

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

T H E

bulletin

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Up Front from the President



I can't say enough how thankful and appreciative I am of the outstanding work put in by the teachers and students at Memorial Academy in Botwood for

hosting our Education Week Opening Ceremonies. They highlighted their school and why all schools continue to provide the best they can each and every day. Education Week has been an initiative of the NLTA for more than 80 years and throughout these years the purpose has been to highlight the importance of education. Education Week is a recognition and celebration of the work that happens in schools throughout the entire year.

In order for our students to receive the education that they deserve, investments in education need to occur. As government prepares for its provincial budget, this investment is something that has to be taken into account. We all acknowledge the fiscal situation in the province, yet we also know that there are decisions that government makes all the time. It can't always be about the money. Often it has to be about how you decide to invest the monies that are available. Moving forward, if education is truly as valued by our government as they say that it is, we will see investments in our province's education system. The reduction of class sizes, coupled with the provision of supports to ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed, to reach their

unique potential, is critically important. We need to see additional supports for our most vulnerable students, starting with a move to enhance the allocation of school counsellors and psychologists. The availability of school administrators continues to be inadequate. The ability for schools to proactively address concerns such as those identified by the Child and Youth Advocate in the report of school absenteeism and to provide true instructional leadership is certainly compromised as a result of the reductions that occurred in previous budgets.

We know that our citizens want to see improvements to the province's education system. If this is to happen, government and school districts need to be willing to work with teachers and parents on solutions to the major challenges facing our public education system. Policies and procedures need to be streamlined so that those that matter most – students – are not shortchanged. Teachers need time to focus on what truly matters. Teachers need supports to allow them to deliver programming to our most precious resource – our children! Anything that distracts from this effort is a disservice to those students who aren't being adequately supported at the present time.

Over the past month we have been engaged in the process of moving forward with the tentative collective agreement. I am very appreciative of the level of engagement shown during this process. I respect the varying opinions that were offered on this and do acknowledge that it was a difficult decision for many. The negotiating team worked diligently to get to this

point, and I am thankful for the work that they accomplished. It was the best deal that could be attained at this time. In the coming months we will begin preparations for the next round of negotiations. As I indicated in an email to all teachers, I am hopeful that the same level of passion and engagement will be there for the next round of negotiations. The message will continue to be sent to government and our educational stakeholders that teachers will be expecting an agreement that addresses our concerns, that provides fair compensation and that recognises our worth and responsibility of educating our province's future.

Your Joint Council met on March 8 and brought forward a number of concerns and issues that they have heard from members. Your Provincial Executive and your branch presidents, who make up Joint Council, respond and act on the concerns and information brought forward. It is important that your concerns are brought to the attention of these same individuals who have the authority to make motions and advise Provincial Executive on teacher and education issues. The NLTA is not just your Provincial Executive. The NLTA is not just your branch president. The NLTA is the membership – you, the teachers of this province. As preparations for BGM 2019 continue, ensure that your thoughts and concerns are brought to the attention of those who will be representing you. Become informed. Become engaged and ensure that your voice is one that is brought forward.

Until next time...

TEACHERS CHANGE
LIVES EVERY DAY

THE bulletin

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM GROUP INSURANCE MANAGERS

The Group Insurance Managers have reviewed surpluses in the Group Insurance Fund over the last number of years. Surpluses occur from time to time when the annual premiums collected are greater than the claims and expenses in the same year.

Due to recent surpluses, Managers have decided to **implement a premium holiday for the month of April for both Health and Dental**. Thus, there will be **NO** deductions from your cheque for Health or Dental premiums in the month of **April 2019**.

Further information and updates on Group Insurance will be available in the coming months. If you have any questions please contact an NLTA Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 or mail@nlta.nl.ca.



PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

GRAND FALLS-WINDSOR

EVI Students participate in University of Waterloo Project

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2019 as the International Year of the Periodic Table of Elements. The Chemistry Department at the University of Waterloo developed a student project to celebrate. The project has brought together students from 118 schools in 29 countries and each school submitted an original tile telling the discovery story for their element.

Exploits Valley Intermediate (EVI) in Grand Falls-Windsor was one of the schools that had the opportunity to participate in this worldwide project. Five Grade 9 students were selected to display their knowledge and talent by developing a tile representing Hydrogen (the very first element on the periodic table). A classroom poster, a public website and a special wall mural in the new Science Teaching

Complex at the University of Waterloo will be created to display the Hydrogen tile along with tiles from schools all over the world.

Mrs. Krista Simms says that although she was the teacher supervisor on the project at EVI, it was the students' independent work that formed the tile submitted. Mya Fifield, Emily Hayden, Claire Loder, Cora Hogg and Devyn Hogg, through independent research and creative talent, produced a fantastic tile which was revealed on the University of Waterloo's website on March 6, 2019. It can also be found on Twitter #timelineofelements.

"Great job girls. Way to show talent, creativity and an appreciation for science," says Mrs. Simms.

Pi Day at EVI

Pi Day was celebrated once again at Exploits Valley Intermediate in Grand Falls-Windsor. Students in Grade 7 were challenged to memorize the first 100 digits of Pi. Many students attempted to recite the digits in front of their classmates and three were successful in reciting all 100 digits. Their prize? Pie a teacher. Although the challenge was set forth by both Mrs. Krista Simms and Mr. Thomas Caines, the students took it easy on Mrs. Simms and all three pied Mr. Caines. "A great show of school spirit and ability by the students and good job Mr. Caines for being such a great sport."



L-R: Mya Fifield, Emily Hayden, Claire Loder, Cora Hogg, Devyn Hogg



L-R: Luke Healey, Mr. Caines, Isaiah Mercer, Logan Dove

Exploits Valley Branch scholarship winner announced

Chloe Power, a graduate of Exploits Valley High School, accepted the Exploits Valley Branch Scholarship for the 2017-18 school year on December 19, 2018. The \$500 scholarship goes to the son or daughter of an active NLTA member of the Exploits Valley Branch who has achieved the highest overall average (provided by the Department of Education) during their graduating year. They also have to be attending a post secondary institution full time. Chloe is the daughter of Mr. Edgar Power, a teacher at Exploits Valley High School, Grand Falls-Windsor. Money from the scholarship is donated by the teachers of the branch.



Chloe Power is presented with her scholarship by Mr. Paul Moore, President of the Exploits Valley branch.

CANADA

Talk With Our Kids About Money Day

The Canadian Foundation for Economic Education (CFEE) invites you to take part in the annual Talk With Our Kids About Money Day. On Wednesday, April 17, 2019 teachers in ANY subject area are encouraged to teach a lesson plan relevant to their subject area that focuses on a money topic.

Registration and free resources with lesson plans are available online at talkwithourkidsaboutmoney.com or www.parlonsargentavecnosenfants.com.

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PARLIAMENT | PARLEMENT
CANADA

WATERFORD VALLEY

2018 Waterford Valley Branch NLTA Scholarships awarded

The 2018 Waterford Valley Branch NLTA Scholarships have been awarded to Hannah Williams (mom is Pattiann Williams of St. Matthew's School), and Patrick Handrigan (mom is Deanne Handrigan of St. Peter's Primary).

Each of these two \$500 scholarships were awarded to a Grade 12 graduate (June 2018) with a parent who teaches in a Waterford Valley Branch school and achieved the highest academic average (as provided by the Department of Education).

The scholarships were awarded on December 10, 2018 at O'Donel High School in Mount Pearl.



