



## Message from the President

April 8, 2020

The COVID-10 public health emergency and global pandemic is impacting everyone in our province, country, and around the world. While our primary focus right now should be on our health and safety and that of our families, this unprecedented situation is also having an extreme financial impact. The NLTA is keenly aware of the particular vulnerability of our substitute members at this time.

The Association announced its [COVID-19 Substitute Relief Grant](#) program on Monday, which has seen a significant and immediate response, with some applications being processed and paid as of yesterday. Previous communications have referenced the Association's provincial and federal lobbying efforts for financial supports for substitutes, including those in part-time positions who rely on substitute work to make ends meet. These efforts are ongoing and we are committed to keeping members informed of supports that are available in as timely a manner as possible.

In this regard, I am writing to provide an update on my telephone meeting yesterday, April 7, with the Honourable Seamus O'Regan, Minister of Natural Resources and the federal Cabinet representative for Newfoundland and Labrador. I, and senior NLTA staff, took full advantage of this opportunity to not only outline the unique financial realities faced by substitute teachers, but also to explain and advocate for reasonable and achievable solutions. I referred to my [April 2](#) letter to the Honourable Ahmed Hussein, the Minister responsible for Service Canada, which Minister O'Regan indicated he had received and read.

I am pleased to report that Minister O'Regan was attentive and very receptive to our concerns. He thanked us for reaching out and expressed that, but for the Association's efforts, he would not have understood or appreciated the particular hardships faced by substitute teachers, including those with part-time contracts. Minister O'Regan acknowledged that the measures recently announced, namely the CERB, do not capture everyone and indicated that the federal government is working towards addressing these gaps in financial supports. He also committed to advocate for the solutions we have proposed, which can be achieved through changes to the Employment Insurance Regulations.

Thank you to all NLTA members for your support and patience as we navigate these uncharted waters. I, and Association staff, will continue to avail of every opportunity to advance the cause of members facing financial hardship during these challenging times.

Take care and stay safe.

Dean Ingram  
President