



MAPC Newsletter

Fall 2008

Phone: 956-1770 Toll Free: 1-877-290-4702 Website: www.mapc.mb.ca Email: mapc1@mts.net

President's Welcome

As we move into a new school year we face many challenges and experiences. We welcome new students into our schools as they enter Kindergarten, and notice the void left behind as the graduates from last year have moved on to further their education or enter the workforce. We meet new parents attending our parent council meetings as well as new teachers in our schools, all of which need our support to help them along the way.

This is my second year as President of Manitoba Association of Parent Councils (MAPC). The first year was both challenging and educational as I'm sure this year will be as well. I'm hoping that with some experience behind me and the support of a wonderful executive and board that things will continue to operate smoothly for our organization.

Last year, we encountered some challenges related to the size of the MAPC Board of Directors. At our Annual General Meeting in May 2008, we welcomed three new board directors. Unfortunately, one has since had to resign due to personal issues and we wish her our most sincere appreciation for her efforts. With the twelve directors ready to go, we are nonetheless prepared to face any challenges that arise in a positive and proactive manner.

At our retreat in May 2008, the MAPC Board of Directors elected our Executive Directors for 2008—2009. Working with me on this committee are Vice President, Judith Cameron, Treasurer, Linda Meads, and Secretary, Eva Cameron. I am looking forward to working with each of them as we continue to visit educational issues and represent our members from throughout the province.

With all that said, welcome back and I wish you well for the upcoming year.

Paul Croft, MAPC President

What is Advocacy?

The Manitoba Association of Parent Councils Advocacy Project (MAPCAP) defines advocacy as "speaking up for yourself or others". Advocacy is a process used to resolve an issue which involves a student, a student's parents or a group of parents, and the school. The MAPC Advocacy Project works as a resource and support for parents to learn how to navigate their way through the educational system while working towards achieving resolution.

Some examples of instances when you may need help to learn to advocate for yourself or your child are:

- A decision made about your child without consulting you
- An unfair punishment
- How a teacher is treating your child
- A policy at your school that you feel is unfair

To learn more about MAPCAP or about volunteering for the Advocacy Project, please contact Naomi Kruse at 945-6977 or 1-877-290-4702.

You can also visit our website at www.mapc.mb.ca

Inside this issue:

Page 1

- President's Message
- Advocacy Project

Page 2

- CHSF Report
- Dates to Remember
- Schools and Listeria

Page 3

- Volunteering
- Manitoba Schools make the top 25!

Page 4

- Upcoming Events
- MAPC Committee Involvement
- Board of Directors

Quote for the day...

"Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and help them become what they are capable of being."
- Goethe

Looking for School Lunch Ideas?

Many schools in Manitoba dedicate at least a few days a school term to fun and fundraiser lunches. In fact some schools have as many as 30-40 a year!

Over recent years school communities in Manitoba have put an increased effort in providing nutritious food choices more often. With the release of the Manitoba School Nutrition Handbook, Getting Started with Policies and Guidelines in the fall of 2006, more and more school communities in the province are moving away from the typical hot dog and pizza fun and fundraiser lunches. Most would agree that with any change it takes some work, creativity and determination to make it work.

For ideas or support with your fun and fundraiser lunches or to share your success story contact The Manitoba School Nutrition Support Team at 1-888-547-0535 toll free. The team is available to answer questions regarding policy, guidelines, and practical nutrition support.

Visit the Food In Schools Website at www.gov.mb.ca/healthyschools/foodinschools

Dates to Remember

October is Brain Tumour and Lupus Awareness Month as well as Canadian Library and International Walk to School Month

October 01—International Day for Older Persons

October 01—International Music Day

October 02—Eid-al-Fitr

October 05—World Teachers Day

October 6—12—National Family Week

October 09—Yom Kippur

October 10—World Mental Health Day

October 13—Thanksgiving

October 16—World Food Day

October 17—International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

October 24—United Nations Day

October 27— Manitoba School Library Day

October 31—Halloween

November is Diabetes Month

November 02— Daylight Savings Ends

November 11—Remembrance Day

November 16—International Day of Tolerance

November 17—21—MB Addictions Awareness Week

November 20—Universal and National Child Day

November 21—World Television Day

December 01—World AIDS Day

December 03—International Day of Disabled Persons

December 05—International Volunteer Day

December 07—International Civil Aviation Day

December 09—Eid-al-Adha

December 22—Chanukah Begins

December 25—Christmas Day

December 29—Muharram

December 29—Chanukah Ends

CHSF Report

The AGM and meetings were held in Oakville, ON this past May and I found it to be very educational.

The Parenting the Net Generation presentation license is now done. For MAPC, this means that we cannot provide this presentation to our parents. It was, by far, one of the most requested presentations to our membership so we are looking at ways that we can continue to provide this service to our parents.

The Provincial Sharing time is by far the most enjoyable part of the CHSF meetings. Every province seems to be doing something different. New Brunswick has some wonderful resources on Bus Safety and Teacher Appreciation Week. I have brought those items back with me to the MAPC Board table for discussion.

Saskatchewan is "proclaiming" a day in May to appreciate parent council volunteers. I have brought this to the MAPC Board table as well and we are now working on it. Parent Councils in our schools do so much for the education of our students and we need to appreciate them more.

As with any new Board, I have spent my first year with CHSF familiarizing myself with the standing rules, committees, etc. so that I could represent MAPC well. Having spent the year learning, I am now comfortable in getting more involved. I joined the Communications and Dissemination Committees and am looking forward to working with the other committee members to promote and enhance CHSF's visibility. I am also the CHSF Rep. on the Prime Minister's Teaching Award Committee.

