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NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION
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Vol. 64/No. 5

May/June 2021

bulletin

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SEPTEMBER OCTOBER

NOVEMBER DECEMBER

JANUARY FEBRUARY

MARCH APRIL

MAY JUNE



MEMBERS, ENJOY YOUR SUMMER BREAK
(THE NLTA OFFICES ARE OPEN YEAR-ROUND IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE)

INSIDE

Read President Ingram's statement re: the report of the Premier's Economic Recovery Team 10

Up Front from the President



It's hard to believe it has been four years since I wrote my first *Up Front* article. I began that submission by stating: "We all have dates that mark significant events in our lives. The day we were born, got married, had children, or other life altering events and situations. One of those dates for me was the day I became a teacher and at the same time also became a very proud member of the NLTA. Like all teachers in this province, the moment I taught my first class I became a part of our Association. The journey that eventually brought me to be your President started when I taught my first class. I'm very proud to be able to represent all of you and the day I was elected as your President marks another one of those significant life events."

I find myself now looking at another significant date. That date will be July 31, 2021 and it will mark the end of my time as the President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. The past four years have gone by very quickly and it has been my pleasure to have been afforded the honor and privilege of representing all of you. I can only hope my representation and advocacy served you and your colleagues in the manner you deserved and needed. As my presidency concludes, I will forever be thankful for the feedback I have received. Not only the feedback that was in support of the directions being taken, but also the feedback that questioned and suggested a different approach. It is never helpful to only hear that which you like to hear – hearing what is needed is more important and helpful. That feedback was always part of the deliberations. At times it caused a change in direction, at other times a reaffirmation of the path we were on. But it was always taken into account and I am grateful for receiving it.

This year was certainly not how I expected my last year as President to be. If I was in charge of writing the script, it would have been a lot more Robert Munsch and a lot

less Steven King! But that's another story for another day. Thinking back to March 2020, I can't help but marvel at how amazingly well teachers handled the initial shutdown. And my admiration has just continued to grow since that time. I am continually reminded of just how resilient, hardworking, and committed you are.

The degree to which your students have coped with this pandemic and still found success is directly related to the efforts of you – our members. I know those efforts have caused significant strain on each and every one of you, impacting your personal health and wellbeing. In order to be good to your students, and give them what they need, it is important to ensure that you are giving yourselves what you need. When conditions are far from ideal we all have to look at what we are able to give based on current circumstances. In other words, to create the learning conditions that students need, we need to start with creating the teaching conditions that you need.

Over the coming weeks and months this Association will continue to engage with both government and the school districts to press and advocate for what is needed. Premier Furey publicly committed to conduct the long overdue review of the allocation model for our province's schools. This year the school counsellor allocations and administrator allocations were reverted to what was recommended in 2008. We need not only a return to 2008, but we need to have a system that meets 2021 needs. Class

size and composition was an issue long before COVID, it was crystallized during COVID, and will absolutely need to be addressed post-COVID.

In a few short months the incoming Provincial Executive with Trent Langdon as President and Maureen Doyle-Gillingham as Vice-President will take on the task of leading this Association. There will no doubt continue to be challenges, but the Association must always rise to meet them. Rising up to meet them must include continued advocacy for what is right for our members. What is right for our members is what is right for our students. Teaching Conditions are Learning Conditions.

In closing, to those members who are concluding your careers, let me offer my sincere congratulations and wish you all the best in whatever comes next for you. A career of dedicated service deserves to be recognized and celebrated. This year's celebrations might be dampened, but the significance of your career is not. Congratulations and best wishes to you all.

Thank you once again for affording me the honor of sitting as NLTA President. Thank you for your support over the past four years and most importantly, thank you for all your efforts. I have always concluded my *Up Fronts* by stating "until next time." This time I want to end by simply saying... Thank You.



T H E
bulletin

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The 2020-21 school year has been a challenging one for many, however the way members of the NLTA have risen to meet each challenge and persevere is inspiring. As you approach the end of the school year and are able to enjoy a much needed break, a thank you to all those that have volunteered their time to be part of NLTA committees, Special Interest Councils or at the Branch level – your work is vital and you are a voice for your colleagues throughout the year. As I finish my first year as Editor of *The Bulletin*, I would like to thank all those that have contributed to the publication over the school year with some very informative and inspiring articles. And finally, a sincere thank you to the editorial team for *The Bulletin* – your professionalism and talent shines through in each issue.



Enjoy your summer break...see you in September!

Jennifer

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Bulletin Distribution Changes

At its March 2021 meeting, Provincial Executive moved that the NLTA will print and distribute paper copies of *The Bulletin* to schools and other member worksites in quantities as follows: **1 per every 10 NLTA members on staff, or fraction thereof, up to a maximum of 5 paper copies per school/worksite and subject to a minimum of 1 paper copy per school/worksite.**

Member feedback on this **temporary** change shall be sought by the Communications/Political Action/

Membership Engagement Committee at the beginning of the 2021-22 school year, with results to be reported to Provincial Executive prior to the 2021 Christmas break. The electronic version of *The Bulletin* will continue to be made available to all members.



PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

WATERFORD VALLEY

Waterford Valley Branch NLTA scholarships awarded for 2020

This year's 2020 Waterford Valley Branch NLTA Scholarships were awarded to Waterford Valley High graduate Laura Head (daughter of Loretta Head, teacher at Hazelwood Elementary) and O'Donel High School graduate Hannah Dooley (daughter of Wendy Dooley, teacher at Hazelwood Elementary).

Each \$500 scholarship was awarded to a Grade 12 graduate (graduated June 2020) who achieved the highest academic average, as provided by the Department of Education, and whose parent teaches in a Waterford Valley Branch school. Scholarship presentations took place on February 9, 2021 at Hazelwood Elementary School. Awards were presented by Kim Fifield, President of the Waterford Valley Branch.



Waterford Valley Branch scholarship is presented to Laura Head.



Waterford Valley Branch scholarship is presented to Hannah Dooley.

CANADA

Science Team NL to compete at Canada Wide Science Fair

For the second year in a row, two virtual science fair competitions were held in the province, both in April 2021. The first was a competition for junior and senior high students outside of Eastern Newfoundland.

Grace Tuglavina, a grade 11 student from Lake Melville School in North West River was a gold medal winner and "Best of Fair" at the 2021 NL Virtual Science Fair for the Labrador, Western and Central Newfoundland (LWCN) region on Saturday, April 17. This is a newly formed region, recognized by Youth Science



Grace Tuglavina

Canada, the governing body for science fairs across Canada. Students from six different schools competed for medals, prizes and six spots on Science Team NL. Award winners included four grade 11 students from Holy Cross School in Eastport: Gold went to Hannah Babstock, while Miya Burden, Cassie Saunders, and Ethan Woodfine along with his project partner, Amy Gillard, a grade 11 student at St. Stephen's All Grade in Rencontre East each won a silver medal. Bronze medal winners included Lily Warren who is in grade 11 at Burgeo Academy as well as grade 7 students from J.R. Smallwood Elementary School in Wabush: Lylah Mercer and Haleigh Clarke. Also from the school in Wabush, grade 7 students Dylan Fagan and Andrew Dillon received an honourable mention.

Monetary prizes were also awarded to the top six students: \$400 went to first place Grace Tuglavina, \$300 to second place Hannah Babstock and \$200 to third place Amy Gillard and Ethan Woodfine. As well, Miya Burden and Cassie Saunders will each receive \$50. These six students will compete at the national level as part of Science Team NL along with the six students that were chosen at the virtual science fair for students in the Eastern region.

The Husky Energy Eastern Newfoundland Science and Technology Fair, an annual event since the early 1980s, went online on April 23 and 24. Although numbers were lower than a typical physical fair, the 28 projects (38 students) were of the usual variety of topics and high quality. Students from five schools on the Avalon Peninsula competed for medals and prizes on Friday, April 23. The virtual awards show on April 24 recognized 23 of those projects with a total of 19 medals (9 gold, 5 silver and 5 bronze) as well as four honourable mentions.

Livi Allen, a grade 12 student from Holy Heart was the big winner taking home the “Best in Fair” as well as the MUN Faculty of Science entrance scholarship (\$2550). Other special award recipients included two students from Holy Trinity High School. Grade 11 student



Livi Allen

Abigail Hammond received the Marine Institute entrance scholarship (\$1000) and Sydney Vaters, who is in grade 10 won the Ted Rogers Award (\$200) for the best project that demonstrates commercial potential. Monetary prizes were also awarded for the top three projects in each of the three categories: junior (grades 7-8), intermediate (grades 9-10) and senior (grades 11-12).

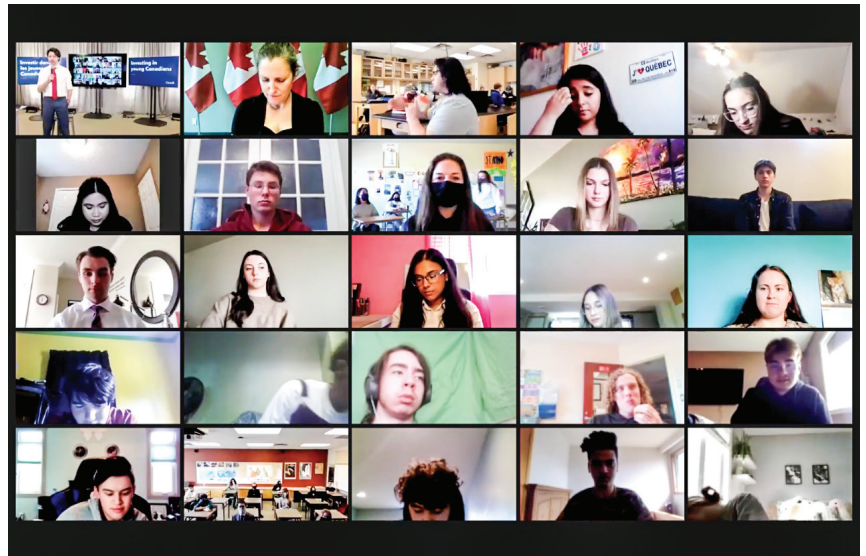
The six students selected to represent Eastern Newfoundland as part of Science Team NL included Holy Heart students Livi Allen, John Hiscock and Nicholas Qiu, Holy Spirit High student Caleb Tibbs as well as Macdonald Drive Junior High students Orpa Hawlader and Dipayan Sutra Dhar. This is a historical moment for science fairs in this province as it is the first time Science Team NL includes representation from Labrador. It's also the first time, in many years, that the team will include students from outside of the Avalon Peninsula. As well, a science team of 12 is the largest team we have sent to the CWSF in about 15 years. The creation of a second official region in the province for students outside of the eastern region has made this possible and is an important avenue for engaging students in science and technology. All participants are to be commended, as well as their supportive teachers, family and friends, for completing a science project in such a challenging school year.