Hannah Williams is presented with her scholarship by Kim Fife, Waterford Valley Branch President.



Patrick Handrigan is presented with his scholarship by Kim Fife, Waterford Valley Branch President.



NL Administrator Named as Canada's Outstanding Principal



Gerald Morgan, Principal of Stephenville Primary School, has been named as one of 30 exceptional educators from across the country to be recognized as Canada's Outstanding Principals of 2019 by The Learning Partnership.

Gerald is praised for his inclusive leadership style and for ensuring that Stephenville Primary School is a safe, welcoming and caring learning environment. He emphasizes the messaging of the "Positive Behaviour Supports initiative: Be kind to yourself, Be kind to others, and Be kind to the world." It recognizes students for acts of kindness, and pictures of students following the "3 Bees" are displayed on the beehive bulletin board. Gerald instituted a dedicated reading program at Stephenville Primary School and co-coordinated the successful application of an Indigo For the Love of Reading grant, which provided the school with funds to acquire books for struggling and reluctant readers. He believes students, staff, parents/caregivers, and the community together, are an integral part of the teaching and learning community.

The Learning Partnership's Canada's Outstanding Principals program recognizes the unique and vital contributions of principals in publicly funded schools. The 30 principals, nominated by parents, colleagues and community members, and chosen by a national selection committee, are being celebrated for demonstrating innovation, leadership and for employing creativity in finding solutions and opportunities within their school communities. They were recognized for their accomplishments at the annual Canada's Outstanding Principals awards gala reception on February 26, 2019 in Toronto, Ontario.

(Information for this article was provided by The Learning Partnership.)

MAKING A REAL DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN

It's been a difficult winter for many people in our province – cold, lots of snow and ice, and just all around miserable. The cost of heating your home is rising, and we have seen an increase in the cost of food. For many families, it's becoming increasingly difficult to put food on their table. That is why our Kids Eat Smart Breakfast Clubs are so important.

Breakfast is one less thing a family has to worry about. A mom at a school told us she sends her children to the Breakfast Club because she knows they will get milk there and she cannot afford to buy milk at home. Every school day we serve over 29,000 meals to children and youth in schools throughout our province. We could not do this without the support of so many donors and partners who fund the programs.

Kids Eat Smart Foundation is built on the premise that we are volunteer run. We rely on the dedication and commitment of volunteers to ensure children receive a nutritious breakfast at school. Many of those volunteers are people like you – teachers, principals and school staff.

This year's Volunteer Week is April 7-13. The theme this year is *The Volunteer Factor Lifting Communities*. Every day you make a difference in the lives of our children in so many ways, breakfast being just one of them. You also give residents in communities an opportunity to make a difference. By engaging with community leaders, parents and grandparents, you give people an opportunity to contribute to our children's future, through their volunteer service in your Breakfast Clubs, a very rewarding experience for so many.

Every day, we salute you, and our school community, and thank you for ensuring our children start their days well nourished and ready to learn.

For great menu ideas, healthy recipes, fundraising updates and inspirational stories regarding our Breakfast Clubs, please follow us on Facebook and Twitter @KidsEatSmartNL.

For more information or resources regarding your KES Breakfast Clubs, please visit our website at www.kidseatsmart.ca, call us at 722-1996, toll free 1-877-722-1996 or email info@kidseatsmart.ca.

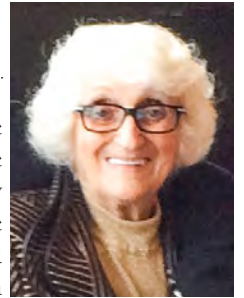


Kids Eat Smart
Foundation

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

MARJORIE ROACH (NEE TUCKER)

1935 -2018



Marjorie was born in Blow Me Down, Port de Grave to Annie and Fred Tucker on February 7, 1935. Her talents became evident early as she would often sing and play the organ for church services at St Luke's Anglican Church in Port de Grave and then accompany Canon Richards to South River on a horse and sleigh to play the organ for services there.

After graduating high school from St Luke's School in Port de Grave in June 1952, she attended summer school at Memorial University at the original campus on Parade Street. In September of 1952 she started her teaching career at the same school she had graduated from a few weeks earlier. Other teaching assignments included schools in Winterton, South River and Upper Island Cove. Her summers in the early years of her career were spent continuing her education at Memorial. Eventually, once her two children, Brad and Steven were born, she settled into a permanent teaching position at Amalgamated Elementary School in Bay Roberts. Her summers then consisted of travelling with her husband, David, and her two boys. Their motorhome would be packed and they would travel all over Canada and the USA, never staying in the same place more than one night, until it was time to return home to prepare for another school year. Marjorie particularly enjoyed visiting places that related to the curriculum she taught. She would bring these experiences to her students through pictures, film/videos and first-hand accounts of her travels.

After a 35-year teaching career, Marjorie retired in June 1989 from Amalgamated Elementary School. She and her husband continued to enjoy travelling and getting out in their motorhome at every opportunity, in spite of successfully battling four different types of cancer in her retirement years.

Marjorie passed away on February 21, 2018 predeceased by her parents, baby sister Irene and sister Bertha (by 1 week). Leaving to mourn her husband David, sons Bradley (Rhonda), Steven, and one beloved granddaughter, Allana. With the death of her husband, Dave, on January 22, 2019, they were laid to rest together at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church cemetery in Coley's Point.

(Submitted by her son Brad Roach)

THE REDUNDANCY/REASSIGNMENT AND LAYOFF PROCESS

May 7th is the **DEADLINE** for teachers to be notified of layoff and **ALL** teachers should be familiar with the process for redundancy/reassignment and layoff as outlined under Article 9 of the Provincial Collective Agreement (*Article 47 in the Labrador West Collective Agreement*).

Article 9 outlines the process that school districts are required to follow as they prepare and finalize staffing plans for the 2019-20 school year.

Teachers should be informed of and take steps to ensure that the redundancy process is properly followed in their circumstances.

As well, Article 9 can be found on pages 4-6 in the Provincial Collective Agreement and Article 47: Layoff can be found on pages 25-27 in the Labrador West Collective Agreement. The Collective Agreements can be accessed at www.nlta.nl.ca.

During any year in which there is a reduction or a realignment of teaching units in a school, a position(s) in a school may be designated as redundant. The actual removal of a position(s) can be accommodated through

one of two means: i) through the natural attrition process, created by teacher retirements or resignations and the school district's decision not to fill the vacancies that have been created; or ii) through the redundancy/reassignment/layoff process, as outlined in Article 9. Even when the number of retirements and resignations are equal to or greater than the number of teaching units that are scheduled to be removed because of redundancies, there still exists the possibility that redundancy in a school may occur for program reasons. Redundancies in a school can have implications not only for teachers in that school, but in neighboring schools as well.

Any teacher who has been notified by his/her school administrator and/or school district personnel that their position is redundant and that they will be reassigned or laid off for the following school year should consult with the designated Administrative Officer in Programs and Services responsible for their school district/region. (The NLTA number is 726-3223 or toll free at 1-800-563-3599.) The school district assignments for each Administrative Officer are listed below:

NL English School District:	Avalon Region	Avalon East	Ian Crewe	ext. 232	icrewe@nlta.nl.ca
		Avalon West	Darrin Pike	ext. 226	dpike@nlta.nl.ca
	Central Region	Nova Central	Deana Hatcher	ext. 270	dhatcher@nlta.nl.ca
		Burin	George Tucker	ext. 245	gtucker@nlta.nl.ca
		Vista	George Tucker	ext. 245	gtucker@nlta.nl.ca
	Western Region		Miriam Sheppard	ext. 230	msheppard@nlta.nl.ca
	Labrador Region		John Veitch	ext. 244	jveitch@nlta.nl.ca
Conseil Scolaire Francophone Provincial de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador			John Veitch	ext. 244	jveitch@nlta.nl.ca

School District Teacher Online Profiles:

In determining a teacher's capabilities, the school district will first rely upon the information contained in a teacher's online profile. It is important, and strongly recommended, that all teachers create, review and update if necessary the information in their online profile to ensure that it is complete, accurate and reflective of their teaching experience and qualifications.

