social Justice	Chair	Val Harder (DO)	
		Co-Chair	Karla Rootsart (SWD)	
	Indigenous Education	Chair		
		Co-Chair		
	Professional Development	Chair		
		Co-Chair		
	Public Relations	Chair	Jonathan Cullen (NPC)	
		Co-Chair	Karla Rootsart (SWD)	
	Social & Teacher Wellness	Chair		
		Co-Chair		
Workplace Safety & Health Liaison				
Appointed	Past-President	Joel Swaan (Parkland)		
	MTS Provincial Executive	Joel Swaan (GVTA)		
Members-at-Large elected by the members they represent	COSL MAL			
	Members-at-Large represent schools and administrative units who are not represented by other Elected Members. Any units not represented after elections take place at AGM on May 26 th will elect their own representative to the Executive. <i>Units not yet represented are</i>			



Your 2025 / 2026 GVTA Representatives



Mike Urichuk (GVTA)
President & Ed. Fin. Chair



Kirsten Carman (GVC)
VP; Emp. Benefits Chair



Joel Swaan (MTS/PLS)
Past President; Prov. Exec.



Patrick Derksen (PRS)
Member-at-Large



Val Harder (DO)
ESJ Chair



Sarah Coates (GVC)
EB Co-Chair; CB Co-Chair



Karla Rootsart (SWD/HES)
ESJ Co-Chair; PR Co-Chair



Mary Eberling-Penner
(PCS/EDW) Secretary



Camille Daesey (GVC)
Indig. Ed. Co-Chair



Christan Froese (PLS)
WSH Liaison



Alyssa Friesen (PLS)
PD Chair



Crystal Hildebrand (BVS
/BES) Member-at-Large



Jim Parry-Hill (SUB)
Indig. Ed. Chair



Caleb Reimer (JRW)
Ed. Finance Co-Chair



Jonathan Cullen (NPC)
PR Chair



Jessica Riddell (GVC)
CB Chair

Missing: Amy Neufeld (PRS) – PD Co-Chair, Anny Froese (PDS) – Treasurer, Garret Brook (COSL/PRS) – COSL rep,

Email, call, or text: president@gvta.mbteach.org (431) 775-4282

Attention GVTA Members!

You are invited to attend a free event:



Speaker:

**DR. IZZEDDIN
HAWAMDA**

Supper Included!

**The Zone @ GVC
April 21 | 4-6pm**

Sign up by Friday, April 17 by emailing
valerie.harder@gvzd.ca or
karla.rootseart@gvzd.ca