



## BEAUTIFUL PLAINS TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

### Of the Manitoba Teachers' Society

Hi BPTA Members

My name is Allen Hanke and I am currently the president of the Beautiful Plains Teachers' Association. Prior to being president, I was the vice president for a few years. I took over as president in early 2022.

My regular job is being the principal of Hazel M. Kellington School, and I have been in this position for the last 21 years. HMK is the K-4 school in Neepawa, but when I first started, it was a K-6 school. The growth in Neepawa over the last several years has seen our population increase at an astounding rate! HMK has lost two grades to the middle school as our community grows, yet has increased its total school student population by approximately 100 kids during that time!

BPTA is currently in a good place. We work effectively and collaboratively with our school board, which is not always the case in other school divisions. We take pride in being able to work through issues together, in a way that is best for students, members, and the division. With everyone working towards a common cause, it makes it easier to find solutions that make sense.

We are always looking for people to join our small group of committed members who keep the local going! Meetings are open to all members – the only part that would not be open is anything in-camera, but this does not happen often. As an added bonus, everyone who attends the meeting is eligible to join us for supper after, courtesy of the BPTA! We also currently have an opening for the position of Wellness Chairperson. If this is something that might interest you, please let me or any executive member know!

In closing, I would like to remind you that the BPTA, and MTS, work on your behalf. If you have questions, or feel like you are not being treated fairly, please be sure to reach out to me, or contact MTS and ask for a staff officer. These services are there for you, and I would encourage you to use them if ever you have questions!

Have a great 2023-24 school year!!



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# BEAUTIFUL PLAINS TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Of the Manitoba Teachers' Society

## 2023-24 Executive



Position	Name	School	School Ph	Cell	Email
President	Allen Hanke	HMK	(204) 476-2323	(204) 841-3329	<a href="mailto:ahanke@bpsd.mb.ca">ahanke@bpsd.mb.ca</a> (checked daily) <a href="mailto:bptapres@mbteach.org">bptapres@mbteach.org</a> (not checked daily)
Vice President	Gary Salmon	CC	(204) 834-2172	(204) 476-0401	<a href="mailto:gary1salmon@gmail.com">gary1salmon@gmail.com</a>
Secretary	Loretta Keller	HMK	(204) 476-2323		<a href="mailto:lkeller@bpsd.mb.ca">lkeller@bpsd.mb.ca</a>
Treasurer	Robyn Forsman	Brookdale	(204) 354-2166		
Collective Bargaining	Gary Salmon	CC	(204) 834-2172	(204) 476-0401	<a href="mailto:gary1salmon@gmail.com">gary1salmon@gmail.com</a>
Professional Development	Loretta Keller	HMK	(204) 476-2323		<a href="mailto:lkeller@bpsd.mb.ca">lkeller@bpsd.mb.ca</a>
	Julie Van Kommer	DO	(204) 704-8538		<a href="mailto:jkommer@bpsd.mb.ca">jkommer@bpsd.mb.ca</a>
Equity and Social Justice	Alexa Hulme	Twilite	(204) 476-8837	(204) 870-0210	<a href="mailto:ahulme@bpsd.mb.ca">ahulme@bpsd.mb.ca</a>
	Denise Selewich	NMS	(204) 704-3000	(204) 867-7903	<a href="mailto:dselewich@bpsd.mb.ca">dselewich@bpsd.mb.ca</a>
Liaison	Al Hanke	HMK	(204) 476-2323	(204) 841-3329	<a href="mailto:ahanke@bpsd.mb.ca">ahanke@bpsd.mb.ca</a>
Workplace Safety/Health	Kerry Turner	NACI	(204) 476-3305		<a href="mailto:karturner@icloud.com">karturner@icloud.com</a>
Education Finance	Dale Swanton	NACI	(204) 476-3305		
Indigenous Education	Michelle Kolbe	NMS	(204) 704-3000		
Public Relations	Brent Boyle	CC	(204) 834-2172	(204) 721-9125	<a href="mailto:brent_boyle@hotmail.com">brent_boyle@hotmail.com</a>
Employee Benefits	Hylin McLaren	HMK	(204) 476-2323	(204) 801-4009	<a href="mailto:hylinmclaren@gmail.com">hylinmclaren@gmail.com</a>
Wellness					
RJW Rep	Laurie Robson	RJ Waugh	(204) 834-2828		<a href="mailto:lrobson@bpsd.mb.ca">lrobson@bpsd.mb.ca</a>
Colony Rep	Alexa Hulme	Twilight Colony School	(204) 476-8837	(204) 870-0210	<a href="mailto:ahulme@bpsd.mb.ca">ahulme@bpsd.mb.ca</a>