More information about these fairs including the top projects can be found at enstf.ca.

Any teacher interested in participating next year can contact Yvonne Dawe, YSC Regional Coordinator for the LWCN region, if they require assistance in getting started (yvonedawe@nlesd.ca).

Town Hall with Prime Minister

Two NLTA members, Jill Kennedy from O'Donel High (Mount Pearl) and David Welshman from Gonzaga High (St. John's), along with two of their high school students participated in a national virtual town hall event with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland on April 28, 2021. The two students, Jai Lynn Francis of O'Donel High and Ben James of Gonzaga High, had the opportunity to pose a question to the Prime Minister and received answers in response. The entire event can be viewed through the Prime Minister's Twitter feed @CanadianPM. Participation in the town hall was organized by the Canadian Teachers' Federation, through the NLTA.



NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

MUN Faculty of Education: Summer Institute for French Teachers (Graduate Level) 2021

The Faculty of Education of Memorial University, in partnership with the Department of Modern Languages Literatures and Cultures, will offer **online** (subject to funding and enrolment), a Graduate Summer Institute for French Teachers (SIFT) during the 2021 summer session. Applicants will be French teachers, principals, assistant principals, program specialists, etc., who have an undergraduate degree with a major in French or have significant experiences in the French language giving a proficiency level of B2 on the Council of Europe's common reference levels. Those who are currently registered for a Graduate Program may select one or both of these courses as electives.

Courses

The Institute will consist of two graduate-level courses, French 6820 and Education 6925. Completion of this institute does **not** guarantee acceptance at a future date to a graduate program in the Faculty of Education or in the Department of Modern Languages Literatures and Cultures. If candidates are subsequently admitted to a graduate program,

the applicability of these two courses towards the program will be at the discretion of the head of the appropriate department.

Français 6820 Littérature de jeunesse – Théorie et pratique – Professeur: Dr. Kodjo Attikpoé

Ce cours examine les questions fondamentales que pose l'étude de la littérature de jeunesse: comment peut-on définir cette littérature? Qu'est-ce qu'un jeune lecteur? Quelle ligne de démarcation existe-t-il entre littérature de jeunesse et littérature générale? Qu'est-ce qu'un bon livre pour enfants? Existe-t-il des sujets tabous en littérature de jeunesse? Le cours analyse aussi les enjeux littéraires et pédagogiques de la littérature de jeunesse et propose des outils d'analyse des livres destinés aux jeunes lecteurs.

Education 6925 Répondre aux besoins variés des élèves dans la classe d'immersion française – Professeur: Dr. Denise King

This course acquaints students with the current practices of identifying and meeting diverse student needs in an inclusive second language classroom. The course presents an introduction to the fundamental principles related to the assessment, identification, teaching, and learning of students in a second language classroom with identified exceptionalities and diverse learning needs. Students will be provided with a selection of readings, actively participate in classroom discussions, collaborative activities and exchanges, and engage in self reflection.

Application and Registration Procedures

To obtain an Expression of Interest form, or if you have any questions regarding the SIFT, please contact Jacqueline Rideout, French Education Coordinator, Faculty of Education, ED3036, Memorial University of Newfoundland at jacqueline.rideout@mun.ca.

Johnson Insurance launches 2021 Scholarship Program

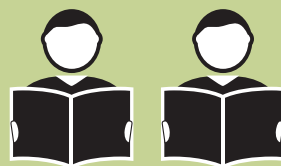
Johnson Insurance is pleased to offer 50 scholarships worth \$1,000 each to eligible students completing high school in 2021 and starting post-secondary education in the fall of 2021. Qualifying children or grandchildren of NLTA members and retired teachers are eligible to apply and it is not necessary to be insured with Johnson for Home or Auto Insurance to make application. Deadline to apply is **July 15, 2021**. For more information or to apply visit Johnson.ca/scholarship.

NLTA SCHOLARSHIPS

The NLTA will award six scholarships to dependents of active, retired, disabled or deceased members of the NLTA. The award will be made upon completion of secondary school and through application to the NLTA. Scholarships are valued at \$1,000 and are awarded based on the criteria used by the Department of Education for the selection of provincial scholarship recipients.

To obtain an application form visit the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca and click "Forms" or contact the NLTA at mail@nlta.nl.ca.

Application Deadline: July 31, 2021



"Teacher's pet? That's me."



Scholarship Program 2021

OPEN: April 15th, 2021

Education Week Contest Winners

3rs: Renew. Refresh. Reconnect.

Congratulations to **Holy Redeemer Elementary** in Spaniard's Bay and **Elwood Elementary** in Deer Lake, winners of our Education Week 2021 Social Media Contest. Both schools were awarded **top prizes of \$500.**

Congratulations as well to the following **10 classrooms** who won a **\$100 VISA gift card:**

- ★ DeAnna Ellsworth's class
Admiral's Academy, Conception Bay South
- ★ Heather Mercer's class
All Hallows Elementary, North River
- ★ Sam Paterson's class
Brookside Intermediate, Portugal Cove-St. Philip's
- ★ Brenda Crane's class
Brookside Intermediate, Portugal Cove-St. Philip's
- ★ Ashley Fowler's class
Cloud River Academy, Roddickton
- ★ Carla Warren's class
Fortune Bay Academy, St. Bernard's
- ★ Erinne Kearsy's class
Holy Trinity Elementary, Torbay
- ★ Beverly Billard's class,
Octagon Pond Elementary, Paradise
- ★ Nirosha March's class
Tricentia Academy, Arnold's Cove
- ★ Ashleigh Hudson's class
Vanier Elementary, St. John's



Education Week Survey Winners

Congratulations is also extended to the following winners who were awarded an NLTA prize pack for participating in the NLTA 2021 Education Week Survey: **Krista Burrows, Beverley Norman, Pamela Avery** and **Susan Alexander**. Thank you to all who completed the survey. Your input will be very important to us as we move forward to plan future Education Weeks in the province.

WILLIAM (BILL) CONNOLLY

William (Bill) Connolly of Flatrock passed peacefully away on December 5, 2020, at the age of 82 years.

A teacher for 31 years, Bill was an admired educator and mentor to the many students he taught at Holy Cross and St. Pius X School. He especially loved seeing old students and colleagues in retirement.

Many in the sporting community consider Bill to be one of the finest ambassadors in our province for the sport of basketball. A highly regarded forward with St. Pat's, Holy Cross and Memorial, he was enshrined into the St. John's Basketball Hall of Fame as a player-builder in 1987. However, it was his work as a floor official where he left his true mark on the game.

In an officiating career that spanned decades, Bill officiated at every level – locally, provincially and nationally. He was the recipient of numerous awards, including the prestigious J. A. Wink Wilcox award of merit for his dedication and contribution to officiating. This award held special significance, as he became the first official from our province to be presented with this national honour. Bill was equally proud to be the first official to be inducted into the Newfoundland and Labrador Basketball Association Hall of Fame in 1999. Today, his legacy as an official is recognized through the "Bill Connolly Rookie of the Year Award", given to a first-year provincial referee who demonstrates the potential, commitment, and interest in developing as a floor official.

Bill often said he officiated how he played – and that earned him the respect of players, coaches and colleagues. Considered colourful and fair on the court, Bill enjoyed officiating the game he loved.

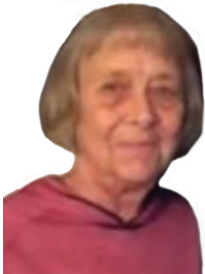
Bill is predeceased by his parents, Fred and Elizabeth Connolly, and son, Todd Connolly. Leaving to mourn his loving wife of 55 years, Josephine (Martin), devoted daughter Tracy (Terry Humber), treasured grandchildren Courtney Tapper-Connolly (Jon Codner), Terri Lynn Humber (Justin Hickey), Tyler Humber, and great-granddaughter Nora Codner. Also leaving behind with fond and loving memories are his sister Mercedes Escott (Ed), sister-in-law Anna Rohrbach (Bob), sister-in-law Maureen Martin, brother-in-law Jimmy Martin (Meredith, deceased), brother-in-law and special friend Gus Martin (Jennie), cousins Maud O'Keefe and Angela Wall, good friend Norman Langmead, and many cherished nieces, nephews and numerous friends.

We hope Bill will be remembered as someone who made a valued difference in the lives of the people he encountered as a teacher, coach, athlete, mentor, community leader, and most of all, a friend.

(Submitted by Trina Martin)



William (Bill) Connolly



Lynda Fawn Fowler



Brendan Jordan

LYNDA FAWN (BRIERS) FOWLER, 1954 - 2020

Lynda Fawn (Briers) Fowler passed peacefully away on November 21, 2020 at the young age of 66. Lynda was born on April 29, 1954, daughter of the late Esther (who passed away January 1, 2021) and Harold Briers of Sydney Mines, Nova Scotia.

Lynda attended Acadia University where she completed her Special Education training. After graduating, in 1975 she left Nova Scotia in her blue Mini and headed north to Labrador City. She began her 37 year career in education at Notre Dame Academy working as a special education teacher. With the reorganization of schools in Labrador West in 1997, she then moved to A.P. Low Primary where she finished her teaching career and wore many educational hats over the years including instructional resource teacher, classroom teacher, and librarian. Even upon retirement, Lynda was an essential volunteer at A.P. Low Primary helping out wherever she could. During her career she touched the lives of many. She will forever be remembered for her kindness, willingness to help, and her superb organizational skills.