Steps in the Redundancy Process

The following are the steps in the redundancy process which teachers should ensure are applied to their circumstances (clause numbers noted are from the Provincial Collective Agreement but the provisions and process described are provided for in the Labrador West Collective Agreement and apply in the same manner within the Labrador West bargaining unit):

Step I:

Clause 9.01: Defines seniority as the total length of time employed as a teacher in Newfoundland and Labrador, and identifies May 7 in the school year as the date of calculation of seniority for the purpose of reassignment and layoff for that year.

Each teacher must ensure that their placement on the school district's seniority list accurately reflects their entire teaching service in the Kindergarten to Level III public school system in the province. Time taught outside the province or outside of the Kindergarten to Level III school system cannot be credited as seniority. If there are discrepancies between a teacher's calculation of seniority and the school district records, it is the teacher's responsibility to notify the school district as soon as it is discovered.

Step II:

Clause 9.02: Where it is determined by the school district that a teaching position in a school is being declared redundant, the senior teachers shall be reassigned to the remaining positions within the school that they are capable of filling. Subject to capability, the reassignment process shall be as follows:

- (a) tenured teachers;
- (b) teachers on a one-year probationary contract;
- (c) teachers on a two-year probationary contract;
- (d) teachers on probationary contracts in accordance with Clause 7.05.

This effectively means that the junior teacher should be the person leaving the school unless the junior teacher is teaching something that no other more senior teacher is capable of teaching while still fulfilling the program needs of the school.

Step III:

Clause 9.03(a): A teacher, who is not reassigned in accordance with Clause 9.02, shall have priority, based upon seniority, subject to capability, to vacant teaching

positions or positions held by junior teachers, in the following order of priority:

- (i) within the community;
- (ii) within the nearest community, within the school district, where such a position exists.

A teacher who is reassigned and notified in writing in accordance with Clause 9.07(b), has five (5) working days following their notification to notify the school district of his/her acceptance or rejection of the reassignment.

Step IV:

Clause 9.03(c) states that, notwithstanding Clause 9.09, any teacher who refuses reassignment in accordance with Clause 9.03(a) in any particular year shall not be entitled to further consideration for reassignment in that year. A teacher who refuses reassignment in accordance with Clause 9.03(c) can apply for transfer to vacant positions during the remainder of the school year and will be considered with all other teachers who have applied for transfer to the same position. If the individual is unsuccessful in obtaining a transfer before the end of the school year, the teacher will be deemed to be laid off and placed in recall subject to Clause 9.10 after the end of the school year (see Step V below).

NOTE: With respect to Clauses 9.02 and 9.03, in determining capability to fulfill the requirements of the job function, the school district shall consider the overall ability of the teacher to perform the functions of the position in accordance with the currently modern standards required for the position. As per Clause 9.05, reassignment contemplated by Clauses 9.02 and 9.03 shall be to a comparable position, where possible.

Step V:

Any teacher, who is declared redundant and not reassigned, in accordance with Clauses 9.02 and/or 9.03, is deemed to have been "laid-off" and placed on recall. Any teacher placed on recall will be offered vacant comparable positions during the subsequent three (3) years following the layoff before the positions are advertised (Clauses 9.09 and 9.10). For the purpose of recall, a layoff does not take effect until the end of the contract year (the last day of school for teachers).

It is the teacher's responsibility to inform the school district of their interest in and availability for recall in the subsequent three years after layoff.

If you have any questions or need further information contact mail@nlta.nl.ca or 726-3223 or toll free 1-800-563-3599.



Group Insurance: Part Two

Do You Have Enough Coverage?

by DARRIN PIKE

In the December 2018 issue of *The Bulletin* I reviewed the basic coverage which most teachers have. These include Basic Life, Basic Accidental Death and Dismemberment and Health Insurance, which are cost shared with government. This also includes Dental, Long-Term Disability and Basic Critical Illness. Our best advice is to check your paystub or log in to the Johnson Insurance members-only website (nlta.johnson.ca) to review what programs you are enrolled in. If you don't have any of the above programs, we suggest a discussion with an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at the NLTA or one of Johnson's staff members.

Okay, let's assume you are fully enrolled in all the basic programs, but do you have the right or enough insurance to protect you and your family? There is no right answer to that question, but there are things to consider.

Let's start with life insurance. Life insurance is designed to help a family deal with the financial loss of a loved one. The Basic Life Insurance program, which is partially funded by government, will provide a benefit to surviving beneficiaries equal to twice the salary of an active teacher or twice the pension of a retired teacher up to age 65. The program cost is low and almost all of our teachers add an extra dependent coverage (~\$1.00 per month) that provides a \$10,000 payout in the event of a death of a spouse/partner or \$5,000 payout for eligible dependent children.

The next question is, what happens if tragic events occur and a teacher passes? The surviving beneficiary will receive a lump sum payment of twice salary or twice pension (assuming the deceased is less than 65 years old) and a partial pension. The pension will equal 60% of what the teacher would have been entitled to, at that time. As an example, a teacher with 20 years of experience with a salary of \$80,000 may have accumulated 40% towards a pension (\$32,000) and the surviving beneficiary would receive 60% of the \$32,000 or \$19,200. This means the annual household income will drop by approximately

\$60,000. Basic Life Insurance for an active teacher making \$80,000 would be \$160,000, but their annual loss of gross salary would be \$60,000.

Teachers should consider how this significant drop in household income will impact their family's ability to continue making the required monthly payments and living an acceptable lifestyle into the future. Adding extra life insurance (Voluntary Life Insurance) could help alleviate that burden for your family. As an example, a 45-year-old teacher could apply for an additional \$200,000 of coverage at a cost of \$17.80 per month. Please note: Voluntary Life Insurance premiums increase as you enter older age bands.

Voluntary Life Insurance can also be applied for to cover your spouse/partner. The loss of your partner's income can have a devastating impact on your ability to continue to live, not only with the emotional loss of a partner, but the loss of income. This is especially true if your partner's employer provides little or no life insurance or if your partner is self-employed.

Voluntary Accidental Death and Dismemberment

Given the amount of driving many of our teachers do on the highways, plus the recreational activities that often involve ATVs, skidoos and boats, Basic Accidental Death and Dismemberment is a must. Adding extra (Voluntary) Accidental Death and Dismemberment provides additional coverage at a very affordable rate. When the low cost is factored in with the potential for tragic events occurring on the highways, or during leisure time, this coverage is almost essential to an overall good insurance plan. As an example, \$100,000 of additional coverage would currently cost \$2.40 per month. You could expand this coverage to include family coverage for a total cost of \$3.30 per month. This would insure a spouse/partner for 60% of the teacher's coverage if there are no dependents and for 50% with dependents. Eligible dependent coverage would be insured at 15% of the teacher's coverage.