*Brookdale School - Front Entrance*

## TREASURER

I am just starting my 17th year of teaching and I have spent 15 of those years teaching in Beautiful Plains School Division. I was the teaching principal at Fairway Colony School for 8 years and have been teaching at Brookdale Elementary School for the past 7 years. Before beginning my time in BPSD I taught highschool math and science at Baldur School and Minnedosa Collegiate. Science Fair is one of my passions in education and I have run fairs at my schools and have also served on the Western Manitoba Science Fair Committee for the last 15 years. I have been able to travel across Canada with students to attend the Canada Wide Science Fair for the past 13 years.

I have been on BPTA since 2012 and enjoy working with other teachers from our school division on this committee. I am looking forward to another great school year!

Robyn Forsman

## ABOUT THE WESTMAN SCIENCE FAIR

The Western Manitoba Science Fair is the Regional Science Fair for Southwestern Manitoba and has been in operation since 1969. It provides an opportunity for students to showcase their scientific talent for their parents, teachers, and the community. Applicants come from grades 1 through 12. The WMSF is a full day event, held in spring every year, and we usually host around 500 hundred students. The participants set up their projects first thing in the morning, and then judging begins! After presenting their projects to the judges, the participants are provided with some entertainment and educational activities (the 'Science Olympics') while the judges are tabulating their results. In the early afternoon there is a public viewing of the projects where community members and media can view the projects and talk to the participants. The award/medal ceremonies are held at the end of the day. We award bronze, silver, and gold medals, in addition to various Special Awards. The final awards of the evening are Best of Fair and the Runner(s) Up; these top projects of the fair in grades 7 - 12 receive an all expenses paid trip to compete in the Canada Wide Science Fair.

### Important 2024 Dates

- Tuesday, March 5, 2024 - Latest date to hold a school fair
- Friday, March 15, 2024 - WMSF Entry deadline
- Tuesday, April 9, 2024 - WMSF fair day

If you are planning on sending students to WMSF please be sure to let us know so we can make sure we have space for everyone! Please email [info@wmsf.com](mailto:info@wmsf.com).

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*"Everything is theoretically impossible, until it is done."  
~ Robert A. Heinlein*

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## EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To support teachers with Equity and Social Justice issues related to the profession.

To meet with the other chairpersons from their region at each of the two-day training sessions and at least once as a stand-alone meeting held in their respective region. MTS provides three two-day workshops annually which are designed to provide:

- information and resources to support the work of the Chairpersons.
- opportunities to interact with experts on various issues; meet service providers from around Manitoba; receive copies of relevant resources and interact with their counterparts in regional and random groupings.

In addition, these training sessions and meetings are designed to assist chairpersons in meeting the following goals:

- Provide a voice and support for teachers engaging in ESJ work within their association.
- Educate membership of their local association on ESJ issues.
- Influence and educate membership in collective bargaining.
- Provide resources and contact information for local members.
- Organize committees to promote ESJ awareness and action.
- Advocate for training at the local and society level.