Lynda dearly enjoyed her work, friends, and family in Labrador. It was in Labrador City that Lynda met her husband, Justin Fowler, and had their two children, Matthew and Nicholas. As a family, they enjoyed outdoor life together and spent many wonderful days at their cabin at Duley Lake. Matt and Nick were her life, and they constantly showed their love of their mother, especially in the care they gave her during her illness.

Lynda will be deeply missed by Matthew and Nicholas. Besides her sons, she leaves behind her brothers, David (Terri), and Bruce (Lisa), and sisters, Jeanne (Jody Jessome) and Wendy (Jim Clarke). Also left to mourn are her brothers-in-law, Gerry, Albert (Pauline), Ralph (Mary), and Francis, and sisters-in-law, Clare (Albert Spurvey), Eleanor (Cliff Winsor), Christine (Harold Budgell), as well as many nieces, nephews and friends. Lynda was predeceased by her husband, Justin Fowler; father, Harold Briers; and in-laws Lawrence, Harold, Bernard, Marie, and Theresa.

A beautiful service was held at Carol United Church in Labrador City to celebrate Lynda's life. In true Lynda style, she prepared a message to be read at the service which touched the hearts of everyone. Lynda planned her service to include uplifting songs, readings, and a special song which was near and dear to her heart to be sung by her teacher colleagues... *Keep on the Sunny Side of Life*. Lynda always looked at the brighter side of things so it seems fitting to end this tribute with a verse from the song reflecting what Lynda would want us to do...

Keep on the sunny side, always on the sunny side
 Keep on the sunny side of life
 It will help us every day, it will brighten all the way
 If we keep on the sunny side of life

~ Song lyrics written by Ada Blenkhorn

(Submitted by Glenda Applin & Rose Neville)

BRENDAN JORDAN, 1939-2021

Brendan Jordan was born in Ferryland on October 8, 1939 to John and Elizabeth (Butler) Jordan. Upon graduation from high school in 1957 he was approached to take a position as a teacher in St. Shott's without any formal training in education. He accepted, thus beginning a very rewarding career in teaching and administration, which took him to many communities along the Southern Shore including Aquaforte, Calvert, Fermeuse and Ferryland. Brendan spent his summers driving back and forth to Memorial University, and was successful in receiving a B.Ed. in 1974 and a B.A. in 1978. He also took a position as coordinator and teacher of the Adult Education Program in Ferryland or "Night School", which he delivered twice weekly.

Personable, vibrant, genuine, knowledgeable, respectful, and respected, Brendan inspired a generation of students and instilled in them a love of history and a zest for learning. Involved in many school activities, he was especially proud of the "Reach for the Top" teams that he coached throughout his years at Baltimore Regional High School, from where he retired in 1988.

Actively involved in his community, Brendan served as the first mayor of Ferryland, overseeing its incorporation in 1971. He was a member of church and historical committees in town and, known as a skilled public speaker, he served as an emcee at many events on the shore.

Brendan passed away at Pleasant View Towers on February 15, 2021 at the age of 81. Despite his dementia diagnosis, he never forgot that he was a teacher and would often scold the nursing staff for wasting time when they should have been "at their books"! Once a teacher, always a teacher.

Left to mourn a life well lived are his wife, Annie (O'Brien), daughters, Brenda Heard (John), Ramona Shortall (Mark), Kim Jordan (Moe Tehrani), and son, Neil.

(Submitted by Ramona Shortall)



CALL FOR INTEREST

The Math-Science Special Interest Council is calling for interest in joining their board. The board consists of 12 positions: 6 executive and 6 members at large.

The MSSIC meets monthly, with a minimum of 7 meetings per year. Board members are expected to attend a minimum of 4 meetings per year. Meetings take place via teleconference.

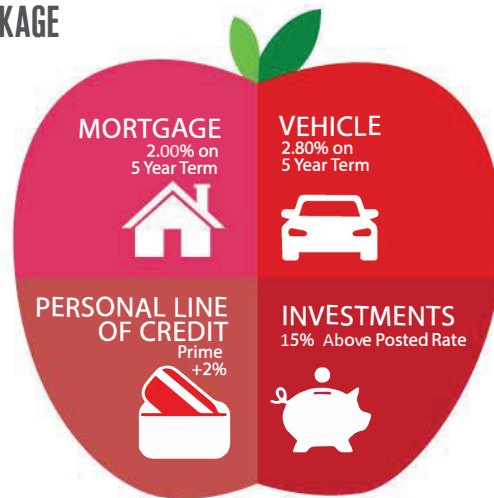
Elections, if necessary, will occur electronically in June. Once elected, members will assume duties within 2 months of elections and serve a two-year term. **The deadline for nominations is June 3, 2021.**

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

If interested in joining our team, please contact yvonedawe@nlesd.ca.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

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* 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.



NLTA President's Statement on the Report of the Premier's Economic Recovery Team

The following media statement was delivered by NLTA President Dean Ingram at a media conference on Friday, May 7, 2021.

I would like to thank all of you for coming today. I will be available over the next week if any of you would like to have more detailed conversations regarding the Report of the Premier's Economic Recovery Team as it relates to the future of the public education system in Newfoundland and Labrador.

It is important for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to understand that the NLTA has two legislated responsibilities in this province under the *Teachers' Association Act*.

The first is as the bargaining agent for teachers, school administrators, teaching and learning assistants, program specialists, school counsellors and psychologists, and speech-language pathologists – all of the professionals in our schools who work directly with students. This representation provides us with a unique and detailed understanding of the public education system. In this capacity, I will say clearly that the NLTA and its members will respect collective agreements that they negotiated and gave concessions to achieve. The NLTA and its members will respect the pension reform agreement that they negotiated and gave concessions to achieve. **I want to be absolutely clear on this – the NLTA will fight any attempt by government to legislate changes to these agreements or to remove any member from this Association.**

The NLTA's second role is as the professional association for educators. In this role, we have the important, legislated right and responsibility to advise government and the public on practical issues in education.

The Report of the Premier's Economic Recovery Team, authored by Dame Moya Greene, was, as you all know, just released yesterday. I have had an initial review of the report itself, which I will be studying more closely over the coming days. The document is extensive, and touches on a broad scope of issues

and areas of our provincial society and economy. In the time we have today, I will focus on the matters of most significant concern to the NLTA and our public K-12 education system. Following that, I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

1. Demographic Realities

In her media comments yesterday, Dame Greene stated that Newfoundland and Labrador has the lowest student/teacher ratio in the country. This statement, left hanging out there on its own, without reference to the unique context of our demographic realities, is not useful and is misleading at best. The report opines that our small student population should be an "advantage", without explanation or acknowledgement of our provincial demography, other than to reference three small coastal schools, two of which have been closed as noted in the small print of the footnotes. It is critical to consider the impact of population density, and overall geographic size as numbers alone do not tell the full story.

According to Statistics Canada data, Newfoundland and Labrador has the lowest population density among our closest comparators, the Atlantic Provinces, with 1.4 persons per square kilometre. In comparison, PEI has a population density of 24.7, Nova Scotia is 17.4, and New Brunswick is at 10.5 persons per square kilometre. There is no comparison. The cost of providing services in a province in which it can take three full days, if the weather holds, to travel between the furthest flung communities, will not be the same as it is for our geographically smaller, more densely populated neighbours.

Given this reality, in order for Newfoundland and Labrador schools to truly "level up", as Dame Greene puts it, is essentially to say that there will be no public education offered to children in rural areas of the province. The only solution proposed in the report is to pay families to be separated from their children for the duration of each school year. There is no talk of rural renewal or the many contributions that our

rural communities make to the provincial economy.

Interestingly as well, the report references the need to increase provincial immigration numbers, and cites public policies that encourage immigration as important in attracting and retaining new and skilled immigrants. Should we assume that this is a strategy for urban areas only? **Gutting, or “leveling”, the public education system in rural Newfoundland and Labrador seems completely opposed to the goal of encouraging and supporting new immigrants and their school-aged children to settle anywhere other than in larger centres.**

2. The K-12 Education System

“The Big Reset” report is critical of the provincial public K-12 education system, its teachers, the curriculum, and government’s ongoing implementation of recommendations made in 2017 by the Premier’s Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes. Yet, there was nobody on the Premier’s Economic Recovery Team, including Dame Greene, with extensive background, experience or expertise in public education. By way of consultation, the NLTA, the association representing professional educators in this province, was afforded one meeting with Dame Greene for less than an hour in late November of 2020.

The report calls for increased supports for students with disabilities, mental health issues, and those at risk of dropping out of school, while at the same time criticizing the recent resources added to the system to implement the 2017 recommendations of the Premier’s Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes, many of which overlap with needs identified by Dame Greene.

On what basis was it determined that grade 12 has become a “slack year for many students”? There is no footnoted, or any, source cited for this assertion.

Who are the “experts” that have indicated K-6 teachers trained in this province are not able to teach reading and math? That is what they do, every day. **Graduates from the MUN Faculty of Education are highly sought after and aggressively recruited by school boards and education authorities from across the country and around the world.** With respect to technology, during the pandemic, current teachers, graduates of Memorial University, have led the way, volunteering their time and talents in offering leadership and professional learning to their colleagues on the use and integration of technology in teaching and learning.

Dame Greene cites no support for the recommendation that school administrators should not be members of the NLTA. Neither does she explain how this move would positively impact the province’s fiscal situa-

tion. The recent report of the Premier’s Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes, *Now is the Time*, made no such conclusions, despite being focussed exclusively on public K-12 education in this province. The collegial model of school leadership is entirely consistent with the primary role of school principals as instructional leaders, pursuant to the *Schools Act, 1997*. Principals and vice principals are, in effect and appropriately, the lead teachers in their schools – they are required to be certified as teachers, and are teachers first. Most vice principals and a number of principals in Newfoundland and Labrador also have teaching responsibilities. Schools are unique and dynamic workplaces and, while no system is perfect, our current context promotes unity in the profession while allowing for role clarity. This balance promotes collegiality, and remains effective in Alberta, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, as well as Newfoundland and Labrador. In other jurisdictions where school administrators have been removed from a common professional organization for teachers, much time, energy and effort has been redirected to dealing with union issues or other hierarchical conflicts. Recommendations to reduce administrative supports at the school district level would further erode time available for instructional leadership at the school level.

