



MIGHTY PEACE TEACHERS' CONVENTION

weEngage, weInspire, weMatter March 6 & 7, 2014

A Message from the MPTCA President

Hi Everyone,

I'm pleased to be back with our convention team again this year. We are already well into the planning process for 2014. We chose the theme, "weEngage, weInspire, weMatter", as a reflection of all that we do as educators. We make such an amazing difference every year in the lives of our students, in our workplaces, in our communities, and in support of our colleagues around the world. It seems like it is high time that we came together to celebrate our accomplishments.

Celebrating with us is the exceptional Rick Wormeli, back by popular demand. We look forward to his inspiration, his humour, and his insight. We are honored to have him for the full two days. Our closing keynote is the former teacher-turned-poet, Taylor Mali. If you haven't done so already, I encourage you to watch him present his dynamic poem, "What Teachers Make" on YouTube. He will make you sincerely proud to be a teacher. A word of warning, though, once you start watching him, you may be there a while. I saw Taylor present at a conference in Edmonton, and I can honestly say that I have never been so captivated...

As always, we thank you very much for your continued feedback about how we can make our convention better. We appreciate your evaluation comments and the ongoing dialogue through our social networks.

I would also like to offer some special recognition to our hosting schools, our local presenters, and the school divisions that support the work that we do. You make our work so much easier.

Feel free to contact me anytime. I look forward to hearing from you!

Julie Gummesen

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Facebook Group: [Mighty Peace Teachers' Convention](#)

Website: mptca.teachers.ab.ca



**Thank you to
Windsor Plywood
for supplying the
wood needed to
make the display
tables!**

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Attendance Policy and Information About Being Absent From Convention

Teachers are obligated, professionally and legally, to attend and participate in teachers' convention. Section 78(1)(d) of the School Act defines "teaching day" to include the two days per year on which teachers' conventions are held. These days are for attending sessions at the convention authorized by the Alberta Teachers' Association. Convention days are, by law, teaching days for which teachers receive pay.

School boards have the right to deduct pay from teachers absent from convention without legitimate reason, and in fact, have done so. A charge of unprofessional conduct under Association discipline bylaws may also be lodged against a teacher who fails to attend and participate in teachers' convention.

- **If you are sick (or cannot attend convention for other personal reasons)** then the provisions in the collective agreement apply and you must follow the same procedures for obtaining sick leave (or other forms of leave) that you would if it was a normal teaching day.
- **Any teacher wishing to engage in other professional development activity** during teachers' convention must complete the Alternate PD application form from the MPTCA website and send it to the attendance committee

chairperson of the convention board. This person, in conjunction with the attendance committee, will make a judgment regarding the request. Requests to be absent from the Mighty Peace Teachers' Convention for **reasons of alternate professional development** are to be made prior to **January 24, 2014**.

- **Part-time teachers are** being paid "only for the time the teacher teaches" (*School Act* (Section 103(b)). Your teaching assignment is your *shift*, which is a defined time. Any addition to or adjustment of time must be done with your agreement and proper compensation. In simplest terms, whatever is consistent with your assignment for that day is your obligation. Notwithstanding all of the above, part-time teachers **aren't prevented from voluntarily attending sessions**.
- **Any teacher required to coach at an ASAA Provincial Finals Event** during teachers' convention must complete the form available on either the ASAA or MPTCA website and send it to the attendance committee chairperson of the convention board.

Session Spotlight

A Great School for All – A Hopeful Vision for Alberta: A conversation with Mark Ramsankar, President of the Alberta Teachers’ Association

Friday, March 7 Session F

As our cultural obsession with standardization, testing, technology and elaborate accountability measures is increasingly reflected in our schools, the education of our children suffers. In classrooms and schools across North America, teachers are under attack and the public trust that many teachers once enjoyed is undermined by the media, politicians, school boards, and sometimes even by fellow educators. This lecture describes how this happened and what we can do about it in the Alberta context. In collaboration with a panel of international experts, the Alberta Teachers’ Association has published a roadmap for transforming Alberta’s schools called A Great School for All that offers both hope and practical steps to insure all students succeed.

A Great School for All – Our Shared Leadership Challenge

Friday, March 7 Session G

The history of public education in Canada is one with strong commitments to knowledge, critical thinking, democratic participation, and citizenship – broad and historic ideals which are now in jeopardy. Yet there is hope in transforming Alberta schools through strong leadership at the school level. In this interactive workshop, school leaders are invited to join Dr. Joel Westheimer in a conversation about the challenges and opportunities outlined in *A Great School for All* related to rethinking teacher and student leadership and the role of public education and the ‘public school’ in citizenship and community development.



Dr. Joel Westheimer is education columnist for CBC Radio’s *Ottawa Morning* show and University Research Chair in Democracy and Education at the University of Ottawa. Westheimer’s recent award-winning book is *Pledging Allegiance: The Politics of Patriotism in America’s Schools* (foreword by the late Howard Zinn). He is also author of the critically acclaimed *Among Schoolteachers: Community, Autonomy and Ideology in Teachers’ Work*. He’s currently working on his third book, *Restoring the Public in Public Education*.

2014 Schedule

| Thursday, March 6 | Friday, March 7 |
|--|--|
| Session A: 9:00 - 10:15 Opening Keynote & Sessions | Session E: 9:00 - 10:15 |
| Session B: 10:30 - 11:45 Opening Keynote Repeated & Sessions | Sessions F: 10:30 - 11:45 |
| Break 11:45 – 12:30 | |
| Session C: 12:30 – 13:45 | Session G: 12:30 – 13:45 Closing Keynote & Sessions |
| Session D: 14:00 – 15:15 | Session H: 14:00 – 15:15 Closing Keynote Repeated & Sessions |

Sessions Over Capacity

The classrooms at the schools we use are subject to fire codes and do have a maximum capacity. We appreciate that teachers are understanding of this and respect these limitations.

The Mighty Peace Teachers’ Convention Association Program Committee attempts to anticipate the popularity of sessions so that they may book repeats of these sessions or host the sessions in some of the larger spaces but of course this is not always possible.

We are extremely lucky to have the free venues that we have (which come with use of equipment like computers, SmartBoards and WiFi) since this reduces our costs significantly and allows us to have such great sessions in the first place. There are no other venues in Grande Prairie that offer us the space, technology and affordability that we currently have.

We are looking at suggestions that were made through the online evaluations to address the concerns of the board and the teachers.