## Equity and Social Justice — Co-Chair

Hi, I am Denise Selewich. I teach Grade 6 at Neepawa Middle School. I have been teaching for 30+ years. I have worked as a Classroom Teacher, Teaching Principal, Education Director, Adult Education Instructor and Educational Assistant.

I continue my educational journey by working on various committees including Equity and Social Justice Chair. I have worked in this position for seven years. Through this role, I continue to collaborate with colleagues, attend workshops, and stay updated on the latest research and on the best practices which can further enhance one's understanding in promoting fairness and equity. I have learned that every effort, no matter how small, contributes to creating a more equitable world. To my fellow colleagues at Beautiful Plains, keep up the excellent work that you do to inspire your students each and every day.

This year, I am excited to have the opportunity to have a new co-chair onboard.

Welcome to Alexa Hulme!



*Neepawa Middle School Staff*

## Equity and Social Justice — Co-Chair

Hi, my name is Alexa Hulme. I am the Teaching Principal at Twilight Colony School, where I teach grades K-8. I am currently in my 4<sup>th</sup> year of teaching.

This year, I am excited to be joining Denise Selewich as the Equity and Social Justice Co-Chair. Being new to this position, I am looking forward to working alongside Denise, attending workshops, and learning more about what I can do to support the teachers in our school division, in regards to Equity and Social Justice work within our schools.

*Acadia School - Front Entrance*



## INDIGENOUS VOICE AND ACTION CHAIR

Hello, My name is Michelle Kolbe, I am the BPTA 2023-24 Indigenous Voice and Action Chair. I am currently in my 4th year of this position, and feel fortunate to work towards Indigenous education and equity-based learning for our students within BPSD. I am excited to see what positive steps we will take towards Indigenous education this school year within our caring school community!

As an ally and representative of the Indigenous Voice and Action chair, I aim to uphold working towards equity-based goals to promote Indigenous education opportunities and resources in our schools.

**The objectives within my role as Indigenous chair this 23/24 school year are to:**

- Attend MTS Indigenous Chair seminars
- Represent BPSD and BPTA as an advocate for Indigenous education
- Provide resources and share new information to the BPSD community
- Be available to answer questions for BPSD regarding Indigenous education
- Strive to meet the Calls to Action by representing BPSD and BPTA

As an educator with 23 years in the field, I have had the opportunity to work within a variety of roles. My experiences have been in both Garden Valley School Division and Beautiful Plains School Division as a German language teacher, member of the Manitoba Teachers of German (various roles), EAL coordinator and teacher, ELA teacher, small school administrator, middle years teacher and teachers' association committee member (various roles).

I am both a University of Winnipeg and Brandon University alumni, and am currently a Western University EdD student. I believe that we are all life-long learners, and that equity within education is a key component to the values of Canadian education.

I currently reside in Neepawa with my spouse Delaeno, and I enjoy hiking in our beautiful Manitoba parks.

I am available at [mkolbe@bpsd.mb.ca](mailto:mkolbe@bpsd.mb.ca) and would greatly appreciate hearing about your ideas connected to Indigenous education at BPSD.

Sincerely,  
Michelle Kolbe



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“Reconciliation is realized when two people come together and understand that what they share unites them and that what is different about them needs to be respected.” - Wab Kinew

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# PUBLIC RELATIONS

Greetings fellow educators and members of the Beautiful Plains Teachers' Association community. My name is Brent Boyle, and I am delighted to introduce myself as your Public Relations Representative for the 2023/24 school year. I aim to build and maintain a positive reputation and relationship with students, parents, the general public, and within our own teachers' association.

The Public Relations itinerary for this year includes but is not limited to:

1. Publishing a fall and spring newsletter.
2. Donating to the September reconciliation event in Neepawa.
3. Donating to the Splash Park in Carberry.
4. Handing out bookmarks at the Carberry and Neepawa holiday parades.
5. Sponsoring a Skating day at the Brookdale and Eden Rinks.

We will need volunteers for these events to happen. Please be in touch if you are willing to help.

