

The Apple Core

April 2026

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Hello GVTA Members,

Two major highlights for this month:

- The MTS Workload Survey
- Canada Student Loan Forgiveness Program Update

MTS Workload Survey

With provincial bargaining, the importance of this survey has increased. Each submission to this survey directly impacts the information that MTS has access to when advocating on our behalf in front of government bodies and as they bargain the next provincial contract.

Ensuring that enough responses are gathered to make this data statistically significant can mean the difference between successful advocacy and unsuccessful advocacy. Further, adding your perspective and experiences on this survey is one of the most direct routes from all 17 000 MTS Members to those individuals that will be sitting at the bargaining table.

As you go through the MTS Workload Survey, the questions will seem familiar to those who have contributed to the survey in the past. However, it is important to continue to receive your feedback. As a thank you for taking the time to complete the survey, our Apple Core contest for April (prize of a \$25 gift card) is to email me letting me know that you have completed the survey. Thank you in advance for completing the survey.

Canada Student Loan Forgiveness

Program Interested in accessing funds for your B. Ed, Post-Bacc, or M. Ed?

Some folks are unaware that Canadian student loans are not income-tested nor do they accumulate interest while you study. Further, part-time students can access up to \$10 000 in Federal Student Loans.

If you start a part-time graduate or post-bacc program this spring/summer or next school year, it would be possible to apply for a student loan, access the National Student Loan Forgiveness Program for Teachers/ Clinicians each year that you study part-time, and have your full loan forgiven prior to needing to make a payment on your student loan.

Essentially, you may be able to access an interest-free loan that could be fully forgiven as you work to increase your teaching qualifications. While there are specifics around eligibility, if you continue to work full-time in a GVSD school while studying, apply for student loan forgiveness at the end of each complete school year in July, and file your taxes, you stand to benefit significantly from this program that came through years-long advocacy by the Canadian Teachers' Federation.

For those continuing to pay off existing student loans, [the online application for Canada Student Loan Forgiveness](#) is now open through the National Student Loans Service Centre (NSLSC) and Teachers will be able to successfully apply for their first \$4000 of federal loan forgiveness at the end of the school year (since

Garden Valley Teachers' Association members work on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, and the homeland of the Métis nation. GVTA respects the Treaties that were made on this territory.

applicants need to have 10 consecutive months worked as a Teacher).

While work-life balance can be difficult to achieve while working in education, completing a second, third, or fourth degree could lead to hundreds of thousands of dollars more in career earnings and pension payments. The earlier in your career you can attain a higher classification, the larger the impact.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to reach out!

Mike Urichuk

president@gvta.mbteach.org

Apple Core Readership Contest:

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

For April's contest, send an email with the subject line "April Apple Core Contest" to president@gvta.mbteach.org. **Include in your email a note that let me know you completed the MTS Workload Survey.**

Entries received on or before April 29, 2026 will be entered to win a \$25 gift card to the local business of your choice!

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

Notice of Bylaw Change

The GVTA Executive will be considering a motion to amend the GVTA Bylaws at the May GVTA meeting.

This amendment will be altering all references to “secondment” to “release time” so that our bylaws will receive approval by the MTS Provincial Executive.

All GVTA Bylaw changes will also be presented at the GVTA AGM for Membership approval.

If you have any feedback about this bylaw proposal, please do not hesitate to contact president@gvta.mbteach.org

ESJ Event – April 21

Don't miss out! This month you have the opportunity to hear Dr. Izzeddin Hawamda speak. In his work with educators, Izzeddin focuses on the power of **dialogue, listening, and respectful conversations** across differences. He uses **storytelling**, including stories from Palestine, as a way to help teachers and school communities build understanding, empathy, and meaningful connections.

As teachers, we all bring our own stories and experiences into the classroom. Taking time to reflect on them helps us recognize both what we know—and what we may still be learning. When we listen to one another's stories, we build empathy, broaden our perspectives, and discover new ways of understanding our students and communities.

This workshop is rooted in a love of teaching and the belief that stories can be transformative. Through accessible writing, sharing, and guided dialogue, educators will explore their own journeys while learning from colleagues. The session highlights student voice and storytelling as powerful tools for connection, healing, and building stronger, more inclusive school communities.

Please contact Valerie.harder@gvsd.ca or karla.rootsaert@gvsd.ca to sign up. **Deadline is Friday, April 17.** Event is Tuesday, April 21 from 4-6pm in The Zone at GVC, and supper is included!

Hope to see you there!

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	Susana Hawryshko (DO)		
	Secretary	Mary Eberling-Penner (PC)		
	Collective Bargaining	Chair	Jessica Riddell (GVC)	
		Co-Chair	Sarah Coates (GVC)	
	Education Finance	Chair		
		Co-Chair		
	Employee Benefits	Chair	Kirsten Carman (GVC)	
		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	Kirsten Carman (GVC)	
		Co-Chair		
Workplace Safety & Health Liaison	Christan Froese (PLS)			
Appointed	Past-President	Joel Swaan (Parkland)		
	MTS Provincial Executive	Joel Swaan (GVTA)		
Members-at-Large elected by the members they represent	COSL MAL	Garret Brook (PRS)		
	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 ECS, JR, BV, PDS, WES</i>			

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