

For Immediate Release
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NLTA ANNOUNCES RESEARCH ON THE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL HEALTH OF TEACHERS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

St. John's, NL... The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association has invited research proposals to assess the current social and emotional health of teachers and school administrators in Newfoundland and Labrador.

"When the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development announced the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) initiative we felt it was important to get a benchmark assessment of the status of teacher social emotional health," says Dean Ingram, President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. "We invited proposals on this important topic and are pleased to announce that the successful team consists of four established researchers who bring a strong history of successful provincial, national, and international research projects related to teacher wellness, mental health, and inclusive education".

This research project will be conducted, analyzed, and completed primarily in Newfoundland and Labrador at Memorial University. The primary investigator is Dr. Kimberly Maich with secondary investigators Dr. Sharon Penney, Dr. Michael Savage and Dr. Vera Woloshyn. Dr. Maich and Dr. Penney are Associate Professors at Memorial University specializing in qualitative methodology. Dr. Savage and Dr. Woloshyn are professors at Brock University in Ontario specializing in quantitative methodology. The bios on each of the researchers are attached.

The resulting research project will be framed by a sequential mixed methodology approach including both quantitative (survey-based) methods using eight standardized measures, and qualitative measures (six focus groups at varied provincial locations) using a semi-structured approach; it is informed by both self-determination theory and appreciative inquiry theory as well as a holistic approach.

The researchers will prepare a combination of professional reports, peer-reviewed journal publications, open access knowledge mobilization information, and dissemination will also occur through scholarly/professional conferences.

The research will begin this Fall and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2019.

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Research Team Bios

Dr. Kimberly Maich, PhD, OCT, BCBA-D, R Psych

Kimberly Maich holds an undergraduate degree from the University of Guelph, professional degrees from Redeemer University and Simon Fraser University, and graduate degrees from Brock University and Memorial University. She is a certified teacher, a special education specialist, a behaviour analyst at the doctoral level, and a provisionally registered psychologist. Dr. Maich has been engaged in provincial, national, and international research, teaching, training, and peer-reviewed academic publishing since 2002, with multiple awards in publishing and teaching. Dr. Maich has strong connections to teaching and school leadership positions in Newfoundland & Labrador, having lived on the Great Northern Peninsula, the central region, and now on the Avalon Peninsula, with school-based positions as a vice-principal, guidance counsellor, resource teacher, technology / library coordinator, and classroom teacher prior to moving to clinical, college, and university settings. Related to this project, she has a strong background with inclusive schools, Newfoundland and Labrador-based educators, school leadership, emotional and behavioural issues, and program evaluation.

Dr. Sharon Penney, PhD, R Psych

Sharon Penney holds an undergraduate degree from Memorial University, graduate degrees from both the University of New Brunswick and the University of Alberta. She is a certified teacher and a registered psychologist. Dr. Penney brings a variety of experiences to this research project including behaviour therapist, school guidance counsellor, school psychologist, mental health therapist (Alberta Mental Health) and family therapist (Alberta Mental Health). Since coming to Memorial University Dr. Penney has been involved with a variety of research projects both provincially and nationally. Related to this project, she has a strong background with inclusive schools, positive mental health promotion with both pre-service and in-service teachers, home and school communication, and emotional and behavioural issues.

Dr. Michael Savage, PhD, C Psych

Michael Savage holds undergraduate degrees from Brock University and graduate degrees from Brock University and the University at Buffalo, State University of New York. He is a trained educator and a licensed clinical psychologist. Dr. Savage brings a variety of experiences to this research project including clinical experience in schools, residential treatment centres and forensic settings with children, adolescents and adults in Canada and the United States in addition to teaching courses about mental health and wellness at the graduate and undergraduate level. He has completed numerous comprehensive, psychoeducational, personality and forensic assessments for agencies and in private practice. He has also worked as a licensed teacher, conducted program evaluations in a variety of settings, and has consulted with schools on a number of different issues. Dr. Savage has been involved with a number of research projects designed to investigate and promote mental health and wellness with a variety of populations including children, adolescents, undergraduate students, international students, teachers, administrators, social service agencies and community organizations. He has expertise with both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and data analysis. Especially relevant to this research project, Dr. Savage is the primary investigator on a funded research project exploring Ontario teacher and school staff members' perceptions of mental health and wellness (their own and students'), along with their use of coping and stress management strategies.

Dr. Vera Woloshyn, PhD, B.Ed., MACP, RP (Qualifying)

Vera Woloshyn holds undergraduate degrees from McMaster University and Brock University, and graduate degrees from the University Western Ontario and Yorkville University. She is a trained educator and a registered psychotherapist (qualifying). Dr. Woloshyn brings a variety of experiences to this research project including learning strategist, crisis line support worker, Safe Talk trainer, and individual, family and child counsellor (Ontario). Over her career, Dr. Woloshyn has been involved with a variety of research projects and initiatives intended to promote and support learner success at school and home and has worked extensively with educators, international students, teacher candidates, and community organizations. She possesses expertise in quantitative and qualitative research design and data analyses procedures. She has participated in the development and delivery of direct services as well as graduate-level courses intended to promote mental health and wellness on campus. Especially relevant to this research project, she is co-applicant on a funded research project exploring Ontarian educator and school staff members' perceptions and experiences of mental health and wellness (self and student), along with their use of coping and stress management strategies.