Last but not least, I am very excited to report that the CHSF 2009 AGM will be held in Gimli. As the Manitoba Rep. for CHSF, I am busy planning for this event. This is going to be a wonderful time to showcase Manitoba.

I am looking forward to attending the Mid-Term meeting in Ottawa this November.

Eva Cameron

How does the Listeria outbreak affect *your* school?

"There have been some rumours circulating about the Minister of Education banning the sale of hotdogs and other processed meat items in the school system. At the current time, after some investigation, MAPC has found that there is no factual basis to this rumour. If your school is banning the sale of hotdogs and other processed meat items due to fears associated with the Listeria outbreak, then you are encouraged to discuss the issue with your school and request that they provide the correct background information to support the ban."

Volunteering

Volunteerism is clearly an essential component of healthy communities. We understand and realize that the "community" we refer to, is not just where we live, but whom we touch.

In almost every modern society, the most basic of values is people helping people and, in the process, helping themselves. This was a lesson I learned at a very young age because I followed my parents and my older siblings lead in helping out in our home town. Back then, we didn't call it volunteering, it was just the right thing to do. We didn't think about who or what needed help, we just knew we would be there to be a part of the process and make a difference where and when it was needed. In return, we felt satisfaction and gratitude for a job well done. There were no expectations of thanks or recognition because we knew at any given time, we could be in that position and need assistance and support.

These experiences made me realize how important it is for us to take control of our own communities and identify our own needs. For that reason, I have compiled the *Ten Tips for Volunteering Wisely*:

1. Research the causes or issues important to you.

Look for a group that works with issues about which you feel strongly.

2. Consider the skills you have to offer.

If you enjoy outdoor work, have a knack for teaching, or just enjoy interacting with people, you may want to look for volunteer work that would incorporate these aspects of your personality.

3. Give yourself a chance to do something new.

Perhaps you would like to learn a new skill or gain exposure to a new situation.

4. Combine your goals.

Look for volunteer opportunities that will also help you achieve your other goals for your life.

5. Don't over commit your schedule.

Make sure the volunteer hours you want to give fit into your hectic life, so that you don't frustrate you family, exhaust yourself, shortchange the organization you're trying to help, or neglect your job.

6. Understand that nonprofits have questions too.

While most nonprofits are eager to find volunteer help, they have to be careful when accepting the services you offer. You may be asked to come in for an interview, fill out a volunteer application, describe your qualifications and background—just as you would at an interview for a paying job.

7. Consider volunteering as a family.

Think about looking for a volunteer opportunity suitable for parents and children to do together, or for a husband and wife to take on as a team.

8. How about virtual volunteering?

Yes, there is such a thing! If you have computer access and the necessary skills, some organizations offer the opportunity to do volunteer work over the computer.

9. Seek out different or unusual volunteering opportunities.

Many community groups are looking for volunteers and some may not have occurred to you.

10. Give voice to your heart through your giving an volunteering!

Bring your heart and your sense of humour to your volunteer service, along with your enthusiastic spirit—which in itself is a priceless gift. What you'll get back will be immeasurable!

Judith Cameron

Vice-President, MAPC

Manitoba Schools Ranked Among Top 25 in Canada!

In September 2008, Today's Parent magazine published the fifth annual Great Schools competition, listing the top 25 schools in Canada. MAPC is pleased to congratulate Manitoba's Alf Cuthbert school in Moosehorn, École Dieppe School, and Luxton School, (both in Winnipeg) for being selected from among Canada's best!

Alf Cuthbert School (Lakeshore School Division) won the Real Respect category. Some of the examples given included students from higher grades helping younger students with breakfast programs, lunch preparation, and running the intramural sports programs.

École Dieppe School (Pembina Trails School Division) won the Terrific Teachers category. One example included the school's music teacher helping her students to win a large number of awards from the Winnipeg International Music Festival and their work on a composition written and performed with the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra.

Luxton School (Winnipeg School Division) won the Community Commitment category by highlighting the family centre organized by parents and volunteers, adult upgrading programs within the school, English courses offered in the evening and on weekends, and a recreational program for children living in Central Winnipeg.

Upcoming Events

What does your *child* want to be when they grow up?



www.mstn.ca

Make your child's career dreams come true....

PARENT FORUM '08

Don't forget to mark your calendars to attend the 2009 MAPC AGM and Conference on Friday, May 1 and Saturday, May 2 at the Victoria Inn and Conference Centre in Winnipeg!

Watch for more information coming soon!

Saturday, November 1, 2008
1555 Wall Street (Tec Voc High School)

MAPC Board of Directors

Executive Directors

Paul Croft, President
Judith Cameron, Vice-President
Linda Meads, Treasurer
Eva Cameron, Secretary

Directors

Serena Hurst
Sharon Machinski
Khalid Mahmood
Ethel Raine
Alanna Rawluk
Judy Seib
Martin Simmons
Doug Zintel

Winnipeg Staff

Naomi Kruse, Administrative Officer and Advocacy Coordinator

Bonne Chance!

*It is with the very best wishes that we bid our Administrative Assistant, Tara Traynor farewell as she pursues other avenues in her life!
Good Luck, Tara! Thanks for your dedication and service to MAPC!*

MAPC Committee Involvement

Minister's Teaching Awards—Eva Cameron

Most of us remember at least one teacher who stood out among the many who influenced our lives – a teacher who encouraged, guided and inspired us to do our best. The Minister's Teaching Awards recognize innovative and exemplary teaching practices in the province of Manitoba for three categories; Teaching Excellence, Outstanding new Teacher, and Team Collaboration.

Nomination packages will be sent to your school soon.

Have you sent in your registration?

It's not too late to register your membership with MAPC!

Don't forget, we are offering a one time discount of \$10 off your membership to say *Thank You* for your support!

Visit our website at www.mapc.mb.ca to download your form!