



River East Transcona Teachers' Association

206-1100 Concordia Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R2K 4B8
204-661-1823 • Website: www.retta.ca • treasurer@retta.mbteach.org

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Good afternoon,

I'm sure by now most of you have heard about the passing of Nello Altomare, Minister of Education for the Province of Manitoba.

To many of us, Nello was more than the Education Minister. He was a colleague, friend, mentor, teacher, principal, family member, and a member of the Transcona Community who was known to so many people for being an advocate for what's best for kids. Anyone who came into contact with him was better for it.

I first met Nello when I taught his children. Great kids aren't always the product of great parenting, but in this case it was. His dedication to his family was consistently evident. As our paths changed, Nello retired and I moved to the RETTA office, our relationship changed as well. He followed his passion to make a difference in the community, specifically the education community and as we all know, was ultimately appointed to be the Minister of Education. Not one to let the high-profile position affect his relationships, he remained as centered and grounded as he always was.

It would've been easy, even understandable, if he had reduced his focus on local issues in favour of those affecting more of the province, but he never did. He always answered when I called. Whether it was to do with the need for a better education funding model or just to sit down and catch up on how teachers are doing in our neck of the woods.

I'd heard about his passing fairly early that morning. By the time lunch had rolled around and we were visiting a school, everyone there knew. That's Transcona. When the man affectionately known as "The Mayor of Transcona" passes away, it doesn't take long for people to hear about it. By the next day I was already hearing "I taught with him", "I went to university with him", "I taught his kids", "He was my principal", "My kids are friends with his kids", and more and more evidence of the huge number of valuable human connections that he had made throughout his life.

He was many things to many people. But ultimately, he was a great human being and will be greatly missed.

On behalf of all of us at RETTA, our condolences go out to his friends, family, and all those who knew him. He will be missed.

Sincerely,

Chris Darazsi,
President