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## \$15: Beneficial or Punitive?



The conversation on raising the minimum wage continues to dominate the Ontarian political agenda, and has left many Ontarians with burning questions about what effects this dramatic change will have on the economy. On January 1, 2018 the minimum wage in Ontario rose from \$11.60 an hour to \$14, with the final increase to \$15 an hour set for January 1, 2019. With our own BC New Democratic Party vowing to follow in Ontario's footsteps (albeit now without the previous 2021 limit to reach the \$15 milestone), many British Columbians are asking the very same questions as our cousins to the East.

One potential issue that would likely hit home for many secondary school and post-secondary students is the issue of youth unemployment. According to Stéphane Marion of the National Bank of Canada, 61% of young Canadian workers between the ages of 15 and 24 make minimum wage. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, an intergovernmental group of developed countries, states that Canada has a youth unemployment rate of 13.1%, putting us ever so slightly above the OECD average of 13%. However, there is a possibility that an increase in minimum wages could affect young workers' employment opportunities.

According to Marion, after an increase in minimum wages in Quebec in the 1970's, youth unemployment rose 6 percentage points to 19.5%. This concern was further reiterated by Karl Baldauf of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce who said that the Ontarian Premier's "advisory panel on the minimum wage" had concluded that "For every 10% increase in minimum wage, youth unemployment goes up 6%."

Another concern that many people have surrounding the minimum wage is the effects it will have on businesses. In a CBC interview, a small business owner in Windsor, Ontario stated that in order to accommodate the wage increase, he would be required to mandate that his employees work fewer hours. Marie Coutu, an independent coffee shop owner in Downtown Toronto states that she rose her prices by 22% due to the sudden wage increase. The issue of Tim Hortons has been quite prominent in the headlines as well, with a handful of Ontario franchises stating that they will, among other things, cut employee benefits and no longer allow for paid breaks. Many businesses however, seem to have found ways to continue operating with relatively small hiccups.

Coffee Public, a café with locations in Toronto and Port Hope, Ontario has decided to raise their prices by 10%, an average increase of around 25 cents for every cup of coffee. Ivan Gedz, owner of Union 613 in Ottawa raised his restaurant's minimum wage to \$16 an hour in November 2017 as a way of helping his worker who initially were struggling to make ends' meet. A slight price increase was required to allow for the wage changes.

Regardless of one's stance surrounding the \$15 an hour minimum wage, almost everyone can agree that because this initiative is relatively new, it will be a while before the long term effects of the policy can be established. However, there is also no denying that the issue of the minimum wage will remain an issue in provincial politics for a very long time.

By Naomi Hudson

# TEACHER TALK

Every wanted to know more about your teacher? Ever wonder what their favourite colour is, their pastime activities or why they became a teacher? This column is dedicated to just that!

Our first guest is Mme Marshik.....

## **What's your favorite colour?**

Red, like “the colour of red wine.”

## **Do you have any pets?**

Mme Marshik does not have any pets; however, she does have a beloved snake plant.

## **If you could only eat one food for the rest of your life what would it be?**

She enjoys eating many different types of food, but having to choose only one to eat for the rest of her life Mme Marshik would choose to eat fruits.

## **What do you like to do in your free time? Where is your favorite place to go?**

As Mme Marshik likes learning new things, she likes to spend her free time studying languages and her favourite place to go is the library.

## **How many languages do you speak?**

In addition to English, Mme. Marshik is fluent in French as well as Spanish. She also has beginner knowledge of Russian, Italian, Mandarin, and Arabic.

## **Where did you grow up?**

Mme. Marshik grow up in North Vancouver.

## **Do you have any siblings?**

Mme. Marshik has one younger sister.

## **Did you always want to become a teacher?**

Growing up, Mme. Marshik always liked playing “teacher,” making lessons plans for her younger sister to teach her about maps and spelling. In high school, Mme. Marshik completed a job survey that said that she should become a circus clown—I guess that goes to show how inaccurate those surveys really are. Ultimately, in university Mme. Marshik was a tutor and teaching assistant which lead her to rediscover her love of teaching.

## **How did you choose to teach the subject that you did?**

As we all know, Mme. Marshik has a love for languages. When choosing a subject to teach there was a high demand for French Immersion teachers, so Mme. Marshik found it to be a perfect fit.

## **What is something you wish that students did less of? What is something you wish they did more of?**

Mme. Marshik’s pet peeves are when students are on their phones in class, don’t study, and yell in the hallways. On the other hand, she appreciates when students study regularly, ask her questions in class and show enthusiasm for learning.

## **Do you have any funny anecdotes to share?**

When she was teaching at another school and the Miley Cyrus song “Wrecking Ball” had just come out, some students decided it would be “fun” to run into the portable while simultaneously yelling “wrecking ball.”

**That concludes the first edition of Teacher Talk, stayed tuned for our next edition !**

By Mani Bains, Emma Northcott, Gabriella Bowers, and Avneet Brar

# New Year, New Me?

As the craziness of 2017 fades away, and we start off a new part of our lives in 2018, it's evident that many of us want to change for the better by ridding bad habits or by trying something new. Most people do this every year. As soon as the ball drops and announces the new year we lead ourselves to believe that we can become better people by making our annual New Year's Resolutions.

Whether it's trying to exercise more, to eat better or to stop procrastinating, almost everyone has goals to be better in the new year. But with the annual attempt to change also comes the annual failure. I believe as individuals we need to re-evaluate the "New Year's Resolution" notion and ask ourselves does it really work? How often do you make resolutions and have them slowly fade away by the second week of January? I believe as individuals we need to stop kidding ourselves, and stop living in the delusion that when January comes around we can become new people.

It may sound a little cynical to say that new year's resolutions are a bit overrated but the new year doesn't decide when we can make goals for ourselves. We don't need a new calendar to tell us to be better people. Whether you want to get rid of your bad habits or start good ones, you can do so no matter what month of the year it is. You can choose when you want your fresh start. But, if you are still set on the idea of New year's resolutions, it's time to change the way we approach them.



A study at the University of Scranton estimated that less than 10% of people in the United States follow through on their new year's resolutions. Why is this? Most of the time it is because our goals are not specific enough. "Get more exercise" or "start eating healthier" are too vague. In order to feel less intimidated by our resolutions, we need to start off small. Instead of planning on getting more exercise, plan on walking to school everyday or to take the stairs whenever possible. Instead of planning on eating healthier, say you want to have a smoothie for breakfast. As the weeks progress, increase the intensity of your goals. Perhaps now you want to walk to school, but by June you want to walk for an hour a day. Also, when making resolutions, ask yourself: why do I want this? Having a personal reason for these resolutions will give you a stronger sense of motivation. Finally, track your progress. Being able to look back and see how much you have accomplished will inspire you to keep going.

So, whether you believe in New Year's resolutions, or you believe that it's just false hope and a waste of time, know that you can be the best version of yourself no matter where we are in the year. And remember everyone has something they want to change about themselves. If you are determined to do so and change for the better than I applaud you. If not, try not to be so hard on yourself because we're all still human.

By Justine Basi

## Come see Hairspray!

Burnsview, it's that time of year! The Burnsview theatre class is back at it again. This year they will be performing the musical, Hairspray! The first showing will be on Tuesday, February the 27th. There will be one show a day until Friday, March the 2nd, which is the last day. All of the performances will take place during the evenings, except on the last day when there will be a matinee in addition to the evening show.

By Gurleen Bhangu