On a personal note, this is my 18<sup>th</sup> year teaching. I have spent time with Frontier and Prairie Rose School Divisions, and am currently in my 13<sup>th</sup> year at Carberry Collegiate where I have mostly specialized in high school math. I live in Neepawa where my wife, Clara, who teaches grade 5 and my two children Jack and Mae attend grade 4 and kindergarten respectively.

Feel free to reach out to me at [bboyle@bpsd.mb.ca](mailto:bboyle@bpsd.mb.ca) or [brent\\_boyle@hotmail.com](mailto:brent_boyle@hotmail.com) with any public relations ideas or to volunteer with planned events.

Sincerely,

Brent Boyle  
Public Relations Representative  
Beautiful Plains Teachers Association  
[bboyle@bpsd.mb.ca](mailto:bboyle@bpsd.mb.ca) or [brent\\_boyle@hotmail.com](mailto:brent_boyle@hotmail.com)



*Front Entrance—Carberry Collegiate*



## WHERE TO FIND US

### **The Manitoba Teachers' Society**

McMaster House, 191 Harcourt Street  
Winnipeg, MB, Canada R3J 3H2  
Phone: 204-888-7961  
Toll Free: 1-866-494-5747  
Fax: 204-831-0877

### **Disability Benefits**

Bradley Square, 101-2639 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB, Canada R3J 0P7  
Phone: 204-957-5330  
Toll Free: 1-866-504-9373  
Fax: 204-957-5347

### **Other Contacts**

[Local Associations](#)

[Council of School Leaders \(COSL\)](#)

[Éducatrices et éducateurs francophones  
du Manitoba \(ÉFM\)](#)

[Canadian Teachers' Federation \(CTF\)](#)

[Canadian Teachers' Unions](#)



*A Union of Teaching & Learning*

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS CHAIRPERSON

Hello Colleagues!

My name is Hylin McLaren, and I am your new Employee Benefits Chairperson. I have taught for 24 years, 10 of those at HMK, and have recently returned to BPSD after 7 years in another Manitoba school division. There I spent time as a school rep, and the last 3 years as the Employee Benefits Chairperson for our local association. I have also broadened my perspective by working in partnership with unions in low income countries through participation in 3 Project Overseas projects sponsored by Canadian Teachers' Federation.

While we are working towards bargaining for provincial benefits, I will be able to keep you up to date on our current benefits, and assist you should you have questions. You can always find information on your pension and benefits at <https://www.mbteach.org/mtscms/> by clicking on the Benefits tab. You will also find under this tab, the free Humanacare counselling service for you and your family. This includes any type of counselling you may need, from personal wellness to financial or legal advice etc. When you contact Humanacare, they will triage and connect you with someone who is best able to work with you, either virtually or in person.

You are always welcome to contact MTS Program Officer, Glen Anderson, with any questions regarding your benefits. He is a wealth of knowledge, and is there to answer any question you may have.

Phone: 204-831-3052

Email: [ganderson@mbteach.org](mailto:ganderson@mbteach.org)

Have a great year!

Hylin McLaren  
HMK School  
[hylin.mclaren@bpsd.mb.ca](mailto:hylin.mclaren@bpsd.mb.ca)



*Entrance—Hazel M. Kellington School*



## WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

The website below is a great place to find resources such as Safe Work Manitoba, Workplace Safety and Health Act, Workplace Safety and Health Regulations, and more.

If anyone has any Work Place Health or Safety questions or concerns, please contact myself, Allen Hanke (BPTA President) or MTS Teacher Welfare at 204-831-3055.

Thanks!

*Mrs. Kerry Turner*



## UPDATES—HEALTH INSURANCE AND PENSION BENEFITS

### What you need to know:

1. If you regularly fill prescriptions for maintenance drugs, you are encouraged to use COSTCO or EXPRESS SCRIPTS CANADA.

Why?