There is always room for improvement and the public education system should be responsive to evolving labour force demands. However, to say that K-12 education in this province does not provide students with a strong educational foundation is a gross exaggeration and over-simplification of the issues. OECD assessments are the only source cited in support of this assertion, yet respected national and international authorities in public education, such as Education International and the Canadian Teachers’ Federation, have consistently critiqued reliance on such measures as the sole indicator of an education system’s effectiveness. Dame Greene said herself that our young people are leaving the province. **Our students compete successfully for post-secondary and employment opportunities outside of Newfoundland and Labrador.** They leave well-prepared and well-educated, sought after in other parts of Canada.

The report demonstrates a disturbing lack of understanding of and appreciation for the reality of teachers’ workdays. Five hours is merely the minimum legislated daily instructional time. There is no guaranteed preparation time during the work day for teachers in this province. I would welcome Dame Greene to follow the footsteps of just one teacher in our K-12 system and tell me how many hours they work in a day – preparing for class and evaluating assessments;

delivering instruction; writing reports; supervising students before class, during recess and lunch breaks, and following dismissal; making contact with families; attending after school meetings with parents and colleagues; volunteering their time for extracurricular activities, including sports, music, drama, and student leadership programs. I could go on and indeed, this entire issue has been well researched over time. The 2004 study conducted by one of the most respected educators this province has ever produced, the late Dr. David Dibbon, former teacher, principal and Dean of the MUN Faculty of Education, found that the work done by teachers outside of the legislated work day is considerable. **Dr. Dibbon's research concluded that teachers work on average 46.67 hours per week to perform required professional duties, and that this increases to more than 52 hours per week if you include the voluntary activities that add so much to our schools and contribute to the overall social and emotional health of students.** The suggestion that extending official school operational hours will somehow create more time for professional learning and collaboration is ill-informed and insulting. To suggest that teachers engage in five hours of instruction per day without investing additional time in planning and preparation is naive.

3. Public Service Pensions

As noted in the report, provincial pension plans recently underwent significant and successful reform. This was not a one-sided process, and teachers made considerable sacrifices, in terms of retirement benefits and pension contributions, to achieve this result. In 2015, under the sole administration of government, the funding ratio of the Teachers' Pension Plan was 62.7%, and the plan was projected to be exhausted within 30 years, placing retirement income for all teachers at risk. Not a glowing example of good management. **As a result of pension reform and the 2016 Joint Sponsorship Agreement between government and the NLTA, along with the strategic investment plan that has been implemented by the Teachers' Pension Plan Corporation, the funded status of the TPP fund has grown to 114%, with an 86% probability of remaining fully funded in 20 years.** An excellent example of working together to solve a problem.

Dame Greene's recommendations would have a destabilizing impact and would work against growing our economy. As a population ages, pensions become more important to the economy as a stabilizer. Solid jobs with retirement benefits, to which employees make equal contributions, attract young professionals. Newfoundland and Labrador is already facing difficul-

ties recruiting teachers and other educational professionals in many parts of the province. Eliminating defined benefit pension plans would serve only to weaken our competitiveness and drive more young professionals towards opportunities elsewhere.

4. General Remarks

The NLTA recognizes the serious financial realities that are facing this province. To effectively respond to this fiscal reality, one thing government must do is to finally begin treating public education as an investment and not only an expense. Investments in quality, well resourced, publicly funded education are, in effect, investments in our economy that can have a significant and sustained positive impact over time if Government is prepared to make a long-term commitment. Research from various agencies, including a recent study by the Conference Board of Canada, shows that investments in improving public education generate positive economic results, including reductions in crime and poverty, gains in productivity, and decreased costs in health care, social assistance and the criminal justice system.

I am deeply concerned by the content and lack of vision in *The Big Reset* report. It is beyond disappointing. The recommendations for public education will devastate communities, especially in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, and send the wrong message to young people, families and immigrants. Now is not the time for austerity, but for a proactive vision and plan for the future, a future that includes strong public services and good jobs that will attract and retain professionals and their families.

The disrespect for the public sector and negotiations is appalling. The NLTA is always willing to engage in good faith discussions with government; however, Dame Greene's blatant call for a legislated approach to settling labour relations matters is an unwarranted attack on constitutionally protected collective bargaining rights. **I will say again that the NLTA and its members will respect collective agreements that they negotiated and gave concessions to achieve. The NLTA and its members will respect the pension reform agreement that they negotiated and gave concessions to achieve. And to be clear, we will fight any attempt by government to legislate changes to these agreements.**

We will continue to review and assess this report in the coming days and weeks and will no doubt have more to say as we move forward and prepare for the consultation process referenced yesterday by Minister Coady. (www.nlta.nl.ca/nlta-response-to-premiers-economic-recovery-team-report)

Thank you.



BIENNIAL GENERAL MEETING 2021

The 2021 Biennial General Meeting of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association took place virtually from April 7-9. Below are some highlights of BGM as well as resolutions put forth by branches and special interest councils.

PRESIDENT'S BGM ADDRESS

The following are excerpts from President Dean Ingram's address delivered at BGM 2021:

While this convention may be a little different than previous BGMs, like every other before it, very important decisions are going to be made. One of the most important is who will sit as your Provincial Executive. To those who have offered themselves – a sincere thank you. You have decided to put yourself forward to be considered by this Assembly to provide very important leadership and set the direction for our Association. In doing so you are saying you are willing to take on the responsibility that comes with it.

I have been humbled and honoured to be your President. I built my Presidency on the work of former Presidents before me. I hope that when you reflect on my four years as your President you will see that I have honoured them and mirrored the behaviours that allowed them to find success.

This year's BGM is a bittersweet one for me. I have been attending these conventions for my entire 29 year career. Today marks my 18th as a member of Provincial Executive. It would have been my 20th but this body decided I wasn't worthy in 2001! But you know what, truth be told, back then I wasn't. I approached the convention that year in a very nonchalant way. I didn't recognize the important role that the Executive body plays and the gravity of the decisions that are made. I do now and that knowledge has been my cornerstone ever since being elected.

To those who are chosen at this convention to be part of the Executive body, never forget to whom you are accountable and responsible for. Take any and all feedback seriously and make it part of your deliberations. You are not here to be told what you want to hear. Your job is to listen to, and most importantly heed, what you need to hear. The leadership role that you wish to take on will require being willing to make many decisions – at times very tough

decisions – that must be framed in how it impacts our membership today and in to the future.

In closing, I want to end by thanking the many people that have helped and supported me along the way – many of them are here in this virtual setting. Some aren't.

Firstly, I want to thank every President I had the pleasure of serving with. Every single one of them were always willing to take my calls no matter the topic. It was something I truly appreciated. Had this been a regular BGM, I would have thanked them all in person. In time I hope to be able to do exactly that.

I want to thank the Executive members I have sat with since 2003. While we may not have always agreed on every issue, I know that the debates and discussion always came about from a genuine concern for our membership and the province's education system.

It has been said that good organizations hire good people. Great organizations hire great people. The staff that work at 3 Kenmount Road are second to none. I have seen firsthand how our organization functions in comparison to others. The NLTA is blessed with a group of professional, dedicated people. I see it every day and I have been the beneficiary of their dedicated service. It is a lot of work keeping me in line and keeping me prepared. They do it very well.

No one can do anything without the love and support of their family. I have been truly fortunate to have an abundance of both. My wife and son have always been my biggest supporters.

Anything I have accomplished is only possible because of their love and support. Often times my wife has had to pick up the slack when I wasn't there. Over the years, I have missed events with my son, from trick or treating when he was younger to most recently not being there for his last Minor Hockey Provincials. To my family, thank you for all that you have done. Thank you for your

understanding. I know without a doubt that I wouldn't be here today without you.

Finally I want to thank the province's teachers for putting their faith and trust in me as your President these past four years. For those who have supported me, I am truly thankful. For those who haven't always or those who have questioned and criticized me – well... I thank you every bit as much, if not, in some ways, more. All the outreach I have received from the membership has shaped me into the President that I am today and most importantly prepared me and galvanized my commitment to my role, this organization and its members.

I have been truly honored to sit as your President. It has been a privilege that I will forever cherish.

I can only hope that I was able to represent you, to advocate for you and speak for you in the manner that you needed and deserved.

To incoming President Trent Langdon, the keys will soon be yours!

Every weekend I usually go for morning drives and I usually take a few minutes to listen to Jiggs Breakfast. As the show closes they typically play a song from the High Kings. I won't sing it for you! But with that being said, I quote:

*Of all the money that e'er I had
I spent it in good company
And all the harm I've ever done
Alas, it was to none but me
And all I've done for want of wit
To memory now I can't recall
So fill to me the parting glass
Good night and joy be to you all*

Thank you. It has been my honor.





PRESIDENT-ELECT'S ADDRESS

There are **3 KEY MESSAGES** that I would like to share with you...

- a) It is important that we never forget that we are 'Stewards of the Social Good'; we must stand up for what is 'true and just' for children and public education. Fighting for the common good will translate into effective mobilization when needed for Association purposes.
- b) Professionalism and Integrity has served us extremely well through the years; now is the time to continually uphold and demonstrate these character traits.
- c) Solidarity will be our strength; it is rooted in Identity and a Sense of Community... solidarity secures our individual and group resilience. We must always demonstrate to the employer that Teachers/TLAs are continually organizing as one.



President-Elect Trent Langdon

We need to forever uphold the '3 Pillars of a Teachers' Union'

- 1) Fighting for Funding of Public Education
- 2) Protection of Labor Rights
- 3) Fighting for Social Justice

Moving Forward

I will need the help of all of you (both personally and professionally) to chart the waters that lie ahead. I will be reaching out to you for the same.

Call to Action

I will hold true to my election platform of championing mental and emotional well-being for our members, building the diversity of representation within our leadership, and further solidifying our collective rights and protections.

There is mending to be done

- The Pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges with impacts that will last for some time to come; I truly believe however that our steadfastness will be rewarded.
- Our Collective Agreement is strong after decades of fighting and holding fast – there is still work to be done!
- We must battle the class size dilemma that continues to consume our personal and professional lives. From this, all things will improve.

To conclude, I will be there... your Executive will be there... your NLTA will be there... We need you to be there!