Voluntary Critical Illness

Unfortunately, many of the top illnesses that will affect Canadians are more prevalent in Newfoundland and Labrador than in other provinces. There are 31 illnesses/conditions including life threatening cancer, stroke, heart attack, kidney failure, Muscular Dystrophy, Parkinson's and major burns that are eligible. Basic Critical Illness provides a one-time payment of \$10,000 to assist. Teachers may want to consider adding additional coverage or adding coverage for their spouse/partner or children. Coverage can be purchased in \$10,000 increments up to \$300,000. As an example, a 45-year-old non-smoker female can purchase \$10,000 for \$3.25 a month. As with the optional Life Insurance, optional Critical Illness premiums increase as you enter older age bands. For teachers about to retire, it is very important to note that Basic Critical Illness ends at retirement and the only option to continue to have critical illness coverage is to add Voluntary Critical Illness.

Travel Insurance

One of the other optional programs that teachers can enroll in is travel insurance. There are many horror stories of someone visiting the United States and getting sick or having a simple accident and suddenly \$50,000 - \$100,000 later, the family is facing a significant financial burden. One of the strongest recommendations we have for teachers is not to travel outside the country without travel insurance. The Medoc program (travel insurance) is one option teachers should consider. The other caution is that many programs, including the Medoc program, have different options for how long you can stay outside the country during any one visit. The basic Medoc program is 17 or 35 days, which means your insurance ends if your stay exceeds your program limits. You can purchase additional coverage to have insurance up to 212 days. There is also a requirement for members to return to their home province before leaving the country for an additional visit. We have had situations where members went to the United States for 35 days, returned back to Canada (e.g. Ontario) and then went back to the United States assuming they had coverage, which they did not. Again, bottom line, don't leave the country without travel insurance.

The last piece of advice for members is to get in the habit of logging into the Johnson Insurance Members-only website (nlta.johnson.ca). Once online, review the benefits you are enrolled in, their

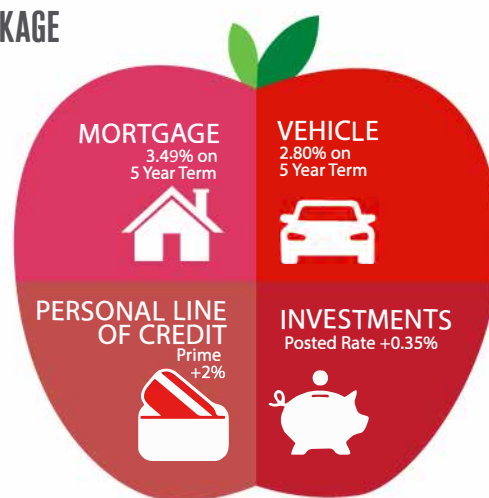
current levels and cost. You will also see the programs where you do not have coverage. Another great feature is that you can review your claims history to check the benefits you have remaining. For example, you could check to see how much physiotherapy you have used for the current year. This site also allows teachers to upload receipts and submit claims online. Teachers just need to attach a void cheque for initial setup of direct deposit to your bank account.

The Johnson Group Insurance portal is a great way to check on your insurance benefits. As always, if you have questions call Johnson Inc. at 737-1528, 1-800-563-1528 or reach out to an NLTA Administrative Officer.

Darrin Pike is an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services with the NLTA.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

CARE PACKAGE



As a teacher, you care for your students. We at NLCU, applaud all that you do, so consider this bundle of special offers a "Care Package" of sorts. You can benefit from any one or all of these special rates.



* Annual Percentage Rate (APR) means the cost of borrowing for a loan expressed as an interest rate. It includes all interest and non-interest charges associated with the loan. Rates subject to change without notice. All loans and rates subject to credit approval.

Education Week in Newfoundland and Labrador took place **March 3-9, 2019**. This year's theme was ***Go the Extra Mile • Aller plus loin.***

Memorial Academy in Botwood hosted this year's opening ceremonies which were held on the morning of Monday, March 4. Masters of Ceremony for the event were Memorial Academy students Andrew Oake and Brooke Budgell, who introduced the various speakers and performers with ease and professionalism. The ceremonies commenced with the singing of "Oh Canada", led by Memorial Academy's Elementary Choir under the direction of Music Teacher Deanne Carey and accompanied by Kara Watkins. Students, staff and guests were then welcomed by Principal Asher Cutting.

NLTA President Dean Ingram addressed the audience and reiterated the importance of education and "Going the Extra Mile" in all that we do. Mr. Scott Simms, Liberal Member of Parliament for the riding of Coast of Bays-Central-Notre Dame, brought greetings on behalf of the Government of Canada and Mr. Bronson Collins, Assistant Director of



Education (Programs), Central Region, spoke on behalf of the NL Eastern School District. The Honourable Al Hawkins, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, was unable to attend the event but sent a video message which was viewed by all in attendance.

Audience members were treated to various student performances including a Mob Dance called “Gotta Keep Reading”, the singing of “Go the Distance” by the Elementary Choir, a display of martial arts through Karate by students Andrew Oake, Jake Dalley and Luke Dalley, and a student-performed light show called “High Hopes”.

The Education Week proclamation was read by student Josh Hancock in English and student Avery Byrne in French. Following the signing of the proclamation, the youngest student at Memorial Academy, Jade Lee, and the oldest student, Pyper Penney, cut the Education Week cake. The ceremonies then drew to a close with the singing of “The Ode to Newfoundland”.



SCHOOL SPORTS NL NOW ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS FOR ITS ANNUAL AWARDS

Each year, School Sports NL (SSNL) takes the time to recognize and applaud those individuals who help make our Varsity and Participation Nation programs the best they can be, while also celebrating those students who excel in school sports.

Our Annual Awards Programs includes **seven award categories** that are now open for nomination:

- Brother GI Moore Student - Athlete of the Year Award (**NEW CRITERIA**)
- PN Ambassador Award
- PN Champion Award
- Student Athletic Program Volunteer of the Year Award (**NEW AWARD**)
- Varsity Coaching Service Award
- Varsity Honor Award
- Varsity Regional Recognition Award

Please take the time to nominate those worthy individuals in your schools who have given so much over the years. We want to do our part to say a big thank you!

Details on each award, and their respective nomination forms, can be found on our website's latest news section.

www.schoolsportsnl.ca

Deadline for receipt of nominations is May 6, 2019



Are You Thinking About Retiring?

INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW

Under the *Teachers' Pensions Act*, a teacher is eligible for pension benefit:

- (a) At age 60, with between five and 24 years of pensionable service. **Note:** teachers who retire **prior to age 60** with between 5 and 24 years of pensionable service will not be eligible for a pension until the month following their 62nd birthday.
- (b) At age 55 or after, with at least 25 years of pensionable service.
- (c) After completing 30 years of worked service* (or 29.5 years by June), regardless of age.
- (d) Reduced pension with 29 years of worked service (or 28.5 years by June) and at least 30 years of pensionable service. Pension will be reduced based on the number of months a teacher will be retired prior to reaching age 55.

(*worked service refers to all pensionable service, except university study buy-back that was purchased prior to 1991.)

Regardless of which retirement eligibility trigger applies, **pension is only payable in the month following resignation and application for a pension.** For example, a teacher who retires effective June 30 and a teacher who retires effective June 5 will both be eligible to start receiving a pension in July. This holds true no matter when or in which month a teacher chooses to retire.

Access to Pension Estimator

Teachers also have access to a pension estimator through the NLTA website (www.nlta.nl.ca); click on "Programs and Services", then "Salary, Benefits and Pensions". Teachers can now go on-line and using their individual Teacher Benefit Statement that they receive from the Teachers' Pension Plan Corporation (TPPC), input their salary information and obtain an estimate of their expected pension at a chosen point of retirement.

