



February 2025



## Presidents Message

We have made it to the second half of the school year!!! Spring is almost here. I just have a few items that came up this past month that I thought others might be wondering about as well.

I would like to speak about schedules. A new semester might mean a new schedule for your day, and it is important to know your rights. Our Collective Agreement allows for an unpaid lunch break that is no shorter than 30 minutes and no longer than 60 minutes in length. If your lunch break is scheduled within your paid EA hours to allow you to do the lunch supervision position, this is against our Collective Agreement. No one should be getting a paid lunch break. Also, your lunch break cannot be scheduled any sooner than 2 hours after the start of your day and no later than 1 hour before the end of your day. You are also entitled to two paid 15-minute breaks, one in each half of your day. Breaks should not be any longer or shorter than 15 minutes and cannot be added to your lunch break. They also cannot be scheduled at the start or end of your workday. And remember, doing the non-MANTE lunch supervision shift is not mandatory for any staff member. That is your choice, and you can stop doing it any time you wish.

As I spoke about in the January newsletter, there is no requirement for you to use your personal cell phone for work related matters. If your school is using a WhatsApp group chat to communicate daily, you are under no obligation to be part of that group. You are also not required to share your personal cell phone number with anyone.

In partnership with ESS and Human Resources, we are looking at creating the mass MANTE PD day again. We have heard from MANTE members that PD opportunities are important to them and that school-based PD is not always occurring. If you would be interested in serving on this committee and helping to generate meaningful professional development, please send me an email. We are working on a survey that should come out soon to gather information on areas that our membership is interested in.

Everyone should have received the explanation from payroll regarding the calculations for the retro payments. If you are still unclear or have questions, please email the payroll department. The division has hired a new employee for the MANTE payroll. Their name is Doris Anoro and can be reached through division email.

There has been some confusion around Family Days. We negotiated 5 family days per year to be used for attending medical appointments or attending to a sick family matter. These days are not used to spend time with family. This is why in Atrieve it is asking for a reason when entering in a family day. You need to identify if it is for sick or medical appointment. You are not required to provide any more information than that.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out. I cannot help in situations I know nothing about. It is important that we all stick together and follow the Collective Agreement. We worked hard to negotiate the rights that are outlined within it. I know it can be hard because we all want to help and support our team the best we can, but we also need to stay within the parameters of the Collective Agreement.

## Keep in Touch

Even during the postal strike, 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 a reason to celebrate, please advise Maggi Sawchuk at [maggi.sawchuk@sjasd.ca](mailto:maggi.sawchuk@sjasd.ca) so that MANTE can send out an appropriate card.

## Professional Development

Reminder. When applying for PD funding, fill out the PD application form available through the portal and scan the application or send through division mail to Connie Lowe at Lincoln Middle School. There are still PD funds available for the 24/25 school year. The Crisis and Trauma Resource Institute is out with its winter/spring guide. Check it out at [ctrinstitute.com](http://ctrinstitute.com)

## MANTE Professional Development Committee

EA Rep – Maggi Sawchuk  
Admin Asst. Rep – Rachel Novakowski  
Library Tech Rep – Jocelyn Oliver  
MANTE President – Jennifer Monaster  
Human Resources – Joanne Johnston  
Administrator – Connie Lowe  
Financial – Monika Kananowicz

## February Retirees

NIL

## Meet the Executive

### Secretary Rep – Wanda Prychitko

Our three children attended Strathmillan, so naturally I volunteered there. One thing led to another, and I moved from volunteer to Lunch Supervisor to SuccessMaker Computer Tech to Math Enhancement EA to Admin Assistant. As that job disappeared, I took on the new rotating secretary position, visiting 4 different schools every 6 days – those were some busy times, and I learned a lot. I put new roots down at Golden Gate Middle School for 7 years, and when it became a single-track school, my job life changed again. I needed to fill my afternoons, so off I scurried daily from Golden Gate to John Taylor as a PowerSchool Assistant. During a division PD in 2018, the speaker invited us to 'embrace change, otherwise things will remain the same'. That same day, I jumped at the chance to fill the Head Admin Assistant role at Brooklands. Coincidentally, my daughter was teaching a term there, so it was a no-brainer. I love being part of the Brooklands team!

I joined the MANTE Board in 2021, to be a voice for admin assistants and MANTE members at my school. There is a team of motivated, dedicated folks on the MANTE Board, and everyone should know they've got people in their corner.

On the home front, I enjoy singing with the Philharmonic Choir as well as at church. I also dabble in writing a little – I've spent the last couple of decades sharing what's on my mind and bragging about our community (check out the Free Press Community Review - West). I'm also involved with the Block Parents Program (yes, we're still around).

Finally, a huge shout-out to all the staff and admin assistants in my life. Remember, we're stronger together!



### Maggi Sawchuk – EA Rep, Health and Welfare Rep and PD Committee

I've been with the division for 16+ years. I have worked at every level and in a few different capacities. I'm currently an EA but I have also been a Secretarial Assistant and a Science Lab Tech.

I've been volunteering for as long as I can remember. I coached Ringette, I was a Candy Striper, and I've sat on many boards and executives. I believe in volunteerism and giving back.

In my down time, when I'm not at my second job, I love to craft, read and cuddle with Daisy, my ginger tabby girl.

Keep sending me your emails if you know of any of our MANTE members that need to be sent a card.



## Executive Members

President – Jennifer Monaster

Vice President – Open

Treasurer – Robyn King

Secretary and Pension Rep – Cerys Hooper

Board Office Rep – Rosemary Koltalo

EA Rep – Jenn Plesh

EA Rep and Health and Welfare Rep – Maggi Sawchuk

Library Tech Rep – Jocelyn Oliver

Secretary Rep – Kerry Fraser

Secretary Rep – Wanda Prychitko