I am wishing you steadfastness and courage (and strength) in the coming weeks as we collectively battle the challenges, eyeing better days ahead.

It will truly be an honor to represent you along with our incoming VP Maureen Doyle-Gillingham and the newly-elected Provincial Executive.

In solidarity my friends... Thank you.

Morale is a state of mind...it is steadfastness and courage and hope.

~ George Marshall (former US Secretary of State/Secretary of Defense)

PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2021-23

- **Trent Langdon**, President, Waterford Valley Branch, School Counsellor, St. Peter's Junior High, Mount Pearl
- **Maureen Doyle-Gillingham**, Vice-President, Baccalieu Branch, IRT/Career Development Teacher, Baccalieu Collegiate, Old Perlican
- **Derrick Baker**, Belleoram-Wreck Cove Branch Skills Trade/Social Studies Teacher, Fitzgerald Academy, English Harbour West
- **Angela Dawe**, St. John's Centre Branch Art/Home Economics Teacher, Brother Rice Junior High, St. John's
- **Derek Drover**, Seagaulher Branch Teaching Principal, Victoria Academy, Gaultois
- **Darryl George**, Upper Trinity South Branch Assistant Principal, Crescent Collegiate, Blaketown
- **Kelly Loch**, Carbonear Branch Instructional Resource Teacher/Reading Specialist/Assistant Principal, Persalvic School, Victoria
- **Tracey Payne**, Humber Branch Chemistry/Science Teacher, Corner Brook Regional High School, Corner Brook
- **Colin Short**, Port aux Basques Branch Elementary Teacher, St. James Elementary, Port aux Basques
- **Sheldon Slaney**, Placentia Branch Grade 4 Teacher, St. Anne's Academy, Dunville
- **Della Way**, Belle Mer Branch Science eTeacher, Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI), Flower's Cove
- **Sean Weir**, Coastal Labrador South Branch Assistant Principal/Teacher-Librarian/Multi-Grade Teacher, Bayside Academy, Port Hope Simpson





NLTA AWARD WINNERS

On the occasion of each BGM, the NLTA recognizes individuals who have made a significant contribution to education, the NLTA and its Branches and Special Interest Councils. Below are those honoured for BGM 2021:

Barnes Award

The Barnes Award, named in honour of Dr. Arthur Barnes, the first Minister of Education in the province who, in 1928, initiated a number of teacher conferences to promote excellence in education, was established in 1987 to recognize outstanding professional development services provided by teachers at the special interest council level.

Terri L. Decker from the Council of Special Services (COSS) Special Interest Council is a recipient of the 2019-20 Barnes Award.

Megan Roome from the Technology Education Special Interest Council (TESIC) is a recipient of the 2020-21 Barnes Award.

Bancroft Award

The Bancroft Award, named in honour of James Frederick Bancroft, the first President of the NLTA, was established in 1980 to mark the 90th anniversary of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. The Award recognizes outstanding service at the branch level of the NLTA.

Natalie Jackson of the Taylor's Brook Branch is a recipient of the Bancroft Award for 2019-20.

Stephen Drover of the Port aux Basques Branch is a recipient of the Bancroft Award for 2020-21.

Special Recognition Award

The Special Recognition Award was instituted in 1990 by Johnson Inc. to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. The award is presented annually to an active or life member of the NLTA who has made a major contribution to the cultural, social and/or community life of Newfoundland and Labrador.

James Feltham of Deer Lake Branch is a recipient of the 2020-21 Special Recognition Award.

Patricia Cowan Award for Support and Promotion of Education

The Patricia Cowan Award for Support and Promotion of Education, established in 2007, is named in honour of the first woman NLTA President and may be presented once during a President's term of office. The award recognizes outstanding contribution to teachers and the teaching profession by individuals or groups outside the K-12 school system, either through advocacy or a relationship with the NLTA resulting in a positive impact on teaching and learning.

Susan Rose is the recipient of the Patricia Cowan Award for 2021. Susan is a life-long advocate for human rights and lobbyist for LGBTQ rights in the education system.

Honorary Membership – BGM 2021

Provincial Executive may award NLTA Honorary Membership to any person who, in their assessment, has made a significant contribution to the cause of education.

Don Ash was made an honorary member of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association at this year's BGM. Don joins a group of 46 distinguished Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who have received this honor.



Susan Rose accepts the Patricia Cowan Award from President-Elect Trent Langdon.



Don Ash becomes an Honorary Member of the NLTA.

RESOLUTIONS FROM BGM 2021

Category A: Association

Award Nominations Deadline

1. That the NLTA change the deadline for submission of nominations for awards from January 15th to January 31st. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Category B: Programs and Services

Allocation for SLPs Specializing in Augmentative & Alternative Communication

4. That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education and school boards for additional allocations for, and the creation of, an associated itinerant Speech-Language Pathologist (S-LP) position in each of the regions, and the French School Board, specializing in Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC). **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**
5. That the Collective Bargaining Committee consider for inclusion in the opening proposals for the next round of negotiations a proposal for allocations of Speech Language Pathologists (S-LPs) as follows: Speech Language Pathologists shall be allocated based on a student to teacher ratio of 40:1 with a maximum of twenty-five (25) direct contact students per allocated position. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Allowance for Speech-Language Pathologists

6. That the Collective Bargaining Committee consider for inclusion in the opening proposals for the next round of negotiations, a proposal for payment of allowances to Speech-Language Pathologists (S-LPs), at the same rate as allowances for School Psychologists. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Leave for Principals

7. That the NLTA lobby the NLESD, CSFP, and the Department of Education to provide leave time for administrators whenever they need to attend Board and Department meetings such as family of schools meetings or district wide meetings, and that such mandatory meetings be held during the scheduled teacher workday. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Teacher Librarian Allocations and Learning Common Grants

8. That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education for teacher librarian allocation improvements and library learning commons grants, similar to those found in Phase I of the K-6 Education Action Plan, for all schools. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Teacher Duty

9. That the Collective Bargaining Committee consider for inclusion in the opening proposals for the next round of negotiations a proposal that supervision duty not be required of teachers. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Teaching Experience/Qualifications

10. That the Collective Bargaining Committee consider for inclusion in the opening proposals for the next round of negotiations a proposal to make teaching experience equivalent to academic qualifications. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Professional Learning During Working Day

12. That the NLTA lobby the NLESD and CSFP to offer district led PL only during the working day. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

NLTA Video Workshops

13. That the NLTA investigate the feasibility of creating and promoting informational videos for certain sections of the workshops offered by Program and Services (e.g. financial planning, wellness, social media, etc.). **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Equitable Access to Digital Resources

14. That the NLTA continue to advocate that the Department of Education and School Districts develop, maintain, and provide free access to a Virtual Library Learning Commons in order for teachers and students to have equitable access to resources for all schools. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Gender Inclusive Language

15. That, when gender is not relevant to the intended purpose or meaning within a message, the NLTA will use gender-inclusive language and will lobby the Department of Education, NLESD, and CSFP to use gender-inclusive language. This would include, but is not limited to, existing and future policies and other written forms of communication (e.g., memos, forms, surveys, etc.). **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

LGBTQ2S+ Representation in Curriculum

16. That, by reviewing and updating a wide variety of subject and grade level curricula, the NLTA lobby the Department of Education to purposefully include meaningful and authentic LGBTQ2S+ representation within existing and emerging prescribed curriculum resources. **(CARRIED)**

Resolutions from the Floor

- FL1 That NLTA have public research conducted to assess if the Teachers Change Lives and Invest In Our Kids campaigns have changed or improved public perception of teachers. **(CARRIED)**
- FL2 That the NLTA fund costs for an alternate delegate to attend a 2023 Biennial General Meeting from any branch and special interest council. **(REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)**
- FL3 That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education for the approval of emergency supply substitute teachers by having them approved before the beginning of the school year, and have the length of their approval last until the end of October of the following school year. **(CARRIED)**



A Trip Down Memory Lane – and a Hope for the Future

by DARLENE JOHNSON

After a year fraught with uncertainty and anxiety, never has the emotional aspect of teaching been clearer. The enthusiasm and passion teachers bring to their classrooms, and the genuine caring and compassion they feel for their students and colleagues has been evident throughout the many challenges this past year has brought. But while this kind of emotion can energize teaching and the learning environment, if not balanced, it can also drain that energy and compromise the passion. Acknowledging this dichotomy is important as it highlights the need for strong emotional supports for teachers at every stage in their careers. In the excerpts below, two West Coast teachers recount how mentorship provided them with a strong and continuous source of emotional support long after their official “learning relationship” ended.

Sherra Robinson (Itinerant for Safe and Inclusive Schools - Western Region)

“In the Summer of 2004, fresh out of my Bachelor of Education program, I secured an English teaching position at Long Range Academy in Cow Head. I cannot even begin to tell you how excited I was about this opportunity, even while I was nervous about the many challenges I knew awaited. When I arrived at the school, I was met by Denise Reid.

From the beginning, I felt like a member of a team, in large part because of Denise’s kind and caring nature. She was the kind of teacher who challenged students, but she made it clear that it was most important to provide that caring space students need to ask questions and learn from mistakes. For Denise, that meant meeting them every day with love in your heart and a smile on your face. She gave students choice and a voice and taught them to use those voices. There is no doubt these early experiences helped carve a path to the job I do today.

I am sure I messed up a thousand times those two years that we worked together, but Denise never judged, and always made me feel like my ideas mattered. Almost 17 years later, I realize that I am the educator I am today in large part due to support I received from my Long Range Academy family. Denise was

such a big part of that – always pushing me to be better but letting me make mistakes and learn along the way. Even today, I know that I can pick up the phone or email her at any point to get the support I need during increasingly challenging times.”

Denise Reid (Gros Morne Academy)

“I first met Sherra in 2004 when she secured a position at Long Range Academy. From the beginning, our relationship was a reciprocal one, though Sherra may not have realized it. I had the experience and Sherra, fresh from university, had some creative new ideas and a much better grasp of technology. There were some growing pains for Sherra, of course, and I did what I could to be there for her along the way.