Checklist for Retiring Teachers

The following checklist is designed to assist teachers as they participate and plan for this upcoming life phase change.

- ☐ Apply to the NLTA to attend a pre-retirement seminar up to two years prior to your year of retirement;
- ☐ Confirm the eligible date of your retirement with the TPPC at the pre-retirement seminar or by contacting the TPPC directly.

- ☐ Submit your resignation to the School Board (**do not** resign until eligibility has been confirmed): one month notice is required if retirement is to occur anytime prior to Christmas; three months notice (March 31st) is required if retirement is to occur after Christmas.
- ☐ Apply for pension by completing and submitting the appropriate "Teachers' Pension" application prior to the effective date of your resignation.
- ☐ Complete and submit the "Direct Deposit" form to the TPPC if there is a change to your current "Direct Deposit" information.
- ☐ Apply for severance pay (if applicable) by completing the "Severance Payment Request" form.
- ☐ Confirm/consult with Johnson Inc. on Group Insurance coverage: 1-800-563-1528.
- ☐ Consider joining the Retired Teachers' Association by completing the application form and submitting it to the NLTA.
- ☐ Consider seeking personal financial advice regarding financial decisions related to retirement.
- ☐ Keep your mind active and your body healthy. Enjoy life!

Changes Effective Upon Retirement

- NLTA Membership status changes from Active Membership to Life or Associate Membership.
- Access to the services and benefits of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) terminates.
- Basic Life Insurance coverage reduces to twice annual pension from twice annual salary (provided coverage is maintained and premiums paid); coverage terminates at age 65 and is replaced by a members only \$15,000 benefit after age 65.
- Basic Critical Illness Insurance terminates.
- Eligibility for EI ceases (unless a person becomes a "re-established worker" or is on a forced medical retirement).

Any questions or comments can be directed to George Tucker, Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at the NLTA at gtucker@nlta.nl.ca, Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 245.

The Conference on New Teaching and Classroom Techniques

CONTACT 2019

***Celebrating over
40 years of Atlantic
Teacher Organizations***

**August 6 (evening) - August 9 (noon)
University of New Brunswick, Saint John, NB**

Plenary Sessions, Keynotes and Your Choice of Concurrent Sessions

Presented by your teacher colleagues from the four Atlantic provinces on a variety of topics to send you back to your classroom equipped with new ideas and enthusiasm!

Application Guidelines

1. FORWARD YOUR APPLICATION DIRECTLY TO THE NLTA

by Friday, May 10, 2019.

2. The Professional Issues Committee is the Selection Committee for delegates to CONTACT. Decisions will take into account the following:
 - Priority to teachers who have not previously attended CONTACT.
 - Branch representation.
3. Teachers will be notified of acceptance as soon as possible following the selection of delegates.
4. a) Onsite expenses for CONTACT (registration, accommodations and meals) will be paid by the Association. A travel subsidy will be based on funds available.
b) Transportation costs shall be based on the cheapest and most direct mode of transportation possible.
c) Selected delegates to CONTACT must submit a non-refundable \$25.00 deposit towards their registration.

CONTACT is sponsored by the teacher organizations of the Atlantic Region.



CONTACT 2019 APPLICATION FORM

Name:

School/Address:

.....

..... Postal Code:

Tel: (s) (h)

Mobile:

Email:

Home Address:

..... Postal Code:

Have you attended CONTACT before? ☐ No ☐ Yes; Year

Branch:

If you are not selected in the initial process, do you wish to be waitlisted and contacted in the event of a cancellation? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(Waitlisted applicants will be considered up to June 30, 2019)

Date: Received:

Deadline Date: May 10, 2019
Late applications will not be considered.

Return to:

John Veitch, Administrative Officer, Programs and Services
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
Fax: 726-4302 or 1-877-711-6582 (toll-free)

or

submit online at www.nlta.nl.ca

Go to FORMS

and then click on "C" for CONTACT.



From Grief to Gratitude

by JUDY BERANGER

**“What we have once enjoyed deeply we can never lose.
All that we love deeply becomes a part of us.” ~ Helen Keller**

Just recently I lost a dear brother – the reality is slowly sinking in as I take a little time each day to be conscious of his presence in my heart. We all face loss. Hardly a week goes by for me without receiving a call from one of our members who is also facing a loss of some kind. Some are resilient, choosing to make connections, seeking supports and sharing stories of the unique loss that has caused them varying degrees of sadness and anguish. Others are unable to do that for a while, if ever. Intentional grieving involves hard work and can take a life time to integrate. We are unique in how we have learned to grieve and how we accept the notion of death as part of nature’s cycle.

I have had the privilege of witnessing many resilient teachers and entire school staffs consciously weaving grief into their daily lives with intention and hard work. When faced with a devastating loss, such as death, just standing upright and keeping functioning may be the most a person can do. In the words of a teacher grieving two major losses: *“While managing my cancer diagnosis, chemotherapy treatment and blood transfusions, I stayed determined. The next year my brother was diagnosed with cancer and died within three months. It felt like somebody hit me with a huge mallet. Though I managed to get to school each day, it took me a year to feel any shift from this pain. I had to leave my classroom at times to cry my eyes out.”*

In February, a teacher from Gander, after having an MRI, discovered she had an aggressive tumor and died a month later! Despite this, with great strength and courage she was able to sing at her Dad’s funeral two weeks before she passed, knowing this was also her own good-bye. A week later, another school lost a well known and respected student assistant. Though still in shock, the staff and school communities came together, supporting each other and students alike, with active presence and compassion.

Loss can strike at a moment’s notice, taking many

forms and shapes, reducing energy and creating imbalance. If we ignore its impact it will affect our overall health and wellbeing. Losses can include the passing of a family member or friend, loss of optimal health, losing a family pet, separation and divorce, estranged family relationships, and loss of childhood, to name but a few. Any of these losses can be expected to result in significant change and upheaval.

Society can sometimes judge loss. Loss due to death elicits extra caring and support for people which may not be as present when the loss results from separation and divorce. Unfortunately, people attach judgements. Loss brings out a coldness in some that can be warmed by healing and care. H.W. Longfellow said it wisely: *“...every heart has its secret sorrows, which the world knows not, and oftentimes we call a man cold, when he is only sad.”*

None of us will escape grief – it is a part of life. Initially, grieving can keep pounding on us, consuming what seems to be every ounce of our energy. Some days, it can feel like a chore just to lift our heads and every step seems like an effort. V. Harrison maintains: *“Grief is like the ocean; it comes on waves ebbing and flowing. Sometimes the water is calm, and sometimes it is overwhelming. All we can do is learn to swim.”*

Some people say they grieve in a linear process with defined stages. Others say their grief is more like a roller coaster. One teacher said: *“If I could plot my grief as a graph, you’d see a sharp set of zigzags.”* Feelings such as denial, anger, frustration, resentment, despair, hopelessness, sadness and fear can happen. The challenge is not to get stuck in any one of them. Eventually acceptance comes, though it only takes a trigger to initiate spiralling again. Keeping a stiff upper lip doesn’t work with grief. Allow feelings to ebb and flow, like those tides in the ocean.