- No membership to Costco is required for this
- Costco has the lowest dispensing fee of \$4.48, ESC dispensing fee \$8.99, pharmacies charge whatever they want for a dispensing fee, and most are well over \$10
- At other pharmacies you only receive 80% coverage, and our plan is implementing a dispensing fee cap of \$10 **effective Jan. 1, 2024** (this is an increase from \$7 previously)
- Pharmacies are required to disclose their dispensing fee, which in Manitoba range from \$4.48-\$23.99, so it pays to ask.

2. Effective Jan. 1, 2024 yearly drug maximum for **retirees** will increase from \$2,500 to \$2,750 per person

3. Now available for all teachers (with at least a 60 day working contract) and eligible spouses - **Portable Benefits** - If actively working, and under age 65 you can add life insurance, accidental death and dismemberment and critical illness coverage. Maximum life coverage is now \$1,000,000 for members and spouses (from \$500,000). For more info go to MTS website.

3. **YOUNG TEACHERS** are strongly encouraged to attend an upcoming pension sustainability seminar.

Why?

- Your future pension fund is being depleted by pensioners who are now collecting longer than they have worked.
- This is going to affect your take home pay and benefits. **Your voice and your opinions are needed** at the provincial bargaining table regarding where you would rather have these funds taken from.

### Upcoming virtual seminars:

- In order to prepare handouts, pre-registration is necessary. To register online go to the MTS website at [www.mbteach.org](http://www.mbteach.org), log in at my profile, click on the header Events and from the drop down menu choose List of Events, scroll down and click the applicable Pension Sustainability Seminar to complete the registrations process. (It is at the very bottom of the list.)

5. Effective April 1, 2023 diabetes related health coverage was updated. If you are unaware of these changes and need more information, please contact Hylin or visit the MTS website.

# **Grade 12 Provincial Assessments Return**

## **Grade 12 Provincial Assessments**

This year, Manitoba will see the return of grade 12 provincial math exams. As a member of the development committee, I am excited about the potential it holds. Together, the committee recognizes that we have a unique opportunity to usher in positive change for both math students and teachers across our province. The revival of these provincial assessments brings with it the promise of encouraging the consolidation of knowledge, informing instruction, elevating student achievement, and ensuring a fair and equitable assessment for all.

### **Consolidation of Knowledge**

"Does a student remember September math in June?" Students need to use and understand everything they've learned in a course, not just some parts. This process of reviewing, relearning and putting the missing pieces of the puzzle together is the consolidation of knowledge. Provincial assessments add formal accountability to teachers and students alike to strive for mastery of the whole curriculum.

### **Informing Instruction**

The professional goal of all educators is to grow in their teaching abilities each year. Data provided by summative assessments can be a powerful tool. It efficiently summarizes where students in a class or school need to improve and can focus attention on those areas to guide future instruction.

### **Increasing Student Achievement**

Teachers gain a sense of confidence from observing success on provincial assessments, which in turn translates to more student confidence. Provincial test expectations are communicated clearly and are directly created based on outcomes in the curriculum. Clear expectations have a positive effect on student achievement. Provincial assessments, in particular, emphasize the importance of mathematical communication and adherence to conventions, including the correct utilization of equations, expressions, and notation. When this becomes commonplace in math classrooms, students understand the language of math better and achievement increases.

### **Equality of Assessment**

Prejudice and inequality are challenges faced by various communities globally, including cities, towns, villages, neighborhoods, and ethnic groups. In Canada, we pride ourselves on working towards equality. This assessment sets the same standard for everyone. Even though not everyone will meet that standard, both teachers and students can see clearly where that standard is.

In some parts of the country, grades have been inflated, making it hard for post-secondary institutions to award scholarships and fairly accept students into their programs. Some universities have even created algorithms to help sort and put value to marks coming in from secondary institutions. For example, do we accept a 93% from school A or a 99% from school B? Provincial assessments help make things fair for students coming from all schools.

