



**October 2023**

## Vice President's Message

Hey Folks, it's your co-captain speaking. I hope you all had an amazing summer break, had some rest and relaxation. I also hope you had time to dive into some adventure that got you excited and filled you with awe and wonder about the planet we live on. Whether it was getting creative, learning a new skill, playing a new game with family and friends. Summer is a time for us to throw off the routine and do something we love and gets us jazzed.

This past summer I started playing on a fun league team, to attempt to practice some new volleyball skills. If you've ever stepped out of your comfort zone, and allowed yourself to start something from the beginning, you know that there is NOTHING pretty about it. I fumbled the ball more times than I can count. I used every other body part to connect with the ball, rather than the arms and hands as is customary. I hit wall, poles and even the portable scoreboard! However, I was fortunate to have some very supportive teammates that taught me some of the basic fundamentals like how to bump and volley, how to posture and square myself, and you know, applying what others taught me worked, I got slightly better as we played more games.

An important aspect of the game was my mindset. I went into training as if I knew little and needed to learn, I became a student. I asked questions, I put into action the suggestions that were given to me. I encouraged others on my team, whether it was a good serve, volley or set. Because the attitude I brought to the table would either keep energy flowing or it would stagnate, and I wanted to have a positive flowing team that worked well, was encouraged, and continued to learn and have fun. I am grateful for the short time I had with them, as now is a new season and I am on a new team. Many of the players are very good players, and they're teaching me even more and I'm getting the physical exercise necessary for a healthy body.

So, coming back to work I have more of a team focus, and we are all on the same team. No matter what school or grade or position you have, coming in learning your position and embracing your fumbles and celebrating your successes with your team is more than needed, it's necessary. Having a mindset ready to encourage self and others is particularly important, because you bring your team up when you do. Being a team player looks like being on time, communicating needs, and knowing the job you are responsible for and having a positive thought process towards your position.

Have a great year, and like one of my old elementary teachers use to say, "Good, better, best, never let it rest, until your good is better, and your better is your very best!"

John Izzard  
Vice President



## Bits and Bites

### Ask a Rep

Do you have any general questions that you would like an answer to and that could be beneficial information to the collective? Shoot us an email and we will post the Q and A's here.

[mante@mante.ca](mailto:mante@mante.ca)

### Spotlight

Do you have a story that you would like to shine a light on? Please send us your successes, perhaps you want to recognize an exceptional employee, maybe a student activity that just warmed your heart. We want to share the joys that occur in the day to day. [mante@mante.ca](mailto:mante@mante.ca)

### Keep in Touch

If a member at your work location is off for an extended illness or has had a bereavement in the family, or if a member has had a birth or an adoption in their family, please advise Maggi Sawchuk at [maggi.sawchuk@sjasd.ca](mailto:maggi.sawchuk@sjasd.ca) MANTE sends out cards of sympathy and congratulations throughout the year.

### October Retiree

Karen F. 37 years

### Did You Know?

When it comes to breaks and lunches, there are rules surrounding them. Lunches can be anywhere from 30 to 60 minutes, but not longer. This prevents the scheduling of split shifts. Breaks are 15 minutes long and you are entitled to a break in each half of your work day. Breaks are not to be combined together and should not be added to your lunch or start and end of day time.

## National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

September 30<sup>th</sup>, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is a federally declared statutory holiday to recognize the tragic loss and the lasting effects of Canada's history and the residential school system. Our collective agreement recognizes all federally declared holidays. At this time, the Provincial government has not declared it a holiday and therefore the schools were not closed in lieu of this day. Therefore, the Association and the Division have written a Letter of Understanding for the 2023/2024 school year. We have agreed that all 10-month MANTE members will take a day off in lieu to be taken on any designated in-service day, and for 12 month employees any work day during the winter or spring breaks, chosen by each employee in consultation with their administrator/supervisor. This day in lieu cannot be carried over to the next school year. Please pick your day and enter it into Atrieve using the code S30. Employees will be paid for this day as if it were a regular workday.



## Bus Roles and Responsibilities

On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, training was provided to all staff members that accompany a student on a school bus to or from school. Emergency evacuations were demonstrated, and procedures were reviewed. A clear outline of these procedures will be provided to each school so that all members of the school team are aware of what should happen in an emergency. One thing that was discussed was the role of the EA on the school bus. It was made clear that there is no grey area when it comes to who should be doing what. The bus driver is solely responsible for securing wheelchairs on the school buses. What does this mean, what does this look like? I know that EA's are always trying to help speed up the process, especially

in the winter. However, EA's are not to be touching the wheelchair at any point in the loading or unloading process. When loading, the driver will lower the lift, come around and wheel the chair onto the lift and secure it. The driver will then raise the lift, then they will go onto the bus and pull the chair off the lift and place the chair in its location. The driver will then go off the bus and close the lift door. The driver will then reenter the bus and secure the wheelchair with all appropriate straps. The EA is there to supervise the student and during this time must remain hands off. You can assist with the students, perhaps lifting their arms so the seatbelt can be secured, or moving the backpack if it is in the way. When unloading the student, the same rules apply. The bus driver will unhook all straps, will then exit the bus, and open the door, come back on the bus and extend the lift. The bus driver will then move the chair from its secure location onto the lift. The bus driver will then exit the bus and go out and lower the lift down. I know this may seem strange for many of you and may seem like a waste of your skills, but this is a liability issue and the minute you start moving the wheelchair on the bus, you have now opened yourself up to liability should anything go wrong. The rules have been made clear and we must follow and respect those rules. They are in place for a reason. If you have any questions regarding this procedure, please speak with your resource team or you can reach out to the Association.

## Executive Members

President – Jenn Monaster  
Treasurer – Robyn King  
Information Officer – Signy McIntyre  
EA Rep and Health and Welfare Rep – Maggi Sawchuk  
EA Rep – Jenn Plesh  
Secretary Rep – Kerry Fraser

Vice President – John Izzard  
Secretary – Cerys Hooper  
Board Office Rep – Rosemary Koltalo  
EA Rep – Noah Reimer  
Library Rep – Jocelyn Oliver  
Secretary Rep – Wanda Prychitko

## *How can I help?*

Recently, I have been hearing some beliefs regarding this Association. I am hearing comments like “The union is a joke;” “The union doesn’t do anything”; “The union has no power”. I am sure many of you have thought these things before and I would like to address these opinions. The Association has been representing Non-Teaching Employees since 1977. They have fought battles behind the scenes that members are unaware of. Over the years, through negotiations, the membership has avoided any strike situations and has negotiated deals similar if not better than those negotiated by C.U.P.E and M.G.E.U for a fraction of the price paid to those unions. There is no doubt that the big unions have the financial means to be aggressive, but that does not mean that we cannot hold our own.

The Association is here for you. I work for you. I want to know how you are doing and how things are going in your school. I cannot help with situations that I know nothing about. When a situation comes up, reach out to me. My door is open. When I receive an email from you late into the evening and you get a response quickly, that’s because I care. It’s because I get it. I know the stress and anxiety that is typically surrounding the decision to reach out to the Association. It might not always be an answer right away, but I will always acknowledge that I hear you. When you receive an email from me after I have learnt you’ve had a rough day, it’s because I genuinely care how you are doing. I want to make sure that you are being supported in your role and I will do what I can to ensure that is happening. When I send a random email just to check how the workloads are balancing out, it’s because I really want the truth. I want to make sure that no school is being overloaded and if it is, what can I do to make things better. I cannot guarantee that I can solve all the problems facing the members of the Association right now, but all I ask is that you give me the chance. Give the Association a chance to change the narrative.

Jenn Monaster  
President