Ideas for self-care

The literature abounds with ideas for self-care in grieving:

- Set realistic and minimal expectations. Forgetting is common during stress. Do what is necessary and give time for healing.
- Choose healthy food. We especially need the antioxidant foods that are deep blue, purple, red, green and orange and contain the nutrients to boost our immunity. Drink plenty of water.
- Deep breathing for the oxygen necessary to function normally. A technique to stay grounded: breathe in through the nose for the count of 5, hold for the count of 5, and exhale through the mouth for the count of 5.
- Movement and exercise are important. Time in nature, even five minutes, if energy is low, can be nourishing as nature knows the seasons of life.
- Allow tears. There is sacredness and power in tears. A teacher shares: *"I finally decided that I would rather feel something than nothing at all."*
- Finding comfort with someone special can be helpful, even if it seems like they can only help us crawl across the floor.
- Journaling to express feelings. Trust what comes. Write how you can make the bad thoughts that creep in, creep back out.
- Write a letter to your loved one for further connection and reflection.
- Take relief breaks. Consider photography, music, nature hikes, the pursuit of knowledge, spiritual practices, art, pictures – anything that gives you energy and makes you smile.
- Grief groups, on-line therapy and/or counselling can be helpful, and a powerful means of support.
- Attend to the emptiness. The more intense the loss, the greater the emptiness inside. Nourish this place with what gives you renewed energy: good friendships, gardening, volunteering, recreational activities, travel, redefining and healing the broken parts of your heart.

The choice of "not grieving" is to "not choose" to move toward optimal health. The literature suggests that angry, sad and judgemental people are often carrying unresolved grief.

Gratitude

Acting grateful can heal at a very deep level as we accept our losses and the brevity of life. For me, being grateful for lessons learned by observing my brother, Glenn, and what he managed to accomplish in his last days on earth while so conscious of others' needs, will forever stay with me and teach me about energy that can be harvested. Recalling his compas-

sion helps keep him alive in my heart. I am continually amazed by all the active love he displayed when he could have been focused on his own suffering, loss and impending death.

Practicing gratitude, even for simple pleasures, helps us to shine light on the blessings in our lives despite our grief. It can sometimes transcend the anguish, allowing in goodness. A gratitude journal, including things we appreciated, can be helpful, informative and energizing. Some things are going right! It is tough, but important to choose to reengage with life. Author Mary Oliver remarks: *"Someone I loved once gave me a box full of darkness. It took me years to understand that this, too, was a gift."*

Grief changes us and can cause fear, negative thinking and feelings of isolation and loneliness. We can't get around that; we can only work through it toward healing. Focusing on our own path frees us from the need to change others. Gratitude helps us banish disease-producing thoughts.

Anita Moorjani in her book *Dying to Be Me*, asks us to imagine a dark warehouse where we live with only one flashlight by which to see. All we know within that space is what we can see by that beam of light. We may look for something and not find it even though it is there. We only observe where we focus our senses. A switch is turned on and we see the room in its entirety, and nothing is like we imagined. The willingness to face and attend to the hard work of grieving is like turning on the switch. The work of grieving provides greater visibility, which in turn leads to deeper awareness. Though painful, we see and become more. Transformation can be healing and fulfilling but does not come without some level of struggle and anguish. Now with "the room" fully illuminated we gain a new understanding and clarity. Author John Steinbeck reminds us, *"It's so much darker when a light goes out than it would have been if it had never shone."* Intentional grieving allows us to truly understand this concept.

In losing someone dear, the relationship is changed but despite the aching, death cannot take away the love that weaves its way through every painful fiber of our being. Eventually we can learn to ride the waves with gentle acceptance and gratitude.

Judy Beranger is Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for Teachers. For confidential assistance contact Judy at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 265, jmberanger@nlta.nl.ca.



Students Supporting Students

How to Make Your Classroom More Accepting of Autism

by KENDRA LANE

Promoting autism awareness and acceptance is one of the most important services provided by Autism Society, NL (ASNL). During the 2017-18 school year, ASNL provided peer autism awareness sessions to nearly 10,000 students in schools across Newfoundland and Labrador. We are on track to do even better in 2018-19, and you can be a part of it!

If you are near an ASNL regional office, a staff member can provide an in-person session. If not, please contact us and we will find another way to connect with your classroom so they can learn more about being a friend to someone with autism. Have you already had an awareness session and are looking for more ways to engage your students in learning about autism? Contact us and we can help with that too!

CLASSROOM SESSION DETAILS

Kindergarten to Grade 1 (approx. 20 min.)

Provides students with an introduction to autism through multimedia: books, digital book, video, and colouring page.

- Sesame Street – We Are Super Friends & video clip
- *What Colour is the Ocean*, written by Maggie Parsons of Hare Bay, NL
- *The Invisible Boy*, written by Patrice Barton

Requirements: internet, smart/team board

Grades 2 to 3 (approx. 30 min.)

Begins to build upon a student's sense of empathy through similarities and differences of our friends.

- PowerPoint story introducing autism and what makes individuals with ASD unique and special.

Requirements: smart/team board

Grades 4 to 6 (approx. 45 min.)

Strengthens the bonds of friendship by providing students with a greater understanding of some of the unique characteristics, challenges, as well as strengths someone with autism may have.

- Examine anxiety, communication, social behaviour, self-regulation as well as famous people with autism.

Requirements: smart/team board, a writing utensil for each student

Grades 7 to 9 (approx. 45 min.)

Using a series of video shorts from individuals with autism spectrum disorder with follow-up discussions, this session provides students with a more in-depth explanation into the world of someone with autism.

- Students will learn about the characteristics, challenges and strengths an individual with ASD may possess.

Requirements: smart/team board



These Grade 5 students are proud to be autism aware at Elizabeth Park Elementary.



These Grades 4-5 students at Northern Lights Academy in Rigolet participated in an autism awareness session via Skype!

Grades 10 to 12 (approx. 45 min.)

Students will watch a local Newfoundland video production of *Stay Cat* that focuses on the life of a young woman with autism.

- The film explores her processing various social situations as well as how she learns to cope and self-regulate as she navigates this snapshot of life experience.

Requirements: smart/team board

To find out more about peer awareness sessions for your classroom, please contact us at info@autism.nf.net or 722-2803 today!

Kendra Lane is Director of Operations with Autism Society, NL and a certified TEACCH Practitioner. She can be reached at 709-722-2803, ext. 226 or klane@autism.nf.net.

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Johnson Insurance is a tradename of Johnson Inc. ("JI"), a licensed insurance intermediary. Home and car policies underwritten and claims handled by Unifund Assurance Company ("UAC"). Described coverage and benefits applicable only to policies underwritten by UAC in NL/NS/NB/PEI. JI and UAC share common ownership. Eligibility requirements, limitations, exclusions, additional costs and/or restrictions may apply, and/or vary by province/territory. Travel insurance products are underwritten by Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance Company of Canada ("RSA"). Valid provincial or territorial health plan coverage required. The eligibility requirements, terms, conditions, limitations and exclusions which apply to the described coverage are as set out in the policy. Policy wordings prevail. JI and RSA share common ownership. †NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Open January 1, 2019 – April 30, 2020 to legal residents of Canada (excluding NU) who have reached the age of majority in their jurisdiction of residence and are a member of a recognized group of JI with whom JI has an insurance agreement. One (1) available prize of \$25,000 CAD. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. Math skill test required. Rules: www1.johnson.ca/cash2019

BE COOL FOR AUTISM
IT'S COOL TO BE ACCEPTING OF EVERYONE

In celebration of
World Autism Awareness Day,
you can take part in Be Cool for Autism by
wearing your sunglasses and
making a donation to Autism Society,
Newfoundland & Labrador until
April 30, 2019.