### **Conclusion**

Provincial assessments can be stressful for teachers and students alike. I recall the pressure that I felt as a new teacher with a provincial exam looming. That pressure and need to succeed was likely the best thing for me as a teacher. It motivated me to be thorough, clear and efficient in my teaching and assessment in Grade 12 courses. It also made me look back and examine which fundamental skills are needed in grades 11, 10, 9, and even earlier.

All of our students, especially those inspired to study engineering and sciences, deserve this global plan in education. I credit much of my teaching success with the professional growth I gained from marking provincial exams and learning from the experiences of others.

Provincial assessments can be a driving force for increased student achievement if paired with appropriate data and professional development to help teachers understand and use that data for future lessons. Relying alone on summative assessment would be unwise. Teaching should always include formative assessments, looking back, informed professional judgment, and following the best teaching practices.

Brent Boyle  
Teacher  
Carberry Collegiate

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*“Pure Mathematics is, in its way, the poetry of logical Ideas”  
- Albert Einstein*

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## MEMBER BENEFITS

101-2639 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3J 0P7

Phone: 204-957-5330 or 1-866-504-9373

Fax: 204-957-5347 or 1-866-216-9014

[www.mbteach.org](http://www.mbteach.org)

# Memorandum

Dear Colleague:

## **Pension Sustainability Seminar MTS members and TRAF participants**

*(Please note these are **NOT** pre-retirement seminars)*

You are invited to attend one of the Pension Sustainability presentations for MTS members. The seminar is specific to the long term sustainability of your pension and **some projections on what it will resemble if some of the ancillary benefits change**. These seminars are taking place **on various dates and times**. *Please note, that all seminars are virtual with the exception of one in person seminar held in Winnipeg, February 15, 2024, and one in Brandon, February 24, 2024*. The seminars are generic to any MTS member, you may attend any one of them. The seminar dates and times can be found on the MTS website at [www.mbteach.org](http://www.mbteach.org).

This session is sponsored by The Manitoba Teachers' Society. The objective is to help you understand aspects of your pension, prepare for retirement, and **consider potential changes to the Pension**. While the pension is in good shape, the other party to your pension, **the Province, has a large unfunded liability** to your pension and as a result may very well amend the pension law to deal with the liability. These amendments may change the actual benefit you will receive dependent on when you retire. It is important to note that all teacher pensions across the country have changed their pension or are changing it. Manitoba will be the last to consider changes.

**As any potential change will affect younger teachers more** because historical pensions and historical accrued values will likely be grandfathered, while it is open to all, **we strongly encourage that younger teachers participate**.

Resource persons from The Manitoba Teachers' Society *and* The Teachers' Retirement Allowances Fund (TRAF) will be in attendance to make presentations. Time has been built in for questions from participants.

In order to prepare handouts, pre-registration is necessary. To register online go to the MTS website at [www.mbteach.org](http://www.mbteach.org), log in at my profile<sup>1</sup>, click on the header Events and from the drop down menu choose List of Events, scroll down and click the applicable Pension Sustainability Seminar to complete the registrations process.

Please plan to attend and you may bring your spouse or significant other. A good understanding means better planning for life events.

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<sup>1</sup> If you have not previously used myprofile on the member portal you will need to "Sign Up Now". Once you click on "Sign Up Now", complete these required fields:

1. First Name
2. Last Name
3. Password (you create your own password)
4. Confirm Password
5. Your MTS Number is your actual MTS membership number on your MTS Card. The next time you login, this is the number that you will use along with the password that you created.



# BPSD Treaty Education Training

FEBRUARY 12-13, 2024  
YELLOWHEAD HALL, NEEPAWA  
**9:00AM-3:30PM**

**LUNCH IS PROVIDED**

## February 12

All Beautiful Plains School Division Staff

## February 13

All Teachers



“...Strengthening, rebuilding, and enhancing the Treaty Relationship between First Nations and Canada.”  
~Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba

