



# MAPC Newsletter

Summer 2008

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## President's Report

Well, another school year is coming to a close and some of our students are moving on to bigger and better things while others are preparing to continue, or to become, students in the fall. This will bring in a new generation of parents to continue supporting parent groups in Manitoba schools. Some of these parents may need help getting accustomed to their new roles and MAPC will continue supporting you as you guide those taking on this new role in parenting.

At the beginning of May, the MAPC Annual General Meeting and Conference were held in Winnipeg. We had a great turnout and by reading the evaluations that were submitted, the delegates were quite pleased. *(Thank you to everyone who contributed suggestions regarding some of the challenges that were faced. We will certainly do our best to keep them from happening again!)*

During the AGM there was some wonderful discussion and feedback on the issues that were raised. As a result, three of the four position statements presented were approved. The three position statements passed are: *Violence in Manitoba Schools*, *Educational Focus*, and *Drug and Alcohol Use in Manitoba Schools*. These statements will be presented to the Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth as well as our educational partners.

The Keynote Speaker for our conference was Barbara Coloroso and, as expected, she was *fantastic*. The evaluations about Barbara were over the top and we will certainly consider inviting her back in the future. We also received wonderful feedback from our members about our networking sessions and afternoon workshops. Overall, the AGM and Conference were a resounding success.

At the AGM we elected the Board of Directors for the 2008-2009 school year. Each of the current directors were re-elected along with two new directors and one returning director. I am pleased to announce your 2008-2009 MAPC Board of Directors: *Paul Croft, Alanna Rawluk, Eva Cameron, Linda Meads, Martin Simmons, Doug Zintel, Khalid Mahmood, Judy Seib, Judith Cameron, Ethel Raine, Sharon Machinski (returning MAPC Director), Serena Hurst (new Board Director), and Teressa Blank (new Board Director)*. Over the next few months we will be working hard to represent you and hopefully we can visit your schools or divisions during the school year.

If there is anything that MAPC can do to help or support your school group, please contact the MAPC Office.

Have a wonderful summer!

*Paul Croft*

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**Quote for the day...**

*"You never know when you're making a memory."*

*~ Rickie Lee Jones*

### 2008 MAPC Conference Networking Sessions

At the MAPC Annual Conference held on Saturday, May 3, participants were asked to discuss different topics relating to education in Manitoba. Some very lively and intelligent conversation was enjoyed by the conference delegates as a result of this session.

When asked, "*Does your school have a nutrition policy and what does it entail?*" we found that while many schools have a policy or are currently working on one, most reported that their schools are already actively promoting healthy food choices in their school. This led to further discussion regarding, "*What content would you want in a trans fat policy?*" Overall, the group was in support of the removal of trans fats in the school, but agreed that there is more need for healthy food choices education which can then be applied to all lifestyles.

Concern with low attendance was also discussed during the networking session. Everyone agreed that while it is not a large concern during the early years of a child's education, there is a problem during the middle and senior years in school. All agreed that schools must be in regular contact with families where attendance is a problem and the parents must be involved in correcting the problem. Some ideas for solving attendance problems presented were: *parents must be responsible for signing their child out of school when they will not be in attendance, providing more education to families explaining why attendance is important, and tying in a child's school attendance to a family's eligibility for the Child Tax Benefit program.*

Delegates also explored the idea of whether children should be enrolled in Kindergarten in a full day program, rather than the half day, or alternating full day, programs which are currently the norm in Manitoba. The group was split as to whether they supported the idea. Concerns expressed involved a child's physical, emotional, and social readiness as well as the ability for a child to transition more easily to grade one. Questions were also raised about the need for additional teacher support, classroom availability and size, finances for such a program, and the critical need for consultation and collaboration with existing daycare programs.

Other discussions enjoyed by the participants included: middle school band and art programs, bullying, bussing, learning disabilities, the role of education assistants, the use of suspensions as a punishment, and low enrolment.

If you are interested in the complete list of responses to our networking session, please visit the MAPC website at [www.mapc.mb.ca](http://www.mapc.mb.ca)

### **MEET THE 2008-2009 MAPC Board of Directors**

**Teresa Blank—River East School Division**  
**Eva Cameron—Brandon School Division**  
**Judith Cameron—Evergreen School Division**  
**Paul Croft—Frontier School Division**  
**Serena Hurst—Kelsey School Division**  
**Sharon Machinski—Independent**  
**Khalid Mahmood—Independent**  
**Linda Meads—Lakeshore School Division**  
**Ethel Raine—Prairie Spirit School Division**  
**Alanna Rawluk—Lakeshore School Division**  
**Judy Seib—Brandon School Division**  
**Martin Simmons—Independent**  
**Doug Zintel—Louis Riel School Division**

#### **Winnipeg Office:**

**Administrative Officer / MAPC Advocacy Project Coordinator: Naomi Kruse**

**Administrative Assistant: Tara Traynor**