Autism Society
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR



Computational Thinking and the Digital Literacy Movement

by KIM TAYLOR

Virtually every sphere of our work and life has become dominated by digital technology. The majority of Canadian youth have grown up never knowing a world without computers and smart phones, and even though many are avid consumers of technology, there is a growing concern that they are not being prepared to become producers of technology.

As technology advances, it will become important that Canadian youth are prepared to contribute to their digital world. This includes being prepared to interact in a meaningful way with others, taking part in a workforce in which computers play an ever-increasing role, making decisions about how technology shapes their world, and finding solutions to problems that face us all.

Educators will need support to develop an understanding of what is important for our youth to learn so that they may play an active role in their ever-

changing digital world. Let's Talk Science would argue that in the 21st century and beyond, students will need to learn to think computationally, that is, to develop the skills, knowledge and habits of mind of Computational Thinking.

The term "Computational Thinking" appears in education systems around the world, including the Canadian Kindergarten to Grade 12 system. Computational Thinking will be new for many educators and it will be important to understand what Computational Thinking encompasses so that they are prepared to effectively support student learning.

Where Does Computational Thinking Fit?

In most respects, Computational Thinking falls within the realm of Digital Literacy. The Brookfield Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship defines Digital Literacy as the "ability to use technological tools to solve problems, underpinned by the ability to critically understand digital content and tools. This can include the more advanced ability to create new technological tools, products and services".

What is Computational Thinking?

There is currently no universally accepted definition of Computational Thinking. There are many similar yet different definitions and explanations of Computational Thinking which reflect the interests and opinions of researchers, educators and organizations (computer science, science, mathematics, etc.).

Although there seems to be little consensus on terminology, there are some recurring ideas in the research.

Let's Talk Science Computational Thinking Framework

The Let's Talk Science Computational Thinking Framework is a synthesis of the many definitions and explanations that have been proposed to date.

Computational Thinking...

involves thinking processes such as logical reasoning

is associated with, but not limited to, problem-solving; including defining, understanding, and solving problems

draws on the tools, techniques and concepts of computing (e.g., decomposition, abstraction and algorithmic thinking)

involves systematically and logically structuring procedures (algorithms) to generate automatable (programmable) solutions

enables the creation of solutions that can be effectively carried out by an information-processing agent, such as a computer

often involves gathering, organizing (sorting, grouping) and analyzing data (looking for patterns, dependencies and relationships)

may lead to the creation of digital products, processes and systems

develops and supports higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis and evaluation

supports development of 21st century/global skills and competencies including creative thinking, critical thinking, collaboration and communication

It is designed to illustrate how the various facets of Computational Thinking enable students to develop the skills, understandings and habits of mind they need to solve problems and meet needs in the digital world.

To read the full copy to the Let's Talk Science Computational Thinking framework, and to see a full list of references please visit letstalkscience.ca/professionallearning.



How is Let's Talk Science Supporting Computational Thinking in the Canadian Classroom?

To support teachers in their ability to teach coding and Computational Thinking through cross-curricular projects, our Digital Literacy workshops introduce teachers to the United Nation's Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs). These goals are used to help foster empathy in students and challenge them to come up with solutions to real-world problems using the design thinking model. This approach helps teachers feel more comfortable in introducing Digital Literacy and Computational Thinking into their lessons as they can rely on their existing expertise as a subject matter expert, and can become co-learners with their students as they come up with technology-driven solutions to their problems.

For more information on upcoming training sessions or to speak with a Let's Talk Science professional learning specialist about a private session for your school visit letstalkscience.ca/professionallearning.

Kim Taylor is an Education Specialist and has been working with Let's Talk Science since 2001. She is passionate about all things STEM and enjoys sharing cool technology that helps people of all ages understand their world better.

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let's talk science | parlons sciences

Thinking about summer?



Join us this summer for a Let's Talk Science professional learning experience.

NEW THIS SUMMER:
One day AND
educator cohort
options
available.

"Super hands-on, informative and amazing resources to bring right into the classroom!"

Thanks"

- C. Sutherland, Ottawa Catholic School Board

Learn to use a skills-based approach to science, technology, engineering and math and digital literacy that focuses on the development of student competencies through inquiry and problem solving. Our sessions provide practical, hands-on, curriculum aligned strategies that can be easily incorporated into the classroom.

Find a session near you:

letstalkscience.ca/professionallearning

Visionaries



Mitchell
A. Baran



Professional Learning Supporters



OF SPECIAL INTEREST...

HEALTH EDUCATION Special Interest Council News

2019 Physical and Health Education (PHE) Conference

Website Pre-Conference: May 2, 2019

Student Leadership Experience: May 2, 2019

National Conference: May 2-4, 2019

Event Venue: McGill University, Montréal, QC

Social Media to join the conversation: #PHEMontreal2019

PHE Canada social media handles:

Twitter | @PHECanada

Facebook | /PHECanada

Instagram | @phecanada

Social and Emotional Toolkit for School-Aged Youth

Qalipu First Nation is working in collaboration with several partners, including the NLTA Health Education Council, to develop a social and emotional toolkit for school-aged youth. This multi-year project, funded by the McConnell Foundation, will address identified needs faced by Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth while keeping in line with both the Comprehensive School Health model and the traditional values of the Mi'kmaq people.

www.healthednl.com

Don't forget to visit our website (www.healthednl.com) where you can find all kinds of resources to use for your Health Education curriculum. One example of the many links you can find is www.participaction.com/en-ca which is packed with ready-to-use posters, fact sheets, and an interactive page called *Build Your Best Day!* where students can learn all about Canada's 24-hour movement guidelines.

The New Canada Food Guide

On January 22, Health Canada released the new Canada Food Guide. The Food Guide is no longer a one-size-fits-all print document but is now a mobile-responsive web application with new resources that provide Canadians, policy makers and health professionals with information and up-to-date advice on eating well.

Key changes that are relevant to schools:

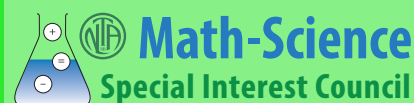
- The old rainbow visual has been replaced with a plate visual that emphasizes vegetables, fruit, protein and whole grain foods and water as the main beverage.
- The new Guide uses terminology that Canadians already use when making food choices, such as protein foods, rather than specific food groups.
- Instead of focusing on food groups, number of servings and serving sizes, the new Guide includes at-a-glance information on what to eat and provides practical advice on how to eat, including cooking more often and eating meals with others.
- Water, unsweetened milk or fortified soy beverages, and fruit should be offered instead of sugary drinks such as 100% fruit juice and sweetened milk and plant-based beverages (e.g. chocolate milk or flavoured almond milk). We encourage you to take some time to explore the new food guide at Canada.ca/foodguide.

Math-Science Special Interest Council **CALL FOR INTEREST**

The Math-Science Special Interest Council (MSSIC) is calling for interest in joining their board. The board consists of 12 positions: six executive and six members at large. The MSSIC meets monthly, with a minimum of seven meetings per year. Board members are expected to attend a minimum of four meetings per year. Meetings take place in St. John's where members can attend in person or via Skype. Elections, if necessary, will occur electronically in May. Once elected, members will assume duties within two months of elections and serve a two-year term.

More information about the MSSIC is included in the MSSIC by-laws document which is posted on the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca/mathscience-sic.

If interested in joining our team, please contact Yvonne Dawe by **midnight April 15, 2019** at yvonedawe@nlesd.ca.