Sherra also had a background in theatre which was of great benefit to both me and the school. We made a great team pulling on each other’s strengths, and together, we made a very positive environment for all students involved. We even hosted a regional festival – a first for Long Range Academy. I remember being hesitant; at the time I had two young children at home, and I just didn’t have the same sort of energy as Sherra. But again, our combination of experience and enthusiasm carried us both through and allowed us to bring that wonderful opportunity to our school.

That was 17 years ago, and we have always kept in contact, whether it be at some drama festival or simply bouncing some ideas around again on the phone or through emails. I can honestly say that Sherra taught me to not be so frightened of technology, to take more creative approaches to teaching and to never let go of my enthusiasm for teaching. Always with a positive attitude, Sherra made a great team player! There were many laughs and a few tears during our time working together! Even today, should we meet each other, in or out of school, there is always a big hug and great memories that will always bind us!”

In their article on *Mentoring in the New Millennium*, Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) highlight the importance of a strong community of colleagues and stress that this community benefits new teachers immensely. However, it also allows mentors to develop “new insights into their own and others’ teaching, new relationships, and a renewal of enthusiasm and commitment to their craft and career” (p. 52). Sherra and Denise’s story illustrates just this experience and offers hope for the capacity of teachers to support and empower one another through mentorship and friendship.

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Darlene Johnson is an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at the NLTA, djohnson@nlta.nl.ca.





A Year Like No Other

by STEFANIE TUFF

When you take on a new challenge, it is normal to feel excited and a bit apprehensive at the same time. If I am being honest though, I find it difficult to remember how I felt in January 2021 as I embarked upon a new stage in my career as Executive Director of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. It all seems like a very long time ago right now. I am sure we can all agree that the 2020-21 school year has been anything but normal. While pandemic fatigue is taking a toll on everyone, and a big part of me would like to write about something, anything else right now, COVID-19 has defined our reality this year. The impact of the virus and Public Health emergency on the education system as a whole and NLTA members in particular has been significant and is ongoing. My goal here is to provide a brief perspective of your Association's approach to this crisis and efforts on behalf of members since commencing in my current role.

Throughout these unprecedented and challenging times, your Association has been guided by four principles: that the safety of students, teachers and administrators is paramount; that learning plans and employer expectations must be achievable and manageable, allowing teachers to exercise their professional judgement; that NLTA members should not be financially disadvantaged by any suspensions of in-school instruction; and, that regular and timely communications are important, helping to minimize anxiety and demonstrate respect for members.

NLTA staff and the President have been active and proactive since the beginning of pandemic response measures in March 2020. The NLTA immediately raised concerns about the impact on schools with Department of Education and school district officials and, via a news release on March 16, 2020, publicly questioned the wisdom of continuing in-school instruction. Later the same day, at the end of a long weekend, government announced an immediate suspension of in-school classes. This was just the beginning, and your Association's advocacy and action have continued and persisted since then. I won't repeat information from my predecessor's previous updates, but all of the NLTA news releases, calls to action, guidance documents and updates for mem-

bers, along with a full archive of the President's media interviews can be accessed online.

Calls for enhanced safety precautions in schools and earlier access to COVID-19 vaccinations for teachers continued in January 2021. Before government would officially identify the resurgence in cases in early February as an "outbreak", the NLTA began advocating for a suspension of in-school instruction and work from home protocols for members on February 8. On February 14, it was announced that all schools in the province would be moving to online learning for at least two weeks, and the Association lobbied diligently to ensure that all teachers had the option to work from home during this "circuit breaker" period. As in person classes were set to resume for some schools later that month, the NLTA continued to speak publicly on the lack of clear information regarding the impact of the outbreak on schools and the need for stronger Public Health measures to protect students and teachers, particularly in light of the confirmed presence of the B117 variant of concern. Subsequently, more details on cases in schools were released, and some increased precautions were announced, including stronger mask requirements for students, as well as confirmation that teachers would be included in Phase 2 of the vaccination roll-out plan.

Since the return to Scenario 1 for most schools, the Association has continued to raise concerns and speak truth, publicly, to the "myth" of K-9 cohorts as an effective substitute for physical distancing and proper ventilation. Some action, although not ideal, has been taken to mitigate cohort issues for a handful of junior high schools. The NLTA has brought concerns about student and teacher privacy related to the blended learning model introduced for high schools in April 2021 to the attention of the provincial Privacy Commissioner.

We have watched other jurisdictions suspend collective agreements and enhance management rights in response to the pandemic, with teachers required to continue in person instruction during periods of much higher COVID-19 prevalence than that which has triggered shifts to virtual teaching and learning in this province. The Minister of Health has stated

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

that teacher access to vaccinations, as part of Phase 2, should be underway by mid-May, and we continue to monitor this closely. The NLTA has worked collaboratively with the Department and school districts to further the interests of members whenever possible, but has not hesitated to speak publicly and pursue grievances and arbitrations when necessary to advance the principles underlying our efforts. Your Association continues to advocate for the long-term retention of the increased allocations for school administration, school counsellors and term contract substitute positions that our lobbying efforts achieved for the current school year.

Throughout this challenging period of time for the NLTA and its members, Association staff, with the support of your dedicated and focussed Provincial Executive, have responded to thousands of contacts from members in a timely fashion, and have moved quickly to provide accurate information and guidance on issues of concern for teachers. There is more to do, and your Association continues in its work to advance the cause and support the needs and interests of the membership. The NLTA is the only institution that speaks for teachers, and should not be held to blame for the failures of those in positions of power.

All the best to NLTA members for a safe and relaxing summer as this year like no other draws to a close.

Stefanie Tuff is Executive Director of the NLTA, stuff@nlta.nl.ca.

NLTA STAFF CHANGES

The NLTA is pleased to announce the following staff appointments:

IAN CREWE

Ian Crewe has been appointed to the position of **Assistant Executive Director**, effective January 4, 2021.

GABRIEL RYAN

Gabriel Ryan has been appointed to a term position (until August 31, 2022) of **Administrative Officer, Programs and Services**, effective February 11, 2021.

KENDA RIGGS

Kenda Riggs has been granted tenure in the position of **Coordinator, Employee Assistance Program**, effective March 5, 2021.

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Save up to \$800 when you bundle your home and car insurance.*



NLTA members also enjoy access to perks like:

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Look Forward to a Summer Staycation

by GAIL CARROLL

We are still battling the COVID-19 Pandemic and at the time of writing this article, there is no news on whether the Atlantic Bubble will be opened or how travel might look for those wishing to vacation this summer. One thing we know for sure is that it has been a super busy and stressful year for all. It is important for you to start thinking about how your summer vacation will look and make it one to enjoy no matter what the restrictions and limitations. There are so many beautiful places to see and enjoy right here in our home province. This year might challenge you to get creative with your planning, but it is very important for you to plan a beautiful and restful break for yourself.

Now that the weather has finally taken a turn for the better, there are longer days, a few extra hours of sunshine, an increase in temperatures and spring fever. It's finally here and how we long to spend those hours outside after the long winter inside (especially this year). School is winding down and we are thinking and dreaming of summer vacation. We are officially on the count down. So, what do you plan to do with your vacation?

Many of you may be avid gardeners and look forward to spending time at your favorite hobby. It allows you to enjoy the great outdoors, be creative and immerse yourself in something that requires your attention so completely that you can forget the world around you. For those who would like to try gardening but may live in an apartment or condo, you might consider trying your hand at container gardening. Lots of fun and color for you to enjoy your patio space. A website you may enjoy that provides plenty of ideas and inspires creativity is www.containergardening.about.com.

We have a beautiful province to explore and enjoy. So, when we say vacation, we mean "vacate your regular life and routine to do something fun and wonderful". Think about visiting some places in our wonderful province you have not been before. You can camp, book a cottage, or stay at a hotel or bed and breakfast. So many wonderful choices. For

those who enjoy hiking, take a look at the East Coast Trail www.eastcoasttrail.ca. The website offers many choices and suggestions for places to stay as well. Another great website to visit is www.explorenewfoundlandandlabrador.com/101-things-newfoundland-labrador. It offers 101 things to do and places to see in our great province. No shortage of ideas here.

The official website for the province is www.newfoundlandlabrador.com. Lots of great information on this website including where to go, what to do and places to stay including cottages and B and Bs.

The website below is supplied by the province for guidance to all who wish to travel within Newfoundland and Labrador this summer. Great information on staying safe and COVID-19 guidelines for travellers and for those who own and operate tourist businesses. If you are considering travelling within the province this summer, remember to plan as soon as possible as places book quickly despite the pandemic. (www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/individuals-and-households/vacations-at-home/)

It is so important to find time over the summer to take care of yourself. As we all know, time flies by very quickly and to make the most of your time off it is important to be able to let go of this past school year and have that down time for rest and rejuvenation.

There are many health benefits to taking a vacation:

- Improves your overall well-being.
- Calms your mind.
- Cuts your risk for heart attack.
- Decreases burnout.
- Improves family, social and work relationships.
- Improves mental health.
- Improves your concentration and focus.
- Increases your energy.
- Helps you to live a longer and healthier life.

If you find that the events of this past year are not allowing you to enjoy your break and enjoy some rest and relaxation, you might consider calling your EAP (Employee Assistance Program). You may benefit from some counselling to assist you in letting go of issues that are continuing to revisit you. Or

perhaps you need to attend to some personal work through counselling that you might have been thinking about or considering but just couldn't find the time because of the busyness of the year. Now might be a good time to make the time. Allow yourself that opportunity so that when the new school year approaches you will have had time for you and will be returning to school with some tips and tricks for approaching whatever challenges lie ahead.

Summer is also a time when we enjoy so many outdoor activities that it is prudent to take care of ourselves when enjoying the great outdoors. When travelling, remember to buckle up and drive the speed limit, adjusting your speed for weather conditions such as rain and fog. Remember to pack things like insect repellent, sun hats, sunscreen, bottled water, hand sanitizer and masks. Always let a neighbour, friend or family member know when you will be away and arrange to have someone take in your mail and news fliers in addition to keeping an eye out for your home while you are gone.

Keep an eye out for the UV index wherever your travels may take you. Although the sun is wonderful in so many ways – fueling our Vitamin D levels, improving our energy levels and our moods – there are also dangers associated with enjoying it. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. The ultra-violet rays in Canada are strong enough to cause serious harm to our skin. The Canadian Cancer Society advises that the risk of skin cancer due to the sun's harmful ultra-violet rays is much greater than it was 20 years ago.

