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President's Message



FTA Meeting Schedule

March 14, 2009

May : TBA

June 13, 2009



Let Us Hear YOUR Voice!

The FTA VOICE is a publication by Association members for Association members. The goal is to keep FTA members informed of the business that the Executive is undertaking on their behalf. Let us hear what you have to say.

Questions, comments, or any concerns, can be sent to

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Hello, fellow members of the FTA, it appears that due to events beyond my control, I will not be your president for the rest of the year. As of March 12, 2009, I will be going to the hospital for two total knee replacements (the benefits of a misspent youth). Remember the Meat Loaf song "a wasted youth is better than a wish and productive old age."? Of course I not only enjoyed my misspent youth, I now want a wish and a productive old age. Yes, it is a little like having your cake and eating it too. But, due to modern science and a public health care system, I did have chance for a misspent youth and now have a chance for a wish and productive old age. The only cost was that I had to wait for the operation to come through.

The next time you hear anyone put down the Canadian Health Care System remember, in the States I may not have had to wait for the operation, but by the same token, most teachers' health insurance would not cover the operation. Therefore, I could

have an appointment right away for an operation I could not afford. So here I wait, until I came to the top of the list, to have an operation the government pays for, or I could have an operation on time I could not afford. Choice seems clear to me. Well that is my rant for Public Health Insurance.



Scott Miller
President of the FTA

For those teachers looking at retirement this year and wondering how TRAF has been affected by the current economic situation, the real results of the pension plan will not be known until the Annual General Meeting in May. But I do think we can draw a few conclusions from past events. First, the pension plan has most likely lost money. Most pension plans in Canada, the United States and Europe report a 15% to 25% re-

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School ICT Committee Internet Filter Management

FTA Members have voiced concerns regarding the new internet filtering system. In response to these concerns, Bradley Hampson has forwarded us the following letter from the division outlining the procedure for ensuring that access and content are appropriate.

The main purpose of the School ICT Committee is to provide Principals with the resources and information necessary to make sound, timely, and informed decisions on matters pertaining to content management and user access on schools' ICT systems.

Each school will have a committee to ensure that the intended Internet content is inline with the school's educational objectives. This might entail different access levels for teachers, support staff, and students of various ages/grades. The committee will be chaired by the Principal and will consist of at least two other members, both of whom should be educators in order to speak to the appropriateness of the content in question. In the event that the school is too small to form the committee, then the Principal, Area Superintendent, and Assistant Superintendent, Technology will make up the committee. The Chair will authorize any changes to be made to the school's firewall filters or internal systems configurations. The changes may be made by an authorized staff member at the school, or by an Area Technician depending on the nature of the request. Schools will be advised what level of technical access their local appointee(s) has by the Area Technician.

***Note: The committee does not have the authority to override a Principal's ruling;**

however, a Superintendent may override decisions where the perceived risk is greater than the planned benefit.

Procedural overview:

1. Sites/content is suggested for access or blocking to committee.
2. Committee views content.
3. Chair authorizes changes to systems.
4. Area Technician or delegate makes, and reports on, system changes.

The above process is formal and minutes should be kept for sensitive issues. For day to day operations, the same process can also be done verbally or by email as long as the general process is observed.

The Principal, or acting Principal, must understand that they are ultimately responsible for ensuring that all the content on their school's systems are appropriate and inline with the stated policies, regulations, and mission statement of Frontier School Division. Management of the firewall is like computer access in that **it is a privilege** and that if abused it will be revoked in part or completely.

EQUALITY AND

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

(formerly the Equality In Education Committee)

The ESJ committee's responsibility is to ensure Equality and Social Justice for the membership of the FTA. If at anytime you feel you need information and/or assistance related to any Equity or Social Justice issue feel free to contact me at (204)357-2057

Submitted by Edie Turner, ESJ Rep.

NEGOTIATIONS REPORT



Your bargainers have been working very hard on the opening package for presentation to the Board of Trustees. At the time of writing this has yet to be completed. We would like to thank everyone that filled out the surveys and wrote comments. All of them have been read and considered for the opening package. The opening package will be presented to your FTA executive at an upcoming meeting. This package will be discussed and voted upon prior to the beginning of the bargaining process.

Our collective agreement expires June 30th of this year. Bargaining in a meaningful way will begin next September. It is my hope that the Division and Association will exchange packages prior to the end of this school year.

Respectfully Yours
Dean Elliott, Bargaining Chair

(Continued from page 1)

duction in funds, in other words, a loss. Will this mean that teachers will be expected to increase their pension payments? In a word, yes. I would expect an increase not simply because of market movements,

More to the point, for every one retired teacher in Manitoba, we have 1.7 teachers working, and this is almost a one to one ratio. So the question is simple, do I want to spend my retirement years in comfort? If the answer is yes, then you will be expected to contribute to the plan. If the answer is no then expect to die teaching. I love simple choices.

Another issue that may be on the minds of some members is the upcoming election for the president of the Manitoba Teachers' Society. Many members of the Frontier Teachers' Association do not know who to vote for because they do not know any of the people. A write up about the people running will come to your school. Read the information, call, or e-mail, but please vote. Become an informed voter. It just takes time.



For more information contact the Chief Returning Officer at 191 Harcourt Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba. You can phone 1-800-262-8803 (ext. 207), or simply email election2009@mbteach.org.

Elections for the FTA are also coming up. If you do not think we are doing a correct job place your name forward and run. The only way to change a wrong to correct an injustice is to become involved. This was my last, whether I return next year as Past President depends on many things none of which I control. Become involved this association is only as good as the people that place there names forward to run and work.

I have tried to explain my reasons for leaving and of course a question or two that may be on the minds of some teachers. After the FTA executive meeting on March 14th, the FTA will be able to report who will take over as president for the rest of this school year. As for me I wish you all "fair winds and following seas."

THE LOST DR SEUSS POEM

I love my job. I love the pay!
I love it more and more each day.
I love my boss, he is the best!
I love his boss and all the rest.

I love my office and its location. I hate to have to go on vacation.
I love my furniture, drab and grey, and piles of paper that grow each day!
I think my job is really swell, there's nothing else I love so well.
I love to work among my peers, I love their leers and jeers and sneers.
I love my computer and its software; I hug it often though it won't care.
I love each program and every file, I'd love them more if they worked a while.

I'm happy to be here. I am, I am.
I'm the happiest slave of the Firm, I am.
I love this work. I love these chores.
I love the meetings with deadly bores.

I love my job—I'll say it again—I even love those friendly men.
Those friendly men who've come today, in clean white coats to take me away!!!





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Early one morning, a mother went in to wake up her son. "Wake up, son. It's time to go to school!"

"But why, Mom? I don't want to go."

"Give me two reasons why you don't want to go."

"Well, the kids hate me for one, and the teachers hate me, too!"

"Oh, that's no reason not to go to school. Come on now and get ready."

"Give me two reasons why I should go to school."

"Well, for one, you're 52-years old. And for another, you're the Principal!"