If you have any questions, concerns or ideas re the NLTA Special Interest Councils, contact:

Ian Crewe, Administrative Officer, Programs & Services, NLTA
icrewe@nlta.nl.ca; Tel: 726-3223 or toll-free at 1-800-563-3599, ext. 232

Important Information for Teachers Who May be Considering Retiring at the End of the Current School Year

Please be advised of the following notice based on information from the Teachers' Pension Plan Corporation:

This is a reminder that teachers planning to retire prior to the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year should submit their resignation to the school district and their pension application to the Teachers' Pension Plan Corporation (TPPC) by March 31, 2019. As administrator of the pension plan, the TPPC has advised that federal government pension regulations may prevent retroactive payment to July 1 for any pension applications received between July 1 and August 31. Therefore, it is important that you submit all documents by no later than June 30.

Under the Teachers' Pension Plan, eligible teachers can begin receiving their pension in the month following their resignation and submission of application for a pension. Therefore, a teacher who submits their resignation notice and pension application by June 30, 2019 will be eligible for a pension benefit in July 2019. However, a teacher who submits their resignation notice and pension application in July 2019 will not be eligible to begin receiving a pension until August 2019; a teacher who submits their documentation in August 2019 will not receive a pension until September 2019, etc. and so on, depending on the month in which a teacher chooses to retire.

To be clear, March 31 is the resignation deadline for teachers planning to retire effective the end of the school year, as per the Clause 12.02(c) of the Provincial Collective Agreement and Clause 48.02(c) of the Labrador West Collective Agreement. Teachers who have submitted their resignation to their school district and have submitted their pension application to the TPPC on or before March 31 will receive their entire summer holdback pay as a lump-sum payment during the first pay period following the end of the school year and will begin receiving pension benefits by July 31.

If you have any questions regarding pension eligibility or pension administration, please contact an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services.

NEWS & EVENTS

PHE CANADA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

May 2-4, 2019

Montreal, QC. Attn: Phys. Ed. & Health Ed. Teachers. This conference offers an opportunity to network with colleagues and increase your knowledge and skills in fostering healthy active living for children and youth. For more information visit: <https://phecanada.ca/connecting/events/2019-phe-national-conference>

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS COUNCIL CONFERENCE & AGM

May 8-10, 2019

Glynmill Inn, Corner Brook. Theme: *Fostering Excellence and Equity for All: Moving Towards New Possibilities*. For more information email: helencoleman@nlesd.ca or glennmacarthur@nlesd.ca. To register visit www.nlta.nl.ca/sac_conference.

CONTACT 2019 (THE CONFERENCE ON NEW TEACHING AND CLASSROOM TECHNIQUES)

August 6-9, 2019

University of New Brunswick, Saint John, NB. to register visit www.nlta.nl.ca/contact19. Deadline date: May 10, 2019.

MUSIC SIC CONFERENCE: RESONATE 2019

October 24-25, 2019

Sandman Signature Hotel, St. John's. Keynote and Feature Presenter: Gena Pretty-Norbury. Registration Opens June 1, 2019. Early Bird Registration: \$75; after September 30 - \$100. For more information visit nlmsic.com.

For a full list of conferences and professional development opportunities, visit the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca/pd_opportunities/

Dates to Remember

April 2019

- Apr 15 **Deadline:** Notice for postponement of Deferred Salary Leave or withdrawal from DSLP
- Apr 18 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications
- Apr 23-26 NLTA Biennial General Meeting
- Apr 30 **Deadline:** Year-end resignation from contract
- Apr 30 **Deadline:** Deferred Salary Leave applications

May 2019

- May 6-10 Branch Election Week
- May 7 **Deadline:** Notice by Board of layoff
- May 16 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

June 2019

- June 7-8 NLTA Provincial Executive Meeting
- June 20 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

July 2019

- July 31 **Deadline:** NLTA Scholarship applications

Urgent: Recent NLESD Trustee Decision Puts Teachers at Risk

The NLTA regrets to inform its members that the Executive Committee of the NLESD Board of Trustees has disciplined a teacher without just cause. The teacher has been suspended without pay as a result of criminal charges being laid for conduct that is alleged to have occurred in the school setting. The NLTA does not dispute that criminal charges in the school setting are a serious matter, but it takes extreme exception to any member being disciplined **without** a finding of fault and **without** due process. The charges have yet to be challenged in court, and the District has not completed an investigation. Regardless, the Trustees have suspended the teacher without pay for an indefinite period.

This action is a clear violation of the NLTA Collective Agreement, which states that a teacher cannot be disciplined without just cause. A recent arbitration decision has confirmed that an unpaid suspension is an act of discipline. The NLESD Trustees have violated Clause 10.06 of the Provincial Collective Agreement, which requires a teacher to be placed on paid leave pending the completion of a disciplinary investigation. To be clear, neither the courts nor the District have reached a finding of fault or wrongdoing against the teacher at this time. **The teacher has been suspended without pay simply because charges have been laid.**

This action, taken by the Executive of the NLESD Board of Trustees is also contrary to current government policy (Human Resources Secretariat Discipline Policy) which requires that collective agreements be followed in matters of discipline and that a suspension, pending the outcome of an investigation into allegations against an employee, must be with pay. In meetings and conversations with NLESD officials over the weekend of February 23-24, the Association forcefully made these concerns known. The NLESD has refused to reconsider the action taken and has clearly indicated that this was a Trustees' decision.

The NLTA Provincial Executive held an emergency meeting on Monday, February 25 to discuss this situation and the ramifications of the NLESD Trustees' complete disregard of agreed upon contractual processes for dealing with issues of teacher discipline. The Provincial Executive is considering all possible responses to this very serious situation. While charges against teachers are not common, the fact is that teachers are vulnerable to allegations that can potentially give rise to criminal charges due to the fact that many teachers are responsible for interacting with students on a daily basis in sometimes challenging circumstances. **The approach adopted by NLESD potentially exposes all members, who may need to interact physically with students, to disciplinary action without due process and extreme financial risk.**

The Association will defend teachers' rights to due process and the integrity of the Collective Agreement through all means available. However, in light of the Trustees' disregard for due process and our Collective Agreement, the following advisory is issued to all members to better protect themselves from situations in which allegations may arise:

Teachers or administrators working with or supervising students who may be prone to acts of violence and/or disruption in the school setting, are advised to consider the level of student assistant and teacher supports provided to those students. If supports are considered inadequate, teachers should email their Director of Schools requesting additional resources using the template provided below. This is not an admission that teachers cannot do their jobs but rather a statement of what is required to safely fulfil their duty of care. Any teacher who is encouraged, advised or directed not to communicate with their Director of Schools on this matter should inform the Association immediately.

Draft Message for Teachers to Use in Email Communication to Directors of Schools

Dear **(Director of School Name)**:

I am a **(teacher/administrator)** at **(name of school)**. I take my responsibility to students very seriously and I have concerns that the level of support available to our students is less than what is necessary to ensure a safe environment for students and staff. I felt it necessary to put these concerns in writing to you and to ask that the District consider providing additional human resource supports.

Thank you
(Teacher's/Administrator's Name)

Copied to:

- (School administrator if not the author)
- Stefanie Tuff, Assistant Executive Director, NLTA – stuff@nlta.nl.ca

It is important that teachers copy Ms. Stefanie Tuff.

Should you have questions regarding this correspondence, please contact any member of the NLTA Programs and Services staff at 709-726-3223, 1-800-563-3599 or through mail@nlta.nl.ca