Here are some tips from the Canadian Cancer Society in choosing a sunscreen:

- Choose a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30.
- Choose a broad-spectrum protectant and go for waterproof versus water resistant.

Now that you know which sunscreen lotion to buy, how do you apply it for optimal results?

- Apply sunscreen to exposed areas of the body 15-30 minutes before going outside. It is important to allow your body to absorb the sunscreen before exposure to the sun.
- You may need a friend's help for those hard-to-reach places.
- Remember to apply sunscreen to your ears, face, hands, neck and feet.
- Remember to re-apply sunscreen after swimming or when you have been out awhile and sweating.
- Sunscreen can be used all year. Remember that the UV factor can be high, even on cloudy days. Protect yourself and your loved ones. Don't forget to check the Weather Network's UV forecast and protect yourself in sun or cloud.

If you are not travelling and enjoying time at home or the cottage this summer, there are many other activities to enjoy from boating, swimming, golfing, playing tennis and hiking to relaxing with a good book that can take you on a wonderful escape or adventure.

Whatever you decide to do, remember to look after yourself and enjoy some much needed and deserved rest and relaxation – and remember to have fun!

Wishing all of you a safe, fun and happy summer.

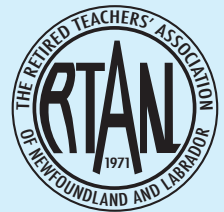
.....
Gail Carroll is a Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for Teachers. For confidential assistance contact Gail Carroll (ext. 242) or Kenda Riggs (ext. 265).

CONGRATULATIONS!

As we approach the end of another academic year, there are some of you who will not be returning to the classroom next school year because you will be retiring. The Retired Teachers' Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (RTANL) would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on reaching this important milestone and to wish you a long, healthy, and happy retirement.

The RTANL would also like to welcome you into our group of over 5600 fellow retirees scattered throughout the Province and beyond. Please consider becoming a member to enjoy our social activities and stay in touch by completing the Membership Application Form which was included with your package during the Pre-Retirement Seminar. For your convenience, this Form can also be downloaded from our website: www.nlta.nl.ca/rtanl and checking under Publications.

**There is life after retirement,
but you have to make it! Good luck.**



PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINARS 2021-22

Further information on Pre-Retirement Seminars for 2021-22 will be emailed to NLTA members in June.

Additional information can be found on the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca/preretirement2021.



Wellness on Wheels

by KELLIE BAKER

The Dream

What a dream – to support students in achieving their full potential and an enjoyable life! But how? One way is through wellness.

We hear the word *wellness* often, but what does it mean? One popular definition that the NL Department of Education favours is: *Wellness is a state of dynamic physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being that enables a person to achieve full potential and an enjoyable life**. With this (w)holistic definition in mind, our team considered the needs of our school community. In light of the news that Kinderstart would be at the very least postponed, if not cancelled, we applied for a grant with the intention of bringing wellness books into the lives and hands of Kinderstart students and families. We were fortunate to be awarded the Wellness Coalition - Avalon East grant in March 2021.

In addition to our intent to support the wellness of Kinderstart students and families, involving Grade 5 students had added wellness benefits. Engaging in the Wellness on Wheels initiative offered an opportunity for Grade 5 students to develop mental, social,

and spiritual well-being through authentic and meaningful contributions to our school community. For example, Ms. Meaney and her Grade 5 students took the lead on surveying primary students, collecting and analyzing data, making suggestions of wellness topics, sorting books, and preparing books for pick up and delivery. These learning opportunities added some real-world meaning to curriculum areas such as:

- math – creating and administering surveys
- science – analyzing data
- language arts – choosing and sorting developmentally appropriate French and English literature, applying second language learning to real world contexts
- health – practicing health literacy skills (e.g., accessing, analyzing, and decision making), and
- social studies and religious education – ensuring diversity so that everyone feels seen and included.

As well, discussions about the feelings associated with the process of being involved in a community initiative supported students in making connections to their own wellness, for example, the development of their social, spiritual, and mental well-being.

Realizing the Dream

In supporting others in realizing dreams for their schools, we felt it important to outline the *how* of our process in this article.

In addition to Ms. Meaney and the Grade 5 students, this initiative also involved: a) a team of teachers; b) a Children's and Youth Collections Services Librarian; and c) Cowan Heights administration. For example, Ms. Maher, our school principal, started the grant process by forwarding the grant information. I, as PE teacher, thought of an idea and asked our Reading Specialist, Ms. Phillip's for her insights. Together we decided on a plan of action – the formation of a library of books centered around wellness that could be distributed to Kinderstart families as a way to support their connection with the school community with the added benefit of supporting wellness. After presenting the plan to both Ms. Maher



Ms. Meaney's Grade 5 students.

*www.gov.nl.ca/education/files/Wellness-and-Positive-Relationships-November-2020.pdf

and Ms. Cassell (assistant principal), we applied for the grant. Ms. Meaney's class started right away, even before receiving confirmation of the grant, by pulling all developmentally appropriate health related books from the school's Library Learning Commons, creating and administering surveys, and analyzing and sorting data.

Within a couple of months, we were awarded the Wellness Coalition - Avalon East grant. It was now time to bring others on to the team; namely our school's part-time learning resources teacher, Ms. Aylward, and Ms. Blackmore, NL Public Libraries Children's Youth Collections. After analyzing the data collected from primary students about their wellness interests, the Grade 5 students provided Ms. Aylward and Ms. Blackmore with topics of wellness related books. With this information, they used their expertise to provide suggestions of books to purchase.

Ms. Aylward took the initiative one step further and also created a virtual space so that books could be accessed online – no purchase necessary! Ms. Phillips and Ms. Aylward also promoted the initiative through an online Kinderstart session, sharing a baggie of books, what the process would entail, and how to access books online. This project created an extra layer of excitement around the upcoming in-person Kinderstart session.

Grade 5 student involvement was not yet over though. Once the books arrived, the Grade 5 students were excited to open the boxes and hold the product of their work in their hands – meaningful! Students learned how to work as part of a team by sorting the books into bags. Preparing the baggies of books was a challenging task with so many hands involved, but they were all smiles (under their masks) in part due to the success they felt in accomplishing this task and getting one step closer to the books being distributed.

Currently the books are being sent home with families during Kinderstart sessions, but the Grade 5 students are busily making plans for more frequent exchanges. For example, one idea is to make a drop box that will help with contactless pick up and return. As the school year comes to a close, however, we are not sure how many more times we will be able to have a book exchange, but we look forward to continuing and improving Cowan Heights School's Wellness on Wheels for next school year.

The Meaning of the Dream

What this has meant to our school community is best exemplified by our Kinderstart families and Grade 5 students. For example, one four year old immersed in the reading of one of the books from the baggie,

remarked, "I just love new books". A mom also felt that Wellness on Wheels is "A wonderful program to encourage reading for the youngest learners – the more you read, the more you know!" Grade 5 students also shared the ways in which this was a meaningful experience saying, "It made me feel good that my school is giving books to little kids so they can grow up reading", "To have a leadership role in the community is awesome!", "I feel like I am helping my community with this program and I am thankful for that", and "It was fun and I enjoy helping others".

This brings us back to the definition of wellness: *Wellness is a state of dynamic physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being that enables a person to achieve full potential and an enjoyable life.* Wellness on Wheels, while a small initiative, has brought wellness into the lives of so many, not just through reading and the wellness content of the books, but also through the experience of being involved in a school-based project that reaches beyond the school walls.

Supporting our school community in achieving their full potential and an enjoyable life in whatever little ways we can...What a dream!

We would like to send our thanks to the Wellness Coalition - Avalon East, for supporting many school-based wellness initiatives, including Wellness on Wheels.

.....
Kellie Baker is a K-7 PE specialist at Cowan Heights School in St. John's and teacher educator at Memorial University.

Grant Implementation Team: Cowan Heights School - Robyn Meaney & Grade 5 students, Kim Phillips, Catherine Aylward, and Kellie Baker. Newfoundland and Labrador Public Library, Children's Youth Collections and Services Librarian - Emily Blackmore.



Kinderstart student

I would like to thank the membership for their hard work during this stressful school year. I look forward to working with incoming President Trent Langdon and the new executive team to continue to advance issues that are important to the membership. All the very best for a relaxing and rejuvenating summer holiday.

Maureen Doyle-Gillingham,
Vice-President Elect, NLTA



Speech and Hearing Month 2021

Every year the Speech Language Pathologists Council, a special interest council of the NLTA, recognizes the month of May as Speech and Hearing Month. It is a time to raise public awareness about communication health, the importance of early detection and intervention in the treatment of communication disorders. S-LPs are essential members of education teams, taking on a variety of roles within the school setting. This includes collaborating with teachers in the classroom to provide individualized and group services to students of all ages. As members of interprofessional teams, they also contribute to educational goal setting, planning and curriculum accessibility. S-LPs play a critical role in supporting academic success, as well as the social and emotional well-being of students.



LANGUAGE AND LITERACY SKILLS

Speech-language pathologists can help.

Children need to learn to read **and read to learn.**

Literacy – the ability to read and write – enables us to communicate with others and learn about our world. To develop literacy skills, children first need speech and language skills.

Help your child develop strong literacy skills.

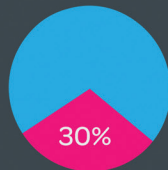


Children start to develop literacy skills by looking at words in their environment, including in books, on signs or in logos. Research has shown that one of the best ways you can promote literacy in your child is by **reading together**.

Children with language impairments are

4 to 5

TIMES MORE LIKELY
to have reading difficulties while in school.



Up to **30%** of children with speech disorders also have a reading disability.

Speech-language pathologists can help your child learn to read and write.

Recent research indicates that reading difficulties are primarily **language-based**. Speech-language pathologists can help children who are at risk of developing reading disorders through early identification and intervention. They can also offer treatment programs to children who experience reading difficulties.

Children with speech or language disorders are more likely to have difficulties with literacy. Follow your child's literacy development by looking out for these milestones:

- 1 YEAR OF AGE:** shows an interest in picture books.
- 2 YEARS OF AGE:** knows to hold books the right way up and turns the pages.
- 3 YEARS OF AGE:** understands that printed words have a function (or menus, lists, signs, etc.).
- 4 YEARS OF AGE:** can think of simple rhymes (e.g., toy and boy)
- 5 YEARS OF AGE:** knows all letters of the alphabet.



Speech-Language & Audiology Canada
Communicating care

Find a speech-language pathologist near you at
www.communicationhealth.ca

If you think your child may have a reading disorder, consult a speech-language pathologist.

Speech-Language Pathologists (S-LPs) are Essential Members of Education Teams

Speech-language pathology services support academic success, as well as the social and emotional well-being of students.

S-LPs assist students with:

- ✓ Reading
- ✓ Listening
- ✓ Vocabulary
- ✓ Feeding & Swallowing
- ✓ Writing
- ✓ Speaking
- ✓ Social Skills
- ✓ Augmentative and Alternative Communication



How we help:



Prevention

Our interventions can prevent literacy and secondary behaviour problems.



Collaboration

We contribute to educational goal setting, planning and curriculum accessibility.



Modelling

We participate in team teaching and model intervention activities to caregivers and other educators.



Adaptations

We recommend task adaptations that help students succeed.



Screening & Assessment

Group-administered or one-on-one screenings and assessments guide our interventions and inform school placement decisions.



Identification

We identify speech, language and communication challenges that directly impact student success.



Intervention

Our evidence-informed interventions include individual treatment, small and large group instruction, as well as consulting with other educators.

Speak to your school's S-LP to learn more about school-based speech-language pathology services.



Speech-Language & Audiology Canada
Communicating care



OF SPECIAL INTEREST...

PHE Virtual Conference/New Website: Health Educators Takeaways

by Stephen Pike

This past spring has seen a lot of changes for many educators, including the change of PHE Canada's National Conference from a face-to-face professional learning and networking event to a solely virtual event. This had many positive consequences, as each session could be viewed synchronously or asynchronously without the expenses of travelling to a face-to-face event. As a physical and health educator, I found many sessions to be very relevant and useful. There were many "nuggets" of inspiration or knowledge shared over the course of the event and I will share a couple with you, focusing on Health Education.

Salutogenic vs. Pathogenic

First, presenters noted that health education should be focusing on the salutogenic approach, rather than the pathogenic approach. Focusing on students' understanding of the development and maintenance of health, rather than focusing on disease and individuals being normal vs. abnormal. This will reduce the prevalence of students being labeled as normal or abnormal (e.g., based on body weight, nutritional intake) and will provide more opportunities for students to develop and engage in health promoting activities (e.g., gratitude journals, cooking classes).

Giving a Voice for Advocacy

As well, giving students a voice whenever possible to build their capacity and willingness to communicate, especially for advocacy and self care, needs to be a part of any health class or healthy school approach. Teachers at a rural school in Saskatchewan use "rock talks" for K-6 where students can deliver a rock to a teacher or administration to share their story. They have developed outdoor spaces with fire pits where conversation occurs similar to a sharing circle. Students have input in healthy schools policy and help determine school wide initiatives and projects that are health promoting and interesting to them, such as creation of a greenhouse. Many of us have heard when planning and teaching our lessons that we should focus on the "what, how and the why?" when teaching our health courses, but how often do we allow students to determine these? How many students know the why of the task they are completing today? Having them a part of the decision making and communicating their needs will lead to increased motivation and deeper learning. Help them answer the question: "Why is this important to our life?"

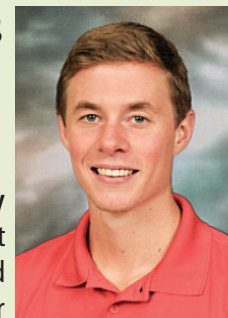
Student Interest Leads to Learning

Furthermore, I learned the term "sticky learning", which is useful learning that students are interested in, focused on, and leads to further exploration. A presenter used this phrase and it resonated with me. They described three components of "sticky learning": i) health and wellness component, ii) experiential learning component, and iii) land based or outdoor component. If we reflect on our lives where deep learning occurred and we were impacted, these three components were checked. How can we create learning experiences for our students that check these boxes?

Skills for a Healthier Future

Lastly, as PHE educators, we cannot be, and should not be, solely responsible for our students' nutrition, physical activity, and mental wellness needs in a day. I know myself and many other PHE educators have felt that pressure before and that leads to stress and teacher burnout. What we need to ask ourselves, today – are we giving them an opportunity to build a strategy or skill that will guide them into a healthier future?

Stephen Pike (B.PE Hons., B.Ed. (Diploma Tech Ed.), M.Ed.) is a Physical Education, Health and Science Teacher at Mealy Mountain Collegiate in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. He is also Communications Officer with the NLTA Health Education Council. For more information or resources in both French and English, visit our re-designed Health Education Special Interest Council website at <https://sites.google.com/nlesd.ca/nltahealtheducationcouncil/home>.



NOTE FROM THE HEALTH EDUCATION COUNCIL PRESIDENT

We are always looking for new members to join our team who are passionate about health education. There are new and great things coming in the 2021-22 school year!

If you are interested in joining the executive, contact Angela Norman, at angelanorman@nlesd.ca.

OF SPECIAL INTEREST...

The Benefits of Involvement with NLTA Special Interest Councils

by Dale Lambe



It was October 2006 and I was a new Administrator in the Metro region of St. John's. I was very proud to be Assistant Principal at Brother Rice Junior High, but the learning curve was a significant one. At this point one of my mentors, Principal Susan Martin, suggested that I respond to an open call for a group known as the School Administrators Council (SAC) Region 10. Little did I realize at this time that my involvement in this special interest council (SIC) of the NLTA would serve to influence my Administrative decision making and approach to student and teacher advocacy each and every day of my career.

SICs provide members with networking opportunities that serve to offer support when we need it most. As an Administrator who has been involved with SAC on a regional and provincial level, I have built a strong support system that enables me to solicit advice from several reliable and experienced Principals and Assistant Principals. Each of us as teachers in our chosen fields can sometimes feel like we are working in isolation. The networking that occurs naturally from SICs can help offset that lonely feeling when you wonder if you are moving forward in the right direction.

One of the most enjoyable things that has helped me with my involvement with SAC has been the reward and fulfillment of arranging and organizing professional learning opportunities for my colleagues. As a teacher and as an Administrator, being involved with provincial and national conferences leaves you with intense feelings of satisfaction. In the past few years I have seen other SICs take professional learning to a new level. Whether you are teaching Mathematics or Music, there is an SIC out there to support you.

The final thing that has shaped my daily practice as an Administrator, that would not have been possible without SAC, is the value of advocacy for our chosen field. When you make the connection between advocating for your field, and the positive impact on your staff and students, the sky's the limit. In the past few years I have seen the NLTA Executive and our respective school boards seek the opinions and viewpoints of SICs before making monumental decisions. This speaks volumes about the importance of SICs on our provincial education landscape and shows why your potential involvement can sustain a viewpoint that will support everyone involved.

A long time has passed since 2006 and my involvement with SAC has helped me enjoy the daily challenges that I face as an Administrator. From the lifelong friendships and opinions that have guided me through obstacles, to the gratification received from helping work with teams who offer top notch professional learning events, I cannot stress the importance of SICs enough. I encourage you to visit www.nlta.nl.ca/sics/ to see if there is a council that is there to get involved with. It is so rewarding and fulfilling.

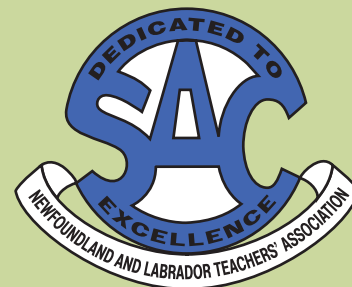
Dale Lambe is a Principal at Villanova Junior High in Manuels and is currently serving as SAC President (Provincial). For more information on Dale's particular SIC, visit <http://sacsic.nlta.ca/> and follow @SACProvincial on Twitter.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' COUNCIL (SAC) HOSTS OPEN SESSION FOR TEACHERS

THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF WORKING AS AN ADMINISTRATOR

SAC Provincial is proud to host an open session for teachers titled "The Positive Impact of Working as an Administrator." This will take place at 4:00 p.m. on **Wednesday, June 9, 2021**. The session is aimed to provide useful information for teachers who are interested in educational leadership.

For more information, please e-mail dalelambe@nlesd.ca or check us out on Twitter @SACProvincial.



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

Darlene Johnson, Administrative Officer, Programs & Services, NLTA
djohnson@nlta.nl.ca; Tel: 726-3223 or toll-free at 1-800-563-3599, ext. 241

KIDS EAT SMART FOUNDATION NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

EVERY BREAKFAST. EVERY CHILD. EVERY DAY. ...TOGETHER, WE MAKE IT HAPPEN!

We recognize the challenges experienced throughout this school year, and it is because of you that our children have had access to food at school, at no cost to families. To all our Teachers, Principals, Volunteers, and School Staff who have stepped up to ensure that Kids Eat Smart (KES) Breakfast Clubs are up and running in your school – *our sincerest heartfelt thanks!*

We are humbled by the continued support of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association (NLTA) and their gift of \$5,000 that will make a direct impact on the lives of school-age children in our province. It is through our partnership that our KES clubs continue to provide children with the nutrition they need to learn, grow and be their very best. Thank you, for giving a Gift that Matters.

We are extremely grateful for the unwavering sup-

port of the NLTA and outgoing President Dean Ingram. We congratulate him on all his accomplishments, and together as we welcome incoming President Trent Langdon, we look forward to continuing to work with you into the future.

On behalf of the Kids Eat Smart Foundation Board of Directors and Staff, we wish you all a wonderful summer and we look forward to continuing to work together to ensure our children start their days well-nourished and ready to learn.

Every Breakfast. Every Child. Every Day.
Together, we make it happen.

If you would like more information, visit our website at www.kidseatsmart.ca, or you can contact Celina Stoyles, Executive Director, at (877) 722-1996 or email cstoyles@kidseatsmart.ca.



Thank You 

GIFTS THAT MATTER
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Foundation
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR